



## CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

# Annual Disability Rights in Africa Conference 2024 Disability Rights, Information and Communication Technologies in Africa

### ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The Centre for Human Rights, Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria, will be convening a hybrid conference titled 'Disability Rights, Information, and Communication Technologies in Africa', scheduled for **13-14 November 2024**. The conference aims to achieve two primary objectives: firstly, to critically examine laws, policies, practices, programs, and ideologies pertaining to the rights of individuals with disabilities in Africa within the context of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT); secondly, to promote discussions on innovative solutions aimed at enhancing human rights for individuals with disabilities through the utilisation of ICTs. It is anticipated that papers presented at the conference will be refined by authors and subsequently submitted for potential publication in the 2025 volume of the *African Disability Rights Yearbook*.

The Centre for Human Rights hosts the annual Disability Rights in Africa conference every November. The annual conference provides a platform for engaging key stakeholders in dialogue on disability issues and highlighting critical and emerging disability rights issues across Africa.

For more details on past editions of the conference, please visit:  
<https://www.chr.up.ac.za/disability-rights-projects/dru-annual-conference>



## BACKGROUND

In recent decades, rapid technological advancements have reshaped the global landscape. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) continues to revolutionise various aspects of society, including interactions within communities, economic activities, and educational systems. However, despite the proliferation of ICT systems across Africa, digital exclusion persists among persons with disabilities. Barriers to digital inclusion include the high costs associated with technology, inadequate infrastructure, especially in rural areas, limited funding for infrastructure improvements, and low levels of digital literacy. Addressing these challenges is crucial to ensuring equitable access to the benefits of ICT across all segments of African society.

Going forward, technology will undoubtedly play a central role in achieving the full and effective inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society. Collaborative efforts among diverse stakeholders, including regional and sub-regional bodies, governmental and non-governmental entities, are essential to enhancing ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities across Africa. This can be achieved through the review and enhancement of existing legal frameworks, the implementation of awareness campaigns and capacity building initiatives, and the execution of programs aimed at increased digital literacy. Improved access to ICT will promote increased participation by persons with disabilities in the socio-economic and political spectrums.

Against this backdrop, the conference will serve as a platform to unite key stakeholders and formulate strategies to advance ICT access for persons with disabilities in Africa.

## PARTICIPANTS

The conference aims to convene a diverse group of stakeholders dedicated to advancing the human rights of persons with disabilities through ICT. This includes individuals with disabilities, civil society organisations, particularly those advocating for disability rights, legal academics and scholars, policymakers, representatives from telecommunications companies, and government officials.

## POSSIBLE TOPICS TO CONSIDER:

- Legal frameworks for ICT and disability in Africa
- Digital inclusion/exclusion of persons with disabilities in Africa
- Assistive devices and access to education in Africa
- ICT, skills development, and employment for persons with disabilities
- ICT and access to government services in Africa
- ICT and access to information for persons with disabilities in Africa
- ICT use by persons with disabilities in African elections

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- Affordability of assistive devices in Africa
  - Accessibility of mobile applications by the telecommunications industry
  - Socio-economic barriers to ICT access for persons with disabilities in Africa
  - Collaboration for ICT accessibility in Africa (governments, telecoms, regulators, civil society)
  - ICT impact on persons with disabilities during crises in Africa
  - Improving digital literacy among persons with disabilities in Africa
  - Advocacy for digital rights of persons with disabilities in Africa
  - Intersectionalities
  - Lessons and best practices for digital rights of persons with disabilities in Africa including ICT accessibility

## SUBMISSION SPECIFICATIONS

### **Abstracts must adhere to the following guidelines for consideration:**

1. Written in English
2. Length: 300-350 words
3. Format: MS Word document (not PDF)

### **Abstracts must include the following in a single document:**

1. Title of abstract
2. Author's name
3. Affiliation
4. Qualifications
5. E-mail address

### **Abstracts must be sent by email to Sabeeha Majid at the following email address:**

[sabeeha.majid@up.ac.za](mailto:sabeeha.majid@up.ac.za)

### **Submission deadline for Abstracts: 31 August 2024**

Authors will be notified of the acceptance of their abstracts for presentation at the Annual Disability Rights in Africa Conference (13 – 14 November 2024) by **9 September 2024**.

## SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR PRESENTATIONS:

Authors whose abstracts are accepted will be required to submit their full presentations by **31 October 2024**.

For any inquiries, please contact **Sabeeha Majid** at [sabeeha.majid@up.ac.za](mailto:sabeeha.majid@up.ac.za).