

ARUA-The Guild joint leaders' statement: Transformative science relationships are indispensable to address common global challenges

At the ARUA-The Guild Summit, held at the University of Glasgow 14-17 June 2026, Vice-Chancellors and Presidents of 46 leading universities in Africa and Europe resolved to redouble their efforts to address humanity's common challenges in health, digital transformation, environmental degradation, technological shifts, cultural tensions and geopolitical strife together. To achieve this they will strengthen equitable, long-term collaboration through the Africa-Europe Clusters of Research Excellence (CoRE), which bring together more than 400 researchers from over 120 institutions across both continents and beyond. In this way, they confirm their commitment to implementing the [AU-EU Innovation Agenda](#), [the African Union's Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa \(STISA 2034\)](#) and [the European Union's Global Gateway strategy](#).

But more needs to be done, Africa's resources in talent, human development, and science requires systemic change to reach our aspirations. It is therefore an imperative that Africa's science capacity is strengthened through equitable partnerships that develop ideas and solutions that are scalable, inclusive, and transformative – not just for higher education and research, but for the societies they serve. To this end, we call on African and European policymakers, national and global research funders, and local and global industry partners committed to this transformation to work with us and all R&I stakeholders to:

- Encourage and incentivise excellent innovative models for R&I collaboration.
- Invest in addressing local phenomena of global societal challenges, in this way creating new solutions for all.
- Strengthen the human talent pipeline, including marginalised groups, through new pedagogical tools, by investing in higher education.
- Maximise return on investment by aligning development assistance with highly beneficial research infrastructures and R&I investment
- Recognise the diversity of the African and European continents as opportunities, rather than obstacles, as research builds on the challenges and ideas of all.

At this time of geopolitical rupture, Universities must acknowledge that global science has also been predicated on power inequalities and it is by addressing this issue effectively that universities, funders

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and governments can build trust-based networks that provide a more effective response to the politics of division that characterises the present-day international order.

The African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA)

The African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA) was established in 2015, bringing together twenty-three of the region's leading universities. ARUA is a network of universities from different countries and different historical backgrounds, but with a common vision. ARUA aims to enhance research and graduate training in member universities through a number of channels, including the setting up of Centres of Excellence (CoEs) to be hosted by member universities.

The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities (The Guild)

Established in 2016, The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities comprised of twenty-three of Europe's most distinguished research-intensive universities spread across seventeen countries and is dedicated to enhancing the voice of academic institutions, their researchers and their students. The Guild is committed to the pursuit of excellence, the importance of truth-seeking and trust-building as the foundation of public life, and the creation of new knowledge for the benefit of society, culture, and economic growth.

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