

AfLS, SA and Pan Africa

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Inspired by the rallying call of Science for Development, Science for Peace, and Science itself, a large cohort of Scientists and Policy Makers and others, from Africa and beyond, have identified the African Light Source as a priority. This large scale science research infrastructure is the leading example of a resource hosting multi/inter/trans- disciplinary research activities. These include the medical sciences, cultural heritage sciences, geosciences, environmental sciences, energy sciences, nano-sciences, materials sciences and mineral sciences, industrial R&D, amongst others. It is expected to have an enormous impact on socioeconomic development. As an example, already, we know the HIV drug development was guided by the idea from structural biology that structural information helps to elucidate protein function and, in particular, the mechanisms of enzymes. This understanding inspires the design of new drugs. The same idea of course applies to many other diseases. Similar dramatic and relevant growth can be found in African heritage and also materials research. The call was first sounded in 2002, and it is now rather mature, with a Roadmap, driven by a fully mandated international Steering Committee. Massive gains are now made, particularly in the expansion of the User Base, the profile at the African Government and Pan African Level, and the momentum of the progress on the Roadmap. This talk will review the past, present and future prospects, as we drive the roadmap forward, with some highlights from Africa.

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