

EVENTS

2024 CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACADEMY CONFERENCE

The Minister of Higher Education, Technology, and Innovation Honorable Dr. Itah Kandjii-Murangi, inaugurated the 2024 Creative Entrepreneurship Academy conference in Windhoek, Namibia. Emphasizing the significance of education in preserving and digitizing cultural heritage. The conference, held under the theme "The Role of Education in Preserving and Digitizing Cultural Heritage," was lauded by the Minister as a key initiative in fostering heritage-based digital skills and entrepreneurship among the youth.

Dr. Kandjii-Murangi expressed her gratitude to the Namibia and Estonia National Commissions for UNESCO, along with their partners, for their collaborative efforts in this initiative, funded by the Estonian Centre for International Development (EstDEV). The project aims to enhance awareness of heritage-based and creative economy entrepreneurship, utilizing digital technologies to engage the youth in acquiring vital skills in product development, entrepreneurship, and digital technologies.

The Minister highlighted the importance of partnerships in achieving the 2030 Agenda, noting that such collaborations can have a tangible positive impact on sustainable development. She also pointed out the growing significance of the creative economy, which contributed 3.1% to the global GDP in 2020 and has become a key driver for employment, particularly among youth and women.

As digital technologies continue to transform the cultural and creative industries, Dr. Kandjii-Murangi underscored the need to harness these advancements, including the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI), to foster creativity and innovation in Namibia. She emphasized the rich cultural heritage of Namibia, with elements like the Marula festival and Nama Ancestral Musical Sound Knowledge inscribed on UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage list, as vital assets that can boost the nation's global competitiveness.

The Minister reaffirmed the Namibian government's commitment to creating an inclusive environment for the creative economy, ensuring accessibility for all, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, and indigenous communities. She called on higher education and technical vocational education and training (TVET) institutions to equip students with the necessary skills to thrive in the creative industries.

In her concluding remarks, Dr. Kandjii-Murangi encouraged institutions to leverage the conference as an opportunity to learn from their Estonian counterparts, with the aim of strengthening the link between creative industries, youth employment, and the preservation of cultural heritage. She also expressed hope for the development of new TVET programs by the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) and the Namibia Training Authority (NTA), which will further support the growth of creative industries and youth employment in Namibia.