



JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

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LAUNCH OF THE BANK OF NAMIBIA ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND ROBOTICS ACCELERATOR (AIRA)

1. The Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) officially launched the Artificial Intelligence and Robotics Laboratory today, on 05 November 2024 at 14h00, in the Science and Technology Building, Lower Campus. This state-of-the-art facility is made possible through a strategic collaboration between the University and the Bank of Namibia, marking a significant milestone in the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Robotics in the country.
2. The Bank of Namibia's substantial investment in this project underscores its commitment to modernising Namibia's financial and technological ecosystem. As part of its ongoing transformation strategy, the Bank has identified the importance of equipping Namibians with future-focused technical skills that align with global advancements. This laboratory not only prepares students for careers in high-demand fields but also supports the Bank's vision of fostering a technologically literate workforce capable of contributing to Namibia's economic progress.
3. The modern Lab is set to cater to the needs of the newly introduced Bachelor of Artificial Intelligence and Bachelor of Artificial Intelligence Honours programmes, spearheaded by the Department of Computer Science, in the Faculty of Computing and Informatics. Responding to global market trends, these programmes will provide specialisations in pioneering fields such as Natural Language Processing, Bioinformatics, Computer Vision, AI in Cybersecurity, and Robotics.
4. "The Artificial Intelligence and Robotics laboratory is an accelerator, designed to encourage the active participation of students, faculty, and industry professionals in solving real-world challenges," said

the Deputy Governor of the Bank of Namibia, Ms. Leonie Dunn. “This facility will not only serve as a training ground for our future workforce but also as a beacon of inspiration for the nation.”

5. Students will enjoy access to an array of cutting-edge technologies thanks to the laboratory’s high-performance workstations featuring advanced Graphics Processing Units capable of executing complex tasks such as sensor integration and developing Robot Operating Systems. Additionally, a sophisticated range of IoT devices will empower students to engineer automated systems, fostering an environment ripe for innovation that extends beyond academia.
6. As NUST continues to play a pivotal role in Namibia’s technological evolution, the Artificial Intelligence and Robotics Laboratory will serve as a cornerstone of the university’s strategy to meet the demands of Industry 5.0—a future characterised by human-centred collaboration between people and machines within automated ecosystems. "This lab is not merely a technological milestone—it represents our commitment to shaping future generations. By equipping our students with skills in these fields, we are ensuring that they will not only thrive in a rapidly evolving world but that they will lead Namibia’s transformation in vital sectors such as healthcare and agriculture,” said Prof Eroid Naomab, the NUST Vice-Chancellor.
7. Notably, NUST recently completed a robotics pilot project in partnership with Honda Motors, Universidad Pablo de Olavide in Spain, and Aalborg University in Denmark. The pilot, which tested the communication skills of Honda’s advanced robot, Haru, within a Namibian context, laid the groundwork for future long-term research collaborations. Additionally, the Artificial Intelligence and Robotics Laboratory will encourage interdisciplinary engagement, allowing students from various faculties to harness the power of AI and robotics in their respective fields.
8. For enquiries, contact Mr Edward Nepolo at T: +264 61 207 2520 or E: enepolo@nust.na

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