



ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES  
ASSOCIATION DES UNIVERSITES AFRICAINES  
اتحاد الجامعات الأفريقية



Historic African Diaspora  
Placement Program



## ONLINE SYMPOSIUM

# From Dialogue to Action

---

Advancing Partnerships between **Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)** and **African Higher Education Institutions** in Alignment with the Diaspora as **Africa's Sixth Region**

**Date:** 17 September 2025

**Time:** 10:00 AM EST (Eastern Standard Time); 15:00 WAT (West African Time);  
16:00 CAT (GMT +2) (Central African Time)

Online Symposium Convened by the Historic African Diaspora Placement Program (HADIP) in partnership with the Association of African Universities (AAU) and UNCF (United Negro College Fund)



# Introduction

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), which were mostly established between 1865 and 1900 have played a pivotal role in shaping the educational, social, and economic success of African Americans. As mission-driven institutions created to respond to the systemic exclusion of African people from higher education in the United States, HBCUs have become bastions of academic excellence, cultural pride, and social justice.

Notably, the founding of HBCUs primarily for the education of African descendants – oftentimes through efforts led by African-centered organizations, including the African Methodist Episcopal Church – underscores their connection with the continent. Even though today HBCUs serve students of diverse racial backgrounds, their historical mission of serving the African diaspora essentially includes them in the **African Union's vision of the diaspora as the 6<sup>th</sup> Region of Africa – the global network of people and institutions of African descent**. The African Union defines the African diaspora as “consisting of people of African origin living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and nationality”. In this regard, the constitutive act declares that it shall “invite and encourage the full participation of the African Diaspora as an important part of our continent, in the building of the African Union”.

Recent trends show a growing interest among HBCUs and African higher education institutions (HEIs) to forge meaningful partnerships that transcend borders while advancing the capacity and long-term sustainability of both networks of institutions. Initiatives such as joint research and centers of excellence initiatives, faculty exchanges, offshore campuses, joint curriculum projects, twinning programs, executive leadership development, quality assurance and accreditation, technical and vocational education and training, and collaborative community engagement are emerging, but there is a pressing need for a structured platform to facilitate these efforts for the mutual benefit of both HBCUs and African HEIs to support areas

# Introduction (cont.)

of common challenge and opportunity (including financing models, digital infrastructure, enrollment management and faculty development). Against this background, the Historic African Diaspora Placement Program (HADIP) is partnering with the Association of African Universities (AAU) and UNCF Institute for Capacity Building (UNCF) to organize an online Symposium on the theme ***"From Dialogue to Action: Advancing Partnerships between Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and African Higher Education Institutions in Alignment with the Diaspora as Africa's Sixth Region,"*** which aims to move the dialogue to actionable strategies.



In essence, this symposium seeks to capitalize on the shared histories, goals, and challenges faced by HBCUs and African HEIs. By bringing together university/college presidents, vice chancellors, provosts, vice presidents, faculty, educators and administrators, researchers, policymakers, and students from both sides of the Atlantic, the event will create an inclusive space for discussion and collaboration. The overarching goal is to develop sustainable partnerships that enhance educational opportunities, promote cultural exchange, and contribute to the socio-economic development of both African nations and diaspora communities around the globe, thereby fulfilling the African Union's vision of a united and empowered diaspora. Through this effort, we seek to advance a networked approach, generating activities and partnerships that propel the missions of our institutions while creating the conditions for institutional capacity building and transformation.

# Objective

Besides the main objective of **translating discussions into actionable strategies** that **enhance partnerships** and promote the African Union's vision of the diaspora as the 6th Region, the specific objectives are to:

- **Explore and identify methods of collaboration** between HBCUs and African HEIs, including partnership efforts that promote professional development, technology adoption, innovative partnerships and adoption of mutually beneficial systems, policies and strategies.
- **Facilitate discussions that enable participants to develop concrete action plans and frameworks** for implementing collaborative initiatives, ensuring they are sustainable and impactful.
- **Foster an inclusive environment** that brings together educators, researchers, policymakers, students, and community leaders from Africa and the United States, encouraging diverse perspectives and innovative ideas for collaboration.
- **Provide a platform for sharing successful case studies and promising practices related to HBCU-African HEI partnerships**, including replicable models that can inform broader strategic partnerships that support institutional transformation at scale.



# Registration & Target Audience

Registration and participation in the Symposium is free and highly encouraged. Participants and attendees can register for the event at the following link:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/1gTt\\_dKrQv2QfbW\\_CBuajw](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/1gTt_dKrQv2QfbW_CBuajw)

The event's targeted participants are institutional leaders and funders, advocates, researchers, supporters, and champions with the ability to influence the development of strategic partnerships between HBCUs and African HEIs.

**We welcome university/college presidents, faculty, students, and community leaders to join the discussion.**



## Components, Date & Time

The Symposium will be held virtually. The following components are proposed for the agenda:

The online Symposium will take place on **17 September 2025** via Zoom at the following equivalent times:

**Note:** The event will last 3 hours.

Opening remarks, Presentations, Panel discussions, Audience engagement, Closing remarks and next steps for collaboration

- 16:00 CAT (GMT +2) (Central African Time)
- 15:00 WAT (West African Time)
- 10:00 AM EST (Eastern Standard Time)



# Expected Results

**The expected results for the online Symposium are the following:**

- Increased understanding of HBCU-Africa collaboration opportunities among participants.
- Development of concrete action plans for collaborative initiatives between HBCUs and African HEIs.
- Creation of a network of educators, researchers, higher education administrators, policymakers, and students for ongoing communication and collaboration.
- Compilation of successful case studies and best practices in HBCU-Africa partnerships.
- Insights and understandings from the Symposium to inform future research and policies on educational collaborations and partnerships between Africa and the United States.

# Contacts

---

For further information about the Symposium, please contact:

- **HADIP Representative (Barassou Diawara):** [b.diawara@acbf-pact.org](mailto:b.diawara@acbf-pact.org)
- **HADIP Representative (Reginald Nnazor):** [rnnazor@ipied.org](mailto:rnnazor@ipied.org)
- **AAU Representative (Saliu Adams Larry):** [salary@aau.org](mailto:salary@aau.org)
- **AAU Representative (Comfort Afia Yeboah):** [cayeboah@aau.org](mailto:cayeboah@aau.org)
- **UNCF Representative (Ed Smith-Lewis):** [edward.smith-lewis@uncf.org](mailto:edward.smith-lewis@uncf.org)
- **UNCF Representative (Julian Thompson):** [julian.thompson@uncf.org](mailto:julian.thompson@uncf.org)

# About Us



**About AAU.** The Association of African Universities (AAU) is the apex higher education organization in Africa, which represents the voice of higher education on the continent. Established in Rabat (Morocco) in 1967, the AAU currently has a membership of over 450 institutions of higher learning across all the linguistic and geographic divides of Africa. Its headquarters is in Accra, Ghana, and it currently has three regional offices at the University of Khartoum in Sudan (for the East African bloc), Al Azhar University in Egypt (for the North African bloc), and Women's University in Africa, Zimbabwe (for the Southern Africa zone). The AAU has separate MOUs with the American Society for Engineering Education, the University of California, Los Angeles, and some other North and South American universities.

The AAU operates in four languages, namely, English, French, Arabic, and Portuguese. By its constitutional mandate, the AAU supports African universities to deliver quality higher education and has enjoyed a unique capacity for convening most of the higher education community in Africa to reflect and consult on key issues affecting education on the continent. The thrust of its base is the nimble deployment of advocacy, commissioning of studies, and acting and becoming the clearing house and intelligence arm for these higher education institutions on the continent.



**About HADIP.** The Historic African Diaspora Placement Program (HADIP), incubated by the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), is a transformative pan-African initiative aimed at fostering professional and cultural exchange between Africa and the African Diaspora in the United States. It is a partnership established by ACBF, the African Union Mission to the United States, the International Partnership for Inclusive Education and Development (IPIED), the Directorate of Citizens and Diaspora Organizations of the African Union (CIDO), and the Africa-America Institute (AAI). ACBF serves as the Secretariat for HADIP, and the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE), DelReeve Konsult, and Eleos Groups LLC are technical partners. This program leverages the talents and skills of African Diaspora professionals to contribute to the sustainable development of African countries while enhancing cultural ties and mutual understanding.

HADIP's mission is to place African diaspora professionals in the United States for professional and cultural immersion in African countries, enhancing professional connections and deepening cultural understanding between Africans and the diaspora in the United States. The diaspora will also be provided with programmatic opportunities to participate meaningfully and sustainably in the development of Africa.

African Diaspora in the United States consists of two broad populations: the contemporary Diaspora and the historic Diaspora. While the contemporary Diaspora are largely voluntary immigrants or descendants of voluntary immigrants, the historic Diaspora are descendants of Africans forcibly taken from Africa during the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. HADIP is historic in committing to meet a long-existing pan-African need to meaningfully and sustainably connect the Diaspora, especially in the United States, with Africa by offering unprecedented pan-African programmatic opportunities for both populations of African Diaspora to live in Africa, to experience Africa authentically, and to leverage their skills and expertise to contribute directly to the sustainable development of Africa, as well as to enhancing relationship and understanding between Africa and the Diaspora.



**About UNCF.** UNCF (United Negro College Fund) is the largest and most effective minority education organization in the United States. To serve youth, the community and the nation, UNCF supports students' education and development through scholarships and other programs, supports and strengthens its 37 member colleges and universities, and advocates for the importance of minority education and college readiness. While totaling only 3% of all colleges and universities, UNCF institutions and other historically Black colleges and universities are highly effective, awarding 15% of bachelor's degrees, 5% of master's degrees, 10% of doctoral degrees and 19% of all STEM degrees earned by Black students in higher education. UNCF administers more than 400 programs, including scholarship, internship and fellowship, mentoring, summer enrichment, and curriculum and faculty development programs. Today, UNCF supports more than 50,000 students at over 1,100 colleges and universities across the country. Its logo features the UNCF torch of leadership in education and its widely recognized trademark, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste."