ZAMBIA RESEARCH AND EDUCATION NETWORK (ZAMREN)

CALL FOR PAPERS
ZAMREN WEEK 2027

FROM GROWTH TO IMPACT

Call opens: 1st December 2026 | Submission deadline: 1st February 2027

Conference dates: 11–14 May 2027 | Venue: AVANI Victoria Falls Resort, Livingstone

1. Introduction

The Zambia Research and Education Network (ZAMREN) invites academics, researchers, ICT professionals, policymakers, undergraduate and postgraduate students, innovators, industry practitioners and development partners to submit original research papers, case studies, technical papers and evidence-based innovations for presentation at ZAMREN Week 2027.

Under the theme "From Growth to Impact", the conference will examine how investments in digital infrastructure, research and education networks, emerging technologies, institutional capacity and collaborative partnerships can translate into measurable and sustainable outcomes. It will bring together stakeholders from universities, colleges, research institutions, government, the private sector and the wider research and education community to exchange knowledge, share experience and develop practical solutions.

ZAMREN particularly encourages submissions that present empirical evidence, measurable results, implementation lessons, scalable solutions and recommendations relevant to Zambia, Africa and the global research and education community.

2. CONFERENCE THEME: FROM GROWTH TO IMPACT

The theme reflects the importance of converting growth in digital capacity, research capability and institutional development into tangible benefits for institutions and society. Contributors should demonstrate not only what has been developed, adopted or implemented, but also what has changed as a result. Papers should, where applicable, identify measurable outcomes, challenges, lessons learnt, sustainability considerations and opportunities for scaling.

Central question: How can growth in digital infrastructure, research, technology and institutional capacity be translated into measurable, sustainable and inclusive impact?

3. Objectives

1. Showcase original research, technological innovations and practical solutions with measurable impact in research and education.
2. Promote the effective use of research and education networks and digital infrastructure.
3. Examine the potential of AI, cloud computing, high-performance computing and other emerging technologies.
4. Strengthen cybersecurity, data protection, digital governance and institutional resilience.
5. Promote open science, research collaboration, knowledge sharing and African scholarship.
6. Encourage collaboration between academia, industry, government and development partners.
7. Provide a platform for students and early-career researchers.
8. Promote digital inclusion, sustainability and equitable access to knowledge.
9. Generate practical recommendations for Zambia's research and education ecosystem.
10. Demonstrate the value of investments in digital transformation.

4. WHO SHOULD SUBMIT?

- Universities, colleges and other higher education institutions.
- Public and private research institutions.
- Academic staff, lecturers, researchers and ICT professionals.
- Undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral students.
- Government ministries, departments and agencies.
- Technology companies, industry practitioners and innovation hubs.
- Libraries, librarians and information management professionals.
- Research and education networks, development organisations and civil society organisations.
- International researchers and institutions collaborating with African partners.

Multidisciplinary teams and collaborations between institutions are particularly encouraged.

5. CONFERENCE TRACKS AND DETAILED GUIDANCE

TRACK 1: Digital Infrastructure, Advanced Networking and Connectivity Impact

Focus: Transforming connectivity and network investments into measurable research, educational and institutional outcomes.

Areas of interest:

- Impact of high-speed connectivity on teaching, learning and research productivity.
- Research and education networks as enablers of national and international collaboration.
- Network design, optimisation, resilience, redundancy and quality of service.
- Bandwidth management, traffic engineering and cost-effective connectivity models.
- Connectivity for rural, underserved and resource-constrained institutions.
- Eduroam, federated access and secure connectivity across institutions.
- Network monitoring, automation and performance measurement.
- Shared digital infrastructure and institutional efficiency.
- Connectivity for virtual laboratories, digital libraries and remote research.

- Return on investment in research and education network infrastructure.

Guidance for contributors: Where possible, demonstrate improvements in connectivity, availability, service quality, cost savings, access, collaboration or educational outcomes. Technical papers should describe the problem, solution and results achieved.

TRACK 2: Artificial Intelligence, Emerging Technologies and Research Acceleration

Focus: Translating AI adoption and emerging technologies into responsible innovation, improved productivity and scientific advancement.

Areas of interest:

- Generative AI in teaching, learning, research and academic administration.
- Machine learning in agriculture, healthcare, mining and environmental research.
- AI-assisted scientific discovery and research productivity.
- Responsible AI, ethics, transparency and accountability.
- AI governance frameworks and institutional policies.
- Academic integrity, assessment and responsible AI use.
- Natural language processing and AI applications for African languages.
- AI readiness, digital skills and institutional capacity building.
- Robotics, the Internet of Things and other emerging technologies.
- Impact of AI on productivity, service delivery and educational outcomes.

Guidance for contributors: Explain the problem, technology applied, methodology and outcomes. Address ethical, privacy, security and governance considerations. Support performance claims with evidence wherever possible.

TRACK 3: Cloud Computing, High-Performance Computing and Shared Research Infrastructure

Focus: Converting shared computing capacity into scientific breakthroughs, research efficiency and sustainable digital services.

Areas of interest:

- High-performance computing for scientific research and complex simulations.
- Cloud computing adoption in universities and research institutions.
- Shared data centres, colocation and national research computing infrastructure.
- Cloud migration and infrastructure modernisation.
- Research computing for climate science, health, agriculture and engineering.
- Storage systems, data-intensive research and large-scale data processing.
- Disaster recovery, business continuity and infrastructure resilience.
- Cost optimisation and sustainable financing of shared computing services.
- Infrastructure management, virtualisation and containerisation.
- Research and institutional value of shared digital infrastructure.

Guidance for contributors: Demonstrate how infrastructure supports research, improves resource use, reduces costs, increases computing capacity or enhances reliability. Include performance measurements, cost comparisons and implementation lessons where applicable.

TRACK 4: Cybersecurity, Data Protection and Digital Trust

Focus: Building secure, resilient and trusted digital research and education environments.

Areas of interest:

- Cybersecurity governance and risk management in higher education.
- Cyber threat intelligence, incident response and digital forensics.
- Data protection and privacy management.
- Cybersecurity and data protection policy implementation.
- Compliance with applicable Zambian data protection and cybersecurity legislation.
- Information security management systems and privacy frameworks.
- Identity management, access control and authentication.
- Protection of research data, intellectual property and institutional information.
- Cybersecurity awareness and capacity building.
- Business continuity, cyber resilience and institutional recovery.
- Security challenges associated with cloud computing and AI.
- Cybersecurity collaboration and threat information sharing.

Guidance for contributors: Identify the security or privacy challenge, describe controls applied and evaluate effectiveness. Discuss risk reduction, incident response, compliance and resilience. Do not disclose confidential information or sensitive operational details without authorisation.

TRACK 5: Open Science, Research Excellence and Knowledge Dissemination

Focus: Turning research outputs into accessible knowledge, stronger collaboration and societal impact.

Areas of interest:

- Open science policies and implementation frameworks.
- Open-access publishing and equitable access to scholarly knowledge.
- Institutional repositories and research visibility.
- Research data management, sharing and reproducibility.
- Research collaboration across institutions and disciplines.
- Responsible research assessment and impact measurement.
- Open educational resources and knowledge-sharing platforms.
- Research integrity, reproducibility and scientific transparency.
- Digital preservation of research outputs.
- Translating research findings into public policy and practical solutions.
- Intellectual property, licensing and responsible data sharing.
- Open science and African research visibility.

Guidance for contributors: Explain how research becomes more accessible, discoverable, reusable or impactful. Provide evidence of visibility, collaboration, knowledge reuse or policy influence, while addressing intellectual property and data protection.

TRACK 6: Digital Learning, Artificial Intelligence and Educational Excellence

Focus: Exploring how digital technologies, artificial intelligence (AI) and innovative pedagogical practices can transform teaching and learning, strengthen assessment, improve student engagement and enhance educational quality and success.

Areas of Interest / Sub-Tracks

- AI-Enabled Learning Management Systems (LMS): Intelligent LMS platforms, AI-powered learning assistants, automated learning support, content recommendation, and the integration of generative AI into Moodle and other digital learning environments.
- AI-Enabled Assessment and Feedback: Automated assessment and marking, AI-assisted formative and summative assessment, intelligent feedback systems, adaptive testing, assessment design and the evaluation of learning outcomes.
- Personalised and Adaptive Learning: AI-driven personalisation, adaptive learning pathways, individualised student support, intelligent tutoring systems and competency-based learning.
- Generative AI in Teaching and Learning: Applications of generative AI in lesson planning, instructional design, content development, student learning support and innovative pedagogical practices.
- Learning Analytics and Student Success: Predictive analytics, early-warning systems, student engagement monitoring, identification of at-risk learners, student retention and evidence-based interventions to improve academic performance.
- Blended, Online and Virtual Learning: Online education, blended learning, virtual classrooms, hybrid teaching models, mobile learning and emerging digital learning environments.
- Academic Integrity, AI Ethics and Responsible AI: AI-generated content, plagiarism detection, responsible use of AI in academic work, bias and fairness in AI systems, data privacy, transparency and ethical assessment practices.
- Digital Assessment Design and the Future of Examinations: Authentic assessment, competency-based assessment, e-portfolios, online examinations, secure digital assessment, and assessment approaches that evaluate critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving in the age of AI.
- Virtual Laboratories, Simulations and Immersive Learning: AI-powered simulations, virtual and remote laboratories, augmented reality, virtual reality and extended reality applications in practical and experiential learning.
- Digital Inclusion, Accessibility and Equity: Inclusive digital learning, assistive technologies, AI-supported accessibility, multilingual learning resources and equitable access for rural learners, students with disabilities and other underserved groups.
- Digital Competencies and AI Literacy: AI literacy for educators and students, digital skills development, professional development for academic staff and the development of competencies for the future of work.
- Digital Learning Resources and Open Educational Practices: Open educational resources, digital content repositories, AI-assisted educational content creation, multilingual resources and the effective use of digital libraries.
- Quality Assurance and the Evaluation of Digital Education: Standards for online and blended learning, evaluation of AI-enabled educational interventions, digital learning quality assurance and the measurement of teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes.
- Digital Infrastructure and Interoperability in Education: Integration of LMS platforms with student information systems, digital libraries and academic administration systems; learning technology standards; identity management; Eduroam; and secure access to digital academic services.

- Digital Transformation and Sustainable Educational Technology: Institutional digital transformation strategies, technology adoption, change management, cost-effectiveness, scalability and the sustainability of investments in educational technologies and AI.

Guidance for contributors: Describe the intervention and how it was evaluated. Evidence may include student performance, retention, engagement, accessibility, completion rates, educator productivity or learner feedback. Distinguish measured outcomes from anticipated benefits.

TRACK 7: Innovation, Entrepreneurship and University–Industry Partnerships

Focus: Translating research and innovation into practical solutions, enterprise opportunities and economic value.

Areas of interest:

- Commercialisation of university research and intellectual property.
- University–industry collaboration and technology transfer.
- Student entrepreneurship and innovation programmes.
- Digital start-ups and technology-enabled enterprises.
- Innovation hubs, incubators and accelerators.
- Industry-sponsored research and collaborative development.
- Digital platforms supporting small and medium-sized enterprises.
- Public–private partnerships in research and technology development.
- Funding models for research commercialisation.
- Economic and societal impact of academic innovation.
- Industry-relevant digital skills.
- Scaling research innovations into practical applications.

Guidance for contributors: Identify the innovation, problem addressed, implementation or commercialisation pathway and value created. Evidence may include adoption, partnerships, prototypes, cost reductions, jobs supported, users reached or community benefits.

TRACK 8: Digital Transformation, Smart Campuses and Institutional Performance

Focus: Converting institutional digitalisation into operational excellence, improved governance and better service delivery.

Areas of interest:

- Integrated university information management systems.
- Digital transformation strategies and maturity assessment.
- Automation of finance, human resources, procurement and student services.
- Smart campuses and the Internet of Things.
- Digital records management and paperless administration.
- Data analytics and evidence-based institutional decision-making.
- Enterprise architecture and interoperability.
- Digital identity and integrated service delivery.
- Change management and digital skills development.
- Institutional productivity and operational efficiency.

- Digital governance, accountability and institutional performance.
- Lessons from successful and unsuccessful digital transformation.

Guidance for contributors: Describe the institutional challenge, digital solution and impact on processes, service quality, cost, turnaround time or accountability. Include comparisons, performance indicators, lessons and sustainability considerations.

TRACK 9: Digital Inclusion, Green ICT and Sustainable Development
Focus: Ensuring that digital growth is inclusive, environmentally responsible and sustainable.

Areas of interest:

- Bridging the digital divide in rural and underserved communities.
- Affordable connectivity models for education and research institutions.
- Gender inclusion in ICT and STEM.
- Accessible digital services for people with disabilities.
- Energy-efficient network infrastructure and data centres.
- Renewable energy for digital infrastructure.
- Electronic waste management and sustainable ICT procurement.
- Digital technologies for climate monitoring and adaptation.
- Geospatial technologies and environmental research.
- Sustainable digital infrastructure financing and operations.
- Environmental footprint of digital services.
- Social and environmental impact of digital inclusion programmes.

Guidance for contributors: Demonstrate improvements in inclusion, affordability, accessibility or environmental performance. Evidence may include institutions or communities reached, energy savings, emissions reductions, accessibility improvements or benefits to underserved populations.

TRACK 10: Digital Governance, Investment and Measurable Impact on National Development
Focus: Converting ICT investment, strategic partnerships and institutional growth into measurable value for education, research and national development.

Areas of interest:

- Return on investment in ICT and digital infrastructure.
- Strategic ICT governance and alignment with institutional objectives.
- Sustainable financing for research and education networks.
- Performance indicators for digital transformation.
- Public–private partnerships and digital investment.
- Institutional accountability and evidence-based management.
- Digital transformation policy and regulatory frameworks.
- Research and education networks' contribution to national development.
- Digital technologies in agriculture, mining, healthcare and public services.
- Regional collaboration and research networks' contribution to Africa's development.
- Socioeconomic impact of digital services.
- Lessons for scaling successful digital initiatives nationally and regionally.

Guidance for contributors: Establish the connection between investment, intervention or policy and results achieved. Explain how impact was measured, identify indicators and discuss costs, benefits, sustainability and scalability. Practical policy recommendations are encouraged.

6. TYPES OF PAPERS ACCEPTED

- **Original research papers:** Original empirical, quantitative, qualitative or mixed-methods research with a clear methodology and contribution to knowledge.
- **Technical and engineering papers:** Design, development, deployment, testing or evaluation of networks, systems, platforms and digital infrastructure.
- **Institutional case studies:** Evidence-based accounts of projects or interventions implemented by institutions.
- **Policy and governance papers:** Analysis of policies, strategies, regulatory frameworks, institutional governance and digital transformation.
- **Innovation and implementation papers:** Prototypes, new solutions, practical applications or implementation lessons.
- **Research reviews:** Systematic or clearly structured reviews that synthesise evidence, identify gaps and propose future directions.
- **Student research papers:** Original undergraduate, postgraduate or doctoral research, dissertations and applied projects.

All submissions must relate to at least one conference track and demonstrate a clear connection to the overall conference theme.

7. SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

7.1 Abstract submission

Authors must first submit an abstract of 250–300 words containing:

- Paper title.
- Research problem or context.
- Purpose, objectives or research questions.
- Methodology or approach.
- Principal findings or expected findings, where appropriate.
- Significance and practical implications.
- Contribution to “From Growth to Impact”.
- Proposed conference track.
- Three to five keywords.

Completed studies should report actual findings wherever possible. Work in progress should identify its current stage and expected contribution. Abstracts must be written in clear, professional English.

7.2 Full-paper submission

Authors whose abstracts are accepted will be invited to submit full papers. Full papers should generally be 4,000–6,000 words, excluding references, tables, figures and appendices.

A full paper should include, as appropriate:

- Title, abstract and keywords.
- Introduction and background.
- Problem statement and objectives.
- Literature review or relevant context.
- Research methodology or implementation approach.
- Results and findings.
- Discussion and interpretation.
- Implications for research, education, institutions or national development.
- Limitations and lessons learnt.
- Recommendations and conclusion.
- References.

Technical papers and policy analyses may use a suitable structure provided that the approach, evidence, findings and contribution are clear.

7.3 Formatting requirements

- A4 page size.
- Readable font such as Times New Roman, 12-point.
- 1.5 line spacing and consecutively numbered pages.
- Clear headings and subheadings.
- Numbered tables and figures with descriptive titles or captions.
- Consistent referencing using APA 7th edition.
- Complete references for all cited works.
- Define abbreviations and technical terms at first use.
- Submit in Microsoft Word (.docx), unless ZAMREN advises otherwise.
- Ensure figures and tables are legible and referenced in the text.

ZAMREN may issue a final conference paper template to accepted authors.

7.4 Originality and academic integrity

Submissions must be original and must not contain plagiarism, fabricated findings, falsified data or misleading claims. Authors must acknowledge others' contributions and cite sources appropriately. Any use of AI tools in preparing research, analysing data or developing a manuscript must comply with applicable institutional requirements and be transparently disclosed where relevant. AI tools must not be listed as authors; authors remain responsible for accuracy, originality, integrity and attribution. Previously published work or work under consideration elsewhere must be disclosed. Substantial duplication of previously published work will not be accepted.

7.5 Research ethics and data protection

Research involving human participants, personal data, confidential institutional information or sensitive datasets must comply with applicable ethical, legal and institutional requirements. Where required, authors should indicate ethics approval or exemption. Personal data must be handled lawfully, and confidential information must not be disclosed without authorisation.

7.6 Authorship

All listed authors must have made a meaningful contribution and approved the submitted version. The corresponding author is responsible for communication with the organising committee and ensuring that all co-authors are informed of decisions and revisions.

8. ABSTRACT AND PAPER REVIEW PROCESS

11. **Stage 1: Submission screening.** Submissions will be checked for completeness, relevance, basic formatting and track selection.
12. **Stage 2: Abstract review.** Abstracts will be assessed for relevance, clarity, originality, methodological soundness and potential contribution.
13. **Stage 3: Full-paper review.** Authors whose abstracts are accepted will be invited to submit full papers for detailed review by qualified reviewers.
14. **Stage 4: Revision and final acceptance.** Authors may be asked to revise papers in response to reviewers' comments. Final acceptance depends on satisfactory completion of required revisions.
15. **Stage 5: Presentation selection.** Accepted papers will be scheduled for oral or poster presentation as determined by the organising committee.

Submission does not guarantee acceptance. Decisions will be made by the Scientific and Technical Review Committee in accordance with conference review procedures.

9. Assessment criteria

Criterion	Weight
Relevance to the conference theme and selected track	20%
Originality and contribution to knowledge or practice	20%
Methodological rigour and quality of evidence	20%
Demonstrable or credible potential for measurable impact	25%
Practical relevance, scalability and quality of recommendations	15%
TOTAL	**100%**

Reviewers will consider the nature of each paper. Technical papers may emphasise performance evaluation, while policy papers may emphasise evidence, analysis and practical recommendations. Priority will be given to submissions that demonstrate outcomes, scalable solutions and lessons relevant to Zambia's research and education ecosystem.

10. Important dates

Activity	Date
Call for Papers opens	1 December 2026

Abstract submission deadline	1 February 2027
Notification of abstract acceptance	28 February 2027
Full-paper submission deadline	20 March 2027
Notification of full-paper acceptance	31 March 2027
Deadline for revised papers	15 April 2027
Conference programme publication	20 April 2027
ZAMREN Week 2027	11–14 May 2027; AVANI Victoria Falls Resort, Livingstone

Important: 1st February 2027 is the deadline for abstract submissions under this Call for Papers. ZAMREN will communicate subsequent full-paper and review deadlines through its official channels. Authors are encouraged to submit abstracts well before the closing date.

11. How to submit

Authors should follow the submission instructions published through ZAMREN's official communication channels. Each submission should include:

- Paper title.
- Full names of all authors.
- Institutional affiliations.
- Corresponding author's email address and telephone number.
- Preferred conference track.
- Abstract of 250–300 words.
- Three to five keywords.
- Brief author biography, where requested.

The designated submission email address or online submission link will be communicated by ZAMREN. Authors should ensure that contact details are accurate and the correct track is selected. The Scientific and Technical Review Committee may recommend another track where it is a better fit.

12. Presentation and participation

Authors of accepted papers may be invited to present through:

- Oral research presentations.
- Technical demonstrations.
- Research posters.
- Student research presentations.
- Thematic panel discussions, where invited.

Presenters should be prepared to explain the research problem, methodology, findings, practical implications and contribution to the conference theme. Presentation instructions, time allocations and technical requirements will be provided to accepted authors.

At least one author of each accepted paper should register for the conference and present the work in accordance with the final arrangements. Registration fees, student concessions and participation conditions will be communicated separately. Acceptance does not waive conference registration fees.

13. Publication and dissemination

Subject to final arrangements and publication criteria, accepted papers may be considered for conference proceedings or other approved dissemination platforms. Acceptance for presentation does not automatically guarantee publication in proceedings, a journal or another publication. Authors will be informed of applicable publication requirements, copyright arrangements, permissions and further review procedures. Findings should be shared responsibly, subject to copyright, confidentiality, intellectual property and data protection requirements.

14. Recognition of outstanding papers

Subject to approval by the organising committee, ZAMREN may recognise outstanding contributions in categories such as:

- Best Overall Research Paper.
- Best Student Research Paper.
- Best Technical Innovation Paper.
- Best Applied Research or Institutional Case Study.
- Best Paper Demonstrating Measurable Impact.

Final award categories, eligibility requirements and assessment procedures will be communicated separately.

15. Why contribute to ZAMREN Week 2027?

- Share research findings and innovations with a multidisciplinary audience.
- Engage with experts, policymakers, researchers and ICT practitioners.
- Showcase practical solutions to research and education challenges.
- Establish collaborations with institutions and industry partners.
- Contribute to discussions shaping digital research and education in Zambia and Africa.
- Promote innovations that can be replicated, scaled or adapted by other institutions.
- Demonstrate the tangible value of research, technology and digital transformation.

16. Final invitation

ZAMREN invites the research and education community, technology professionals, policymakers, students and industry partners to contribute to this important national and regional platform. We encourage papers that challenge existing approaches, present credible evidence, share practical experiences and propose innovative solutions to the opportunities and challenges facing research and education.

FROM GROWTH TO IMPACT

Turning Digital Potential into Measurable Results.

CALL OPENS: 1st DECEMBER 2026 | DEADLINE: 1st FEBRUARY 2027

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Submission instructions and updates will be published through ZAMREN's official communication channels.