

# African tech firms invited to join UK-led growth project

- Application process underway as government ministers and business leaders attend first ever UK-Africa Investment Summit
- Africa has a fast-growing tech sector which is driving growth and creating jobs on the continent

Some of Africa's most innovative start-ups are invited to take part in a global tech project to take their businesses and ideas to the next level.

Go Global Africa, a scheme run by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport through its International Tech Hub Network, aims to build links with the UK's thriving digital sector and pave the way for future economic partnerships.

The successful programme, which first launched last year, is currently open to firms from Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa developing tech solutions in finance, agriculture, health and clean energy.

Entrepreneurs who have developed products that are ready to go to market and already raised investment are invited to apply.

Digital Minister Matt Warman said:

Africa is home to a rapidly growing tech sector and it is great to welcome leading figures from across the continent to the UK-Africa Investment summit.

Through the Go Global Africa project we are giving entrepreneurs the support they need to grow their business and benefit from the UK's world-leading tech and innovation expertise. This will allow them to continue developing technology to improve lives around the world.

I encourage all those with the talent and ambition to succeed to apply for a place on this exciting project.

Africa is home to a rapidly growing tech sector. Its start-ups raised 50 per cent more venture capital in 2017 than in 2016. The majority of this is being invested in South Africa (£130 million), Kenya (£114 million) and Nigeria (£89 million).

Nigeria's tech sector generates more than 10 per cent of the country's economic output and the sector is projected to create three million jobs and generate £67.4 billion for the economy by 2021.

Kenya's technology sector is growing rapidly and is worth more than 11

percent of the country's economic output. It is considered one of the most vibrant, advanced and successful in Africa.

South Africa attracted a record amount of investment in tech of any African country in 2017. It raised almost £128m and research by the World Economic Forum ranks it as the best place to do business in Africa.

The Digital Access Programme aims to boost digital skills and connectivity and build the cybersecurity capacity of partner countries. It will also help create a thriving digital ecosystem that will stimulate innovation to address local development challenges, create skilled jobs and generate partnerships between the UK and Africa.

The launch of [Go Global Africa 2020](#) coincides with the start of the UK-Africa Investment Summit in London which will bring together businesses, governments and international institutions to showcase and promote investment opportunities across Africa.

Attendees include the participants of the [Africa-UK: Female Tech Founders 2020](#) programme which will see 15 of Africa's most ambitious women entrepreneurs visit the UK for a three-day programme to learn how to grow their business, access world-class mentoring from UK tech leaders and network with investors.

## **Notes to editors**

For media queries please contact 0207 211 2090.

For interview opportunities with one of the female tech founders are available for interview, please contact the above number.

Today's launch follows the first successful Go Global Africa programme last year which saw eighteen ambitious tech startups from Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa visit London. They exchanged ideas, learned how to scale and grow their business, and showcased their innovations across fintech, healthtech, agritech and waste to investors and leading figures from the UK's tech sector.

South African fintech company GLU, graduates of Go Global Africa 2019, landed two more significant global (Africa/Europe) deals resulting in a positive cash flow position and allowed them to expand their team.

The successful African startups from Go Global Africa 2020 will be expected to act as Go Global champions and share the skills they have learned with other firms across the continent. This will help spread digital skills, digital capability and increase entrepreneurial spirit, creating jobs and prosperity.

According to the World Economic Forum, Africa's early-stage entrepreneurial activity is 13 percent higher than the global average. Lagos, Nairobi and Cape Town have emerged as internationally recognised technology centers, hosting thousands of startups and organisations that support them, including the Tech Hubs.

The scheme will help firms in the host country make links with UK start-ups in new markets and benefit from the expertise in our booming tech ecosystem, which according to Tech Nation is worth £184 billion to the economy every year.

The government announced the UK-Nigeria, UK-Kenya and UK-South Africa tech hubs in August 2018. The hubs are one pillar of a broader Digital Access Programme which aims to boost digital inclusion across Africa.

## **Outline of Go Global Africa 2020**

Judges will select the most promising start-ups at events in Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa where shortlisted firms will benefit from a 3-day masterclass. Here they will learn key business skills, gain technical expertise and bespoke mentoring from experienced entrepreneurs to help them scale their business.

Winners from the events will then be invited to travel to the UK in March 2020. Start-ups will benefit from a five-day training programme designed to improve their business skills, build links with the UK's thriving digital sector and pave the way for future economic partnerships.

## **Africa-UK: Female Tech Founders participants**

### **Nigeria**

- Damilola Olokesusi, Shuttlers Mobility
- Ifeoma Hope Uddoh, Shecluded
- Damilola Emuze, ScholarX
- Funmi Adewara, Mobihealth International
- Keturah Ovio, Limestart

### **Kenya**

- Lucy Njuguna, Nurse in Hand Emergency Response
- Nyambura Kamau, Viwanda Africa Group
- Muthoni Masinde, Itiki
- Kate Kiguru, Ukall Apps
- Cindy Adem, Village2nation

### **South Africa**

- Tebogo Mokwena, Akiba Digital
- Nobukhosi Diamini, Bahati Tech
- Mandisa Mjamba, Relay Africa
- Jaishree Naidoo, Envisionit
- Tina Fisher, Snapsave