



# AMBITION



AMBassadors for sustainable transITION

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# ABOUT

## The Project

AMBITION is a EU-funded project targeted at **PhD students** and aimed at contributing towards raising a **future generation of scientific ambassadors for Sustainable Transition** in both **Europe and Africa**, through a **Joint Honours Programme in technical disciplines** involving seven universities and a non-governmental organisation.

The participants in AMBITION are empowered to carry out research projects tailored to the different economic, environmental, and cultural constraints whose evidence-based results can inform the policy-making.


AMBITION aims to strengthen the capacity of the PhD programmes of partner universities and enrich the participating PhD students' experience to leverage on evidence-based knowledge for **sustainable development** and **green technology**.

The need for an increase in integration and interconnection among PhD programmes in the European and

African context brought the partner universities to the design of a Joint Honours Programme in which **PhD candidates from partner universities can bring together their different backgrounds, acquire shared knowledge and skills suitable for the role of AMBassador for sustainable transition.**

## Alignment with Europe and Africa's Agendas

AMBITION's motivations are grounded within the EU priorities 1 (Green Deal) and 4 (a stronger Europe), the EU principles as emanates from Madrid Declaration on Science Diplomacy (S4D4C 2019) and in line with the aspiration of the Agenda 2063 of the African Union both calling for a new peer-to-peer partnership on sustainable development and able to offer a way to hit international cooperation in the short and long run.



AMBITION's motivations are also coherent within the AU-EU High Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) on Science, Technology and Innovation and with the Roadmap established by the AU-EU Research & Innovation Partnership on Climate Change and Sustainable Energy (CCSE). AMBITION shares also the principles of the recent "African Research Initiative for Scientific Excellence" (ARISE) pilot programme set up by the EU Commission.

AMBITION is the first **IDEA LEAGUE joint EU-AU project**, funded by the European Union's **Erasmus+** initiative.

Partners



**POLITECNICO**  
MILANO 1863

**RWTH**AACHEN  
UNIVERSITY



Associate Partners

**ETH** zürich



Promoted by



Funded by



Erasmus+

# OBJECTIVE AND PILLARS



## General objective and main output

AMBITION aims to support the education of a future generation of qualified young professionals trained across Europe and Africa and equipped with the tools to promote a culture of sustainable development and activate research in the same. The objective is being pursued through **a Joint Honours Programme for talented PhD candidates who wish to become ambassadors for Sustainable Transition.**

The two pillars of the initiative are:

- **Trust in science diplomacy:** international cooperation in research and technological innovation to support foreign policy and international relations; interest and public trust in science contrasting disinformation on hot topics for society; interest in delivering research results through evidence-based policymaking.
- **The growing role of AU-EU partnerships**

The project seeks to achieve its objectives at three levels:

### 1. Institutional Level

To co-design and implement a Joint Honours Programme for PhD talented candidates across the partner universities as asset for international cooperation to boost the contribution of multidisciplinary science and competences to sustainable transition in both EU and AU universities

### 2. People Level

To enrich the capacity of PhD candidates and provide them with an enabling environment in term of skills and platform to act as science ambassadors to boost sustainable innovation in EU and AU countries and partner universities.

### 3. Strategic Level

To consolidate PhD education as strategic assets for science diplomacy and responsible research at regional and country levels to create value addition for society and policymakers on global and just sustainable transition.

# THE HONOURS PROGRAMME



AMBITION will involve a maximum of 28 participants **from October 2023**.

## Three in-person Sustainable Innovation Schools

2 weeks in Nairobi, Kenya  
(Nov 2023)

**School 1** - managed by: Polimi / *"Integrated Energy and cross-sectorial modelling for the sustainable transition"*

**School 2** - managed by: RWTH Aachen / *"Life cycle sustainability assessment a methodology to support industrial sector to measure contribution to SDGs"*

1 week in Delft, The Netherlands  
(May 2024)

**School 3** – managed by: TU Delft / *"Governing the Just Transition"*

The first two Sustainable Innovation Schools will be hosted by Strathmore University (Nairobi) for two consecutive weeks in November 2023, while the third school will be hosted by TU Delft in May 2024.

## Online Web series on Complementary Skills

The Online Web Series on Complementary Skills will focus on ethical, social and political dimensions of the STEM disciplines. These short courses (2 hour each) deal with such complementary skills as project proposal writing, policy brief preparation, impact assessment of research and will enable young Ambassadors to reflect on, discuss and explain the societal implications of their research.

## Game-based learning

The participants in AMBITION will act as Ambassadors for sustainable transition by co-creating a game-based lesson plan on global development from the European and African perspectives. They will also share their knowledge during cascading sessions at local high schools that is aimed at connecting students from Europe and Africa in a multicultural and multigenerational perspective.

## Required commitment from participants

Successful completion of the programme and the award of certificate as an Ambassador for Sustainable Transition will require:

- in-person attendance of at least two out of the three Sustainable Innovation Schools;
- completion of at least four modules of the online web series on Responsible Engineering (each module lasts max. 2 hours);
- serve as Ambassadors for sustainable transition by co-creating game-based learning activities for students in high schools.

## Benefits for participants

- Participation in AMBITION's Honours Programme is fully funded and includes trips to Nairobi, Kenya (2 weeks) and Delft, The Netherlands (1 week);
- In-person and online training by researchers from 7 leading European and African universities;
- Certificate of Participation issued by the 7 partner universities. A Diploma Supplement (if applicable) or support letter will also be issued;
- Be part of an international network of Ambassadors for Sustainable Transition;
- Serve as mentors to youth to societal change through the promotion of sustainable transition;
- Present the findings of their research to relevant stakeholders via tools of the evidence-based policy making process.



# ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA



## Eligible applicants

To be eligible for admission, applicants are required to:

- be a PhD student with 2+ years to graduation, enrolled in one of the partner Universities (Polimi, Chalmers, ETH Zurich, KNUST, RWTHAachen, Strathmore Uni-versity, TU Delft);
- demonstrate within their CV and motivation letter
  - » interest and commitment to sustainable development and the SDGs
  - » interest in multidisciplinary and cross-disciplinary education and research
  - » commitment to serve as Ambassadors for sustainable development in high schools and universities
- understand English effectively and communicate clearly in spoken and written English
- commit to participating to the program for its full duration

A maximum of **4 students** from each university can be enrolled in AMBITION. The selection process will be based on the review of the candidate's application, including CV and motivation letter.

The Evaluation Committee defined within each partner university will invite selected candidates for an online interview.

Candidates with limited mobility due to physical disability will be provided with dedicated means of transport means and/or assistance service; candidates who need support towards costs of childcare while attending the in-person Sustainable Innovation Schools and project activities will also be provided with economic coverage.



# HOW TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to submit the following documents via email to **[phdambition@polimi.it](mailto:phdambition@polimi.it)** by **15th May 2023**

- ① **Motivation letter (in English)** highlighting reasons to participate and commitment of the candidate to the project (Max 1 page)
- ② **Support Letter (in English)** by the Supervisor/Tutor of the PhD
- ③ **CV** (in English, including academic background and professional experiences)
- ④ **Additional Documents containing other information that may highlight experiences in innovation or experiences as trainer** (Max 2 pages)

Selected applicants will be notified of the results by the beginning of August 2023.

For additional information see:  
**[phdambition.org](https://phdambition.org)**



# ABOUT IDEA LEAGUE



The IDEA League is a strategic alliance between five leading European universities of science and technology. Through cross-border, bottom-up format the IDEA League provides the platform for students, researchers and staff at partner universities to share a collective wealth of knowledge, experience and resources. By doing so, IDEA League aims to connect and inspire a new generation of science and technology graduates, champion innovation and entrepreneurship and steer Europe towards a more competitive and compassionate future.

The five members of the IDEA League are RWTH Aachen University, Chalmers University of Technology, Delft University of Technology, ETH Zürich, and Politecnico di Milano.

# PARTNER UNIVERSITIES



**POLITECNICO**  
MILANO 1863

**Politecnico di Milano (Italy)**

Politecnico di Milano (Polimi) is a public university that trains engineers, architects, and industrial designers. Moreover, it is ranked among the top 20 universities by subject in all its areas of specialization: 20th in Engineering & Technology, 10th in Architecture and 5th in Design.

[www.polimi.it/en](http://www.polimi.it/en)



**Chalmers University of  
Technology (Sweden)**

Chalmers tekniska högskola was founded in 1829 following a donation by William Chalmers, director of the Swedish East India Company, and was transformed into an independent foundation in 1994.

Chalmers has developed leading research in the areas of life sciences, materials science, information technology, micro- and nanotechnology, environmental sciences and energy.

[www.chalmers.se/en](http://www.chalmers.se/en)

**ETH zürich**

**Eidgenössische Technische  
Hochschule Zürich (Switzerland)**

ETH Zurich is a public research university in Zürich, Switzerland. Founded by the Swiss federal government in 1854, it was modeled on the École polytechnique in Paris, with the stated mission to educate engineers and scientists; the school focuses primarily on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, although its 16 departments span a variety of disciplines and subjects.

[ethz.ch/en](http://ethz.ch/en)



**Kwame Nkrumah  
University of Science  
and Technology  
(Ghana)**

Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) is the leading Science and Technology public university in Ghana. KNUST was established in 1952 to provide technical education in STEM programmes to support the development of the then Gold Coast colony (Ghana).

Over the years KNUST has been the leading in research, knowledge transfer and diffusion especially to MSMEs.

[www.knust.edu.gh](http://www.knust.edu.gh)



**RWTH Aachen University  
(Germany)**

RWTH Aachen University was established in 1870 and has nine faculties. Currently around 47,173 students are enrolled in over 152 academic programmes. About 12,000 people with an international background, from more than 125 countries, currently study, research, teach, and work at RWTH Aachen.

[www.rwth-aachen.de](http://www.rwth-aachen.de)



**Strathmore  
UNIVERSITY**

**Strathmore  
University  
(Kenya)**

Strathmore University (SU) is a leading private non-profit university in Kenya. SU employs 700 full-time staff and 300 part-time staff. Through Strathmore Energy Research Centre (SERC), SU offers renewable energy research and related services to the renewable energy industry.

[www.strathmore.edu](http://www.strathmore.edu)



**Technische Universiteit Delft  
(The Netherlands)**

Founded in 1842, Technische Universiteit Delft (TU Delft) is the oldest and largest technical university in the Netherlands. Our 8 faculties offer 16 bachelor's and more than 30 master's programs. Our more than 26,000 students, 3,000 PhD students and 6,000 employees share a fascination for science, design and technology. Our common mission: impact for a better society.

[www.tudelft.nl/en](http://www.tudelft.nl/en)

## OTHER PARTNER



**Green Growth Africa  
Sustainability Network  
(Nigeria)**

Green Growth Africa Sustainability Network (Green Growth Africa); formerly known as - International Support Network for African Development (ISNAD-Africa) is a UNEP-accredited non-governmental organisation that is committed to innovation, development and implementation of 'greened' socio-economic development solutions to address Africa's development challenges.

[www.thegreengrowth.org](http://www.thegreengrowth.org)



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