



MINISTRY
COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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**MINISTER MONDLI GUNGUBELE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE
VICE-CHANCELLORS OF TSHWANE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (TUT) AND
THE UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG (UJ), LAUNCHES THE TUT HUB OF THE
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE INSTITUTE OF SOUTH AFRICA (AIISA)**

MEDIA STATEMENT

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**SHAPING SOUTH AFRICA'S DIGITAL FUTURE: TUT READY TO LAUNCH
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE HUB**

In implementing the recommendations of the Presidential Commission on 4IR the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies, Hon Mondli Gungubele in partnership with Prof Tinyiko Maluleke of the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) and Prof Letlhokwa Mpedi of the University of Johannesburg (UJ) will, officially launch the TUT Hub of the Artificial Intelligence Institute of South Africa (AIISA) on Friday, 24 March 2023, 09:00 – 13H00 at the Theunis Bester Hall, Building 7, Pretoria.

It is with a sense of pride and enthusiasm that TUT has responded to the call of the Department of Communication and Digital Technologies, for the University to put its high-end expertise in Artificial Intelligence at the service of the digital advancement of our country. For this great national duty, TUT could not have been paired with a better institution than UJ. Having participated joyfully in the launch of the UJ Hub in November 2022, we cannot wait for the launch of the TUT Hub of the Artificial Intelligence Institute of South Africa. We are excited that TUT will be part of a network of AI centres of excellence nationally and continentally.

“The time has come for South Africa to join the digital revolution that is sweeping across the nations of the world. The work of the Artificial Intelligence Institute of South Africa is to bend the arc of the digital universe in favour of South Africa. This way, South Africa will stop becoming a consumer and a victim of solutions and algorithms conceptualised

elsewhere. Instead, South Africa will become the author and shaper of its own digital destiny” said the Vice Chancellor and Principal of TUT, Prof Maluleke.

TUT has several projects in AI that are linked to Government Catalytic projects. The government Catalytic projects that TUT is involved in include AI Capacity Building for Public Servants, AI Motor Industry Infrastructure Enhancement Programme, Modernising Public Services, and AI in Farming and Food Production, which will all be showcased at the TUT AI Hub launch.

These projects target three sectors of the country’s economy, namely 4IR in manufacturing (value chain), Healthcare, and Farming/Agriculture and food processing (Agriculture 5.0).

Positioning South Africa as a global technological competitor.

“The AI Institute of South Africa (AIISA) has a great potential to help us fight the problem of youth unemployment by imparting the much needed modern skills that will turn them into job creators and shapers of the 21st century workplace.

The catalytic projects already in place at TUT and UJ are already indicative of how AI can become the engine of economic advancement in various sectors. Through the formation of AIISA, South Africa is poised to become a significant player in the global Fourth Industrial Revolution. We are looking forward to this important launch of the TUT AI Hub.” commented Minister Gungubele.

UJ’s Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Letlhokwa Mpedi says: “The establishment of the Institute of Artificial Intelligence is a testament to the collective agility and impact of the two universities and the department in the 4IR space, which reaches far beyond South Africa’s borders to Africa and elsewhere in the world. As we declared at the inaugural launch at UJ, the Institute presents South Africa with the opportunity to reskill the labour force for a digital future, whereby working collaboratively with machines will be the norm. This is in line with UJ’s strategic objective to ensure that our approach to digital technologies is not only innovative but that it is also human-centric, in a manner that it has a positive and transformative impact on people.”

In conclusion, Prof Maluleke also spoke of the strategic significance of the TUT AI Hub, saying, “our role in the establishment of the Artificial Intelligence Institute of South Africa is the clearest articulation of our university’s intention to take its place in the construction of the technological future of the country, this; in a world in which AI is becoming both ubiquitous and indispensable.”

For more information on the launch, please contact:

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