

LREC 2006

Call for Papers

Pre-Conference Workshop: 22 May 2006 (14:30 – 20:00)

Networking the development of language resources for African languages

African countries are faced with multiple challenges in bridging the digital divide. Research and development within most of these countries very often take place in an isolated fashion – this is surely true of R & D in the field of Human Language Technologies, specifically with respect to local languages.

The workshop will focus on African languages *per se*, which is motivated by the wide range of typological commonalities between these languages and their special features in relation to other languages (e.g. both lexical and morphosyntactic tone; noun classes etc.). Furthermore, there is already a large body of resources available, *inter alia*, for the development of HLT applications in the African languages that could be reported on.

Broad aim:

To develop an **academic network** for sharing ideas, and for cooperation in the development of resources and tools for the African languages which may entail regional workshops, conferences, training courses etc. This network should be supported by a **physical network** (a dedicated server and web-site) to facilitate regular interaction between role players in Africa and globally.

It is our aim to place this network on the agenda of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (**NEPAD**) initiative which, among other issues, focuses on the development of knowledge networks in Africa (Cf. <http://www.nepad.org/>).

Specific aim:

To acquire adequate and reliable information on existing resources and tools in each of the regions (Western, Eastern, Central and Southern Africa), **submissions for oral or poster presentations are invited on the following topics of interest:**

- Principles and practices regarding resource development for African languages in particular.
- Current state of resource development in particular countries / regions.
- Development of applicable software in the African language context.
- Standardisation and resource development.
- Challenges in setting up academic and physical networks for co-operation in this field.
- Methods of making the resources available to the research community at large.

Oral presentations of **15 minutes** maximum are foreseen, followed by a facilitated discussion session.

Important dates

- 15 February 2006:** Submission of abstracts for oral/poster presentations (max 600 words).
- 1 March 2006:** Notification of acceptance.
- 1 April 2006:** Submission of camera ready papers (max 6 pages - details to follow).
- 7 April 2006:** Provisional programme available.

Submissions are to be made by e-mail directly to Justus Roux at jcr@sun.ac.za

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Organising Committee:

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