



UGANDA CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY

A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa



EAST AFRICA COMMUNICATION
ASSOCIATION

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

THE 10TH ANNUAL EAST AFRICAN COMMUNICATION
ASSOCIATION (EACA) CONFERENCE

KAMPALA, UGANDA: 27-29 AUGUST 2021

CONFERENCE THEME:

*RE-IMAGINING THE FUTURE OF
MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION
IN A PANDEMIC CONTEXT*

Hosted By:

UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF
JOURNALISM, MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

Background to EACA

The East Africa Communication Association (EACA) was established in 2011 to serve as a platform for media and communications experts, researchers, academics, policy makers, regulators and media practitioners in Eastern Africa and beyond. The association was established for the purpose of:

1. Building networks and harnessing synergies towards building capacity for changing media environments in the region and Africa as a whole.
2. Enabling the dissemination of work through the annual conference and a peer-reviewed journal, the *African Journal of Communication*. The latter solicits submissions throughout the year.

The work that emerges from the research and publication is deployed to improve the field and industry. The research and presentations will be peer reviewed for publication in the *African Journal of Communication*, with a wide reach.

Since its inception in 2011, EACA has held nine annual conferences in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi.

The Faculty of Journalism, Media and Communication at UCU

The Uganda Christian University's Faculty of Journalism, Media and Communication (FJMC) is a leader in teaching journalism and communication skills for a variety of contexts. The FJMC's mission is to equip Christ-centred media professionals for a dynamic society. We purpose to mould our students into relevant, purposeful, empowered, independent and practical citizens. Our practical approach to learning ensures that students develop multimedia skills for both journalism and communication practice buttressed by a solid work ethic.

The 10TH Annual EACA Conference (Both virtual and physical)

The EACA 2021 Conference seeks to explore how media and communication actors can re-imagine and redefine the future of journalism and communication through critical conversation on media and communication industry and education in a context variously impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Context

The digital era brought nearly as much improvement to the media and communication landscape as interference. This has in turn transformed journalism and communication education and practice within a short period of time. Many of the changes the journalism and communication industry are experiencing are driven by globalisation and rapid technological advancement and have been particularly punishing to traditional media, challenging the values of practice. Education institutions have been equally affected as they have had to continuously re-engineer themselves to meet the needs of the industry.

The disruption caused by digitisation was further compounded in 2020 with the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. The East African region was not spared some of the most stringent measures put in place to slow the advance of the pandemic, some as stringent as the closure of schools. Different institutions responded differently to

the challenges the closure of schools brought to education institutions, including journalism and communication education. While some were able to transfer learning online almost instantly, others are yet to catch up.

There is optimism with the emergence of Covid-19 vaccines, yet higher education has been challenged and changed. In particular, journalism and communication education and training has been affected by the inability to run some of the practical sessions, lack of technology to support teaching and learning, access to stories and sources, leading to rising concerns about the quality of journalism and communication education in the region. Additionally, concerns about the viability of media whose revenues have declined and who have struggled through the pandemic to pay their staff and remain in production continues to rise. The situation has been exacerbated by the rise of citizen journalism and fake news, which has impacted public trust in the media.

It is increasingly clear that neither the media/communication industry, nor media and communication education institutions can survive without the other, and that more than ever, synergies between these two sectors are key. All this calls for critical reflection. What should the industry and academia do differently to remain viable and relevant?

The dialogue during the EACA conference August 27-29, 2021 will be centred around the theme: **Re-imagining the future of Media and Communication in a pandemic Context**. This theme will enable researchers and industry players to hold critical conversations driven by the research and experience of actors in the industry. The conference offers an opportunity for different actors to re-imagine and redefine the viability of the media and communication industries and the role of education institutions in this.

Objectives of the conference

The main objective of the EACA 2021 Conference is to explore the current challenges and possible synergies that the media/communication industry and academia can explore to increase the viability and relevance of both media/communication education and practice, particularly at the crossroads moment that East Africa finds itself in.

Specifically, the conference will:

1. Examine the potential and actual impact of Covid-19 on media and communication education and practice in the region.
2. Establish how training institutions in the region and the continent are reinventing themselves to remain viable and relevant to the industry they serve.
3. Interrogate the capacity and preparedness of journalism schools in training for a rapidly changing market.
4. Investigate possibilities, synergies and partnerships for the viability of media and communication education and practice in a world challenged by Covid-19.
5. Assess new ethical challenges arising from the pandemic and post-pandemic situation and possible mitigation measures from both industry and academia.
6. Examine the future of health communication post Covid-19 pandemic.

Call for abstracts

Abstracts are invited from researchers and practitioners in the following broad themes or related areas:

1. The state of Journalism and communication education in East Africa.
2. The implications of Covid-19 for media and communication pedagogy and curricula.
3. The implications of Covid-19 pandemic for the media/communication industry, practice and regulation.
4. Innovations in media and communication education and practice and their viability for East Africa.
5. Civil-society/government/industry/academia partnerships, possibilities and synergies for the viability of media and communication education and practice in a world challenged by Covid-19.
6. New research areas in media and communication emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic.
7. Communicating Covid-19.
8. Infodemics and Covid-19.
9. Covid-19 implications for the viability of the media and communication industries.
10. Regulation of media and communication in the Covid-19 era.
11. The role of the media/communication industries and media/communication institutions in crisis communication in the context of Covid-19.
12. The role of the media/communication industries and media education institutions in Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE).
13. East Africa's coverage of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Panels: Call for proposals

Proposals for panels on the conference theme are invited from all sectors of the field. These will be evaluated competitively by anonymous referees. Panel proposals on the conference theme must include a 500-word rationale explaining how the panel fits within the conference. It should also provide names of up to four of the prospective panellists, their contact details and institutional affiliation.

Guidelines for Submission

Prospective delegates and authors should submit abstracts of between 500-800 words to [**eaca2021@gmail.com**](mailto:eaca2021@gmail.com)

Please submit your abstracts as an attachment in Word format, 12 point, 1.5-line spacing, clearly indicating the title of the paper, the author(s) and contact details (institutional affiliation, email address and phone contacts). Also include a good quality mugshot (passport photo) and short biography/biographies of the author(s). Send your inquiries on the conference to the same addresses.

Key Dates:

- **Call for abstracts:** 15th April 2021
- **Abstract submission deadline:** 15th May 2021
- **Notification of abstract acceptance:** 22nd May 2021
- **Delegates registration commences:** 22nd May 2021