

Panel 1: Abstracts

'The Third Mission of Higher Education': Perceptions of HE engagement among African Centres of Excellence

Belinda Du Plooy (Nelson Mandela University), Malve Von Moellendorf (Universität Oldenburg)

The conflictual role of African universities, caught between the demands of academic excellence, on the one hand, and local demands of development and regional and communal impact, on the other, have not yet been adequately resolved. Conceptually and organizationally, 'engagement', 'transfer' and 'outreach' activities serve as mechanisms to bridge the divide between the traditional academy and the needs and expectations of societal stakeholders located outside of formal HE structures. This is now often referred to as the third mission (TM) of HE, the first and second missions being teaching and research. In recent years, many of the existing DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) African Centres of Excellence (ACEs) have established partnerships and networks with actors from the political, social and economic sector to increase their relevance and impact in their regions. Against this backdrop, a qualitative exploratory study was conducted to determine the experiences and perceptions of participating representatives from ten ACEs, located in their different and specific African regional and societal contexts, about their university-society community engagement (CE) or TM activities. This paper will report on the findings of this study, which contributes to the larger aims of identifying long-term synergies and collaboration potential and the development of conceptual models that are scalable. The findings of this study can form an adaptable basis for future TM-CE projects and for possible future research projects about such activities in HE, especially in a cross-border, transnational or global South-North context.

Case Study of two Research and Education Exchanges in Europe & Africa Collaboration

Fisseha Mekuria (Malmö University), Dr. Fitsum Asaminew (Addis Ababa Institute of Technology), Dr. Alexis Dowhuszko (Aalto University Finland) Prof. James Maina (Pretoria University) Dr. Esubalew Alemneh (Bahir Dar Institute of Technology)

The proposed Panel will deal with sharing the learning experiences from two research and education partnerships between Europe and African Institutions. 1. The collaboration between Malmö University, University of Turku Finland, Bahir Dar University and Pretoria University, in organizing the IEEE ICT for development for Africa: IEEE ICT4DA2021-24:<https://ict4daconf.org/>. The conference is supported by IEEE Region8 focal point senior members in Finland and from Malmö University. The event provided Universities in Africa to host Digital Technology Conferences, invite & host expert researchers and academicians, and provided a possibility for graduate students to publish their research in a peer reviewed

conference. It also resulted in networking and future collaborative opportunities in emerging digital technologies (5G, IoT and AI). The newly established Malmö University Masters in IoT program, has been promoted to African universities for natural environment monitoring research and biodiversity protection, including promotion of local innovation hubs for addressing needed societal services. 2. Malmö University, Sweden & Aalto University, Finland, organized a collaborative skills development webinar on advanced digital technologies for local African mobile operators, telecom regulatory institutes and higher educational institutes in Africa. The collaborative educational institutes such as the Addis Ababa institute of Technology (AAIT), and the Telecom Excellence Centre, Addis Ababa, Malmö University, and Aalto University participated in delivering the webinars, to university teachers, researchers, innovators and professional engineers in the mobile telecom sector. The webinars started in Jan 2024, and 8 such webinars dealing with emerging digital technologies (5G, AI, IoT), associated services and innovative applications development is carried out. The webinars provided a number of thesis projects for postgraduate education at the universities and provided the incentive for the explosive mobile financial applications development in Ethiopia and Kenya and leading to innovative startups.

A critical evaluation of a South Africa-Belgium partnership in education

Gerda Van Niekerk (University of Limpopo), Marilize Pretorius (University of Antwerp)

Over the past few years, European and African governments have sought to enhance education collaboration through equal partnerships, fostering more balanced and mutually beneficial initiatives. In this context, we participated in a collaborative online international learning project involving master's students from the Universities of Antwerp (UA) in Belgium and Limpopo (UL) in South Africa. Conducted over two months during three separate years of study, the project included 31 linguistics students from UA and 37 business law students from UL. Through qualitative content analysis of students' reflective feedback, we explored how the structure and design of such partnerships influence outcomes, particularly in terms of perceived and actual equality. While students reported many positive experiences, including exposure to new perspectives, the collaboration revealed particular challenges and disappointments. These were often related to differences in academic expectations, digital accessibility, and logistical constraints. Our findings suggest that partnerships emphasising mutual respect and shared responsibilities foster environments where students from both continents benefit. This approach strengthens educational opportunities by promoting intercultural learning, critical thinking, and the development of global competencies. By addressing existing imbalances and refining partnership structures, such initiatives can contribute to a more equitable model of international education cooperation. Ultimately, such collaborations have the potential to reshape North-South educational relations, moving beyond traditional donor-recipient dynamics toward a more reciprocal and sustainable

framework. With careful planning and continuous adaptation, these initiatives can serve as a blueprint for future educational partnerships worldwide.

Beyond Window Dressing: Fostering mutual learning and capacity building in a North – South ECTE Partnership

Gjertrud Stordal (DMMH), Elin Birgitte Ljunggren (DMMH), Marinda Swart (STADIO), Kerri-Lee Schneider (STADIO), Gry Mette D. Haugen (DMMH), Amanda Lee (STADIO), Sine B. Hanssen (DMMH)

This paper reflects on the potential challenges and possibilities of achieving mutual learning and capacity building. The reflections are based on a North -South project collaboration (South Africa and Norway), focusing on leadership education and professional development for Early Childhood Teacher Education (ECTE) students and educators. Recognizing the vastly different contexts of ECTE in South Africa and Norway, we engage in a conceptual discussion of how mutual learning and capacity building can be understood within the framework of Professional Learning Networks (PLN) and professional development. Drawing on perspectives of PLN as informal learning spaces and our own experiences with joint master lectures and student supervision, we ask: What fosters significant mutual learning and capacity building for students and educators within professional ECTE leadership development? While such spaces offer opportunities for mutual learning and capacity building, we find that there are prerequisites to achieving these goals. For instance, our preliminary results suggest that openness, skills adaptability, mutual knowledge and common understanding of the working theories and concepts are significant for realizing mutual learning and capacity building. Based on the possibilities and challenges from a North-South project collaboration, our reflections provide insights into the role of mutual learning and capacity building in fostering sustainable and equitable collaborations. This paper contributes with knowledge about how we can ensure that such collaborations foster opportunities and values for the involved partners, and do not remain mere superficial window dressing.

Mutual Learning and Transformative Exchange: Fostering Sustainable and Equitable Institutional Collaboration Between South Africa and Norway

Gry Mette Haugen (Queen Maud University College), Sine Hanssen (Queen Maud University College), Kerri-Lee Schneider (STADIO), Gjertrud Stordal (Queen Maud University College), Mandy Lee (STADIO), Marinda Swart (STADIO), Jolanda Morkel (STADIO)

This paper explores mutual learning within a longstanding partnership between STADIO School of Education in South Africa and Queen Maud University College (QMUC) in Norway. Over the past year, the collaboration has expanded to include sustainable research and teaching practices, such as joint workshops, co-teaching, supervision, bachelor and master

student exchange programs. The project aims to facilitate mutual learning and contribute to the development of sustainable and equitable institutional partnerships. Grounded in Jack Mezirow's transformative learning theory and concepts of disorienting dilemmas, as well as John Dewey's perspective on education as learning through reflection and action, this study investigates how exchange students navigate cross-cultural experiences and challenge existing perspectives. Through in-depth analysis of student data, we explore how students' encounters with disorienting dilemmas (moments of cognitive and cultural disruption), foster critical reflections, personal transformations, and enhanced intercultural competences. By applying an explorative and transformative learning framework, this paper highlights the role of student exchange in fostering deeper institutional collaboration. Understanding how students adapt, learn, and co-create knowledge allows for the development of exchange programs that move beyond mere knowledge transfer, ensuring long-term, reciprocal partnerships between STADIO and QMUC. The findings contribute to the broader discourse on international academic cooperation, emphasizing the need for sustainable, equitable, and mutually beneficial educational knowledge exchanges.

The power of reciprocity in global partnerships

Jan Olav Baarøy (Norwegian Agency for Exchange Cooperation)

The world is changing. Our development industry is radically challenged. The polycrisis we are faced with changes at a speed we could hardly fathom only moments ago. But times of crisis also open up for new opportunities. It is time we ask ourselves the hard questions to allow for new solutions that are better suited to create the futures we want. Our development models are outdated. There is no space for the donor – beneficiary dichotomy and dynamic. It is imperative that we recognize the power of voices from beyond the capitals of Europe and the US.

At Norec, our guiding principle is that knowledge exists everywhere. Norec's grants aim to build mutual trust and strong global partnerships for sustainable development. We focus on enabling institutional development and innovative solutions driven by young professionals as holders of knowledge, skills and attitudes. We do this through funding collaborative work exchanges where the partners themselves have identified mutual and complementary areas of competence and learning. In this locally-led model, the partners jointly design the project, and agree on the coordination and implementation modality. With each partner being a trusted and respected contributor of competence, we believe that this partnership model presents an important alternative to the traditional aid dichotomies and dynamics. Half of our portfolio consists of south – south partnerships where for instance, Pelum in Kenya and FACHIG Trust in Zimbabwe are exchanging competencies in climate-smart ecological farming methods and business management and marketing. The partnership has exchanged 10 staff members a year, over three years. Each partner now reports having obtained new expertise and the ability

to provide better services to their farm clients and communities. They are the designers, implementers and beneficiaries of their partnership and project.

We see that partnerships that are built on reciprocity and trust are ultimately stronger. The recognition that every partner has value to bring and something to learn is a recognition today's global partnerships must make. It provides a much-needed alternative to the current apparent collapse of international relations as we know it.

Enhancing Africa Collaborations in a Changing World: The Role of Science Diplomacy and Sustainable Funding at Uppsala University

Kajsa Hallberg Adu (Uppsala University) & Jecinta Okumu (Uppsala University)

In a world increasingly defined by geopolitical polarization, economic shifts, the proliferation of misinformation, and, in the context of higher education institutions, changing landscapes of research funding, collaborations between higher education institutions in the Global North and South face considerable obstacles. Many of these partnerships are project-based and short-term, limiting their long-term impact and sustainability. Moreover, the prevailing dominance of Global North institutions, with their greater financial opportunities may continue to reproduce imbalances in decision-making power and funding allocation. To effectively address these challenges and enhance the production of knowledge, it is imperative to transform existing collaboration models in higher education. Global collaborations among universities hold the potential to counteract the rise of neo-nationalism, combat the dissemination of fake news, and uphold international legal frameworks. A key concept emerging in this context is "science diplomacy," which leverages scientific collaboration as a form of soft power to further diplomatic goals across nations. But what does the practical application of science diplomacy entail? This paper explores approaches undertaken at Uppsala University in terms of research collaborations in Africa. Drawing upon findings from a recent mapping exercise of students, researchers, teachers, and administrators at Uppsala University, we share our experiences and challenges related to the current geopolitical landscape and the scarcity of financial resources. Our results emphasise the crucial role of science diplomacy and sustainable funding models in cultivating robust and impactful collaborations. Additionally, we provide examples illustrating how our Nordic researchers continue to strengthen partnerships in Africa amidst a rapidly evolving global environment.

Collaboration and innovation in creative economies

Keld Hosbond (Principal, Royal Academy of Music, Aarhus)

In recent years, Africa's creative economies have shown immense potential, driven by innovation, digital platforms, and the growing global demand for African art, music, and

fashion. In this presentation, I will explore how emerging platforms are reshaping the creative industries, offering new opportunities for collaboration and global market access. I will examine the evolving frameworks that support African creatives, from funding opportunities to policy reforms, while also addressing the challenges they face, including legal barriers and intellectual property concerns. I'll highlight the efforts of the Royal Academy of Music, Aarhus (RAMA) in building capacity within African higher music education, fostering international collaborations, and strengthening educational infrastructure. Additionally, I will discuss the role of the GLOMUS network in connecting African creatives with global partners. A key focus will be on the untapped potential of art in peacebuilding and reconciliation across Africa, with examples such as the Danish cultural program in Mali and the Spot on Mali Music Festival, both of which use music and culture to foster dialogue, healing, and unity in post-conflict societies.

Aiming for dialogues of equity and decoloniality in a South-North capacity-building project

Kristin Vold Lexander (University of Inland Norway), Agnes Chileshe Chibamba (University of Zambia), David Mwanza (University of Zambia), Anne Marit Vesteraas Danbolt (University of Inland Norway)

When engaging in South-North collaboration, we run the risk of maintaining structures of power imbalances and coloniality (Luthuli, Daniel and Corbin, 2024; Molosi-France and Makoni 2020). This paper presents how a capacity building project with partner institutions from Zambia, Iceland and Norway sought to build structures of equity and decoloniality in the preparation of the proposal and in the initial phases of the project. The focus was to create a South-North collaborative environment which promotes inclusive and reciprocal exchange of knowledge, ideas and expertise. We first describe how the needs analysis was carried out, leading to the main innovative feature of the project and guiding the recruitment of partners in the North. Second, we discuss challenges internal and external to the project and how they were solved or sought solved. These challenges include formal requirements by the funder, both in the preparation of the proposal and in the validation of institutions. A challenge for decoloniality is that the requirements of international funding often align with a distribution of roles whereby the partners in the South area “in need” and the partners in the North provide “what is needed”. Based on reflections by representatives from the different partners in our project, as well as our own, we therefore ask the following questions: How can we enhance epistemic freedom and knowledge independence (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2018) from within the structures of international funding? How can we challenge power imbalances in a project when funding is based on those very power imbalances?

Exploring Success/Failure Factors of International Research Collaborations: A Qualitative Study Across India, Norway, Poland, and South Africa

Livhuwani Muthelo (University of Limpopo), Mahmood Khosrowjerdi (University of Limpopo), Dorota Rak (University of Limpopo), Bhaskar Mukherjee (University of Limpopo)

Background: International academic collaborations are essential for advancing knowledge, fostering cultural exchange, and addressing global challenges. They can take various forms, including joint research projects, faculty exchanges, student mobility programs, joint publications, and participation in international conferences. However several factors might positively or negatively influence the success of partnerships between countries. Aim: To explore the reflections of researchers on the success and failure factors of international academic collaborations. Methods: A qualitative study using narrative design was conducted to explore success and failure factors of international collaborations. Purposive sampling was used to sample 28 academics from India, Norway, Poland, and South Africa, all of whom had experience with international academic projects. These countries represent diverse geographic locations, cultures, and economic conditions, further diversified by varying English proficiency levels. Data was analysed using F4 Analyse software (version 3.4.5). Results: The participants regarded global teamwork as efficient, identifying a greater number of positive factors such as effective communication, nurturing strong relationships, honesty and openness, cultural factors, effective project management and planning, institutional support and resources, and staff competence and expertise. The negative factors included lack of transparency, gender bias, inadequate skills, and the variation in time across different countries Conclusion: The study expands the body of knowledge by focusing on key factors identified in a range of contexts, including both developed and lower-middle-income countries. This dual focus highlights a groundbreaking contribution to the understanding of global dynamics. It also provides a valuable guide for promoting international collaboration among countries with different cultures, economic situations, and languages.

Experiences and lessons learned in the implementation of the Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) between Belgium and South Africa: Reflections on partnerships

Mahlapahlapana Themane (University of Limpopo)

In 2021 I collaborated with a colleague at the Antwerp University in Belgium following the IMPALA project on the internationalisation of the curriculum. I was introduced to a COIL programme that sought to implement the internationalisation of curriculum. COIL was one of the instruments for this purpose. Several South African universities participated in this initiative, where they sought partnership with their European partners. This presentation serves to share experiences and lessons learned in the programme. I used a self-study framework to make sense of these experiences where I employed document analysis and

conversation with my partner at Antwerp. This data was processed through a thematic data analysis. Four themes emerged from this analysis, namely technical hiccups, student encounters, support from the partner, nature and status of the COIL programme. These findings have some implications for both researchers and policy makers on how partnerships between the Global North and South could be hatched and developed. Key words: Partnerships, COIL, internationalisation, curriculum implementation

The impact of the EU-SADC economic partnership agreement on women's economic empowerment: a South African perspective on partnerships for prosperity

Matimu Maluleke (University of the Western Cape)

This paper examines the impact of the European Union-Southern African Development Community Economic Partnership Agreement (EU-SADC EPA) on women's economic empowerment in South Africa, focusing on women-led sectors. Through the framework of "Partnerships for Prosperity," the study evaluates how the EU-SADC EPA has contributed to enhancing access to markets, finance, and technology for women entrepreneurs in South Africa. By eliminating tariffs and improving trade facilitation, the EPA aims to promote economic opportunities, particularly for marginalized groups such as women. Despite these initiatives, women in South Africa continue to face significant barriers, particularly in accessing finance and opportunities in emerging industries like green sectors. This paper employs a qualitative approach by reviewing existing literature, policy documents, and case studies to assess the EU-SADC EPA's impact on women-led sectors. It also identifies key initiatives within the "Partnerships for Prosperity" framework, such as training programs, and targeted funding, and evaluates their effectiveness in advancing women's economic empowerment. The findings suggest that while the EPA has had a positive impact on women-led sectors by enhancing access to markets, finance, and technology, challenges persist in the financial sector, where women continue to struggle with accessing the capital necessary to expand their businesses. The paper proposes specific policy recommendations to improve financial inclusion for women entrepreneurs, expand support for emerging industries, and enhance the inclusivity of the EU-SADC EPA in promoting gender equality. These findings contribute to the broader discourse on gender-responsive trade policies and provide lessons for other countries within the SADC region and beyond.

Probing Un-equal Struggles in Higher Education Partnerships for Universities in the Global North and Global South

Molebatsi Nkoane (University of the Free State), Hlomelang Metsing (University of the Free State)

This paper aims at probing the likely difficulties for the arrangements of international relations and/or academic partnership with universities in the global north and global south. The rationale for forming academic partnerships for universities across the globe is informed by the enhancement of research capacity, advancement of knowledge systems, skills promotion, academic standards, research capabilities, and global visibility among many other factors. This higher education partnerships do not come up without struggles in discourses and knowledge systems tendencies. One of the most striking ideological discourse clashes are university rankings systems, financial constraints, inequalities in resources and discursive praxis or power dynamics between partner universities. This paper is grounded within the critical emancipatory theory, that aims at forging for equality, equity, social justice, challenging power relations and pushing the margins of inequities. This is a theoretical paper that draws data for published intellectual pieces. Discourses are analysed using the critical discourse analysis to understand how power, dominance, and inequality are created and maintained. This paper concludes by showcasing disparities and un-equal discursive praxis on what is expected to be an equitable partnership of universities in the global north and global south. Keywords: Higher education partnerships, unequal struggles, universities in the global north and global south.

Social Work Education for a Global World: Innovating for Transformative Change – SoWEGloW

Padmaja Barua (The Western Norway University of Applied Sciences), Manish Jha (The Western Norway University of Applied Sciences), Marichen Van Der Westhuizen (The Western Norway University of Applied Sciences), Mariann Vigdal (The Western Norway University of Applied Sciences), Hege Aarlie (The Western Norway University of Applied Sciences), Orsolya Fekete (The Western Norway University of Applied Sciences)

Social Work Education for a Global World: Innovating for Transformative Change (SoWEGloW). The SoWEGloW project aims to strengthen collaboration between the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL), the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in India, and the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in South Africa. This partnership addresses complex societal challenges such as poverty, exclusion, and discrimination in Norway, India, and South Africa. SoWEGloW enhances teaching, learning, and research by incorporating innovative methodologies and aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and Inner Development Goals (2021). The project focuses on building skills and resources in students, teachers, and professionals to contribute to a more sustainable global society. Key activities include student and staff mobility, course development, organisational partnerships, internships, and collaborative research. The project promotes cross-cultural, transformative, and interdisciplinary social work perspectives. Expected outcomes include establishing institutional agreements, modifying courses for COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning) formats, developing mentoring programs, and creating knowledge-

sharing structures. The project's impact includes developing educational programs at partner institutions, equipping students with skills in cross-cultural communication and professional development, and enhancing the competencies of teachers and professionals. SoWEGloW will establish sustainable structures for continued collaboration and knowledge sharing. The project will be monitored and evaluated through surveys and interviews to measure the achievement of its goals.

University of the Western Cape (UWC) and the North – learning from our research collaborations: A case study of three specific collaborations

Rachael Jesika Singh (University of the Western Cape)

Research collaboration between the University of the Western Cape and our partners in the North has increased significantly over the recent past. This paper presents the learning from a sample of the three collaborations. There have been numerous collaborations between this North/South partnership, however, many questions have been raised about the nature of the partnership and by selecting this sample, it presented an opportunity to provide an in-depth view about the uniqueness of research partnerships and the challenges that are faced in the changing nature of funding, research contexts and the need to address global issues as identified through the sustainable developments goals (SDGs). This probe into three cases found that the nature of partnerships is driven by research primarily, and the learning from the partnerships are based on research support; funding sources and their limitations, and who are the ultimate beneficiaries of this north/south partnerships. The data was collected through focused questionnaires that covered the research that was conducted between the partners. The recommendations from this study are as follows: partnerships should focus on the research that is of mutual benefit to the partners and the communities that they serve; funding models should serve partners equally.

Sustainable and equitable academic partnerships between Namibia and Finland

Roseanna Avento (University of Eastern Finland), Romanus Shivoro (University of Eastern Finland/Namibia University of Science and Technology)

Global academic partnerships have increasingly become instrumental in promoting educational development over the years. Namibia and Finland have maintained a longstanding relationship dating back to 1800s. The history of Namibian higher education is highly intertwined with the history of Finnish collaboration with Africa, which provides a solid foundation for academic partnerships. Collaboration between Namibia and Finland stands as a model of how countries with diverse educational needs and resources can work together towards sustainable growth. Through joint initiatives, both nations aim to promote knowledge exchange, capacity building, enhance research quality, and address pressing global challenges.

Finland's advanced technology and educational frameworks and Namibia's unique and diverse context are mutually beneficial. In this paper, we present an array of academic partnerships between Namibia and Finland, exploring their formation, objectives and results. These partnerships will cover strategic initiatives, student and staff exchange, as well as education and research exchange as well as community engagement. We also reflect on the role of networks like the Southern Africa Nordic Centre (SANORD), among others, and the role of their different instruments, such as the Brian O'Connell Scholarship, and activities such as the SANORD Conference and webinars, in bridging and fostering the partnerships for sustainability and equity. We reflect on different measures of sustainability in the partnerships and how equity is (or is not) manifested, considering the challenges and how to mitigate them in order to further improve future engagement.

Academic and Cultural Transitions in International Higher Education: University of Limpopo Academics' Experiences in Mobility Exchange Programs and Insights from Africa-Europe Research Partnerships

Thembinkosi Peter Singwane (University of Limpopo), Vusi Moses Makamu (University of Limpopo), Nonceba Mbambo-Kekana (University of Limpopo)

Background: International mobility exchange programs play a crucial role in fostering academic growth, cross-cultural collaboration, and knowledge production. For academics from historically disadvantaged institutions such as the University of Limpopo, these programs provide opportunities for professional development, research advancement, and international networking. However, the transition into new academic and cultural environments presents both opportunities and challenges that shape the overall experience of mobility scholars. **Objective:** This study examines the academic and cultural transitions experienced by University of Limpopo academics who have participated in mobility exchange programs over the past five years. It further explores insights from Africa-Europe research partnerships to identify best practices for enhancing the impact of academic mobility. **Methodology:** A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining semi-structured interviews and surveys with 30 University of Limpopo academics who engaged in mobility programs. A phenomenological research design was adopted to analyze their lived experiences, focusing on adaptation processes, academic growth, and challenges encountered in host institutions. **Results:** Preliminary findings indicate that while mobility programs provide significant career and research benefits, participants often face challenges related to cultural adaptation, institutional support, and differing academic expectations. Africa-Europe research partnerships offer valuable models for fostering equitable collaborations and mitigating these challenges through structured mentorship, capacity-building initiatives, and reciprocal engagement. **Recommendations:** Strengthening institutional support structures, enhancing pre-departure training, and fostering long-term collaborative research networks

can improve the effectiveness and sustainability of academic mobility programs for scholars from the Global South.

Possible lessons from the Norway-southern Africa Admin-Africa trust project. Relations in research, education and academic organization over the period 1998-2006

Thorvald Gran (UiB, USN and UWC, University Zimbabwe, University Mzumbe Morogoro Tanzania)

The Admin Africa project was financed by the Norwegian organization NUFU, for cooperation between colleagues of Norwegian universities and universities in the south. The Admin Africa project funded nine PhD students and some five senior academics from Norway and some seven academics from universities in South Africa, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. An ambition of the final paper is to include a summary of evaluations of the cooperation from PHD doctorates and engaged senior academics. The context of the project some 20 years back was the post 9/11 attack and the American war against terror. In South Africa the project was active during the building of a new liberal democratic state generating popular trust in government and the struggle to expand black education, inclusive of university education and research. In Norway the Department of Government at the University of Bergen was the home base of the Admin Africa project. In South Africa the base was the University of Western Cape; in Zimbabwe the University in Harare; and in Tanzania the University of Dar es Salaam. An ambition of the paper is to describe the obvious power differential between the Norwegian side supplying most of the funding and the African side in control of most of the relevant data. How did that difference play itself out in the organization of the project and in the specific cooperation between African and Norwegian colleagues. To what degree did the project have neo-colonial traits. What were the post 2007 careers of the project colleagues. An ambition of the analysis is to search for experiences in the project that pointed to future egalitarian and creative cooperation and support to expansion of black education and research in the African universities and other research organizations and institutes. Doctorates: Annie Dzenga (Zimbabwe), Jaqui Goldin (SA), Michele Esau (UWC), Rashid Kalema (SA), Ng'wanza Kamata (UDSM), Kwame Domfeh (Ghana), Gideon Zhou (Zimbabwe), Nazeem Ismail (UWC), William Ellis (UWC). Senior colleagues: Donald Chimanikire (Zimbabwe), Chris Tapscott, School of government, UWC, Mpaisha, School of government, Ben Cousins Plaas, Neleke Bak (UWC), Stephen Robins (Stellenbosch), Francis Appiah (Ghana/UiB), Jan Froestad, Department of government, UiB, Tor Halvorsen, UiB Global, Thorvald Gran UiB, guest researcher (Plaas, UWC) and (USN). Steinar Askvik (UiB).

South Africa-Sweden Research School for collaborative, multidisciplinary and comparative studies on different aspects of physical activity and capacity building in an inclusive and equal perspective

Tomas Peterson (Malmö University), Lloyd Leach (University of the Western Cape), Sharhidd Taliep (Cape Peninsula University of Technology), John Malone Setu (Stellenbosch University), Susanne Linnér (Linnaeus University), Katarina Schenker (Linnaeus University), R Thomas H Persson (Malmö University), Jenny Vikman (Malmö University)

South Africa-Sweden-Ireland Research School for collaborative, multidisciplinary and comparative studies on different aspects of physical activity and capacity building in an inclusive and equal perspective We would like to present a project that is building and sustaining a partnership between two Universities in South Africa, two in Sweden and one on Ireland. The organization revolves around a Research School for collaborative, multidisciplinary and comparative studies on different aspects of physical activity and capacity building in an inclusive and equal perspective. It has three thematic focuses: the phenomenon of Sport Schools, the School Subjects of Life Orientation and Sport and Health, and the work conditions of Blue Light personal - Firefighters, Paramedics and Police Officers. During 2025 the main task of the researchers involved will be to formulate an application to Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Doctoral Networks. The Universities involved are University of Western Cape, Cape Peninsula Technological University, North, South East Technological University of Ireland, Linnéus University and Malmö University. As a part of the work a PhD-course will be held at CPUT March 3 – March 14, involving researchers from all Universities. For the research group, Tomas Peterson, Senior Professor in Sport Sciences, Malmö University Lloyd Leach UWC, Sharhidd Taliep CPUT, John Malone Setu, Susanne Linnér and Katarina Schenker Linnaeus University and R Thomas H Persson, Tomas Peterson and Jenny Vikman Malmö University.

Equitable Partnerships Between Universities in the Global North and Global South: Challenges, Principles, and Best Practices

Tracy Beckett (University of the Western Cape), Judy Peter (Nelson Mandela University), Mbali Mkize (Mangosuthu University of Technology), Zama Sishi (Durban, South Africa), Jonas Ewald (LNU), Jordan King (International Academic Diplomacy Portfolio), Elin Kvaale (Western Norway University of Applied Sciences), Kristin Svartveit (University of Bergen)

Equitable partnerships between universities in the Global North: Linnaeus University (Sweden) and University of Bergen (Norway) in the Global South: University of the Western Cape (Cape Town), Mangosuthu University of Technology (Durban) and Nelson Mandela University (Port Elizabeth) are crucial for fostering sustainable and mutually beneficial research, education, and innovation collaborations. These partnerships seek to address historical power imbalances and promote fair contributions and benefits for all stakeholders. This paper explores the North-South divide in higher education and examines key principles that underpin equitable partnerships. It also discusses the challenges and opportunities in fostering such collaborations, highlighting best practices that can enhance their effectiveness.

Drawing insights from Africa-Europe partnerships in research and education, the paper presents case studies that illustrate practical applications of equitable collaboration. We will also explore strategies embedded in the constructs of global peripheries and epistemic humility when considering new partnerships. Finally, it offers policy recommendations to strengthen North-South university partnerships, emphasizing the need for continuous dialogue and long-term commitment to equity in global higher education.

Equitable partnerships: instruments that do and don't work

Umesh Bawa (University of the Western Cape (UWC), Margreet de Lange, (Utrecht University)

This session will bring together practitioners in an interactive, practical and solution oriented workshop.

Key foci:

1. What does it mean to have an equitable partnership? Balance in input? Balance in output? Balance in power? Redress former imbalances? This question is discussed with the participants in order to continue with a workable definition.
2. How do we achieve an equitable partnership? Let's look critically at the standard instruments we use in partnerships. Firstly, we have to conclude that most are modelled to fit the Northern academic mould. We want to look at two of those instruments: student mobility and joint doctorates.
 - A. Student mobility in the standard form of spending a semester abroad during the bachelor in order to acquire 30 ECT towards the degree is an instrument of internationalisation and cooperation that is designed to fit the Northern curriculum and student experience. But this is poorly aligned with the academic practices and realities at Southern partners. Eg UU-UWC
 - B. Joint doctorates: addresses a need and provides a benefit on both sides. It is more flexible and has long term outcomes. Eg. UU and UWC
3. On a supra-university level networks can be useful to create change on a national and international level. For example to lobby for changes in funding structures that currently favour or even require Northern practices. Examples of similar networks are the Knowledge Equity network and the Africa Charter.

