



27th AABD Annual Conference **CALL FOR PAPERS**

18 – 22 MAY 2027 | LONDON, UK

Africa & Global Business Collaboration in the Era of AI: Opportunities, Challenges and Strategic Pathways

Hosted by the Royal Docks School of Business and Law, University of East London, the conference brings together scholars, practitioners, policymakers, business leaders and students from across the globe to examine how Africa can shape, and be shaped by, the era of artificial intelligence.



KEY DATES

31 December 2026

Abstract and full paper
submission deadline

10 February 2027

Notification of
acceptance

31 March 2027

Early registration
deadline

About the Conference

Context:

The Academy of African Business and Development (AABD) is delighted to announce its 27th Annual Conference, proudly hosted by the Royal Docks School of Business and Law, University of East London, UK. This prestigious international gathering will bring together leading scholars, practitioners, policymakers, business leaders and students from across the globe from 18-22 May 2027 to exchange knowledge, share insights, foster meaningful connections, and explore emerging developments shaping the future of business.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly reforming the global business landscape, creating new opportunities for innovation, entrepreneurship, productivity, and international collaboration. For Africa, the advent of AI presents both a significant development opportunity and a strategic challenge. Undoubtedly, the continent is endowed with significant resources including human talent, entrepreneurial capability, diverse markets and locally relevant data. Nevertheless, considerable gaps remain in some areas such as computing infrastructure, investment, digital skills and access to advanced technologies. Accordingly, the ability of African economies and businesses to benefit from AI will depend not only on domestic capacity-building but also on the nature and quality of their collaboration with global businesses, technology companies, governments, universities and international organisations.

The extant AI landscape provides an opportunity to reconsider traditional models of Africa-global business relationships. Rather than positioning Africa primarily as a market for technologies developed elsewhere, collaboration can increasingly be based on knowledge exchange and mutual value co-creation. This entails global businesses working with African entrepreneurs, researchers and institutions to develop AI applications that respond to African contexts while possessing potential relevance for international markets. Such collaboration is particularly important because AI development requires resources that are unevenly distributed globally.

Conference Theme and Scope

Scope:

Access to high-performance computing, quality datasets, cloud infrastructure, investment capital and specialist skills remains a major constraint for many African businesses. Partnerships with global technology companies and investors can therefore help address these structural limitations while enabling African firms to participate more actively in global AI value chains. Successful collaboration should extend beyond the transfer of technology or provision of funding. It should involve investment in African capabilities, including research and development, entrepreneurial ecosystems, technical skills, locally relevant datasets and digital infrastructure. The objective should be to create sustainable African capacity to develop, adapt and commercialise AI rather than creating long-term technological dependence.

Moreover, African businesses can also contribute distinctive resources and capabilities to global AI development. It is noteworthy that the continent's linguistic, cultural and socioeconomic diversity constitutes opportunities for developing AI applications that address context-specific challenges such as financial inclusion, multilingual communication, marketing issues, healthcare delivery, agriculture, education and many others. African entrepreneurs can therefore become not only consumers of AI technologies but also innovators and partners in the global AI ecosystem.

Theme:

Africa and Global Business Collaboration in the Era of AI: Opportunities, Challenges and Strategic Pathways

The conference invites papers that critically examine how African businesses, governments and institutions are navigating the opportunities and challenges presented by Artificial Intelligence. Contributions may explore how AI can stimulate innovation, enhance competitiveness, strengthen entrepreneurship, transform business practices and create new opportunities for participation in global markets. The conference also welcomes research addressing challenges relating to infrastructure, skills, data governance, ethics, regulation, cybersecurity, employment and sustainability. Particular attention is given to collaborative and mutually beneficial approaches that can foster sustainable business growth, strengthen Africa's global economic engagement and enhance its contribution to the evolving AI-enabled global economy.

Why London?

Please join us at the Royal Docks School of Business and Law, University of East London, UK, for an intellectually stimulating and socially enriching experience. The choice of London as the host city this year is both strategic and significant. As one of the world's leading international business, financial, cultural, and academic centres, London offers delegates a unique environment for intellectual exchange, global networking, and cross-cultural engagement. Its exceptional connectivity and diverse international business ecosystem further enhance its suitability as a meeting point for ideas, partnerships, and opportunities spanning Africa and the wider global economy.

Conference Tracks

We welcome theoretical, empirical, and practice-oriented contributions from a wide range of disciplines. Submissions may address the conference theme and sub-themes as presented. Both full papers and abstracts will be considered, and doctoral students are especially encouraged to participate. The conference will feature keynote speeches by thought leaders, special panel sessions and ample networking opportunities.

01 Accounting, Finance, Investment, and Economics

02 Entrepreneurship, Small Business, and Informal Sector

03 Organizational Behavior, Human Resource Management and Business Strategy

04 Sustainability, Business Ethics, Social Responsibility & Law

05 Artificial Intelligence (AI), Information Systems & Communication Technologies (ICT)

06 Marketing

07 Operations, Supply Chain, and Project Management

08 Special Sessions

09 Submissions in French

Submissions and Deadlines

Please adhere to the following submission guidelines:

Abstracts: should be no more than 300 words, highlighting research objectives, methodology, and key findings.

Full papers: should follow APA style and not exceed 7000 words, including references, tables, figures, and appendices.

Template: use the paper template provided on the AABD website for formatting.

Languages: submissions should be in English or French.

Submission portal (submit via this link): [AABD2027 Submission Portal](#)

Submissions must be made electronically in Word through the ExOrdo AABD conference submission portal. **PDF submissions will not be accepted.**

Important Dates

Abstracts and full paper submission deadline	31 December 2026
Notification of acceptance	10 February 2027
Early registration fee payment	31 March 2027
Payment of registration fee for papers to be included in the programme	30 April 2027
Notice of exclusion of paper from the conference book of abstracts and proceedings	1 May 2027

An email to exclude your paper must be sent to the Proceedings Editor by 1 May 2027. Please send your request to rshambare@ufh.ac.za.

Publication and Contacts

Keynote, workshop & panel

Keynote speakers and workshops and panels will be announced as they are confirmed.

Publication opportunities

Full paper submissions will be double blind peer-reviewed and only those meeting our high-quality standards will be published in the Conference Proceedings.

Additionally, authors interested in submitting their work to the Journal of African Business (JAB), the official journal of the Academy, are encouraged to consult and adhere to the journal's submission and publication guidelines available on its official website. JAB is an internationally recognized scholarly journal with an established impact factor and is included in the ABDC Journal Quality List, providing an additional avenue for authors seeking to disseminate high-quality research on African business and related areas.

Conference contacts & information

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JOIN US IN LONDON, MAY 2027.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Royal Docks School of Business and Law, University of East London.