

## SPbPU hosted the second RAFU international conference

Polytechnic University hosted the second RAFU International Scientific and Practical Conference «Contribution of Russian and African Universities to Sustainable Regional Development». This year the event was held in a hybrid format and brought together about 100 participants. 40 speakers represented 23 RAFU member organizations from Russia, ten African countries (Morocco, Algeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Mali, Ethiopia, Burundi, Guinea, Kenya, Cameroon) and Brazil.



RAFU member universities summarized the results of their work for 2024, shared their achievements and best practices. Dmitry Arseniev presented the activities of Polytechnic University as a consortium coordinator. RAFU confidently takes its position on the educational map of the world. Since its establishment in 2021 as a single platform for educational cooperation between universities, the consortium has significantly expanded its boundaries. Under the coordination of SPbPU, the total number of RAFU participants has more than doubled, and today it is more than 120 universities, scientific and other organizations. At the same time, the number of RAFU African partners has quadrupled during the same period — more than 40 universities from 14 countries. This growth is the result of our intensive work to promote the RAFU brand and Russian-African educational cooperation

in general.



The RAFU Summer Multidisciplinary University, which is the flagship event of the consortium's activities, has become an effective mechanism in the development of bilateral educational partnership between Russia and Africa. In 2024, the number of participants almost doubled: 19 Russian RAFU universities organized summer schools. The concept of the Summer Multidisciplinary University was adjusted, with the main emphasis on conducting professional development and retraining courses at the sites of universities that already have existing projects or are just starting to develop Russian-African initiatives.

Polytechnic University implemented a comprehensive professional development program for leading employees of the National Center for Artificial Intelligence of Mali. Classes and events were held on the basis of three universities: St. Petersburg Polytechnic University, Moscow Polytechnic University and Moscow Aviation University. Based on the results of this cooperation, all three universities signed agreements on further cooperation with the National Center of Mali.





Among the participants who came to the conference were representatives of Russian universities-members of the RAFU consortium — Belgorod State University, Kirov St. Petersburg Forestry Engineering University and others. Delegation of Hassan II University, Omar Sabri, President of the SPbPU Alumni Association in Morocco, delegation of the University of Sciences and Technologies of Houari Bouamedienne (Algeria) and Professor of SPbPU Khaled Hamouda, from Mali was Honorary Consul of the country in St. Petersburg, Associate Professor of the Engineering and Construction Institute of SPbPU Issa Togo.



Experts from St. Petersburg, Samara, Chelyabinsk, Astrakhan, Moscow, Voronezh, Tambov, Irkutsk, Yakutsk, Tomsk told about projects with African partners to train national personnel, develop inter-university cooperation and scientific ties. Specialists highlighted the difficulties in the regulatory and legal field, which they have to face in the course of their work. The speakers shared the best practices in promoting Russian education, joint educational programs, preparation of African applicants for admission to Russian universities, advanced training programs for teachers of African universities.





It is worth noting the applied nature of many reports. These are joint scientific projects in such important for African countries areas as geology, construction, meteorology, agriculture, alternative energy, medicine, construction, ecology, economics.

On the margins of the conference two online signing of the memorandum of accession to RAFU took place with the Private University of Fez and the International University of Agadir. Polytechnic also signed cooperation agreements with the International University of Agadir.

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