

THE CASE FOR AN AFRICAN SPACE AGENCY

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We currently have the African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development (ALC), a NEPAD initiative to establish an African Institute of Space Science (AISS) as a networked organisation of existing entities, and half a dozen national space or remote sensing agencies and programmes. There are also university departments and individual academics in astrophysics or other areas relevant to space science and technology, and amateur astronomy associations.

First, what is the optimal way to articulate all of these to each other so that we achieve continental coordination? Second, the capital-intensive demands of the space industry make it optimal to pool our scarce human and financial resources. As a continent, we will be able to negotiate better offers for satellite construction, space launches, technology transfer, and share data, scarce facilities and infrastructure.