



The NIIH Post

MAY 2025

NEWSLETTER

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Editorial: Celebrating Innovation through Collaboration

Welcome to the May edition of the NIIH Post. We're proud to bring you another round of stories that showcase Uganda's accelerating digital transformation—stories of partnership, progress, and purpose shaping a smarter, more inclusive future.



In this issue, we spotlight key developments that reflect Uganda's digital maturity. We celebrate powerful collaborations through our "Partner Spotlight Series", highlighting organizations like StartHub Africa, JICA Uganda, Cente-Tech, and more, whose efforts are building the foundation for a resilient, digitally skilled generation. From UJ Connect Pilot projects to the opening of the Maarifasasa Digital Impact Hub in Lira—both pivotal to unlocking opportunity and jobs across the country. From the Aerospace Workshop 2025, to refining the innovation pipeline at UICT Innovation Bootcamp and Pitch 2025 to the Edutech Club's Intecraft innovation and techpreneurship industrial training program, innovation continues to meet real-world needs.

Each initiative—whether empowering educators, spotlighting youth talent, or scaling start-ups—proves that Uganda's digital future is being built by all of us, together.

Winfred Nankanja

Communications and PR Associate, National ICT Innovation Hub

Message From the National ICT Innovation Hub

Team Lead Innovations

- Flavia Opio



I'm pleased to share this month's update as we continue to unlock new frontiers in Uganda's digital transformation journey. May 2025 has been a month of remarkable activity, collaboration, and momentum across innovation, capacity-building, and strategic partnerships.

We proudly launched the UJ Connect BizLink Platform, Uganda's first national B2B e-commerce marketplace, in partnership with @MoICT_Ug. This platform is a bold leap toward building an inclusive digital economy—empowering local businesses to scale across borders, access new markets, and become competitive in the global value chain.

At the regional level, the launch of the Maarifasasa Digital Impact Hub in Lira signaled another major step in advancing Uganda's BPO agenda, aligned with our goal to create 150,000 digital jobs by 2030. Through the Partner Spotlight Series, we celebrated impactful collaborations with @MTNFoundation, @StartHubAfrica, @refactory_acad, @CenteTech, and @JICA Uganda—each one playing a pivotal role in skills development, youth empowerment, and cross-border innovation.

Capacity-building remained a strong theme

this month. We hosted a 3-day Leadership Training Programme for young innovators, ran an AI and Data Science session with OTIC Group, and conducted Training of Trainers programs for educators and university lecturers in partnership with StartHub Africa, HP LIFE, and Cisco NetAcad.

The Intecraft innovation and techpreneurship industrial training program, led by Edutech Club, officially launched with 63 students from 19 tertiary institutions. Participants are gaining hands-on experience with AI-Augmented design thinking, prototyping and building with WordPress, and emerging tools—preparing them for Uganda's AI-driven future.

Innovation outreach continued with inspiring events such as the Aerospace Workshop 2025, and our visit to Gulu University to explore a potential innovation hub. Meanwhile, two of our startups—eMoT Museum and Real VR—proudly represented us at #MuseumFair2025, showcasing how culture and technology are reshaping how we tell our stories.

These milestones reflect our shared vision of a digitally skilled, inclusive, and innovation-powered Uganda. We remain committed to this transformation—together.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT SERIES: CELEBRATING THE POWER OF COLLABORATION



At the National ICT Innovation Hub, we believe that partnerships are the engine of impact. That's why we're thrilled to introduce our Partner Spotlight Series—a campaign that highlights the visionary organizations we work with to build a more inclusive, innovative, and digitally empowered Uganda.

Through this series, we're celebrating the stories, values, and outstanding work of our partners who share our commitment to driving digital transformation, skills development, and youth empowerment. Here are some of the changemakers we're proud to spotlight:

MTN Foundation – Bridging Communities Through ICT. In our conversation with @BryanMbasa, Senior Manager at @MTNFoundation, we explored how the Foundation is advancing Uganda's digital transformation through initiatives in ICT, education, and health. Their commitment to community empowerment through technology aligns perfectly with our mission of inclusive innovation.

StartHub Africa – Building a Movement of Changemakers. Led by @MatMobius, @StartHubAfrica has been instrumental in co-creating high-impact programs with us, including

the Green Growth Hackathon and enhancing Regional Innovation Hubs. Their focus on empowering youth-led innovation has made a lasting impact on our ecosystem.

JICA Uganda – Enabling Global Collaboration Through UJ-Connect. Our long-standing partnership with JICA Uganda, represented by Mr. Yamashita Hideshi, has opened doors for Ugandan startups to connect with Japanese companies through UJ-Connect. A major milestone includes the launch of the UJ Connect BizLink Platform (<https://bizlink.ict.go.ug>)—a digital gateway to global business matching and investment opportunities.

Centenary Technology Services (Cente-Tech) – Skilling for the Future. With leadership from @stkipirenga, @CenteTech has supported our skilling programs through digital training, mentorship, and crucial ICT infrastructure upgrades. Their support ensures our learners have the tools they need to succeed in Uganda's digital economy.

Refactory – Growing Uganda's Tech Talent Pipeline. Guided by @mniyitegeka, Executive Director of @refactory_acad, our collaboration has focused on preparing youth for the job market through mentorship, career expos, and market-relevant skilling. Together, we're nurturing a new generation of tech talent equipped for real-world innovation.
Subscribe to Our YouTube Channel
We're excited to share behind-the-scenes conversations and video spotlights with our partners. Don't miss out—subscribe today and follow the series as it unfolds!
This is more than just a spotlight—it's a celebration of the collective spirit shaping Uganda's digital future. Stay tuned as we continue to share stories of collaboration, impact, and innovation.

*Article by **NIIH POST DESK***

INSIDE THE UJ CONNECT PILOT PROJECTS

Article by **NIIH POST DESK**

In today's digital economy, connecting local talent with global opportunity is essential. Sumic IT Solutions Ltd, a Ugandan tech company, exemplifies this through its participation in the UJ Connect Pilot Projects—a Uganda–Japan collaboration supported by the Ministry of ICT & National Guidance, UICT, and Japanese partners. Sumic's work highlights the potential of South–East Asian–African partnerships in driving innovation.

A centerpiece of this effort is the Sumic International Academy in Kampala, which trains youth in software development, business innovation, and uniquely, Japanese language and culture. The goal is to develop professionals ready to excel in international, especially Asian, tech environments while remaining grounded in African realities.

Sumic also leads in the UJ Connect Internship Program, linking Ugandan students and start-ups with Japanese firms through internships. At a May 27, 2025 event, Sumic showcased its collaboration with eight Japanese companies, including FVital Inc., eftax Co. Ltd., and Japan AI Consulting Cooperation. Four of these have co-developed solutions with Sumic, demonstrating real-world implementation—not just theory. CEO Cirus Sumika emphasized the importance of cultural and technical readiness for success in Japanese tech settings.

Two major apps emerged from these collaborations:

Neonatal Resuscitation App (with FVital): AI-powered support for healthcare workers during newborn emergencies.

Halo Dish App (with eftax): Helps Muslim tourists in Japan and Thailand find halal food and prayer spaces.

Sumic's model merges technical education, entrepreneurship, cross-cultural training, and practical international experience. Its Academy is now open for the June–July 2025 intake, attracting attention across Uganda. In collaboration with institutions like UICT, Sumic ensures more youth from underserved regions gain access to global opportunities.

This initiative proves Uganda's tech talent can scale globally, with Sumic offering a replicable model for cross-border innovation.



Business Matching Experience

ビジネスマッチング体験

Case Study: Sumic IT Solutions Ltd.
ケーススタディ:スミックITソリューションズ株式会社



ITES & BPO



MAARIFASASA DIGITAL IMPACT HUB LAUNCHED IN LIRA

Article by **NIH POST DESK**

On May 23, 2025, Uganda launched the Maarifasasa Digital Impact Hub in Lira during the Lira BPO Awareness Campaign—an event uniting government, academia, private sector, and development partners to accelerate Uganda's Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector. Spearheaded by the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, the Hub aims to provide Northern Uganda's youth with digital skills, employment opportunities, and global market access.

The launch aligns with Uganda's National BPO Policy (Feb 2025), which targets 150,000 jobs by 2030. BPO is viewed as a scalable solution to youth unemployment, tapping into Uganda's growing, tech-savvy workforce. As of April 2025, Uganda hosts 50 active BPO firms employing over 3,000 people, and has identified 243 BPO-ready companies.

Key advantages include:

A youthful population (77% under 25)

English proficiency (2.5M fluent speakers)

Cost-effective operations and a favorable time zone

The Ministry's National BPO Publicity Campaign has reached over 1 million Ugandans. A new BPO Business Matching Platform (launching May 26) will connect 75+ BPO firms with clients and investors globally.

The Maarifasasa Hub reflects Uganda's commitment to building a collaborative BPO ecosystem—empowering youth, attracting investment, and advancing Uganda's role as Africa's Innovation Powerhouse.



EXPLORING NEW FRONTIERS: INSIDE UGANDA'S FIRST AEROSPACE WORKSHOP 2025

Article by **NIIH POST DESK**

In May 2025, Uganda marked a historic milestone with its first-ever Aerospace Workshop, hosted at the National ICT Innovation Hub. This landmark event brought together students, innovators, tech leaders, and experts to explore Uganda's potential in aerospace technologies, satellite data, and remote sensing. The goal: to harness these technologies for critical sectors such as tourism, agriculture, climate resilience, and health.

Guided by the theme "Building a Collaborative Ecosystem", the workshop included panel discussions, tech showcases, and mentorship sessions. It was organized by the Ministry of ICT & National Guidance and UICT, emphasizing the need for cross-sector collaboration—linking academia, government, private sector, and research institutions to develop practical, impactful aerospace solutions.

Why aerospace? The technology offers Uganda strategic tools for precision agriculture, climate monitoring, urban planning, and disaster response. By leveraging satellite data, the country can make smarter, faster decisions for national development.

Event highlights included:

Panels on research, partnerships, and Uganda's entry into aerospace innovation.

Tech demonstrations of drones, GIS tools, and data applications by university and startup teams.

Networking opportunities fostering long-term partnerships.

Mentorship sessions guiding new aerospace startups and project ideas.

Key outcomes from the workshop include plans to:

Launch the Aerospace Uganda Network for sustained collaboration.

Establish a startup accelerator focused on aerospace solutions.

Integrate aerospace and remote sensing into university curricula.

Roll out pilot projects using satellite data in agriculture, mapping, and resource management.

The workshop is a launchpad for Uganda's role in African aerospace innovation. As tech leader Eng. Jasper Otim noted, it's "a fantastic milestone." Moving forward, continued engagement from students, educators, industry, and funders will be vital. Uganda is officially reaching for the skies—turning data into development.



REFINING THE INNOVATION PIPELINE: LESSONS FROM UICT'S 2025 BOOTCAMP AND PITCH COMPETITION

Article by **NIIH POST DESK**

The UICT Innovation Bootcamp and Pitch 2025 has emerged as a powerful model for nurturing student-led digital innovation. Hosted by the Uganda Institute of Information and Communications Technology (UICT), the event brought together 200+ participants, including 21 student teams, 15+ mentors, and key partners like CAMTech Uganda, NITA-U, and Innovation Village. The newly released Final Review and Recommendations Report provides actionable insights for turning short-term events into long-term innovation pipelines aligned with Uganda's Digital Transformation Roadmap.

Key Achievements included:

21 student teams trained and 15 MVPs (Minimum Viable Products) developed
6 projects awarded seed funding
Strong mentorship and technical guidance from institutional partners
Plans for IP protection, incubation, and sustained follow-up

This success reinforces UICT's mission to transform student innovation into industry-ready solutions.

Improvement Areas were identified to boost future impact:

Set SMART goals with measurable outcomes (e.g., 15 MVPs, 6 incubated projects by Sept 2025)

Track tangible metrics like prototype completion and pitch readiness
Include data breakdowns by gender and department to assess equity
Summarize judges' insights to improve curriculum alignment
Use a consistent Problem → Innovation → Next Steps format for project write-ups
Introduce a follow-up matrix (Who, What, When) to monitor post-event progress

Results by Numbers:

21 teams trained (target: 20)
15 MVPs developed (target: 10)
6 projects funded (target: 6)
15+ mentors and 8 institutional partners engaged

Student Innovations like the Smart Borehole Monitor and automated waste tracking system are already attracting real-world attention and support.

Strategic Outlook: With Demo Days, IP registration, and a formal outcomes report in the pipeline, UICT is positioning its bootcamp as a national innovation engine—bridging academia, entrepreneurship, and Uganda's digital future.





ANWISTEM EMPOWERS WOMEN THROUGH FINANCIAL LITERACY

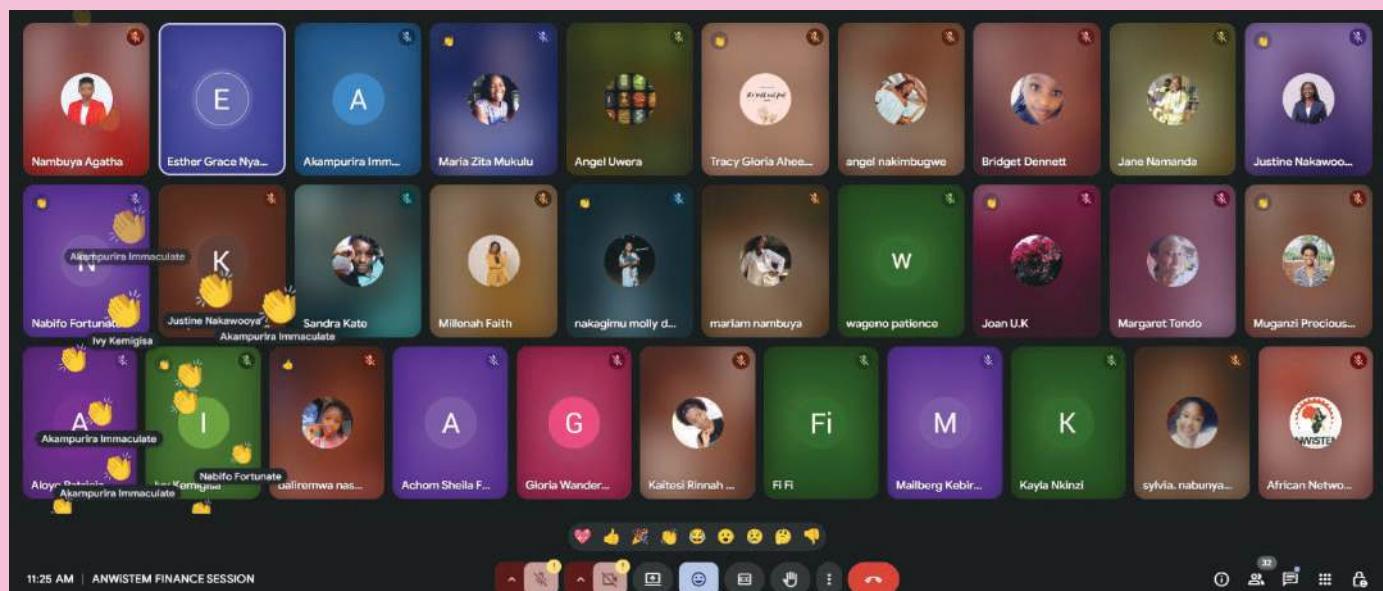
Article by **NIH POST DESK**

On Saturday, 24th May 2025, ANWiSTEM hosted an engaging online session titled “Mastering Your Money: Personal Finance Basics.” Led by Agatha, the session focused on helping women in STEM understand key financial concepts such as budgeting, saving, and setting realistic financial goals.

The session was interactive and practical, with participants engaging in live polls, games, and open discussions. It created a safe and supportive space for women to learn, ask questions, and reflect on their financial journeys.

This session is part of ANWiSTEM's ongoing effort to equip women in STEM not only with technical skills but also with life skills that foster independence and long-term success.

The series continues on Saturday, 21st June with “Passive Income 101.” We look forward to welcoming even more women on this empowering journey.



FOSTERING INNOVATION THROUGH STRATEGIC COLLABORATION – VISIT TO GULU UNIVERSITY

Article by **NIIH POST DESK**

Following the signing of an MoU between the Ministry of ICT & National Guidance and Gulu University, we had the pleasure of visiting the university on Thursday, 22nd May 2025 to kick-start conversations around future collaboration.

This initial engagement focused on building rapport, understanding shared goals, and assessing the university's readiness to host an innovation hub that could serve as a catalyst for regional digital transformation.

We're pleased to report that the visit was both productive and promising. Both teams expressed a strong commitment to move forward together in laying the groundwork for impactful innovation programming in Northern Uganda.

This is just the beginning, and we look forward to co-creating a vibrant ecosystem of tech talent and entrepreneurship with Gulu University.

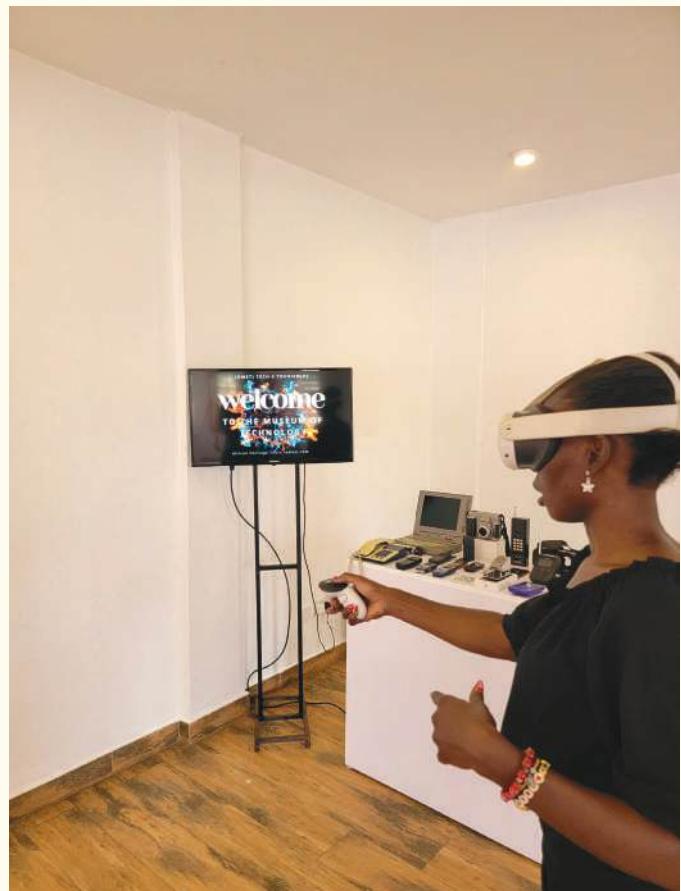


SHOWCASING INNOVATION AT MUSEUM FAIR 2025

Article by **NIIH POST DESK**

A proud moment for Uganda's innovation ecosystem! We're excited to celebrate two of our very own startups — eMoTMuseum and Real VR — as they represent us at the International Council of Museums (ICOM) Uganda #MuseumFair2025, under the theme: "The Future of Museums is Rapidly Changing Communities."

As the world reimagines how heritage is preserved and experienced, EMOT – the Museum of Technology is leading the way by leveraging digital tools to protect and promote Uganda's rich cultural legacy. Alongside them, Real VR is redefining museum experiences through immersive virtual reality, helping transform traditional exhibits into interactive, inclusive, and tech-driven spaces. Their participation underscores how innovation and culture can powerfully intersect to shape the future of storytelling, education, and preservation.



Edutech Club Launches INTECRAFT Innovation and Techpreneurship Industrial Training Program For The Youth

Article by **Mukisa Godfrey** - Team Lead Edutech Club

Edutech Club has officially launched INTECRAFT Lab—a 6–8 week digital skilling and industrial training program designed to equip youth for the AI-powered future of work. In partnership with the Ministry of ICT & National Guidance, National ICT Innovation Hub, Ablestate, and Crossroads Digital Multimedia Animation Studio, the program kicked off with strong momentum.

Targeting 50–100 participants from 19 tertiary institutions and 5 S.6 vacists, INTECRAFT empowers learners to co-create community-focused digital solutions using AI-augmented design thinking.

Tools like ChatGPT, Canva AI, and Notion AI are at the heart of training sessions, enabling students to prototype and test impactful solutions—primarily through AI-powered WordPress websites.

With a dedicated WordPress community, participants are actively preparing for the Uganda Website Projects Competition 2025, which has drawn interest from over 40 institutions.

INTECRAFT aligns with national priorities such as the UCC/UCUSA Research Support to Academia, promoting inclusive,

skill-based innovation ecosystems. Delivered in in-person and hybrid formats, the program aims to turn learners into leaders in Uganda's digital transformation.

Registration for future cohorts is open at <https://lnkd.in/dsN8n9wg>.

INTECRAFT is more than training—it's a youth-powered movement crafting Uganda's digital future.



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