ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY
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EACA
EAST AFRICA COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION

THE 16TH EAST AFRICAN COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION (EACA) ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2026

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

CONFERENCE THEME

REIMAGINING COMMUNICATION IN AFRICA: AI, MEDIA INNOVATION AND GLOBAL COLLABORATION

26TH – 28TH AUGUST 2026

HOSTED BY: ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSITY, KENYA

BACKGROUND

The East African Communication Association (EACA), founded in 2011, brings together media and communication scholars, practitioners, students, and policy-makers from Eastern Africa and beyond to strengthen networks, build capacity, and share research in the evolving media landscape. Its main activities are the annual regional conference that is hosted in different East African countries and serving as a platform for discussing emerging issues in media practice and scholarship; and the African Journal of Communication (AJC), which publishes peer-reviewed research, including work from conference participants. Overall, EACA fosters collaboration and supports efforts to understand and respond to media and communication developments and their societal impacts.

EACA OBJECTIVES

- To promote media and communication studies as academic disciplines in East Africa and beyond.
- To provide a forum for media and communication scholars, researchers, and practitioners to exchange information and ideas related to their work.
- To promote critical research and teaching, and the application of professional and scientific principles of the field.
- To improve media and communication research, policy, and practice.
- To contribute to the development and improvement of the education and training of media and communication practitioners using appropriate research and critical scholarship.

THE 2026 CONFERENCE HOST

The 2026 EACA conference will be hosted by St. Paul's University under its School of Communication and Computer Studies from 26th to 28th August 2026, in Limuru, Kenya. Limuru offers a reflective yet dynamic setting for dialogue on how communication is shaped by local contexts and how local experiences inform global communication futures.

St. Paul's University is committed to developing exemplary communication and technology practitioners who will make a contribution to Africa's and the world's development. Rooted in its long history as a mission-founded institution dedicated to holistic education, the School of Communication and Computer Studies at St. Paul's University offers market-relevant undergraduate and postgraduate programmes designed to equip learners with 21st century skills.

Its flagship programmes include the PhD in Communication Studies, which prepares scholars to influence theory, policy and practice; the Master of Arts in Communication Studies, which develops advanced communication professionals; Master of Science in Informatics, whose focus is on the study and application of information, computation and technology; and undergraduate degrees including: the Bachelor of Arts in Communication, the Bachelor of Business and Information Technology, the Bachelor of Computer Science, and the Bachelor of Science in Computing and Information Systems. Through strong industry partnerships and internship opportunities, the School ensures that students gain practical experience to complement academic learning, empowering them to stand out in a competitive global environment.

Hence, we anticipate that the 16th EACA conference will bring together media and communication scholars and practitioners, students, early-career researchers, creatives, policymakers, industry leaders, and communication actors from East Africa, across Africa, and beyond to St. Paul's University this year, 2026.

CONTEXT OF THE CONFERENCE

Amid rapid technological change and expanding youth participation in digital spaces, the conference addresses urgent questions facing African societies and communities: How is AI transforming media work, community storytelling, and communication careers? How can innovation strengthen local cultures, indigenous knowledge, and community voices? How do African communicators working in universities, media houses, civil society, and community settings move from participation to leadership in global communication ecosystems? Special attention will be given to young communicators and community-based practitioners navigating digital work, creative economies, and public-interest communication in Africa.

The conference engages communication issues that are locally rooted yet globally connected, including digital transformation, community and mainstream media practices, misinformation, policy and regulation, creative industries, cultural expression, and technological innovation. Through panels, paper sessions, practitioner forums, and community-engaged sessions, participants will exchange knowledge and co-develop practical responses to real-world communication challenges, generating actionable insights for policy, education, professional practice, and community development.

CONFERENCE THEME

The 2026 conference theme: *Reimagining Communication in Africa: AI, Media Innovation and Global Collaboration* highlights Africa's creativity and growing influence in global communication. It foregrounds African-led innovation, ethical and culturally grounded uses of AI, and meaningful cross-border collaboration, positioning Africa and its communities, not only as beneficiaries but as active producers of communication knowledge, technologies, and solutions.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE 16TH CONFERENCE

The 16th EACA Conference aims to:
- Examine the impact of AI and emerging technologies on media practice, community communication, and communication careers in Africa, with attention to ethical, cultural, and regulatory concerns.
- Showcase African-led media and communication innovations, including youth-driven and community-based initiatives that strengthen storytelling, journalism, cultural expression, digital engagement, and public-interest communication.
- Strengthen collaboration among scholars, practitioners, community actors, policymakers, and industry, fostering partnerships, mentorship, and joint research and practice across borders.
- Address key communication challenges affecting African societies and communities, such as misinformation, digital inequality, media sustainability, representation, and regulation.
- Generate actionable outcomes for policy, education, professional practice, and community development, positioning Africa as an active contributor to global communication innovation.
- To promote peace journalism by strengthening ethical, conflict – sensitive practices that enhance social cohesion, reduce conflict risks, and support sustainable peace and development in Africa.

CONFERENCE SUB-THEMES

A. AI, Technology & Digital Transformation

1. Artificial intelligence, automation, and the future of media in Africa
2. Digital governance, data protection, and ethical AI in communication
3. Emerging technologies and the African creative economy (film, music, gaming)
4. Platform power, algorithms, and African public discourse
5. Influencer marketing, social media, and journalism in the Global South
6. Digital economy

B. Media Systems, Journalism & Information Ecosystems

7. Transforming newsrooms: Innovation, fact-checking, and solutions journalism
8. Misinformation, disinformation, and trust in African media
9. Environmental journalism, climate change, and sustainable media practices
10. Transforming media systems: Research, policy, and training for journalist protection

C. Strategic Organizational and Leadership Communication

11. Strategic business communication, diplomacy, and Africa's global partnerships
12. Public relations, brand Africa, and strategic communication for global influence
13. Organizational communication, entrepreneurship, and innovation
14. Strategic leadership and work place workplace Communication

D. Communicating Faith in a Connected World

15. Faith communication in the age of artificial intelligence and digital technologies
16. Visual, multimedia, and social media storytelling for faith formation and engagement
17. Crisis communication and leadership in faith-based contexts
18. Ethics and responsibility in digital faith communication

E. Peace and Security in the Digital Space

19. Rethinking African security in the digital world
20. Communication in conflict, peacebuilding, and humanitarian contexts
21. Covering migration and mobility in Africa
22. Reporting of labour migration in Sub-Saharan Africa

F. Development, Health, Education, Culture, and Gender Communication

23. Strategic communication for sustainable development (SDGs)
24. Gender, education, and inclusive development communication
25. Innovative communication for health and wellbeing
26. Africans in the global public sphere: Identity, voice, and representation
27. Indigenous knowledge systems and intercultural communication

G. Teaching, Research, Methodology & Scholarship in Communication

28. Decolonizing communication research, pedagogy, and knowledge production in Africa
29. Innovations and competency-based approaches for teaching communication in a digital and AI-driven era
30. Emerging research methods, ethics, and responsible scholarship in communication
31. Strengthening research capacity and shaping communication teaching and research in Africa

H. Ethics and Policy in Communication

32. Policy, regulation, and governance of AI and digital media platforms in Africa
33. Freedom of expression, responsible communication, and ethical considerations in the digital age
34. Inclusivity, accessibility, and equity in AI and media policy, with a focus on Africa

EXPECTED OUTPUTS OF THE 16TH EACA CONFERENCE (2026)

1) **Analytical Papers:** Peer-reviewed papers will explore the theme *"Reimagining Communication in Africa: AI, Media Innovation and Global Collaboration"* and will be compiled into a conference proceedings volume. High-quality papers may be selected for publication in the EACA journal.

2) **Presentations:** Keynote speeches, panels, and research presentations will spark debate and knowledge exchange. Selected presentations may be recorded or summarized online for wider accessibility.

3) **Conference Report:** A comprehensive report will summarize key discussions, findings, and recommendations, providing a roadmap for future research, policy, and collaboration.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE 16TH EACA CONFERENCE (2026)

- **Strengthened Networks:** New partnerships and collaborations among scholars, practitioners, and policy-makers.
- **Enhanced Scholarship:** Greater visibility and recognition of African research in communication studies.
- **Capacity Development:** Learning opportunities and skill-building for participants, especially from East Africa.
- **Policy & Practice Insights:** Actionable recommendations for ethical, inclusive, and innovative communication strategies.
- **Fostering Innovation:** Inspiration for forward-looking ideas that position Africa as a leader in global communication.

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- Abstracts should be no more than 300 words and include the title, author(s), affiliation, and contact information.
- Clearly indicate the chosen conference sub-theme.
- Include a brief biography (50 words) and contact information.
- Submissions should be sent to *eaca2026kenya@spu.ac.ke*

IMPORTANT DATES

Abstract Submission Deadline	Notification Of Acceptance	Full paper Submission	Conference Dates
May 15th 2026	**June 15th 2026**	**July 31st 2026**	**August 26th - 28th 2026**

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS & PANEL DISCUSSIONS

We are thrilled to host renowned scholars and industry leaders who will share insights on *Reimagining Communication in Africa: AI, Media Innovation and Global Collaboration* highlights Africa's creativity and growing influence in global communication.
Their talks will inspire, challenge, and ignite conversation.

We also invite experts to propose panel discussions on cutting-edge communication topics, trends, and challenges. Panels will foster dynamic, interactive dialogue and deliver actionable ideas for participants.

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEE DETAILS

EACA MEMBERS	35 USD	Excludes membership renewal
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL	30 USD	New and old members
TOTAL FEES FOR MEMBERS	65 USD	Old and new members
NON - MEMBERS	70 USD	See second bullet below
STUDENTS	25 USD	Graduate and undergraduate students

Please note the following in relation to the above fees' categories::

• EACA members are encouraged to renew their membership before or on the first day of the conference.
• To qualify for the fees indicated in point 3 above, all new members are encouraged to subscribe to EACA membership before August 2026 and show your receipt at the conference registration.
• Students are advised to carry their students' IDs to qualify for the fees indicated under point 5.
• Please pay the conference and membership fees at the following bank accounts:

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION ACCOUNT DETAILS:

Acc Name: St. Paul's University
Bank: National Bank of Kenya
Branch: St. Paul's University Branch
A/C NO: 01021091200100
Swift Code: BKEKENXXXX
Mpesa Paybill No: 632333
Account No. EACA2026

MEMBERSHIP FEES ACCOUNT DETAILS:

Acc Name: East Africa Communication Association
Bank: Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB)
Branch: Village Market
A/C NO: 1134186622
Swift Code: KCBLKENX
Alternatively, you can pay using **Mpesa Paybill No:** 522522, directly to the bank account.

EACA MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

1. Opportunities for increased academic and professional networks.
2. Accreditation to a professional body.
3. Legibility to vote and be voted into the EACA Executive Board.
4. Legibility to convene the Annual Conference.
5. A certificate of participation in the EACA Annual Conferences.
6. Links to jobs, research, scholarships, and publication opportunities.
7. Mentorship opportunities.

Further inquiries about the 2026 EACA Annual Conference can be sent to:
eaca2026kenya@spu.ac.ke

Dr. Gladys Muasya
EACA 2026 Conference Convenor