

Digital Humanism Innovation Bootcamp

Organized by Carnegie Mellon University Africa (CMU-Africa) during the Digital Humanism Summer School, the Digital Humanism Innovation Bootcamp is an applied innovation track for approximately 20-25 participants interested in developing practical, human-centered solutions to societal and digital transformation challenges within African contexts. The Bootcamp takes participants through an innovation journey that begins with understanding people, problems, and context and progresses toward the development of meaningful solution concepts and implementation pathways. Working in multidisciplinary teams, participants will engage with users, communities, practitioners, institutions, entrepreneurs, ecosystem actors, and implementation environments connected to the challenge areas they explore. Throughout the Bootcamp, teams will identify meaningful problems in given thematic areas, investigate how each problem is experienced in practice, and develop a solution response grounded in real needs and real conditions. These solutions may take different forms, including: a low-fidelity prototype, a digital product or service concept, a workflow or operational model, a platform, tool, process, or ecosystem solution, or a business or sustainability model for responsible adoption.

Participants will validate and refine their solutions through continuous stakeholder interaction, ensuring they are useful, feasible to implement, capable of adoption, and sustainable beyond the Bootcamp. Direct engagement with mentors, entrepreneurs, and industry actors will accelerate ideas from early insight into a clear implementation pathway, setting the stage for potential partnership, piloting, and incubation. The journey culminates in the Digital Humanism Innovation Showcase on Saturday, where teams will present their evidence-informed innovation opportunity and business rationale to a dedicated audience of investors, incubators, and ecosystem stakeholders. This is the definitive platform for demonstrating a responsible, relevant, and promising innovation pathway with commercial viability and the potential to create real societal value.

Bootcamp Schedule

Day	Time	Activity/Focus
Monday	02:45 – 04:00pm	Session 1: Stanley Mukasa Innovation Bootcamp Introduction Define the Bootcamp, set participant expectations, talk through thematic areas, judging criteria and the showcase.
Tuesday	02:45 – 04:00pm	Session 2: Thomas McManus and Stanley Mukasa Problem Discovery & Stakeholder Validation Form multidisciplinary teams, identify meaningful problems, and begin contextual investigation and early validation planning. Talk through how usability, feasibility, and ecosystem engagement shape responsible and commercially viable solution pathways. Plan for engagement with key stakeholders to uncover promising innovation opportunities grounded in real-world conditions.

Day	Time	Activity/Focus
Thursday	02:45 – 04:00pm	Session 3: Stanley Mukasa and Carine Pierrette Mukamakuza Solution Validation & Implementation Pathways - Refine solution concepts through continuous stakeholder validation, usability testing, and feasibility exploration. Develop practical innovation pathways, operational approaches, and Business Model Canvas components for proposed solutions. Synthesize validation findings and adoption considerations. Refine the business rationale, ecosystem positioning, sustainability logic, and finalize showcase presentations for demonstrating commercial readiness
Saturday	08:00 – 4:00	Showcase Day Present validated problem understanding, proposed solution, feasibility, implementation pathway, and innovation opportunity to investors, incubators, and ecosystem stakeholders, demonstrating commercial viability and societal value.

Thematic Areas

1. AI, Trust, and Society
How can AI systems and digital technologies become more trustworthy, accessible, participatory, and responsive to real societal needs within African contexts? Participants may explore innovation opportunities connected to responsible AI adoption, trust in digital systems, accessibility, accountability, digital participation, and human-centered implementation of emerging technologies.
2. Communities, Culture, and Digital Futures
How can digital transformation better reflect the realities of communities, culture, language, identity, participation, and everyday life? Participants may identify and develop practical innovation pathways that strengthen inclusion, local relevance, community engagement, contextual usability, and meaningful participation within rapidly evolving digital environments.
3. Public Systems and Digital Inclusion
How can digital innovation improve the way people access, experience, and engage with public systems, institutions, infrastructure, and essential services? Participants may explore practical and scalable approaches that strengthen accessibility, usability, efficiency, trust, participation, and implementation within real-world societal environments.
4. Technology Adoption and Everyday Life
Why do some digital solutions succeed while others fail adoption within everyday societal contexts? Participants may investigate usability, behavioral realities, implementation barriers, sustainability considerations, ecosystem dependencies, and practical innovation opportunities connected to how technologies are adopted, adapted, and integrated into daily life.

Innovation Bootcamp - Showcase

Saturday | 08:00 – 4:00

The Showcase brings together participants, mentors, entrepreneurs, investors, innovation hubs, incubators, practitioners, development organizations, industry actors, and ecosystem stakeholders for a high-level engagement around practical and human-centered innovation pathways emerging from the Bootcamp. The

Showcase provides teams with an opportunity to present their validated problem understanding, stakeholder insights, proposed solution, implementation pathway, feasibility considerations, sustainability logic, ecosystem positioning, and business rationale to a broader innovation and implementation audience. Presentations are expected to demonstrate how teams moved from early challenge exploration toward practical, usable, feasible, adoptable, and societally grounded innovation opportunities. The day will feature mentor and coaching engagements, ecosystem feedback sessions, networking conversations, and presentations exploring implementation opportunities, pilot pathways, partnership potential, incubation support, commercialization potential, and future development pathways connected to promising solutions emerging from the Bootcamp.

Showcase Schedule	
08:45 – 09:15	Morning Coffee, Team Setup, and Ecosystem Networking
09:15 – 10:15	Mentor, Coach, and Stakeholder Engagement Sessions
10:15 – 10:30	Opening Remarks and Showcase Introduction
10:30 – 11:30	Team Presentations
11:45 – 12:00	Teams Photo Session
12:00 – 2:00	Lunch
2:00 - 3:00	Keynote & Judges Calibration
3:00 - 3:45	Announcing & Awarding the winning team
3:45 - 4:00	Closing Reflections and Next Steps