



Effort to Strengthen Africa's University-based Science, Engineering Instruction Adds Two Networks

U.S. \$ 4.9 Million to Support Five Research and Training Collaboratives

New York NY, Princeton NJ, and Nairobi, Kenya, September 19, 2008— An international effort to boost Africa's scientific capacity known as the Regional Initiative in Science and Education (RISE) has been expanded with the addition of two research and training networks, bringing to five the number of university-based collaboratives selected through a rigorous competition.

The expansion was made possible by a U.S. \$1.6 million grant from Carnegie Corporation of New York to the Science Initiative Group (SIG) at the Institute for Advanced Study, which administers RISE in partnership with the Nairobi, Kenya-based African Academy of Sciences (AAS).

With an earlier grant award of U.S. \$3.3 million to support an initial group of three networks selected in July, Carnegie Corporation has invested a total of U.S. \$4.9 million in the initiative to strengthen higher education in the sciences and engineering by increasing the population of skilled Ph.D. and M.Sc. scientists and engineers teaching in Africa's universities.

The new funding will provide two-year grants of \$800,000 each to:

- The **Natural Products Research Network of Eastern and Central Africa (NAPRECA)** under the leadership of John David Kabasa of Makerere University in Uganda in collaboration with the University of Nairobi in Kenya and Sokoine University in Tanzania. NAPRECA aims to increase competence in the science and technology of natural products to foster socioeconomic development in sub-Saharan Africa.
- The **Southern Africa Water Resource Network**, led by Denis Hughes of Rhodes University in South Africa. University partners are Eduardo Mondlane University in Mozambique, the University of Botswana and Makerere University. The network will focus on the multi-disciplinary field of water resource science as it relates to water quality, quantity and uses and ecological dependencies.

The three networks named earlier were the African Materials Science and Engineering Network (AMSEN), Southern African Biochemistry and Informatics for Natural Products (SABINA) and Western Indian Ocean Regional Initiative in Marine Science and Education (WIO-RISE). RISE networks include universities in Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda.

The top five candidates were identified in July by a panel of independent international scientists from among 48 proposals involving 29 countries. Proposals were evaluated based on scientific merit, training capacity, research activities, evidence of institutional support, added value of the network structure and potential for sustainability, including strategies for retaining faculty.

Representatives of the five networks will convene in Nairobi on October 6-7 to discuss their plans and goals.

The Institute for Advanced Study has for a decade provided the administrative home for SIG, an international team of scientific leaders dedicated to fostering science in developing countries. SIG's mission is to strengthen science and its uses in the developing world. It has helped create research and training programs in Chile, Brazil, Mexico and Uganda, financed by The World Bank and governments. The Institute is a private, independent academic institution, and is one of the world's leading centers for scholarly and theoretical research and intellectual inquiry in the sciences and humanities. The Institute supports a permanent faculty of 27 eminent scholars and each year awards fellowships to some 190 visiting Members from research institutions throughout the world.

The Carnegie Corporation of New York was created by Andrew Carnegie in 1911 to promote "the advancement and diffusion of knowledge and understanding." For more than 95 years, the Corporation has carried out Carnegie's vision of philanthropy by building on his two major concerns: international peace and advancing education and knowledge.

The mission of the African Academy of Sciences is to provide leadership in science and technology (S&T) innovations in Africa and to bring S&T solutions to bear on the socioeconomic challenges that Africa is currently facing. During the next decade AAS plans to undertake visionary and innovative initiatives in renewable energy, climate change, food security, microbial diversity, health and socio-anthropology, as well as establish a think tank to influence policy directions in these areas.

More information about SIG and RISE is available at www.ias.edu/sig.