Introduction

PAICTA ("Pan African Information Communication Technology Association") and everything we stand for, is inspired by the former President of South Africa, Mr. Thabo Mbeki’s vision for our Continent and his African Renaissance ideals of pioneering Pan Africanism. These ideals were shared by Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Nasser of Egypt, and from the African Diaspora Mr. Edward Blyden, Mr. W.E.B Du Bois and Mr. Stokely Carmichael who developed Pan Africanism into a machine to advocate for African unity by tackling common issues affecting the Continent. Although PAICTA is a new organisation, like the movements before it, it aspires to the main goal of the Pan-African movement which is to get Africans all over the world to unite and to work together for economic independence in Africa. The relevance of this unity of purpose in the 21st Century is very pronounced, especially in this digital or technological age and COVID-19 times.

PAICTA believes that the unique challenges faced by African countries require a collaborative effort by our nations, that prioritises a transformative agenda dedicated to bridging the digital divide and ensuring that the continent derives sustainable benefit from digital innovation.

We foresee an Africa whose technological development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, while using its collective muscle to negotiate and collaborate on the international stage. PAICTA aims to be the platform that facilitates the inclusion of the smaller player in the digital development ecosystem, thereby driving transformation as well as the betterment of their communities.

The association will achieve this by using the expertise within its structures to engage relevant stakeholders to contribute towards transformative policy and legislative frameworks; foster the digital inclusion of the African Child; ensure collaboration and increased cooperation within the ICT digital economy; and to catalyse Africa towards being a powerful driving force of future innovations.

The Best Value comes from The Integrity of Successfully Working Together.

To this end, PAICTA advocates for an integrated Digital Continent, with a quest inspired by the spirit of Pan Africanism, focusing on the inclusion as well as economic emancipation of women, the youth and persons with disabilities in the Digital Era. It is motivated by development based on the self-reliance and self-determination of the African child being part of digital transformation.

We want to be a catalyst for the inclusion of rural and peri-urban communities by:
- Creating an enabling developmental ecosystem;
- bridging the digital divide across Africa and accelerating African digital transformation access through the creation of an Innovation Factory or tech hub to provide access to economically excluded individuals;
- training, skilling, re-skilling or up-skilling individuals from communities;
- connectivity – providing guidance on internet access, digital infrastructure;
- promoting digital culture in communities.
- developing platforms that provide information and market access opportunities; and
- establishing community challenges, survival strategies, information about available resources, and community skills.

PAICTA as an organisation is synonymous with the metaphor of a tree, in that it has grown branches to focus on critically important areas and has created Women In Digital Era (“WiDE”), Youth In Digital Era (“YiDE”), the Institute of Science Technology & Innovation (“IST”), SECURE ACADEMY, PAICTA Pamoja Digital Learning (“P2DL”) Radio 78.5 Pan African Voice, PAICTA Research & Development Innovation (PRDI). African Digital Innovation Factory and Women Entrepreneurship School of Excellence.
About Paicta

Our Executive and Advisory Board members’ experience is grounded in ICT and spans across the sector’s operations, entrepreneurship and academia, boasting specialist expertise in Applied Information Education, ICT4 Research and Development, Information Technology Governance, ICT in Rural Development and Healthcare, Cybersecurity and Smart Technologies, Agricultural Economics, E-Learning as well as Corporate Leadership and Investment.

PAICTA is a Pan-African continental non profit organization that was formed in July 2020 – during the Covid-19 national lockdown in a bid to become a digital transformative organisation geared towards advancing the ICT pursuits of African small to medium enterprises or SMEs, Youth, Women, and Persons with disabilities through the facilitation and encouragement of an inclusive ecosystem that is conducive to economic growth.

Why Paicta exists?

PAICTA was created in response to a critical need to address challenges faced by ICT SMEs, youth, women, people with disabilities as well as the greater Communities in Africa. These matters include:

- the Absence of a conducive environment for innovation, development, sustainability and Digital Innovation across the continent - from Cape to Cairo. Our beautiful, and culturally;
- rich continent is rife with political upheaval, economic volatility and the changing goal posts of international investment;
- the challenge of digital divide & Inequality – (amplified by market disruptions by the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR) coupled with the Covid-19 global pandemic outbreak and tech cold wars);
- digital Exclusion of our fellow Africans especially in the rural and peri-rural communities
    - gender Inequality;
    - access to resources such as R & D; and
    - digital or tech education.

Through PAICTA’s vision of creating an integrated and inclusive digital society, we hope to see the African economies improve the quality of life for Africa’s citizens through enhanced communities, technology innovation and digital transformation.

We seek to achieve this:

By advocating and contributing towards a transformed digital economy led by African Youth-owned, Women-empowered and Persons with disabilities owned SMEs as drivers of job creation, poverty alleviation and technology innovation on the continent.

PAICTA’s main focus over the few months has been geared towards our mission of Championing for an enabling environment for Africa digital innovation, IP commercialisation, digital transformation and economic emancipation.

We seek to be:

A unified voice, advocating Africa’s socio-economic development and sustainability, while Fostering digital inclusion, collaboration and increased cooperation in the digital eco-system through Africa digital transformation. Catalyzing responsible research for an innovation powerhouse of the future Africa.
PAICTA has successfully forged partnerships with various civic organisations in the corporate, academic, and public sector across multiple social spheres. As a result, PAICTA is able to offer digital skills development programmes to rural and peri-rural target communities via our Cisco Academy, CompTIA Academy, Check Point Secure, Fortinet and Splunk that have enabled the association to accredit the unemployed youth with International Accreditations.

As mentioned in our bid towards bridging the digital arena., and launched the Pan African Women in Cyber (PAWCY), to qualify on International Certified Courses and become Cybermasters.

WIDE has set out activities, events, programmes and services needed to achieve digital transformation in developing countries. It stands behind information dissemination and awareness; networking and partnerships; building capacity; economic empowerment and sustainability.

**Institute of Science Technology and Innovation**

In actively building competency, capacity and agility to meet the digital literacy and unemployment challenges in the rural and peri-rural communities, PAICTA has formed a division called PAICTA Institute of Science Technology & Innovation (ISTI).

The institute is committed to closing the digital divide, to improve education and digital training across the African Continent by offering courses that embody the inventiveness, openness, rigor and quality that will be the symbol of PAICTA Institute of Science and Technology. We believe that working together with various International Institution, our digital training objectives will be achieved for a successful Africa.

We are a Cisco NetAcad, Checkpoint, Fortinet, Splunk and CompTIA certified partner that has managed to run learnerships in 2021 and managed to train just under hundred (500) youth in Cybersecurity, Python, C++, IoT, Get connected (IT Literacy)

Some of the expected outcomes of ISTI programme will include:

- Assisting in closing the digital gap;
- promoting entrepreneurship;
- enriching the skills and ability of entrepreneurs;
- increasing capacity of entrepreneurs to successfully grow and start companies;
- Improving the environment for entrepreneurial development which can be delivered through many forms, including:
  - venture development organisations,
  - mentorship programmes,
  - bootcamps,
  - accelerators and incubators, and
  - digital skills.

**PAICTA Research & Development Innovation (PRDI) HUB FOR AI IN MATERNAL SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH (HASH)**

Theme: Maternal Health - Machine Learning for identifying teenage patients at risk of gestational hypertension.
We believe this is achievable when a robust developmental digital ecosystem is prevalent and digital transformation and access is accelerated by:

- Providing support to innovators through access to R & D, creating Intellectual Property (IP), protecting and maturing the IP and creating MVPs on the innovations’ behalf for industry adoption,
- Building an African Digital Innovation Factory (Tech Hub) that will be accessible to all,
  - Providing tech training, skilling, reskilling or upskilling of communities,
- Engaging governments on ICT policy issues that impact technology innovation,
  - Motivating for and mobilising the setting up of digital infrastructure and access to the internet for communities,
- Promoting a digital culture in communities,
  - Developing platforms for information and market access opportunities and,
- Establishing city, provincial, country, and continent-wide challenges such as Hackathons to inspire innovation.

At the heart of such initiatives is a mix advisors from professors in academia to business leaders and philanthropists - this gives the entity the capacity, competency and a broad knowledge base to create programmes and initiatives for the communities we serve, providing skills for employability, Entrepreneurship and training the underserved youth.

Partnerships

We, as an entity are establishing partnerships to build a knowledge base and capacity with organisations such as the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (“CSIR”), the University of Johannesburg (“UJ”), the University of Fort Hare (“UFH”), Walter Sisulu University (“WSU”), National University of Lesotho (“NUL”), the Small Enterprise Development Agency EC (or SEDA EC), Addis Ababa University (“AAU”)Nelson Mandela iHub, Beetroot, EuroAfri Link, Tech Hub Harare, Women University in Africa (“WUA”), ZADNA & MICT SETA

We are working outside South Africa with individuals, organisations in the SADC (Southern African Development Community – Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Zambia, Namibia, Malawi), COMESA (The Common Market for Eastern - Ethiopia) and ECOWAS (Southern Africa, Economic Community of West African States - Ghana).

We are in the process of creating partnerships with other government bodies in South Africa, Zambia, Botswana, Eswatini, Uganda, Mauritius. The intention of this strategy is to surround the organisation with credible partners who can play a positive role in getting the organisation to achieve its strategic imperatives.

Successes:
- Webinars
- Internships
- Hackathons
- 4IR – MICT Seta 4IR course development for SA
- Cisco Academy
- CompTIA
- Weekly Talk Shows / online conversations
Executive Core Team & Board Advisors

1. Mr. Sonwabo Mdwaba – Founder, Chairperson and President
2. Prof. Nobert Jere – Walter Sisulu University - SADC
3. Dr. Suama Hamunyela – Head of Department: Namibia University of Technology and Science - WiDE
4. Prof. Ntombovuyo Wayi-Mgwebi – Professor of Information & Communication Technology, University of Mpumalanga
5. Prof. Mpho Raborife PhD - Computer Science - University of Johannesburg
6. Prof. Tembisa Ngqondi – Dean of Faculty of Informatics and Design, Cape Peninsula University of Technology
7. Dr. Attlee Gamundani (United Nations University Institute in Macau)
8. Dr. Solomon Gizaw Tulu - Addis Ababa University - COMESA
9. Dr Gloria Iyawa- NUST & UNESCO Chairperson for Gender and Digital Technologies
10. Ms. Dimpho Mdwaba – Secretary General & Finance
11. Dr. Tshidi Mathibe - Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria
12. Dr Tshidi Mathibe - Entrepreneur, Business coach, & Strategic Advisor
13. Prof Darelle van Greunen – Nelson Mandela University


Paicta Branches

PAICTA Research & Development Innovation

PAICTA Institute of Science Technology & Innovation

PAICTA Secure Academy

PAICTA Women Entrepreneurship School of Excellence

PAICTA Pan-African Women in Cyber

PAICTA Pan-African Women in Digital Era

PAICTA Youth in Digital Era

PAICTA Women in Digital Era

PAICTA Women in Digital Innovation Factory

PAICTA Pamoja Digital Learning

PAICTA Pamoja Pan-African Voice

PAICTA Pamoja Pan-African Youth

PAICTA Radio 18.5

PAICTA Pan-African Digital Academy

PAICTA Secure Innovation

PAICTA Women in Digital Era

PAICTA Youth in Digital Era

PAICTA Women in Digital Innovation Factory

PAICTA Secure Academy

PAICTA Women Entrepreneurship School of Excellence