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® **Building a Knowledge Democracy: The Deep Learning IndabaX Story**

Tuesday, 5 December 2023 14:10 (10 minutes)

The Deep Learning Indaba was founded in 2017 as a community for growing Artificial Intelligence capability and knowledge sharing across Africa. To extend the impact of the community, “Deep Learning IndabaX” events have been launched in multiple participating nations. A Deep Learning IndabaX, or “IndabaX,” represents a locally-organised conference aimed at democratizing machine learning expertise and capability across the African continent. As of 2023, these IndabaX events have been conducted in 36 African countries.

The South African Deep Learning IndabaX (“IndabaX ZA”) first took place in 2018 and has since united students, researchers, and industry practitioners in a collaborative atmosphere. IndabaX ZA serves as a platform for attendees to meet and engage with grassroots communities and small businesses. IndabaX ZA is a volunteer-driven event and would not be possible without support from partners including the CHPC, NiTheCS and the DSI-NRF Centre of Excellence in Mathematical and Statistical Science (CoE-MaSS).

One of the highlights of the IndabaX ZA is the hackathon, where concerted efforts have been made over time to encourage more active student participation in the event. Complementing this is a dedicated “fundamentals” track spanning 3 days, with the aim of cultivating foundational skills and lowering the barrier to entry for new members of the community. Furthermore, initial strides have been taken towards incorporating practical, hands-on training into the programme.

This talk will provide a review of the IndabaX ZA journey thus far, shedding light on its impact, community diversity and emerging trends within the field. Moreover, we will touch on our shared vision with partners like the CHPC and how we can explore avenues for deeper collaboration. For example, there is a great opportunity to provide a platform for the CHPC to introduce participants to compute and training resources. Our mutual goal remains the upliftment of young minds in the realm of AI research, paving the way for a future generation of skilled and empowered individuals across the country and the continent.

Student or Postdoc?

No. Not a student nor Postdoc.

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