# Artificial Intelligence for Development in Africa Scholarship Program

## *Webinar Series*

## Webinar 1: Strategies for Commercialization of Research Outputs

### 30th May, 2022: 14.00 hrs, EAT

## Introduction

The African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS), in collaboration with five regional and three international partners, is implementing a programme - Artificial Intelligence for Development in Africa (AI4D Africa). The overall objective of this program is to design and administer a scholarship program that will foster the talent needed to meet a growing demand for research and development (R&D) in responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) in African public universities. The specific objectives are: (a) to support at least 12 scholars to undertake and successfully complete PhD research in AI and ML in African universities for 24 to 36 months; (b) to support at least 8 Early Career Academics (ECA) to strengthen their R&D capacities in AI and ML for a period of at least 24 months; and (c) to facilitate professional development for the PhD and ECA scholarship beneficiaries.

The program began in March 2021 with the first cohort of 15 PhD students and 5 ECA beneficiaries selected and awarded scholarships between June and September 2021; and are currently implementing their research projects. A unique component of this program is the inclusion of a component on professional development of PhD and ECA scholarship holders (specific objective 3). The AI4D Africa programme has lined up a series of short courses (box 1) aimed at supporting the scholars to better define their career path and enhance the impact of their research findings on policy making and economic development processes.

### Box 1: Topics for the short courses

1. Commercialization of AI and ML solutions
2. Intellectual Property and Artificial Intelligence
3. Gender and Artificial Intelligence
4. Artificial Intelligence research for policy making
5. Artificial Intelligence and ethics
6. Understanding responsible AI development and deployment

## Course Objectives

Currently there are 15 PhD students who are development various AI solutions addressing challenges in agriculture, health, energy, and finance. To realise the desired economic development agenda, these solutions will need to be deployed in a scale that can have maximum impact. However, this can only happen if these solutions are successfully converted into tangible products and business solutions. This short courses, therefore, aim to equip the AI4D Africa scholarship beneficiaries with skills and strategies through which they can commercialize their AI solutions.

## Module Coverage

This will be a 2-hour interactive module on commercialization of AI solutions. It will be part of the short course on Intellectual Property and Artificial Intelligence. The module will address the following questions:

- Why is it important to protect AI solutions?
- What options are there to protect the AI solutions?
- Why is it important to commercialise AI solutions?
- How do you estimate the value of your AI solutions?
- What are the options for commercialising AI solutions?
- How do you identify your target market and conduct market survey?
- Are there some success cases of technology commercialization?

## Profile of the Tutor



Prof. Tom Ogada has been involved in technology transfer and commercialisation of R&D outputs for over 20 years. He has been a consultant with the World Intellectual Property Organization on issues of technology transfer and commercialization since the year 2000. He has also been a visiting professor for the Africa University since 2009, teaching technology transfer and management of IP assets. In the recent past, he has supported several African universities and research Institutions to put in place intellectual property policies. These include Koforidua Technical University in Ghana, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Ghana, University of Rwanda, Jomo Kenyatta University of Science and Technology (Kenya), National Agricultural Research Organization, (Uganda), Africa University, (Zimbabwe) Namibia University of Science and Technology, and University of Nairobi (Kenya).