

2ND INTERNATIONAL **ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP** CONFERENCE **2023**

Africa Continental Trade Area (AfCFTA)

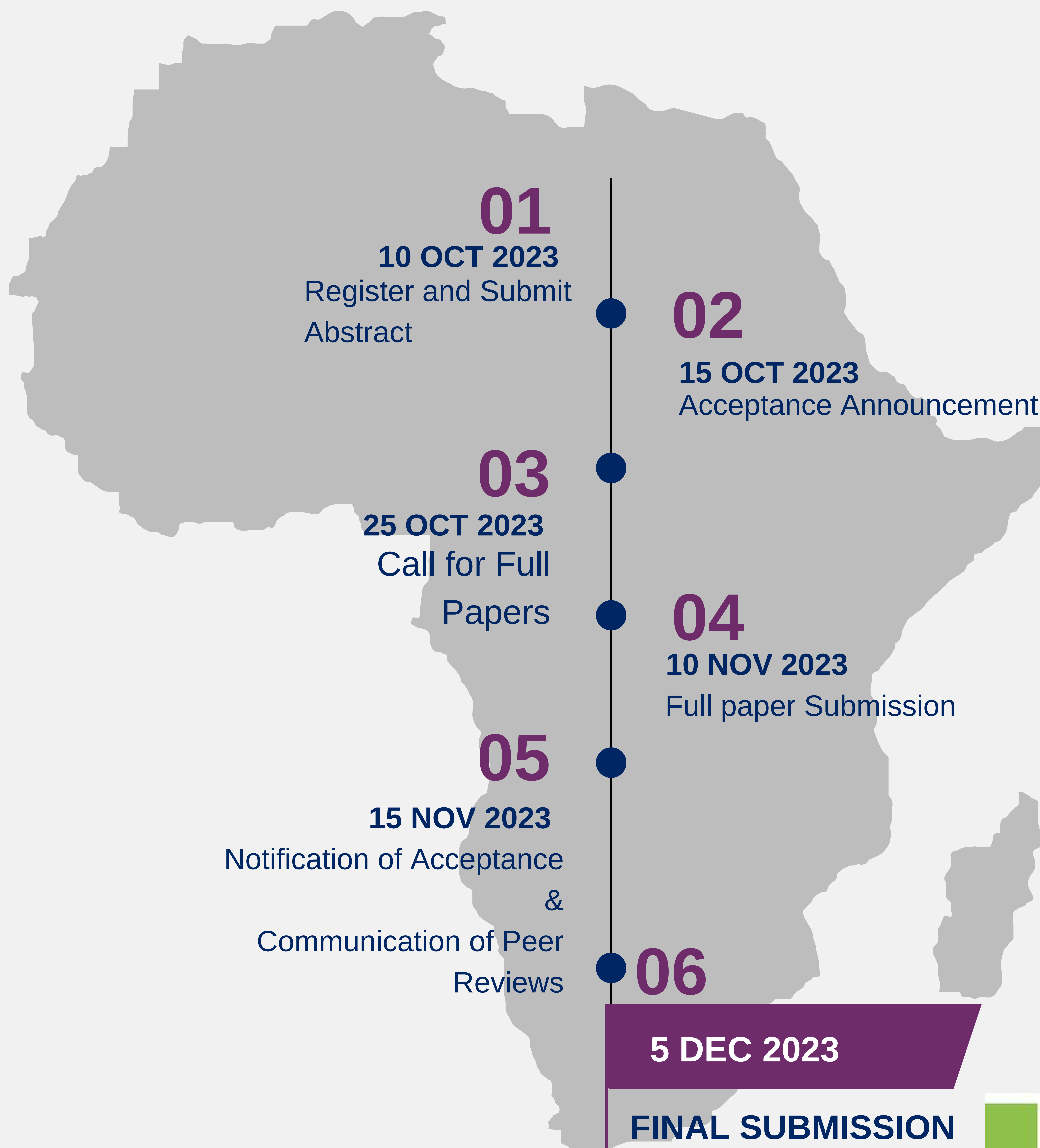
# LEADING CHANGE

in uncharted waters of the continental free trade agreement

## CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

The SBL and the University of Botswana are co-hosting the 2nd International Engaged Scholarship Conference, on the 13-15th December 2023, at Avani Gaborone Resort & Casino, Chuma Drive, Gaborone.

Abstracts are invited on each of the 6 conference thematic areas, no later than, 10 October 2023. You are to register in order to submit. Upon a positive evaluation by the scientific committee, a conference paper will be invited for submission by no later than 25 October 2023, to a double-blind peer review process.



**FINAL SUBMISSION**

Submit to <https://iesca.co.za>



All accepted conference papers will be published in electronic conference proceedings (with an ISBN number, as indexed by



... where outstanding quality papers will be invited into book chapters of a conference manuscript.

### **About the Conference:**

This conference is a platform for policy makers, revolutionary academics, agents of change, and indigenous knowledge holders to contribute their intellectual prowess towards creating collaborative opportunities between the public and private sector; between urban and rural businesses; between local, national, and regional enterprises, to develop sustainable economies. The aim of the conference is to enlist the voices of policy makers, local, regional, and global enterprises to contribute their perspectives on poverty eradication solutions in the context of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area. The conference seeks to spotlight systems for coproducing knowledge in ways that navigate policy, science, and indigenous knowledge to advance poverty eradication agendas of African communities.

**AfCFTA offers a scholarship platform for contributions towards this intra-continental free-trade harmonization endeavor. Papers (and Abstracts): Novel Research contributions are invited on economic policies, strategies, and related topics - to help Africa shape its common-market harmonization endeavor.**



### **TRACK 1: *Intra-Africa Trade Status***

Harmonization of the continental free trade market for African countries is a significant development towards greater African unity.

- Alignment of financial systems and the easing of potential barriers would go a long way in facilitating this process.
- A discourse on national and regional financial (including Fiscal and monetary) frameworks, multi-lateral diplomatic arrangements on trade between countries, currencies, taxing systems as well as banking and investment regimes would play a key role in facilitating trans-border, trans-regional, and ultimately, intra- continental trade.
- A Borderless Africa: Implications for rural-urban Economic Spaces Challenges in Implementing the AfCFTA
- Challenges in implementing the AfCFTA

### **TRACK 2: *Agenda 2063 and Implications for national and Regional Policies***

- Prior to the Africa Free Trade Markets harmonization undertaking, economic policies and strategies were nationally and regionally focused. A harmonization discourse would help forge a new chapter in the Africa-Free-Trade market development.
- Protocol on Trade in Services: Implications for Higher Education

### **TRACK 3: *Entrepreneurship, Small Business, and the Informal Sector***

- The opening of Africa's continental trading markets is geared to advance the economic prospects of the continent, and all its people.
- Entrepreneurship development, including the strengthening of small, micro, and medium enterprises (within the formal and informal sectors) is central to this effort.
- Rules of Origin: Implications for African Enterprises and the Rest of the World



**TRACK 4: *Exporting, Internationalization, and Foreign Direct Investment***

Novel Research contributions are invited on how provincial bodies, nation-states, and respective regional collaborative formations can align their internationalization regimes, including multilateral trade frameworks to better exploit the current African free-market trading developments. Through a Free-Trade Market liberalization undertaking, Africa seeks to advance its continental economic competitive standing in the greater global political economy.

- International Trade Theory
- EU intra-regional Trade Lessons for Africa
- Peace and Security issues in Africa – implications international trade

**TRACK 5: *Cultural Diversity, Human Resources, and Logistics/Supply Chain and Organization***

- The opening of the Africa Trading Markets has direct implications on the movement of labor between respective African countries, with direct implications on cultural diversity, respective national human resource frameworks, and related practices.
- Operations, supply chain, and project management processes also need to align with continental market extensions.
- Cultural Diversity, human movement, operations & logistics – Implications on trade Papers (and Abstracts):

**TRACK 6: *Technology Infrastructure, Innovations, Tools, Systems & Enablers***

- Information and Communication Technology is at the center of all modern economic activity, be it e-Business, e-Commerce, e-Marketing, or purely efficient communication, training, or trading at a stock exchange anywhere in the continent and the world.
- Harmonizing technology infrastructure, networks, and systems, as well as technology resources to simplify trade, would help improve intra-Africa trade efforts.
- Digital Transformation: Implications on intra-Africa Trade Papers (and Abstracts).



## **TRACK 7: *The Creative Economy In the Context Of The African Continental Free Trade Area( AfCFTA)***

- The broad benefits and advantages that would impact the African creative economy within the framework of AfCFTA.
- The structure of the requisite legal framework that would facilitate cohesion of the African creative economy within the AfCFTA.
- The nature of the enforcement mechanisms required to protect copyright and intellectual property rights of the African creative economy within the AfCFTA.
- The nature of harmonization of policy and regulatory frameworks necessary and required and which particular areas are critical in the regulatory framework for the African creative economy to prosper within the AfCFTA.
- The strategies and innovations necessary to address the language barrier and other cultural complexities and cross cultural opportunities of the African creative economy within the AfCFTA.
- The structure of economic integration and the financial infrastructure required for the African creative economy to function within the AfCFTA.
- The challenges of the digital divide as it affects the AfCFTA and the necessary inclusive transformative technological strategies required for the African creative economy to fully function within AfCFTA.



**TRACK 8: *The signing and ratification of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) by African states has reignited academic and policy interest in integration and regionalism.***

The signing and ratification of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) by African states has reignited academic and policy interest in integration and regionalism. AfCFTA is one of the largest free trade areas, constituting around 1.2 billion people in 55 national economies with an approximate \$2.5 trillion combined GDP. However, low levels of intra-African trade and economic productivity has security and political implications for the implementation of the AfCFTA in both the short and long-term. For instance, the implementation of AfCFTA could exacerbate grievances emanating from regional economic disparities and uneven distribution of integration benefits and costs. This is particularly true in contexts where relations between states are complex and characterized by intense rivalry and negative competition. Weak and fragmented regionalism, slow growth, political instability, and the absence of harmonized security policies to tackle illegal trade and smuggling add to the challenge of integration. On the other hand, current measures to deepen continental economic integration through, for example, the creation of one-stop-border posts under the Horn of Africa Initiative and the African Union (AU) plan to Boost Intra-African Trade (BIAT), can go a long way in deepening integration and creating economies of scale with built-in flexibilities to withstand external shocks. Doing so could promote economic development, particularly in fragile contexts, while simultaneously positioning Regional Economic Communities (RECs) as sites for developmental regionalism. Under the Peace and Security theme, submissions will tackle, broadly the following topics:

- Democracy and good governance
- Pan Africanism
- Dispute Resolution and free trade
- AfCFTA and informal cross-border trade in Africa
- Gender disparity and mainstreaming
- Global geopolitical dynamics and influences
- Youth Participation



1. Register and submit your abstracts here

2. The deadline for submission of completed chapters of up to 6000 words is Dec 5, 2023.

The book is expected to be published in 2024.

### Abstracts format

Title of Paper

Author's Name(s) (Full Name(s))

Affiliation/University/ Institute e-mail address

### ABSTRACT

An abstract should be a single paragraph, with no indentation. It should summarize key points of the manuscript in 200 to 350 words. Hence, standard practice has seen abstracts being spared citations, references, figures, tables, and graphs. For, abstracts should capture only the essence of the manuscript, including a few lines of introduction, linked to a shortened problem and a rationale. Whilst titles should give a clear link between the proposed manuscript and the conference, the framing of the abstract must also show a link between the proposed manuscript and the theme of the conference. The aim and objective would follow logically, leading to a methodology. An expected contribution also balances the context (in place of the findings). Linking this to the actual aim and purpose of the conference or journal would improve the relevance (and acceptability) of the abstract. Obviously, if the manuscript is based on the work that already has the findings, the abstract becomes even more balanced. Indeed, abstracts should also end with a logically flowing conclusion.

***\*Provide 5 keywords in alphabetical order separated with semicolons, not included in the title. Keywords: writing; template; sixth; edition; self-discipline***



We invite original, high-quality papers of unpublished conceptual, constructive, experimental and/ or theoretical research in topical areas across the four thematic areas of the conference.

NB: Authors undertake NOT to submit the same manuscripts for publication or similar consideration in other publication platforms. Submission of a manuscripts implies that it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

### **Full Paper Reviewing Process**

- All manuscript submissions will be subjected to a double-blind peer-review process, guided by strict scientific criteria of academic excellence, integrity, and novelty.
- The submitting author is responsible for ensuring that the article's publication has been approved by all co-authors, taking responsibility for the quality of the submission from the peer review to the presentation, and ultimately, the publication process.
- The publisher will not be held legally responsible should there be any claims for compensation.

### **Language**

- English, American, British, South Africa usage is accepted, but not a mixture of these.
- Authors are encouraged to use relevant editing services and tools to improve the quality of manuscripts, thereby improving chances for acceleration into the Journal of Public Administration (JoPA) Special Issue.

### **Images, Figures, Tables**

- Standard international formatting practice in the use of Tables, Figures or images applies.



## Tables

• The Heading of the Table is placed above the Table. The Title of Figures is always placed below the figure as demonstrated below

Table 1: Formatting Template for Tables

International Engaged Scholarship Series				
Country & Venue	1st IESC'22 - Jhb, RSA	2nd IESC'23 - UB, Gaborone	3 <sup>rd</sup> IESC'24 - Ghana,	4th IESC'25 - UNAM, Windhoek
Theme	AfCTA	AfCTA & PAF (e-Nets)	Cross-Regional Trade & Tech-Dev Synergies	Technology Status & Trade Beyond 2030

International Engaged Scholarship Conference (IESC); University of Botswana (UB); Pan African e-Networks [PAf (e-Nets)]

Source: Mlitwa, 2022



Figure 1: Essence of the Co-creation Concept in Developments  
Source: SBL, 1st IESC'22 Brochure

***Finally, Tables, figures and images sourced from alternative publications should be acknowledged with appropriate references.***

## Paper Structure

- Title
- Author details (and affiliation)
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Problemata
- Aim/Purpose/Objectives
- Methodology/Approach
- Findings/Results
- Conclusion/Implications/Recommendations
- Acknowledgments (when appropriate)
- References
- Appendices (when appropriate)



**Formatting & Paper Length Limit**

<i>Paper length</i>	<i>Full paper: within 15 pages, including references, tables/ charts and keywords</i>
<i>Abstract length</i>	<i>200 - 350 words</i>
<i>Key words</i>	<i>3 - 5 words</i>
<i>Font</i>	<i>12 points Times New Roman</i>
<i>Paragraph</i>	<i>Single-spaced</i>
<i>Margin</i>	<i>Normal (Top: 2,54cm, Bottom: 2,54cm left: 3,18cm, Right 3,18cm)</i>
<i>Page Numbers</i>	<i>Bottom-centered</i>
<i>Layout</i>	<i>One-column Portrait</i>
<i>Format</i>	<i>MS Word compatible file</i>

**POSTER FORMAT**

A poster is a graphical illustration of your research project, article message, or idea. As such, a poster should be based on the submitted abstract as accepted by the Scientific Committee. It must be a format that is easy to follow, read, and comprehend with minimal effort.

- Mostly through inclusion of some visuals, charts, and or graphs - joined by fewer words. As a basis, a Poster must have a title that is bold and representative of the message of the poster. Usually on top of the poster, together with the names and affiliations of the authors, in a font lower than that of the title. The colors of the text and images must always be in direct contrast to the background, to enhance visibility. Size: A1 international paper size, on a board or material that allows it to be posted on the boards



*Today's world is an interdependent trade ecosystem. The recent signing of the African Continental Free Trade Area (2018) underpins the commitment of African leaders to operationalize the interdependence of economies in the African region. Even more important, is the prevailing mood amongst African leaders to fast-track industrial development and regional integration.* On 1 January 2021, trading under AfCFTA started. The AfCFTA with its 35 signatories, is an instrument that legitimizes the creation of a single continental market for goods and services – with free movement of business, people, and investments – laying – the foundations for the integrated, prosperous, and inclusive Africa. One of the expected outcomes through the implementation of the area is to boost intra-African trade. Currently, intra-African trade accounts for between 10-16%. It is expected that the area will accelerate growth and sustainable development through a doubling of overall intra-African trade by 2022, and tripling trade in agricultural goods by 2023.

Trade interdependences pose challenges for policy makers and opportunities for local and cross-border traders. Challenges abound when economic policies do not create an enabling environment for local and international trade to be optimized. Forward-looking trade policy frameworks are crucial in international trade, but these are not enough to transform and align African economies with the needs of the current digital industrial revolution. Without a special kind of policy-making acumen and leadership sensibilities, that unlock capabilities to navigate the global business environment nimbly, the policy environment will still not yield inclusive growth.

Notwithstanding the collapsing of borders as envisaged in the AfCFTA, the trade deficit in Africa is high, while intra-Africa Trade is low. This is attributed to several factors including changes in the structure of the African economies that saw unrelenting unemployment figures in the past ten years, a decline in the productive sector of the African economies, and inequality increased in some countries.

- The effects of the financial crisis of Covid 19 and the Ukrainian War, as well as the increase in indebtedness of households, aggravates growth problems faced by small, medium, and large enterprises.



*These economic conditions require the private and public sectors to swivel around in search for growth opportunities, often, in uncharted waters of international trade. Accordingly, the questions that will drive chapters invited for this publication will be contextualized around the unique geopolitical and economic circumstances of Countries in Africa. Some of these questions are: how can small, medium, and large businesses unlock value against the low growth trap, high inequality, and the speed of technological and market changes? What will it take to erase the legacy policy choices from the consciousness and soul of local businesses, and institutionalize the AfCFTA to invigorate the African economies? What kind of international trade opportunities are available and how can local businesses better prepare for such opportunities? Given, trade facilitation problems, infrastructure deficit, as well as peace and security issues in Africa how can the public and private sectors institutionalize the AfCFTA in a way that would pivot Africa on a new inclusive growth path*

### **Book Chapters**

*With the support of the University of Botswana and the University of South Africa, we are pleased to invite proposals for chapters of previously unpublished and original work to be included in *Leading Change in the context of uncharted Africa Continental Free Trade Area Waters* to be published by a high impact Scopus publisher in 2024.*

### **Submission Procedure**

- 1. Book chapter proposals with a deep theoretical analysis focused on international trade theory and its implications for different industrial and higher education sectors*
- 2. You are invited to submit a Word document with the title of the proposal and an abstract of 500 - 600 words. In addition, please submit a 200-word author(s) bio which should include: the author's or authors' professional title(s), affiliation(s), and contact details.*
- 3. The abstract should present a strong proposal that describes the subject of the study, and both a clear methodological and theoretical approach based on specific arguments to support the proposal. Include specific details and primary sources that explain how the proposal challenges or updates existing research.*