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Introduction to the African Strategy for Fundamental and Applied Physics (ASFAP)

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The ability to generate scientific innovation and technological knowledge and translate them into new products that are of value to society are key instruments for a society's economic growth and development. As remarkable as these abilities are for other regions in the world, Africa's science, innovation, education, and research infrastructure, particularly in Fundamental and Applied Physics, have over the years been undervalued and under-resourced. Africa cannot afford to lag behind other regions in the world. For that would stretch the technological gap with developed countries even farther. The African Strategy for Fundamental and Applied Physics (ASFAP) initiative was founded with big ambition for change. The aspiration is to demonstrate the potential benefits of physics for African society and to have African countries participate in a global village of technology that is in the interest of every nation in Africa. ASFAP aims to produce a long-term strategy for reforming and transforming the basic physics research and application, higher education, and scientific research systems in Africa to energize and unlock the minds for brighter economic prospects. Key considerations in ASFAP are a strong desire for investment in African science for economic growth driven by physics-based technologies and its beneficial impact, including other sciences that draw heavily on advances in physics. ASFAP is critical if Africa has to take its place as a co-leader in the global scientific process and reap the consequent socio-economic benefits. ASFAP process will last a few years and eventually produce a final report to inform the African and broader communities about the strategic directions likely to have positive impacts on physics education and research in the next decade. ASFAP should help African policymakers, educators, researchers, communities, and international partners in national, regional, and Pan-African organizations on implementing the defined strategic directions and prioritize educational and research resources and activities. ASFAP will complement African top-down strategies and encourage a broad community participation. The process will be repeated every 7-10 years.

Abstract Category

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