

## African Open Science Platform

From the Science International Accord on Open Data onwards a number of documents have sketched a vision of an African Open Science Platform which will provide a mechanism by which African countries, research institutions and systems can participate in, take advantage of and contribute to a global movement for Open Science which brings considerable scientific, technological, developmental and economic benefits.

The African Open Science Platform Project has been funded by DST to build a community and collaborations for such an initiative and to lay the foundations necessary to make it into a reality on a broad pan-African scale.

These foundations include:

- community building and a landscape survey of African data initiatives;
- frameworks for Open Science strategies and policies;
- training and capacity building materials and activities adapted to African circumstances; -
- recommendations to address incentives;
- an infrastructure roadmap addressing regional and national requirements as well as those of particular disciplines and research institutions (universities and other RPOs).

If the vision of an African Open Science Platform is likened to a city on a hill, the AOSP project is helping considerably to identify and light the route there. It is now essential rapidly to put in place the pan-African partnerships and strategies, collaborative mechanisms and infrastructures to construct the route between the activities of the project and the vision of an African Open Science Platform: to build a functioning platform that can deliver services and facilitate Open Science practices for researchers in many African countries.

A broader initiative requires the engagement of partners throughout Africa. To be successful any initiative must take advantage of economies of scale, collaborate with and encourage coordination between existing initiatives, and avoid unnecessary duplication.

This presentation or session will consider the benefits of Open Science, present the work of the African Open Science Platform Project and suggest strategic next steps to build a pan-African initiative in which infrastructure providers and NRENs can and should play a major role.

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