

Box 19.9: A subregional centre of excellence in theoretical physics

The East African Institute for Fundamental Research was established in 2018. Located on the University of Rwanda campus in the capital city, it is poised to become one of the most important institutes of physics in Africa. It is a short walk away from the university's departments of physics and mathematics, with which it enjoys close collaboration.

The East African Institute for Fundamental Research is a partner of UNESCO's Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), based in Italy, on which it is closely modelled. It is the fruit of negotiations

between the ICTP and the Rwandan Ministry of Education, which has always been extremely supportive of the centre.

Like the ICTP, the East African Institute for Fundamental Research provides advanced training and research in condensed matter physics, geophysics and high energy physics, cosmology and astroparticle physics. It offers MSc and PhD programmes, as well as postdoctoral fellowships. It also has a visiting scientists programme.

For the 2019/2020 academic year, 20 students were enrolled in an MSc degree, including three women. A further three were enrolled in a PhD programme. Most

students receive scholarships from the ICTP, the Rwandan government or the Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World, a programme unit of UNESCO (see also Chapter 3).

In addition to research, the East African Institute for Fundamental Research has hosted activities on topics of relevance to artificial intelligence, such as short courses on machine learning and data science that have attracted 72 participants, including 14 women.

Source: Mary Ann Williams, ICTP

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