

CALL FOR PAPERS



26 November 2025

Digital Frontiers: Safeguarding Trade and Finance in a Transforming Africa

Academic Conference 2026 | Mauritius

Hosted by Tutwa Consulting Group with Academic Partners and Hampton Group

Africa's economies are undergoing a profound digital transformation. From mobile money and fintech innovations to e-commerce and automated trade systems, new technologies are reshaping markets and connectivity. These advances promise greater financial inclusion and growth, but also introduce risks. With Africa's cross-border payments market projected to surge from about \$329 billion in 2025 to \$1 trillion by 2035, robust frameworks are needed to ensure transparency and trust in digital finance.

It is against this backdrop that the conference addresses Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) in Africa's digital era. Illicit flows drain critical resources from African economies: countries are estimated to lose roughly \$88.6 billion each year to IFFs, undermining public services and development goals. Meanwhile, the expansion of digital channels has broadened opportunities for crime: experts warn that *"cybercrime and digital fraud are among the continent's most pervasive emerging threats."* This evolving landscape demands urgent research on how technology, finance, and policy can intersect to block illicit flows.

Addressing IFFs also requires attention to gender and youth dimensions. For example, lost revenues reduce budgets for social services and equality programs, which "disproportionally affects women". At the same time, Africa's large youth population — digitally literate but often economically vulnerable — is particularly exposed to online fraud and illicit networks. Understanding these gendered and youth-specific impacts is critical to ensuring that digital economies benefit all people.

Thematic Areas

We invite submissions on, but not limited to, the following topics:

- Trade-based money laundering and misinvoicing in digital trade systems

- Digital financial systems and terrorism/drug-related illicit finance
- Emerging technologies (AI, blockchain, digital public infrastructure, regtech) for financial integrity
- Governance, regulation, and institutional cooperation in digital oversight
- Gendered and youth-specific impacts of IFFs and digital vulnerabilities

Conference Objectives and Format

This multidisciplinary conference brings together scholars, policymakers, industry leaders, and civil society to explore solutions at the intersection of technology, trade, and finance. It will feature engaging plenary sessions, parallel research tracks, and interactive roundtable discussions. A special innovation showcase will highlight fintech, blockchain, and regulatory-technology (regtech) solutions for financial integrity. Attendees will have the opportunity to present papers, share experiences from public and private sectors, and network with peers.

Submission Guidelines

Extended abstracts (**up to 900 words**) should be submitted via email to conference@tutwaconsulting.com. Abstracts must clearly outline the research question, methodology, and anticipated findings. Submissions should be original and not under review elsewhere. Please note that full paper submission guidelines (paper format, length, review process, etc.) are provided in **Annex A** of this CFP.

Important Dates:

1. Abstract Submission Deadline: 15th January 2026
2. Notification of Abstract Acceptance: 14th February 2026
3. Full Paper Submission Deadline: 1st April 2026
4. Notification of Paper Acceptance: 30th May 2026
5. Final Paper Submission: 30th August 2026
6. Conference Dates: **7 – 9 October 2026**

We warmly invite researchers, practitioners, and policymakers from academia, government, the private sector, and civil society to join this landmark conference. Together we will build knowledge and forge partnerships to safeguard Africa's digital economy.

All accepted papers will be published in the *Digital Frontiers Conference Proceedings* (ISSN: **3023-3992**).

ANNEXURE A

Author Guidelines

Maximum Word Count

For research-based submissions, the total word count of the Submission Document **must NOT exceed 8,000 words (excluding Abstract and References list)**.

Authorship, Listing of Authors

If the submission has more than one listed author: (i) all authors must have contributed substantively to the submission; (ii) an **Authors' contributions declaration** must be included in the Author Information Document; and (iii) the authors must be listed in order of degree of contribution to the submission, i.e., the first-listed author is the one who contributed most.

Protection Of Personal Information

If the submission draws on research with human subjects, the research subjects' personal information must have been managed in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, e.g., research conducted in South Africa must comply with the [Protection of Personal Information Act \(POPIA\)](#).

Originality

Each submission is received on the understanding that: its contents are original, unpublished material; it is not being considered for publication elsewhere (unless a note is provided that indicates otherwise); and its content is not directly copied from material submitted as part of a student paper, Master's thesis/dissertation, or PhD thesis/dissertation.

Where a submission is an adapted (e.g., revised, updated) version of a previously published work (e.g., conference paper, working paper, research report, student paper, Master's thesis/dissertation, PhD thesis/dissertation), the author(s) must specify this at the time of submission in the "Acknowledgements" section of the Author Information Document (see below), and the original work must be cited in the References section of the Submission Document (see below).

Where a submission includes written content and/or data from an item or items already published online by one or more of the submitting authors (e.g., in a conference paper, working paper, research report, student paper, Master's thesis/dissertation, or PhD thesis/dissertation), each of those published sources must be mentioned in the "Acknowledgements" section of the Author Information Document (see below), and each of those published sources must be cited in the References section of the Submission Document (see below).

Translated material that has not been published in English will be considered.

The editorial team reserves the right to edit or otherwise alter contributions, both before and after internal review and/or external double-blind peer review, with author(s) given the opportunity to review and accept/reject edits and alterations in advance of peer review and publication.

The Two Documents That Must Be Submitted

All authors must submit two documents: an *Author Information Document* and a *Submission Document*, as outlined below:

(1) Author Information Document: A one-page document containing:

- Submission title
- Corresponding author's name, title, organisational affiliation, postal address, email address, and mobile telephone number
- (where applicable) Name, title, organisational affiliation
- **Acknowledgements** (where applicable): Statement of acknowledgement of the kind specified above under the "Originality" guidelines; and acknowledgement of any other kind of non-financial support/assistance from individuals/entities
- **Funding declaration** (where applicable): Declaration of any funding received for the research detailed in the submission and/or for the preparation of the submission, including funding grant number(s) where applicable
- **Artificial intelligence (AI) declaration:** Declaration as to whether any AI tools (and if so, which tools) were used in the research covered in the submission and/or in preparation of the submission, or a declaration that **"The author(s) did not use any AI tools in the research covered in this submission or in the preparation of this submission."** If generative AI tools such as ChatGPT were used in the research and/or preparation of the submission, the AI declaration must specify (a) the version used, e.g., GPT-4, (b) the element(s) of the research and/or submission preparation that the tool was used for, and (c) the prompt(s) used for the element(s) specified. Moreover, all information returned by the AI search must subsequently be clearly referenced.
- **Competing interests declaration:** Declaration of any competing interests on the part of the author(s), or a declaration that "The author(s) has/have no competing interests to declare."

When there is more than one author:

- **Authors' contributions declaration:** Specify contribution(s) of EACH listed author, using the following taxonomy developed by the South African Journal of Science (SAJS): <https://www.sajs.co.za/author-contributions>

(2) Submission Document: An anonymised (i.e., with no author information) submission containing:

- Title
- Abstract (not exceeding 200 words in length)
- Keywords
- the body of the submission (see rules below for format, footnotes, citations, spellings, tables, figures)
- References (see guidelines below)

Format: All submission documents should be in **12-point Times New Roman** font, with **single line-spacing** that is left- and right-justified, in MS Word (or compatible open source format), and with **NO auto-formatting** (e.g., with NO auto-formatting of headings, sub-headings, etc., and NO auto-formatting of in-text citations or References citations).

Footnotes: Footnotes (NOT endnotes) should be used **ONLY** to provide supplementary information, NOT to provide full citations for sources (see citations guidelines below).

In-text citations for sources: Citations of primary and secondary sources referred to in the body of the submission **must** each be provided via an [APA-style parenthetical \(author, year\) or narrative citation](#), with page numbers for direct quotations, and with this same style used if and when a source needs to be cited in the course of provision of supplementary information in a footnote.

References section (at end of submission): All bracketed (author, year) citations in the body of the submission **must** have a full entry in a concluding [APA-style References section](#) arranged in alphabetical order and following APA 7th Edition style conventions for listing of author(s), year of publication, source title—including adherence to all of the APA conventions for punctuation, italicisation, upper-casing, lower-casing, URLs and DOIs in References sections.

African/UK English spellings: Submissions must use African/UK (NOT American) English spellings, e.g., programme NOT program; labour NOT labor; organisation NOT organization; analyse NOT analyze, etc.

Tables: Tables should be numbered consecutively, in decimal numerals (e.g., 1, 2, 3, 4, 5), with the numbers followed by headings. **Each table heading should be *above* the table.**

Figures: All graphs, diagrams, drawings, and photographs should be referred to as figures, should be provided in the body of the submission in high-resolution .jpeg file format, and should be numbered consecutively in decimal numerals (e.g., 1, 2, 3, 4, 5), with the numbers followed by headings. **Each figure heading should be *above* the figure.**

Queries on Submission Procedures:

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