

## Annex 1: Establishment of an RSIF Endowment Fund: Inputs from the 2021 Virtual RSIF Pre-Conference

### 1. Background and Introduction

PASET's objective in establishing a Permanent fund is to sustainably support applied scientific and engineering research in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) universities for the growth of the Continent. RSIF design promises multiplier effects and reduced PhD costs over time, required to substantially increase the stock of highly skilled scientists, professionals and innovators and harness global expertise and capacity for the transformation to a knowledge economy.

The virtual panel discussion was held on 17 November 2021 (video recording [here](#)) and discussed implementation of the RSIF endowment fund feasibility study report towards establishment of the RSIF pan-African science fund. The Panel discussed ways for the partnership to raise long-term investments in Africa's science capacities in the post-Covid era – and considered possible modalities for establishing the RSIF permanent fund. The panel was comprised of senior experts drawn from global and African foundations, experts in governance, impact investments and professionals associated with African companies and philanthropy sectors as per Fig. 1 below and speaker profiles document [here](#).

**2021 Virtual Pre-Conference**  
**Rsif**

**PASET**  
Partnership for Africa  
in Applied Science,  
Innovation & Technology

**MOHAMMED VI UNIVERSITY**

**icipe**

**SCIENCE FUNDING IN AFRICA : Establishing an endowment fund for building STI capacity in Africa**

**17th November 2021 16:10-17:30 EAT**

 <b>Prof. Wole Winston Soboyejo</b> Provost, Worcester Polytechnic Institute & PASET CAG member <b>Moderator</b>	 <b>Dr. Mercy Karanja,</b> Senior Program Officer, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation	 <b>Mrs. Ndi Okonkwo Nwuneli</b> Co-founder/Managing Partner, Sahel Consulting	 <b>Marcel Mballa-Ekobena</b> Sloan Fellow, London Business School, Investments, Markets & ESG Executive
 <b>Prof. Philip Cotton</b> Director for Human Capital Development, Mastercard Foundation	 <b>Mrs. Dora Waruiru</b> Head of Foundation Cooperative Bank	 <b>Joel Kibet Molel</b> Principal Resource Mobilization and Partnerships Officer, African Development Bank	 <b>Dr. Dorothy Nyambi</b> President and CEO at MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development Associates)

**Register here: <https://bit.ly/3beZ2eq>**

Specifically, the objectives of the Panel were to:

1. Receive guidance from the session to the findings of the RSIF feasibility study for the establishment of the RSIF Permanent Fund
2. Identify potential funding sources for establishment of the Permanent Fund
3. Elucidate proposed implementation approaches and where needed, input into the governance of the RSIF Permanent Fund
4. Provide information on potential mechanisms towards resourcing the RSIF Permanent Fund.

### 2. Key Input and Recommendations from the Expert Panel Discussion

The Panel contributed to a rich discussion on the modalities for Fund establishment, highlighting important elements that were perceived critical to the success of the Fund as well as potential for partnerships. Recommendations were received on the endowment fund's vision and focus; structure and governance strategies; involvement of stakeholders; and resource mobilization. A number of the recommendations have already been considered by the EB.

a) *Vision and focus of the endowment fund*

- There should be a clear focus and vision of the fund: There must be mechanisms to ensure that those who benefit from the fund will give back to the continent. e.g. teach and work in Africa to get loan forgiveness
- Ensure clear connectivity between PhD training and development needs of the continent – the trained PhD should make their marks on the continent.

b) *Structure and governance strategies of the endowment fund*

- Critical success factors: good governance, accountability, transparency and clear communication strategies
- Multiple entities in endowment governance and management could cause confusion and hurt investor confidence
- Board membership to be rotated periodically (for example, every 3 years). Have advisory committees that involve “outsiders”, such as academics and NGOs.
- Fund withdrawals should be restrictive (certain percentage of fund proceeds annually) to ensure perpetuity of the endowment fund.

c) *Involvement of stakeholders in the endowment fund*

- Ownerships/buy-ins of the endowment fund by African government and universities involved provides incentives for others to support the fund
- Create thematic research areas that cut across different areas to get wider potential funders/stakeholders
- Consider ways for community involvement and ownership of beneficiary selection.

d) *Motivating private sector to get involved in providing resources to support ASET education in Africa*

- Ensure training and research in areas that address existing problems in Africa, relevance for industry, create shared value
- Have an adaptive fund that can be used to support emergency issues, such as the development and manufacturing of vaccines.

### **3. Way Forward**

*icipe* intend to constitute an advisory committee to provide advice to the RCU on the establishment of the RSIF Permanent Fund. It is suggested that the Committee meets at least three times a year, virtually, and as needed to consider:

- Fundraising outside governments, e.g. African philanthropy and collaboration
- Governance, fund management and investment policy
- Mechanisms and measurement of impact for investors.