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## IN BRIEF

### ATU CYBERSECURITY SYMPOSIUM CALLS FOR COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO CYBER EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

Accra Technical University (ATU) has called for a comprehensive approach to cybersecurity awareness and education at its Cybersecurity Symposium on Thursday, October 17, 2024, at the University auditorium. The event themed “Empowering the Next Generation Cyber Defenders: Building a Resilient Digital Future,” addressed both national and global cybersecurity challenges, including cybercrime, data protection, and the need for cybersecurity education.



## ATU CYBERSECURITY SYMPOSIUM CALLS FOR COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO CYBER EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

Delivering the keynote address, the Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor Amevi Acakpovi, reiterated ATU's commitment to prioritising cybersecurity in response to the growing digital landscape in Ghana. He noted the significant losses caused by cyberattacks such as phishing, ransomware, and malware, stressing that public data has become a prime target for cybercriminals. Professor Acakpovi called for stronger measures to protect public data and foster public awareness, emphasising the importance of compliance with Ghana's Data Protection Act, which is currently facing enforcement challenges. He further advocated for integrating



cybersecurity education across all academic disciplines, promoting capacity-building initiatives to equip the next generation with the skills to safeguard digital infrastructure.

Mr. Stephen Cudjoe-Seshie, Lead, National Computer Emergency Response Team, Cyber Security Authority (CSA), who represented the Director General, highlighted the pivotal role of information technology in driving innovation but acknowledged the associated risks. He revealed that 36% of Ghanaians have experienced data breaches in recent years, with cybercrimes such as online fraud, WhatsApp hacks, and cyberbullying becoming prevalent. Mr. Cudjoe-Seshie pointed to a troubling shortage of skilled cybersecurity professionals in Ghana, noting that even those available often lack critical expertise in areas such as artificial intelligence (AI), cloud computing,





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incident response, and application security. “There is a growing need for cybersecurity professionals to protect our digital infrastructure, but there’s a significant gap in the necessary skills,” he said. He also outlined the CSA’s efforts to address this gap through targeted programmes for training and licensing cybersecurity experts. Additionally, the CSA has partnered with the Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC) to incorporate cybersecurity into the national education curriculum.

The symposium featured a panel of experts who discussed the need for inclusivity in cybersecurity education. Mr. George Babafemi, a Fintech Consultant and Board Member of eTranzact Ghana Limited, talked about the psychological effects of cybercrime and the need for sensitisation among the public as everyone stands at risk. He spoke about the fear, anxiety and distress surrounding cyber-related crimes and the irreparable damage they cause to people’s lives. Dr. Edward Ansong, a senior lecturer at the Department of Computer Science, University of Ghana, advocated demystifying the perception that cybersecurity is solely a tech career.



He argued that cybersecurity affects all aspects of life and should be embedded in the education system, making it accessible to students across all disciplines. The Panelists agreed on the idea of enhancing education on cybersecurity. Dr. Babafemi stressed the need for all to be vigilant in protecting data. According to him, “data is the new gold” and for every institution that deals with people’s data, it is imperative to prioritize the protection of its data. Dr. Ansong again said that training on cybersecurity should not be relegated to top management but even among the least on the institutional hierarchy. He said that data protection is a collective responsibility. Director of ICT at Accra Technical University,



Dr. Sylvester Hatsu, buttressed this sentiment, calling for revisions to the university’s curriculum to provide short courses and professional certifications in cybersecurity for students outside of traditional science programs. The cyber security Symposium was part of ATU’s celebration of the month of October dedicated to the celebration of Cyber security awareness. The event was a partnership between Accra Technical University and the Cyber Security Authority (CSA) and sponsored by etranzact, Digital Arena, Telingent (Gh) and Improtech



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### ATU ENGINEERING STUDENTS SHOWCASE INNOVATION AT AFRICA SKILLS WEEK 2024

Contingents from Accra Technical University's (ATU) Electrical/Electronic and Mechanical Engineering Departments have taken part in the ongoing Africa Skills Week 2024 at the Palm Convention Centre in Accra.



## ATU ENGINEERING STUDENTS SHOWCASE INNOVATION AT AFRICA SKILLS WEEK 2024

The four-day event, which commenced on October 14, 2024, is organised by the African Union Commission in collaboration with Ghana's Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation. Themed "Skills and Jobs for the 21st Century: Quality Skills Development for Sustainable Employment in Africa," the event brought together key stakeholders to deliberate on strategies to strengthen Africa's skills development ecosystem.



The event attracted policymakers, educators, industry leaders, and stakeholders from across the continent, fostering constructive dialogue on policies and frameworks to enhance skills training in Africa. Activities included a forum for peer learning, workshops, seminars, a youth summit, a study tour, and a skills exhibition.

Students from ATU's Electrical/Electronic and Mechanical Engineering Departments participated in the skills exhibition, displaying innovative projects that portrayed the university's commitment to practical, hands-on training. Their participation showcased ATU's focus on impact-oriented research and skills development, aligning with the broader event theme of equipping young people with the necessary skills to thrive in the rapidly changing job market.



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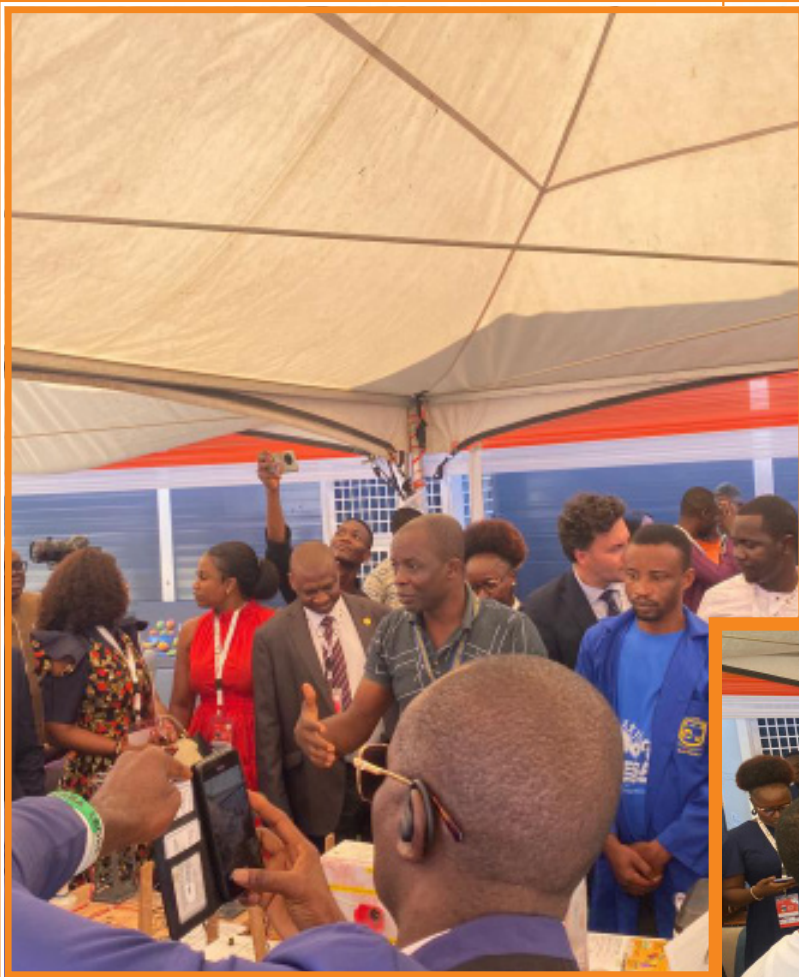
The ATU delegation was led by the Dean of the Faculty of Built Environment, Dr. Bernard Arthur-Aidoo, who praised the event's relevance in highlighting the importance of technical and vocational education in Africa's sustainable development. He stressed the value of regular engagements like Africa Skills Week to foster a skills-driven culture among the continent's youth, crucial for driving both employment and innovation in an evolving global economy.

Africa Skills Week 2024 provided a platform for showcasing the potential of African talent and skills development while facilitating knowledge-sharing among participants to strengthen education systems and labor markets across the continent.





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## IN BRIEF

### ATU FLEXILAB ROADSHOW: STUDENTS COLLABORATE WITH INDUSTRY TO ADDRESS AGRICULTURAL SECTOR CHALLENGES

Accra Technical University has organised its FlexiLab Junior Consultant Roadshow under the BGA Project and supported by BGA, German Cooperation, and AFOS. The event, which was held on October 16, 2024, at the University's Akwaaba Lodge showcased sustainable solutions presented by student project groups, aiming to provide real-world applications of digital tools in addressing societal challenges.



## ATU FLEXILAB ROADSHOW: STUDENTS COLLABORATE WITH INDUSTRY TO ADDRESS AGRICULTURAL SECTOR CHALLENGES

Delivering the keynote address, the Acting Vice-Chancellor of ATU, Professor Amevi Acakpovi, stressed the crucial role of digital tools in solving pressing societal problems. He pointed out that as a Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institution, ATU's mandate is to prepare students with the skills needed to be self-reliant in the job market, particularly in a country facing significant unemployment challenges. He further announced the university's Centre for Entrepreneurship and Incubation Services, (CEIS) which focuses on equipping students with entrepreneurial skills to transform ideas into



sustainable ventures. Professor Ernest Winful, a key member of the project's coordination team, described the Junior Consultant initiative as a platform to promote employability. He noted that the project's primary goal is to provide participants with practical digital skills, preparing them to tackle industry challenges.

Hannah Schlingmann of AFOS expressed her outfit's excitement about being part of the project. She announced the launch of the 4th cohort of the Junior Consultant programme, which will have a special focus on empowering young women by raising awareness and facilitating placement services within the global workforce. The event featured presentations by Junior Consultants, who had spent the previous two to three weeks developing digital solutions to challenges



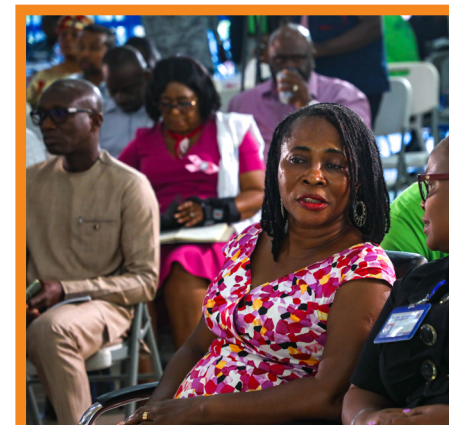
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faceted by companies in the agricultural sector. These students collaborated with companies such as SPEG, SHEPAG, and ASPEG to design mobile applications and websites aimed at addressing operational issues within the sector.

Christopher Mars from BGA German Cooperation shared his experience of working with the Junior Consultants, expressing his satisfaction with the solutions presented and encouraging more stakeholders to support the initiative in achieving its long-term goals.

The FlexiLab Junior Consultant Roadshow forms part of the broader BGA Project, which is backed by BGA, AFOS, and Accra Technical University, aiming to equip students with practical digital skills to solve industry-specific challenges.







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### ATU 2024 VIRTUAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME (VIP) COMMENCES IN EARNEST

The Vice-Chancellor of Accra Technical University, Prof. Amevi Acakpovi has launched the 2024 Virtual Internship Programme for students to acquire work experience in a simulated environment.



## ATU 2024 VIRTUAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME (VIP) COMMENCES IN EARNEST

The programme, under the auspices of the Industrial Liaison Directorate, officially kicked off with a brief ceremony at the University Auditorium on September 24, 2024. Mr. Prosper Agumey, Director of Industrial Liaison, delivering the purpose of the gathering, explained that the programme was created to address the difficulties most students encounter while applying for internships.

Prof. Amevi, in his remarks, Professor Amevi Acakpovi, in his remarks at the stressed the institution's dedication to innovation and excellence in education, particularly in the context of its Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) mandate. He highlighted that virtual internships provide students with valuable hands-on experience, bridging the gap between academia and industry, and offering flexibility that makes the experience more inclusive. He noted that such internships align with the global shift towards digital transformation, equipping students with essential skills for the modern workforce. "This flexibility makes internships more inclusive," he stated, underscoring how it allows students to overcome geographic and logistical barriers. Professionalism and discipline while undertaking their internships. "The world is your stage, and the skills you gain here will not only serve you well in your careers but also contribute to the development of our nation," he encouraged. He counselled students to





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make the most of the programme, treat it like they would in a conventional work environment, and abide by all the rules and regulations governing it.

Professor Acakpovi also thanked industry partners for their support, noting their crucial role in shaping the next generation of skilled professionals. “This period of the virtual internship is not a free period. You need to be there on time and close on time. You can’t be absent as you want”, he stressed, adding that the overall programme counts towards students’ credits which will be added to their results in the coming semester. He also advised participating students to be disciplined and show maximum respect to their trainers.

The programme was graced by representatives from organisations billed to offer practical training to participating students. The VIP is an annual programme instituted for displaced students during internship allocation, an opportunity to be practically equipped in a simulated work environment.





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### DEPUTY EDUCATION MINISTER LAUDS ATU FOR ADVANCING TVET AND STEM

The Deputy Minister of Education in charge of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), Professor Kingsley Nyarko, has praised Accra Technical University (ATU) for its remarkable strides in promoting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education and technical training. His commendation came during a visit to the university on Tuesday, October 8, 2024, as part of an ongoing initiative to evaluate the progress of TVET institutions across the nation.



## DEPUTY EDUCATION MINISTER LAUDS ATU FOR ADVANCING TVET AND STEM

During the visit, Prof. Nyarko lauded ATU's commitment to blending practical training with academic knowledge, a key element of STEM education. He noted that the university plays a critical role in preparing the future workforce with the hands-on skills essential for Ghana's industrial growth. His tour included stops at important university facilities such as the TV studio, the Amatrol Lab, and the Drone Center, all of which reflect ATU's progress in integrating modern technology into its curriculum.

Prof. Nyarko emphasised the significance of these facilities in narrowing the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, especially in today's rapidly evolving industrial environment. "The skills that students acquire here are crucial in preparing them to meet workforce demands," he stated.

Additionally, the Deputy Minister visited other key centres, where he was briefed on various innovative projects currently being undertaken by the university. He highlighted that ATU's pioneering efforts in technical education place it at the forefront of Ghana's STEM and TVET advancement.

The Acting Vice-Chancellor of ATU, Professor Amevi Acakpovi, expressed gratitude for the Deputy Minister's visit and his encouraging remarks. He reiterated that the university's dedication to STEM and TVET aligns with the government's vision for technological and industrial development.





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“Your recognition reinforces our commitment to remain leaders in TVET education. We take pride in contributing to the nation’s development by equipping our students with the necessary skills and knowledge for the future,” Professor Acakpovi remarked.

Prof. Nyarko assured the university of the Ministry’s continued support, stressing that ATU’s advancements in STEM and TVET are vital to the country’s educational and economic aspirations. He reaffirmed that the Ministry would continue collaborating with institutions like ATU to ensure that technical education remains robust and responsive to the needs of a technology-driven economy.

As a leader in practical, hands-on education, Accra Technical University continues to enhance its capabilities in training students across various technical fields, making a significant contribution to Ghana’s industrial and economic development. The Deputy Minister’s acknowledgement of these achievements underscores the importance of TVET and STEM education in shaping the nation’s future.





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