

**Negotiating African Priorities for AI Governance: A Multistakeholder Assessment of the AU
Continental AI Strategy through the Just AI Framework of Inquiry**

Guide to the process for producing an output document (v. 2 - 7 October 2026)

About this document

This document outlines the process by which participants from all stakeholder groups will participate in the 2026 AfriSIG practicum, a role play exercise with a dual purpose. The AfriSIG practicum is both a learning event as well as an opportunity to produce a collaborative output document that provides a multistakeholder African perspective on priorities for global AI governance. For the purpose of the AfriSIG 2026 Practicum participants will assess the **African Union Continental Artificial Intelligence Strategy**. Participants will use Research ICT Africa's **Just AI Framework of Inquiry** as an analytical framework for the purpose of doing the assessment. The first version of the AfriSIG2026 practicum outcome document - should participants reach consensus - will be presented at the African IGF in Accra at a session organised by [Research ICT Africa](#) and [MAP-AI](#). A final version could, if there is agreement on this, form the basis of a submission or submissions into current global AI governance processes such as the May 2027 [UN Global Dialogue on AI Governance](#) and in the June 2027 [Geneva AI Summit](#). If no consensus is reached, the exercise will still fulfil its learning objectives.

The Context

In Africa, several continental strategies and frameworks now provide the foundations for AI and digital governance, articulating African priorities around inclusive digital transformation, responsible AI, data governance, digital sovereignty and sustainable development. Key instruments include the [African Union Continental Artificial Intelligence Strategy \(2024\)](#), which sets out an Africa-centric approach to harnessing AI for development while addressing its risks; and the [African Digital Compact \(2024\)](#), which establishes a broader common vision for Africa's inclusive and sustainable digital transformation. It recognises persistent challenges including digital inequality, cybersecurity risks, automation and employment, data sovereignty and privacy, dependence on foreign technologies, skills gaps and regulatory barriers. Importantly, both instruments were conceived partly as mechanisms for articulating African priorities within global digital governance processes.

A growing number of African countries have developed national AI strategies or policies, including Algeria, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Libya, Mauritania, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Tunisia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. These national initiatives are being developed alongside continental instruments, particularly the [Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa 2020–2030](#) and the [African Union Data Policy Framework \(2022\)](#). Together, these frameworks provide an emerging African policy position on AI and digital governance, but important questions remain about whether they sufficiently address structural inequality, economic and data justice, democratic governance, environmental sustainability and Africa's position within global AI value chains. The [RIA Just AI Framework of Inquiry](#) provides an African-centred analytical framework through which these existing commitments can be interrogated and strengthened, including in developing African positions for emerging global AI governance processes.

At the global level, the [UN Global Dialogue on AI Governance](#), mandated in the Global Digital Compact, an outcome of the UN Summit on the Future (September 2024), has created a recurring intergovernmental

process through which governments, with input from other stakeholders, can deliberate on international AI governance. Its first annual session took place in Geneva on 6-7 July 2026, following consultations and an open written-input process that attracted more than 1,500 submissions. Read the [AI Dialogue chairs report](#) for an overview of what was discussed. The second Dialogue will take place in New York on 3-4 May 2027. It will be followed by another global AI discussion event, one that is not part of the UN at all, but still relevant to African interests, the Geneva AI Summit.

The AfriSIG 2026 Practicum

The AfriSIG practicum is a simulated policy analysis and multistakeholder negotiation process that provides participants with practical experience in consensus-building and drafting policy documentation. Participants will work in four stakeholder groups, government and other public sector institutions, civil society and academia, private sector, and the technical community. A fifth group will be made up of observers from the media and international organisations. AfriSIG participants will gain a deeper understanding of multistakeholder policy processes as they engage critically with the AU Continental AI Strategy, representing a range of stakeholder perspectives.

The process will move through four stages: analysis, stakeholder position building, negotiation and drafting and consensus building.

Stage	What is involved	When to start
Analysis	Reading African Union Continental Artificial Intelligence Strategy (2024) and African Union Data Policy Framework (2022) and the RIA Just AI Framework of Inquiry Reading as many of the other background documents as possible Note down key questions and insights	Before AfriSIG opens on 27 October
Stakeholder position building	Putting yourself in the shoes of the stakeholder group you will be part of for the practicum and trying to understand how they would approach the task. Doing research on the specific role you will play. These will be assigned on 27 October.	Before AfriSIG opens on 27 October and ongoing throughout the process
Negotiation and drafting	Working in stakeholder groups, using the framework of inquiry and documenting insights and proposals in text form. Sharing workload within the group (e.g. for reading additional documents). Producing draft inputs for practicum sessions and submitting these to the Secretariat by the agreed deadline. Negotiating with other stakeholder groups on points of divergence.	28 October and ongoing throughout the process
Consensus building	Building agreement among groups on approved text for the final output document.	29 October, concluding on 31 October

Each stakeholder group will use the Just AI Framework of Inquiry to identify strengths, gaps and priorities in the AI Continental Strategy. Each group will then establish its position, define its key concerns, expectations and redlines and identify where it may be willing to compromise before entering negotiations. Participants will then negotiate across stakeholder groups to determine which issues and recommendations should form part of a common African contribution to global AI governance. The final stage will consolidate these priorities into a written output.

Goals of the process

- To deepen participants' understanding of AI governance in Africa and the relationship between continental policy priorities and emerging national and global AI governance processes.
- To develop a hands-on understanding of how different stakeholder groups and sectors approach AI governance .
- To critically assess the AU Continental AI Strategy, identifying Africa's existing strengths and the gaps, ambiguities and emerging issues that require further development.
- To build participants' capacity to negotiate across different interests, identify shared African priorities, and engage with and influence regional, continental and global AI governance processes.
- To produce a negotiated set of African priorities and proposals for AI governance for potential submission to regional and global processes, with participants' consent.

The Scenario

NOTE: The institutions named here are fictional.

The **African Council for Collaboration in Science, Technology, and Innovation (ACCSTI)** a standing body which reports to African decision-makers through regional intergovernmental organisations. At its 2026 annual session ACCSTI convened a group of experts made up of African professionals from various disciplines and stakeholder groups to provide them with an independent multistakeholder perspective on trends in African continental and national AI strategies. In particular they would like an opinion on whether the [AU's Continental AI strategy](#) takes the diverse contexts across the continent into account and whether it is effectively grounded in principles of inclusive, human rights-oriented and sustainable people-centred economic, social and sustainable development. This group is known as the ACCSTI AI Strategy Multistakeholder Expert Group (ACCSTI-AI-Strategy-MEG). **As a participant in AfriSIG 2026 you are a member of this group.**

The Task

Using the RIA Just AI Framework of Inquiry, the **ACCSTI AI Strategy Multistakeholder Expert Group** will assess the Continental AI Strategy and identify its main strengths and gaps. Based on this analysis they will then propose key priorities for global, regional and national AI governance from an African perspective that should be advanced through regional and/or global governance processes.

The outcome of this process is intended to be a negotiated African multi-stakeholder output document for the consideration of the ACCSTI. If members of the ACCSTI-AI-Strategy-MEG cannot reach consensus the chairs of the process will provide ACCSTI members with a “chair’s report”.

The core strategy that the group should analyse and assess is the [AU Continental Artificial Intelligence Strategy](#) (2024). The primary framework they should draw on to conduct this assessment is the [RIA Just AI Framework of Inquiry \(2025\)](#).

Other key supporting documents include:

- Just AI Analysis of AI National Policies and Strategies:
 - [Decoding Egypt's National AI Strategy through a Just AI Lens](#)
 - [Decoding Kenya's National AI Strategy through a Just AI lens](#)
 - [Decoding Mauritius' National AI Strategy through a Just AI lens](#)
 - [Decoding Zambia's National AI Strategy through a Just AI lens](#)
- [AI Continental Roadmap](#)
- [The African Union Data Policy Framework \(2022\)](#)
- [The African Digital Compact \(2024\)](#)
- [The African Commission on Human and People's Rights \(ACHPR\) Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information](#) (2019)
- [The ACHPR Resolution on Promoting and Harnessing Data Access as a tool for Advancing Human Rights and Sustainable Development in the Digital Age](#) ACHPR/Res.620 (LXXXI) 2024

Good Faith and Diversity within Stakeholder Groups

No matter which stakeholder group participants are part of, or whether they agree with one another or not, they should always try to approach the consultation in good faith and with the assumption that they all share the goal of reaching an acceptable consensus. Stakeholder groups are also not homogenous. There can be as much diversity among views held by different people in different governments, or even among different departments in the same government, as there is between, for example, government and civil society. The same applies to civil society and the private sector. Different businesses have different priorities. Members of Parliament come from different political parties and represent different constituencies. Sometimes their priorities are the same, but sometimes they are not. This diversity makes multistakeholder policy processes more complex, but can also lead to richer analysis and proposals provided they remain focused on the overall goal of the exercise.

The Output Document

The practicum will produce a 3-5 page negotiated African multistakeholder output document that summarise the outcome of their analysis of the Continental AI Strategy and any recommendations they wish to make. Participants will be given a structure/table of contents for this document.

Sharing the Output

Should participants agree, the output document could be presented at the African IGF in a session organised by Research ICT Africa and the MAP-AI Initiative. Feedback received could then be incorporated, and the document shared more widely.

The second UN Global Dialogue on AI Governance is scheduled to take place in New York on 3-4 May 2027, followed by the Geneva AI Summit in June 2027. The UN indicates that a written submission portal opens ahead of each annual Dialogue. Once the consultation process opens, the practicum output can be reviewed against the official themes, format and submission requirements. Subject to agreement by the

organisers and participants, it could then be adapted into a formal African written contribution. AfriSIG has already been registered as an official Geneva AI Summit pre-event.

The document could also inform African participation in other continental and global AI governance processes, including the AI-themed UN Internet Governance Forum in Nairobi in December 2026.

Work Process

The AfriSIG practicum is an intensive process, requiring work during breaks and in the evenings. Refer to the programme for details.

Stakeholder Groups

Participants will be divided into five stakeholder groups. Participants will be given the opportunity to select which stakeholder group they want to work in. We strongly encourage participants to select a group that is different from the one they are generally part of:

- Government and other public sector institutions
- Civil society and academia
- Private sector
- Technical community
- Observers: consisting of the media and international organisations

Stakeholder groups should not be treated as homogeneous. Participants may disagree strongly within their own groups. The objective is to understand the range of interests represented within each stakeholder community rather than to reproduce standardised stakeholder positions. Each group will appoint a rapporteur who will liaise with the Practicum Secretariat on submitting their text contributions. Resource people will be available to advise the groups on an as-needed basis.

AfriSIG 2026

Practicum Schedule

27 October – 1 November 2026 · Accra, Ghana

About the Practicum

The practicum is a simulation exercise that runs across the full AfriSIG week. Participants are divided into stakeholder groups — representing governments, civil society, the private sector, the technical community and others — and work collaboratively to produce a joint outcome document on a digital governance challenge. The practicum mirrors the real-world dynamics of multistakeholder internet governance negotiations.

The nine practicum sessions are interspersed throughout the week's programme, beginning with an online introduction on 21 October. Each session builds on the day's learning and advances the groups' drafting and negotiation toward a final outcome document, which is presented at the closing session on Day 5 (1 November).

	Day / date / time	When	Activity	Purpose
	Prior to Accra 21 October 2026 Online prep session, 13:45–14:15 UTC	After “How does the internet work?”	Online introduction to the practicum: overview of the process and task (Mpho Moyo and Anriette Esterhuysen). Role assignment and research into roles by fellows. Reading background material.	<i>Building identity and understanding of roles.</i> <i>Gaining a clear grasp of the process and its goals.</i>
1	Day 1 28 October 2026 13:00–13:15	After Session 3	Assignment for lunch: participants identify initial questions and concerns to bring to their stakeholder groups. Stakeholder group discussions continue over lunch (13:15–14:15). Lead: Mpho Moyo.	<i>Activate prior knowledge; surface participant priorities before the formal practicum begins.</i>
2	Day 1 28 October 2026 16:45–17:15	After Session 5	Informal plenary: stakeholder groups present their initial questions and concerns at a chaired plenary session.	<i>First cross-group exchange; test initial positions before groups begin drafting.</i>
3	Day 1 28 October 2026 19:30–20:30	After dinner	Self-organised informal working sessions in stakeholder groups, meeting at their respective hotels. Goal: produce written submissions to be sent to the secretariat the following morning (29 October).	<i>Begin drafting; distribute writing work across groups.</i>
4	Day 2 29 October 2026 17:30–18:30	After Session 10 (continued)	Working session: stakeholder groups prepare text contributions for the formal practicum plenary after dinner. All written inputs to be shared with the secretariat by 18:45.	<i>Consolidate Day 2 learning into group positions; prepare for formal negotiation.</i>

5	Day 2 29 October 2026 19:30–20:30	After dinner	Formal practicum plenary: stakeholder groups present their text contributions to the outcome document at a formal chaired session. Venue: Kofi Annan Centre.	<i>First formal negotiation session; groups test and defend their positions.</i>
6	Day 3 30 October 2026 12:45–13:00	After Session 14	Working session for stakeholder groups, followed by a working lunch for stakeholder groups (13:00–14:15).	<i>Integrate Day 3 themes (human rights, gender, media) into group drafts.</i>
7	Day 3 30 October 2026 17:00–18:00	After Session 16	Formal plenary and negotiations: groups discuss the draft output document based on compiled inputs from all stakeholder groups. May continue after dinner (18:30) if needed. Venue: Kofi Annan Centre.	<i>Advance negotiations toward a consolidated draft; resolve key divergences.</i>
8	Day 4 31 October 2026 12:30–13:00	After Session 19	Working session for stakeholder groups.	<i>Integrate Day 4 themes (private sector and AI governance, cybersecurity, DPI) into group drafts.</i>
9	Day 4 31 October 2026 16:15–17:30 (continues 19:30 if needed)	After Session 20	Final practicum plenary: negotiations on the final text of the outcome document. Continues after dinner if needed.	<i>Reach consensus on the final text; close all outstanding items.</i>
10	Day 5 1 November 2026 14:15–15:30	Closing session	Presentation of the AfriSIG 2026 practicum outcome document to the full group, as part of the closing session on the practicum output and AfriSIG evaluation.	<i>Celebrate and share the product of five days of collaborative work.</i>

Note: Written submissions from the Day 1 evening working sessions go to the AfriSIG secretariat the following morning (29 October). All written submissions for the Day 2 formal plenary must reach the secretariat by 18:45 on Day 2 (29 October). The secretariat will compile and circulate a consolidated draft before the Day 3 plenary (30 October, 17:00).