



SPRU Africa Newsletter- December 2016

SPRU has a rich history of working with a wide range of African institutions. It is exciting and rewarding to see so many new connections emerging between SPRU and Africa. We will seek to deepen and broaden the relationships in 2017 -[Prof. Johan Schot](#), Director of SPRU

Following up on the Policy brief circulated in September 2016, this newsletter serves to inform the SPRU Africa community on the latest developments.

Research

Understanding the Political Economy of Science Granting Councils in Sub-Saharan Africa

SPRU (Science Policy Research Unit), based at the University of Sussex, UK, participated in the recent African Science Granting Councils (SGC) [Annual Forum](#) held in Maputo, Mozambique, from 23rd to 25th November 2016. The forum was an opportunity for the SPRU team to formally launch its research that focuses on the Political Economy of SGCs in Sub-Saharan Africa, present the ideas, and obtain feedback. The research is led by [Prof Joana Chataway](#) with a team that includes [Dr Chux Daniels](#), [Dr Rob Byrne](#) and [Dr Michael Hopkins](#). The research, carried out in partnership with the African Centre for Technology Studies ([ACTS](#)), is funded by the International Development Research Centre ([IDRC](#)), U.K.'s Development for International Development ([DFID](#)) and South Africa's National Research Foundation ([NRF](#)).

Capacity Building in Africa

ATPS and AfricaLics

SPRU is currently developing training manuals on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) policymaking – in collaboration with the African Technology Policy Studies Network ([ATPS](#)) and [AfricaLics](#). This project is led by the Africa team at SPRU. The trainings will focus on policymakers, innovation practitioners in industry, civil society organisations and other sectors; and the research community.

SPRU University of Pretoria (UP) Collaboration in Student Supervision

As part of SPRU engagements with STI actors in Africa, some SPRU colleagues accepted an invitation from the University of Pretoria (UP), South Africa, to co-supervise MSc (dissertation) students and PhDs. [Prof David Walwyn](#) based in the Graduate School of Technology Management, UP, is leading this initiative.

Policy engagement

Transformative Innovation Policy Consortium (TIPC)

The SPRU-Africa team is involved in the [Transformative Innovation Policy Consortium \(TIPC\)](#), launched on the opening day of SPRU's 50th Anniversary Conference in September 2016. The consortium is a global partnership with the central aim of transforming innovation policies. It brings together global actors to examine the future of innovation policy – its foundation, formulation and governance with a view to improving our understanding on how innovation (including science and technology) policies can better respond to social and environmental challenges. Alongside SPRU, the founding member countries are Colombia, Norway, South Africa, Sweden and Finland.

Review of South Africa's Science and Technology White Paper

[Prof. Johan Schot](#), SPRU Director, is a member of international advisory group working with the National Advisory Council on Innovation ([NACI](#)) in the review of South Africa's 1996 White Paper on Science and Technology and guiding the development of the Decadal Plan on Science, Technology and Innovation. Prof Schot is supported by the SPRU-Africa team. This work will lead to the production of a new White Paper and Green Paper on STI. As part of this project, SPRU recently attended a NACI [workshop](#) on the performance of the National System of Innovation (NSI). The purpose of the workshop was to provide a platform to discuss the NACI's draft report with various stakeholders of the NSI across public and private sectors. The draft report, *Towards the Next-Generation Science and Technology White Paper for South Africa*, was intended to analyze the effectiveness of STI actors and policy instruments in terms of their performance in South Africa's NSI.

Events

The second South Africa Science Forum took place from the 8th to 9th December in Pretoria. [Dr Chux Daniels](#), SPRU-Africa Engagement Coordinator, was one of the [panelists](#) discussing the importance of *Making International Engagement Work for Africa*. The panel, organised by the British High Commission in South Africa, was chaired by [Prof. Robin W. Grimes](#), UK Government's Foreign and Commonwealth Office Chief Scientific Adviser.

SPRU weekly Friday Seminar

SPRU recently held a seminar on: *Industrial Development and Policy in South Africa: Why is There Not More Success?* With speaker Prof Sam Ashman (University of Johannesburg, UJ), the seminar was chaired by [Blanche Ting](#) with Prof [Raphie Kaplinsky](#), [Chantal Naidoo](#), and Garth Williams as panellists.

Youtube Videos from SPRU 50th Celebration

Dr Nicholas Ozor, Executive Director, ATPS, provided his [thoughts](#) on SPRU and STI policy, past, present and future during the SPRU 50th celebration. Relatedly, **Mr Agoro Olayiwola**, Principal Research Officer at Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Science and Technology (FMST), in his [comments](#), addressed various challenges that include STI funding and capacity building in Africa, stressing that the FMST is keen to work with SPRU in these areas.

Further Engagements with SPRU

The developments outlined in this newsletter represent some of the initiatives achieved this year. Various projects, activities and deeper engagements are planned for next year and in the future. Kindly forward the newsletter to interested parties as we continue to expand and build on our collaborative networks.

For general enquiries please visit the [SPRU Africa Website](#).

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