



Africa Diaspora Academic Network – United Kingdom (ADAN-UK)

Charity Number: 1184476

Trustees' Annual Report

For the period 1 June 2024 to 31 May 2025

1. About ADAN-UK

Africa Diaspora Academic Network – (ADAN-UK) was established to enable African academics to harness their expertise and contribute meaningfully to addressing pressing development and governance challenges across the African continent. The network provides a platform for constructive dialogue, policy engagement, research collaboration, and knowledge exchange between the UK and Africa.

Our aim is to foster and sustain a vibrant community of practice in the United Kingdom dedicated to promoting, debating, and advancing practical solutions to Africa's development and governance challenges through research, learning, training, and the exchange of ideas.

Strategic Objectives

The network's strategic objectives remain:

- To serve as a hub of expertise on a wide range of educational, cultural, socio-political, and economic issues affecting Africa for UK-based policymakers, institutional leaders, civil society, and development partners
- To actively engage in national and transnational collaborations that promote innovation and knowledge exchange between the UK and Africa
- To empower and strengthen the visibility and capacity of ADAN-UK members to influence policy and academic discourse relating to Africa
- To engage as equitable partners with UK-based academic institutions, policymakers, and development partners in shaping policy and practice
- To contribute to and influence research agendas and ensure rigorous interpretation and dissemination of Africa-focused research
- To identify, develop, and share best practices across Africa and globally
- To facilitate opportunities that enhance the contribution of African diaspora academics to development and governance in Africa
- To support capacity building in higher and further education institutions, government bodies, and development partners in both the UK and Africa.

Trustees

- Judy Muthuri
- Angela Gathu

2. Activities and Achievements

ADAN-UK continues to operate primarily through in-kind contributions, including volunteer time, institutional support, and collaborative partnerships. Despite limited financial resources, the network delivered several impactful activities during the reporting period.

2.1 Capacity Building and Knowledge Exchange

During the year, ADAN-UK organised a series of webinars and knowledge-sharing sessions aimed at supporting African academics and early career researchers. Key topics included:

- Securing research funding and grants in the UK and internationally
- Decolonising research methodologies and knowledge production
- Academic publishing and impact pathways
- Strengthening Africa–UK research collaborations

These sessions attracted participants from across the UK, Africa, and the wider diaspora, reinforcing ADAN-UK's role as a knowledge hub.

2.2 Mentorship and Academic Support

The network expanded its mentorship programme to support early career researchers and postgraduate students of African origin.

- A total of 5 mentees were supported during the year
- Mentorship focused on career progression, research development, and navigating academic institutions
- Senior academics provided guidance, peer support, and networking opportunities

This initiative continues to strengthen academic pathways and build confidence among emerging scholars.

2.3 Outreach and Widening Participation



ADAN-UK remained committed to widening participation and inspiring future generations:

- Delivered Black History Month engagement activities in collaboration with partner universities
- Engaged students from primary and secondary schools, particularly those from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds
- Promoted higher education pathways and representation in academia

These activities contributed to raising aspirations and visibility of African academics in the UK.

2.4 Partnerships and Collaboration

ADAN-UK strengthened relationships with academic institutions, research networks, and community organisations. The network:

- Participated in collaborative discussions on Africa-focused research and policy
- Contributed to knowledge exchange initiatives linking UK and African institutions
- Continued engagement with partners to explore joint funding and programme opportunities

3. Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges

ADAN-UK continues to face a number of structural challenges:

- Limited funding opportunities, restricting programme expansion and sustainability
- Volunteer capacity constraints, particularly due to increasing workloads within UK universities
- Difficulty in scaling activities without dedicated administrative and financial resources

Opportunities

Despite these challenges, several opportunities have emerged:



- Growing interest in Africa-centred research and decolonisation agendas
- Increased recognition of the role of the African diaspora in shaping global knowledge systems
- Potential for strategic partnerships and funding applications to strengthen institutional capacity
- Expansion of digital platforms enabling wider engagement and participation

4. Appreciation

The Trustees would like to express their sincere appreciation to all ADAN-UK members, volunteers, and partners whose continued commitment makes the network's work possible.

We extend our gratitude to supporting institutions and collaborators, including:

- Africa Academy of Management
- Africa Research Group
- Nottingham University Business School

We also thank all participating academics, students, and stakeholders who contributed to the success of our activities during the year.

5. Future Outlook

Looking ahead, ADAN-UK aims to:

- Secure funding to strengthen organisational capacity and sustainability
- Expand mentorship and capacity-building programmes
- Increase policy engagement and research impact
- Strengthen Africa–UK partnerships and collaborative projects
- Broaden outreach to underrepresented communities and early career academics