

INTRODUCTION

Science and Technology is one of the key focal areas on Africa's development agenda. The Constitutive Act, establishing the African Union (AU), recognizes the need to advance the development of Africa by promoting research in all fields, and in particular, in science and technology.

In January 2007, the AU Heads of State and Government "declared 2007 as the launching year for building constituencies and champions for science, technology and innovation in Africa". In response to this political momentum and commitment to: - raise community awareness,- engage African citizens in Africa's science and technology programmes, promote elements of human intellectual development, encourage technological and scientific leadership and - strengthen Africa's research capacities, the AU Commission, with the support of its key Development Partners, initiated the prestigious "African Union Scientific Awards Programme" targeting young researchers at Member State level, women at regional level and open to all outstanding scientists at continental level .

The programme is designed to celebrate and acknowledge the achievements of African scientists and to promote all efforts to transform scientific research into entrepreneurship, attract investments to Africa, and create research centers of excellence. It will further encourage the science community, and the public to participate in scientific engagements towards addressing critical problems in Africa. The programme will contribute towards raising the profile of science and technology sector and building a scientific culture amongst African citizens. There is a strong urge for Africa to quickly mobilize its scientific resources, competencies and comparative advantages to champion programmes that promote access to science and technology by all, strengthen research capacities, and increase the use, and generation of scientific knowledge for the development of the continent.

A prize will be awarded to each of the following two scientific sectors (a) *Life and Earth Sciences*¹; and (b) *Basic Science, Technology and Innovation*².

¹ Earth Science embraces all sciences related to the planet earth, covering (but not limited to) the following disciplines, geology, geophysics and geodesy. On the other hand, we regard Life Sciences to encompass all sciences that have to do with 'organisms', like plants, animals and human .This may be Agrotechnology, Animal Science, Plant Science, Biotechnology, Biology, Environmental Sciences, Food Sciences, Medicine, and Tissue Engineering to mention a few.

² Basic, Science, Technology and Innovation category will consist of all other sciences, technologies and innovations excluding those covered within Earth and Life Sciences category. These may include, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Engineering (Mechanical, Electrical, Electronics, civil etc), Artificial Intelligence, Material Sciences, Manufacturing and Production Technologies, Metallurgy, Textiles, Energy and Innovations etc.

THREE AWARDS SCHEMES

(i) AU-TWAS Young Scientist National Award

Award	AU - TWAS Young Scientist National Award for Life and Earth Sciences	AU - TWAS Young Scientist National Award for Basic Science, Technology and Innovation
Value	5,000 USD	5,000 USD
Target Group	Young Scientists (of less than 40 years on 31 December of the year of contest)	
Region	AU Member States	

* TWAS - Academy of Sciences for Developing World
* Upto 40 years is the age accepted for young scientists

This award is open to both male and female young researchers. The Commission believes that it is important to recognize the scientific achievements of young researchers and to encourage them to continue to strive for excellence in their careers. The awards will acknowledge their contribution to progress in science. It is expected that the publicity surrounding the awards will encourage young people to consider a career in research. The AU Commission and TWAS are collaborating in this award.

(ii) African Union Women Scientist Regional Award

Award	African Union Women Scientist Regional Award Life and Earth Sciences	African Union Women Scientist Regional Award for Basic Science, Technology and Innovation
Value	20,000 USD	20,000 USD
Target Group	Excelling Woman Scientists	
Region	African Union Regions ³ (Central, Eastern, Northern, Southern and Western)	

The Regional Scientific Award will promote participation of African women in science, technology and innovation. The Commission endeavours to ensure that African women in science achieve their full potential by breaking down barriers and increasing opportunities. There is a need to address their under representation in Science, Engineering and Mathematics and to promote their access to science education, scientific professional careers and greater utilization of science in daily lives. The awards will acknowledge their contribution to progress in science. These awards are expected to raise the profile of women researchers in the population as a whole and thereby to inspire young women and girls to aim for a career in research.

³ AU Countries are regionally grouped according to the resolution CM/Res.464 of the 20th Ordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers, refer to Annex 1.

(iii) African Union Scientific Award

Award	African Union Scientific Award Life and Earth Sciences	African Union Scientific Award for Basic Science, Technology and Innovation
Value	100,000 USD	100,000 USD
Target Group	Outstanding African Scientists	
Region	African Union	

This award is open to both outstanding male and female researchers. Science, technology and innovation form an indispensable tool for driving socio-economic progress and it requires a strong, dynamic and sustainable basic research enterprise, which in turn, is sustained by adequate and competent human capital. It is now compulsory to strengthen the capacities of African researchers and scientists by facilitating the integration of their efforts and competencies for the sustainable development of the African continent.

The already existing scientific excellence should be tapped profitably and acknowledged via a various initiatives. In this programme a prize of 100,000 USD will be given to the outstanding African scientist as a mark of recognition of the African Union to acknowledge Africa's children who have had the merit to incontestably emerge in science and technology.

ELIGIBILITY

The African Union Scientific Awards will be awarded to African scientists who have remarkable achievements, demonstrated by number of publications, number of research graduate students, applicability of the scientific work to Africa's challenges, and its patentability. Only nationals of the African Union (AU) Member States are eligible for this Award.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Advisory Committee is the supreme body of the awards programme and is chaired by the Commissioner of Human Resources, Science and Technology. Other members of the Committee are European Commission (EC), African Development Bank (AfDB), World Intellectual Property Organization, (WIPO), Academy of Sciences for Developing World (TWAS) - Africa Regional Offices, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), African Academy of Science (AAS) and International Council for Science (ICSU) Africa Regional Office. The major functions of this committee are advisory issues, policy, operational modalities and ensuring adequate resources for the programme.

SECRETARIATS

SECRETARIAT FOR AFRICAN UNION YOUNG SCIENTIST NATIONAL AWARD

National Awards will be run by National Academy of Sciences and /or National Research Councils under the supervision of the Ministries in Charge of Science and Technology in Member States.

SECRETARIAT FOR AFRICAN UNION WOMEN SCIENTIST REGIONAL AWARD

The Regional awards will be run by the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). For 2009 the following RECs have been mandated to run the awards. The figure below shows the AU Regions, the REC assigned to that Region and the Member States within that Region.

REGION	WESTERN	EASTERN	SOUTHERN	CENTRAL	NORTHERN
REC	ECOWAS	EAC	SADC	ECCAS	CEN-SAD
MEMBER STATES	Benin Burkina Faso Cape Verde Cote d'Ivoire Gambia Ghana	Comoros Djibouti Eritrea Ethiopia Kenya Madagascar	Angola Botswana Lesotho Malawi Mozambique Namibia	Burundi Cameroon Central African Republic Chad Congo Congo (DRC)	Algeria Egypt Libya Mauritania Tunisia Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)
	Guinea Guinea Bissau Liberia	Mauritius Rwanda Seychelles	South Africa Swaziland Zambia	Equatorial Guinea Gabon Sao Tome & Principe	
	Mali Niger Nigeria Senegal Sierra Leone Togo	Somalia Sudan Tanzania Uganda	Zimbabwe		