

2021 AWIEF Awards winners announced

The Africa Women Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum (AWIEF) has announced the winners of the 2021 AWIEF Awards.



Margaret Hirsh, winner of the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2021 AWIEF Awards.

Source: Africa Women Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum (AWIEF)

Many inspirational and outstanding African women entrepreneurs excelled this year in creating opportunities and positively impacting lives and communities, driving growth for Africa. Out of the 24 powerful women founders and entrepreneurs selected as top finalists by an independent panel of judges, eight winners were announced at the awards ceremony that took place at the Marriott Hotel Melrose Arch in Johannesburg on 3 December 2021, with some of the attendees in-person and the rest of the audience virtually watching the ceremony from across African countries and beyond.

Each year the AWIEF Awards recognise, honour and celebrate amazing women entrepreneurs and business owners in Africa and across industry sectors, for their economic performance and contribution to Africa's growth and social development. AWIEF salutes these women for their passion and determination in making a difference in their countries and on the continent.

An independent panel of judges last month selected 24 outstanding women entrepreneurs, as top finalists for the 2021 AWIEF Awards, from over 600 entries and nominations received. The 24 top finalists represented women-owned businesses operating in 11 African countries: Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

It was an absolute delight to judge the AWIEF Awards once again this year. The standard and quality of the nominations and businesses continue to be high,” said Judge Birgitta Cederstrom, Frost & Sullivan’s business development director for Middle East and Africa.

The winners of the 2021 AWIEF Awards in the eight different categories are:

- **Young Entrepreneur Award:** Tao Boyle, cofounder and COO of FoondaMate (South Africa)
- **Creative Industry Award:** Cynthia Asije, creative director at The Adirelounge (Nigeria)
- **Tech Entrepreneur Award:** Ivy Barley, cofounder of Developers in Vogue Foundation (Ghana)
- **Agri Entrepreneur Award:** Hadia M. Gondji, founder and MD of Hadiya Seed Production and Agro Industry Plc (Ethiopia)
- **Energy Entrepreneur Award:** Josephine Takundwa, CEO of Earthlink Technologies (Zimbabwe)
- **Social Entrepreneur Award:** Gudula Naiga Basaza, MD of Gudie Leisure Farm (Uganda)
- **Empowerment Award:** Djénéba Gory, cofounder and COO of Suadela (Mali)
- **Lifetime Achievement Award:** Margaret Hirsch, cofounder and executive director of Hirsch's Homestores (South Africa)

Margareth Hirsch felt honoured to win the Lifetime Achievement Award and had an encouraging message for all female entrepreneurs out there: “My mission was to become financially independent so I could make my own choices. We women must become our own financial persons. We are all winners, let us be strong and take over. Know that it is possible. I also started small as an entrepreneur. Have faith and persevere, knowing it can be done.”

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