

Interstellar: The visionary co-architect behind the PAPSS Marketplace, unlocking intra-African trade

Interstellar Powers New PAPSS African Currency Marketplace to Revolutionize Cross-Border Payments and Boost Economic Growth



Mahe, Victoria Jul 8, 2025 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - [Interstellar](#), a leader in Africa's deep-tech sector, today announced its pivotal role as the co-architect and core technology engine of the newly launched PAPSS African Currency Marketplace (PACM). This next-generation platform, a landmark in the Fintech Africa landscape, was developed in collaboration with the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS), an initiative of Afreximbank. It directly addresses the continent's long-standing currency convertibility challenges, which have historically hindered cross-border payments in Africa.

For decades, the inability to easily trade between Africa's 41 sovereign currencies has forced businesses into a costly dependency on external hard currencies. This friction creates what experts call the "hard currency bottleneck," draining an estimated \$5 billion annually from the continent and hindering the progress of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The PAPSS African Currency Marketplace is a revolutionary piece of Financial Market Infrastructure (FMI). Powered by Interstellar's enterprise-grade technology, it provides a transparent, order-book-driven platform for African businesses and financial institutions to achieve direct local currency settlement in near real-time.

“This is not just about technology; it’s about fulfilling a continental vision for Intra-African Trade,” said Ernest Mbenkum, Founder and CEO of Interstellar. “The PAPSS African Currency Marketplace was architected from the ground up to serve Africa’s specific needs. PAPSS and Interstellar are not just collaborators; we are co-architects of a new financial future, aligned in purpose and committed to transformation. African currencies deserve a better place in the world. With this marketplace, your local currency is no longer just a medium of exchange—it becomes a vehicle of opportunity.”

Interstellar’s resilient and scalable infrastructure is the foundation of the marketplace, reducing transaction settlement times from weeks to mere minutes while ensuring institutional-grade security and compliance. The platform’s success was proven in a pilot phase where over 80 African corporations transacted across 12 different currency pairs, with all settlements occurring in local currencies.

Mike Ogbalu III, CEO of PAPSS, [affirmed the platform's impact](#): “The PAPSS African Currency Marketplace is fully transparent, order book-driven, and operates with trusted counterparties, strictly adhering to local regulatory frameworks and global best practices. By creating a single, continent-wide liquidity pool, PACM serves as a powerful liquidity engine for intra-African commerce.”

What This Means for Africa’s Financial Ecosystem

- **Banks and Fintechs:** Gain access to real-time currency pairing and local settlement rails to unlock liquidity, reduce risk, and offer innovative services to customers.
- **Businesses and Multinationals:** Seamlessly settle trade obligations, payrolls, and supplier payments in local currencies, eliminating costly intermediaries and releasing capital trapped by exchange restrictions.
- **Investors and Ecosystem Partners:** Engage with a proven infrastructure partner delivering the foundational rails essential to realizing the full economic potential of the **AfCFTA**.

About Interstellar

Interstellar is Africa’s leading deep-tech fintech infrastructure company. As the core tech provider and co-architect of the PAPSS African Currency Marketplace, Interstellar designs secure, scalable systems that solve Africa’s most persistent financial challenges. Its platforms—including STARGATE and Bantu Blockchain—are trusted by leading financial institutions to power cross-border payments, currency exchange, and tokenized asset movement. Interstellar’s mission is to make African value flow freely, securely, and natively.

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