



Digital Innovators Summit

Empowering Truth in the Age of AI



Concept Note for the Digital Innovators Summit 2025

Empowering Digital Transformation in Lesotho

Project Summary

The Digital Innovators Summit is a flagship initiative designed to equip Lesotho's youth with the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in the digital economy. The summit directly contributes to Lesotho's National Digital Transformation Strategy 2024–2030's pillars of creating a digitally literate population, fostering innovation, and enabling participation in digital business.

By focusing on artificial intelligence (AI), the summit focuses on key themes such as AI in healthcare, agriculture, entertainment, science, and technology, ensuring that young professionals, students, and the wider community are equipped with the essential skills needed for the future, ensuring their inclusion in Lesotho's digital transformation journey.



Project Summary

The Digital Innovators Summit is led by Sky Alpha HD, an online radio station founded by Tello Leballo, with a commitment to advancing innovation, media excellence, and youth empowerment in Lesotho. The first installment of this initiative was supported by prominent sponsors such as the US Embassy, LNIG, Hollard, and Lesotho Revenue Services, as well as partnerships with leading educational institutions in the National University of Lesotho, Limkokwing University of Creative Technology, as well as Botho University.

The summit serves as a bridge between the nation's Digital Transformation Strategy and actionable solutions, ensuring that youth and professionals are prepared to contribute to a sustainable and inclusive digital economy.



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Background/Problem Statement

Lesotho's National Digital Transformation Strategy identifies digital literacy, economic inclusion, and innovation as key enablers of national development. However, challenges such as a lack of digital skills, underutilized technology, and the spread of misinformation impede progress.

The youth, who represent the majority of Lesotho's population, are particularly disadvantaged due to limited access to modern technologies, training, and opportunities to participate in the digital economy. The summit aims to address these gaps by providing AI-driven tools and actionable skills to prepare young people for emerging roles in industries shaped by technology.

Program Goals and Objectives

Over the course of this next series of summits, we aim to ;

- Align with the National Digital Transformation Strategy by fostering digital literacy and innovation among youth.
- Equip participants with tools to combat misinformation and enhance trust in digital ecosystems.
- Promote inclusion by targeting underserved populations, including women and rural youth, to ensure equitable access to digital opportunities.
- Train 1,500 participants in AI applications, sentiment analysis, and blockchain integration over the series of events through hands-on workshops and expert guidance and mentorship
- Encourage trained participants to share the knowledge and skills they have acquired with their communities to decentralize knowledge dissemination
- Build professional capacity for digital content creation, media innovation, and technical competence, creating a sustainable talent pipeline of capable Basotho ready to thrive in this new world of digital reliance
- Establish networks of empowered youth and professionals who can drive digital transformation at the community level.
- Foster adoption of AI into fields of production such as agriculture, finance, and healthcare
- Provide networking and exposure for the youth to industry experts, creating opportunities for internships, employment, and collaboration

Estimates and Projections

We aim to employ a Train-The-Trainer model approach in our project and train 1500 people across different educational and socioeconomic backgrounds. This approach could position us to possibly reach well over 3 times our initial audience. We project that we could reach 5000 people over the year to follow after the second series of summits, a number we intend to monitor through surveys.



Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

To measure the impact of the summit, the following metrics will be employed:

- Participant Feedback: Surveys to assess satisfaction and perceived skill acquisition.
- Engagement Metrics: Attendance numbers, diversity of participants, and social media activity.
- Long-term Impact: Periodic follow-ups to evaluate how participants apply skills in professional or academic contexts, aligned with KPIs from the National Digital Transformation Strategy for digital literacy and innovation.

Budget and Financial Information

The total estimated budget for the 2025 Digital Innovators Summit is **M303,950.00**, covering five key events across Lesotho's leading tertiary institutions: Manthabiseng Convention Centre, Botho University, Limkokwing University of Creative Technology (LUCT), Lerotholi Polytechnic, and the National University of Lesotho (NUL).

Each event is budgeted at M57,790.00, except for the Manthabiseng Convention Centre event, which totals M72,790.00 due to additional venue rental fees. Key expenses include:

1. Venue Rental (M15,000 per event): Ensures professionally equipped spaces for hosting participants, speakers, and exhibitors.
2. Speakers' Fees (M8,000 per event): Attracts industry experts to provide invaluable insights into AI applications and digital innovation.
3. Catering (M14,400 per event): Provides high-quality meals for 120 attendees to maintain engagement and comfort.
4. Audio-Visual Equipment (M10,000 per event): Ensures effective communication and impactful presentations with high-quality projection systems.
5. Logistics and Transport (M3,500 per event): Covers the movement of speakers, staff, and equipment, ensuring seamless execution.
6. Graphic Design (M1,500 per event): Drives awareness and participation through professionally designed promotional materials.



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The budget is justified by the overwhelming success of the 2024 summit, where nearly 500 participants were reached despite an initial target of only 40 attendees. This demonstrated the demand for such programs and the efficiency of our implementation.

Additional funding is sought to address potential under-budgeting challenges, and to support sustainability measures such as tracking long-term participant outcomes.

Reflecting on the 2024 Edition

The first series of summits in 2024 was focused on the fight against mis-, dis-, and mal-information with Artificial Intelligence, with the theme “Empowering Truth In The Age Of AI”. It served as a pivotal event series dedicated to exploring the transformative, and sometimes destructive, role of Artificial Intelligence in the information disseminated to the public, but also went beyond that. The summit also included conversations on job creation, economic growth, advancing digital skills and empowering Basotho in the digital landscape, and building regulatory frameworks that foster trust in digital platforms.

With over 500 guests and substantial media coverage over four months, this summit has provided a collaborative platform for digital experts, innovators, students, and the public, strengthening community awareness and involvement on AI and digital transformation. The summit marks a foundational step in Lesotho's journey towards a digitally literate and integrated society.





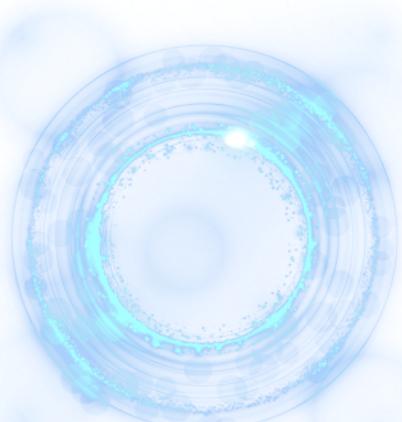
The success of this first series of summits is reflected in our achievements so far, which include:

1. Broad Reach Across Academic Institutions: Previous summits have engaged over 500 participants from leading universities, including NUL, Botho University, and Limkokwing University. Over 30% of attendees have implemented digital tools in their work or studies.
2. Increased Awareness and Advocacy: Participants have actively led campaigns against misinformation on social media, using AI tools introduced during the summit. Journalists and content creators reported improved accuracy and ethical reporting practices post-training.
3. Established Collaborations: MOUs with universities have ensured continuity in digital education initiatives. Government and private sector partners now actively support digital transformation policies influenced by summit themes.
4. Recognition of Sky Alpha HD Initiatives: The summit has been lauded as a cornerstone for digital literacy advancement in Lesotho, earning national awards and international nominations.

Summary

Aligned with the National Digital Transformation Strategy's Vision for 2030, the Digital Innovators Summit is more than an event—it is a step toward creating a digitally empowered society. By providing youth with critical digital skills, the summit strengthens Lesotho's workforce, fosters innovation, and enhances resilience in the face of misinformation and economic challenges.

In a nation where digital transformation holds the key to sustainable growth, the summit serves as a catalyst for change, equipping young Basotho to lead in an interconnected, technology-driven world. This initiative ensures that no one is left behind as Lesotho transitions into a competitive, inclusive, and thriving digital economy.



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Together, let's empower Lesotho's future and drive digital transformation for all.