

Australia Africa Knowledge Teamwork: Policies, Priorities, People

AAUN Australia Forum 4-5 September 2023

Participants Biographies and Abstracts of Presentations

Session 1 – Teamwork Time: Policies and opportunities 2023-25

Professor John Hearn

University of New South Wales, Sydney; Exec Co-Chair AAUN

John Hearn is the Founding Executive Chairman of the Australia Africa Universities Network (2012); Adjunct Professor, Institute for Global Development, University of New South Wales; and Emeritus Professor of Physiology at the University of Sydney. Born in India, raised in England and East Africa, he received his BSc (1st hon), MSc and DSc (hc) from University College Dublin, and PhD from the Australian National University (ANU). He served 7 years each in leading research, teaching and administrative positions at the Universities of Edinburgh, London UCL, Wisconsin, ANU, and Sydney. He was DVC (Research) at ANU 2000-4, and DVC (Academic and International) at Sydney 2004-13. He teaches and mentors students in biomedicine and published 220 research papers and six edited books in reproduction and fertility, stem cell biology, and education. He is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. A committed international citizen, he works globally in research capacity development. He is an adviser to the Australian Government, WHO, British Council, and OECD. He lived in Kenya and Uganda, working with WHO on human and animal fertility; and playing representative rugby and boxing. He was (to 2013) a Board member of the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organization, and the founding Chairman of the Sydney Confucius Institute.

AAUN 2023-30 – Teamwork towards the next decade

Prof John Hearn

Since its launch in 2012, AAUN has developed a strong platform, with 10 Australian and 14 African Members, 60 multinational research teams, mobility and exchange programs. The AAUN Strategic Action Plan 2023-26 (www.aaun.edu.au) includes a careful expansion in our university partnerships and people, while targeting global challenges aligned to the SDGs 2030, Africa Agenda 2063, and Australia Indo-Pacific engagement. Throughout, we keep to the principles of equal partnership and governance, shared thinking and innovation, opportunities for women and men - established and early career. AAUN is also exploring selected Indo-Pacific and Global University alliances, partnering with governments and business. The research programs are in environment and climate; agriculture and nutrition; the marine economy and conservation; life course NCDs in obesity, heart disease and diabetes – with links to sports science. AI solutions to distance learning and research

collaboration are being studied, as are education and employment with entrepreneurial careers, business spin-offs and economic sustainability. The post-Covid period poses challenges to be overcome, both social and financial, in achieving full momentum. We welcome assessment and learning about what has - and has not - worked; what gaps remain, and what global and local instruments and teamwork will deliver further impact and success.

Dr David Mickler

Dean Global, Africa, Office of the DVC Global, Curtin University

Dr David Mickler is Dean Global, Africa, Office of the DVC Global, and a Senior Lecturer in International Relations at Curtin University, Perth. He is a Board Member of the Australia Africa Universities Network (AAUN) and serves as the Australian Representative to the Academic Group of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). Previously, Dr Mickler was the Founding Director of the Africa Research & Engagement Centre (AfREC) at the University of Western Australia and the inaugural Co-Chair of the Global Africa Group within the Worldwide Universities Network (WUN). Dr Mickler is a Political Scientist whose research and teaching sit at the intersection of International Relations and African Studies. He has been a Visiting Fellow at the University of Pretoria, Addis Ababa University and the Africa Union Commission. His books include *New Engagement: Contemporary Australian Foreign Policy Towards Africa* (2013); *The African Union: Challenges of Peace, Security and Governance* (2016); and *Africa and the Sustainable Development Goals* (2020). Dr Mickler is a CI on the new Australian Research Council Discovery Project *The Political and Economic Agency of Africans in Australia*. Dr Mickler is also convening the new Curtin University-AAUN program *Emerging Leaders in Australia-Africa Diplomacy (ELAAD)*.

HE Mr Joe Tapera Mhishi

Ambassador of the Republic of Zimbabwe

His Excellency, Ambassador J. T. Mhishi is a career diplomat having joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1992 soon after graduating from university.

The Ambassador is a holder of a Master of Science in Economics and a Master of Science in International Relations. The Ambassador has had experience working at Head Office in Harare in various Departments during which exposure he rose through the ranks to his current position of Ambassador.

The Ambassador has previously served at postings in Berlin, Germany and Jakarta, Indonesia where he served as Deputy Head of Mission. He was appointed Ambassador in July 2019 under Zimbabwe's 2nd Republic before being deployed to Australia in September 2019. The Ambassador is accredited to both Australia and New Zealand.

HE Mrs Marie Claire Jeanne Monty, Dip Ed / BA / M Ed

High Commissioner, Mauritius

Her Excellency was appointed as High Commissioner to Australia in December 2019, she joined the Diplomatic Corps in March 2020 and presented her Credentials to the Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia on 7 April 2020.

Before her appointment, Mrs. Monty has been Member of Parliament (2014-2019) and has served as Private Parliamentary Secretary, having as responsibility, to look after infrastructure in to Constituencies of her country.

During her mandate as Member of Parliament, Her Excellency, has also served as Member of the PAN African Parliament where she was elected as Vice- Chair of the Committee on Education, Tourism and Culture and was also Member of the

Committee on Gender. Mrs. Monty has been one of the founder Members of the First Parliamentary Gender Caucus instituted in 2017 in Mauritius.

High Commissioner Monty has had a long career in Secondary Education for Girls before joining politics and has been French language teacher, Chief Examiner and Director of Catholic College for Boys.

Her Excellency has also been serving as voluntary social worker for quite a number of years in her country and is the proud mother of three accomplished children, two daughters and one son.

Prof Loretta Feris

Vice-Principal: Academic, the University of Pretoria

Prof Feris is currently the Vice-Principal: Academic, at the University of Pretoria. Prior to working as a Law Professor at the UP Law Faculty, having re-joined UP in February 2022. She was Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) Transformation, Student Affairs and Social Responsiveness at the University of Cape Town (UCT). She held numerous leadership roles at UCT, including the Director of the Institute of Marine and Environmental Law as well a Director of Research, both roles at the Faculty of Law. Prof Feris has 28 years of experience as an established scholar with international standing and commendable scholarly work with eight years of her experience at a senior management level. She has experience in teaching and learning through her participation in multiple academic committees, including the UCT teaching and learning, language and social responsiveness committees. From 2004 to 2009, Prof Feris was Associate Prof of Law and Programme Manager of the International Trade and Investment Law in Africa programme at the University of Pretoria. Prior to that, she was involved in several roles at the Washington College of Law, American University, Washington DC in the United States of America (USA).

In 1988, she obtained a BA degree in Law at the University of Stellenbosch as well as an LLB in 1990. In 1994, she completed her LLM at Georgetown University Law Centre, USA. She holds a doctoral degree in Environmental Law, an interdisciplinary field from the University of Stellenbosch. Prof Feris is a member of the IUCN Academy for Environmental Law where she has also served as a committee member in the Teaching and Training Committee and was requested to serve in a task team that was exploring innovative teaching methodologies for Environmental Law. She has served as an expert in the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Montevideo process, focusing on the development of environmental law at a global level. She was one of two lead academics for the development of a global Curriculum on Compliance with and Enforcement of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, commissioned by the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and UNEP. Professor Feris serves on the board of Biowatch and chairs the Board of Natural Justice, both civil society organisations with a strong focus on environmental justice.

Honorary Prof Matthew Neuhaus

Australian National University

Matthew Neuhaus has been Honorary Professor (International Law) at the Australian National University College of Law since November 2022.

He was Australian Ambassador to the Netherlands from August 2018 to October 2022, and Permanent Representative to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical

Weapons in The Hague. He represented Australia at the ICJ, ICC, PCA and other international legal bodies.

Mr Neuhaus has previously served as Australian Ambassador to Zimbabwe (2011-15) -accredited also to DRC, Zambia and Malawi -and High Commissioner to Nigeria (1997-2000) - accredited also to Ghana, Sierra Leone, The Gambia and Senegal. He has also held senior positions in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Prime Minister and Cabinet, covering Africa, the Middle East, the Pacific, UN and Multilateral Engagement, and international law. He was Assistant Secretary for Africa, then First Assistant Secretary for the Middle East and Africa from 2015-18.

Mr Neuhaus was Director of the Political Affairs Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat in London 2002-2008. His previous postings with DFAT include Kenya (1983-1985), Papua New Guinea (1988- 1989), UN New York (1991-94) where he represented Australia on the First and Sixth Committees, and was Vice Chair of the Sixth Committee in 1993-94.

Mr Neuhaus has a B.A. (Hons) LLB from the University of Sydney and a Master of Philosophy (International Relations) from the University of Cambridge. He attended Harvard University Kennedy School Leaders in Development Program in June 2006, and was a Visiting Fellow at the Lauterpacht Centre for International Law at Cambridge University in 2015.

Abstract of Presentation

Hon Prof Matthew Neuhaus, ANU College of Law & former Australian Ambassador

My presentation will cover the history of Australia's Engagement with Africa in recent decades, beginning with the successful support to end apartheid in South Africa and the development of a diplomatic network across the continent. Central to this engagement in recent years have been the Australia Africa Awards, which have built a network of alumni and strong connections with African universities, government and the private sector. As African diaspora communities in Australia grow; our investment in the mining sector and more widely increases; and Africa's international impact and importance for Australia in achieving its global goals becomes ever more important, these relations need to be strengthened. AAUN is crucial to this at an institutional, knowledge sharing and people to people level.

Ms Keara Shaw

Australian Charge d'Affaires to Mauritius

Ms Shaw has served as Australia's Chargé d'Affaires to Mauritius, Comoros, Madagascar and Seychelles since August 2022. Ms Shaw is a career diplomat with previous postings and assignments in Zimbabwe, Cambodia and Indonesia. In her most recent role in Canberra, she was Director of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's diplomatic law team. In Canberra, she has also managed complex foreign policy issues including international engagement on people smuggling and issues before the UN Security Council during Australia's term as a non-permanent member. On posting to Jakarta, she managed Australia's engagement with Indonesia on security issues.

Prior to joining the Department, Ms Shaw was a lawyer. She holds a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) and Bachelor of Arts from Melbourne University.

Session 2: The role of AAUN and Universities in deepening Australia Africa cooperation

Chair: Prof Sanjeev Sobhee, Vice Chancellor University of Mauritius

Prof Sanjeev K Sobhee

Vice Chancellor of the University of Mauritius

Prof Sanjeev K Sobhee is currently the Vice Chancellor of the University of Mauritius since September 2022. Prior to occupying this post, Prof Sobhee served as Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academia) for more than five years and was Dean of Faculty of Social Studies and Humanities from 2008 to 2011.

As an academic, he is also Professor of Economics and had taught Advanced Macroeconomics, Public Policy, Sustainable Development and Quantitative Methods mostly on postgraduate academic programmes including the MA Collaborative Programme with the African Economic Research Consortium. He has also been instrumental in developing the COMESA MA Regional Trade Integration Programme. Prof Sobhee has published extensively in internationally refereed journals such as Journal of Economic Policy Forum, Oxford Development Studies, Canadian Journal of Development Studies, American Review of Political Economy, Development Southern Africa, Applied Economics Letters, Ocean and Coastal Management and Environmental Management.

In addition, Prof Sanjeev Sobhee has consulted on quite a few projects for various international institutions, namely, The World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Prof Barnabas Nawangwe

Vice Chancellor of Makerere University

Prof Barnabas Nawangwe has been the Vice Chancellor of Makerere University, one of the oldest and premier universities in Africa, since August 2017 and he is currently serving his second term of five years. Prior to that, he was Deputy Vice Chancellor, Dean and Principal of the College of Engineering, and Head of the Department of Architecture, all at Makerere University. His research interests are in the areas of vernacular architecture and sustainable human settlements. Prof. Nawangwe is passionate about African universities' role in transforming the African society through research and innovation. He has given leadership at Makerere and on the continent in driving this agenda. Prof. Nawangwe is the current Chairperson of the Board of the African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA).

**The Role of AAUN and Universities in Promoting Australia-Africa Relations:
the Case of Makerere University**

Prof Barnabas Nawangwe, Vice Chancellor of Makerere University

Modern universities are challenged to, more than ever before, find solutions for problems faced by humanity. This is even more pertinent for universities in the less developed parts of the World, particularly Africa. African universities have a multitude of issues to tackle, all related to chronic and persistent poverty. Partnerships with universities in the more developed parts of the globe are key.

Makerere University, a member of the Australia Africa Universities Network celebrated 100 years of impactful service to humanity last year, 2022. In her century long history, Makerere University, as the only university in the entire East and Central Africa Region for decades produced the bulk of independence activists and government workers. But Makerere now faces new challenges, including the high population growth and youth unemployment, climate change and food security, emerging diseases, and conflict among others.

Partnerships with universities across the globe have played a major role in making Makerere a world class university. Partnerships with Australian universities have enabled Makerere University to not only develop her human resource, but also her research capacity and community engagement. These partnerships have brought together researchers from Makerere and Australian universities to address issues including good security, waste management, tropical diseases and many others.

Professor David Norris

Vice-Chancellor of the University of Botswana

Professor David Norris holds a PhD Degree in Quantitative Genetics and Animal Breeding from the Michigan State University. He read for his MSc in Animal Science at the University of Reading. He holds a BSc - Biology & Physics obtained from the University of Botswana. He has attended a number of leadership and professional programmes including Strategic Leadership; Multi Stakeholder Strategies and Processes; Change and Process Management; Gender Mainstreaming. His competencies include: Innovative Teaching & Learning; Research Development and Innovation; Higher Education Administration and Management.

David Norris has been serving as the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Botswana since 1st November 2017. He is an experienced leader, researcher and lecturer, having served in different capacities in Botswana, USA and South Africa. Prior to joining the University of Botswana, he was the Deputy Vice-Chancellor responsible for Research and Innovation at the Botswana International University of Science and Technology (BIUST). Before serving at BIUST, he was Director of the School of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences at the University of Limpopo, South Africa. He has also served as Assistant Professor at Austin Peay State University, USA and worked for the Government of Botswana's Department of Agricultural Research as Senior Research Officer.

The Role of Australia Africa University Network (AAUN) in Deepening Australia Africa Cooperation

Prof David Norris, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Botswana

Funding limitations, low quality of education, brain drain, poor research culture, weak industry collaboration, lack of entrepreneurial culture and other challenges hinder African Universities from contributing meaningfully to the development of their countries' economies. The Australia Africa University Network (AAUN) aims to facilitate collaboration and partnerships in the areas of education, research, and development between the two regions. The network was established to strengthen ties between Australia and African countries and to address mutual challenges through joint academic and research efforts. The challenges facing African Universities must be addressed efficiently if the objectives of the AAUN are to be achieved. This is

critical for the role of AAUN in effectively deepening cooperation between Australia and Africa. African universities can learn several valuable lessons from Australian universities to enhance their educational quality, research output, and overall institutional effectiveness. These include development of strong linkages between African universities and industry through an established innovation ecosystem; development of a strong research culture; research commercialization, involvement in the entire research and innovation value chain; entrepreneurial orientation; establishment of innovation centres and development of strong community partnerships. The strengthening of the AAUN through strategic planning, collaboration frameworks and shared goals offers an opportunity for African Universities to overcome some of their challenges paving the way for a deepened Australia Africa cooperation.

Session 3: Global Entrepreneurial Universities: Insights from the AAUN

Chair: Dr Annette McLaren, Director, Strategic Projects, Western Sydney University

Prof Margaret Chitiga-Mabugu

Dean of the Faculty of Economic & Management Sciences, University of Pretoria

Professor Margaret Chitiga-Mabugu is an economist and the current Dean of the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences at the University of Pretoria. With a diverse background in research, teaching, and administration, she has vast experience in economic development research.

Professor Chitiga-Mabugu obtained her PhD in economics from the University of Gothenburg in Sweden and has since dedicated her research to analysing the impact of policies on society and the economy. Her research has been widely published in top-tier international journals and has received recognition from esteemed institutions.

Beyond her academic work, Professor Chitiga-Mabugu is an active member of several advisory councils and networks, including the Stockholm Environment Institute's Science Advisory Council, the Academy of Science of South Africa, the Advisory Group to Phase II of Southern Africa – Towards Inclusive Economic Development (SA-TIED) programme, and the Partnership for Economic Policy network. She also co-chairs the ILO's International Technical Group for the Climate Action for Jobs Initiative, confirming her commitment to sustainable development.

Mr Kelly Smith IEAA SF (he/him)

Pro Vice Chancellor International, Murdoch University

Kelly Smith has been at Murdoch University since January 2020 and is currently Pro Vice Chancellor International. He has worked in international education for over 30 years, including in the public and private sectors. He is a Senior Fellow of the International Education Association of Australia and a regular presenter at international education conferences in Australia, Asia and the Americas.

Dr Aldo Stroebel

***Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Innovation and Internationalisation
University of Mpumalanga, South Africa***

Dr Aldo Stroebel is the inaugural Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Innovation and Internationalisation at the University of Mpumalanga, South Africa, and former Executive Director at the National Research Foundation (NRF). He serves as South Africa's National Contact Point for the European Research Council, and as Board Member of South Africa's Water Research Commission. He is an Honorary Scholar at the International Institute of Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), Austria, Foreign Fellow of the Ugandan National Academy of Science, a Senior Fellow of the Pan-African Scientific Council, and a founding member of the SA Young Academy of Science (SAYAS). Education credentials: University of Pretoria (BSc- and Hons-degrees); University of Ghent, Belgium (Masters in International Agricultural Development); University of the Free State and Cornell University, USA (PhD); Postdoctoral research at Wageningen University, The Netherlands. He is a recognised scholar in sustainable agriculture, and acknowledged as a leader in the internationalisation of Higher Education, and research and innovation management. He holds the 2022 Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association (SARIMA) Research Management Excellence Award.

Session 4. Education, research and innovation synergies across AAUN and regions
Chair: Prof Frans Swanepoel, AAUN Interim Co-Chair Africa, University of Pretoria

Prof Wallace Cowling

Researcher, University of Western Australia

Professor Wallace Cowling is a researcher in plant breeding and genetics at the University of Western Australia. He has registered more than 90 canola, lupin and lucerne cultivars or germplasms, many of which have greatly impacted Australian agriculture. He also leads an international development project for breeding of common beans in Africa. Professor Cowling has published more than 130 papers in leading international journals, and a focus of his research is developing innovative methods for improving the long-term outcomes of plant breeding.

Prof Cowling graduated from the University of Melbourne with a Bachelor of Agricultural Science (Hons) in 1975, followed by a PhD in Plant Pathology at University of California Davis in 1980. After two years on a postdoctoral fellowship at Cornell University, he took up a position as lupin breeder at the WA Department of Agriculture in 1982. In 1999, he moved to the University of Western Australia on an externally-funded position in plant breeding and genetics. At UWA, he has graduated 21 PhD and MSc research students and taught upper level undergraduate and MSc courses in plant breeding and genetics. He was elected as a Fellow of the Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering in 2018.

Abstract: the role of plant breeding in improving human nutrition

Prof Wallace Cowling, University of Western Australia

My experience in East Africa has impressed upon me the major potential role of plant breeding in improving human nutrition and health, through our ACIAR-funded project on improving cooking time, iron and zinc in common bean. Common bean is a staple crop in East Africa, where it provides essential protein, iron and zinc, and therefore beans are especially important for the health of African women and children whose diets are often deficient in these essential nutrients. Through our collaborative

research and breeding with plant breeders based in Uganda and surrounding countries, we have decreased the cooking time while improving grain yield, iron and zinc in beans. The genetic improvements are based on natural genetic diversity in an African bean panel. Rapid cycles of breeding and selection have been under way for four years, based on traditional and modern genomic selection methods combined with optimised crossing designs as developed in animal breeding. African colleagues in UGA, BDI, RWA, ETH, KEN and TZA are selecting and disseminating new varieties through their networks, which will include gender-sensitive participatory variety selection schemes. In five years, the project aims to decrease average cooking time by 30%, increase iron by 15% and increase zinc by 10% in the breeding program. Better results should be achieved in varieties released from the project in 5 to 10 years.

Session 5: AAUN – University initiatives to engage academics, students, communities
Chair: Prof Treena Burgess, Harry Butler Institute, Murdoch University

Dr Janet Dzator

Director, Centre of African Research, Engagement and Partnerships (CARE-P)
University of Newcastle

Dr Janet Dzator is an applied economist lecturer and researcher at the University of Newcastle. Janet is the Director for the Centre of African Research, Engagement and Partnerships (CARE-P) and has held other leadership roles including Head of Discipline for Economics, Politics and International Relations, Deputy Head Discipline for Business Analytics, Economics and Politics, Student Academic Conduct Officer, and Program Convenor for Bachelor of Commerce and combined Bachelor of Business, Bachelor of Commerce programs.

Dr Janet Dzator's research program has been instrumental in demonstrating the socioeconomic impacts of macroeconomic policies on health, economic growth, and sustainable development strategies at national, regional and global levels with citations in several UN, World Bank and WHO policy documents.

As Director of CARE-P, I am responsible for bringing together Australia and African researchers, industry partners and communities to collaborate and support excellence in research. An important aspect of this role is nurturing an inclusive culture within the research community through clear, equitable and consistent processes and communications.

It is important to mentor and develop the next generation. I have contributed significantly to establish the Economic Development, Sustainability and Health economics research group, provided mentoring, support and pastoral care to PhDs, African students, and early career staff transitioning to independent academic careers.

Professor Shamit Saggar CBE FAcSS

Executive Director, National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education
Curtin University

Professor Shamit Saggar CBE FAcSS is the Executive Director of the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education at Curtin University.

He was formerly (2019-23) the inaugural Director of the Public Policy Institute and Professor of Public Policy at the University of Western Australia.

He is a former Senior Advisor to UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, has worked in senior roles in government, business, regulation and philanthropy, and has taken an active part in public leadership board roles.

He was previously a Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) at the University of Essex; Director of the ESRC South-East Social Science Network Doctoral Training Partnership; Director of the Policy Unit at the Institute for Social and Economic Research; Senior Policy Advisor in the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, Cabinet Office; ESRC Knowledge Exchange Fellow with HM Government; Professor of Political Science, University of Sussex; Reader in Political Behaviour at Queen Mary, University of London; Harkness Fellow at UCLA; Yale World Fellow at Yale University; and Visiting Professor of Public Policy at the University of Toronto.

He is a Fellow of the UK Academy of Social Sciences, and in 2017 he was awarded a CBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours for services to social science and public policy.