REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Call for Proposals to Participate in the Second UbuntuNet Alliance Women Hackathon 2024

This initiative is sponsored by the European Union as part of the EU co-funded AfricaConnect3 project. The AfricaConnect3 project seeks to unlock the potential of education and research through increased access to digital infrastructures and technologies for African education and research institutions. The UbuntuNet Alliance Research and Education Networking - a partner in the AfricaConnect3 project - is a membership organisation of National Research and Education Networks (NRENs) in Eastern and Southern Africa, covering all the countries in the region.

Background and Rationale

UbuntuNet Alliance serves as an **enabler** for conducting collaborative research and provision of quality higher education by providing access to the global knowledge community, global digital education and research resources, and cutting-edge applications and infrastructure. The mission of UbuntuNet Alliance is to develop and grow a thriving sustainable community of NRENs and partners within Eastern and Southern Africa, enabling and strengthening **collaboration** and **innovation** among Research and Education Communities. More details on the Alliance can be found on our website, https://ubuntunet.net.

Research and education are two core objectives in academia, opening doors to new theories, ideas and innovations that shape society. These innovations have revolutionized the way we live and improved our livelihoods. However, the full potential of research and education is yet to be realized due to many challenges.

The UbuntuNet Alliance Women's Hackathon shall be held on October 28-30, 2024, as a pre-event to our UbuntuNet Connect annual conference in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (https://ubuntunet.net/uc2024). The hackathon seeks to addresses the gap in innovations supporting research and education, and the gender gap in software development on the Africa.

Aims, Theme and Key Focus Areas

We are looking for 21 passionate young women developers, (organised in teams of three) from the UbuntuNet Alliance region of East and Southern Africa to participate in a hackathon.

Theme: Innovate for research and education

Key Focus Areas for projects

- **Innovations for 21st century education:** All over Africa, there is a need to improve the way learning happens both in and out of a school, especially in the post pandemic era. Moreover, the reliance of education on technology has continued to increase and awareness of such technologies is key.

- **Innovations for improving uptake of research and its outputs:** This involves innovations, which help in stakeholders becoming aware of and accessing research outputs to improve policies and practice. Research uptake involves dissemination of research

findings, Capacity development to understand research outputs, increased Influence (social influence), Incentives and creation of enabling environments among others.

- **Innovations for improved collaboration:** Innovations, which bring together multiple stakeholders in research projects. Collaboration technologies include those which assess the diversity of teams (experiences, roles, etc.), help in the mobilisation of teams and assess performance and contribution of teams and individuals in order to provide impactful research.

Why participate

Participants will get the following benefits: -
- Certificates of participation for all participants
- Travel and accommodation costs fully covered
- Opportunity to attend the UbuntuNet-Connect conference in Tanzania
- Possibility of internship opportunities with the UbuntuNet Alliance NRENs
- Linkage to the industry
- Opportunity for Mentorship

How to Apply

We invite concept proposals from teams from eligible countries The concept note should be 2 pages [font Times New Roman, size 12, single spacing], excluding the cover page. It should ideally contain an introduction, a background (or relevance), proposed objectives (leading to development of an ICT solution), methodology (that is based on the software development lifecycle and contains necessary technologies), programming skills of team members, previous experience, links to developed work, education level, year of graduation (past or future). The cover page should have the topic and team member details (names and email address, phone number). The concept note shall be submitted through the online link (https://event.ubuntunet.net/event/141/)

Eligibility

- Female participants
- Pursing or in possession of a university degree in Software Engineering, Information Technology, Information Systems, Computer Science, or any related field.
- Participants should be students or graduates of not more than 5 years.
- Eligible countries within the UbuntuNet Alliance Region: Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Comoros, Congo, DR Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.
- Must not have participated in a previous UbuntuNet Alliance women hackathon.

Selection Criteria

The concepts will be assessed based on the following criteria:
- Proposed idea solves a problem and fits within the theme.
- The idea being proposed is innovative.
- The team has necessary programming skills to implement the proposed idea.
- Feasibility of the proposed idea.

Deadline for submission: **Friday 13th September 2024**

Successful applicants will be notified by 20th September

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