AIFEST UGANDA 2026

Post-Event Brief

AI Agents for Uganda

335+ Students	**34** Universities & 2 High Schools	**210** Attended on D-Day
109 Teams — Phase 1	**40** Prototype Submissions	**11** Top 10 Finalists

9th May 2026 | American Center, Kampala

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Prepared by the AIFest Uganda 2026 Organizing Team



1. Executive Summary

AIFest Uganda 2026 (Second Edition) was held on 9th May 2026 at the American Center, Kampala, under the theme "AI Agents for Uganda." The event brought together students, innovators, industry leaders, government representatives, and ecosystem partners for a full-day celebration of student AI innovation.

The festival was the culmination of a multi-phase Inter-University AI Hackathon that began in January 2026, attracting 109 teams representing 335 students from 34 universities and 2 high schools across Uganda. After a rigorous online judging process, 11 finalist teams pitched their AI-powered solutions live to a panel of judges, with over 210 attendees present on the day.

AIFest 2026 significantly exceeded the scale and impact of its inaugural 2025 edition, cementing its position as Uganda's premier student AI innovation festival.

2. Background and Context

AIFest Uganda was conceived as a response to the growing need for practical AI education and hands-on innovation opportunities for Ugandan students. The inaugural edition in 2025 successfully convened 95 student teams from 28+ higher education institutions, validated the concept, and set the foundation for a recurring national platform.

The 2026 edition was organised by GDG On Campus Makerere University in collaboration with Makerere Innovation and Incubation Centre Hub (MIICHub), with support from sponsors, partners, and a dedicated team of approximately 30 volunteer organisers drawn from the university innovation community.

AIFest was founded by Ronnie Atuhaire and aligns with Uganda's Digital Transformation Agenda, the Digital Uganda Vision, and national ICT skills development priorities.

3. Pre-Event Activities

3.1 Cursor x AIFest Pre-Event Workshop

On 11th April 2026, AIFest hosted the Cursor x AIFest Workshop at CoCIS Block A, Level 4, Makerere University with over 90+ attendees. This one-day hands-on session served as the official technical warm-up for AIFest 2026, designed to equip developers, hackers, and AI builders with practical skills in AI-native software development using Cursor, one of the world's leading AI coding environments.

The workshop ran from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM and featured guided demonstrations and hands-on exercises on building, debugging, and prototyping AI-powered applications. Participants were introduced to AI agents, agentic workflows, and responsible AI development practices.

3.2 Virtual Preparation Sessions

Prior to the main event, the organizing team conducted online preparation and information sessions for the Top 10 finalist teams. These virtual sessions were designed to help teams refine their pitches, understand the judging criteria, and prepare for the live presentation format. Teams were briefed on the 4-minute pitch plus 2-minute Q&A format, and given guidance on prototype demonstration best practices.

3.3 Build With AI Hackathon

On 18th April 2026, the Build With AI Hackathon was held as an additional pre-event community activation, further building momentum ahead of the main AIFest event and providing additional learning and building opportunities for the wider student developer community.

4. Hackathon Competition Structure

The AIFest Uganda 2026 Inter-University AI Hackathon ran across three phases spanning January to May 2026:

Phase 1	Idea Submission (Closed 30th January 2026) — 109 teams from 34 universities and 2 high schools submitted AI solution ideas. Total of 335 students participated.
Phase 2	Prototype Development (Deadline 20th February, Top 10 selection 16th March) — Teams built working prototypes. 40 teams successfully submitted functional AI solutions.
Phase 3	Online Judging (13th to 27th March 2026) — A panel of judges evaluated all 40 prototypes online, selecting the Top 10 finalists based on five criteria: Innovation (25%), Technical Implementation (25%), Impact and Relevance (25%), Usability and Design (15%), and Presentation and Clarity (10%).
Final Pitching	D-Day, 9th May 2026 — American Center, Kampala. 11 finalist teams pitched live to judges and a 210-strong audience. (11 teams due to a tie at 2nd place during online judging.)

5. D-Day Event — 9th May 2026

The main AIFest Uganda 2026 event was held at the American Center, Kampala on 9th May 2026 as a morning session. Over 210 attendees gathered for a programme that included an opening ceremony, keynote and speaker sessions, live team pitches, exhibitions, judge deliberations, and a closing awards ceremony.

5.1 Olive School Young Innovators

A highlight of D-Day was the participation of young students from Olive School, who presented and exhibited two remarkable AI and technology projects alongside the university-level finalists. Their presence demonstrated that the spirit of innovation in Uganda starts well before university:

DOC247 — Every Life Matters	An AI-supported, solar-powered robotic doctor designed for Rural Health Centre IIIs in Uganda, addressing the critical shortage of

	medical personnel in underserved communities by automating basic diagnosis and healthcare delivery.

Verdura Pod	A smart irrigation project using technology to optimise water usage and improve crop yields for smallholder farmers.

The Olive School students received a standing ovation from the audience and embodied the broader mission of AIFest: inspiring the next generation of Ugandan innovators at every level.

6. Top 10 Finalist Teams

The following 11 teams (including a tie at 2nd place) were selected from 40 prototypes and competed in the live pitching finale:

#	Team	University	Team Lead	Project
1	**SisterCare**	Uganda Technology and Management University	Abigail Kisakye	A mobile-first AI companion for menstrual health, cycle tracking, and mental health support for Ugandan women, powered by Gemini with multilingual support.
2	**Triumph**	ISBAT University	Thomas Kayongo	A solar-powered digital health platform connecting hospitals with real-time drug inventory tracking, cross-facility patient records, and AI-powered shortage prediction.
3	**Modu**	Nkumba University	Andama Godwin Ezra	A mobile-first AI development environment enabling developers to build React Native apps from a smartphone using natural language, with no laptop required.
4	**TechGenz**	Universal Technology and Management University	Peter Nuwahereza	DIRECO: An AI disaster response coordinator accessible via web and WhatsApp that autonomously dispatches emergency services when distress messages are received.
5	**Ferox**	Makerere University	Ahamada Shamuran Mubiru	An AI coordination agent embedding proactive intelligence into Uganda's VHT and Health Centre hierarchy for maternal malaria monitoring, triage, and escalation.
6	**Intelli-gents**	Kyambogo University	Abaho Abel K	Maneja: A smart shop management app for Ugandan kiosks allowing sales recording via tap, text, or voice, with real-time inventory tracking and low-stock alerts.
7	**TechSync**	Uganda Christian University	Kirabo Faith Kiggundu	FarmWatch: A web-based AI farming platform connected to an Arduino multipurpose farm machine, with a Claude-powered conversational agent delivering real-time, sensor-informed farming advice.
8	**PlanWise**	Multitech Business Institute	Senior Mugambe	An AI-powered and Web3-enabled financial management platform helping individuals

				and businesses plan, save, and manage finances intelligently.
9	**AgroConsult**	Makerere University	Kibalama Pascal P B	KulimaBrain: A smart farming advisor trained on 20+ years of local weather data to predict optimal planting days, integrating Open-Meteo live forecasts for Ugandan farmers.
10	**Tech Titans**	ISBAT University	Wogoli Hans	K3 Studio: A mission control platform for AI agents supporting multiple AI models (Claude, Gemini, GPT, DeepSeek, Mistral), priced from UGX 18,000 with mobile money payments.
11	**R3p34RS**	Kyambogo University	Olega Joshua J	Yield Guard: An autonomous AI agent monitoring the full crop lifecycle with spoilage risk assessment, market optimisation, and SMS alerts via Africa's Talking API.

7. Competition Results and Prize Awards

Following deliberation by the panel of four judges (Collins Mugadya, Cleopatra K, Brian Ahimbisibwe, and Gilbert Yiga), the following prizes were awarded:

1st Place Tech Titans

ISBAT University

Team Lead: Wogoli Hans

Prize: UGX 1,200,000 + $500 USD in credits

Project: K3 Studio: A mission control platform for AI agents supporting multiple AI models. Built for African developers with mobile money payments from UGX 18,000.

2nd Place Intelli-gents

Kyambogo University

Team Lead: Abaho Abel K

Prize: UGX 900,000 + $300 USD in credits

Project: Maneja: A smart shop management app for Ugandan kiosks with voice, text and tap-based sales recording, real-time inventory tracking, and low-stock alerts.

3rd Place Ferox

Makerere University

Team Lead: Ahamada Shamuran Mubiru

Prize: UGX 600,000 + $200 USD in credits

Project: An AI coordination agent for maternal malaria management, embedding proactive intelligence into Uganda's VHT and Health Centre hierarchy.

Online Judging Winner TechSync

Uganda Christian University
Team Lead: Kirabo Faith Kiggundu
Prize: UGX 300,000
Project: FarmWatch: A web-based AI farming platform connected to an Arduino farm machine, with a Claude-powered agent delivering real-time sensor-informed farming advice.

In addition to cash and credit prizes, ALL Top 10 finalist teams will receive startup incubation support from MIICHub (Makerere Innovation and Incubation Centre Hub) and further support from ecosystem partners to help them develop their prototypes into viable products.

8. Organising Team and Hosts

AIFest Uganda 2026 was powered by a dedicated team of approximately 30 volunteer organisers drawn from the university innovation community, led by GDG On Campus Makerere University and MIICHub. The organising team managed all aspects of the festival including participant recruitment, online judging coordination, venue logistics, technical operations, media and content, and guest hospitality.

The American Center, Kampala, served as the official Host Venue for AIFest Uganda 2026, providing a world-class facility that enabled an inspiring and memorable experience for all 210 attendees.

9. Sponsors and Partners

AIFest Uganda 2026 was made possible through the generous support of sponsors and partners across industry, academia, and the innovation ecosystem. The sponsorship structure comprised three tiers: KitKat, Marshmallow, and Lollipop.

Category	Organisation
Sponsors	Sunbird AI, Black Python Devs, Notion, Cursor, Google
Technical Partners	GDG On Campus Makerere University, MIICHub
Community Partners	IEEE Makerere University Student Branch, GitHub Campus Experts
Host Venue	American Center, Kampala

10. Impact and Key Outcomes

AIFest Uganda 2026 delivered measurable impact across multiple dimensions:

- 109 student teams engaged at the idea stage, representing 335 students from 36 institutions across Uganda.
- 40 working AI prototypes submitted, spanning sectors including health, agriculture, education, finance, civic tech, disaster response, and developer tools.
- 210 attendees on D-Day including students, industry professionals, government representatives, sponsors, and the media.
- 11 finalist teams pitched live before a panel of judges and a 210-strong audience at the American Center, Kampala.
- Over UGX 3 million in cash prizes and USD 1,000 in technology credits awarded to the top teams.
- All Top 10 finalist teams granted access to startup incubation through MIICHub.
- Young innovators from Olive School exhibited AI and technology projects, demonstrating the reach of Uganda's innovation culture beyond university level.
- The Cursor x AIFest Pre-Event Workshop and Build With AI Hackathon added significant value to participants before the main event.
- Approximately 30 volunteer organisers developed event management, logistics, and leadership skills.
- AIFest 2026 surpassed the 2025 edition in every key metric: teams, students, institutions, prototypes, and attendance.

11. Looking Ahead — AIFest Uganda 2027

Building on the success of AIFest 2026, the organising team is committed to growing the platform further. AIFest Uganda 2027 will seek to expand participation to more institutions, deepen industry partnerships, increase prize pools, and further strengthen linkages between Uganda's student innovation ecosystem and the broader AI and technology sector.

The vision remains the same: to build a national, community-led platform that empowers Ugandan students and early-career innovators to learn, build, and deploy practical AI solutions grounded in local realities.

For partnership, sponsorship, or collaboration inquiries, please contact:

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