THE CARIBBEAN BYTE

Building **Y**outh **T**ech **E**ngagement

Your new place for all things youth & ICT!

- Upskilling Youth: Python x Power BI Workshop
- A Caribbean Sustainable AI Roadmap
- Bridging Possibility & Talent: ICT Lecturer's Perspective
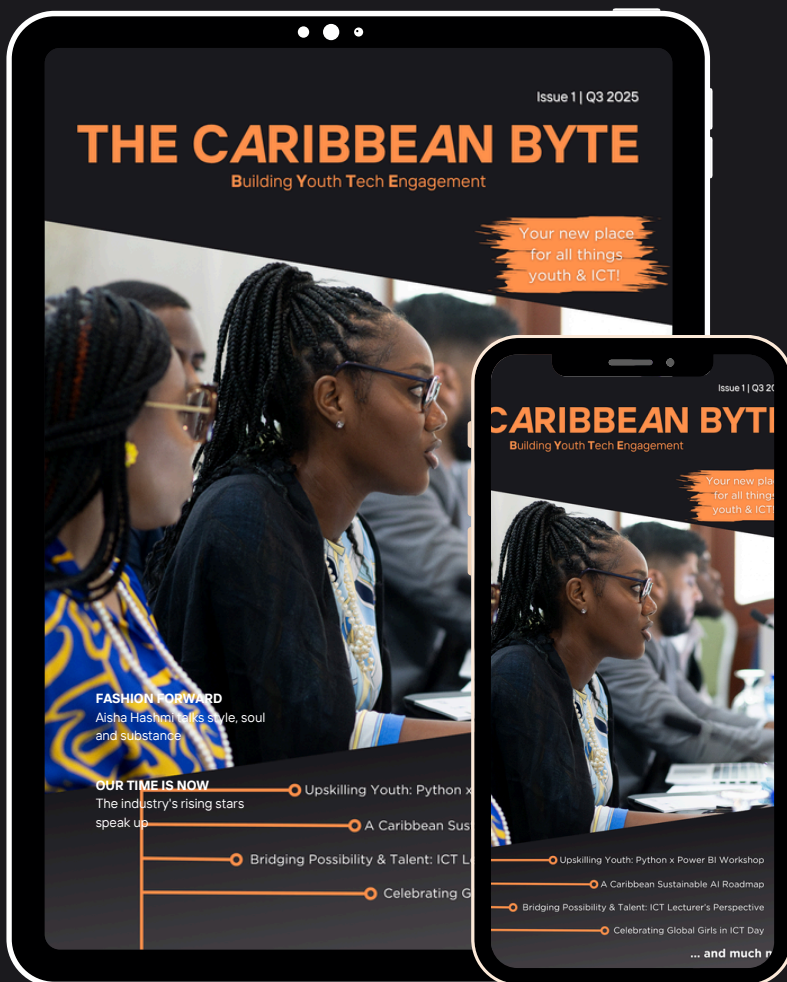- Celebrating Girls in ICT Day

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THE CARIBBEAN BYTE

Building **Y**outh **T**ech **E**ngagement

Issue 1 | Q3 2025

THE CARIBBEAN BYTE
Building **Y**outh **T**ech **E**ngagement

Your new place for all things youth & ICT!

FASHION FORWARD
Aisha Hashmi talks style, soul and substance

OUR TIME IS NOW
The industry's rising stars speak up

Upskilling Youth: Python x
A Caribbean Sus
Bridging Possibility & Talent: ICT L
Celebrating G

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Bridging Possibility & Talent: ICT Lecturer's Perspective
Celebrating Global Girls in ICT Day

... and much m

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Released quarterly
Questions? Email us at ciyn@ctu.int

WELCOME!!

On behalf of the **Caribbean ICT Youth Network (CIYN)** under the **Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU)**, we are thrilled to release the first edition of **The Caribbean BYTE - B**uilding **Y**outh **T**ech **E**ngagement. This quarterly newsletter is the first of many, set out to support the voices of youth, who represent the region's next generation of ICT leaders.

ABOUT THE CIYN

The CIYN is an initiative of the CTU to develop the next generation of ICT leaders: regulators, engineers, policymakers, and entrepreneurs.

This initiative began in 2022, following the International Telecommunication Union's (ITU's) inaugural Generation Connect Youth Summit in Kigali, Rwanda, for which many Caribbean delegates attended. The CTU's Secretary-General and Deputy engaged these youth delegates post-summit, offering them the opportunity to plan the first ever Caribbean Youth Internet Governance Forum (CYIGF) - held virtually in August 2022, preceding the annual Caribbean Internet Governance Forum (CIGF).

This event was well attended and praises from countries around the Caribbean, and has been recurring every year since; the CYIGF is now registered under the United Nations Internet Governance Forum as a National or Regional Initiative (NRI). The co-ordinators of CYIGF also serve in the global Youth track, and represent at the NRI's IGF planning meetings.

Other key CIYN activities include annual meetings of the CIYN during CTU's ICT week, fellowships to ITU's conferences such as the World Radiocommunication Conference 2023 in the United Arab Emirates (sponsored by the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago) and the Global Youth Summit 2025 in Cuba, capacity building seminars and a newly-launched internship programme, taking place over July - August 2025 in Trinidad and Tobago.

Disclaimer: The views represented in this publication do not directly reflect the views of the Caribbean Telecommunications Union

ABOUT THE CTU

The CTU is a regional, intergovernmental organization established in 1989 to advance telecommunications and ICT development across the Caribbean. Headquartered in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, the CTU supports its members in policy harmonization, digital transformation, and technological innovation. Its key focus areas include telecom regulation, spectrum management, cybersecurity and regional harmonization.

The CTU plays a pivotal role in facilitating regional collaboration; and representing Caribbean interests in global fora. Through initiatives such as the ICT Roadshow and capacity-building workshops, it promotes emerging technologies and cyber resilience. Governed by a Council of Ministers and managed by a Secretariat, the CTU remains a cornerstone of the region's efforts to bridge the digital divide and foster inclusive growth.
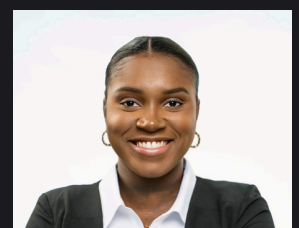
THE CARIBBEAN BYTE

This quarterly newsletter is the first of many, designed to amplify the voices of youth: the region's leaders of tomorrow. It showcases ICT-related topics and interests, including the upcoming ITU World Telecommunications/ICT Policy Forum in 2026 (WTPF-26).

YOUR EDITORS

Mr. Tariq Mohammed
Trinidad and Tobago

Ms. Gabrielle Johnson
Trinidad and Tobago

ITU Global Youth Summit 2025

2nd CIYN Meeting

3rd Caribbean Youth IGF

Girls in ICT Day 2024

CIYN IN REVIEW

CIYN Breakfast with ITU & CTU SGs

1st CIYN Meeting

ITU WRC-23 (youth fellowship sponsored by TATT)

2nd Caribbean Youth IGF
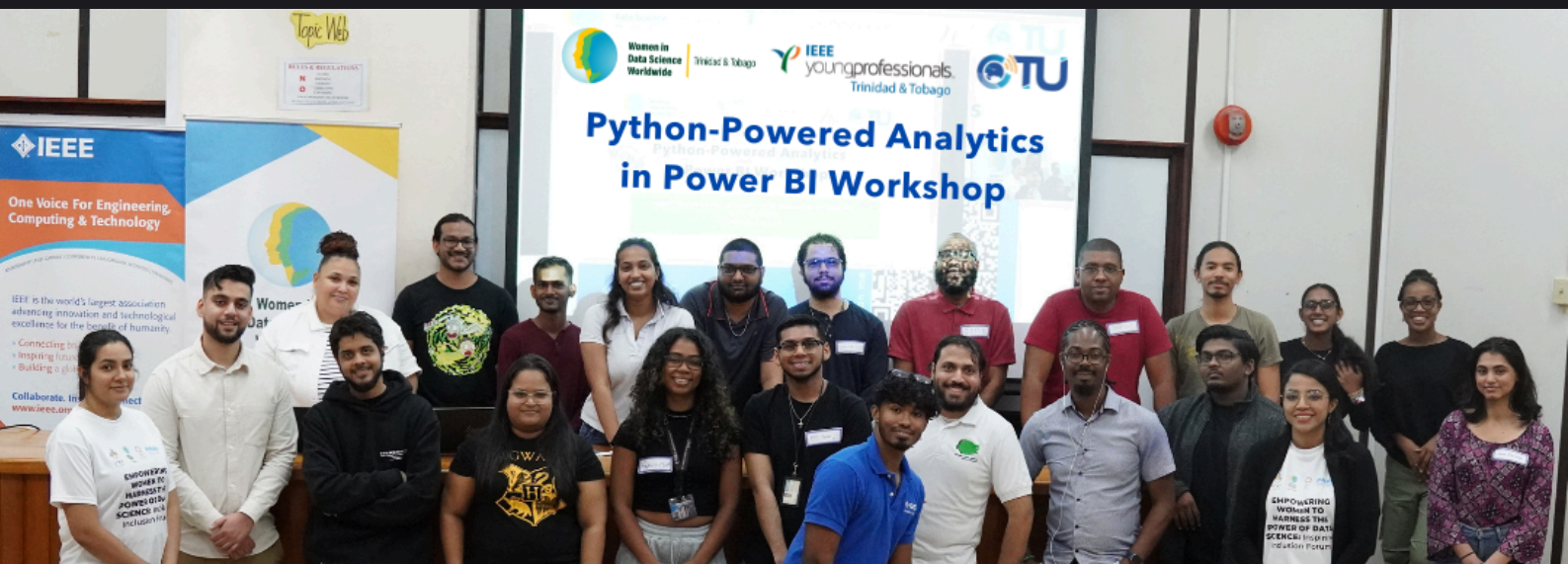
CIYN Breakfast with ITU & CTU SGs

2nd CIYN Meeting

Girls in ICT Day 2024

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KEY CIYN ACTIVITIES

Q2 2025

PYTHON-POWERED ANALYTICS IN POWER BI WORKSHOP

SATURDAY 5 APRIL 2025 | HYBRID (TRINIDAD & TOBAGO & ONLINE)

On April 5, 2025, CIYN, in collaboration with **IEEE Young Professionals Trinidad and Tobago (IEEE YPTT)**, and the **Women in Data Science Trinidad and Tobago (WIDS TT)**, hosted the hybrid technical capacity-building event: **Python-Powered Analytics in Power BI Workshop.**
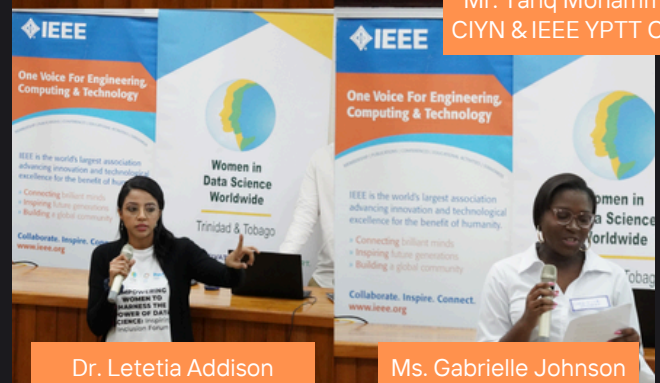
With 260+ unique registrations (53% of which were female) from 23 countries, this Workshop fostered dynamic discussions, hands-on learning, and invaluable networking. This 3.5 hour hands-on session brought together over 160 participants: 30 in person and 130+ attending virtually from 23 countries across the Caribbean, North and South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Oceania. These countries included: Trinidad and Tobago, Germany, United States, Suriname, Guyana, Jamaica, United Kingdom, Bahamas, Antigua and Barbuda, Brazil, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Virgin Islands (British), India, Australia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Kenya, Vietnam, Montserrat, Guadeloupe, Canada, Barbados, Saint Lucia, and Grenada).

The CIYN was represented in-person by Mr. Tariq Mohammed (Chair) and Ms. Gabrielle Johnson. Tariq, who also serves as chair for

the IEEE YPTT, delivered welcome remarks on behalf of IEEE, while Gabrielle offered welcoming remarks on behalf of the CIYN. Ms. Vinita Singh, Chair of the IEEE Women in Engineering Trinidad and Tobago, as well as Dr. Letetia Addison, the WIDS TT Ambassador also delivered welcome remarks on behalf of their organizations.

Mr. Tariq Mohammed
CIYN & IEEE YPTT Chair

Dr. Letetia Addison
WIDS TT Ambassador

Ms. Gabrielle Johnson
CIYN Vice Chair

Mr. Adhir Soechit
WIDS TT Mentor & Course Facilitator

Mr. Adhir Soechit served as the main facilitator for the Workshop, which comprised interactive explorations on leveraging Python and Power BI to revolutionize data workflows, from process automation and analytics to data visualization. Specifically, by the end of this training, participants were able to:

1. Navigate the Power BI interface using appropriate Power Query transformations
2. Visualize insights and analytics for data stories
3. Extend Power BI's functionality using Python-powered tools

During the session, volunteers from WIDS TT and IEEE served co-moderating questions and feedback - which indicated a high level of interest and engagement among participants both in-person as well as online.

Professional development certificates were issued to all attendees via email after the workshop, and many have inquired since on opportunities for intermediate-level training, as well as repeats of this beginner short course, for those that missed it.

This event was of significant importance to all partners. For IEEE and WIDS TT, this was the first hybrid event hosted under both organizations, while for CIYN, this event was the first major capacity building event outside of the standing meetings of the CIYN as well as the Caribbean Youth Internet Governance Forum.

This event certainly revealed interests from stakeholder groups in data analytics and technical capacity building, and offer future opportunities for collaboration amongst the partners from this event. Stay tuned, more is coming soon!

Missed the session? Check out the recording here: https://youtu.be/I4e16MR-M40?si=dS433ST-wDhgYc02

Girls in ICT
Girls in ICT for inclusive digital transformation
24 April 2025
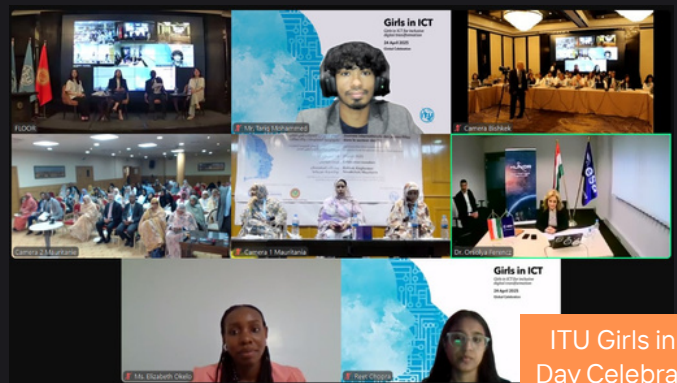
GIRLS IN ICT DAY 2025 CELEBRATIONS

THURSDAY 24 APRIL 2025 | WORLDWIDE

The fourth Thursday of April is a significant day for women and girls around the world - **International Girls in ICT Day**. In 2025, it was observed on April 24th, under the theme "**Girls in ICT for Inclusive Digital Transformation**". This theme emphasizes the importance of empowering girls and women to become active leaders of digital transformation.

As an initiative of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations' specialized agency for ICTs, countries around the world are also invited to join in celebrating gender inclusion and equality through International Girls in ICT Day.

This year, the CIYN actively participated in Girls in ICT Day 2025, though participation in ITU, CTU and CARICOM events.

ITU hosted its global celebration in hybrid format, with in-person activities in Kyrgyzstan and Mauritania, and panelists from around the world. CIYN Chair, Mr. Tariq Mohammed joined high-level speakers such as ITU-BDT's Director, Dr. Cosmas Zavazava, for "**Intergenerational Dialogue and Open Discussion: Bridging ALL Divides for an Inclusive Digital Transformation**", on the role of men in supporting girls in ICT. Tariq called on men to be active listeners and supporters of the women in their networks, with the vision of equal opportunities for all, regardless of gender.

ITU Girls in ICT Day Celebrations

Later that day, CTU hosted its regional, virtual Girls in ICT Day celebrations, in collaboration with Restore a Sense of I Can (RSC). Held under the theme "**Girls in ICT for Inclusive Digital Transformation**", the event showcased inspiring voices from across the region, including keynote speaker Ms. Shamla Maharaj, an advocate for persons with disabilities, who shared her journey of overcoming disability barriers through technology. Ms. Maharaj who has cerebral palsy, is a Product Delivery Analyst, Scotiabank English Caribbean Region. Shamla has a degree in Agribusiness Management, a Masters in Marketing and Agribusiness.

Highlights included remarks from Ms. Michelle Garcia, CTU Marketing and Communications Specialist, who promoted the CTU's Network of Women and Caribbean ICT Youth Network, and took the opportunity to acknowledge and recognise Mr. Rodney Taylor, CTU Secretary-General, for his visionary leadership and stead-

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-fast advocacy for gender equality and youth engagement in ICT.

Also highlighted was a compelling panel discussion titled "From the Classroom to the Boardroom: Women Leading in ICT". The panel featured Ms. Vashti Maharaj, The Commonwealth; Ms. Esther Callender-George, Information Systems Audit and Control Association (ISACA), and Mr. Shergaun Roserie, Co-Founder at Rifbid. The panellists shared insights on navigating professional challenges, embracing adaptability and leading with purpose in the male-dominated ICT sector.

The programme also spotlighted digital entrepreneurship through a session led by content strategist Ms. Ricqcolia Phillip, who encouraged participants to use their creativity and digital skills to build sustainable online businesses. The event closed with reflections from Ms. Gabrielle Johnson, Vice-Chair of the Caribbean ICT Youth Network, who reminded participants that "the future of tech needs us - our ideas, our vision and our leadership!"

CTU Girls in ICT Day 2025 reinforced the Caribbean ICT Sector's commitment to building an inclusive, innovative digital future where all youth, regardless of gender or ability, have the opportunity to lead and to thrive.

Finally on that day, Gabrielle and Tariq participated in the CARICOM's Girls in ICT day event, which took place in hybrid format: in-person in Guyana, where the CARICOM Secretariat is based, as well as on Zoom. Tariq and Gabrielle served as co-moderators for a panel on **Staying Safe and Smart in the Digital World**, where they interviewed Ms. Muriana McPherson – Director, Cybersecurity, of Guyana's National Data Management Authority (NDMA), posing questions on cybersecurity, ranging from digital hygiene and staying safe online, to the opportunities and potential threats of emerging technologies such as AI on online safety.

CARICOM Girls in ICT Day Celebrations

The CIYN looks forward to participating in future initiatives that support digital gender inclusion, even outside of the designated Girls in ICT Day, as we move towards supporting a digitally inclusive world that can be assessed and enjoyed by all.

CTU Girls in ICT Day Celebrations

Source: Mifos

REFLECTIONS ON THE
CARIBBEAN DPI SUMMIT 2025

8-10 April 2025 | Jamaica | Written by Mr. Keeghan Patrick

Attending the **Caribbean Digital Public Infrastructure Summit** which took place on 8-10 April 2025 in Jamaica was a transformative experience that reaffirmed my belief in the region's capacity to leapfrog into a digitally inclusive and interoperable future. The summit brought together key stakeholders from governments, international development agencies, private sector innovators, and civil society to explore how foundational digital systems can accelerate development, inclusion, and economic growth across the Caribbean.

Source: Event website

As a technology entrepreneur deeply engaged in building scalable public interest platforms like **Rifbid** and national innovation ecosystems through **Orbtronics**, the sessions on digital identity, e-governance, and payment infrastructure were particularly resonant. It was encouraging to see broad consensus on

the importance of designing infrastructure that is open, secure, people-centered, and regionally interoperable, an approach that aligns with our own vision of leveraging technology to deliver efficient, transparent, and citizen-first solutions.

CTU x CIYN Representation: Mr. Keeghan Patrick (L) with CTU Secretary-General, Mr. Rodney Taylor (R)

Key takeaways included the need for stronger public-private collaboration, agile policy reform to support DPI deployment, and sustainable financing models that move beyond pilots and toward full-scale adoption. Discussions around MOSIP, and other global digital public goods highlighted tangible pathways for how Caribbean states can adapt
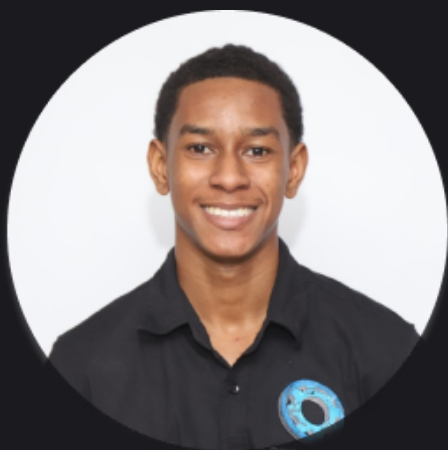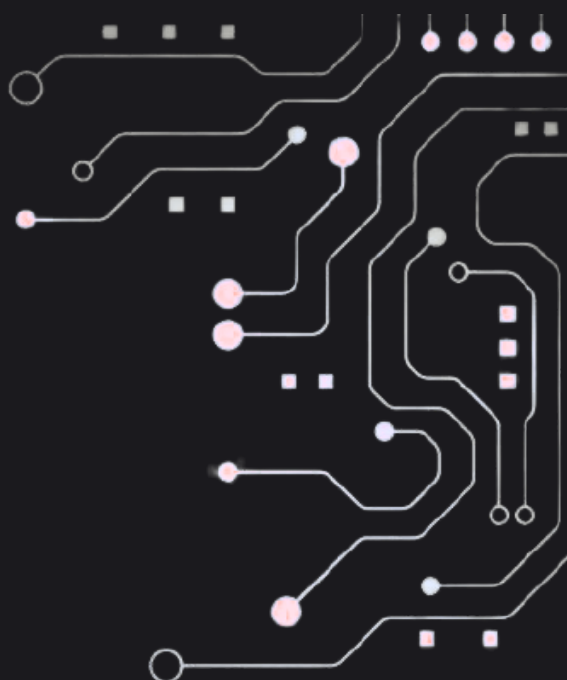
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proven models to local contexts.

The summit also served as a powerful networking platform. I had the opportunity to engage with digital ministers, technical experts, and fellow entrepreneurs across the region, exploring potential collaborations on projects ranging from procurement reform to innovation hubs and youth upskilling.

Overall, the Caribbean DPI Summit was a timely and inspiring convening, one that underscored the urgency of acting now to shape an equitable digital future for our region.

For more information on the Caribbean DPI Summit 2025, including the agenda and high-level speakers, visit the Summit's website https://www.caribbeandpisummit.org/.

About the Author:

Keeghan Patrick is an exceptionally dedicated problem solver with a strong academic and professional background. He earned a master's degree in advanced manufacturing and design from MIT, complemented by a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from UWI. Keeghan further enriched his knowledge through a semester at Harvard Business School, focusing on Strategy and Technology, and honed his entrepreneurial skills at Draper U Ventures' founder accelerator program in Silicon Valley.

His academic excellence is evident in the numerous scholarships he has received from prestigious institutions such as the Wade Institute of Technology, Stanford University's Black in Robotics, 3M, and the National Society of Black Engineers.

In addition to his impressive educational achievements, Keeghan is well-connected in various professional circles. He is a member of the Forbes BLK community, the International Telecommunication Union Generation Connect America's Youth Group, the Caribbean Telecommunications Union Youth Group, and maintains active involvement with the National Society of Black Engineers. This extensive network underscores his commitment to both professional growth and community engagement.

Bridging Possibility and Practice:

A Lecturer's Perspective on Caribbean ICT Talent

Written by Julie Koon Koon

BRIDGING POSSIBILITY & PRACTICE:

A Lecturer's Perspective on Caribbean ICT Talent

Written by Julie Koon Koon

Being a part-time lecturer in a BSc Computing programme while simultaneously pursuing an MBA in Business Analytics has offered a unique lens into the evolving digital landscape of the Caribbean. My dual role as both educator and student constantly reinforces one truth: the Caribbean is filled with untapped potential.

In my classrooms at SBCS Global Learning Institute in Trinidad and Tobago, I encounter a diverse range of students: some fresh out of secondary school and others decades into their professional lives. The gender balance is commendably equal: a promising sign for inclusivity in ICT. SBCS employs a hybrid learning model, allowing students to attend either online or in-person. This flexibility has attracted a broad demographic of learners who are eager to build or transition into tech-driven careers.

Personally, as a student, I prefer in-person classes. I find the face-to-face interaction, classroom energy, and spontaneous discussions more enriching and easier to engage with. However, I recognize the growing shift toward online learning, which offers convenience and accessibility to many. It's important to acknowledge that people learn differently, and we need to support diverse learning styles through flexible, hybrid approaches that blend structure with autonomy.

"My dual role as both educator and student constantly reinforces one truth: the Caribbean is filled with untapped potential."

What stands out most is the hunger for opportunity. These students are deeply inquisitive, often bringing their real-world experiences into classroom discussions and challenging theoretical boundaries. Yet, while the classroom nurtures their knowledge, the external ecosystem often stifles it.

Many Caribbean companies continue to outsource tech talent from abroad, overlooking skilled local professionals. This systemic gap creates a bottleneck for our brightest minds, who then seek roles outside the region or shift away from ICT altogether.

We must collectively reframe the narrative that "foreign is better." This mindset limits our regional development and undermines the confidence and capabilities of local innovators. As someone embedded in both academic and professional spheres, I see enormous value in aligning education with real industry needs. Education should be interactive, hands-on, and project-driven. Lectures should not feel like watching a movie; students should be challenged to think, design, build, and iterate.

There are positive steps being taken. The Ministry of Digital Transformation in Trinidad and Tobago, for instance, has provided incredible platforms for citizens to showcase their digital skills. Initiatives like national soft-
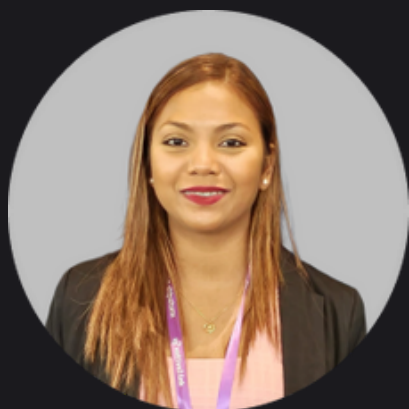
-ware development competitions have not only uncovered local talent but have also offered winners real-world deployment opportunities, bridging innovation with impact. These types of initiatives must continue and expand.

I want to see more structured pathways for students and professionals alike to grow in ICT. This includes university-industry collaboration on internships and tech incubators, financial support for early-stage innovators, and policy frameworks that reward companies for hiring and upskilling local talent. I also believe that large regional and international tech companies have a responsibility to foster development in the Caribbean. This can take the form of collab-

-orative pilots, challenges co-hosted with institutions, access to localized datasets, cloud resources, and, crucially, real mentorship not just one-off webinars.

While we advocate for systemic change, it is equally important to emphasize that students themselves must take ownership of their learning journeys. It starts with them, seeking out opportunities, taking initiative, and never losing the drive to grow. The resources may not always be perfect or readily available, but a mindset of continuous learning and resilience can unlock doors where none seem to exist.

We need to move from passive admiration of Caribbean talent to active investment. If the region is to become truly digitally resilient and future-ready, the journey begins with giving our youth, regardless of their age or background, the tools and platforms to experiment, fail, and grow!
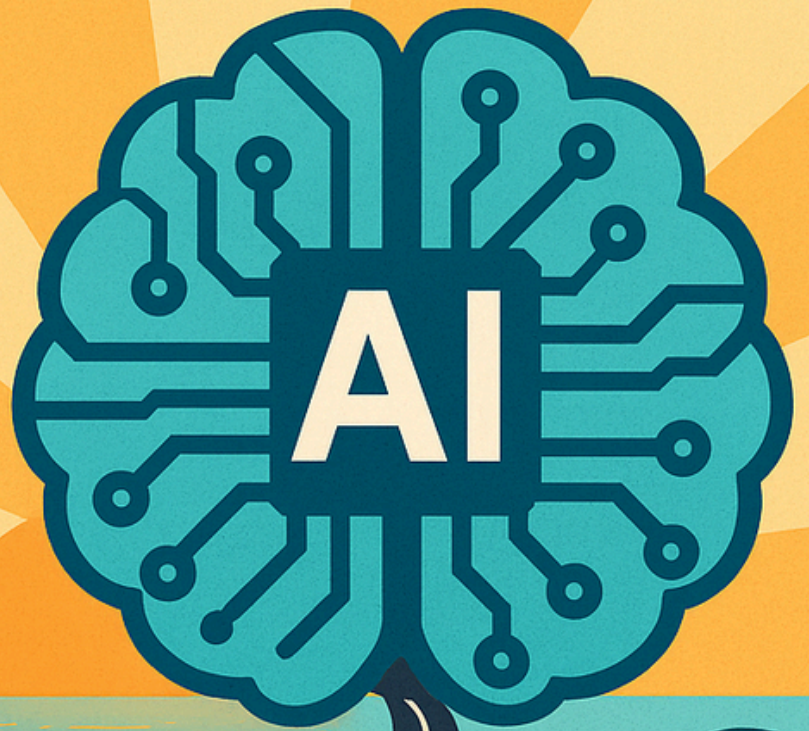
About the Author:

Julie Koon Koon is a data scientist, researcher at TTLAB, and part-time lecturer with over 10 years of experience in education. She is currently pursuing an MBA in Business Analytics and holds an MSc in Data Science and a BSc in Computer Science & Management from the University of the West Indies. Julie is also a mentor with Women in Data Science (WIDS) Trinidad and Tobago and a speaker on data literacy, emerging technologies, and digital equity. Her passion lies in shaping a more inclusive and innovative tech ecosystem in the Caribbean.

Julie participating at the WIDS x PAHO Forum

A Roadmap for
Sustainable AI Deployment in The Caribbean

Written by Adhir Soechit

A ROADMAP FOR SUSTAINABLE AI DEPLOYMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN

Written by Adhir Soechit

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has dominated global technology discourse in recent years, but a critical question remains: How can the Caribbean region reach the promised land of AI-driven progress? As the Caribbean charts its course toward AI integration, it is essential to consider what makes deployment successful and what foundational elements must be in place to support long-term impact.

While global attention often centres on the outcomes of Large Language Models (LLMs), autonomous systems, Machine Learning (ML) and Deep Learning (DL), the focus must also include the vital groundwork that enables these innovations. Much like building a house, AI systems require a solid foundation. Without these core elements, even the most advanced technologies may falter.

Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to facilitate a regional seminar among the CTU's Caribbean ICT Youth Network, Women in Data Science Trinidad and Tobago, as well as IEEE Young Professionals Trinidad and Tobago, titled "**Python-Powered Analytics in Power BI**". Interestingly, the seminar's title it-self reflects the progression toward AI readiness. Data analysis, the precursor to modern AI, has long empowered decision-makers with accessible insights. However, while traditional analytics has excelled at describing past and present trends, it often lacked the predictive capabilities that define contemporary AI systems. This naturally raises the question: "Why not implement AI solutions to handle predictive analysis?" Before turning to complex AI models, it is often more effective to begin with foundational techniques that are easier to interpret, build trust, and scale over time.
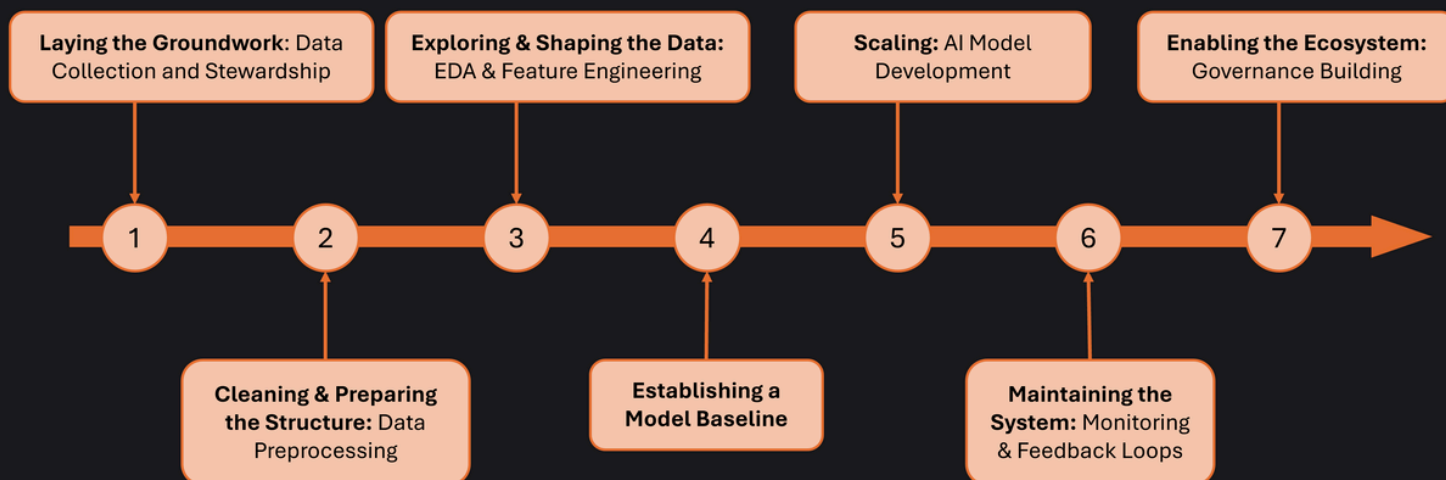
Amid the growing excitement around AI, the temptation to leap ahead without due diligence is understandable. A hurried approach may yield quick results, but without a stable foundation, such systems risk collapsing under their own weight. The journey to AI implementation should be deliberate, phased, and context-appropriate. It is not simply a matter of plugging in models, but of building a system that can sustain and evolve over time.

Adhir delivering a WIDS, CIYN and IEEE "Python-Powered Analytics in Power BI Workshop"

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What would this Roadmap Look Like?

To build an ecosystem capable of sustaining AI, we must follow a roadmap rooted in practicality and long-term vision. This roadmap comprises 7 interdependent phases that mirror the construction of a structurally sound building:

1. Laying the Groundwork: Data Collection & Stewardship

The journey begins with establishing robust mechanisms for collecting high-quality, consistent and relevant data. This includes digitizing paper records, unifying disparate databases and adopting standards for data interoperability and privacy. Good data governance ensures that data is both usable and secure – two essential qualities for AI readiness.

2. Cleaning & Preparing the Structure: Data Preprocessing

Once collected, data must be cleaned, structured and validated. This stage involves handling missing values (such as through imputation or mean substitution), correcting inconsistencies, and standardizing formats. Essentially, data must be prepared and reliable before models can be trained on it.

3. Exploring & Shaping the Data: EDA and Feature Engineering

Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA) involves visualizing and summarizing the data to uncover trends, outliers, correlations, and potential gaps. This phase helps determine whether the data is suitable for the questions being asked. Based on these insights, feature engineering is performed: transforming raw inputs into meaningful variables that improve model performance. This usually ensures that the modelling process becomes both more informed and more effective.

4. Establishing a Modelling Baseline

Modelling approaches vary widely depending on the problem. Some begin with statistical forecasting, while others rely on pre-trained models, simulations, or supervised learning techniques. Regardless of the path, success depends on clean data, domain relevance, and thoughtful evaluation tailored to the specific AI application.

5. Scaling: AI Model Development

With the modelling baseline established, organizations can scale their efforts by implementing more complex models. This may involve supervised learning for classification tasks, neural networks for image or speech recognition, or fine-tuning pre-trained language models for specific business needs. Regardless of the model type, success at this stage depends on prior data readiness and problem definition clarity.

6. Maintaining the System: Monitoring and Feedback Loops

AI systems must be monitored to ensure their outputs remain accurate and relevant. Over time, the model performance can begin to degrade due to data drift, changing environments or unforeseen circumstances. Monitoring and retraining protocols must be established to maintain readiness and fairness.

7. Enabling the Ecosystem: Governance Building

Successful AI deployment also requires investment in human capacity, policy frameworks, and ethical governance. Issues of bias, accountability, explainability, and data sovereignty must be addressed. AI readiness must go hand in hand with building institutions and standards that can guide responsible innovation.

Towards an AI-Ready Caribbean

The Caribbean's journey to AI readiness is grounded in a growing commitment to data quality, analytical thinking, and intentional design. Rather than chasing the most advanced tools, efforts are focusing on the fundamentals that make meaningful AI adoption possible: data collection, statistical analysis, exploratory techniques, and adaptable modelling strategies.

By prioritizing structure over speed, the region can develop AI solutions that are accurate, sustainable, and aligned with local needs. There is no single path to success, but a strong foundation offers the best chance for long-term impact, enabling AI to serve as a practical tool for regional progress.
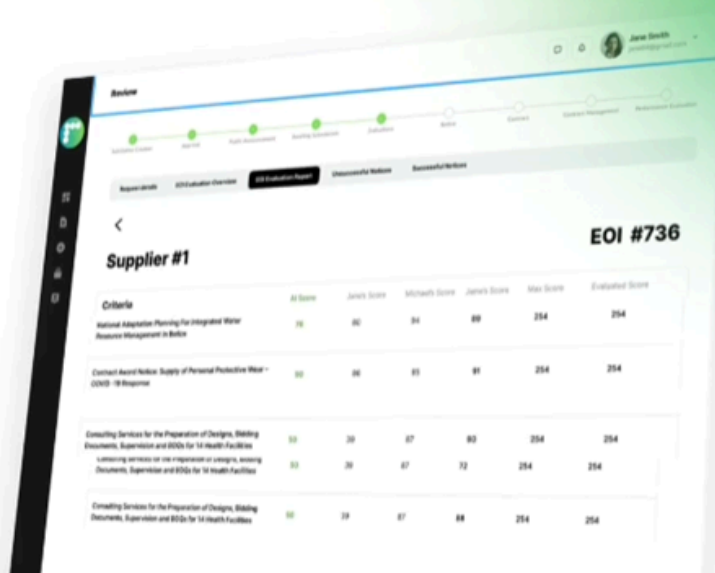
About the Author:

Adhir Soechit, a National Open Scholarship recipient, obtained his BEng. in Electrical and Electronic Engineering at Imperial College London. His early exploration into web development and data analytics quickly evolved into a profound interest in Machine Learning and Natural Language Processing (NLP), with a specific focus on Large Language Models (LLMs). Adhir is passionate about leveraging data to derive actionable insig- -hts that drive tangible impact and optimize performance. He also actively enjoys sharing knowledge and empowering others through the power of data and analytics. Now pursuing a Master's in Data Science and AI, he's further developing his skills to innovate within these dynamic fields.

QUICKLY EVALUATE BIDS
WITH AN AI ASSISTANT

RIFBID: MODERNIZING PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN

Across the developing world, and especially in the Caribbean, public procurement remains outdated, and unnecessarily complex. While most sectors have embraced technology, procurement is still driven by legacy infrastructure and manual workflows. The result? More than USD $60 billion in government contracts go unanswered every year, according to the World Bank.

A new Caribbean startup, **Rifbid**, is taking on this problem head-on.

Founded by the team behind Orbtronics, Rifbid was born after one experience made the inefficiencies painfully clear. What should have been a basic website tender required eight professionals with graduate-level degrees in marketing, software, and project management. It was excessive, exclusionary, and symptomatic of a system built for compliance, not usability.

After interviewing over 50 procurement officers and working with institutions like the OECS, we identified the core issue: most governments are still using procurement systems designed in the early 2000s. These systems don't support strategic planning, modernized digital workflows, or real-time insight. Rifbid set out to change that.
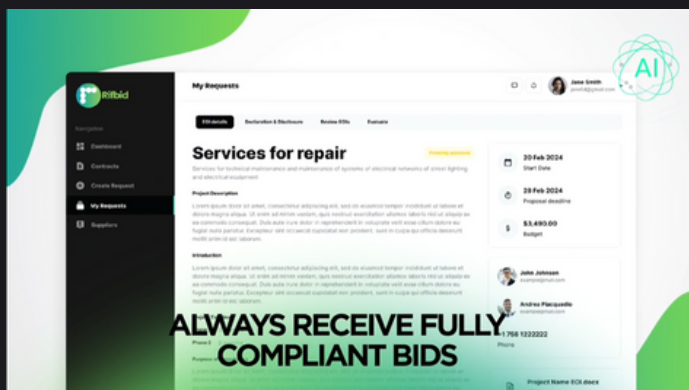
The result is a two-sided AI-powered procurement platform that serves both government agencies and suppliers. For agencies, Rifbid covers the full procurement lifecycle — from budgeting and forecasting to solicitation creation and contract management. It enables real-time compliance assessments against frameworks like those from the World Bank or CDB, and supports agentic features through a foundation built on the MCP protocol. Suppliers, meanwhile, gain access to tools that match them with contracts and help them generate compliant proposals faster. With over 750 suppliers already onboarded, Rifbid is improving access, speed, and visibility across the board.

One of its most powerful features is federated learning, which allows the system to learn across agencies without sharing private data. This keeps information secure while unlocking smarter, faster procurement decisions across the entire network.

Unlike bulky, in-house platforms, Rifbid is modular, cloud-native, and optimized for low-bandwidth environments. It also helps navigate fragmented legal landscapes when actions deviate from national procurement rules.

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While regional bodies like CARICOM and the OECS have long explored shared procurement solutions, bureaucratic hurdles have slowed progress. Rifbid isn't waiting. The platform is already gaining traction through outbound efforts and is currently in advanced conversations with multiple government agencies.

Its mission is simple but urgent: to modernize public procurement into a faster, fairer, and more transparent system — one that empowers both governments and the communities they serve.

For more information, check Rifbid out at **https://rifbid.com/**

Leveraging AI for Better Procurement

Harness the power of artificial intelligence to streamline your procurement process and make better decisions.

AI-Driven RFP Creation
Generate comprehensive RFPs automatically using advanced AI algorithms that understand your specific requirements and industry standards.

Intelligent Tender Matching
Our AI matches your business profile with relevant tender opportunities, increasing your chances of successful bids.

Automated Evaluation Reports
Receive detailed, AI-generated evaluation reports that help you make informed decisions quickly and efficiently.

Data Security & Compliance
Enterprise-grade security measures and compliance protocols protect your sensitive procurement data, ensuring confidentiality at every step.

Young Caribbean Entrepreneurs: Rifbid Founders

L-R: Mr. Dylan Paul, Mr. Keeghan Patrick & Mr. Shergaun Roserie

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES
Q3/4 2025

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES: Q3/4 2025

4th Caribbean Youth Internet Governance Forum (CYIGF)

Wed 22 Aug 2025 | Hybrid| Melia International Cuba | 13:30 - 17:00 (GMT-4)

The 4th Caribbean Youth Internet Governance Forum (CYIGF) will take place as a hybrid event on 20 August 2025 in Varadero, Cuba and precedes the 21st Caribbean Internet Governance Forum (CIGF). Key topics will include leveraging AI and other emerging technologies for digital transformation, discussions on the existing policy and regulatory environment, empowering women in ICTs, and much more! Youth from all over the world are invited to participate, and ensure that the voices of the leaders of tomorrow are heard from today!

See **here** for more info or register **here**.

3rd Meeting of the Caribbean ICT Youth Network (CIYN)

Tue 30 Sep 2025 | Hybrid | Pegasus Hotel Jamaica | 09:00 - 13:00 (GMT-5)

The 3rd meeting of the Caribbean ICT Youth Network (CIYN) will take place as a hybrid event on Tuesday 30 September 2025, as part of CTU's ICT Week Celebrations 2025. This year's meeting will take place in hybrid format: in-person at the Pegasus Hotel, Jamaica, as well as online. It will facilitate capacity building and networking among participants, and serve as a means to set priorities for the 2026 work plan using a bottom-up, membership-driven approach.

We are calling upon youth to register and attend (link to be shared soon), CTU Member States to include youth in their ICT Week delegations, as well as nominate focal points to serve as primary contacts for the CIYN in each of the CTU's 20 Member States. Other CTU Members (Member States, Sector Members, etc.) are also invited to nominate youth to participate in this meeting, as well as consider being sponsors for the CIYN Meeting.

More information will be shared soon on the **CTU ICT Week 2025 Page**.

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In the k-NOW Newsletter

under the CTU's Network of Women (NOW) Initiative

VISION OF CTU's NOW

To lead the charge in creating a strong community of Caribbean Women in ICT to drive profound and impactful transformation across the region. We envision women being equally represented and actively shaping the industry's future.

MISSION OF CTU's NOW

Our mission is to cultivate a supportive and collaborative community that empowers and advances Caribbean Women in ICT and STEM. Through networking, mentoring and professional development opportunities, we strive to promote gender equality, equity and parity by amplifying women's voices, and driving positive change in the industry.

Scan for more info, or visit
https://ctu.int/ctu-now/

Interested in joining the CTU NOW?

Contact CTU Focal Point for ITU's Network of Women, Ms. Francola John, Stakeholder Engagement Specialist now@ctu.int or francola.john@ctu.int (868)-628-0281 Ext. 231