

Startup challenges you need to know about

Africa's best startups and innovators will be descending on the Mother City for the AfricArena Summit, taking place from 11-12 November 2019.



It is here that they will showcase their products to an audience of international and local investors looking for world-class talent and solutions to some of the most pressing issues impacting the continent.

These startups will be the finalists in the following eight challenges that are currently accepting submissions:

- **SA Startup Nation Challenge**

A joint initiative between AfricArena and the SA SME Fund, the SA Startup Nation Challenge is geared towards tech-based small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) in South Africa that have a high potential for scale.

Twelve companies with the most innovative and distinctive products will be selected to pitch at the AfricArena Tour events on Tuesday, 3 September in Cape Town at Workshop17 at the V&A Waterfront, and in Johannesburg on Tuesday, 10 September at Impact Hub in Rosebank.

The five startups with the best pitches and products will then be flown to Cape Town to pitch and show off their offerings at the Summit. The top three to wow the judges will be taken to Paris, France next year to present their work at one of the largest tech conferences in the world, VIVA Technology.

Submission deadline: Sunday, 1 September 2019.

- **Hello Tomorrow Global Challenge**

With a €100,000 equity-free grand prize for the best early-stage startup up for grabs, the Hello Tomorrow Global Challenge is a deep tech startup competition concentrating on early-stage startups with projects based on a scientific discovery, an advanced technology, a complex engineering process or an innovative application of an existing technology.

These projects should solve an industrial, societal or environmental unmet need or create a new market. Along with €3,000 in prize money, the winner of the Africa Challenge will receive a return flight ticket to Paris to attend the Global Summit and participate in the Global Challenge. Last year's winner of the AfricArena Deep Tech/Hello Tomorrow Challenge, RxAll, went on to win the overall competition.

Submission deadline: Friday, 13 September 2019.

- **Sanofi Mental Illness Challenge For Start-ups**

French multinational pharmaceutical company, Sanofi, has teamed up with AfricArena to find solutions from startups that use tech to empower patients and communities by growing education and awareness, debunking stigma and driving early diagnosis to enable proactive care.

In addition to possibly getting to showcase their product at VIVA Technology 2020, the winner will receive mentorship from Sanofi South Africa on developing their brand and offering.

Submission deadline: Friday, 13 September 2019.

- **ENGIE Africa Challenge 2019**

The lack of affordable, safe and sustainable resources to cook food is a key challenge affecting over 800 million people throughout Africa.

To help develop a clean cooking energy solution, ENGIE - a French multinational electric utility company - is looking to partner with and support an African tech startup. Depending on the maturity of the solution, the winner will receive funding from ENGIE for prototype development.

Should the product already be in the testing phase, they will be able to test the efficiency and viability of their solution

in the relevant environment within ENGIE's African business framework over a period of six months.

Based on the results of the testing phase, this may result in the solution's integration into the ENGIE Africa business portfolio and further co-development of the project.

Carole Henry, Head of Innovation and New Business at ENGIE Africa, says: "Africa is clearly a land of innovation and entrepreneurship and ENGIE Africa is determined to support the new tech breakthrough to help solve energy access problems. The AfricArena challenge is an opportunity for ENGIE to promote African new tech and explore disruptive solutions that combine affordability and energy efficiency."

Submission deadline: Sunday, 1 September 2019.

- **French Tech Challenge**

Sponsored by the French Embassy in South Africa, the French Tech Challenge is aimed at startups from the tech ecosystem in France operating in the AI, Robotics or Augmented or Virtual Reality domains and focused on scaling up on the African continent, as well as providing their product and services to the African market.

There will be not one, not two, but three winners in this challenge who will get to tap into AfricArena and the French Embassy's networks and connect with key players in the African tech ecosystem.

Submission deadline: Thursday, 5 September 2019.

- **Sanofi Diabetes Challenge For Start-ups**

With diabetes being the second leading cause of death in South Africa, Sanofi and AfricArena are asking startups: How can we help diabetes patients to live healthier lifestyles by providing education and support to master their treatment, diet, exercise and emotional wellbeing?

Innovative solutions that use tech and have a tested prototype are being sought. The winner will get to work with Sanofi South Africa on growing their brand and offering, as well as attend VIVA Technology 2020.

Submission deadline: Friday, 13 September 2019.

- **Old Mutual Challenge**

The informal sector in South Africa is made up of more than 10 million people, the majority of whom do not have access to financial services products.

To address the problems that exist in distributing financial services products to this market segment, as well as collect payment for these services on an ongoing basis, the Old Mutual Start-up Challenge is on the lookout for solutions in savings, insurance and/or lending that enable them to get cash into the formal digital financial services system.

Startups stand the chance of showcasing their solution at VIVA Technology 2020 and the opportunity to work with Old Mutual on developing their brand and offering.

Submission deadline: Friday, 13 September 2019.

- **Fantom Foundation Blockchain Challenge**

Wanting to create a better, smarter future, Fantom, in partnership with ZAR Network, is on the hunt for innovative

fintech startups that will solve problems for smart cities, public utilities, healthcare, education, environmental stability and financial markets using smart contracts and stable coins.

The winning startup will get to meet the Fantom and ZAR Network teams and, depending on the stage of their business, will undergo incubation, acceleration or internationalisation. Plus, they will win prizes to the value of \$10,000.

Submission deadline: Friday, 13 September 2019.

AfricArena founder, Christophe Viarnaud says, “The startups taking part in these challenges not only have the opportunity to scale exponentially but to also have their products unleashed on a global stage. We are excited to be a part of showcasing and promoting African tech excellence, particularly amongst key figures in the international and African tech innovation ecosystem, investors, corporates and institutions.”

To enter any of the challenges or to purchase tickets to attend the AfricArena Summit where the crème de la crème of the continent’s startups will be showcasing their solutions, go to www.africarena.com.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>