



PAN-AFRICAN INFORMATICS OLYMPIAD 2026

Africa's first in-person informatics olympiad

Hosted by:



**RWANDA
OLYMPIAD
FOUNDATION**



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From 23 to 30 July 2026, the Rwanda Olympiad Foundation and the African Olympiad Academy co-hosted the second Pan-African Informatics Olympiad, and the first held in person.

PAIO 2026 was a hybrid continental event. **Ten** countries competed on the African Olympiad Academy (AOA) campus, while further African delegations and guest teams solved the same tasks online; **107 contestants** (77 official, 17 guest, 13 unofficial with 54 in-person). The Rwanda Olympiad Foundation (ROF) and AOA launched PAIO in 2025, when the first edition ran online from Rwanda with students from 13 countries.

The olympiad exists to find young computational thinkers across Africa, hold them to a shared continental standard, and connect them to mentors and pathways such as the International Olympiad in Informatics (IOI). The week included opening and closing ceremonies at the Kigali Convention Centre, two five-hour contest days with eight original tasks, excursions that included the Kigali Genocide Memorial and a trip to Zipline, a General Assembly of team leaders, and a Generative AI Hackathon with about 200 builders from 14 African countries.

African contestants won **38 medals** (14 gold, 19 silver, 5 bronze) and 13 honourable mentions. Two African contestants, from Morocco and Egypt and one guest contestant from Hungary scored a perfect 800/800. Rwanda won a gold medal at home, and girls from Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Tanzania won gold and silver. At the closing ceremony, Rwanda handed the PAIO flag to Kenya. Kenya hosts PAIO 2027 and Ethiopia PAIO 2028.

The week in Kigali

PAIO SCHEDULE

July 24—29, 2025

TIME	ACTIVITY
DAY 1, JULY 24, 2026	
7:00 – 8:00	Breakfast
8:00 – 10:00	GA 1 (Introduction)
10:00 – 12:00	Transport
12:00 – 13:00	Leaders Join Contest Room
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:00	Free Time
15:00 – 18:00	Opening Ceremony
18:00 – 19:00	Free Time
19:00 – 20:00	Dinner
20:00 – 22:00	GA 2 (Translation Night)
DAY 2, JULY 25, 2026	
7:00 – 8:00	Breakfast
8:00 – 13:00	GA 3
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 19:00	PAIO Talent Connect
19:00 – 20:00	Dinner
20:00 – 22:00	GA 4
DAY 3, JULY 26, 2026	
7:00 – 8:00	Breakfast
8:00 – 18:00	Excursion
18:00 – 20:00	Dinner
20:00 – 22:00	GA 5

TIME	ACTIVITY
DAY 4, JULY 27, 2026	
7:00 – 8:00	Breakfast
8:00 – 13:00	GA 6
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 19:00	PAIO Talent Connect
19:00 – 20:00	Dinner
20:00 – 22:00	GA 7 (Voting)
DAY 5, JULY 28, 2026	
7:00 – 8:00	Breakfast
8:00 – 09:00	Transport
09:00 – 10:00	Intro to Hackathon
10:00 – 12:00	Forming Groups & Scoring Criteria
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:00	Passing through Contestants
15:00 – 17:00	Judging
17:00 – 18:00	Awarding Ceremony
18:00 – 19:00	Departure/Transport
19:00 – 20:00	Dinner
20:00 – 22:00	Free Time

TIME	ACTIVITY
DAY 6, JULY 29, 2026	
7:00 – 8:00	Breakfast
8:00 – 13:00	Light Excursion
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:00	Transport to AOA
15:00 – 18:00	Closing Ceremony
18:00 – 19:00	Dinner
19:00 – 20:00	Free Time
20:00 – 22:00	Free Time
*All meals will be provided on-campus for days of arrival (23rd July) and Departure (30th July)	
DAY 7, JULY 30, 2026	
7:00 – 8:00	Breakfast
8:00 – 13:00	Contest Day 1
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 19:00	PAIO Talent Connect
19:00 – 20:00	Dinner
20:00 – 22:00	Free Time
DAY 8, JULY 31, 2026	
7:00 – 8:00	Breakfast
8:00 – 19:00	Excursion
19:00 – 20:00	Dinner
20:00 – 22:00	Free Time

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PAIO SCHEDULE

July 24—29, 2025

TIME	ACTIVITY
DAY 1, JULY 24, 2026	
7:00 – 8:00	Breakfast
8:00 – 13:00	Practice Contest
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:00	Free Time
15:00 – 18:00	Opening Ceremony
18:00 – 19:00	Free Time
19:00 – 20:00	Dinner
20:00 – 22:00	Free Time
DAY 2, JULY 25, 2026	
7:00 – 8:00	Breakfast
8:00 – 13:00	Contest Day 1
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 19:00	PAIO Talent Connect
19:00 – 20:00	Dinner
20:00 – 22:00	Free Time
DAY 3, JULY 26, 2026	
7:00 – 8:00	Breakfast
8:00 – 19:00	Excursion
19:00 – 20:00	Dinner
20:00 – 22:00	Free Time

TIME	ACTIVITY
DAY 4, JULY 27, 2026	
7:00 – 8:00	Breakfast
8:00 – 13:00	Contest Day 2
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 19:00	PAIO Talent Connect
19:00 – 20:00	Dinner
20:00 – 22:00	Free Time
DAY 5, JULY 28, 2026	
7:00 – 8:00	Breakfast
8:00 – 09:00	Transport
09:00 – 10:00	Intro to Hackathon
10:00 – 13:00	Forming Groups & Working
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:00	Working
15:00 – 17:00	Presentations
17:00 – 18:00	Awarding Ceremony
18:00 – 19:00	Departure/Transport
19:00 – 20:00	Dinner
20:00 – 22:00	Free Time

TIME	ACTIVITY
DAY 6, JULY 29, 2026	
7:00 – 8:00	Breakfast
8:00 – 13:00	Free Time
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:00	Free Time
15:00 – 19:00	Closing Ceremony
19:00 – 20:00	Dinner
20:00 – 22:00	Free Time
*All meals will be provided on-campus for days of arrival (23rd July) and Departure (30th July)	

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SUPPORTED BY

Jane Street, Hudson River Trading and the Global Talent Fund, with Rwanda's Ministry of ICT and Innovation and the Ministry of Education.



GLOBAL TALENT
FUND



Participating Countries

In-person (10): Algeria | Botswana | Cameroon | Ethiopia | Kenya | Lesotho | Mali | Rwanda | Tanzania | Uganda

African Online (7): Egypt | Ghana | Guinea-Bissau | Libya | Morocco | Nigeria | Tunisia

Guest teams (3): Hungary | Pakistan | Turkmenistan

Organization and Partners

PAIO 2026 succeeded because of the hard work and commitment of everyone involved. The Rwanda Olympiad Foundation and the African Olympiad Academy organized the event across five areas of responsibility, supported by three international committees, a team of country guides and our government partners.

Communication amongst teams where maining through emails for record keeping, Whatsapps for fast updates and Discord with leaders.

Area	Leads/Members	Responsibilities
PAIO International Committee	Hirwa Arnold (Chair), Obed Nsanzimfura, Wendy Essuman (Incoming), Abinew Ali Ayele (Incoming), Clotilda Nyongesa (Incoming), Jennie Oluchi (Outgoing), Sihine Negede (Outgoing), Maya Chouikrat (Outgoing)	Oversees PAIO across editions
International Scientific Committee (ISC)	Mina Gayed (Incoming), Bartosz Kostka, Qingyu Shi, Prof. Pedro Paredes, Bernard Ibrahimcha, Tamio-Vesa Nakajima, Anton Tsytko (Outgoing)	Wrote, reviewed and judged the eight contest tasks
International Technical Committee (ITC)	Jean Paul Elisa Niyokwizerwa, Niyokwizera Jean D'Amour, Etienne Kagaba, Joel Lee, Norbert Ndayisenga, Raouf Ould Ali	Ran the contest system and technical delivery
<i>Local organizing team: areas of responsibility</i>		
Leadership and partnerships	Obed Nsanzimfura, Wendy Essuman, Arun Shanmuganathan	Overall direction and final decisions, liaison with the PAIO International Committee, sponsors and government partners
Contest and academics	Jean Paul Elisa Niyokwizerwa, Niyokwizera Jean D'Amour, Etienne Kagaba, Joel Lee, Norbert Ndayisenga, Hirwa Arnold	Problem selection with the ISC, contest system, servers and grading, chairing the General Assembly, clarifications and appeals
Delegations	Hirwa Arnold, Marie Josee Uwayezu, Nobert Ndayisenga	Main contact for team leaders, registration, visas, travel, funding readiness and each country's preparedness
Logistics and participant care	Norbert Ndayisenga, Vanessa Sambwe, Jean d'Amour, Claudine Umutoniwase (Accommodation & Transport), Josue Nduwayo (Operations & Design)	Accommodation, venues, catering, transport, ceremonies, excursions,
Finance and communications	Vanessa Sambwe, Kelly Uwase	Budget, payments and financial reporting, website, social media, photography and press

Area	Leads/Members	Responsibilities
Guides and volunteers	Birananejeje Niyikiza Lois, Micheline Simbi Nishimwe, Niyonkuru Esther, Hirwa Belise Umurerwa, Nshuti Tim, Alvina Rwaichi Minja, Fabrice Niyongira, Tuyisenge Fillette, Mugizi Bruce, Nina Ornella Umukundwa, Alvin Lorrays Cyubahiro, Wongel Dawit Daniel, Akebert Tesfahunegn Arefaine(Head Guide), Habihirwe Olivier, Rubayiza Vincent, Gatete Mugisha Aline, Finesse Asete Laila, Allan Sugira, Rukundo Nelly, Mizero Parfait, Habimana Vedaste, Charity Wanja Mwaura	Main point of contact for transport, meals, schedule and translation support, keeping participants on time for every session, safety and medical support
AOA Talent Connect	Lofred Madzou, Marie Josee Uwayezu	Organizing sessions where students learn about university pathways, scholarships and internships; connecting top students with opportunities after the olympiad
Frontiers GenAI Hackathon	Shawn Filer, Onyi Ozoma, Arafat Mohammed, Thierry Uwase, Jadal Williams, Gaidi Faraj	Event delivery, Securing technology partners and prizes, running the 12-hour build day, organizing mentors and the judging panel



Guides and Volunteers at the Opening Ceremony



Botswana team arrival at the airport

Arrivals and departures

The hosting committee and problem committee arrived a day earlier while the delegations arrived in Kigali on 23 July, and all participants departed on 30 July. In-person delegates needed valid passports; the organizers arranged accommodation and local transport for every registered delegation.

Airport transfers ran smoothly. The guides and the transport team coordinated arrivals, transfers and every movement between venues.

Venues

African Olympiad Academy Campus(Contest & Boarding)

Each contestant worked at an individual workstation. The campus offered high-speed internet, on-site catering, medical support and first aid, and transport to and from accommodation. Students boarded together on campus.



AOA Campus

AIMS Rwanda

Accommodation for team leaders, committee members and guides



AIMS Rwanda

ALX Rwanda also provided the venue for the Generative AI Hackathon on 28 July.

The Opening Ceremony on 24 July and the Closing and Award Ceremony on 29 July brought every delegation together at the Kigali Convention Centre, bookending the week with moments of shared recognition and celebration. The Opening Ceremony welcomed delegations and honoured the people and organisations behind the competition, with remarks from Hirwa Arnold, Chair of the IC Committee, and addresses by Obed Nsanzimfura, Head of Program at the Rwanda Olympiad Foundation, and Gaidi Faraj, Co-founder of the African Olympiad Academy(AOA), speaking on behalf of both hosts. The keynote was delivered by Dr. Nelson Mbarushimana, Director General of the Rwanda Education Board.

The Closing Ceremony celebrated the contestants, recognised outstanding performances and marked the handover to Kenya, the next host. Gaspard Twagirayezu, CEO of the Rwanda Space Agency, attended as Guest of Honour, and Wendy Essuman, Director of Programs at AOA, gave the closing remarks.

Time	Program Item
14:30 – 14:45	Delegate Arrival & Seating
14:45 – 14:50	National Anthem of the Host Country
14:50 – 15:00	Welcome and Opening Remarks
15:00 – 15:30	Remarks from Dignitaries
15:30 – 15:55	Parade of Nations
15:55 – 16:00	Pledge
16:00 – 16:40	Keynote Address by the Guest of Honor
16:40 – 17:00	Group Photo

Opening Ceremony Agenda

Opening Ceremony Gallery



Closing Ceremony Agenda

Time	Programme
14:30 – 14:40	Delegate Arrival & Seating
14:40 – 14:45	Master of Ceremonies' Welcome & Recognition of Distinguished Guests
14:45 – 14:55	PAIO 2026 Highlights (Video/Photo Montage)
14:55 – 15:10	Speech by the Guest of Honor
15:10 – 15:20	Recognition of Contributors (International Scientific Committee, Sponsors & Partners)
15:20 – 16:10	Award Ceremony
16:10 – 16:20	Official Group Photograph
16:20 – 16:30	Farewell Refreshments & Networking

Closing Ceremony Gallery



Problem Selection and review

The International Scientific Committee (ISC) and the General Assembly (GA) were responsible for the academic quality and integrity of PAIO 2026. The ISC developed, reviewed, selected, translated, tested and judged the eight original problems.

The call for problems ran from 15 April to 15 June. Experienced competitive programmers, researchers and problem setters submitted original problems based on IOI syllabus, each with a full statement and a solution tutorial. The ISC judged submissions on technical quality, originality, difficulty and fit with the syllabus, and credited the authors of the selected problems.

The eight tasks were **Vials, Detour, Lanterns and Walks** (Day 1) and **Imigongo, Elevator, Alchemy and Islands** (Day 2). The English statements are on the [PAIO 2026 tasks page](#). Translations are available on [QOJ](#).

Contest set-up and format

In-person contestants competed from individual workstations on the AOA campus, while online delegations took part remotely under the same contest conditions. All contestants did an online practice session on 10 July. In-person contestants also did a practice contest on the morning of 24 July to check their devices and the contest environment.

The contest system

PAIO 2026 used CMS (Contest Management System), configured exactly as at the IOI for both online and in-person contestants. Contestants submitted solutions and asked the ISC questions privately through the platform, and the ISC answered each one and adjusted the system where needed.

 The two contests ran on separate infrastructure for security and to protect AOA's internet bandwidth:

- **In person (54 contestants):** two HPE ProLiant DL380 Gen11 servers running Ubuntu 24 LTS on site. One ran the contest; the second was a read-only mirrored backup that also showed the public leaderboard.
- **Online (53 contestants):** a separate cloud server (16 vCPU, 32 GB RAM) that also hosted the online practice contest for all contestants.

Each contestant computer ran Ubuntu 24 LTS and was locked to the contest network. The network used five Wi-Fi routers and a 24-port gigabit switch, plus 40 extension cables. A larger UPS of about 3,000 VA was bought for the servers after the original one proved too weak.

There were no outages or overloads during either contest day, and no team leader or contestant raised a critical technical issue. The International Technical Committee (ITC) prepared both set-ups and kept them in sync, even though some equipment arrived late.

Many submissions did not compile, which shows that some teams were not familiar with CMS. The ITC added an extra practice session at 7pm on practice day, and better preparation before the contest will be a priority for future editions.

See Appendix B for the full technical set-up checklist.

107 contestants

54 on-site

2 x 5h contest days

800 maximum score, 100 per task

8 tasks 4 per day, IOI syllabus

Invigilation and contest integrity

The ITC & Guides coordinated invigilation for both the in-person and the online contest, and six invigilators supported the online delegations.

The on-site computers had no internet access to prevent cheating. Online contestants needed the internet, so they had to record their screen and their room throughout each contest. Rules were set for both groups:

- Contestants who did not submit their videos were ranked as unofficial if their code was found to be their own. Otherwise they faced cheating penalties.
- Any contestant caught cheating, in person or online, received zero for the whole contest and was ranked last.

On Day 1, a gap in the network restrictions let five in-person contestants reach external websites. The ITC found it within the first two hours and inspected the computers and browsing histories. Two contestants were caught cheating and removed from the leaderboard. On Day 2, one contestant got around the invigilation protocol and was caught cheating in the washroom. In all, three contestants were disqualified.

Reviewing code and videos for both groups was a large workload for the technical team. Because integrity was much easier to protect in person, team leaders at the General Assembly recommended that PAIO become in-person only, with the host and the International Committee considering special cases from individual countries.

Guides and volunteers escorted delegations to the contest rooms, helped with room logistics and looked after contestants' belongings. Some contestants needed help with the contest technology, so guide training for PAIO 2027 should cover the contest system and basic troubleshooting.

The GA and its decisions

GA met on 24 July, before the first contest day, to review the arrangements and answer questions. Through the week, the GA made several decisions to keep the contest fair:

- **Clarifications:** the GA answered contestants' questions during both days. One announcement was made to all contestants on Day 1, and no errors were found in the Day 2 statements.
- **Adding C:** only C++ and Python were requested before the contest. When some teams asked for C after Day 1, the ISC added C graders for all four Day 2 problems overnight.
- **Submission limit:** the online contest allowed one submission per minute, but the in-person contest did not. The GA removed the limit for Day 2 so both groups competed under the same rules.
- **Appeals:** two contestants appealed after their debugging output caused "Protocol Violation" verdicts. The rules had not made this clear, so the GA accepted the appeals and regraded those submissions. A third appeal, about a time limit, was rejected after the GA regraded it on the official servers. There were no appeals on Day 2.
- **Checker issue:** a fault in the Islands checker affected one online contestant on Day 2. The ISC found it and fixed it within 20 minutes.

Scoring and results

Submissions were graded automatically by CMS, and results were published on the [PAIO statistics platform](#). Each day, 72 contestants scored above zero. Seven contestants got perfect scores on Day 1, and three of them, Zakaria Abisourour 🇲🇷, Ahmed Osman 🇸🇩 and guest contestant Balázs Szilágyi 🇮🇪, finished with a perfect 800/800. Including more easy and medium tasks gave a smoother spread of scores than at PAIO 2025.

Medal cut-offs

Medals were based on in-person contestants in the usual 1:2:3 ratio (gold : silver : bronze). This would have given bronze medals to some very low scores, which would lower the standard of the competition. After a vote, the General Assembly set the bronze cut-off using all African contestants, which put it at 84 points. Gold and silver kept the 1:2:3 ratio of in-person contestants.



Students sitting Day 1

Results and Awards

Thirteen African countries won at least one medal or honourable mention. Egypt won the most gold medals (four), followed by Morocco and Algeria with three each. Algeria was the strongest team in Kigali, with three gold and three silver medals, and the host country won its first PAIO gold.

107 CONTESTANTS	77 OFFICIAL	13 UNOFFICIAL	17 GUEST
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Medals and honourable mentions by country

Gold Silver Bronze HM

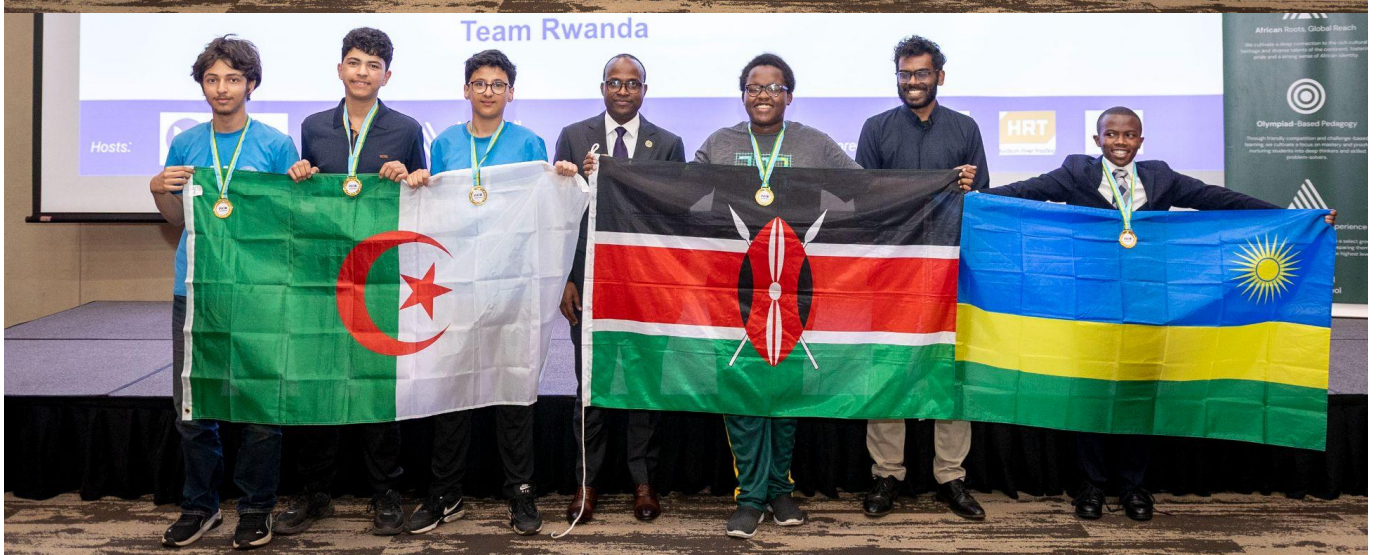
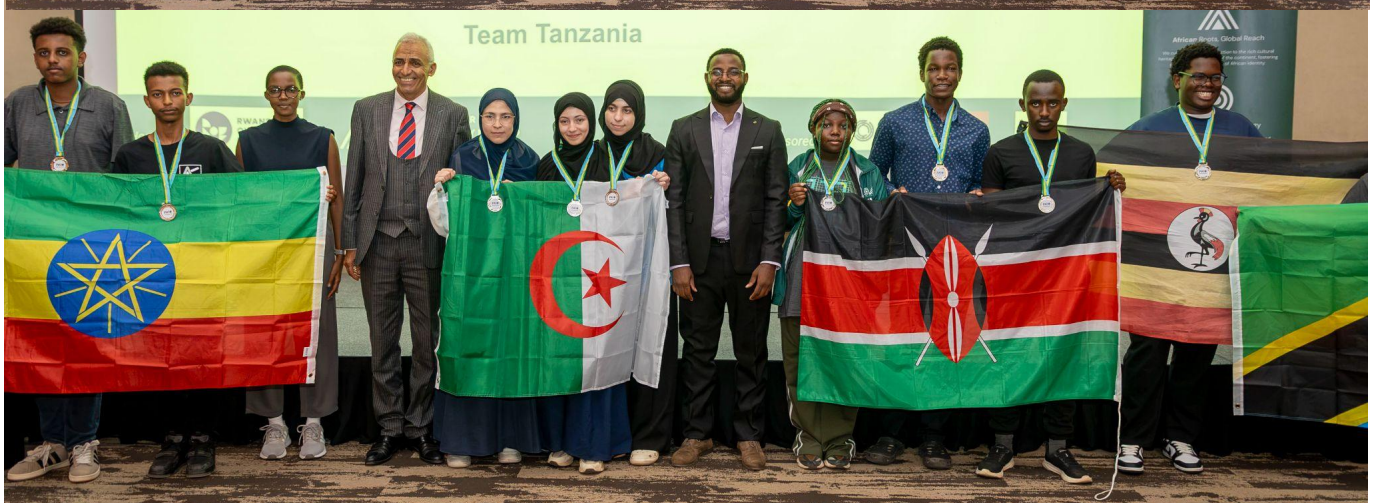
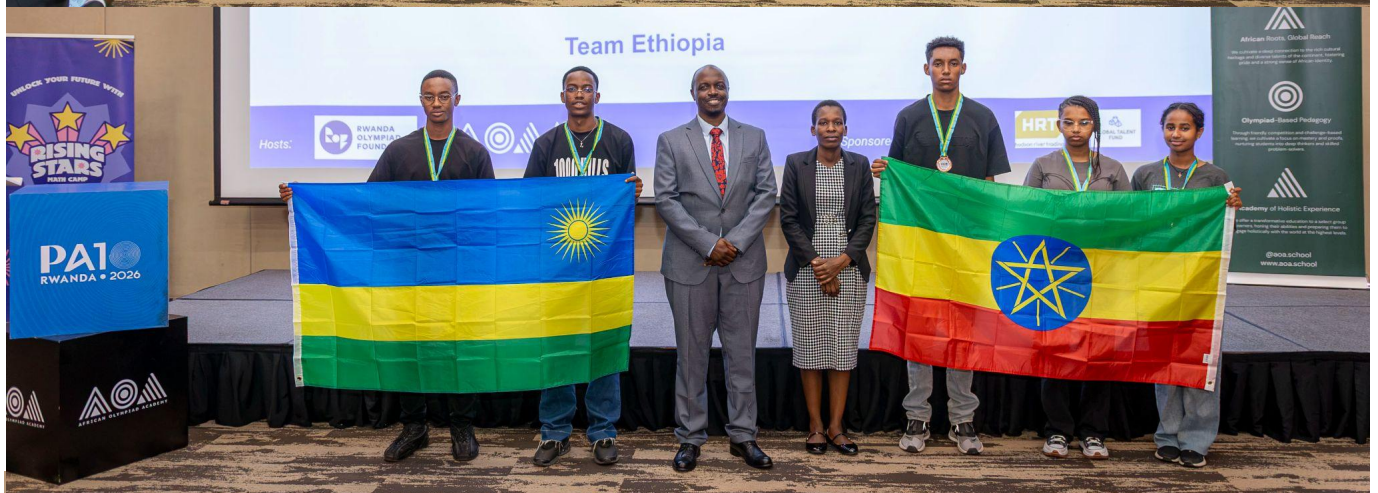
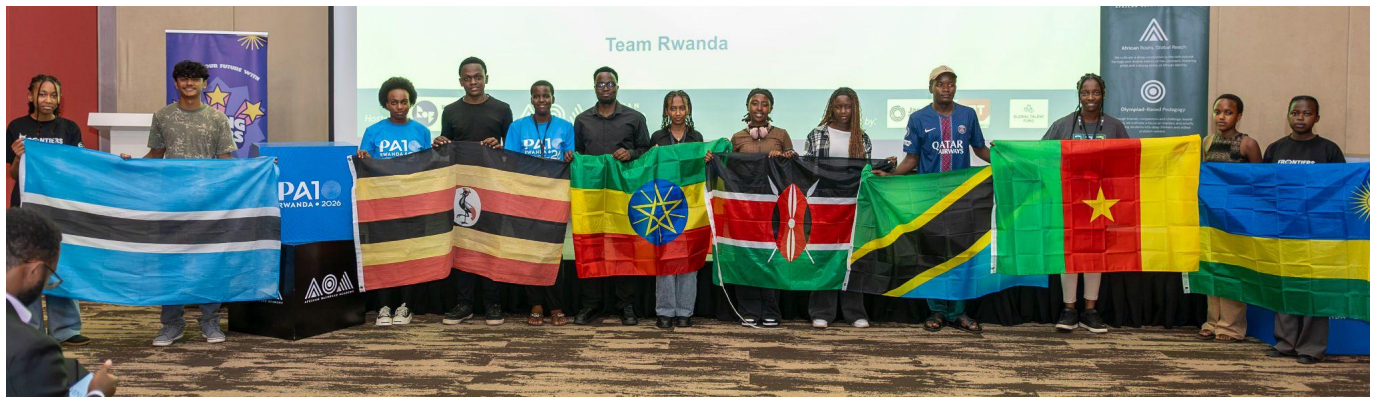
Egypt	     	4 G · 2 S
Algeria	     	3 G · 3 S
Morocco	    	3 G · 2 S
Tunisia	     	1 G · 5 S
Kenya	     	1 G · 3 S · 2 HM
Rwanda	    	1 G · 2 B · 2 HM (host)
Libya		1 G
Ethiopia	     	2 S · 3 B · 1 HM
Uganda	   	1 S · 3 HM
Tanzania	 	1 S · 1 HM
Botswana	 	2 HM
Cameroon		1 HM
Nigeria		1 HM

Official African contestants, on-site and online. Each block is one medal. Guests from Hungary, Pakistan and Turkmenistan were ranked separately.

Highlights

- Prefect Scores: Zakaria Abisourour 🇷🇪, Ahmed Osman 🇸🇩 and guest contestant Balázs Szilágyi 🇮🇪, scored 800 out of 800, solving all eight tasks in full.
- Top of in-person contestants: Kian Abolghasemi 🇮🇪 scored 564.
- Gold Medalists: Kian Abolghasemi 🇮🇪, Haithem Djefel 🇲🇪, Baraka Mulwa 🇰🇪, Fares Khelif 🇲🇪, Happy David 🇧🇼
- Silver Medalists: Jed Oloo Odundo 🇰🇪, Jayden Mukisa 🇪🇪, Asmaa Belmostefa 🇲🇪, Moti Niguse 🇪🇪, Ikram Hamid 🇲🇪, Kesha Wanjare 🇰🇪, Douglas Munga Nderitu 🇰🇪, Nobel Desalegn 🇪🇪, Ines Messadia 🇲🇪, Lightness Ngiliule 🇲🇪
- Bronze Medalists: Hasset Samson 🇪🇪, Brian Muhizi 🇲🇪, Heran Alemayehu 🇲🇪, Mikiyas Shegaw 🇲🇪, Boris Ikaze 🇲🇪

Medalists: Top image HM, Bronze, Silver and last image Gold

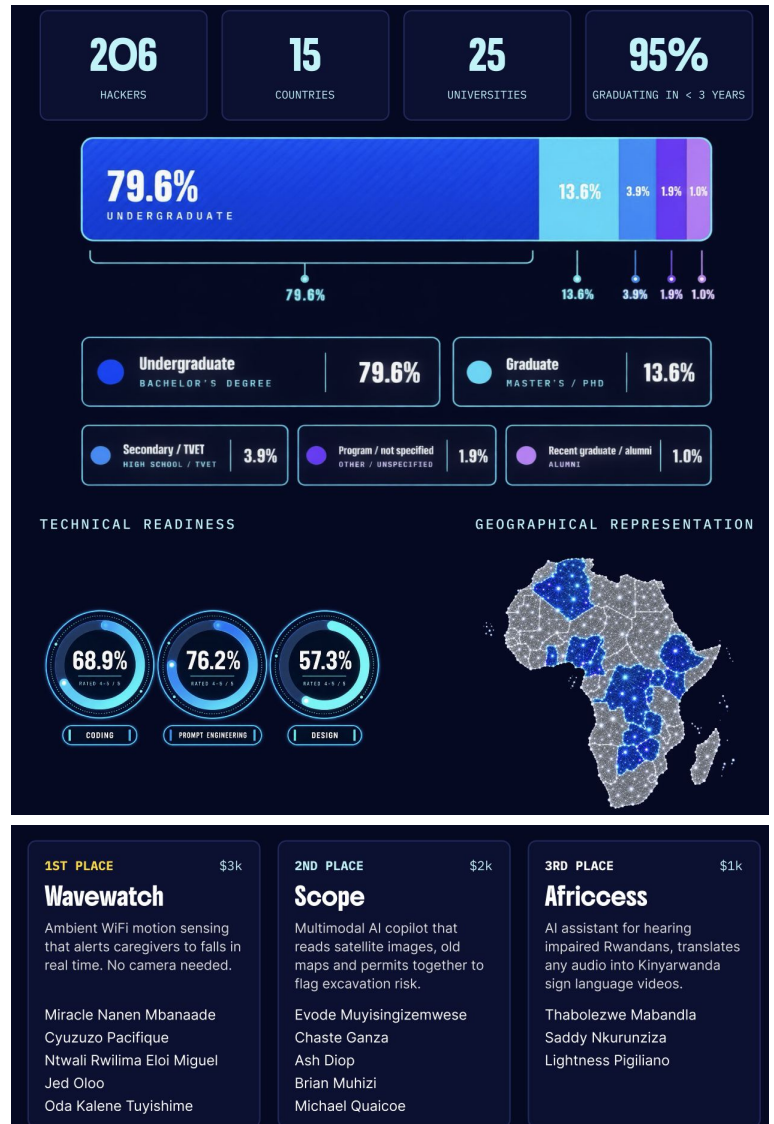


Generative AI Hackathon

On 28 July, about 200 young builders from 14 African countries spent 12 hours at ALX Rwanda prototyping with Google's generative AI models. They were selected from nearly 500 applicants, and the room deliberately mixed levels: around 60 PAIO contestants worked alongside students from Carnegie Mellon University Africa, the African Leadership University and the University of Rwanda.

PAIO contestants were part of all three winning teams: Kenyan silver medallist **Jed Oloo** with Ctrl + Alt + Generate (1st place), Rwandan bronze medallist **Brian Muhizi** with Loss Function Junction (2nd place) and Tanzanian silver medallist **Lightness Ngiliule** with Temperature 2.0 (3rd place).

Find the impact of the hackathon [here](#)



Event in numbers



Top three teams

Visit to Zipline

PAIO participants and leaders took part in a full-day excursion to Zipline's Muhanga facility, the birthplace of the world's first commercial drone delivery network.

Contestants explored the Flight Operations Center, launch site, Control Tower, and Medical Warehouse, learning how autonomous drones deliver blood, vaccines, and essential medicines to health facilities across Rwanda.

The visit gave the young contestants a firsthand look at how technology and innovation can be used to solve some of the continent's most pressing challenges. They also had the opportunity to ask questions and engage with the team to better understand the technology and its impact.

Visit to the Kigali Genocide Memorial

On the morning of 29 July, PAIO delegation, contestant and leaders visited the Kigali Genocide Memorial in Gisozi, a place of remembrance and learning dedicated to the victims of the Genocide against the Tutsi.

Guided by memorial staff, participants learned about the history of the genocide before, during, and after the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

Through photographs and exhibits, they gained a deeper understanding of its devastating human impact. The visit concluded with a minute of remembrance to honor those whose lives were lost.



AOA Talent Connect

Beyond the competition, PAIO extended learning opportunities to high school students through AOA Talent Connect, bringing together programs such as Kepler University, Irembo, the AOA Rising Star Program, and online training opportunities as well as mentors from the AI Ecosystem..

Students learned about scholarship pathways, career opportunities, mentorship programs, and other global opportunities aligned with their interests and future goals.



Students and delegates paying their respects



Planning and coordination			
Area	What worked	What we would change	Recommendation
Roles and ownership	The team stepped in quickly whenever gaps appeared	Roles overlapped; several people held more than one, and some decisions came late in the final weeks	One named owner per function, with a written role, decision rights, a budget line and hard deadlines, also buffer time for any emergency cases
Communication	General Assembly updates were timely and clear, which team leaders called a model	Schedule changes didn't reach every channel, online participants had to wait for links and updates	One communications owner, every change sent to WhatsApp (team leaders) and Discord (students) at the same time
Planning and procurement	The overall programme was well planned and delivered in full	Some hand-offs between steps were missed, and equipment was procured late	Each owner writes a step-by-step workflow for others to test, buy equipment weeks ahead, a project manager with the master sheet monitoring everything
Participant experience			
Flights and arrivals	Airport pick-ups ran smoothly	Funded flights were booked late; observers were added to channels late	Book flights as soon as teams are confirmed, onboard every delegate before arrival
Accommodation and boarding	Students boarding together on campus built friendships across countries	Guides were not housed and had to come from their homes, causing a few delays	Confirm rooming for every group in writing, guides included
Transport	Daily shuttles and airport transfers ran reliably	No transport planned for team leaders on contest days, the transport team also handled room assignments	A day-by-day transport plan for every group, keep room assignment separate and assign to the accommodation team. Clear distribution of roles
Ceremonies	The parade of nations and the flag handover were highlights	No French interpretation, online viewers rated the ceremonies lower because it was not streamed	Budget for interpretation, stream ceremonies
Excursions	The memorial visit gave participants meaningful context on Rwanda	It was listed as "free time" on the schedule, which caused confusion	Name every activity clearly and brief delegations before sensitive visits
Guides and volunteers	Guides were committed and much appreciated	No written role or contest-technology training, too few French speakers, some arrived late or not at all	Screen guides to assess their reliability, check their English and French, train them on contest technology, and keep experienced guides year to year, assign volunteers specific roles
Online participants	They could compete on the same tasks as everyone else	They were left out of day-to-day planning and communication	In person by default; any online component gets its own lead
Information for participants	The contestant guidebook was a good start, giving students the key information in one place	Students didn't always know where to go for the latest plans or changes	An information desk at every major point (boarding, ceremonies, excursions) where students can ask about upcoming plans. Expand the guidebook with the daily schedule, contacts and contest-day procedures

Contest			
Exam room and invigilation	Individual workstations, the practice contest let students test their devices	The Chief Invigilator also led set-up	Keep these two roles separate
Team readiness	Every team received a clear benchmark	Some first-time contestants struggled to compile and submit	A readiness test before the competition, with training for teams that need it
Medal allocation	Results were published quickly	Cut-offs were decided late	Agree and publish the medal policy before the contest

Looking Ahead: a reflection from the African Olympiad Academy

WENDY ESSUMAN, Director of Programs, African Olympiad Academy, and member of the PAIO International Committee

At AOA, our goal is to find and develop Africa's most talented young mathematicians and computer scientists. The talent is there, but many students lack the resources, teachers and opportunities to reach their potential. With AI reshaping every economy, informatics skills now matter more than ever. That is why PAIO must hold itself to the standard of the International Olympiad in Informatics.

PAIO 2026 showed us where to focus. Some teams did not know what to expect in the contest room, a sign of limited practice rather than a lack of talent. We already help countries build mathematics programmes through Rising Stars and our Program Incubator. Informatics now needs the same support.

From 2027 we will:

- Put quality before quantity. PAIO will be held in person, without an online category, so we can build strong teams first and grow participation later.
- Support every future host with what we learned organizing PAIO.
- Set a readiness test that every contestant takes before the competition. Teams that need help will get free online training through Rising Stars, in English and French, and so will their team leaders.

PAIO 2026 proved the talent is there. Our job now is to make sure the opportunity is too.

Welcome to the Pan-African Informatics Olympiad 2026.
To help ensure a safe, respectful, and enjoyable experience for everyone, please observe the following guidelines throughout the event.

Respect Everyone

Treat fellow contestants, team leaders, volunteers, staff, and guests with courtesy and professionalism. Harassment, discrimination, or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.

Wear Your Badge

Please wear your event badge at all times while on campus. It is required for access to event spaces and meals.

Photography

Photography is welcome in public event spaces. Please respect the privacy of others and ask for permission before taking close-up photos of individuals. Follow any photography restrictions communicated during contests or ceremonies.

Contest Integrity

During competition sessions, follow all instructions provided by officials. Unauthorized communication, devices, or materials are prohibited unless explicitly permitted.

Campus Access

Remain within designated event areas unless accompanied by an authorized staff member. Residential areas and restricted facilities are off-limits unless access has been arranged.

Keep the Campus Clean

Help us maintain a welcoming environment by disposing of waste responsibly and treating facilities and equipment with care.

Ask for Help

If you are unsure about anything, speak with a Guide or Organizer.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Need Assistance?

If you experience an emergency or require support during the event, contact the appropriate team below.

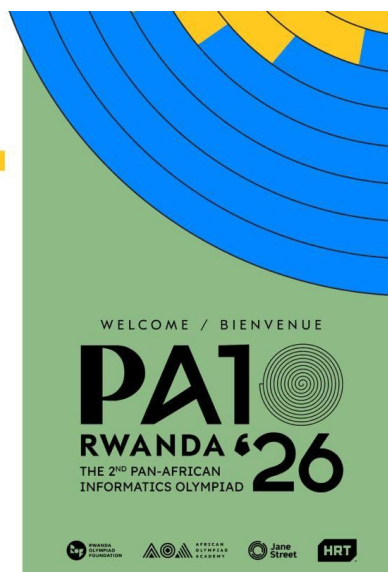
SERVICE	CONTACT
Event Help Desk	<insert number>
AOA Residence	Leila +974 7036 8335
Leaders Residence	Aline +250784342649
Ambulance	912
Police	112
Fire Brigade	111

OTHER INFORMATION

Venue Address
KK 92 ST,
African Olympiad Academy



PAIO Event Website
2026.panafricanio.com/



PAIO 2026
Student guide
pamphlet

A PAIO Host Report

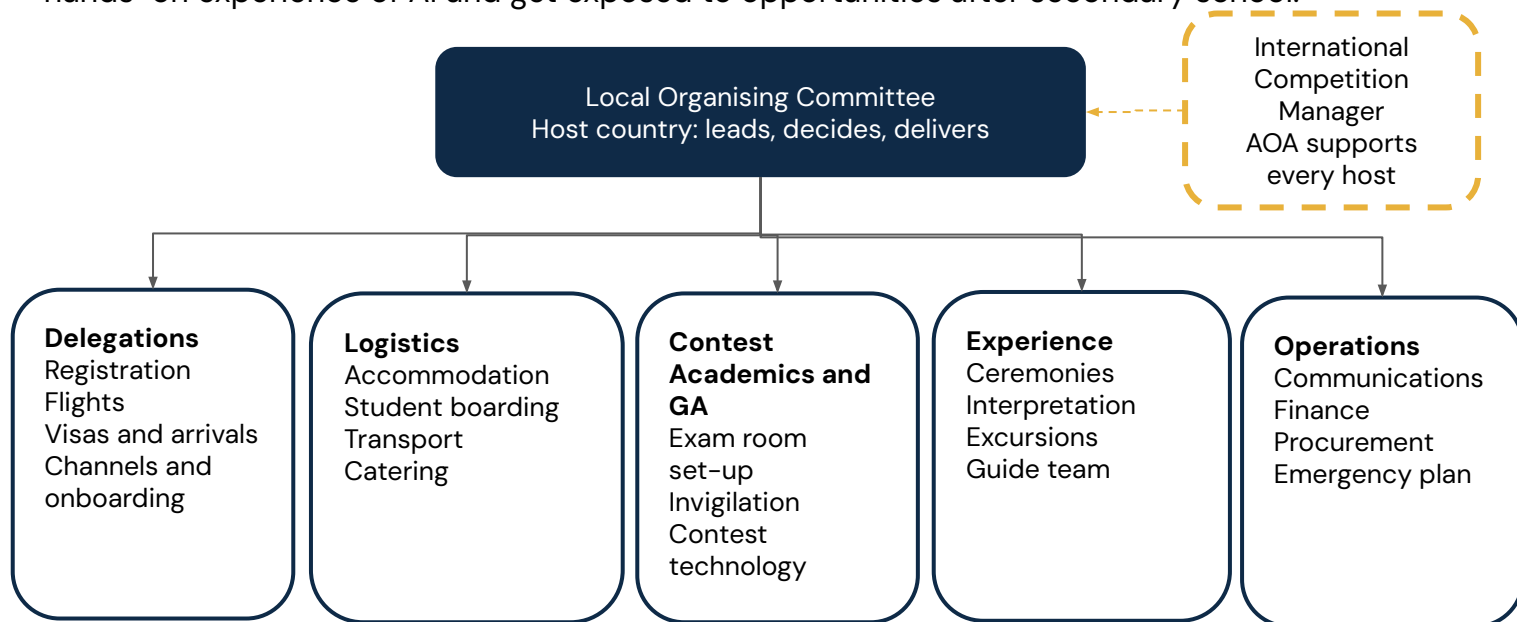
After the event we held an open debrief with our team and the General Assembly. PAIO must move from a successful event to a repeatable continental model, so each host starts where the last one finished while keeping full ownership of its edition.

The most important output of our debrief is this PAIO report, detailing events and reflections, so no one has to rebuild processes from scratch.

Recommended Model

Each host runs its edition through a Local Organising Committee (LOC) with workstreams, each with one named owner. A permanent International Competition Manager at AOA supports every host from appointment to handover.

AOA will continue partnering with Frontiers to run the Generative AI Hackathon and the AOA Talent Connect, working alongside each host so that every contestant leaves with hands-on experience of AI and get exposed to opportunities after secondary school.



Direction agreed by the General Assembly

2026
Rwanda



2027
Kenya



2028
Ethiopia



2029
Call for hosts open

Proposed dates PAIO 2027

Date (2027)	Programme
28 June	Arrival
29 June	Opening Ceremony
30 June	Contest Day 1
1 July	Contest Day 2
2 July	Excursion
3 July	Closing Ceremony
4 July	Departure

Quick Links

- [PAIO Regulations](#)
- [Website](#)
- [Results Site](#)
- [Technical set-up checklist](#)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & CONCLUSION

PAIO 2026 was made possible by a community of institutions, partners, educators, organizers, volunteers and students who gave their time, expertise and commitment to the first in-person edition. Rwanda's task now is to stay part of the continental community, share what it learned, and help every future host start where the last one finished.

Principal Sponsors

Jane Street, Hudson River Trading and the Global Talent Fund, who made continental participation in Kigali possible.

Government Partners

The Ministry of ICT and Innovation, the Ministry of Education and the Rwanda Basic Education Board.

Committees and GA

The PAIO International, Scientific and Technical Committees, problem setters and GA, who developed, tested and judged the eight tasks.

Team Leaders

The team leaders and national committees of every participating country, for preparing and supporting their students.

Host Institutions

The Rwanda Olympiad Foundation and the African Olympiad Academy, for their leadership, resources and commitment to operational excellence.

Hackathon Partners

Google DeepMind, The Changemakers Convening, BIBA, C4IR Rwanda, GIZ, Breakthrough Ventures, PrometheusX and MIT Sports Lab, with students from CMU-Africa, ALU and the University of Rwanda.

Guides, Volunteers and Staff

Whose work, often behind the scenes, carried every part of the week from arrivals to departures.

Venue Partners

Kigali Convention Centre, AOA Campus, AIMS Rwanda and ALX Rwanda for hosting us.

APPENDIX A

Financial Breakdown

Category	USD	Share
Flight support: delegations 🇧🇪 🇩🇪 🇨🇮 🇳🇦 🇰🇪 🇨🇩 🇪🇬 🇪🇸	23,388	23%
Technical set-up	21,390	21%
Flight support: organisers and committee	19,817	20%
Printing, media, medals and certificates	7,324	7%
Hackathon	7,001	7%
Personnel (including guides and volunteers)	6,095	6%
Opening and closing ceremonies	5,548	6%
Catering	3,352	3%
Accommodation	2,799	3%
Local transport	2,615	3%
Medical and miscellaneous	208	<1%
Total	99,537	100%

APPENDIX B: Technical setup guide for future hosts: [here](#)

Based on the PAIO 2026 International Technical Committee (ITC) report



See you in Nairobi, 2027!

PAIO 2027 · Nairobi, Kenya · 28 June – 4 July 2027

To every country, team leader, volunteer, partner and sponsor who made PAIO 2026 possible: we would love to see you again in Kenya.

Want to be involved? Write to us at contact@panafricanio.com

African Olympiad Academy

<https://africanolympiadfoundation.org/>
info@aoa.school

Rwanda Olympiad Foundation

<https://rwandaolympiadfoundation.org/>
info@rwandaolympiadfoundation.org