

African Governments and Business Leader Alvaro Sobrinho Launch Scholarship Fund for Africa

Submitted by: Planet institute

Wednesday, 4 November 2015

In a drive to generate scientific and technological innovation on the continent, African governments and business leaders such as Dr Alvaro Sobrinho have come together and created a scholarship that will fund high-level scientific education for the next 10 years.

A total of \$5 million has been pledged to The Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund by a collection of African governments and a group of business leaders, operating under the moniker 'Africa Business Champions for Science'.

The money will be used to fund 10,000 PhD scholarships over the course of the next 10 years, as part of a World Bank program aimed at boosting scientific learning in the region, called the 'Partnership for Skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (PASET)'.

The African Business Champions for Science group is chaired by Angolan businessman Álvaro Sobrinho who is well known both for his success in business and his philanthropy. He has long been an advocate of expanding Africa's scientific and technological capacities as a sustainable approach to African development.

"Excellence in science and technology will equip Africa with a workforce ready to compete in the 21st century." stated Dr Álvaro Sobrinho.

The creation of the scholarship fund is the most recent of Sobrinho's many efforts to stimulate and promote scientific and technological development in Africa. As the chairman of the Planet Earth Institute, an NGO that promotes scientific development in Africa, Dr Álvaro Sobrinho has been promoting these objectives for many years.

Concrete steps towards the realisation of his vision for a technologically competitive continent were taken when the Heads of State of Ethiopia, Rwanda and Senegal formally supported the scholarship by signing a declaration after the official launch in Johannesburg, South Africa.

After the event, Dr Álvaro Sobrinho expressed his desire to go beyond philanthropy to find ways in which scientific innovation and skills can create lasting benefits for Africa. The expectation is that by funding education initiatives, a lasting foundation of regional knowledge and expertise can be brought to Africa.

The World Bank believes the funding of science and innovation to be an essential component for maintaining growth in Africa. The Bank has declared its full support for the scholarship and has applauded the unique way that the fund has brought together multiple partners – private and public, emerging and traditional.

The scholarship has received wide support from across the continent and will begin operations in June 2016.