

## BIOGRAPHIE



**Dr Akanimo Odon** holds a master's degree in Environmental Rehabilitation, a PhD in Environmental Management from Lancaster University, UK and business and enterprise certifications and fellowships from Cambridge University UK, Stanford University USA and MIT USA. He specializes in cross-border education and innovations in research and is an expert in navigating, developing and managing relationships between academia, government and industry in Africa for economic viability, research impact and student employability. He has been Africa Strategy Adviser for Aberystwyth University, University of Strathclyde; University of East Anglia; and currently he is the African Regional Adviser for the University of London, the Africa Adviser for Lancaster University and the Africa director for Zurich Elite Business School Switzerland.

He recently founded **Flexy-Learn** ([www.flexylearn.com](http://www.flexylearn.com)), a one-stop online shop for distance learning provision for Africa. He is Principal Consultant of Envirofly Consulting UK ([www.envirofly-group.com](http://www.envirofly-group.com)) and Founder of Lancaster International, an international outreach school/programme focused on supporting primary and secondary schools in Africa ([www.lancasterinternational.org](http://www.lancasterinternational.org)). He is the Strategic Adviser of the Innov8 Hub and Mentor on the Nigerian Government TETFUND funded TETFAIR Programme (<https://innov8hub.ng/tetfair/>). He is also Chair of the African Union Scientific Research and Innovation Council (UK) sits on several international boards including the largest and most reputable Think-Tank organization in Africa, the Africa Technology Policy Studies Network, ATPS, headquartered in Nairobi Kenya.

In the UK, he has been an Adviser to the British Government on developing international education policies under the National Student Forum; Education Consultant for British Council; Business Development Consultant for the Grow Creative Scheme under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF); Local Content Consultant to City and Guilds UK; and Local Content Adviser to BG Group. In Africa, he has been Strategy Consultant for the National Centre for Energy and Environment under the Energy Commission of the Presidency, Nigeria; Technical Adviser for Lagos State Ministry of Environment; Non-Resident Research Fellow of the African Centre for Technological Studies, Kenya; Adviser for Africa Centre for Energy Policy in Ghana; Consultant for Trust Africa Senegal, reviewing capacity building policies in Nigeria, Mali, Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Gabon and Egypt; Adviser to the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) Tanzania; Local Content Consultant to the African Development Bank; and also consulted for the Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas on capacity building.

In the last ten years, Odon has organized and facilitated over 50 Africa-focused international workshops and conferences; liaised and collaborated with government, industries and academia in over 30 African countries; developed over 100 strategic educational, research and commercial partnerships between UK and African organizations; facilitated and supported the setting up of over 30 African-focused SMEs; designed and implemented over 40 strategic capacity building and knowledge transfer schemes and programmes; delivered innovative research impact and management training to over a thousand African researchers and mentored over 500 young African researchers and entrepreneurs under XN Foundation, an NGO he founded thirteen years ago. He is an author of two literary books (a novel and an anthology of poetry) and a practical career

transformation book titled 'The Graduate Code'. He is a poet and a multi-award-winning film producer for his recent feature-length movie DRY. He is also creator of one of the most comprehensive and UK CPD certified suite of online career programme in Africa, the Career Enhancement Programme Online (CEPO) – [www.flexylearn.com/cepo](http://www.flexylearn.com/cepo)

In the last five years, Dr Akanimo Odon has won the following international grants:

1. British Council Innovations in African Universities (IAU) Grant, to develop an entrepreneurial programme for student employability in African Universities – in partnership with Lancaster University UK, University of Benin Nigeria, Kenyatta University Kenya, Lancaster University Ghana – 100,000 Pounds.
2. British Council Digital University Africa Grant, to develop a Stimulating Entrepreneurial Thinking in Scientists (SETS) Programme in partnership with Lancaster University, Kenyatta University Kenya, Igbinedion University Nigeria, University of Benin Nigeria, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Ghana – 40,000 British Pounds.
3. GCRF Award on Accelerating the adoption of circular sanitation demonstration systems for improved health outcomes (ACTUATE) – Lancaster University - 700,000 British pounds.
4. GCRF ARUA Centre of Excellence – Partnership Research and Capacity Building for Youth Unemployment Solutions with University of Lagos Nigeria – 400,000 British pounds.
5. GCRF Award on Ocean Management 2018 – value of 20 million British pounds with University of Strathclyde.
6. NERC International Networking Grant/Award on developing Bio-energy Solutions in Africa – 2017/2018/2019 with Lancaster University – 100,000 British Pounds
7. GCRF/Newton Networking Fund Grant/Award on Workshop on Sustainable Air Quality Management in Africa – Lancaster University and African Technology Policy Studies Network Kenya.
8. GCRF Award RECIRCULATE (circular water economy) with Lancaster University and strategic partners which include Lancaster University Ghana, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research Ghana, University of Benin Nigeria, African Technology Policy Studies Network Kenya, Botswana International University of Science and Technology (BIUST) Botswana, Copperbelt University Zambia, National Commission for Science and Technology Malawi – value of 7 million British pounds – 2018
9. Won a Commonwealth and DFID Professional Fellowship Grant for five research fellows – Efosa Osamudiamen (Nigeria), Edu Inam (Nigeria), Fredrick Munthali (Malawi), Hilary Rogen (Kenya) and Kudwo Asante (Ghana) for a fellowship programme at Lancaster University under an Enterprise Development and EcoInnovation Programme - 50,000 Pounds.
10. Won a Commonwealth and DFID Professional Fellowship Grant for three research fellows – Stanislaus Deh, Maximus Ugwuoke and Christopher Emokaro, for a fellowship programme at Lancaster University under an Academia-Industry Forum and Eco-Innovation platform- 50,000 pounds

## PRESENTATION

# **INTERNATIONALIZATION AND RESOURCE MOBILISATION – SOURCING AND WINNING INTERNATIONAL FUNDING THROUGH STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS – DR AKANIMO ODON**

## **OVERVIEW**

Internationalization of Universities and research organizations is the biggest term in use in the international education circles. In a global village like the world is today, internationalization of education and research is a crucial engine that drives international competitiveness and ultimately economic and social revolutions. Developing an internationalization agenda for a University and research organisations and its authorities has the following benefits:

1. Developing its brand, profile and relevance both nationally and internationally.
2. Increasing extensive independent revenue generation streams for the University and the successful sourcing, application and winning of international research grants and funding.
3. Increase its interaction and engagement with the private sector and governance for sustainable and impactful applied-focused research.
4. Delivering social, economic, academic and spiritual impacts of international standards on its students for consequent impacts on national economies.
5. Developing a graduate portfolio that is employable in any part of the world due to uniformity in competence and acquired skills.

In most African countries, Public Universities depend wholly on federal government who now struggle to fund them; they don't speak with private sector folks who can potentially fund them; personal consulting is huge but secret so institutions benefit nothing; they don't recruit overseas students who can give more in tuition; MoUs that can attract funding gather dusts on shelves; access to increasing international research grants is a struggle; and when they apply for grants, proposals are poor; delivering short professional courses for revenue is an alien concept; investing in distance learning and exploiting the huge potential for distance learning is still unclear and problematic. The situation is not so much different in private Universities either.

Finally, one of the biggest challenges with African Universities is the huge gap between academia and research and the private sector/industry and government. By geographical and operational disposition, African universities and research organizations seem cut off from industry and this has affected its relevance, capacity to produce high quality and employable graduates and also the capacity to produce goods and services that solves practical challenges in the society. The world patents map below shows this clearly with African almost unrepresented in the patents map globally.

Currently, global models show that African Universities and research organisations can be 'anchors' in co-designing and supporting research-driven eco-innovation partnerships with

the businesses which ultimately deliver “sustainable solutions”. Second, they can play the key role in delivering the high level (graduate/post-graduate) skills that are essential to drive forward eco-innovative policies, products and services. However, exploiting the power of international partnerships to drive African eco-innovation will require significant capacity building to bridge the current, very significant gap between academia and industry in Africa