

About the Oxfordshire–Africa Forum on International Arbitration

John Eccles House, Oxford Science Park

The Oxfordshire–Africa Forum on International Arbitration is a flagship initiative of the Center for International Mediators and Arbitrators (CIMA) headquartered in England and Wales. Established to foster meaningful engagement between one of Europe’s prominent centers of legal learning—*Oxfordshire*—and the diverse arbitration communities across Africa, the Forum serves as CIMA’s primary platform for training, dialogue, and thought leadership across Africa. Through the Forum, CIMA delivers high-level mediation and arbitration programmes, fosters international scholarly exchange, and builds professional capacity—ensuring that African voices are not only included in the global arbitration discourse, but instrumental in shaping its future.

Fact File:

* Institutional Origin: The Forum was conceptualized and launched by CIMA (England & Wales) as part of its mandate to promote accessible, world-class arbitration and mediation education, especially in underrepresented regions like Africa.
* Strategic Purpose: It acts as a bridge-building mechanism between Oxfordshire's legacy of legal scholarship and Africa’s growing arbitration ecosystem, aligning with CIMA’s goal of empowering African practitioners and institutions through structured engagement, knowledge transfer, and contextualized training.
* Programming Vehicle: The Forum is the main delivery channel for CIMA’s on-going Afro-European arbitration programs, including:
  + Fellowships and capacity-building events
  + Collaborative publications and research
  + In-person and virtual training hosted between Africa and Oxfordshire
* Philosophical Alignment: Both CIMA and the Forum champion equity, representation, and contextual relevance in arbitration, advocating for inclusive systems that reflect Africa’s unique legal, cultural, and commercial environments.
* Thought Leadership Platform: The Forum provides a structured space for African and international scholars, arbitrators, and policymakers to generate new research, publish scholarly work, and influence the development of arbitration jurisprudence and rules.
* Network Expansion Tool: It extends CIMA’s global network by cultivating partnerships with law schools, bar associations, arbitral institutions, and regional courts across Africa and Europe, positioning CIMA as a transcontinental leader in ADR.
* Innovation Incubator: The Forum acts as a testing ground for new ideas—whether adapting arbitration to technology, refining investor-state dispute resolution for African economies, or piloting sector-specific arbitration models.
* Credential Pathway: Through the Forum, CIMA offers curated academic and practical pathways that lead to certification, membership, or fellowship status—serving as a gateway for African professionals to join the global arbitration community on merit.