



**3RD INTERNATIONAL ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP CONFERENCE ON AfCFTA'24:
BRIDGING Barriers to Cross-Regional Trade & Technological Development
Synergies in the Africa Continental Free Trade Area**

Kigali Convention and Exhibition Village (KCEV), Rwanda -13-15 September, 2024

About the Conference

This conference provides a platform for robust engagement by academics, practitioners, policy makers, agents of change and indigenous knowledge holders towards creating collaborative opportunities between (1) public and private sectors; (2) urban and rural businesses; and (3) local, national and regional enterprises to develop sustainable economies. Furthermore, the conference aims at enlisting contributions and perspectives from these diverse role players on, among others, poverty eradication solutions, creating sustainable and connected economies within the context of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area. The conference seeks to showcase systems utilised for co-production of knowledge in ways that navigate policy, science and indigenous knowledge to advance poverty eradication and creation of sustainable and connected economies agenda of African communities.

AfCFTA offers a scholarship platform for contributions towards this intra- continental

free-trade harmonization endeavor. Papers (and Abstracts): Novel Research

contributions are invited on economic policies, strategies, and related topics - to help

Africa shape its common-market harmonization endeavor.





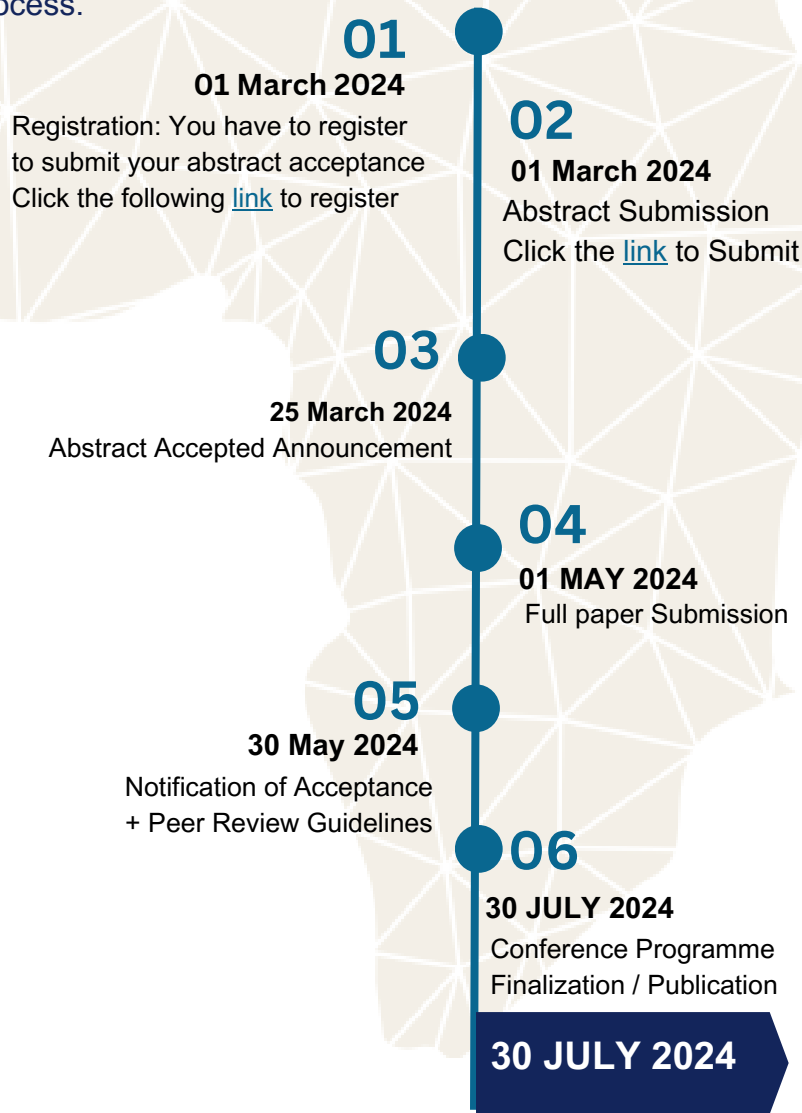
**3RD INTERNATIONAL ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP CONFERENCE ON AfcFTA'24:
BRIDGING Barriers to Cross-Regional Trade & Technological Development
Synergies in the Africa Continental Free Trade Area**

Kigali Convention and Exhibition Village (KCEV), Rwanda -13-15 September, 2024

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

The SBL and the University of Rwanda are co-hosting the **3rd International Engaged Scholarship Conference on the 13-15th September 2024, at the University of Rwanda, Kigali, Rwanda**

Abstracts are invited on each of the 6 conference thematic areas, no later than, 1 March 2024. You are to register in order to submit. Upon a positive evaluation by the scientific committee, a conference paper will be invited for submission by no later than 30 March 2024, to a double-blind peer review process.



FINAL SUBMISSION

Submit to [LINK](#) / Address [scienceOPEN.com](mailto:scienceOPEN@scienceopen.com)
All accepted conference papers will be published in electronic conference proceedings (with an ISBN number, as indexed by.



Themes and parallel sessions

TRACK 1: Intra-Africa Trade Status

Harmonization of the continental free trade market for African countries is a significant development towards a greater African unity.

- Alignment of financial systems and the easing of potential barriers would go a long way in facilitating this process.
- A discourse on national and regional financial (including Fiscal and monetary) frameworks, multi-lateral diplomatic arrangements on trade between countries, currencies, taxing systems as well as banking and investment regimes would play a key role in facilitating trans-border, trans-regional, and ultimately, intra- continental trade.
- A Borderless Africa: Implications for rural-urban Economic Spaces Challenges in Implementing the AfCFTA
- Challenges in implementing the AfCFTA

TRACK 2: Agenda 2063 and Implications for national and Regional Policies

- Prior to the Africa Free Trade Markets harmonization undertaking, economic policies and strategies were nationally and regionally focused. A harmonization discourse would help forget new chapter in the Africa-Free-Trade market development.
- Protocol on Trade in Services: Implications for Higher Education

TRACK 3: Entrepreneurship, Small Business, and the Informal Sector

- The opening of Africa's continental trading markets is geared to advance the economic prospects of the continent, and all its people.
- Entrepreneurship development, including the strengthening of small, micro, and medium enterprises (within the formal and informal sectors) is central to this effort.
- Rules of Origin: implications for African Enterprises and the Rest of the World



TRACK 4: Exporting, Internationalization, and Foreign Direct Investment

Novel Research contributions are invited on how provincial bodies, nation-states, and respective regional collaborative formations can align their internationalization regimes, including multilateral trade frameworks to better exploit the current African free-market trading developments. Through a Free-Trade Market liberalization undertaking, Africa seeks to advance its continental economic competitive standing in the greater global political economy.

- International Trade Theory
- EU intra-regional Trade Lessons for Africa
- Peace and Security issues in Africa – implications international trade.

TRACK 5: Cultural Diversity and Human Resources in Organizations

- The opening of the Africa Trading Markets has direct implications on the labour migration between the respective African countries, with direct implications on immigration policy, cultural diversity, national human resource frameworks and related practices.



TRACK 6: Project Management and Supply Chain Management

6a. Project Management

Projects are vehicles for change, thus play a crucial role in driving economic growth within the continent. The development and application of context-driven project management methods, approaches, tools, and practices are a key driver for the implementation of the AfCFTA initiatives. The development of infrastructure, systems, and capacity building as an AfCFTA enabler is delivered through portfolios of programmes and projects.

6b. Operations and Supply Chain Management

In pursuing the implementation of the AfCFTA objectives, It has been evident that (1) there is insufficient supply chain intelligence available to help with strategic decision-making to combat issues procurement corruption, fit-for-purpose country specific and cross country supply chain legislative frameworks, and, (2) the logistics network infrastructure is either not sufficiently developed or integrated enough to facilitate smooth and efficient movement of goods and people across African borders. The conference therefore seeks contributions from academics, practitioners, and policy makers on how these issues have been addressed in respective countries, can be addressed in future through collaborative efforts of supply chain role players. Furthermore, presentations addressing the issues of fragmented legislative frameworks, transport management systems, and sustainable operations practices that support the achievement of the AfCFTA objectives will be considered.



TRACK 7: Technology Infrastructure, Innovations, Tools, Systems & Enablers

- Information and Communication Technology is at the centre of all modern economic activity, be it e-Business, e-Commerce, e-Marketing, or purely just efficient communication, training or trading at a stock exchange anywhere in the continent and the world.
- Harmonizing technology infrastructure, networks and systems, as well as technology resources to simplify trade would help improve intra-Africa trade efforts.
- Digital Transformation: Implications on intra-Africa Trade



TRACK 8: *The Creative Economy In the Context Of The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)*

- The structure of the requisite legal framework that would facilitate cohesion of the African creative economy within the AfCFTA.
- The nature of the enforcement mechanisms required to protect copyright and intellectual property rights of the African creative economy within the AfCFTA.
- The nature of harmonization of policy and regulatory frameworks necessary and required and which particular areas are critical in the regulatory framework for the African creative economy to prosper within the AfCFTA.
- The strategies and innovations necessary to address the language barrier and other cultural complexities and cross-cultural opportunities of the African creative economy within the AfCFTA.
- The structure of economic integration and the financial infrastructure required for the African creative economy to function within the AfCFTA.
- The challenges of the digital divide as it affects the AfCFTA and the necessary inclusive transformative technological strategies required for the African creative economy to fully function within AfCFTA.

TRACK 9: *The signing and ratification of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) by African states has reignited academic and policy interest in integration and regionalism.*

The signing and ratification of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) by African states has reignited academic and policy interest in integration and regionalism. AfCFTA is one of the largest free trade areas, constituting around 1.2 billion people in 55 national economies with an approximate \$2.5 trillion combined GDP. However, low levels of intra-African trade and economic productivity has security and political implications for the implementation of the AfCFTA in both the short and long-term. For instance, the implementation of AfCFTA could exacerbate grievances emanating from regional economic disparities and uneven distribution of integration benefits and costs. This is particularly true in contexts where relations between states are complex and characterized by intense rivalry and negative competition. Weak and fragmented regionalism, slow growth, political instability, and the absence of harmonized security policies to tackle illegal trade and smuggling add to the challenge of integration. On the other hand, current measures to deepen continental economic integration through, for example, the creation of one-stop-border posts under the Horn of Africa Initiative and the African Union (AU) plan to Boost Intra-African Trade (BIAT), can go a long way in deepening integration and creating economies of scale with built-in flexibilities to withstand external shocks. Doing so could promote economic development, particularly in fragile contexts, while simultaneously positioning Regional Economic Communities (RECs) as sites for developmental regionalism. Under the Peace and Security theme, submissions will tackle, broadly the following topics:

- Democracy and good governance
- Pan Africanism
- Dispute Resolution and free trade
- AfCFTA and informal cross-border trade in Africa
- Gender disparity and mainstreaming
- Global geopolitical dynamics and influences
- Youth Participation



TRACK 10: Graduate Student Symposium

This track provides masters and doctoral students with an opportunity to share and showcase their research with scholars, practitioners, and beneficiaries of their research. The aim is for students to discuss their research with their peers and mentors, receiving guidance on key issues and challenges experienced in their research journey. Interactive mentorship sessions will also facilitate knowledge exchange, generate conversations, and collaborations – integrating research with the current continental realities and lived experiences.

Attending the conference will also provide students an opportunity to learn from and expand their networks with leading African scholars and practitioners in their chosen discipline.

Students have the option to submit abstracts, papers, and poster presentations.



1. Register and submit your abstracts here

2. The deadline for submission of completed chapters of up to 6000 words is 31 May, 2024.

The book is expected to be published in 2024.

Abstracts format

Title of Paper

Author's Name(s) (Full Name(s))

Affiliation/ University/ Institute

e-mail address

ABSTRACT

An abstract should be a single paragraph, with no indentation. It should summarize key points of the manuscript in 200 to 350 words. Hence, standard practice has seen abstracts being spared citations, references, figures, tables, and graphs. For, abstracts should capture only the essence of the manuscript, including a few lines of introduction, linked to a shortened problem and a rationale. Whilst titles should give a clear link between the proposed manuscript and the conference, the framing of the abstract must also show a link between the proposed manuscript and the theme of the conference. The aim and objective would follow logically, leading to a methodology. An expected contribution also balances the context (in place of the findings). Linking this to the actual aim and purpose of the conference or journal would improve the levance (and acceptability) of the abstract. Obviously, if the manuscript is based on the work that already has the findings, the abstract becomes even more balanced. Indeed, abstracts should also end with a logically flowing conclusion.

**Provide 5 keywords in alphabetical order separated with semicolons, not included in the title. Keywords: writing; template; sixth; edition; self-discipline*

Keywords: writing; template; sixth; edition; self-discipline



Call for papers

We invite original, high-quality papers of unpublished conceptual, constructive, experimental and/ or theoretical research in topical areas across the four thematic areas of the conference.

NB: Authors undertake NOT to submit the same manuscripts for publication or similar consideration in other publication platforms. Submission of a manuscripts implies that it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Full Paper Reviewing Process

- All manuscript submissions will be subjected to a double-blind peer-review process, guided by strict scientific criteria of academic excellence, integrity, and novelty.
- The submitting author is responsible for ensuring that the article's publication has been approved by all co-authors, taking responsibility for the quality of the submission from the peer review to the presentation, and ultimately, the publication process.
- The publisher will not be held legally responsible should there be any claims for compensation.

Language

- English, American, British, South Africa usage is accepted, but not a mixture of these.
- Authors are encouraged to use relevant editing services and tools to improve the quality of manuscripts, thereby improving chances for acceleration into the Journal of Public Administration (JoPA) Special Issue.

Images, Figures, Tables

Standard international formatting practice in the use of Tables, Figures or images applies.



Tables

The Heading of the Table is placed above the Table. The Title of Figures is always placed below the figure as demonstrated below

Table 1: Formatting Template for table

International Engaged Scholarship Series				
Country and Venue	1st IESC'22 - Jhb, RSA	2nd IESC'23 - UB, Gaborone	3rd IESC'24 – UNI-Rwanda,	4th IESC'25 - UNAM, Windhoek
Theme	AfCTA	AfCTA & PAF (e-Nets)	Cross-Regional Trade & Tech-Dev Synergies	Technology Status & Trade Beyond 2030



Figure 1: Essence of the Co-creation Concept in Developments

Source: SBL, 1st IESC'22 Brochure

Finally, Tables, figures and images sourced from alternative publications should be acknowledged with appropriate references.

Paper Structure

- Title
- Author details (and affiliation)
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Problemata
- Aim/Purpose/Objectives
- Methodology/Approach
- Findings/Results
- Conclusion/Implications/Recommendations
- Acknowledgements (when appropriate)
- References
- Appendices (when appropriate)
- Paper Structure



**MS Word-compatible file
Formatting & Paper Length Limit**

<i>Paper length</i>	<i>Full paper: within 15 pages, including references, tables/ charts and keywords</i>
<i>Abstract length</i>	<i>200 - 350 words</i>
<i>Key words</i>	<i>3 - 5 words</i>
<i>Font</i>	<i>12 points Times New Roman</i>
<i>Paragraph</i>	<i>Single-spaced</i>
<i>Margin</i>	<i>Normal (Top: 2,54cm, Bottom: Margin 2,54cm left: 3,18cm, Right 3,18cm)</i>
<i>Page Numbers</i>	<i>Bottom-centered</i>
<i>Layout</i>	<i>One-column Portrait</i>
<i>Format</i>	<i>MS Word compatible file</i>



POSTER FORMAT

A poster is a graphical illustration of your research project, article message or idea. As such, a poster should be based on the submitted abstract as accepted by the Scientific Committee. It must be a format that is easy to follow, read and comprehend with minimal effort. Mostly through inclusion of some of visuals, charts and or graphs - joined by fewer words. As a basis, a Poster must have a title that is bold and representative of the message of the poster. Usually on top of the poster, together with the names and affiliations of the authors, in a font lower than that of the title. The colours of the text and images must always be in direct contrast to the background, to enhance visibility. Size: A1 international paper size, on a board or material that allows it to be posted on the boards



Today's world is an interdependent trade ecosystem. The recent signing of the African Continental Free Trade Area (2018) underpins the commitment of African leaders to operationalize the interdependence of economies in the African region. Even more important, is the prevailing mood amongst African leaders to fast-track industrial development and regional integration. On 1 January 2021, trading under AfCFTA started. The AfCFTA with its 35 signatories, is an instrument that legitimizes the creation of a single continental market for goods and services – with free movement of business, people, and investments – laying – the foundations for the integrated, prosperous, and inclusive Africa. One of the expected outcomes through the implementation of the area is to boost intra-African trade. Currently, intra-African trade accounts for between 10-16%. It is expected that the area will accelerate growth and sustainable development through a doubling of overall intra-African trade by 2022, and tripling trade in agricultural goods by 2023.

Trade interdependences pose challenges for policy makers and opportunities for local and cross-border traders. Challenges abound when economic policies do not create an enabling environment for local and international trade to be optimized. Forward-looking trade policy frameworks are crucial in international trade, but these are not enough to transform and align African economies with the needs of the current digital industrial revolution. Without a special kind of policy-making acumen and leadership sensibilities, that unlock capabilities to navigate the global business environment nimbly, the policy environment will still not yield inclusive growth.

Notwithstanding collapsing of borders as envisaged in the AfCFTA, the trade deficit in Africa is high, while intra-Africa Trade is low. This is attributed to several factors including changes in the structure of the African economies that saw unrelenting unemployment figures in the past ten years, a decline in the productive sector of the African economies, while inequality increased in some countries.



- The effects of the financial crisis of Covid 19 and the Ukrainian War, as well as the increase in indebtedness of households, aggravates growth problems faced by small, medium, and large enterprises.

These economic conditions require the private and public sectors to swivel around in search for growth opportunities, often, in uncharted waters of international trade. Accordingly, the questions that will drive chapters invited for this publication will be contextualized around the unique geopolitical and economic circumstances of Countries in Africa. Some of these questions are: how can small, medium, and large businesses unlock value against the low growth trap, high inequality, and the speed of technological and market changes? What will it take to erase the legacy policy choices from the consciousness and soul of local businesses, and institutionalize the AfCFTA to invigorate the African economies? What kind of international trade opportunities are available and how can local businesses better prepare for such opportunities? Given, trade facilitation problems, infrastructure deficit, as well as peace and security issues in Africa how can the public and private sectors institutionalize the AfCFTA in a way that would pivot Africa on a new inclusive growth path.

Book Chapters

With the support of the University of Rwanda and the University of South Africa, we are pleased to invite proposals for chapters of previously unpublished and original work to be included in Leading Change in the context of uncharted Africa Continental Free Trade Area.



Paper Contributions

With the support of the University of Rwanda (UR), University of Botswana (UB) and University of South Africa (Unisa SBL), we are pleased to invite proposals for chapters of previously unpublished and original

work to be included in [Dismantling Barriers to Cross-Regional Trade & Tech-Dev Synergies in the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement 2024](#).

[Paper contributions to reflect topics emergent from the conference theme and tracks, as would be determined by the edit team.](#)

Submission Procedure

- 1) Book chapter proposals with a deep theoretical analysis focused international trade theory and its implications to different industrial and higher education sectors
- 2) You are invited to submit a word document with the title of the proposal and an abstract of 500 - 600 words. In addition, please submit a 200-word author(s) bio which should include: author's or authors' professional title(s), affiliation(s), and contact details.
- 3) The abstract should present a strong proposal that describes the subject of the study, and both a clear methodological and theoretical approach based on specific arguments to support the proposal. Include specific details and primary sources that explain how the proposal challenges or updates existing research.
- 4) Submit abstracts to: [Science Open](#) and [IESCA](#) Using the Abstract Submission
- 5) The deadline for submission of completed papers of up to 6000 words is 30 July 2024



Registration Enquiries

CONTACTS

Ms. Mmathebe Cynthia Songo

Cell: [+27 73 149 5575](tel:+27731495575)

Tel: [011 652 0310](tel:0116520310)

info@iesca.co.za

