



15.12.2021

### The AUEU Youth Lab 3.0: AU Youth Track Programme 2022 – 2025

#### Background and Context

In line with the broader AU-EU framework, the African Union and European Commissions have collaborated on youth engagement and development programmes to demonstrate the importance of active and meaningful inclusion of youth in the work of the EU and AU, moving beyond tokenism and delivering on the people-centred principle of this partnership. The engagement has been tailored around joint actions on youth programming to organised initiatives such as the AU-EU Youth Plug in initiative and the AUEU Cooperation Hub (

The “AU-EU Youth Plug-In Initiative” presented fresh ideas and approaches to Heads of States and governments at the Abidjan AU-EU Summit in 2017. **The AU-EU Youth Cooperation Hub** was then mandated to follow-up, to turn some of those ideas into reality and enable a multi-stakeholder platform for social innovation, with Youth at its core. At the last EU-AU Summit, the youth were invited to report back on progress made at the next Summit of AU-EU Heads of State. The Hub was tasked to work in the areas of 1) Business, Entrepreneurship and Job Creation; 2) Culture, Arts and Sports; 2) Education and skill development; 4) Environmental protection and Climate Change; 5) Governance, Accountability and Citizen’s Engagement; 6) Peace, Security and Anti-radicalization; with gender equality and digital innovation mainstreamed in all areas.

This is the first time that European and African youth are given a framework and resources to act. The Hub has been successful in prototyping and testing approaches, on a small-scale but with maximum impact, visibility and result-evidence. The 50 Young Experts from Africa, Europe and the Diaspora are monitoring, providing input and giving wide visibility to **7 projects** funded by the EU and implemented by CSOs, in **17 countries of Africa and Europe**, which involve youth as active participants and are estimated to **impact 150,000 young people**. The Hub has garnered visibility and institutional support, as a vector for innovation and wider social impact. It is an example of genuine **inter-continental collaboration**, youth civic engagement and young experts playing **active roles as development actors in their own right**, being **“custodians of their own development”<sup>1</sup>** and **“important change-makers and essential partners”<sup>2</sup>**.

As part of expanding the AUEU Youth track programme and as a major drive towards youth inclusion in Africa and Europe., the EU, AU and partners are now interested in supporting **the transition from the AU-EU Youth Hub into an AU-EU Youth Lab (Lab 3.0)** as part of the 2022- 2025 AUEU Youth track programme. The Lab will focus its efforts on bold actions for youth engagement and development. Young people face large common challenges. On both continents, they are drivers for change and have shown an increased interest in acting on global issues. Africa is the continent with the youngest population in the world. Youth

<sup>1</sup> The AU Youth Charter. Together with the African Youth Decade plan of Action, these frameworks propose steps to empower young people to play a meaningful role as “equal partners in the development process”.

<sup>2</sup> Council of the European Union (June 2020). Youth in External Action. Council Conclusions

under the age of 25 make up about 62% of the total African population. Building on lessons learned so far, the AU-EU Youth Lab will support youth innovation and action, catalysing youth energy, dialog and change, and contributing to AU and EU policy, projects and lessons learned.

A major pillar of the AU-EU Youth Lab would be **Multi Actors' cooperation**: The Lab would become a multi-stakeholder initiative driving social innovation in the AU-EU partnership, with youth at its core, but also involving other actors such as institutions, Member States, the private sector, CSOs and relevant Regional and International Organisations from both continents.

The **AU-EU Lab**, will be designed to advance lessons from the AU-EU Plug in initiative, the AUEU cooperation hub and align with current programmes of the AU and EU such as the African Union Young African Programme on Innovation and Entrepreneurship (YAPIE) and xxxxx. It will be designed with a **solid participatory process as the AUEU Youth Track Programme for 2022 to 2025**.

Commented [NNP1]: EU to insert relevant programmes

### Road Map to the launch of the AU-EU Youth Lab 3.0.

Three linked steps and processes are envisaged to the launch of the Lab 3.0

- 1. Stakeholder Consultation:** The AU and EU will hold consultations with Member States, key Private Sector representatives and UN partners to present cocreate the Lab 3.0 Concept. The planned round table events will be organised in the run-up to the Summit to bring together interested partners and ensure mutual dialog and participation in the formation of this multi-stakeholder initiative. In the first Round Table, partners help define the partnership, and explore their potential contribution. In the second Round Table, a larger group of potential partners will be invited, and the initial partners will clarify their commitments of resources or support. After the launch of the initiative, quarterly partnership gatherings would enable stakeholders to formalise their role and future contributions (with a variety of potential avenues of engagement) and decide together the implementation and funding details and modalities of the AU-EU Youth Lab, enabling input, collaboration and visibility to the partners.
- 2. Consultation and validation with African and European Youth**  
As a key stakeholder to the partnership, a youth **side event** will be organised on the margins of the AUEU Summit. This will be an opportunity for young people to validate the Lab 3.0 Concept. The summit side event will also draw participation of AU and EU country delegations and leaders and the interested partners and champions, enabling dialog with youth, and mobilising a call for endorsement at the Summit, and an invitation for broader commitment and active engagement of new partners.
- 3. Presentation and endorsement by AUEU Heads of State**  
The **AU-EU Youth Lab** initiative, together with a small initial network of stakeholders and champions who show interest will be **formally launched at the AU-EU Summit** expected in Mid-February 2022, with a mandate to garner support, start implementing and report back on results at the next summit.

**Annex 1**

**Agenda for the Stakeholder Consultation**

**13th January 2022 – 11:00 – 15:00 EAT**  
**Brussels, Hybrid virtual and physical event**  
**EN-FR translation.**

**Objectives:**

- (a) Exchange and dialogue between youth, public and private partners to define the priorities and design of the Youth Lab.
- (b) To initiate exchanges with partners (Member States, Private Sector Actors, and Regional & International Organisations) on concrete forms of support, active engagement, commitments and investment in the Youth Lab.

**Tentative Agenda**

TIME ( EAT)	SESSION	MODERATOR	REMARKS
	<b>Registration, Log in and Testing of Microphones</b>		
	<b>Session 1: Opening</b> - Remarks by the Deputy Chairperson, AUC - Remarks by Ambassador Birgitte Markussen	Ms Prudence Ngwenya – Ag Director, AUC Women, Gender and Youth Directorate	
	<b>Session 2: Presentation of the Lab 3.0</b>		A facilitated conversation focusing on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lab functionality and ensuring the lab is for purpose</li> <li>- Youth inclusivity</li> <li>- Synergy with existing initiatives</li> <li>- How can the LAB best be resourced and facilitate the scaling up/replication/addition of relevant pilot projects?</li> </ul>
	<b>Session3: Partner Commitments</b>		
	<b>Session 4: Discussions and Next Steps</b>		

**Commented [NNP2]:** This needs to be a facilitated conversation on the design elements on the Hub. We need to define the methodology for this session and think clearly around it, What is the lab, Why, What, How?

The Youth Track Working Group should meet and propose the methodology for the session

**Proposed participants:**

A few key actors who have shown interest for engagement

- o Member States
- o the Private Sector
- o Foundations and Innovative Investment
- o UN partners
- o Generation Unlimited
- o ITU
- Young Experts of the Plug in, Cooperation Hub and AU Volunteers (6)
- Youth leaders - (Bitania Lulu, Advisor to the EU Commissioner, AUC Youth Envoy)

**Annex 2: Agenda for the Consultation and validation with African and European Youth**  
( to be populated and shared by the Consultation Working Group)

**Annex 3: Flow of show for the Presentation and endorsement by AUEU Heads of State**  
( to be populated and shared by the Summit Working Group)