

- Investing in people, by investing in higher education and skills in Africa -



African Doctoral Academy

Africa Centre for Scholarship, Stellenbosch University

Background to the African Doctoral Academy

The African Doctoral Academy (ADA) was established in 2009 at the height of the global financial crisis in direct response to Africa's capacity development challenge.

Since its inception, the ADA has offered high-impact capacity development **training opportunities** to more than 4500 prospective and current African **PhD candidates**, their supervisors and researchers through its annual **Summer and Winter Doctoral Schools**.

The rationale for ADA's establishment 10 years ago remains relevant currently as **quality education** is highlighted in the **Sustainable Development Goals** as well as the African Union's **Agenda 2063**. As widely predicted, few African countries achieved the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. Much work is needed to address **immediate skills shortages** to ensure continued development. This includes knowledge and skills related to **scholarship development** in research and teaching in higher education, which are core activities central to higher education.

However, Sub-Saharan Africa contributes a minuscule percentage of the **world scientific output** and suffers from a "legacy of neglect". Current **low enrolment and graduation rates** at PhD level are indicative of this legacy requiring urgent and sustained intervention.

In service of Scholarship in Africa

As a result of the serious challenges facing universities in Sub-Saharan Africa, **advancing doctoral scholarship** has been recognised as a crucial requirement for the development of **higher education** and research production in Africa.

Stellenbosch University has subsequently launched its Africa-focus central within its internationalisation strategy. This led to establishment of the Africa Centre for Scholarship in 2017 providing a home for the ADA to continue **strengthening excellence in doctoral education** at the university and across the African continent. The ADA's work has been expanded to the **Joint Schools in Africa** programme at partner universities throughout Africa.

Partnering for Success

Stellenbosch University, through its **Centre for Collaboration in Africa** has established formal **bilateral and multilateral** relationships with many of Africa's leading institutions and academic networks.

The many African partners have sought the services of the ADA participating in the ADA's workshops. As approximately 45% of delegates participating at the ADA come from universities and research institutions outside South Africa. The ADA is positioned to **strengthen and expand SU's African networks**, whilst **supporting knowledge production** and **increasing** the number and the quality of doctoral **graduates** on the continent.

In 2016 the ADA presented the first **Joint Doctoral School** outside South Africa with colleagues at Makerere University in Uganda, a long-time bilateral partner. Following the success of the initial schools, the **Joint Schools in Africa** programme has been established and joins the ADA at the Africa Centre for Scholarship.

Joint Schools have **subsequently been presented** in Kenya (Strathmore University), Tanzania (Ardhi University), Malawi (Chancellor's College), Namibia (University of Namibia), Ethiopia (Mekelle University) and Rwanda (University of Rwanda) with Nigeria (University of Lagos) in November 2019.

10 Years of the ADA

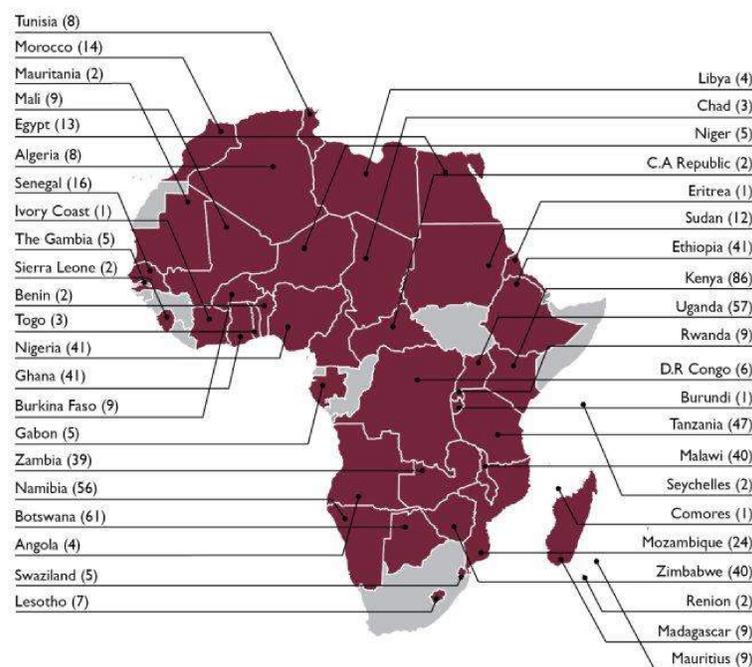


Annual Doctoral Schools at the African Doctoral Academy



Stellenbosch University Collaborations per Country in Africa

Reported collaborative projects of SU staff with staff, universities on the continent and their departments, research centres or organisations and individuals on the continent.

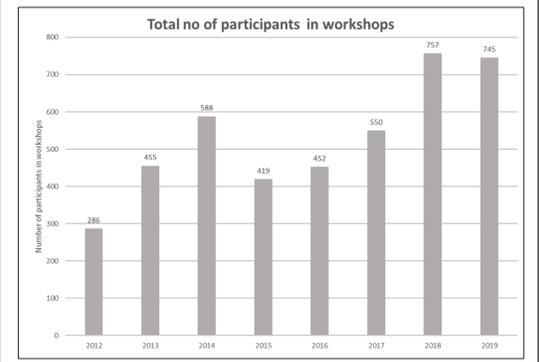


TOP 5 COUNTRIES | KENYA • BOTSWANA • UGANDA • NAMIBIA • NIGERIA
SU staff have engaged in over 310 collaborative projects with these five countries

Growth and Success in Research Capacity Development

The ADA in its **initial stages** benefitted from funding received from the **Carnegie Corporation of New York**. The delegate and workshop numbers have steadily grown in the past five years, which diversified in content and presentation, to **keep pace with developments** in research methods and technological advancements.

With a deliberate **gender strategy** to increase the female participants, Summer School 2019 surpassed **60% female delegates** for the first time. ADA has successfully expanded from a purely Social Science base, to hosting around 45% **STEM** discipline delegates, with Arts and Social Sciences comprising 25% as the second largest group.



Lessons learnt over 10 years

The ADA has learnt many lessons from its capacity development programme. Delegates come to the ADA to learn from the courses taught by **eminent scholars** from Stellenbosch, South Africa, USA and Europe. However, we have observed the **peer learning** and motivation gained from **networking** is an invaluable informal outcome.

In an age of digital learning, the ADA delegates greatly value face to face learning, benefitting from positive reinforcement and the human interaction.

Skills training is as important to this target group as the knowledge intensive courses and is often a springboard to later **substantive learning and success** in PhD completion.

Sustainability & Synergies

There is a great need to **increase access to quality capacity development** opportunities and **investment** in people in Africa, especially emerging scholars with low access to support, or funds for development.

It is evident from the ADA experience and data that the **need for capacity development** for researchers and PhD candidates is increasing. This responds directly to the African Union's call to **improve the quality of research and teaching** at the universities on the continent. The ADA's **scholarships programme** is oversubscribed more than 10-fold.

Contact Information

African Doctoral Academy at the Africa Centre for Scholarship, Stellenbosch University.
Website: www.sun.ac.za/ada

Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/africandocorallacademy/>

Twitter
https://twitter.com/ADA_SUIntl

LinkedIn
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/african-doctoral-academy/>

