AIFEST
REPORT

Makerere University
Main Hall, Ivory Tower

15TH MARCH - 26TH APRIL

2025

Table Of
Contents

Executive Summary

The inaugural AIFest 2025 and the First Inter-University AI Hackathon in Uganda took place on **April 26ᵗʰ, 2025**, at Makerere University, marking a historic moment for AI innovation in Uganda. The event attracted over **163** attendees, including students, mentors, industry leaders, and tech enthusiasts from across the region.

What began as a virtual hackathon on **March 15ᵗʰ, 2025,** culminated in a vibrant on-ground festival that blended project expos, networking opportunities, expert panels, and an awards ceremony. The initiative, powered by a **25**-member core team and a **3 million cash prize** to the **top 3 teams** from the **initial 95 teams** represented by **29** higher academic institutions, and we believe this was a bold step towards nurturing Uganda's future AI leaders.

With the central theme ***"Innovate for Impact: AI Solutions for a Sustainable Uganda"***, AIFest 2025 focused on encouraging participants to develop AI-powered solutions addressing pressing local challenges in health, education, agriculture, and financial inclusion.

Opening Remarks

AIFest 2025 was more than an event, it was a vision brought to life through collaboration, passion, and a shared commitment to innovation. As the first Inter-University AI Hackathon in Uganda, it created a platform where students from across the country could explore the power of AI, build impactful solutions, and connect with industry leaders.

This report opens with reflections from the lead organizer, GDG On Campus Makerere University, and our co-organizer, MIIC Hub, whose joint efforts made this milestone possible. Their words capture the purpose, challenges, and future aspirations of this groundbreaking initiative.

Lead Organiser

Lead Co-Organiser

Ronnie Atuhaire,
GDG On Campus Lead,
Makerere University

Gilbert Buregyeya,
Programs Lead ,
MIIC Hub

" I envisioned Uganda's first Inter-University AI Hackathon as a platform to democratize AI and drive real-world solutions. Today, that dream is AIFest 2025, a movement fostering innovation, collaboration, and impact.

With support from MIIC Hub, AmaliTech, Sunbird AI, etc, our mentors, and an incredible team, we've set the stage for a brighter AI-driven future. AIFest is only the beginning. **See you in 2026!** "

" MIIC Hub partnering with GDG for the first Inter-University AI Hackathon aligned perfectly with MIIC's strategy and mandate to identify high-potential innovative ideas that leverage technology to transform Uganda's economy, create jobs, and solve common community challenges with impact.

On behalf of MIIC, we pledge to make this an annual platform for young talent, generating amazing innovation and building solutions for the future! "

Background

The concept of AIFest was initiated by **Ronnie Atuhaire,** the current GDG Lead at Makerere University. Ronnie is a seasoned innovator and global hackathon champion, with notable wins including the Canva AI Hackathon, Airbyte Challenge on Hashnode, and the MTN MoMo Hackathon, among others. Under his leadership, GDG Makerere (Google Developer Groups - Makerere) has evolved into a vibrant tech community that empowers students and enthusiasts to explore cutting-edge technologies such as AI, Android, Cloud, and more.

With a growing membership of over *2,064* across all social platforms, the group actively organizes workshops, hackathons, and speaker sessions aimed at bridging the gap between learning and real-world application. Through this ecosystem, GDG Makerere continues to inspire innovation, foster collaboration, and connect aspiring developers with industry experts.

This impactful event was co-organized with MIIC Hub, which played a strategic role in providing mentorship and incubation opportunities to the top 10 finalist teams, ensuring that innovation went beyond the event and translated into real-world outcomes.

In addition, AmaliTech, our main sponsor, supported the event with resources and post-hackathon engagement by committing to nurturing and connecting the top 3 teams to career development pathways and further technical support. This partnership was key to reinforcing the sustainability and continuity of the innovations developed.

AIFest 2025 set a new precedent for student-led tech festivals in Uganda, by not only showcasing talent but also creating an enabling ecosystem for project growth and impact.

The Inter-University Hackathon

Ideation Phase

The ideation phase of the Inter-University AI Hackathon, which ran from **March 15th to 31st, 2025,** brought together over **300** participants representing **29** higher institutions of learning across Uganda.

This virtual phase served as the foundation of the AIFest experience, allowing students and young innovators to collaboratively brainstorm and propose AI-powered solutions addressing real societal challenges.

Guided by the theme **"Innovate for Impact: AI Solutions for a Sustainable Uganda,"** the hackathon attracted a total of 95 project submissions spanning sectors like health, education, agriculture, and finance.

This phase fostered interdisciplinary teamwork and creative thinking, culminating in the selection of the top 26 projects that advanced to the prototyping and mentorship stages.

The Judges

AI Fest was honored to have a distinguished panel of five judges who brought a wealth of experience in AI, education, entrepreneurship, and software development.

These included **Valentine Masicha Wegoye,** an AI educator and founder of Mindset Coders; **Cleopatra Kanyunyuzi,** founder of Club Tangaza and a strong advocate for digital inclusion and coding for youth; **Mukisa Geofrey,** a software architect, CTO at Koodeyo, and a passionate mentor dedicated to growing developer talent; **Sserunkuuma Ibrahim,** founder of QollixHQ and Zentrix Africa, championing AI-powered solutions and tech education; and **Carol Mugide,** a strategic leader in Uganda's startup ecosystem focused on community empowerment.

Each project was evaluated based on key criteria that reflected both technical excellence and real-world applicability.

Criterion	Weight (%)
Innovation & Creativity	20%
Impact & Relevance	20%
Implementation	20%
Design	15%
Sustainability	15%
Presentation & Demo	10%

Judges assessed innovation and creativity, impact and relevance to society, technical implementation, user experience and design, scalability and sustainability, as well as the overall presentation and demo. This comprehensive approach ensured a fair and thorough review of each team's solution.

The Top 10 Teams

After rigorous evaluation and mentorship, 10 standout teams emerged from the original 95 projects and advanced to the final pitch stage at AIFest 2025. They pitched live before an expert panel of judges, showcasing solutions in **healthcare, agriculture, education, smart cities, and more.**

Team Name	Project Title	Project Summary
Google Cloud Devs	Malaria Detector API	AI-powered malaria detection system using Deep Learning and FastAPI.
Team Walimo	Walimu Academy	Educational platform (details not provided) aiming to improve access to learning tools.
ClyCites	PricePulse-AI	Real-time market price tracking and prediction platform for consumers and businesses.
The Vitals	Vital AI	AI-powered assistant for safe prescribing, drug interaction checks, and patient records in healthcare.
Intelli-Gents	Dr. Chat	AI chatbot offering instant, SMS-based medical guidance in underserved rural communities.
Dev Native	Sign Language AI	AI system for interpreting and translating sign language in real-time.
Bro Code Labs	Lingomeet	AI app that transcribes and structures online lectures to improve access to quality education.
CodeStorm	Visual Navigator	Smartphone-based AI navigation aid for visually impaired users, using spatial audio and real-time vision.
Isbat Tech Titans	MindGrove	AI research assistant that helps students and researchers optimize academic productivity.
AgriTech	CropGuardAI	AI image-based crop disease detection tool for key Ugandan crops.
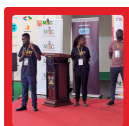
The Top 3 Teams

The judges selected the top 3 winners based on impact, technical execution, scalability, and alignment with the festival theme: **"Innovate for Impact: AI Solutions for a Sustainable Uganda."**

Bro Code Labs

Intelli-Gents

ClyCites

AIFest

The Speakers

AIFest 2025 was hosted by **Sumaiya Nalukwago** & **Miriam Birungi**, featured an inspiring lineup of speakers from tech, academia, and innovation. They shared practical insights on AI, startups, and real-world solutions. Speakers included **Timothy Byekwaso Jr.** *(Asili Fortune)*, **Gilbert Junior Buregyeya** *(MIIC Hub)***, Pritchard Chimbari** *(Amalitech),* **Allan Lule** *(MIIC Hub)***, Patrick Walukaga** *(Sunbird AI)***,** and **Kato Trevor** *(GitHub Campus Expert)***.**

Dr. Margaret gave a powerful keynote on entrepreneurship and innovation, encouraging youth to use AI and ICT for impactful solutions. Her experience at UNIPOD and as a lecturer offered practical guidance for aspiring tech entrepreneurs.

AIFest

The Exhibition
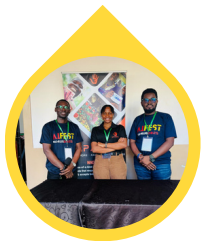
AIFest

The Stats

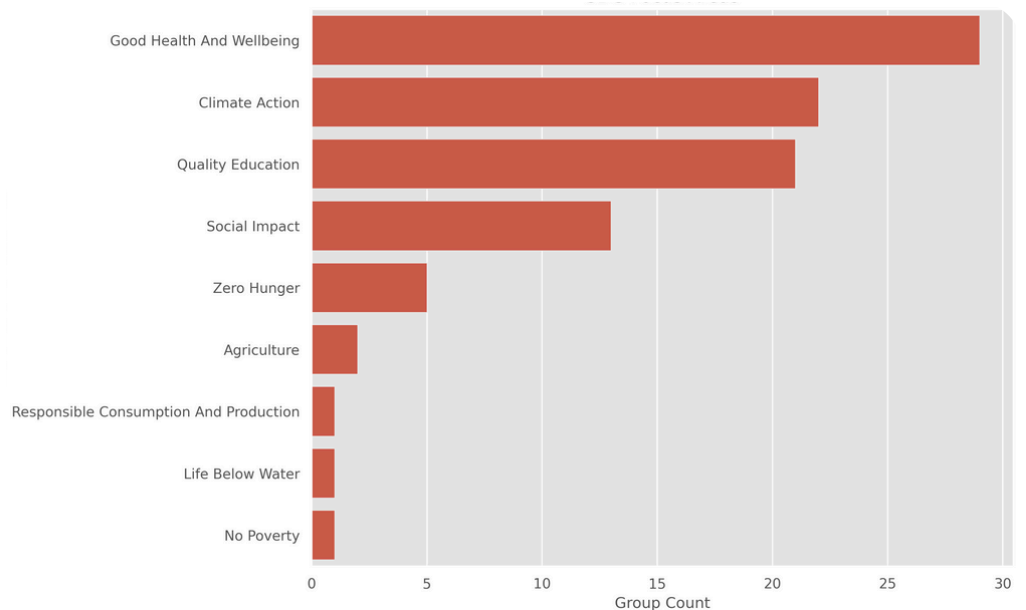|	
301	Team Participants
163	AIFest Attendees
95	Hackathon Teams
29	Academic Institutions
3M	Total Cash Prize (UGX)
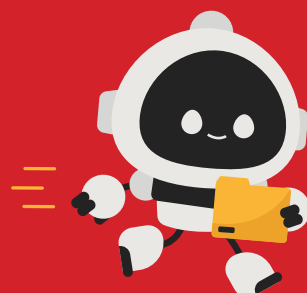
More Stats......

Hackathon Proficiency

- 30.3% Intermediate
- 35% Beginner
- 33.1% Getting Started

Legend:
- ● Getting Started
- ● Beginner
- ● Intermediate
- ● Pro
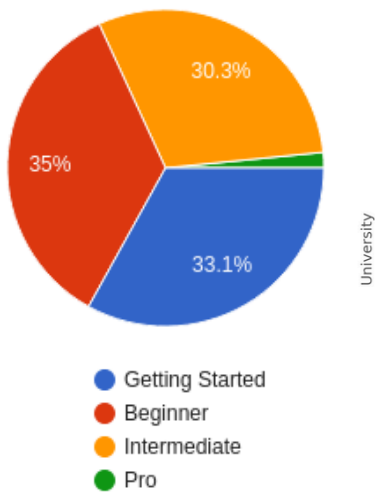
University Participation

University (y-axis) vs Participants Count (x-axis):
- Makerere University
- Mbarara University Of Science And Technology
- Kyambogo University
- Victoria University
- Kabale University
- Uganda Institute Of Information And Communication Technology
- Ndejje University
- Isbat University
- Uganda Technology And Management University
- Kampala International University
- Ymca
- Uganda Christian University
- Mountains Of The Moon University
- Nkumba University
- Bugema University
- Nakawa Vocational Training College
- Metropolitan International University
- Gulu University
- King Caesor University
- Uganda Martyrs University
- Makerere University Business School
- Refactory Academy
- Cavendish University
- St.Peters University
- Busitema University
- Mulago Paramedical
- Multi-Business School

Gender Representation

Gender:
- ● Male (75.3%)
- ● Female (24.7%)

UN SDGs Alignment

Group Count (x-axis):
- Good Health And Wellbeing
- Climate Action
- Quality Education
- Social Impact
- Zero Hunger
- Agriculture
- Responsible Consumption And Production
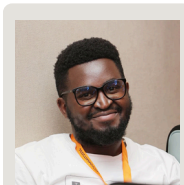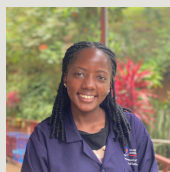- Life Below Water
- No Poverty

AIFest

The Gallery

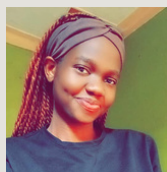# The Organisers
Campus Cordinators
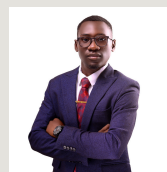
Ronnie Atuhaire
Makerere University

Catherine Ndagire
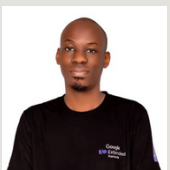UCU

Bryant Nuwe
MUST

Tina Abwor M
Makerere University

George Ssemaganda
Makerere University

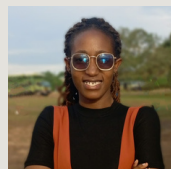**Frank Muhindo**
UICT

Abdul Mayanja
UTAMU

Simon Peter makobi
Kabale university

Samuel Putshu
ISBAT

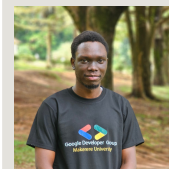**Akol Hope**
Kyambogo University

Birungi Angella M
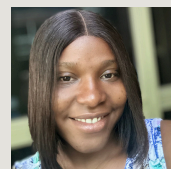MUST

Kyomugisha Evelyne
Kabale university

Daniel Mwiine
KIU

Nannyombi Shakiran
Makerere University

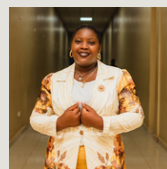**Drileba Shem Remo**
Makerere University
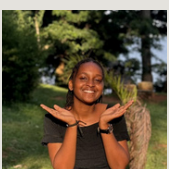
MaryBright Etim
Cavendish University

Arthur Asasira
Makerere University

Emmanuel Jjemba
Nkumba Univeristy

Marie Bushiri
Victoria University

Mariam Wambui
Makerere University

Google Developer Groups
Makerere University

Faculty Mentors & Core Team

The success of AIFest UG 2025 was made possible through the guidance of **Prof. Engineer Bainomugisha**, the GDG faculty mentor and Current Head of Computer Science Department, whose continuous support and encouragement shaped the event's vision. **Dr. Swaib** provided advice and some additional support, and he currently leads the Networks Department. We also thank **Dr. Margaret** for delivering a keynote address.

Prof. Tonny Oyana

Prof. Bainomugisha E

Dr. Kyanda Swaib

Dr. Margaret N

We also had the unwavering support of **Prof. Tonny Oyana**, the Principal of the College of Computing and Information Sciences, Makerere University, whose belief in student-led innovation and dedication to nurturing talent was instrumental from inception to the successful completion of AIFest UG 2024. His encouragement and presence affirmed the importance of empowering young minds to lead Uganda's AI future.

Core Team 2024-2025

Ronnie A	Patricia A	George S	Tina M	Arthur A	Ann T
Lead	Community Manager	Innovations Lead	Events Co-ordinator	Media	Co-Lead
Melissa	Johnson M	Mariam W	Remo S	Kiran N	Ian M
Women in Tech Lead	Emerging Trends	Public Relations	Opensource Director	Partnerships	Technical Director
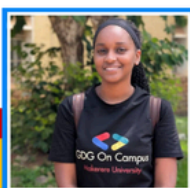
At the heart of the execution was a dedicated 12-member core team from GDG On Campus lead by **Ronnie Atuhaire**, the chief organizers and hosts of the fest.

The Co-Organiser
MIIC Hub

AIFest 2025 would not have been possible without the invaluable support of our co-organisers and sponsors. MIIC Hub, our co-organising partner, played a critical role not only in structuring the ideation-to-incubation pipeline but also in ensuring that the top 10 projects had a nurturing environment to grow beyond the hackathon.

Their dedication to fostering innovation within the student ecosystem laid the groundwork for long-term impact.

The Makerere Innovation and Incubation Center (MIIC) is a dynamic ecosystem designed to nurture student-led innovation and entrepreneurial ventures at Makerere University and beyond. With a strong focus on research translation, digital transformation, and sustainable development, MIIC Hub provides mentorship, incubation, and access to resources that help ideas evolve into impactful solutions.
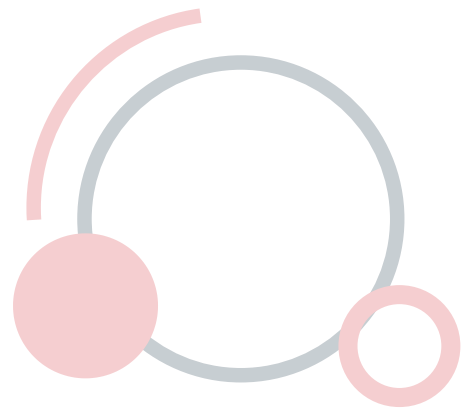
The Sponsors

More Info...

Gallery - 2025

https://tinyurl.com/aifest2025

GDG On Campus

https://tinyurl.com/gdgmuk

MIIC Hub

https://MIIC Hub.com/

AIFest

https://www.aifestug.com/

Conclusion
+ Future...

As we reflect on the success of this inaugural edition, AIFest is only just beginning. We envision this as an annual flagship event, growing bigger each year, with more universities, more partners, and deeper impact. Future editions will feature expanded hackathon tracks, mentorship programs, and community-driven problem-solving challenges, making it the go-to space for AI enthusiasts and changemakers across the region.

Together, let's continue building a future where young innovators lead with purpose, passion, and the power of AI. See you at **AIFest 2026!**

Phone Number
+256 703 151 746

Visit Our Website
www.aifestug.com

Email
mukgdsc@gmail.com