



**ARTIFICIAL  
INTELLIGENCE  
FOR  
DEVELOPMENT  
AFRICA**

# Launch of AI4D Africa Scholarship Programme

August 31, 2021

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## Launch of Artificial Intelligence for Development Africa (AI4D Africa) Scholarship Programme

The official launch of the AI4D Africa Scholarship will take place on Tuesday August 31<sup>st</sup> 2021. This scholarship program is a comprehensive 3-year partnership programme funded by the International Development Research Center / Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (IDRC/SIDA) with the ultimate objective of fostering the talent needed to meet a growing demand for research and development in responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) in the continent.

The scholarship will support 5 Categories of scholars to undertake and successfully complete PhD and Post-doctoral research in AI and ML in African universities: Registered PhD Students; Women researchers and students from low income countries; Early Career Academics; Post-doctoral fellows and Senior Scholars. In addition to this it will enhance the capacities of the existing ICT departments by supporting them with research tools and related infrastructure for AI and ML. This will not only facilitate the research activities of the ECA but will also be made available to other postgraduate and final year undergraduate students within the departments.

The scholarship program is implemented by the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) based in Kenya in partnership with Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology in Ghana, University of Linköping, Sweden and University Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar, Senegal. Other key partners include the Regents of the University of California, United States; Human Sciences Research Council and Institute for Humanities in Africa based in South Africa; and the University of Eduardo Mondlane, Mozambique.

The AI4D Africa Scholarship program not only focuses on the research undertaken but also offers incredible opportunities to learn more on Responsible AI, build networks and grow socially and professionally through complementary ac-

tivities including but not limited to online short-courses, PhD Academy, quarterly seminars, annual workshops, mentorship, regional conferences and online training.

The following online courses are currently being developed: Intellectual Property and Artificial Intelligence by Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology; Gender and Artificial Intelligence by the Human Science Research Council; AI research for policy influence by the African Centre for Technology Studies; Artificial Intelligence and Ethics by the University of California; Understanding responsible AI development and deployment by the University of Linköping and AI for business will be prepared by the Catholic University of Central Africa.

It is expected that there will be a critical mass of scholars to enhance research and development in AI and ML related fields while public universities in sub-Saharan Africa will have developed their capacities to provide postgraduate training in AI and Machine Learning. In addition, there will be adequate access to knowledge by researchers and practitioners and enhanced networking opportunities of the AI and ML scholars. The program is also expected to generate substantial evidence for policy making on AI and ML related issues enhanced in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Call for applications for the 1<sup>st</sup> Cohort were opened on 31 March 2021 and closed on 3 May 2021. It was re-advertised on 19 May 2021 for Lusophone and Francophone and closed on 7 June 2021. Following a rigorous selection and evaluation process, Cohort 1 candidates have been selected and networks formed for them and their supervisors. The second call for applications for Cohort 2 is currently under development.

This event will mark the formal launch of the scholarship program and the network of AI scholars.

