

REPORTING FROM LAST YEAR



ALLIANCE *for* AFRICAN
PARTNERSHIP

2024

ANNUAL REPORT

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2024 In Review: A Year of Growth and Progress

This 2024 AAP report highlights a pivotal year in the continued evolution of the Alliance for African Partnership (AAP). Now operating under its second five-year strategic plan, AAP has deepened its impact across all six strategic goals—building bridges, transforming institutions, supporting research for impact, securing sustainable funding, promoting inclusive governance, and advancing documentation, learning, and knowledge exchange.

This report documents the progress made in 2024, showcasing how AAP has leveraged equitable partnerships, co-created solutions, and supported transformative initiatives across its growing network of African and global institutions. From launching new collaborative research projects and expanding training programs, to mobilizing resources and refining governance structures, the report reflects the consortium’s shared commitment to meaningful, long-term impact. We are excited to report that to date AAP has engaged 912 stakeholders from across all members and partners, has leveraged a total of \$69,090,964 US, has trained directly or indirectly 12,753 beneficiaries, and has led to 126 publications. The 2025 consortium meeting in Malawi provides a valuable opportunity for AAP members and stakeholders to reflect on these accomplishments, confront shared challenges and chart a course for the future.

VISION

A global consortium leveraging equitable partnerships and co-created research to transform lives across Africa and the world

MISSION

To analyze sustainable and equitable research-driven partnerships that co-create innovative solutions that address shared challenges

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Accountability
- Equity
- Inclusivity
- Sustainability
- Transparency

PRIORITY AREAS



AAP Consortium Members



Africa Network of Agricultural Policy Research Institutes
Zambia



Egerton University
Kenya



Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources
Malawi



Makerere University
Uganda



Michigan State University
USA
(initiator of the consortium)



United States International University-Africa
Kenya



Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar
Senegal



Université des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines de Bamako
Mali



University of Botswana
Botswana



University of Dar es Salaam
Tanzania



University of Nigeria, Nsukka
Nigeria



University of Pretoria
South Africa



Goal 1: Building Bridges

Strengthen and engage a robust network of innovative partnerships among consortium members and other international partners

Objectives

- 1.1 Promote collaborations in support of AAP pillars and priority areas**
- 1.2 Strengthen engagement among consortium members and AAP management**
- 1.3 Promote collaborations with multisectoral stakeholders**
- 1.4 Strengthen engagement around gender and equity with individual and institutional stakeholders**
- 1.5 Ensure gender balance and inclusion of underrepresented groups in all partnership activities**

The first strategic goal of AAP is to bring people and organizations together to work toward common goals. Global challenges are too vast and complex for one person or institution to go it alone. We envision and strive to catalyze innovative models of partnership that will address these challenges—facilitating new relationships among people and organizations that may not have traditionally worked together in the past. We support building bridges among government, NGOs, industry, and educational institutions, among researchers in different disciplines, and among institutions across Africa and around the world. This is challenging, but necessary and rewarding work to build deep, lasting, and multifaceted partnerships for global solutions.

Building Bridges Spotlight

The Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health Summit in May 2024 marked a key moment in addressing the continent's ongoing food security challenges. With the unveiling of the Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health Action Plan, governments, donors, and development partners reaffirmed their commitment to restoring soil health and improving fertilizer use as essential steps toward more resilient agri-food systems. The Summit came at a critical time, following years of fertilizer shortages and mounting pressure to boost productivity and nutrition across Africa.

As part of the broader community supporting this effort, AAP has contributed to discussions around the role of research and training institutions in implementing the Action Plan. Alongside partners, AAP co-hosted a side event focused on science-based solutions and knowledge sharing. AAP has also collaborated on the Malawi Ready event, which gathered national stakeholders to begin translating the continental vision into country-level action. These efforts reflect a shared commitment across sectors to link research with real-world impact for a more food-secure Africa.

Goal 1: Building Bridges

2024 Accomplishments:

Advancing Regional Engagement and African Partnerships

In our role as a key driver of regional policy dialogue and collaboration, AAP has been appointed by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) as the secretariat for the SADC Think Tank Network. In this capacity, AAP is facilitating policy engagement across SADC institutions, member states, and regional think tanks. AAP researchers will be actively contributing to policy development through targeted research and policy briefs. A SADC-funded (\$45,000 US) meeting in South Africa approved the formal establishment of the Southern Africa Network of Think Tanks (SANTT), with AAP leading the technical groundwork for its launch.

Strategic Partnerships and MOUs

AAP expanded our strategic partnerships through new Memoranda of Understanding. In collaboration with ICRISAT, AAP co-leads a SADC initiative focused on indigenous crops and soil health. This partnership produced a joint proposal for a school feeding program submitted to the MacArthur Foundation's 100&Change program. In 2024, MSU on behalf of AAP signed an MOU with the Falling Walls Foundation with the mutual goal of fostering international cooperation to advance science communication, engagement, entrepreneurship, arts and society. Additionally, AAP facilitated Michigan State University's (MSU) integration into the Feed, Protect, Care Global Collaborative PhD Platform, joining 17 international institutions, including the University of Pretoria and L'Université de Montpellier, who lead the platform, and Université Cheikh Anta Diop.

Public Dialogue and Knowledge Exchange

In 2024, AAP convened four public dialogue events to foster critical discourse on pressing global and regional issues:

1. Pan-African Thought Leadership – March 13, 2024 (hybrid event at Howard University), co-hosted with Howard University and the Thabo Mbeki Foundation.
2. Indigenous and Traditional Food Crops – May 22, 2024 (virtual).
3. Gender in Science – September 25, 2024 (hybrid, held during the 79th UN General Assembly Science Summit), in partnership with MSU's Center for Gender in Global Context (GenCen) and South Africa's National Research Foundation.
4. Artificial Intelligence and Education – November 27, 2024 (virtual).

Goal 1: Building Bridges

Fellowship and Exchange Programs

We at AAP have continued our leadership on the U.S. Department of State’s Advancing Young Women Agribusiness Entrepreneurs and Innovators Professional Fellows Program (PFP). In partnership with MSU’s Visiting International Professionals Program, GenCen, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Pretoria, University of Zambia, Chinhoyi University of Technology in Zimbabwe, and University of Rwanda. The program strengthened leadership skills for 11 Fellows from Rwanda, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe through U.S.-based workshops, site visits, and agricultural placements. A reciprocal exchange saw four U.S. representatives visit Africa. AAP also awarded seven US DOS-funded alumni engagement grants totaling \$20,000 US, which supported training for over 340 community members in agribusiness. We will host an additional 20 fellows in September and October 2025. Although MSU’s proposal in partnership with Makerere University, University of Dar es Salaam, University of Rwanda, and University of Burundi for the FY24 PFP cycle was recommended, it was not funded due to the removal of the Africa region from the program.

AAP has also partnered for the third consecutive year on the Mandela Washington Fellowship, hosting 25 emerging leaders from 18 African countries. A proposal has been submitted to host the program again in 2025.

Through the Carnegie Corporation-funded IREX University Administration Support Program, AAP hosted a virtual program in late 2024, focused on research management, strategy, faculty development, and innovation.



Goal 1: Building Bridges

Strengthening Partnerships with HBCU partners

In 2024, AAP partnered with MSU's African Studies Center, Tanzania Partnership Program/Partnerships for Sustainable Community Development, and University Outreach and Engagement on a project to expand and strengthen partnerships among AAP African member institutions, MSU, and select Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). The project was funded by a Creating Inclusive Excellence Grant from MSU's Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion. The team engaged deeply with nine HBCUs throughout the course of the project with an eye toward expanding in the future to include other HBCUs and Historically Disadvantaged Institutions (HDIs) in South Africa. Preparation for project activities took place in 2024, and in 2025, the team carried out those activities including a virtual project initiation meeting, a needs assessment survey, an in-person meeting in Washington, DC which included attending a conference held in honor of Paul Zeleza at Howard University. Representatives from four HBCU partners also participated in AAP's 2025 annual consortium meeting in Lilongwe, Malawi. Further details and outcomes from this initiative will be shared in AAP's 2025 annual report.



Goal 2: Transforming Institutions

Transformed consortium members that are better able to engage in equitable and sustainable partnerships that transform lives (through research-driven initiatives)

Objectives

- 2.1 Identify best practices supporting equitable and sustainable partnerships**
- 2.2 Enhance institutional responsiveness to societal transformations**
- 2.3 Increase higher education institutions' capacity to work with non-university partners for mutual benefit**
- 2.4 Increase higher education institutions' capacity to work with other universities and other international partners for mutual benefit, including promoting gender equity and inclusion at AAP consortium member institutions.**
- 2.5 Use evidence-based methods to identify**

Large-scale and long-term partnerships are not possible without strong institutions that are oriented to take part in and support them. In order to transform how institutions partner, we must also transform those institutions that participate in the partnerships to be more effective and engaged. This goal focuses on promoting sustainable and effective partnerships that enhance institutional resources and increase institutional capacity. AAP activities under this goal support capacity development overall, including supporting educational and research improvements and innovations, strengthening administrative capacities, and shaping institutions to be more effective and equitable internally and in the way that they partner with others.

Transforming Institutions Spotlight

In 2024, Tonia Onyeka (UNN) and James Dearing (MSU) led a Transforming Institutions team that achieved a major milestone in research training. As part of the Science Communication Training Project, the Center for Translation and Implementation Research (CTAIR) at the University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN) introduced a groundbreaking policy that makes science communication a core part of its CTAIR Scholar Program. This new policy, set to launch in 2025, aims to close the science communication gap, boost research visibility, and ensure lasting impact by training all future scholars in how to effectively engage the public, media, and policymakers. With plans to expand across the College of Medicine and beyond, UNN is positioning itself as a leader in science communication education.

Goal 2: Transforming Institutions

2024 Accomplishments:

Transforming Institutions Landscape Study

To better align our Transforming Institutions programming with the priorities and capacities of our member universities, AAP has launched a collaborative landscape analysis study. Research leads from each AAP member institution co-developed the study framework and data collection tools. The team is currently preparing institutional case studies to identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities for growth. Final results and case studies will be published in 2025.

Equitable Partnership Activities

AAP advanced our commitment to equity in global partnerships through two key workshops in 2024. The first, held in February, convened 10 African Futures Scholars to explore research and innovation in Africa. The second, a virtual session on November 15, brought together IREX Fellows to discuss equitable strategies for addressing global challenges. Both sessions emphasized collaborative leadership and inclusive research practices.

Innovating PhD Training in Africa

In response to widespread challenges in doctoral education across the continent, AAP hosted a virtual convening of graduate deans from African universities. The goal was to reimagine PhD training systems to be more relevant, inclusive, and globally engaged. AAP's management team synthesized insights from the meeting into a report and concept note, outlining challenges, opportunities, and recommendations for reform. This document was shared with the Carnegie Corporation of New York, and in 2025 AAP, in collaboration with AAP member graduate education directors/deans, was invited to submit a full proposal to Carnegie Corporation.

Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) Faculty Fellows Program – Africa

AAP continued our COIL Faculty Fellows Program in partnership with MSU's Office for Education Abroad and the Global Youth Advancement Network (GYAN). The program supports virtual, team-based teaching partnerships between MSU and African AAP faculty members. The inaugural cohort of seven teams completed their projects in 2024, and a second cohort of seven new teams was selected. The program includes training workshops,

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Goal 2: Transforming Institutions

collaborative project development, and a growing community of practice. The program also trained COIL coordinators at each of the member institutions who had faculty members selected to be on COIL teams. Each COIL team averaged 24 students (12 students per institution) for a total of 154 students who gained critical international competencies through participation in the first cohort.

Transforming Institutions Seed Grants

In May 2024, AAP awarded \$99,961 US in seed funding to [five Transforming Institutions teams](#). These cross-institutional projects involved faculty and staff from MSU, University of Nigeria Nsukka, United States International University-Africa, Egerton University, Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Pretoria, and Makerere University. Non-AAP partners included University of Yaoundé, French Center for Scientific Research (CNRS), and Michigan Fellows Agribusiness Initiative-Uganda.

AAP Research Management Capacity Strengthening Consortium (AAP-RMCSC)

AAP launched the AAP-RMCSC in July 2024 to strengthen research management across African higher education institutions. The consortium offers training workshops and fosters collaboration among AAP members, while also supporting the creation of the African Research Directors Forum (ARDF). A major milestone was a joint two-day workshop co-hosted with South Africa's National Research Foundation (NRF) and the Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI) at the SARIMA Conference in September 2024.



Goal 3: Research for Impact

Demonstrated practice of research for impact among MSU and its partner institutions

Objectives

3.1 Promote human-centered and gender-inclusive approaches for stakeholder engagement in problem identification and solutions

3.2 Increase the number of co-created equitable and inclusive research-for-impact projects

3.3 Develop and diffuse AAP partnership research outcomes

3.4 Develop and diffuse AAP partnership principles and research model

3.5 Engage policymakers, communities and other stakeholders in research

3.6 Promote women's and underrepresented groups' leadership of research teams and authorship of research outputs (publications, presentations, etc.)

This goal aligns directly with AAP's third pillar—transforming lives—and underpins our efforts to support and catalyze research partnerships that generate solutions to local and global challenges. AAP prioritizes research and initiatives with the potential for real-world impact to improve lives and livelihoods across Africa. This includes advancing research-to-practice methodologies, enhancing the dissemination of findings to scholars and practitioners, and connecting researchers to policymaking processes.

The work AAP supports addresses complex and urgent issues such as climate change, youth empowerment, cultural preservation, and strengthening agri-food systems. To track progress, we measure both the dissemination of research—such as co-authored publications, policy briefs, and conference presentations—and the number of direct beneficiaries reached through supported programs. While publications and presentations are not endpoints, they are essential for broadening the reach of research, contributing to science that drives impact, fostering long-term partnerships, and strengthening institutional capacity. As our monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) systems evolve, we will continue to develop more nuanced metrics to better capture our impact.

Goal 3: Research for Impact

2024 Accomplishments:

African Futures Research Leadership Program (African Futures)

The fourth cohort of the African Futures Research Leadership Program concluded in July 2024, with 10 scholars completing a successful year of research collaboration. Already, these scholars have presented at 17 academic conferences, published nine articles, and submitted six proposals for external funding, two of which were awarded. In 2024, AAP conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the program's past cohorts, using surveys, interviews, and bibliometric analysis to assess outcomes and identify areas for improvement. Based on these findings, AAP redesigned the program to offer greater flexibility for scholars and mentors while reducing costs. The new hybrid model launched in Fall 2024 with a call for cohort five. Fellows and mentors represent a diverse range of disciplines, including Engineering, Education, Criminal Justice, Geography, and Nursing. As part of the program, consortium and MSU mentors traveled between institutions to explore expanded research collaborations.

Africa Global Partnership Scholars (GPS) Program

AAP launched the inaugural cohort of the Africa Global Partnership Scholars (GPS) Program in 2024 as part of a broader MSU-wide initiative to enhance international collaboration. The program supports early and mid-career faculty in developing global research partnerships that address shared challenges. Seven MSU faculty members from six colleges were selected and matched with peers from AAP member institutions including UNN, Makerere, UCAD, UDSM, UB, and UP. GPS aims to revitalize MSU's global engagement by empowering faculty to build lasting, cross-institutional research collaborations.

Transforming Lives Research-Into-Use Platforms

AAP supported three thematic platforms in 2024 designed to translate research into action:

- **Soil Health and Resilience:** AAP led the policy technical group and coordination committee for the Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health Summit (May 2024, Nairobi). In collaboration with FARA, CCARDESA, and AUDA-NEPAD, AAP co-developed a proposal for the Soil Initiative for Africa (SIA) Hub for Southern Africa, which was set for SADC approval in March 2025. AAP also partnered with the MwAPATA Institute and MSU's Food Security Group to produce Malawi's Fertilizer and Soil Health Country Position Paper and is now developing an action plan with the Malawian government.

Goal 3: Research for Impact

Transforming Lives Research-into-Use Platforms (continued)

- African Youth Transformation Platform (AYTP): In partnership with ISP's Global Youth Advancement Network (GYAN), AAP launched a student-focused webpage and established the AYTP Corner on AAP Bridge to connect youth-focused faculty. AAP is collaborating with Université Yembo Ouologem de Bamako (formerly ULSHB) and the University of Pretoria to support youth empowerment through entrepreneurship and innovation. Faculty and youth grant opportunities are regularly shared via AAP Bridge, and a proposal is underway with Venture Garden Group to strengthen entrepreneurship education, university-industry linkages, and university-led ventures.
- Ubuntu and AI: Culture & Society: Led by MSU's Institute for Ubuntu Thought and Practice, AAP is launching a platform focused on African indigenous knowledge systems and emerging technologies. AAP has committed seed funding for this initiative, which includes partners from MSU's African Studies Center, Colleges of Engineering and Law, University of Botswana, USIU, Egerton University, UDSM, and Stellenbosch University.

AAP/ASC Student Research Fellowship

In 2024, AAP and MSU's African Studies Center launched the AAP/ASC Student Research Fellowship, awarding grants to 10 graduate students—seven from MSU and three from Egerton University. The fellowship supported travel for fieldwork in Africa or to MSU, helping students advance their thesis or dissertation research. AAP also facilitated MSU's engagement in the Feed-Protect-Care Global Collaborative PhD Platform, supporting the recruitment and selection of two MSU PhD students for the inaugural cohort.

Partnerships for Innovative Research in Africa (PIRA)

The PIRA program continued to support cross-continental research collaboration in 2024. Eleven teams from the first cohort presented their findings in two virtual showcases held in February and March, 2024. These teams consisted of 151 international researchers who to date have trained 936 beneficiaries, co-authored eight publications, and received one external grant to continue their AAP-funded work. In August, AAP awarded \$517,385 in funding to eight international research teams selected for the second round. AAP members represented on these projects include University of Nigeria Nsukka, Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Egerton University, University of Pretoria, USIU, University of Botswana, UDSM, and MSU. Non-AAP partners include University of Johannesburg, University of Lapland, Sharklife Conservation Group, and Kenyan Anti-Counterfeit Authority. These projects will continue through 2025, with final showcases planned for 2026.

Research for Impact Spotlights

PIRA Spotlight:

A 2021 PIRA award supported a collaboration led by Farai Kapfudzaruwa (University of Pretoria), Kudo Shogo (University of Tokyo), and Sriram Narayanan (MSU). Their project, “Implementing an Africa-Asia Business Partnership Forum Using Trans-Local Networks and Transdisciplinary Approaches,” aimed to build capacity among African entrepreneurs by connecting them with Japanese peers to explore collaborative business ventures.

The team successfully created a dynamic platform for mutual learning, enabling ongoing engagement between South African and Japanese entrepreneurs beyond the project's formal end. These sustained connections have led to the emergence of three pilot venture schemes focused on sustainable farming—demonstrating the potential of cross-cultural collaboration and shared competencies across business ecosystems.

The project will culminate in the publication of an edited volume and an academic article assessing the effectiveness of trans-local learning frameworks—fulfilling one of the project's core research objectives. Looking ahead, the team has submitted a proposal to the African Development Bank to scale the network into a full resource platform supporting the emerging ventures.

African Futures Spotlight:

The collaboration between Dr. Tabitha Amollo (Egerton University) and Prof. Qi Hua Fan (MSU) began through the African Futures Research Leadership Program, with Dr. Amollo completing a one-year fellowship in Prof. Fan's lab focused on plasma-processed thin films for solar energy and coatings. The collaboration has already produced tangible research outputs, including two co-authored publications and multiple international conference presentations. Their articles appeared in *Properties, Preparations, and Applications* (2024) and *Diamond and Related Materials* (2025), and their findings were presented at the 2024 Materials Research Society Spring Meeting (Seattle) and the 67th SVC Technical Conference (Chicago).

In 2024, their partnership was awarded a \$100,000 US PIRA grant to scale their research through the project “Develop a Partnership for Renewable Energy Research and Education.” The project expands research capacity at both institutions, provides advanced training for graduate students in Kenya and the U.S., and supports community outreach on renewable energy technologies in Kenya. Their work reflects AAP's vision of research partnerships that deliver real-world impact while building lasting academic collaboration.

Goal 4: Sustainability

Diverse resources necessary to achieve AAP's vision and mission

Objectives

- 4.1 Engage effective social and human capital to strengthen AAP programs**
- 4.2 Ensure financial sustainability**
- 4.3 Ensure internal sustainability of management team**
- 4.4 Mobilize resources in support of long-term partnerships that engage with AAP pillars and priority areas**

AAP's first five years were supported by an initial investment from MSU, intended to be a springboard for long-term sustainability. Since then, AAP has embedded a focus on sustainable funding across all its activities. For example, a key metric in AAP's competitive funding programs is the ability of project teams to leverage additional support from development partners and other organizations to scale their work. AAP also assists member institutions in securing external funding to sustain and expand collaborative programs.



Goal 4: Sustainability

2024 Accomplishments:

External Funding Proposals

In 2024, AAP contributed to 29 proposals for externally funded international initiatives, with 11 successfully securing awards totaling \$1,735,930 US. AAP's support took multiple forms, including direct participation as team members, facilitation of proposal development, and seeding efforts through programs like PIRA, Transforming Institutions, and African Futures.

Resource Mobilization Team (RMT)

Established in 2023 and revitalized in 2024 under new co-chair leadership, AAP's Resource Mobilization Team expanded its capacity by bringing on a content writer, identifying key donor prospects, and setting strategic priorities. The team developed two major proposals: one to scale the African Futures program, submitted to the ASR Africa Initiative, and another—the African Youth Empowerment Initiative—created in partnership with Venture Garden Group (VGG) to enhance university-led innovation and entrepreneurship. The pilot for the youth initiative was co-funded through contributions from AAP, VGG, the ISP Dean's Office, and a private gift, with a launch planned for 2025.

Engagement with Foundations

AAP held strategic meetings with major foundations to explore new partnerships and funding opportunities. In September 2024, AAP met with the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Open Society Foundation to discuss strengthening African higher education systems and promoting peace and democracy. Carnegie requested a concept note focused on revitalizing PhD training in African universities (also mentioned under Goal 2 of this report). In November 2024, AAP met with the President of the Schlumberger Foundation to share details about the African Futures program, to engage MSU-based Schlumberger Fellows, and to position MSU and AAP as key partners and thought leaders.

Goal 4: Sustainability

AAP METRIC	2024
Number of external grants received by program teams	11
Seed Grants	0
AAP Office (AAP Staff, AAP Perspectives, Proposals, etc.)	7
PIRA	0
Transforming Institutions	1
African Futures	3
Platforms	0
External funding (USD) received by program teams	\$1,735,930
Seed Grants	0
AAP Office (AAP Staff, AAP Perspectives, etc.)	\$615,532
PIRA	0
Transforming Institutions	\$2,714
African Futures	\$1,117,684
Platforms	0



Goal 5: Inclusive Governance

AAP governance reflects and promotes the model of co-creation and equitable partnerships among consortium members

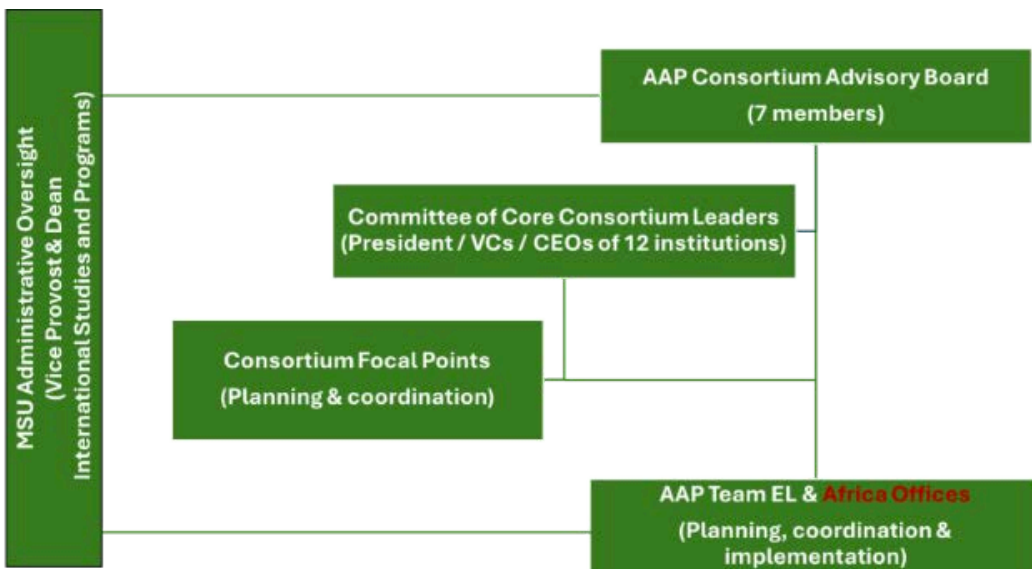
Objectives

5.1 Strengthen the inclusive governance and accountability structure of AAP

5.2 Promote (buy-in/ownership) of AAP among consortium members

5.3 Strengthen the leadership of the management team, ensuring gender balance and inclusion

Good governance, aligned with AAP’s guiding principles, is essential to its success. This includes co-creating inclusive governance structures, clearly defining member responsibilities, establishing effective leadership and management frameworks, and ensuring accountability through checks and balances. Equally important is the flexibility to adapt to emerging opportunities, respond to challenges, and reflect on what works.



AAP Governance Structure

Goal 5: Inclusive Governance

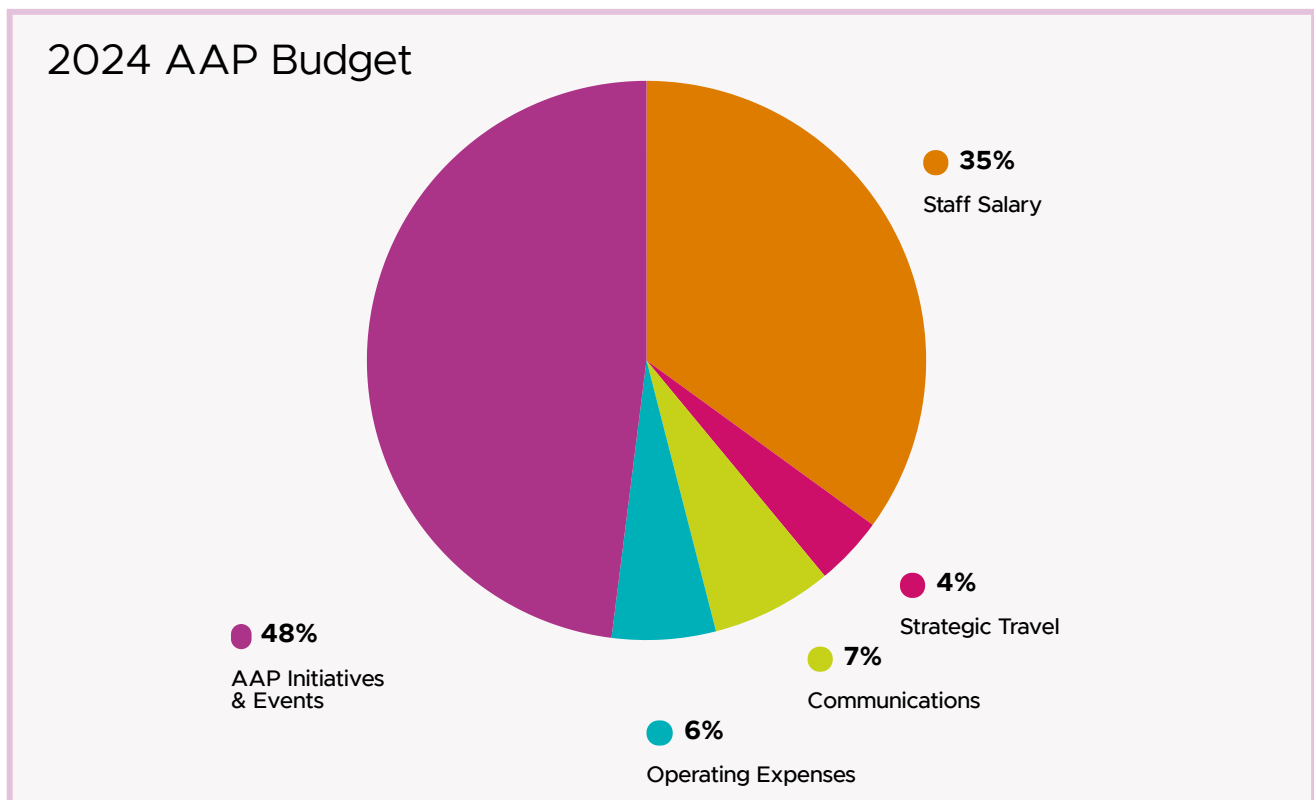
2024 Accomplishments:

AAP Membership

In consultation with focal points, vice chancellors, and other stakeholders, the AAP management team drafted revised consortium membership guidelines. The proposed update outlines membership types, benefits, responsibilities, and a fee structure. It remains under review and is expected to be updated and adopted in 2025. For the first time, members were invoiced for annual fees to support the Africa Office.

AAP Annual Consortium Meeting

Hosted by Makerere University, the annual meeting brought together consortium vice chancellors, focal points, AAP’s advisory board, AAP management, MSU and ISP leadership, and other partners. Key discussions focused on strategic plan progress, resource mobilization, AAP’s growth, and the role of higher education institutions and funders in transforming Africa. The meeting also featured a joint Makerere-MSU alumni event in collaboration with the African Studies Center and ISP Advancement.



Goal 6: Documentation, Learning and Knowledge Exchange

Effective communication, engagement, documentation, and shared learning among AAP and all stakeholders

Objectives

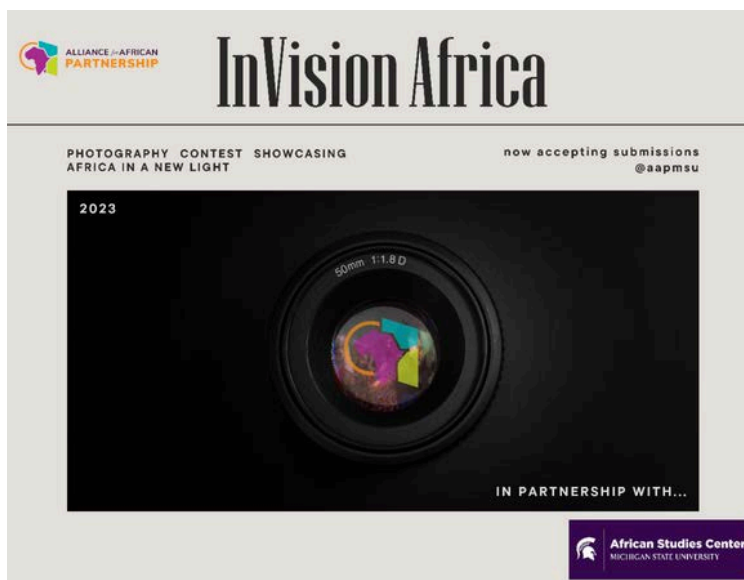
6.1 Facilitate dialogue, communication, and engagement to promote equitable partnerships, successful models, and exchange knowledge among AAP stakeholders

6.2 Manage and maintain AAP consortium brand and identity to all stakeholders

6.3 Demonstrate impact through high quality data collection and analysis

6.4 Improve AAP's programs, activities, and partnership model by incorporating lessons learned through data analysis

Clear communication and continuous learning are essential to the success of AAP's mission. Goal 6 emphasizes the importance of documenting experiences, sharing knowledge, and promoting open dialogue among all stakeholders. By facilitating effective engagement and maintaining a strong consortium identity, AAP ensures that our values and successes are communicated transparently. Equally important is the role of monitoring and evaluation—collecting high-quality data, analyzing outcomes, and using those insights to improve programs and partnerships. This commitment to learning and adaptation not only strengthens AAP's impact but also fosters more equitable and informed collaboration across the network.



Goal 6: Documentation, Learning and Knowledge Exchange

2024 Accomplishments:

AAP Bridge, Social Media, and Digital Engagement

AAP Bridge continues to serve as a virtual hub for networking, professional development, and stakeholder engagement, with 637 active users. The platform is now leveraging user analytics to guide content strategy ahead of the mobile app launch. AAP also expanded its visibility through social media, email campaigns, and collaborative events. Engagement grew across platforms, especially on LinkedIn, where top posts reached 933 impressions, with engagement rates ranging from 2% to 52%. AAP's email campaigns reached 364,635 recipients, with a 40% open rate and a 16% click rate. Most engagement occurred on desktop (93% of opens, 95% of clicks).

Launched in 2024, the AAP Connect newsletter has published three issues, with a fourth due in March 2025. The newsletter highlights human-centered stories and has shown strong engagement potential.

Invision Africa

In 2024, AAP launched the Invision Africa photography competition, inviting submissions that capture Africa's landscapes, cultures, and innovations. Three undergraduate winners—including one from UDSM, one from Egerton University, and one from MSU—presented their work at a showcase in East Lansing in April 2025.

Showcase Events

AAP held two showcase events in 2024:

1. USIU, Nairobi (May) – Featured presentations by USIU faculty, highlighting African Futures Program outcomes, including publications and collaborative projects.
2. U.S. Embassy, Kampala (September) – Attended by the U.S. Ambassador, Makerere faculty, and AAP leadership, this event spotlighted AAP-funded project impacts and the importance of equitable partnerships.

Goal 6: Documentation, Learning and Knowledge Exchange

Communication Strategy and Committee

AAP established the Consortium Communication Committee to improve engagement and visibility across member institutions. Comprised of communications leaders, the committee is finalizing a comprehensive strategy and marketing plan for rollout in late 2025. Upcoming initiatives include short-form video content and AI-enhanced storytelling to elevate AAP's brand.

Falling Walls Partnership

AAP partnered with the Berlin-based Falling Walls Foundation to increase global exposure for African researchers. AAP Co-Director (Amy Jamison), AAP Communications Coordinator (Abraham Mamela), and AAP Program Manager (Justin Rabineau) attended the 2024 Falling Walls Science Summit in Berlin Germany in November, where they continued explore opportunities for partnership between Falling Walls and AAP. Initiatives such as Engage Hub and Lab will launch at the 2025 consortium meeting, enhancing science communication and networking opportunities at AAP members.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)

AAP worked with ISP data scientist Charla Burnett to strengthen its MEL systems. Improvements include enhanced data quality, new reporting templates, and better tools for communicating AAP's impact across the consortium.



2024 Challenges and Responses

In 2024, AAP faced several ongoing challenges but responded with proactive solutions. Some research teams continued to experience COVID-19 related delays, though these are expected to be resolved by 2025. AAP remained flexible by adjusting project timelines to accommodate affected teams.

Housing for African Futures scholars remained a hurdle. While AAP secured accommodations at Campus Hill Apartments, leasing constraints reduced program flexibility, and some scholars had to rent larger units at higher costs. The lack of short-term housing for international visitors at MSU continues to impact program planning, with no long-term solution yet identified despite ongoing advocacy.

Consortium funding sustainability is another concern. Membership dues were introduced for the first time in 2025, with invoices issued in November 2024 and payments due by January 31. Most members have responded promptly, though some delays have occurred due to leadership transitions, complex financial systems, or limited institutional resources. To strengthen funding, RMT remains active in pursuing external support. AAP has also partnered with Global IDEAS' international data analytics team to improve monitoring and evaluation through a new data collection system and centralized dashboard.

In the upcoming year, AAP anticipates the need to find innovative ways to address a rapidly shifting geopolitical landscape. Specifically, an evolving U.S. policy and funding landscape has presented new challenges for international partnerships. The reduction or elimination of Africa-focused programming within key U.S. government initiatives has directly impacted AAP's work. These shifts underscore the importance of diversifying funding sources and strengthening Africa-based leadership and operations to ensure continuity and resilience. In response, AAP is redoubling efforts to mobilize resources from foundations, philanthropic partners, and African institutions while continuing to advocate for the value of equitable global partnerships within the U.S. higher education and policy space. Despite these challenges, AAP continues to adapt, leveraging partnerships, strategic planning, and operational flexibility to sustain and strengthen its programs.

Conclusion and Future Directions

AAP's progress in 2024 affirms the value of collaborative, inclusive, and adaptive partnership models. Through a growing network of institutions and individuals, AAP has advanced our mission of transforming lives and institutions across Africa and beyond. In the coming year, we at AAP will continue to expand our reach and deepen our impact by continuing to support successful programs like African Futures, PIRA, and COIL, exploring new opportunities for resource mobilization, and advancing institutional transformation through strategic capacity building and research initiatives.

Looking ahead, AAP will prioritize sustainable resource mobilization, continued investment in monitoring and evaluation systems, and strengthening its global network. As we move into 2025, AAP remains committed to co-creating a future where research, innovation, and partnership drive sustainable development, equity, and opportunity across the continent and the globe.

