EXCITING PRE GORILLA CONFERENCE TRAINING EVENTS FOR EMERGING SCIENTISTS, YOUNG AND EARLY CAREER SCHOLARS IN SUB SAHARAN AFRICA

November to December 2024 at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Application Deadline: Thursday 14th November 2024

The Local Organizing Committee (LOC) is pleased to announce three exciting training pre-conference events which will take place prior to the GORILLA conference in Kampala, Uganda. The pre-conference events largely target emerging, young and early career researchers including Masters, PhD and Postdoctoral students. We look forward to the active participation of young and early career scientists in the preconference events.

1. Training on Geospatial Artificial Intelligence (GeoAI) for Sustainable Biodiversity Conservation: 1st to 3rd December 2024

Geospatial Artificial Intelligence has gained increasing importance as a robust tool in a range of fields. Geospatial data analysis coupled with Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning techniques play a significant role in Biodiversity conservation. The optimal utility of GeoAI can help to resolve a range of issues in the biodiversity arena culminating into resilient socioecological systems. Despite the inherent potential of GeoAI to address issues of biodiversity, its utility is just emerging and currently suboptimal especially in Sub Saharan Africa. An investigation of the causative factor for the low utility of GeoAI techniques for biodiversity conservation in especially in Sub Saharan Africa (SSA) points to a low pool of human capacities where capabilities and competencies are largely lacking. The gist of this pre-GORILLA conference training is to equip the expected participants with novel skills and knowledge in the optimal application of GeoAI for Sustainable Biodiversity Conservation. The training largely targets emerging scholars and early career scientists from developing countries especially SSA with keen interest in biodiversity issues. If you are excited about emerging technologies and have interest in biodiversity and natural resource management, then this training is good for you.

Application deadline: Applications will be accepted until Thursday 14th November 2024. Successful applicants will be informed by Sunday 17th November 2024.

Training dates and venue: The physical component will be conducted at Makerere University, Uganda from 1st to 3rd December 2024. Prior to that, some virtual trainings will be given on a specific dates between 25-30th November 2024. A zoom provision will be made to accommodate virtual participation.

Award: A certificate of participation will be awarded to the successful participants.

Cost for Participation: The training is free. Insitu needs including stationery, meals and refreshments will be taken care of with funding from the JRS Biodiversity Foundation. However, there will be no per diem or transport refund. Participants are expected to take care of their personal costs.

If the planned training excites you, then make your timely application at: https://gorilla.mak.ac.ug/pre-conference/pre-conference-activities-2024

2. Training on Advanced Data Analysis and Scholarly Writing: 25 - 30th November 2024

The scientific outputs from Africa remain dismally low at less than 5% despite enormous research that is conducted on the continent. Enormous data is often collected from the field but evidence shows that just a small proportion is translated into scientific publications. In the recent past, there has been a paradigm shift in many African universities with a requirement now for many graduate students, particularly at PhD level to churn out publications before they can graduate. This puts a burden on the students to navigate around the art and craft of writing an acceptable manuscript. Cognizant of the existing gaps, this planned Pre-GORILLA conference is geared at enhancing the capabilities early career scholars and scientists in data analytics and scholarly writing. The training targets researchers who already have field data and will be equipped with advanced and novel techniques of data analysis and the process of scholarly writing. It will be given by well-established data analysis gurus as well as editors of journal. Masters, PhD and Postdoctoral students are welcome to apply to join the training.

Application and deadline: Applications can be submitted online and will be accepted until Thursday 14th November 2024. Successful applicants will be informed of the outcome by Sunday 17th November 2024.

Training dates and venue: The training will be implemented in a hybrid mode. The physical training will be conducted at Makerere University, Uganda. A zoom provision will be made for those participating virtually.

Award: A certificate of participation will be awarded to the successful participants

Cost for Participation: The training costs are taken care of by the MERIT Project, which will cover stationery, meals and refreshments. However, there will be no per diem or transport refund. Participants are expected to take care of their personal costs.

Applications to participate in the training can be submitted at: https://gorilla.mak.ac.ug/pre-conference/pre-conference-activities-2024

3. Hackathon on Earth Observation Data for Accelerated Actions towards Social and Ecological Resilience: 29th November to 2nd December 2024

The value of Earth Observation data in resolving a compendium of issues at the heart of the United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 and African Union 2063 cannot be underestimated. Enormous gigabytes of datasets are generated on a daily basis which if well harnessed can contribute towards accelerated actions for realizing the tenets of Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063 on a range of issues including climate change, natural resource management, agricultural productivity, natural hazards, disaster risk management, rehabilitation of degraded landscapes, ecosystem services, biodiversity among others. Innovations are required on how best to utilise the datasets for societal benefits that can culminate into social and ecological resilience.

In response, Makerere University in partnership with regional and global collaborators has established a Climate and Environmental Earth Observation data reception station (eStation) which provides access to huge amounts of environmental and climate data. The upcoming Pre-GORILLA conference hackathon will build on this initiative to explore EO datasets and collaboratively create solutions for pressing societal challenges. Participants will gain hands-on experience with EO, remote sensing, GIS, ICT, and data science skills that align with sustainable development goals. Open to undergraduate, Master's, PhD, and postdoctoral students, as well as young professionals in resilience and technology, the hackathon will culminate in solution presentations at the GORILLA Conference. This event offers participants a unique opportunity to showcase their innovations, gain feedback, and network, ultimately empowering a new generation to drive data-informed solutions for sustainable development.

Application and deadline: Applications can be submitted online and will be accepted until Thursday 14th November 2024. Successful applicants will be informed of the outcome by Sunday 17th November 2024.

Training dates and venue: The hackathon will be conducted at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda from 29th November to 3rd December 2024.

Award: A certificate of participation will be awarded to the successful participants

Cost for participation: There is no cost for participation in the hackathon. The organizers will solicit for funding from partners to cover the insitu costs including stationery, meals and refreshments. Participants will be responsible for their personal costs.

Interested persons can apply at: https://gorilla.mak.ac.ug/pre-conference/pre-conference-activities-2024

Collaborating Partners: The upcoming pre-GORILLA conference events are a collaboration of different partners notably Makerere University, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Africa-IALE, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, CSIR, Paris Lodron University of Salzburg (PLUS), National Environment Management Authority and the IGU Commission on Biogeography and Biodiversity, ICPAC.