



AFRILABS  
ANNUAL  
GATHERING

2025

CONCEPT NOTE



Africa's Innovation Future:  
Policy, Partnerships, and  
Progress



## THE AFRILABS ANNUAL GATHERING 2025

The AfriLabs Annual Gathering is AfriLabs' flagship event, offering a unique platform for tech hubs within the AfriLabs network and other stakeholders of Africa's technology and innovation ecosystem — including corporates, development agencies, academia, and investors — to convene, network, learn, and share knowledge.

The 2025 Gathering will mark the **10th edition** of this influential event, providing a powerful platform to shape Africa's technological and innovative landscape. Under the overarching theme, "Africa's Innovation Future: Policy, Partnerships, and Progress," the gathering will focus on fostering collaboration, driving actionable policies, and strengthening partnerships to position Africa as a global leader in innovation.

## THEME OVERVIEW

The future of Africa's innovation depends on robust policies, strategic partnerships, and measurable progress. This theme highlights the need for collaborative efforts between governments, private sector stakeholders, development partners, and innovators to drive inclusive growth, strengthen ecosystems, and create a roadmap for scalable, policy-backed solutions that enable socio-economic transformation.

The theme underscores the importance of aligning African innovation ecosystems with regional and international stakeholders, ensuring that Africa's technological advancements remain competitive on the global stage.



## BACKGROUND

The AfriLabs Annual Gathering is AfriLabs' flagship event, designed to bring together tech hubs, innovators, startups, policymakers, corporates, academia, development agencies, and investors across Africa and the diaspora. This annual convening serves as a unique platform for networking, knowledge exchange, and collaboration within the African technology and innovation ecosystem.

The 2025 Gathering will mark the 10th edition of this transformative event, building on a decade of fostering innovation and driving impactful initiatives. Against the backdrop of a rapidly evolving global digital economy, the event will provide a timely opportunity to focus on policy, partnerships, and measurable progress as drivers for Africa's innovation-led future.



The AfriLabs Annual Gathering has been held across different African countries in collaboration with member hubs, national and local governments, and the private sector.

- **In 2016**, the Gathering was held in Accra, Ghana with the theme "Making Tech Ecosystem Count".
- **In 2017**, the Gathering was hosted in collaboration with Hivos Coworking Summit, Cairo, Egypt with the theme "Future of African Cities: Innovation, Spaces, and Collaboration".



- **In 2018**, the Gathering was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania with the theme: " Innovation in the Data Age".
- **In 2019**, the Gathering was hosted in collaboration with the African Union Commission Department of Human Resource Science and Technology in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia with the theme: "Connect: Towards an Integrated Innovation Ecosystem".
- **In 2020**, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its restrictions all around the world, the Gathering was virtual with the theme "Building a Resilient Innovative Africa".
- **In 2021**, the AfriLabs Annual Gathering 2021 marked a monumental milestone for the network as we celebrated our 10th Anniversary. The Gathering themed "AfriLabs at 10: A Decade of Empowering and Inspiring Innovation across Africa" was held in Abuja, Nigeria and it aimed at spotlighting the growth and evolution of the African Innovation Ecosystem.
- **Connectivity, Collaboration and Innovation"** held from the 26th to 28th of October 2022 in Lusaka, Zambia, and was co-hosted by a consortium of AfriLabs Member Hubs which consisted of Jacaranda Hub, NyamukAfrika, Bongo Hive and WEAC.
- **In 2023**, the AfriLabs Annual Gathering themed "Accelerating Africa's Digital Economy: by the strength of our Community" was held from the 11th-13th October 2023 in Kigali, Rwanda and it aimed at accelerating Africa's digital economy through the strength of the AfriLabs community and various innovative/creative communities in Africa.
- **In 2024**, the 9th edition of the AfriLabs Annual Gathering focused on the theme "Uniting Innovation" was held in Cape Town South Africa from the 6th – 8th Of November 2024. The gathering aimed to foster collaboration, knowledge exchange, and enhance transformative initiatives.

# 2025 THEME OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES



The theme, **"Africa's Innovation Future: Policy, Partnerships, and Progress,"** emphasizes the critical role of robust policies, strategic partnerships, and measurable progress in unlocking Africa's innovation potential. Africa's future depends on collaborative efforts between governments, private sector players, development partners, and innovators to create sustainable ecosystems capable of addressing socio-economic challenges and driving global competitiveness.

The gathering will provide a platform to:

- Address the policy frameworks needed to support startups and innovation hubs.
- Highlight successful **public-private partnerships** that have scaled impactful solutions.
- Facilitate actionable discussions to develop roadmaps for **inclusive socio-economic growth**.
- Explore how Africa can strategically position itself as a **global leader in technology and innovation**.

## OBJECTIVES

The AfriLabs Annual Gathering 2025 seeks to:



**Facilitate Strategic Collaboration:** Strengthen alignment between policymakers, startups, development agencies, and private sector stakeholders to drive innovation.



**Foster Policy-Driven Innovation:** Advocate for agile, inclusive policies that enable innovation ecosystems to thrive.



**Highlight Best Practices:** Showcase successful partnerships and innovations that have created measurable progress.



**Drive Investment Opportunities:** Unlock funding and investment channels to scale startups and innovation hubs across Africa.



**Promote Cross-Border Synergies:** Build stronger regional and global partnerships that position African innovation on the world stage.



# KEY FOCUS AREAS & EXPECTED OUTCOMES

## KEY FOCUS AREAS

### 1. Policy Frameworks for Innovation:

Crafting policies that enable startups, support digital infrastructure, and encourage entrepreneurship.

### 2. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):

Highlighting the role of collaborative efforts in scaling innovation for impact.

Financing Africa's Innovation Ecosystem:

Exploring venture capital, alternative funding, and government-backed incentives for innovation growth.

### 3. Measurable Progress and Impact:

Showcasing data-driven insights to evaluate and communicate Africa's innovation success stories.

### 4. Building Inclusive Ecosystems:

Promoting diversity, inclusion, and the participation of women, youth, and marginalized communities.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The 2025 AfriLabs Annual Gathering will deliver the following outcomes:

- **Accelerated Collaboration:** Alignment between policymakers, innovators, and investors to strengthen Africa's innovation ecosystem.
- **A Policy and Partnership Roadmap:** Concrete recommendations for policy-backed, scalable innovations.
- **Knowledge Sharing:** Best practices and case studies of successful partnerships, policies, and impactful innovations.
- **Investment Commitments:** Facilitated opportunities for investment and funding to drive ecosystem growth.



# STRUCTURE OF THE GATHERING



## DAY 1 AND 2: MAIN STAGE SESSIONS

- **Announcements and Commencement:** Revealing international programs, government initiatives, and AfriLabs' own initiatives.
- **Keynote Addresses:** Eminent speakers addressing the theme of Uniting Innovation.

## TRACKS

The 2025 edition Tracks will feature a mix of:

- **Keynote Sessions:** Thought leadership from policymakers, innovators, and ecosystem leaders.
- **Panel Discussions:** Expert dialogues on critical policy, partnership, and innovation topics.
- **Workshops and Masterclasses:** Practical sessions to build capacity and share actionable insights.
- **Showcase and Exhibitions:** A platform for startups, tech hubs, and partners to showcase their solutions and innovations.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Facilitated sessions to connect stakeholders for collaboration and partnerships.
- **Pitch Competitions:** Opportunities for startups to secure funding and investment.

# EXPECTED ATTENDEES

## THE GATHERING WILL CONVENE



Venture Capitalists and Investors



Entrepreneurs/ start-ups



Hub Leaders



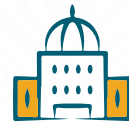
Representatives of development agencies



International Development partners



International Organisations/ UN Agencies



Government representatives & policymakers



Corporate Organisations Media Agencies



Academia Persons Interested in Africa & International Development

## PREVIOUS ATTENDEES



5+ Sitting and Former Heads of State & 20+ Ministers



20+ Journalists



5+ Community of Investors



100 Pan-African Government Officials & Pan- African Bodies



51+ African countries represented



20+ Exhibitors



50 + speakers and 300 moderators and translators



Over 300 AfriLabs community members



500 + CEOs, Start-Ups Innovators and Captains of industry



50 + Creatives



## WHAT TO EXPECT

- High-level panel discussions and dialogue
- Meetups & Ecosystem Tour
- Exhibitions
- Masterclasses by subject matter industry experts
- Networking
- An engaged Pan-African & global audience
- Gala night
- Soiree
- Parallel events/ dinners

The **AfriLabs Annual Gathering 2025** will serve as a cornerstone for Africa's innovation future, bringing together key stakeholders to drive policies, strengthen partnerships, and track progress for sustainable growth. Through this platform, AfriLabs aims to facilitate actionable solutions that will unlock Africa's innovation potential and position the continent as a global hub for technology and entrepreneurship.

**"Africa's Innovation Future: Policy, Partnerships, and Progress"** is more than a theme — it is a collective call to action to shape a future where innovation drives prosperity for all.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

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