

Technology Adoption to Address Economic Issues, Create Jobs

Strategic partnerships, investment in technology, fostering innovations, and revamping academic programmes to suit market needs are among the top interventions prospected to spur job creation among the youth.

Higher education experts and business leaders have billed increased investment in innovation through promotion of entrepreneurship and innovation as the panacea for the joblessness crisis among young people, especially graduates.

During the recent Forum for the Alliance of Entrepreneurial Universities in Africa at Dedan Kimathi University of Science and Technology, delegates expressed the importance of streamlining regulatory frameworks, boosting financial resources, and supporting skill development in advancing socio-economic growth.

“Universities can play a role in connecting students with networks of entrepreneurs, investors, and mentors. Such networking opportunities allow young entrepreneurs to gain insights,” a communiqué of the summit read.

The event was held from 23-24 October, 2024 at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology, attracting senior government officials, entrepreneurs, private sector and regional partners and investors.

According to the communiqué, the stakeholders endorsed partnerships between universities and private sector.

It was proposed that university leadership should organise engagement forums after every four years to review the curriculum with the objective of ensuring academic programmes resonate with emerging trends and churning out graduates who are ready for the job market.



“Private sector advances very fast due to the technological advances that come up every day whereas universities teach the same syllabus for years, using outdated books regardless of the much development on the private sector,” the document indicates.

According to UF Chief Executive Officer Geoffrey Monari, who doubles up as Alliance for Entrepreneurial Universities in Africa (AEUA) Chairman, the event aimed at strengthening entrepreneurial capacity across African universities and catalysing sustainable economic development through partnerships, innovation, and applied research.

Mr Monari underscored that enhanced public-private partnerships will grow the higher education sector and close the skills gap among young people.

“There is urgent need for our universities to be self-sustaining, and public-private partnerships are key to this,” he said.

Mr Monari emphasised that the AEUA is growing, and it seeks to promote, nurture and provide innovation and entrepreneurship opportunities to the youth.

AGPO: Vulnerable Groups Tipped on Government Procurement, How to

The Universities Fund (UF) conducted a virtual sensitisation forum on youth, women and People with Disabilities can benefit from government economic opportunities.

The forum aimed at increasing uptake of procurement opportunities and promoting awareness among the vulnerable groups on how they can access UF tenders under Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO).

During the November 8 forum, the agency also highlighted the steps it is taking to promote compliance with the directive.

The aim of the AGPO programme is to facilitate the enterprises owned by women, youth and persons with disabilities to be able to participate in Government opportunities.

This is achieved through implementation of the legal requirement that 30 percent of Government procurement opportunities be set aside specifically for enterprises owned by these groups.

As a result, the programme is aimed at empowering them by giving them more opportunities to do business with Government.

According to a report on the forum, UF indicated that it reserves 30 percent of the

procurement budget for the disadvantaged groups and submits a procurement plan to Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) by the end of every August.

The document also indicated that UF submits tender award reports to PPRA and National Treasury every six months

“Achievement of 30 percent target is anchored in UF’s performance contract with government annually,” the document read.

For suppliers to be classified under AGPO, they should provide documents such as valid tax

compliance, certificate of business registration, National Identity Card, and CR12 for limited companies or partnership deed for partnerships.

Other documents are certificate from relevant professional bodies, National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) certificate where applicable, and valid AGPO certificate.

To ensure the quality and credibility of the data, UF verifies the validity of the statutory documents during tender evaluations and requires that firms registered with it for more than two years must resubmit valid AGPO certificates.

The funding agency stated that it has laid down measures for promoting uptake of procurement opportunities and stifle unfair competition.

“No tender security is required by UF from entities owned by youth, women and persons with disabilities under the Preference & Reservations Scheme; however, Firms are required to fill, sign and submit a Tender Security Declaration Form,” the document read.

Other measures include specifying the target group in a tender advert, awarding PWDs not less than two percent of the 30 percent procurement budget, and making sure no group secures 50 percent of the budget.

Some of the procurement categories available to the groups range from supply of stationery to design and printing services.



The Universities Fund is on a mission to secure additional resources to support Kenyan universities. Join us as we work towards mobilising Kshs600 million for our programs by 2027! Together we can!

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Varsity's Centre of Excellence to Bolster Research, Climate Action Initiatives

The Universities Fund in collaboration with Vihiga County Government and Kaimosi Friends University launched the Centre of Excellence for Climate Action (CECARE).

The Centre is poised to play a critical role in shaping climate policy, driving research, and developing actionable solutions in key areas such as adaptation, mitigation, and climate financing.

CECARE is envisioned as a dynamic hub for climate-related research, capacity building, and policy engagement.

Its creation reflects a shared commitment among local and global partners to tackle climate change while equipping communities with the knowledge and tools needed to adapt, mitigate, and thrive in an increasingly unpredictable world.

Speaking at the launch on November 7, Vihiga Governor Wilber Ottichilo pledged to donate climate change literature to the centre to boost its repository.

Governor Ottichillo also vowed to establish an annual award for students who excel in areas of climate change, environment and sustainable development.

The partnership is part of the Fund's commitment to empower and position public universities as climate champions.

UF's Samuel Dola, Team Lead, Resource and Partnership Directorate, said the Fund is ramping up efforts to promote research and uptake of climate-friendly initiatives.

Mr Dola said there are ongoing plans to expand the agency's climate initiative fund across universities by equipping them with solar panels, carports and solar farms as sources of clean and renewable energy.

The Fund will also help the institutions to save electricity costs and generate income by selling excess power.



"The Resource Mobilisation and Partnership (RM&P) Directorate is at the forefront of driving change through strategic initiatives in sustainability, inclusivity and research," he said.

The Fund is also advocating for reforestation through tree planting, targeting to plant 15,000 trees in a year.

According to the Fund's Resource Mobilisation Strategy (2024-2026), centres of excellence will enable universities to strengthen their niche areas.

The document underscores that through advancement of solarisation of universities, enhanced tree growing, and setting up of centres of excellence, universities will be able to safeguard the environment and catalyse achievement of the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda.

"UF will support universities to establish climate change centres that will serve as hubs for research, education and innovation, bringing together multidisciplinary expertise to develop solutions for mitigating and adapting to climate change," the document reads.

The centres will further promote partnerships with local communities to transform research into policies that drive sustainable development.