2nd DIGITAfrica Consultation Workshop

April 28, 2026, Tunis

The DIGITAfrica Workshop organised in Tunis brings together public policymakers, research leaders, technical experts, and African and European partners to advance a shared vision for pan-African, sustainable digital research infrastructures and stronger cross-continental collaboration.

The morning sessions set the strategic context, presenting the DIGITAfrica vision, the European research infrastructure framework, and perspectives on the research landscape in Tunisia. A dedicated panel then explores the conditions for enabling pan-African research collaboration, including the landscape, funding, and partnership opportunities. Afternoon sessions showcase DIGITAfrica Blueprints and proof-of-concepts, and the cooperation with SLICES and SoBigData, the two European Research Infrastructures liaising with the DIGITAfrica initiative. The programme also discusses national perspectives on digital research strategies and infrastructures, as well as skills and capacity building.

The workshop concludes discussing a call to action for organizations to become early adopters of DIGITAfrica Blueprints, translating shared priorities into a co-designed approach, operational cooperation and long-term impact through sustainable deployment.

08:30 – 8:50	Registration

Opening Session

09:00 – 09:30	<u>Moderator</u>: Farouk Kamoun**,** UMA, Tunisia • Welcome remarks *Prof Ameur Cherif, President UMA, Tunisia* • EU-Africa cooperation *EU representative* • Opening Speech (**TBC**) *Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Tunisia* • DIGITAfrica welcome *Prof Serge Fdida, Sorbonne Université, France*

Keynote 1

09:30 – 10:00	• DIGITAfrica vision and the European research infrastructure framework *Prof Serge Fdida, Sorbonne Université, France*

Keynote 2

10:00 – 10:30	• Research Landscape in Tunisia *Prof. Mourad Bellassoued, Director General for Scientific Research (DGRS), Chief of Cabinet Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Tunisia*

Panel 1: Enabling Pan-African Research Collaboration: Landscape, Funding and Opportunities

10:30 – 11:30	<u>Moderator</u>: Thomas Magedanz**,** Technische Universität Berlin, Germany • Bilel Jamoussi *Deputy Director of ITU Telecommunication Standardization Bureau* • Mohamed Ben Amor *Secretary-General of the Arab ICT Organization (AICTO)* • Prof. Abdelmajid Ben Amara *Head of the Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils- League of Arab States* • Calvain Nangue *strategic advisor, Smart Africa Alliance*

11:30 – 11:50	**Coffee Break**

Session 1: From Concepts to Demonstrators: DIGITAfrica Blueprints & Proof-of-Concepts

11:50 – 12:40	• Heterogeneous Networking Blueprint *Prof. Joyce Mwangama, University of Cape Town, South Africa*

	• Edge-Interoperable AI & ML Blueprint *Prof. Louis Fendji, University of Ngaoundéré, Cameroon*	
12:40– 14:00	**Lunch**	–

Session 2: Research Infrastructures as Enablers for Research & Innovation: EU Success Stories

14:00 – 14:50	• SLICES-RI: Scientific Large-Scale Infrastructure for Computing / Communication Experimental Studies *Prof. Walid Dabbous, INRIA, France* • SoBigData RI: Data & AI Services for Digital Sciences *Michela Natilli, CNR, Italy*

Session 3: National Perspectives on Digital Research and Innovation

14:50 – 15:50	• A Comprehensive Map of Senegal's and Pan-African AI Strategy *Prof Seydina Moussa Ndiaye, Cheikh Hamidou Kane Digital University (UN-CHK), Senegal* • From Local Talent to Global Impact: How African Centers of Excellence Drive Digital Innovation *Behjet Boussofara, Director General, Talan, Tunisia* • Title TBA Claude Borna, *Managing Director of Sèmè City, Benin* • University of Manouba Research Landscape *Prof. Azza Frikha, Vice President, University de la Manouba, Tunisia* • Cloud and HPC: a Higher Education & Resarch Infrastucture *Prof. Saoussen Krichen, Institut Supérieur de Gestion de Tunis – University of Tunis, Tunisia*

15:50 – 16:10	**Break**

Panel 2: Empowering Research & Innovation Communities: Priorities, Skills and Capacity Building

16:10 – 17:10	Moderator: Prof. Vitalis Ozianyi, Strathmore University, Kenya • Prof. Jouhaina Gherib *Vice president International Association of Universities (IAU), UNESCO Chair Holder, UMA, Tunisia* • Yousef Torman *CEO, Arab States Research and Education Network (ASREN)* • Prof. Eyouléki Tcheyi Gnadi Palanga *CEO, West and Central African Research and Education Network (WACREN)* • Carmela Salzano *Senior Project Officer, Campus Africa, UNESCO*

	• John Matogo *Corporate Social Responsibility Leader for Africa & the Middle East, IBM, Kenya* • Alais, Olivier *Programme Coordinator, Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB), ITU*
**Closing Session: Getting Involved in DIGITAfrica**
17:10 – 17:30	• Call to Action: Become an Early Adopter of DIGITAfrica Blueprints • DIGITAfrica long-term sustainability