

SPbPU at the expert platform of the Russian Ministry of Education and Science: strengthening Russian-African cooperation

Polytechnic University took part in the strategic meeting of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation dedicated to the development of the Russian-African Network University (RAFU). Polytechnic representatives presented a report on the consortium's activities, highlighting key achievements and plans to strengthen cooperation with African countries.



In his speech, Konstantin Mogilevsky, Deputy Minister of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation, emphasized the role of SPbPU in the development of the project: In two years, the consortium has made a qualitative leap: today it includes 90 Russian and 45 African organizations from 15 countries. The Summer Multidisciplinary University, which we are organizing for the fourth time, has become a key project. However, it is important to move forward — to develop higher education programs, network formats and double degrees. SPbPU, which has serious experience in this area, can become a driver of such changes.

Dmitry Arseniev, vice-rector for international affairs of SPbPU, emphasized the

transformation of RAFU into a multifunctional platform: We consider RAFU not only as an educational project, but also as an instrument of access to scientific, personnel and youth resources.

Maxim Zalyvsky, head of the RAFU Project Office, presented the consortium's achievements. An important step was the updating of the RAFU website, which has become a working tool with 14 sections, an online catalog of 120 courses and regularly updated news.

Maxim Zalyvsky paid special attention to the RAFU Summer Multidisciplinary University, which in four years has increased the number of participants from 100 to 300 and the geography from 10 to 33 countries. The program has shifted its focus from cultural and historical tracks to professional internships and advanced training with the participation of industrial partners such as the Mali Artificial Intelligence Center. In 2025, 20 educational programs are scheduled, some of which will be linked to a project dedicated to developing a vision for reforming higher engineering education in Mali. Russian universities are involved in the development of the concept of creation and curricula of educational programs for the new Polytechnic University of Bandiagara on the priority areas of development of Mali.

The participants of the meeting discussed the initiatives on allocation of quotas for African students within the network programs and the significant role of the project in the development of cooperation with African countries. They emphasized the importance of RAFU as an effective instrument of interaction and made proposals to optimize the work of the consortium aimed at increasing its practical impact.

The RAFU member universities highly appreciated the work of SPbPU as a coordinator of the consortium. Polytechnic will continue to expand its partner network and introduce new formats of cooperation aimed at sustainable development of the regions of Russia and Africa.

Summarizing the results of the meeting, Konstantin Mogilevsky proposed to create scientific laboratories to assess colonial damage on the basis of the leading universities participating in the RAFU consortium — a project that could strengthen the expert status of the association. The participants also agreed to hold regular meetings of the RAFU Presidium to develop strategic decisions, operational planning and strengthen partnership with African countries.

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