

Pan-African private higher education network launches

Actis has launched Honoris United Universities, as the first pan-African private higher education network committed to preparing and educating the next generation of African leaders and professionals able to impact regionally in a globalised world.



Luis Lopez - CEO, Honoris United Universities

Actis began with 'beacon' markets in Francophone Africa, investing in Université Centrale Group, the leading post-secondary education group in Tunisia in December 2014. In 2016, the platform expanded to Morocco, creating a Northern Africa Hub through its investment in Université Mundiapolis, renowned for its international approach and focus on employability.

Entry into South Africa

This week, Actis announced a further commitment to Francophone Africa through an investment, subject to regulatory approvals, in Ecole Marocaine des Sciences de l'Ingénieur (EMSI), the largest private institution in Morocco and the leading private engineering school.

It also announced the expansion of [Honoris United Universities](#) to South Africa, an important Anglophone beacon market that will anchor the platform in Southern Africa.

Subject to regulatory approvals, Honoris has entered into an investment agreement with Management College of Southern Africa, known as Mancosa, and the Regent Business School. Together, Mancosa and Regent are South Africa's leading private distance learning institutions, focused on providing accredited, accessible and affordable education.

These agreements in Morocco and South Africa mark the genesis of the pan-African education leadership position that Honoris United Universities seeks to cement. As a whole, the universities will offer more than 100 degrees in fields including health sciences, engineering, IT, business, law, architecture, arts and design, media, education and political science. Delivery is focused on student success and accessibility and includes a blend of on-campus, learning centres and distance learning.

Newly appointed CEO

Actis has appointed Luis Lopez as the CEO of Honoris United Universities, who brings a strong track record of student success and international management experience from Laureate International Universities.

Lopez stated, “I am proud to introduce Honoris United Universities, a unique platform providing international quality education. It is rooted in the vision of the founders of the member institutions. Aware of the vital need for their communities to develop human capital, they have each worked for decades to build relevant and demanding academic models with the dual objectives of developing the employability and the life skills of their graduates. We believe our key values – collaborative intelligence, mobility and agility - unite us in the purpose of securing a successful impact for our students, their families and their communities.”

Rick Philips, partner, Actis, said, “Actis has been operating in Africa for over seven decades. Through the businesses in which we invest, we employ over 100,000 people. We understand not only what students are looking for in terms of quality and access but also what their prospective employers are looking for when they graduate. Businesses are looking for applicants with internationally accredited levels of education. Employers in Africa have ambitions across the continent and beyond - they need candidates with global perspectives but who understand the diversity of Africa and their local markets and can demonstrate the skills to operate successfully.”

Hichem Omezzine, co-lead global education sector, Actis, added, “We have developed extensive domain knowledge in the education sector by backing the trend for emerging market consumers to secure their own and their children’s future quality of life by investing in their education. This has given us the credibility and experience to identify and to work with world class institutions to support their growth ambitions. We are thrilled to expand our partnership with Université Centrale and Université Mundiapolis to Mancosa, Regent and EMSI - three impactful market leaders.”

Actis is a leading investor in growth markets with over US\$13 billion raised since inception and a growing portfolio of investments across Asia, Africa and Latin America. The firm identifies investment opportunities in response to two trends, rising domestic consumption and the need for sustained investment in infrastructure.

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