BROCHURE

AU Digital And Innovation

Fellowship Program

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The African Union Digital and Innovation Fellowship

As a way of fostering continuous and meaningful participation of African citizens in governance spaces and encouraging increased use of innovative data, digital and non-digital technologies in addressing governance and development challenges in Africa; the GIZ DataCipation project, implemented through a BMZ Commission supports the African Union and its organs to enhance its mandate on citizens engagement through a series of interventions and mechanisms. In this context, the project is providing support to the African Union to implement - a Digital and Innovation Fellowship Program.

The African Union Digital and Innovation Fellowship Program aims to identify and deploy 13 highly competent tech innovators from the African continent to units and organs within the African Union headquarters as resident fellows to understand the system within those units, identify data management challenges within the systems and solve the challenges identified by co-creating and building innovative tailor-made products and processes that improve data management processes and the overall work of the African Union. Additionally, the program seeks to facilitate conditions for building the internal capacity of the host African Union organs in the long term to ensure the sustainability of the developed products and processes post the fellowship timeline.

The fellowship program was launched on September 20, 2021 by the African Union, together with its partners, GIZ and AfriLabs, and has since produced 13 fellows deployed to different units/organs of the African Union to proffer digital solutions to the gaps in their data management and operations.

"AfriLabs is glad to be a part of this initiative in partnership with the German Government who is championing the initiative and the African Union taking the lead on this. The fellowship program will help equip African youths and also strengthen the African Union and various organs" - Anna Ekeledo, Executive Director, AfriLabs.

Meet the Fellows

Meet the fellows in the first cohort of the African Union Digital and Innovation Fellowship Program.

Obaloluwa
Ajiboye (Nigeria)

Fellow, Women, Gender and Youth Directorate (WGYD)

Obaloluwa Ajiboye Joseph is a Technology Product Manager, particularly skilled in Web development, Python Programming and Data Analysis. As a technology product manager, he has led the development of various notable pr objects as well as managed and provided support to programs that built the capacity of over 3,800 startups founders in 19 states in Nigeria from 3 different regions and to create solutions to Africa's most urgent problems in Nigeria across 7 critical sectors ranging from Agriculture, Services, Light Manufacturing, Education, Trade and Commerce, Mining and ICT.

Technology Offering to the Women, Gender and Youth Directorate (WGYD)

Description: A dashboard, with the use of Microsoft Power BI, that integrates and visualises many functions including but not limited to the following;

Current Project & Initiatives :

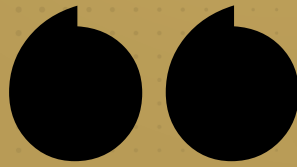ongoing projects & initiatives by the Directorate.

Budget Dashboard :

Display of the financial data in each budget code in the Directorate.

Staff Task Management :

Display of the staff tasks updates in the Directorate, to be leveraged for weekly staff and management meetings.

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In the Early 2000's, My Dad operated a Computer Business Centre in Ogbomoso, Oyo state in South-Western Nigeria. I grew up seeing Monitors and CPU's. This triggered my enthusiasm for technology generally. This contributed to my desire to study Computer Science at the University. Shortly after my first year, i started blogging on news updates and this gave me some level of exposure and a chance to improve myself in various tech-related subjects.

Community engagement is a big part of my journey in tech, attending community events helped me meet and learn from people. It also gave me an opportunity to contribute and share from my wealth of experience and widened my network and knowledge on the different paths in tech. In 2017, I became an avid volunteer on a number of initiatives, some of which include Africa Code Week where over 4000 kids were trained on Basic Programming, and Django Girls where I coached participants on Web Development using Django framework and co-organized various Django Girls projects where we empowered young girls and women with the requisite skills to kick-start their career in tech. As an advocate for Equity and Gender Balance in the Technology Ecosystem, I became a Co-ambassador for Women in Data Science at Stanford University in 2019. As a passionate youth development catalyst and a proponent for social impact, i was excited when i saw the advert for the African Union Digital and Innovation Fellowship program and this is how i interpreted it "The African Union is giving 10 youths across Africa a chance to work directly from the African Union and contribute to the prosperity of africa, and also become a beacon of hope for other youths in the continent? . This is definitely something I would want to do." And here we are today.

Aspiration & Views

- I believe that creating a prosperous Africa is possible. Empowering the youths with different innovation and technology skills will get Africa steps ahead in realising its potential.
- I also believe that to create a truly prosperous Africa, entrepreneurs must leverage innovation and technology to create solutions that address the problems that are peculiar to the African environment and solutions that we can export to other continents. Entrepreneurs and innovators are the frontiers for Africa's development.

Expectations

- Contributing to the Prosperity of Africa and the goals of the goals of Agenda 2063.

Sabina
Nforba (Cameroon)

Fellow, Office of the Youth Envoy (OYE)

Sabina Nforba is a young Cameroonian with a background in Computer Engineering and Project Management. She is a Data Analyst and has co-founded an initiative called AfriTech Hub which, in the course of 4 years, has impacted over 4000 young Cameroonians through programs, such as, the creation of STEM clubs in secondary schools, capacity building workshops for women (including women living with disabilities), and coding bootcamps, with an aim to create a pipeline of skilled workers to match the increasing labour demands of the tech ecosystem. Sabina has won the title of Woman In Tech by the Bonteh Digital Media Awards in Cameroon and has been featured in a prominent magazine - Projecteur Magazine - as one of top 10 women who made 2021 remarkable.

Technology Offering to the Office of the Youth Envoy (OYE)

Description: A data management system which collects, stores, organises, protects, analyses, processes essential data and makes it available to members of the unit. It is a cloud based solution hosted on Microsoft Office 365 For Businesses. The data management system contains two sharepoint sites;

- Front-end Communication Site : Public, and informative on news, events etc.
- Back-end Teams Site : Private for team members only and integrates productivity tools such as;

- Teams (internal communication)

- Planner (project and tasks management)

- OneDrive (data storage)

- Lists (simple database)

- Power BI (dataset analysis).

"Computer Engineering? Why Engineering? You should have opted to study something more feminine, don't you think?" she'd asked me.

News that I had been selected as an Engineering fresh-woman at the University of Buea had reached me and in excitement, I went to share this but was met with that statement. I did not think much of it at the time but later during my studies and now my career, I came to understand that it is a common stereotype and instantly, I knew I needed to try to make my little corner of the world one that does not put people in containers. And most importantly, to be vocal about the imminence of technology in the development of Africa. Covid-19 would later make a sour entrance, crippling nations and emphasizing the importance of a digital transformation to be championed by everyone, irrespective of gender.

Upon graduation, I picked up a job with a Telecommunications Company, and after 5 pm every day, I led an initiative I co-founded to channel my message of ICT and digital transformation as an emergent industry to young people. AfriTech Hub, through several activities, has impacted at least 4000 young people in Africa, especially in Cameroon, to gain knowledge on the high demanding tech skills. I believe that as the youngest and fastest-growing population in the world, African youths can leverage technology to promote growth by actively engaging in the digital ecosystem to build home-grown innovations.

What better way to champion this growth through technology than being a fellow at the African Union? Announcements about the launch of the fellowship were hard to ignore and being a fellow now is a dream come true. My vision for Africa is that the widespread adoption of digital technology will support new infrastructures to alleviate poverty.

Aspiration & Views

"My vision for Africa is that the widespread adoption of digital technology will support new ways of doing business, foster education, promote health and alleviate poverty".

"Technology has the potential to position Africans as global citizens. We just need to support the development of skills"
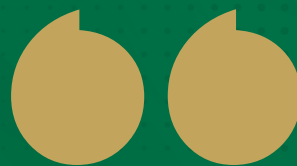
Expectations

I expect to learn as much as I can, as I seek to identify areas within the African Union that can be strengthened by technology, and propose sustainable solutions.

Ray
Nkum (Ghana)

Fellow, African Continental Free Trade Area Secretariat (AfCFTA)

Ray Nkum has over 7 years' experience working with technology as a tool for development. His work in this field earned him recognition as one of the <u>top 5 Digital Africa Award winners</u> in a program organised by the Agence Francaise de Developpement (AFD) to highlight important future innovations across Africa. He was a researcher at the Kofi Annan Peacekeeping and Training Centre after which he embarked on an election monitoring project, utilising social media analysis to provide key insights in early warning. Ray was also the Country Lead for BudgIT Ghana, a civic-tech CSO that utilises technology, research and advocacy to improve citizen's awareness of public finance and the importance of participatory democracy to improve accountability. In this role, he worked with a dedicated team across West Africa in Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Liberia, to deploy data analytics and creative technology to simplify public finances for citizens.

From a young age, I have been a student of leadership and diplomacy. I attended international programs such as the Model United Nations about 6 or 7 times between high school and college. I never anticipated that my story would take a turn into

technology. Fast forward to a few years later, I founded a tech startup with the objective of leveraging technology to transform urban transportation systems. It was daunting at first because I had little to no initial experience or domain knowledge. But I was very determined and also fortunate to have a fantastic team who truly bought into the vision. Ultimately we were unsuccessful in validating a commercial use case for our product, but the lessons have been invaluable. The biggest lesson was that technology cannot stand on its own. Policy is a key prerequisite for technology to deliver impact. With that in mind, I upgraded myself with a research degree from the University of Cape Coast, where I looked at the role of technology, particularly social media, on peace and security. That also opened up a new area of interest for me, leading to my participation as a social media analyst in the WANEP (West Africa Network for Peacebuilding) Election Situation Room for Ghana's 2020 election.

Through this I learned about the opportunity to become the Country Lead for BudgIT Ghana. This really seemed like the ideal position for me and so I grasped it with all I had. Working with BudgIT has been a dream come true. It's an exciting, youthful institution that supports its people while contributing to the greater good of the continent.

Now participating in this AU Fellowship is an opportunity to broaden the scale and deliver impact that could contribute to the 2063 goals that we set out to achieve as a collective. I can't think of anything more exciting.

Aspiration & Views

The narrative about Africa used to be solely focused on its vast natural resources. Today, that has changed quite a bit. It is now well understood that Africa has a different kind of natural resource which is the vast, youthful human resource both at home and in diaspora. What remains now, the final needed shift; is for the old to transition out and allow the youth to direct the future of Africa into this brave new world. The AU is taking a very necessary step in that direction with this program. If member countries can embrace this idea, Africa will be what we know it can be.

Expectations

I expect to learn as much as I can, as I seek to identify areas within the African Union that can be strengthened by technology, and propose sustainable solutions.
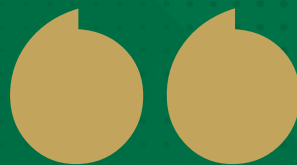
Aimee
Mukankusi (Congo)

Fellow, African Continental Free Trade Area Secretariat (AfCFTA)

A imee Mukankusi is a Digital Innovator, with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Healthcare Management at Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) through the Kepler University Program in Rwanda. She is also certified in Computer and Data Science through MIT in Python Language. Aimee is skilled in technological changing platforms and in data management, particularly data analysis using different software like MaxQDA and Microsoft Excel. Leveraging her exceptional data management and analysis experiences, she has conducted robust research for various not-for-profit organisations since early 2019.

My chosen career path falls in the research field and I am passionate about technology. That is how I have been interested to become a fellow on the program, the African Union Digital and Innovation Fellowship because I have a background in technology. I have been trained in Computer and Data science specifically in Python language through MIT ReACT program and skilled in technological changing platforms and the abilities of

creating solutions using the power of computer science. Currently, I have been selected to become a fellow and I have been deployed in Ghana/Accra even if I am not yet there because of pre-departure processes. Presently, I am remotely researching evidence on the impacts of post-primary education on refugees here in Rwanda through Jigsaw Consult in partnership with the UNHCR and I am a fellow as well. I am looking forward to contributing a lot regarding the fellowship by being among those who strengthen African Union systems specifically in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) unit.

Aspiration & Views

- Africa will be developed by its youth because it has a higher number of young people than adults.
- If Africa can use innovation along with technology, it could become like other highly developed continents.
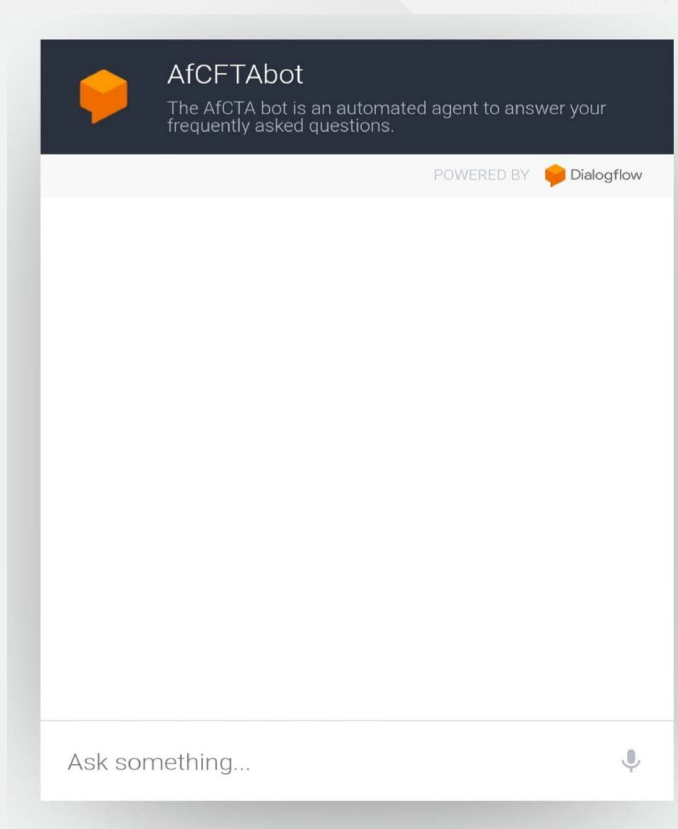
Expectations

I will learn a lot through the fellowship and get a huge network of African tech innovative professionals who will inspire me to keep being an African woman change maker.

Description: A ChatBot automation system that provides information in a conversational manner. Frequently asked questions about the AfCFTA are programmed into the bot to answer queries from users. It also connects to databases and provides functionality to query for data through a text or audio input.

The AfCFTA ChatBot has 3 major features -

AfCFTAbot
The AfCTA bot is an automated agent to answer your frequently asked questions.

POWERED BY Dialogflow

Ask something...

1. Language Portability - The bot can be programmed in English, French, Swahili and Portuguese.

2. Speech Input - The informal sector is effectively disenfranchised in many tech solutions due to their inability to interact with text interfaces due to low education levels. The AfCFTA ChatBot offers a solution to provide speech inputs as requests, which is then automatically transcribed into text, using machine learning methodologies, to achieve an understanding of the user's queries.

3. Training - A significant feature of the ChatBot is its ability to learn and improve on failed interactions, using machine learning capabilities to store and categorise unsuccessful user enquiries. The human developer can then guide the system to adequately recognise these queries and offer appropriate responses.

Tebalo
Thatho (Lesotho)

Fellow, Directorate of Information and Communications (DIC)

Tebalo Thatho is a young innovator with a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science from The National University of Lesotho in 2011 and various certifications. He has a passion for DevOps, IoT, BioMetrics, Artificial Intelligence and Cloud Computing. Tebalo is skilled in Telecommunications, Systems Integrations (SOAP-XML, REST, MQTT), Computer Programming in Several Languages, Solutions Deployments across various cloud Providers including, AWS, Google, Oracle and Microsoft. He has 7 years working experience with Vodacom Lesotho with various roles including - Billing/Charging Systems Administration, Roaming Systems and Solutions Architect in Core Network; 2 years experience in South Africa as Systems Architect at SBS and Sub-Contracted with Tafari Financial Services, and 6 months working experience with IoT.nxt as Technical Architect and served as the high-level designer of the systems to be implemented which covered roles of establishing the basic structure of the system, and defining the essential core design features.

"Computer Engineering? Why Engineering? You should have opted to study something more feminine, don't you think?" she'd asked me.

News that I had been selected as an Engineering fresh-woman at the University of

Buea had reached me and in excitement, I went to share this but was met with that statement. I did not think much of it at the time but later during my studies and now my career, I came to understand that it is a common stereotype and instantly, I knew I needed to try to make my little corner of the world one that does not put people in containers. And most importantly, to be vocal about the imminence of technology in the development of Africa. Covid-19 would later make a sour entrance, crippling nations and emphasizing the importance of a digital transformation to be championed by everyone, irrespective of gender.

Upon graduation, I picked up a job with a Telecommunications Company, and after 5 pm every day, I led an initiative I co-founded to channel my message of ICT and digital transformation as an emergent industry to young people. AfriTech Hub, through several activities, has impacted at least 4000 young people in Africa, especially in Cameroon, to gain knowledge on the high demanding tech skills. I believe that as the youngest and fastest-growing population in the world, African youths can leverage technology to promote growth by actively engaging in the digital ecosystem to build home-grown innovations.

What better way to champion this growth through technology than being a fellow at the African Union? Announcements about the launch of the fellowship were hard to ignore and being a fellow now is a dream come true. My vision for Africa is that the widespread adoption of digital technology will support new infrastructures to alleviate poverty.

Aspiration & Views

"The power of education extends beyond the development of skills we need for economic success. It can contribute to nation-building and reconciliation. Our previous system emphasized the physical and other differences of Africans with devastating effects. We are steadily but surely introducing education that enables our children to exploit their similarities and common goals, while appreciating the strength in their diversity." – Nelson Mandela

"A functioning and resilient infrastructure is the foundation of every successful community. To meet future challenges, our industries and infrastructure must be upgraded. For this, we need to promote innovative sustainable technologies and ensure equal and universal access to information and financial markets. This will bring prosperity, create jobs, and make sure that we build stable and prosperous societies across the globe." – UNDP Global Goal #9

Expectations

"To live a fulfilled life, we need to keep creating the "what is next", of our lives. Without dreams and goals there is no living, only merely existing, and that is not why we are here." — Mark Twain

Amon
Bazongo (Burkina Faso)

Fellow, Directorate of Information and Communications (DIC)

Amon M. R. Bazongo holds a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science and a Masters' Degree in Big Data Management. His span of expertise includes Software Engineering | Cloud Computing (AWS, Google Cloud, Azure) | Digital Communication (Strategy, Content Development) | Artificial Intelligence (Machine Learning) | Blockchain. He has previously worked as an Artificial Intelligence Consultant, a Content Producer for an Emerging Technologies-focused YouTube Channel; and a Speaker at multiple conferences on Artificial Intelligence, Crypto/Blockchain/Web3.

I am Amon Bazongo, a digital technology engineer, focused on Artificial Intelligence and Blockchain. Digital technology has always fascinated me. It feels like a superpower in the real world. I was determined to acquire this power to change the world around me through creativity and innovation. For several years, I was able to bring value to individuals and organisations in different fields like digital marketing, e-learning, e-commerce, and health care.

Seeing the impact of digital technology in countries development made the power that I had, slowly put responsibility forward. Responsibility to build for Africa. It made me

develop initiatives in education and information, and propose digital solutions to address some of African challenges.

Africa is a continent I have learnt to love through its history of struggle for liberation, unity, progress and prosperity. I belong to the generation of young African citizens who want a continent without borders, a continent transformed into a global powerhouse and I have had this dream to contribute to make these pan-African aspirations come true. The African Union Digital and Innovation Fellowship Program is for me an opportunity to realize this dream. An opportunity to use my superpower to build for Africa, with Africans, using digital technology.

Aspiration & Views

- The future of Africa is in our hands.
- Unleashing youth creativity will unlock Africa's future.

Expectations

It is time to build a culture of digital innovation at the African Union for Africa.

Technology Offering to the Directorate of Information and Communications (DIC)

Service Request Platform

Description: It is a simple automated workflow platform that handles almost any defined process and service request category. The automated service request platform enables ALL AUC Organs and Offices to submit requests, gather approvals, route information, trigger alerts, and monitor status. Objectives of the system are to;

- Maintain organisation productivity and efficiency at all times.
- Identify performance trends (Group and Individual) over time and easy access to reports on services requested.
- Alleviate day-to-day workload on ICD Teams.
- Reduce impacts or risks of having malfunctioning or inadequate services and processes.
- Improve service delivery and ensure customer satisfaction.
- Track request status (completed, pending, or in-progress, etc.) in real time.
- Drastically reduce paperwork and associated costs and waste.

African Union Super App

Description: One African Union that will encompass all services in one App and users only know of One African Union App for News, Events, Careers & Jobs, Procurement, Member States and Live Streaming Events of the African Union Commission.
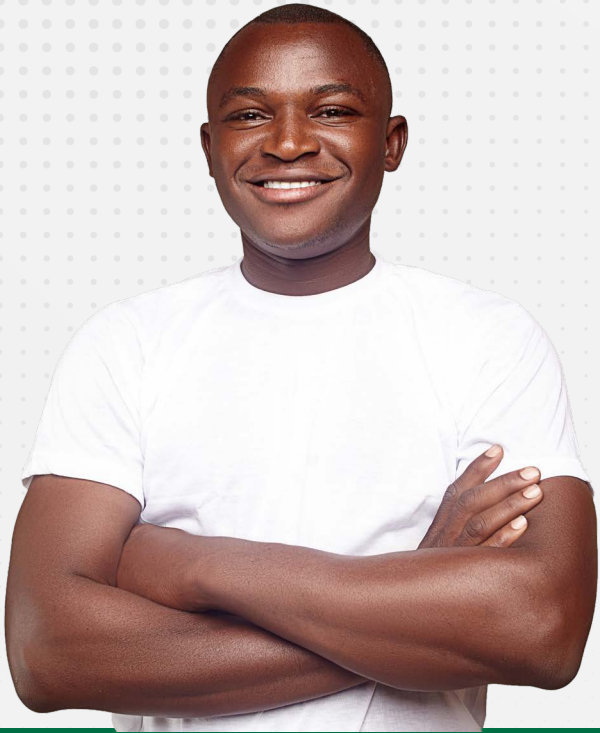
Agenda 2063 Digital Experience (A63DE)

Description: A63DE is a set of interactive digital tools linked with each other with the objective of raising awareness of Agenda 2063 and allow anyone to experience the Africa we want. It includes tools such as a website, a virtual reality (VR) app, a mobile app game, etc.

The Website is the most important component of those tools since it allows to aggregate all Agenda 2063 related content produced within the AU, by other organisations and even individuals. The goals of this website are:

To provide a portal to most content published about Agenda 2063. Approach: content curation and repurposing, call for articles, newsletter, downloadable content.

To rank first on search engines for keywords like "agenda 2063" or "africa we want". Approach: call for sharing, content optimization, content quality and organisation

The VR related tool will be a virtual museum (for the Great Museum of Africa) which is a pilot for a potential expansion to other flagship projects. The virtual museum can reuse characters of the Agenda 2063 animations and the Serious Game Mission 55.

Louis
Marie (Ghana)

Fellow, African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights (ACHPR)

Louis Marie holds a Bachelor's Degree from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, with core experience and expertise in Software Engineering. Because of his love for innovation, he has created digital and technology-focused solutions that have led him to pitch on National and International platforms including the Second African Youth SDGs Summit, Ghana China Cultural and Economic Exchange Week. He has previously worked as a trainer for Dansyn ISO where he trained 12 people in Mobile App development and mentored them to create startups that addressed societal problems.

Technology Offering to the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights (ACHPR)

Human Rights Violation Reporting Tool

Description: The Human Rights violation tool is a web application that helps people to report human rights situations to the Commission. Features includes;

- a simple interface so users can easily interact with it

- a form that takes the reports of the situation

- a dashboard that presents the reports to the Commission

- users can report anonymously (without adding their personal information).

NGO & NHRI Registration Portal

Description: The NGO and NHRI Registration Portal facilities interaction and communication

between the Commission and the NGOs/NHRIs. It is a registration portal for the organisations to
register. Organisations can only register when they have all the required documents to register.
The portal reduces the registration time from minimum of 1 year and maximum of 12 years to 3
months (the time between sessions). Features include;

a dashboard for the commission to:

- *view all the organisations*

- *download a list of the organisations*

- *see all their activity reports*

- *see all pending applications*

- *download the application documents of pending applicants*

- *accept or reject an application*

- *see individual details of any organisation.*

a dashboard for the organisations (NGOs & NHRIs) to;

- *view and update their details*

- *submit activity reports*

- *register to speak during a session.*

I came across a call for applications for a fellowship on WhatsApp in the middle of 2021. I clicked on the link to learn more about it and was captivated by the fellowship's goal. It was in line with my desire and vision to use my Computer Engineering skills to help make Africa a better place. This fellowship approached the issue of the African Technology gap from a broader perspective – innovating the African Union. To avoid unforeseen circumstances, I wrote my essays, had my peers review them, added other requirements, and then submitted them well before the deadline.
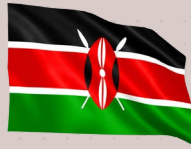
It was surreal to receive a phone call congratulating me on my selection as a fellow. I could not believe that such an opportunity to innovate the African Union had just been given to me.

As a child, I was fascinated by information technology and its potential to solve some of

the world's problems, and as a lover of peace, I was also fascinated by the law. I would like to work as an IT professional and study law in this field. There is a significant gap between Law and IT, which I intend to bridge with the IT and Law skills I will acquire in the coming years.

This fellowship would allow me to innovate the African Union, learn more about human rights, and improve my IT skills.

Lorretta
Binu Kade (Kenya)

Fellow, African Union Youth for Peace Program

L orretta Binu Kade is a young Kenyan innovator. She has previously worked in the valuation division of the Ministry of Lands and Physical planning in Kenya where she assisted in the development of a digital database tool that analyses and presents the critical valuation information. She is passionate about Human-computer interactions including user experience (UX) and user interface (UI) design.

Technology Offering to the African Union Youth for Peace Program

Description: A padlet i.e youthful and fun noticeboard for continuous update of information by the Youth for Peace Program Personnel and collection of data - to communicate and track various activities, to share the work of the program with other stakeholders, to ensure accountability through availing of information and data for Africa's development, and the advancement of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda. The padlet is linked to the Youth for Peace Program page of the PAPS website. The padlet will allow for constant update by the program personnel in real time.

My change-making journey started back in 2017 when I worked with The Nile Project, a pan-African NGO sensitizing riparian communities on inter-cultural cooperation to

solve the Nile sustainability challenges. During that experience, two things stood out for me: my passion to work with initiatives dedicated to inclusion, and my love for coming up with innovative solutions for contemporary issues. My motivation to join the AU Digital innovation fellowship is in part inspired by that experience and my ambition of helping organizations and people with an impact on the lives of Africans. With my background working in alternating roles as a project lead and a research and development analyst in the digital strategy team, I make, deliver and evaluate the efficacy of innovative solutions daily. Joining the AU Digital innovation fellowship, where I will guide the development, delivery and assessment of different tech solutions for Africans, is fulfilling.

I am excited to use the range of experiences I have garnered from both my current and previous roles to bridge systemic gaps with technology.

Nurturing young people's leadership helps create a space for our voices and creativity, and offers an opportunity for us to enter into discussion with other stakeholders, thus bridging a vast communication gap and providing a forum for dialogue, innovation, and collaboration. This is the Africa that I want to be in, one that rises together with its young people and leaves no one behind. The AU Digital innovation fellowship supports this narrative and I cannot wait to be thoroughly engaged in nurturing and realising the African dream through technology.

Esther
Ndagire (Uganda)

Fellow, AUDA-NEPAD Coordination Unit

E sther Ndagire is a technologist specialising in information technology and management. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Information Technology from Makerere University in Kampala,Uganda and is passionate about innovation, technology, and social change. She has over 4 years of tech project management experience, working with teams to leverage technology to unlock civic governance, transform the use of data for improved journalism, and implement digital technology initiatives to address developmental issues across the African continent. Esther also has experience leading projects with a diverse set of stakeholders and donors as well as pursuing and maintaining strategic internal and external partnerships and collaborations. From all her previous roles, she have gained strong tech project and product management skills, research and design thinking skills, innovation and knowledge management skills, critical thinking, and analytical skills, and very comfortable with different management and data analysis tools like Trello, the Google Suite, GitHub, Microsoft Excel, among others.

Technology Offering to the AUDA-NEPAD Coordination Unit

Description: An online platform that integrates many functions including but not limited to the following;

- One stop shop solution

- Deployed across the AUC - Microsoft Teams is fully integrated with Office 365

- Reduced emails

- Live collaboration in real time

- Increased transparency.

The ignition of my passion for technology dates back to when I joined Kola Studios as a developer intern in my 2nd year at Makerere University. Even though I was an Information Technology student, the desire to pursue a career in technology had not been sparked yet. Kola Studios, the leading mobile game developer at the time, took a chance on me to join their team and I have never looked back since. I was introduced to a whole new side of technology, a feat that came with enormous opportunities and possibilities.

Towards the end of my year-long internship, I co-founded a start-up in 2015, developing the BVKIT, an application to help women self-test for bacterial vaginosis and give them the knowledge they needed to prevent reproductive health conditions. I wanted to be part of something with the potential to change the lives of countless women and contribute to social change in Africa. The team went on to win the Resilient Africa Network Technovation Award of 2015.

Due to my keen interest and work in innovation and social change, I was awarded a young innovators fellowship with the United Nations Population Fund and greatly benefited from the leadership training, mentorship, career, and personal development skills provided.

Following the fellowship's close, I pursued a career in technical project and product management skills, working for national and Pan African nonprofits, civic technology organisations, and fintech. I spearheaded different initiatives in Uganda primarily focused on the empowerment of women and youth entrepreneurs.

That said, I gained strong technical project, product, and business development skills but always wanted to do more in innovation because I believe that is one of the ways in which the African continent can achieve the desired social change and development. Solutions built for and by the people can transform lives and our environment and it is an honour to contribute to this process.

This desire motivated me to apply for the African Union Digital and Innovation Fellowship. The fellowship aims to deploy fellows to co-create and build innovative tailor-made products and processes that improve the delivery of the African Union's mandate. This presents an excellent opportunity for me to utilise my experience in innovation to contribute to the mandate inversely growing my knowledge and skill set.

I look forward to working with the African Union, more specifically the AUDA-NEPAD coordination unit, to design and develop digital solutions that will transform and optimise the way the unit works thereby creating significant impact both within the organisation and in the work done on the African continent.

Aspiration & Views

My aspiration for Africa is to become a place where every African's dreams are made and realised. Years ago, many young, motivated professionals aspired to leave the continent in the hopes of world-class education and career advancement. While this has changed in recent years, there's still a lot more to be done. The African Union's Agenda 2063 provides astounding aspirations and a clear roadmap of where we want to be. We now need to put in the work to build the future we want. A future of big audacious dreams, exceptional education and career prospects, socio-economic growth, and strong cultural identity coupled with pride for our home.

70% of the African population is under the age of 30. This is very promising for the development of Africa because the potential to transform the continent is exponential. Young people have the ability to spearhead the innovation and transformation that this continent needs to achieve the Agenda 2063 that the African Union has set forth. However, they can't do it alone. The long-term change that we desire needs the collective effort of Heads of state, citizens, policy leaders, activists, pan African organisations, among others to realise this change. Africa has everything it needs to become everything it wants to be. We need to remain focused on the goal at hand and work together to create the home we desire.

Expectations

It is truly an honour to have been selected out of a numerous number of applicants to participate in the African Union Digital and Innovation Fellowship. This fellowship presents me with the opportunity to utilise my experience in technical project management and innovation to contribute to the African Union's mandate inversely growing my knowledge and skill set. I look forward to working with the African Union, more specifically the AUDA-NEPAD coordination unit, to design and develop digital solutions that will transform and optimise the way the unit works thereby creating significant impact both within the organisation and in the work done on the African continent.

Batshidi
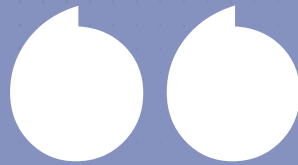# **Selebogo** (Botswana)

Fellow, Office of the Deputy Chairperson

Batshidi Selebogo is the founder of Agrinect, an agri-tech start-up that uses artificial intelligence to help farmers gain market access. Her project recently won the 2021 Orange POESAM Social Venture Prize Botswana and 3rd prize in Orange POESAM Africa and Middle East Grand Prix (an annual competition that recognizes the best technological projects in Africa and the Middle East with a positive impact).

She was previously part of the Ignite Innovation Lab challenge, a program that invites youth across Africa to design digital-based solutions to advance the Sustainable Development Goals, where she won an award for the solution she designed and invited for a 6-month internship with their company, Vetsark. In this role, she designed a system that automated the company's customer service relations as well as other systems that automated marketing and reporting. Batshidi is also a member of the McKinsey and Company Global Alumni Network as well as a Commonwealth Leadership badge holder.

Technology Offering to the Office of the Deputy Chairperson

Description: A Conference Management System to digitise and automate the event and meeting management processes of the African Union Commission, and assist the organisation to manage all aspects of its events from planning, execution, and post-event stages. The system will serve to provide a streamlined workflow, centralised communication, and a scalable event planning process. The system will provide capabilities such as attendee management,

documents management, event management, medical services, all to promote a paperless initiative. The platform will be deployed on AU IT infrastructure to be easily accessed online on any occasion.

I am Batshidi Selebogo. I am a social entrepreneur, innovator and the founder of Agrinect, an agri-tech start-up that uses artificial intelligence to help farmers gain market access. I applied for the African Union Tech and Innovation Fellowship because I believe the mandate of the program perfectly aligns with my goals and aspirations to innovate for the good of others. Through the program, I see myself not only gleaning from industry experts but also leaving with skills I can use in the betterment of the lives of people in my home country, Botswana.

I have always been a firm supporter of the mandate of the African Union and its efforts to see the continent thriving and I aspire to be named as a contributor in those efforts.

It has been amazing to have over the years witnessed how far Africa has come and how, through the skills and talents of many individuals, we continue to redefine ourselves as a technological powerhouse. I hope through my work with the African Union as well as as a social entrepreneur, Africa's potential can shine through.

Through the fellowship, I expect to be challenged, to work to my fullest potential and leave a lasting change within the African Union.

Hana
Erkou (Ethiopia)

Fellow, Office of the Director General

Hana is a tech nerd who is inspired by human centred design and biotechnology. Her past work experience has focused on operationalizing and improving the ROI of early stage to Series A startups. She received her BA in International Studies from the University of Chicago, MS in Global Health Policy and Management from Brandeis University, and her MBA in Healthcare Administration from Brandeis International Business School. She has been dedicated to mentoring women in business, healthcare, and technology her entire career. Her start-up Menesha Virtual Incubator based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia is focused on coaching early-stage startups lead by women until they receive Series A funding. Currently she is stationed at the Director General's Office at the African Union as a Digital Innovation Fellow to cast her net wider and make a greater impact in the lives of her fellow Africans and women in tech.

I have been dedicated to lifting up women and helping them reach their full potential my whole life. At the beginning of my career it was through healthcare research and policy development and now it is through entrepreneurship ecosystem building, mentorship, and technology development. I am ecstatic to be joining the African Union as a Digital Innovation Fellow in order to make a greater impact on my fellow Africans and

women in tech. At an organization with such a large reach and great power and influence in Africa, I know my work at the AU will help bring a better tomorrow for Africa's youth and female populations.

Aspiration & Views

1) "The Africa we want is clearly visible on the horizon. And today, more than ever before, so too, is the road we will travel together, to get there." - President of Rwanda Paul Kagame

2) "Investing in women is smart economics, investing in girls and catching them up stream is even smarter economics." - Director General WTO Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

Expectations

I hope to work cross departmentally to build a useful and adaptable technological product that improves and simplifies work for AU staff so we can build a stronger Africa sooner.

Jelagat
Kimosop (Kenya)

Fellow, Office of the Director General

J elagat Kimosop has a strong background in Applied Statistics and in Monitoring & Evaluation. Upon her graduation from the Technical University of Kenya, Jelagat chose to focus and grow her career within the development sector. She has experience and expertise in web development, data science, and impact evaluation. Her skills, combined with her passion for the development and multilateral sector, have led her to create data management web tools aimed at effective data management, optimum project impact and informed decision-making.

In 2017, I was part of a WhatsApp youth group interested in the advancement of human rights in Africa. A member of the group shared an advertisement of the AU Youth volunteer corps which greatly piqued my interest as I had been seeking opportunities to offer my skills within the wider African context. I immed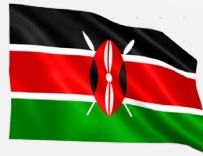iately filled in my application and submitted it on my phone. After a few months and a number of procedures, I received word that I had been selected as a Youth Volunteer for the Researcher's program.

I learned how much work went into initiating, formulating, and implementing policies across the continent during my one-year volunteer-ship. It served as a reminder on the

value of social awareness and advocacy in advancing the four major pillars of the African Youth Charter; education, employment, healthcare, and governance, for the betterment of the status of the African youth. Later on, I got a chance to implement the silencing the guns' initiative, one of the flagship projects of Agenda 2063. I developed a greater understanding of the work that went into organizing a campaign, mediation and peace talks, as this involved partnering with other departments, grassroot organizations, government representatives and other international organizations.

In 2020, I actively started learning web development and data science. I was able to develop websites and soon after, I started exploring the incorporation of data management tools to streamline data management lifecycle within the development sector. I am currently completing my studies in the ALX-Udacity Data Science program.

As a fellow, I plan to use my background in web development and data science to help the AUC effectively carry out its mandate in line with Agenda 2063 and to streamline its processes.

Passy
Miano (Kenya)

AUDA-NEPAD South Africa Office

Passy Miano is a highly skilled Data Scientist who enjoys transforming and organising data in order to draw conclusions, make predictions and drive informed decision making. She is experienced in quality data management, implementing machine learning models and data analytics. Passy believes transforming data into knowledge is a useful process in creating meaningful innovations that solve problems in our society. Passy also holds a Master's Degree in Mathematical Sciences specialising in the Mathematical Modelling of the Climate from the African Institute of Mathematical Sciences.

My favorite subject growing up was Mathematics and this influenced my decision in taking up a course in Mathematics and Computer Science for my higher education. Computer Science because I was genuinely intrigued by technology. Towards the end of my undergraduate studies I develop an interest in data and this led me to pursue a postgraduate degree with a strong data science component. Fast-forward to the end of my postgraduate degree, I was on the lookout for opportunities that allowed the space to use technology to create innovative solutions to challenges facing my continent Africa. The AU digital and innovation fellowship was in line with my aspirations for my career and I am glad I was chosen as one of its fellows.

Aspiration & Views

I hope this fellowship will be an opportunity to use my tech skills to work on projects that bring about innovative solutions with the guidance of a mentor.

Expectations

As an African, I want different sectors of our economy to thrive because this translates to better quality of life for my people. One way we can support this dream is by embracing innovation which is devising new ways of doing things so as to bring about change.

Another way I believe we can improve the quality of life of our people is by investing in leaders who are willing to step up and take responsibility for the visions of its citizens. These type of leaders are able to find potential in people and mobilize them into actions that set out to achieve this visions.

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our sponsors and partners

Our sponsors and partners, who keep us thriving in the innovation ecosystem, are largely responsible for how we are able to do what we do. We celebrate the sponsor and partners of the AU Digital and Innovation Fellowship!

About the African Union Commission (AUC)

The African Union Commission (AUC) is the AU's secretariat and undertakes the day to day activities of the Union. It is based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

About Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) works to shape a future worth living around the world. As a service provider with worldwide operations in the fields of international cooperation for sustainable development and international education work, GIZ works with its partners to develop effective solutions that offer people better prospects and sustainably improve their living conditions. GIZ is a public-benefit federal enterprise and supports the German Government and a host of public and private sector clients in a wide variety of areas, including economic development and employment promotion, energy and the environment, and peace and security.

About AfriLabs

AfriLabs is a network organisation supporting 347 technology and innovation hubs across 52 African countries. We support the growth of technology hubs and their community to raise high potential entrepreneurs that will stimulate economic growth and social development in Africa. We do this by providing capacity building resources, financing, mentoring and networking opportunities to our network members.

Collaborate With Us!

Are you interested in partnering with or sponsoring the next cohort of the fellowship?
Let us know!

We welcome every individual and organisation that is passionate about Africa's growth to collaborate with us and be involved in the launch of the next cohort of the AU Digital and Innovation Fellowship, aimed at leveraging innovation and technology to digitise the African Union and Africa at large over the next decade.

Being a partner or sponsor of the fellowship has several benefits, including:

- Press release announcing your organisation as the fellowship sponsor/partner.
- Prominent display of your organisation as a sponsor/partner on the AU Digital and Innovation Fellowship social media.
- Recognition in promotional and informational material the Digital and Innovation Fellowship develops about the fellowship, including information for distribution at high-level events, such as the AfriLabs Annual Gatherings and African Union events.
- Opportunity to drive positive change and foster innovation, digital transformation in the African Union units/organs and the African continent as a whole and be recognised for it.
- Opportunity to impact lives and empower young African talents to become innovation leaders.
- Recognition as a facilitating partner of technologies/platforms developed by the fellows for the participating African Union units/organs.

If interested in this opportunity, please contact;

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