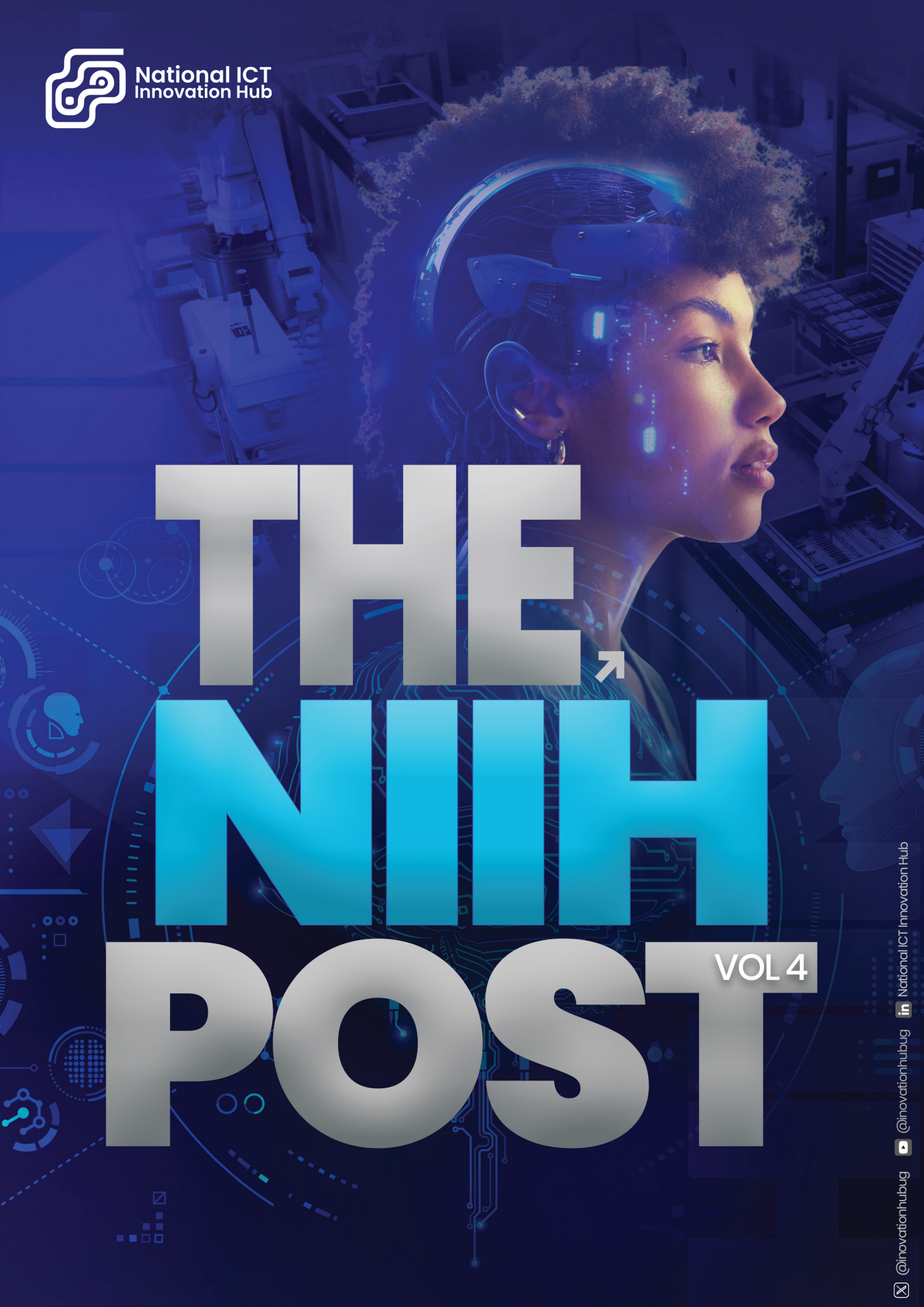
National ICT Innovation Hub



THE NIIH POST

VOL 4

@inovationhubug National ICT Innovation Hub @inovationhubug

EAST AFRICA OPEN ROBOTICS CHAMPIONSHIP 2026









Innovation took centre stage at the East Africa Open Robotics Championship 2026 as young learners and innovators from across the region came together to design, build, compete, and reimagine solutions to some of today's most pressing challenges. Through robotics competitions, hackathons, coding challenges, and innovation projects, participants demonstrated the creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills that will drive Africa's digital future.

Held under the theme "Unearth to Rebuild," the championship encouraged participants to draw lessons from the past while developing technology-driven solutions for the future. From robotics and automation to agritech innovations tackling real-world community challenges, the event showcased the transformative role of STEM education in preparing young people for an increasingly digital world.

Organised by NextGen Uganda in partnership with stakeholders across the education and innovation ecosystem, the championship attracted participants from primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions, creating opportunities for learning, collaboration, mentorship, and healthy competition. Beyond competing for awards, learners gained hands-on experience designing robots, developing innovative solutions, and presenting their ideas to industry experts and judges.

Speaking about the initiative, Mellon Kenyanji, Co-Founder of NextGen Uganda and Code Academy Uganda, highlighted the importance of equipping young people with the skills, tools, and opportunities needed to become creators of technology and drivers of innovation. The championship reflects a shared commitment to nurturing the next generation of innovators, engineers, entrepreneurs, and problem-solvers who will shape Africa's future.

As a supporter of the initiative, the National ICT Innovation Hub is proud to champion platforms that inspire innovation, foster collaboration, and empower young people to transform bold ideas into impactful solutions. By investing in emerging talent and creating pathways for practical learning, initiatives such as the East Africa Open Robotics Championship are helping build a stronger, more innovative, and technology-driven Africa.



CREATING PATHWAYS

FOR WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY

The 2026 GirlCode Uganda Hackathon brought together aspiring developers, founders, and innovators for two days of collaboration, problem-solving, and technology-driven innovation. Hosted at the National ICT Innovation Hub, the hackathon formed part of GirlCode's broader Pan-African mission to increase women's participation in technology and equip the next generation of female innovators with the skills needed to thrive in the digital economy.

More than a coding competition, the hackathon created a space where participants could transform ideas into practical solutions, working alongside mentors and industry professionals to address real-world challenges through technology. By connecting emerging talent with experienced practitioners, the programme provided participants with valuable exposure to the skills, networks, and opportunities that support careers in technology and innovation.

The National ICT Innovation Hub's involvement as host partner reflects a shared commitment to strengthening Uganda's innovation ecosystem and expanding opportunities for young women in technology. Through collaborations such as GirlCode, the Hub continues to support initiatives that encourage innovation, nurture talent, and create pathways for participation in the country's growing digital economy.

The hackathon also highlighted the importance of strong ecosystem partnerships. By bringing together technology professionals, industry partners, and aspiring innovators, the programme demonstrated how collaboration can help bridge the gap between learning and industry, while creating an enabling environment for new ideas to emerge and grow.

As Uganda's technology sector continues to evolve, empowering more women to participate, lead, and innovate remains critical to building an inclusive digital future. Through initiatives like the GirlCode Uganda Hackathon, young women are not only gaining technical skills, but also the confidence to see themselves as founders, developers, and future leaders shaping Africa's innovation landscape.

MTN SPARK HUB LAUNCHED AT BUSITEMA UNIVERSITY

A new chapter in Uganda's digital transformation journey has begun with the launch of the MTN Spark Hub at Busitema University, strengthening access to innovation, technology, and entrepreneurship opportunities for young people in Eastern Uganda. The hub is the second regional innovation centre established under the MTN ACE programme and forms part of a broader effort to extend digital opportunities beyond Kampala.

Established through a partnership between MTN Foundation Uganda, the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, and Centenary Technology Services (Cente-Tech), the facility provides students and surrounding communities with access to modern digital infrastructure, collaborative workspaces, mentorship, and future-focused training. Learners will have opportunities to build skills in areas such as Artificial Intelligence, Software Development, Cybersecurity, Cloud Computing, and Data Science, helping prepare them for careers in Uganda's fast-growing digital economy.

The Spark Hub is part of a UGX 4 billion investment programme aimed at establishing four regional innovation centres across the country while also supporting the refurbishment of the National ICT Innovation Hub in Nakawa. Following the successful launch of a similar facility at Kabale University, additional hubs are planned for Gulu and Soroti, creating a nationwide network of innovation spaces designed to empower young innovators and entrepreneurs.

For Busitema University, the hub represents more than a physical space. It serves as a bridge between classroom learning and practical application, enabling students to experiment, collaborate, and develop solutions to real-world challenges.

By bringing together technology, mentorship, and access to resources, the facility is expected to nurture startups, support innovation-led enterprises, and strengthen the country's digital talent pipeline.

The initiative aligns closely with Uganda's ambitions to grow its digital economy and equip young people with the skills needed for the future of work. Through programmes focused on digital skilling, career development, and entrepreneurship, more students and community members will be able to access opportunities that enhance employability and drive socio-economic development.

As Uganda continues to embrace innovation as a driver of growth, the launch of the MTN Spark Hub at Busitema University demonstrates the impact of collaboration in creating pathways for the next generation of innovators, problem-solvers, and digital leaders.





NIIH SPOTLIGHT: IMPALA HEALTHTECH RESEARCH

ADVANCING DIGITAL HEALTH THROUGH SMARTER DIAGNOSTICS

Improving access to timely and accurate diagnostics remains a critical challenge within Uganda's healthcare system. In many instances, healthcare providers are required to make treatment decisions before laboratory results are available, increasing the risk of inappropriate antimicrobial use and making effective antimicrobial stewardship more difficult.

Through its Digital Antimicrobial Stewardship (DIGAMS) platform, Impala HealthTech is working to address this challenge by strengthening links between healthcare facilities and diagnostic laboratories. The platform enables health facilities to coordinate sample referrals, access laboratory services, receive results digitally, and make more informed clinical decisions using both laboratory and patient data.

In recent months, the innovation has continued to gain recognition within Uganda's growing technology and entrepreneurship ecosystem. Following its selection among the top finalists at the GEC+ Uganda 2026 National Finals, DIGAMS has attracted attention as a locally developed solution addressing healthcare access and antimicrobial resistance through technology.

The team also recently participated in a stakeholder workshop focused on the development of a Health AI Governance Toolkit, contributing to regional discussions on the responsible use of artificial intelligence in healthcare. Bringing together policymakers, regulators, healthcare professionals, researchers, and technology innovators, the workshop explored how emerging technologies can be safely and effectively integrated into health systems while maintaining strong standards for patient protection, data privacy, and accountability.

DIGAMS was recently featured on NTV Uganda's Innovation Nation, where founder Chraish Miiro highlighted how the platform leverages AI and digital technology to bridge diagnostic gaps, particularly in health facilities without specialised laboratory capacity. By connecting clinics to partner laboratories and improving access to diagnostic services, the solution is helping healthcare providers make more informed treatment decisions while contributing to efforts to combat antimicrobial resistance.

As digital health continues to evolve, innovations such as DIGAMS demonstrate the potential of locally developed technology to strengthen healthcare systems, improve patient outcomes, and expand access to quality care for underserved communities.

WHAT TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN Q4:

UGANDA INNOVATION WEEK 2026

As we continue to celebrate the innovators, founders, and ecosystem builders shaping Uganda's digital future, we encourage our community to mark their calendars for **Uganda Innovation Week (UIW) 2026**, taking place from **9 to 13 November 2026 in Kampala.**

The event will bring together innovators, entrepreneurs, investors, policymakers, corporate leaders, academia, and ecosystem support organisations for five days of dialogue, collaboration, and opportunity.

Hosted by Startup Uganda, UIW 2026 will be held under the theme **"Uganda Innovates: Building the Innovation Ecosystem for the Next Decade"** and is expected to attract more than 3,000 participants from across Uganda and beyond.

The programme will explore key themes including deep technology, climate innovation, AI, finance, policy, entrepreneurship, talent development, and ecosystem growth.

More than a conference, Uganda Innovation Week serves as a platform where ideas become partnerships, solutions gain visibility, and meaningful conversations help shape the future of innovation in Uganda and across Africa. Whether you are a founder, developer, student, investor, policymaker, researcher, or innovation enthusiast, there is a place for you at the table.

Registration is now open. Visit www.uiw.ug to learn more and secure your place at Uganda's largest innovation gathering.



TAKING UGANDAN INNOVATION TO THE GLOBAL STAGE

The National ICT Innovation Hub is exploring new opportunities to connect Ugandan innovators with international markets through participation in **Smart Nation Expo 2026**, one of the region's leading digital technology and innovation exhibitions, scheduled to take place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, this November.

The proposed initiative aims to support a cohort of Ugandan innovators to showcase their solutions, engage potential partners, and explore commercial opportunities with organisations across Asia and beyond. By creating avenues for direct engagement with investors, technology companies, government agencies, and innovation support organisations, the platform is expected to strengthen market access and accelerate the growth of locally developed digital solutions.

Led by the National ICT Innovation Hub under the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, the initiative aligns with broader efforts to position Uganda as a competitive player in the global digital economy. Priority will be given to innovators developing commercially viable software, ICT-enabled services, business process outsourcing (BPO) solutions, and other digital innovations with export potential.

Beyond exhibition opportunities, the engagement will focus on fostering meaningful partnerships, knowledge exchange, and technology collaboration. Planned engagements include discussions with organisations working in digital transformation, artificial intelligence, smart cities, cloud computing, cybersecurity, fintech, and enterprise technology, creating potential pathways for investment, skills transfer, and future collaboration.

The initiative reflects the Hub's commitment to supporting innovators beyond product development by helping them access new markets, build strategic networks, and position their solutions on the global stage. By facilitating international exposure and strengthening connections between Uganda's innovation ecosystem and global partners, the programme seeks to unlock new opportunities for growth, collaboration, and impact.



CENTENARY BANK AND NATIONAL ICT INNOVATION HUB LAUNCH WOMEN INNOVATION IMPACT AWARDS 2026

Women-led innovations are playing an increasingly important role in addressing some of Uganda's most pressing social, economic, and environmental challenges. To recognise and accelerate these efforts, Centenary Bank and the National ICT Innovation Hub are partnering to launch the **Women Innovation Impact Awards 2026,** a national platform designed to identify, celebrate, and support women innovators creating meaningful change in their communities.

Held under the theme "Her Innovation. Our Future. Transforming Communities," the initiative will go beyond recognition to provide visibility, validation, and growth opportunities for women-led innovations across the country. The programme will combine a national call for nominations, an independent technical assessment process, a live innovation showcase, and an awards ceremony, followed by structured support for winning innovators.

The awards will recognise outstanding innovations across five key categories: Digital Innovation, Agriculture Innovation, Social Innovation, Financial Innovation, and Green and Climate Innovation. An overall **Woman Innovator of the Year** award will be presented to the most outstanding innovator demonstrating exceptional leadership, impact, and potential for large-scale transformation.

The initiative reflects a shared commitment to strengthening Uganda's innovation ecosystem by ensuring that women innovators have access to the networks, mentorship, recognition, and opportunities needed to grow sustainable solutions. Innovations will be assessed based on factors including originality, impact, sustainability, scalability, and evidence of implementation, ensuring that the awards recognise solutions delivering measurable value to communities and businesses.

Beyond the awards ceremony, the long-term vision is to establish Uganda's leading platform for discovering and accelerating women-led innovation. Through ongoing mentorship, market linkages, visibility opportunities, and ecosystem support, the programme aims to help participating innovators strengthen their solutions, create jobs, attract investment, and generate lasting impact.

As Uganda's innovation landscape continues to grow, initiatives such as the Women Innovation Impact Awards underscore the importance of creating inclusive pathways that enable more women to contribute to the country's digital and economic transformation.



HACK FOR G48 TO EMPOWER YOUNG WOMEN THROUGH DIGITAL INNOVATION

The National ICT Innovation Hub is set to partner with **Garage48 (G48)** and the **Estonian Centre for International Development (ESTDEV)** to deliver a national hackathon focused on strengthening women's participation in technology, innovation, and digital leadership.
Scheduled to take place in Kampala, the initiative forms part of the broader Women's Leadership in the Public ICT Sector programme, which seeks to equip girls and young women with the skills, confidence, and practical experience needed to pursue opportunities in technology and innovation.

The hackathon will bring together young people, mentors, educators, and ecosystem stakeholders to collaborate on technology-driven solutions addressing real-world challenges. Participants will take part in ideation sessions, team-based problem solving, mentorship engagements, and solution pitching, while developing early-stage digital products and prototypes.

Particular emphasis will be placed on increasing the participation of girls and young women in technology by creating an inclusive environment that encourages learning, experimentation, leadership, and innovation. Through exposure to experienced mentors and practical innovation processes, participants will gain valuable skills in teamwork, problem-solving, digital product development, and entrepreneurship.

The initiative also presents an opportunity to strengthen collaboration between local and international innovation partners while contributing to Uganda's growing digital talent pipeline. By providing hands-on experience and pathways into the technology ecosystem, the programme aims to inspire more young women to become active participants and leaders in Uganda's digital future.

As a proposed local implementation partner, the National ICT Innovation Hub is proud to support initiatives that expand access to digital opportunities and empower the next generation of innovators to develop solutions with lasting social and economic impact.