

Thierry Zomahoun

Thierry Zomahoun is the President and CEO of the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS), Africa's first and biggest pan-African network of centres of excellence in mathematical sciences education. Thierry has spent the last 22 years of his career in international development and the consultancy sector, focusing mainly on innovative and scientific educational initiatives. He spearheaded the growth of AIMS Next Einstein Initiative from one to six centres of excellence established across Africa to harness the power of mathematical sciences for Africa's development in academia, research, education, and industry. Considered an education innovator and science entrepreneur by policy makers, academic and research scientists, and development influencers, Thierry is a development strategist, management expert and a thought-leader in innovative and strategic education initiatives.

Thierry is also the Chairman and Founder of the Next Einstein Forum (NEF), a premier global forum for science, the first to ever take place on African soil. In March 2016, the first edition of NEF gathered in Dakar with nearly 1,000 scientists (40% of whom are women) from more than 100 countries including 15 young promising scientists (Next Einstein Fellows), and 54 Science Ambassadors from every African country. He founded the NEF to build a dynamic community of young scientists across Africa, showcase Africa's scientific advances, and to create a pan-African platform that engages African scientists- bringing the continent to the cutting-edge of science. In 2012, Thierry launched the AIMS Industry Initiative and African Solutions to bridge the gap between science, research, industry, and innovation. In March 2016, to honour Thierry's lifetime dedication to innovative education, science, and research, the AIMS International Board of Directors announced the creation of the Thierry Zomahoun Fellowship Program. The Program was established to enable promising young Africans from disadvantaged backgrounds access to cutting-edge science education and research.

Over the past two decades, Thierry has held various executive and leadership positions. He was the CEO and special advisor to the Board of Impact First International, a pioneering Canadian global not-for-profit agency combining micro-finance, health, and education for remote and marginalized communities in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. Thierry also served as regional director for Right to Play International, a global leading organization using sports and play for education for young Africans facing adversity, country director for Aide et Action International (a French-Swiss international agency), and country program adviser for BOERNEfonden, a Danish international organization which strengthens communities through innovative basic education, micro-insurance, and microenterprise development programs. Earlier in his career, Thierry spearheaded policy-changing resolutions that are still implemented in West Africa and worked to affect change in the full education chain in various African countries, from pre-school to university and research through technical and vocational education training (TVET).

Thierry holds a Master's of Business Administration (MBA) from McGill Desautels Faculty of Management, a Master's Degree (DEA) in development studies from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies at the University of Geneva and a Master's Degree (M.A) from the National University of Benin (West Africa).

Thierry's infectious passion for innovative education, science, research and skills development continues to be driven by the promises he made his grandmother over 40 years ago: that he will turn challenges into opportunities, that he will use education to shape his destiny, and that he will ensure African youth are given the chance to do the same. As AIMS continues to work towards a favourable policy environment and partners with private and public sector players to build scientific infrastructure in Africa, for Thierry, the emergence of an African Einstein in his lifetime is a certainty.