

AfrAbia Society (AAS): The Secret Ingredient for Advancing AfrAbia Neuroscience Research

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Background

Africa is marked by a higher frequency of illnesses, trauma, and violence, as well as greater exposure to toxic substances and malnutrition, against a backdrop of far greater genetic variety. All these variables present potential for the neuroscience community in Africa to achieve breakthroughs in fundamental research and develop personalized therapies to boost brain health and well-being throughout the continent. While the high incidence of mental, neurological, and substance-use problems presents unique challenges to the African neuroscience community (Feigin et al., 2017; Feigin et al., 2019), the possibilities are also equally great. For instance, low physician-to-patient ratios expose the average clinician to a high number of patients, hence enhancing possibilities for field-specific competence development. This increased clinical exposure generates topics of study that are directly relevant to the local community, and improves the viability clinical studies, which helps not only the African community, but also the Global North. Recruiting participants for clinical studies on traumatic brain injury, for instance, takes less time in Africa than in Europe. Lastly, there is ample opportunity for clinically oriented neuroscience research to enhance healthcare in Africa, particularly for young people. Specific objectives include the improvement of developmental potential and mental health, as well as the alleviation of mortality and neurological impairment.

What is AfrAbia Society (AAS)?

Ali A Mazrui initially used the word AfrAbia in 1992 (Mazrui, 1992). In the new world order, Arabism and Africanity were united with Islam in a fusion that spanned the Sahara Desert and the Red Sea. He went so far to say that the Red Sea has no right to separate Africa from Arabia. Islamization and the Arabization of North Africa took place during the same period as Arabization, which attempted to counteract the geographical barriers created by the formation of the Red Sea thousands of years earlier. He explained that one way to stop the establishment of global apartheid was to seek reconciliation between Arabs and Africans, and both the white and pan-European movements joining forces to advance global solidarity. Thus, AfrAbia incorporates both Arab League nations and African Union countries. The two overlapping territories of Africa and the Arab world are cross-culturally connected by historical and geographic influences.

AfrAbia incorporates nations of both the Arab League and the African Union. The two overlapping territories of Africa and the Arab world are cross-culturally connected by historical and geographic influences. In AfrAbia Society (AAS) (Figure 1, 2), we believe that it is important to inspire, motivate and mentor AfrAbian researchers and clinicians at a high level, both abroad and at home in AfrAbia. By taking up translational research to improve

health management and outcomes of neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson's disease, and teach in universities and high schools. Since the establishment of research efforts in the neurosciences remains in its early stages in most AfrAbian countries, it is our belief that exposing more scholars and clinicians to the field through close interactions with global authorities will promote the growth of a critical mass of researchers to take the lead in solving the neurological burden across the continent. We believe that AAS would encourage more neuroscience research and propel future collaborations in this field. This is of eminent importance to the AAS mission and vision. The main aim of AAS is to offer an opportunity for collaboration between basic neuroscientists, clinical neurologists, geneticists, epidemiologists, and environmental health experts from African and Arabic countries. We anticipate capacity building, both through interactions between established and AfrAbian investigators and by training AfrAbian researchers. Ultimately, such activities should lead to the development of regional AfrAbian programs dedicated to a multidisciplinary approach to studying and identifying complex neurodegenerative diseases. Although there are current efforts to foster collaboration, the cooperation remains weak. We believe establishing such a society will provide us with a unique opportunity to gather scientists from different sectors and engage the AfrAbian countries. The dialogue between different cultures is a major step forward toward understanding others. We feel that a dialogue that starts through scientific activities such as organizing schools, and associated training fellowships is a more attractive and practical way for stopping brain drain and for the advancement of neuroscience for the sake of our mother Africa.

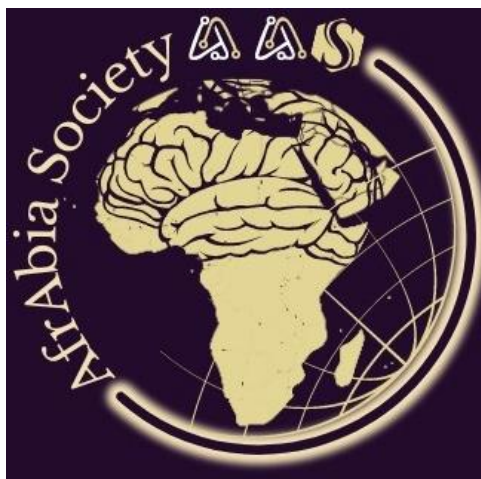


Figure 1: Logo of AfrAbia Society

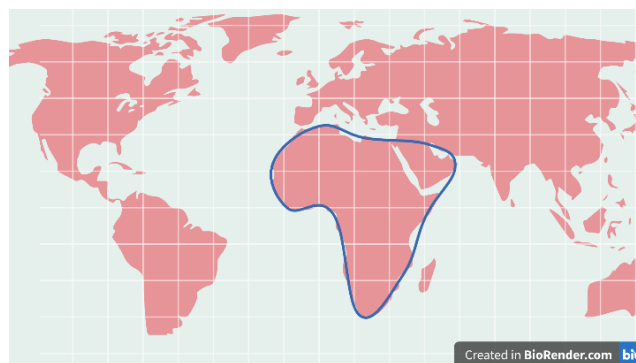


Figure 2: AfrAbia countries are lined with a blue line

AfrAbia Vision and Mission

Neuroscientists working in AfrAbia have access to possibilities unavailable in other continents. Populations in this area have the most genetic variety; they inhabit habitats with different flora and fauna; and they suffer threats to brain health, especially infant brain health and development, because of high rates of traumatic brain injury and endemic illnesses. Nonetheless, the African neuroscience community has yet to attain its full potential. The vision of AfrAbia Society is to develop a hub-and-spoke network model for neuroscientists in AfrAbia, with networking capabilities, such as a database of information about their research interests, equipment, and resources, they can share, and opportunities such as grants, collaborations, training, and mentoring. The structure of the hub should be adaptable to varied circumstances, including sub-networks when applicable. Promote greater interaction,

networking, and collaboration within and between scientific fields, institutions, countries, and the African continent; build capacity in African neuroscience by sharing information, expertise, and resources; amplify the voice of neuroscientists across the continent by advocating together on shared issues; and encourage innovative neuroscience research (Donald et al.,2022). Neuroscience researchers in AfrAbia depend on worldwide funding sources, which are often associated to research issues unrelated to AfrAbia. Through this society and with the help of both international and local financing channels, AfrAbia neuroscience unveils a vision for a prosperous and flourishing AfrAbia neuroscience ecosystem that is both aspirational and realistic. Our mission is to accomplish groundbreaking work, assist neuroscientists at all stages of their careers, and to provide the necessary infrastructure to maintain the growth of neuroscience in AfrAbia.

AfrAbia Society Achievements

We believe that the goalmouth of a neuroscience arena is nothing less than trying to understand ourselves. It is noteworthy that this endeavor should not be limited to a fraction of the world. Developing countries, including most of AfrAbian countries, have the human capital to add and need at least as straightaway as other countries the remunerations in medical care and knowledge. Haven't say this, we believe that it is important to inspire, motivate and educate AfrAbian researchers at a higher level and at home in Africa and Arabia who will then go out to teach in high schools and universities. This slant may be well as certain more prolific than trading our best students to join the elite overseas, many of whom certainly not return to AfrAbia with a lot of AfrAbia brain drain.

In AfrAbia Society, we believe that collaboration is the key to success, and our slogan is *United We Concur*. To this end, the AfrAbia Society (AAS) is now affiliated with SfN ([Link](#)) and MDS ([Link](#)). Moreover, we collaborate with many partners, including the Brain Wellness Initiative ([Link](#)), and the Institute of Primate Research, Kenya ([Link](#)). We will sponsor 3 IBRO schools this year in Kenya ([Link](#)), Burkina Faso ([Link](#)), and DRC ([Link](#)). Furthermore, we published a few articles on Advancing African Neuroscience with Welcome Trust ([Link](#)), What is next for African Neuroscience? ([Link](#)), and other AfrAbia-related articles ([Link](#)). We nominated a young researcher to SfN Next Generation Award as well as the SfN video contest for 2020.

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