

Discussion Objective

- To develop guidelines for an African Regional Initiative in Science and Education from which one can extract:
 - A foundation proposal for the overall program
 - A Request for Proposals for use by applicants to the program.



Assumptions

- The objective of RISE is capacity development in research and training in science and technology in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Emphasis is on people (complementing initiatives to strengthen institutions).
- Approach is regional (complementing national and institutional initiatives).
- Selection of initiatives will be by a competitive process including international peer review.

Challenges:

the issues below cannot be addressed quickly but rather should inform the remainder of the discussion.

- How can RISE help to...
 - Establish incentives and practices for effective interaction and collaboration among participants?
 - Support/establish university/industry linkages?
 - Enhance/create structures, incentives and policies to encourage PhDs to remain in/return to African universities?
 - Maximize potential for value to the private sector and employability of people trained in RISE?
 - Minimize duplication and ensure RISE is complementary to other capacity-building initiatives?
 - Best engage the Diaspora?

Structure and Priorities

- Greater emphasis on regional initiatives completely within Sub-Saharan Africa? Ones involving ties with countries elsewhere? Or no priority; strongest proposals either way win? Consider regional initiatives contained within a single country but involving multiple institutions or sectors?
- Priority to initiatives based at universities to help strengthen university systems? Or equal weight to proposals from other types of institutions? Encourage university/industry linkages?
- Relationship among institutions: hub-and-spokes model, equal partners? Or no priority; strongest proposals either way win?

continued

Structure and Priorities cont.

- Relationship between individuals and institutions: preference to any one model, e.g. students based at one university/institute, rotating among institutions, or involved in sandwich programs? Or strongest proposals win regardless of model?
- Priority to proposals designed to strengthen a specific discipline? To multidisciplinary proposals (inherent advantage of regional model)? Or no priority; strongest proposals either way win?
- Create entirely new regional initiatives, build on existing ones, some of each? Assuming some of each, in the selection process should existing initiatives be given any advantage – to minimize to potential to ‘reinvent the wheel’ – or should all proposals be weighted equally to encourage innovation?
- Incorporate special program elements, e.g. Global Science Corps, Park City Math Institute model?

Resources

- Funding requirements; minimum amount/duration needed to launch/sustain effective network? (initial assumption: 3-4 networks for 3 years at US \$250,000 annually each; possibility of 2-year extension after evaluation in year 2)
- Minimum infrastructure requirements
 - ICT, instrumentation: what needs to be in place?
 - Provide new facilities or rely exclusively on existing infrastructure? If the former, maximum allowance for infrastructure?
- What weight, if any, should be given to matching funds or other resources provided by participating institutions?

Competition and Implementation Timetable

- Appoint follow-up team to provide input for proposal and Requests for Proposal
- Proposal to Carnegie Corporation (deadline: 31 Oct. 2007)
- Carnegie board meeting/decision on proposal (1 Dec. 2007)
- Work on RFP and program details to take place in parallel with above; assuming grant is approved, turnaround time for implementation will be minimal.