

03 November 2011

PRESS RELEASE

## **New network brings together PhD students in Africa and Europe**

A project to establish a unique network for doctoral students and early career researchers in African and European countries was launched today by the Association of Commonwealth Universities at the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) in Doha, Qatar.

DocLinks will raise awareness of doctoral education, create the first-ever single publicity channel for resources relevant to PhD study, and establish contact and exchange between PhD students and early career researchers in Africa and Europe.

Professor John Wood, Secretary General of the Association of Commonwealth Universities, anticipates that the project will make a valuable contribution to students and universities across both continents. 'The long-term aim of DocLinks is to feed into policymaking and strategic development in higher education in the EU and in Africa. I am delighted that the ACU will play a pivotal role in bringing together key players to help map out a new direction for doctoral education in the regions concerned', he said.

DocLinks, which is supported by the Erasmus Mundus programme of the European Union, will run over two years. The initial phase will analyse the needs of the target audience, while the second phase will include the development of a dedicated website and virtual platform for interaction, as well as two residential schools. The ACU is coordinating the project with 6 other African and European partners.

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Notes to editors:

1. The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) was established in 1913 and is the oldest international inter-university network in the world, with over 500 members in six continents. Its mission is to strengthen the higher education institutions within its membership through international co-operation and understanding. The ACU operates a series of professional networks for staff in key roles, undertakes research and policy analysis on key issues in international higher education, and has active programmes in libraries and information, research management, gender and university governance. For further information, visit [www.acu.ac.uk](http://www.acu.ac.uk)
2. Partners in the DocLinks – Increasing Understanding and Establishing Better Links between African and European Doctoral Education Candidates project are:  
The Association of Commonwealth Universities, United Kingdom (Coordinator)  
Eurodoc, The European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers, Belgium  
French Speaking University Agency, Belgium  
Irish African Partnership for Research Capacity Building, Ireland  
University of Jyväskylä, Finland  
University of Botswana, Botswana  
African Academy of Sciences, Kenya
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