

Growing Materials Science in Africa The Case of the African School for Electronic Structure Methods and Applications (ASESMA)

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Abstract:

Materials science is arguably the most important discipline in the physical sciences that should be developed in Africa given its rich resources of minerals, energy and biological diversity. Developing materials science should therefore be an important goal for Africa with important opportunities for economic benefits and quality people development. There are already many successful materials science activities that are underway in Africa. This needs to gain wider international attention and should become contact points for international collaborations. The African School for Electronic Structure Methods and Applications (ASESMA)[1,2,3,4] is one such successful initiative that has been in existence for the past decade. ASESMA has shown that it is possible to build a network across sub-Saharan Africa with world-class research with a relatively low budget. The greatest asset is the commitment of the lecturers and mentors, the teamwork of the local organisers and the idealism of the participants who rank amongst the brightest of young minds from Africa, many of whom come from impoverished backgrounds but still dare to reach for the stars.

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