

# Vodacom Digital Accelerator launches

Telecommunication company, Vodacom Tanzania and Smart Lab have launched "Vodacom Digital Accelerator," a program that intends to help early-stage and growth-stage technology startups become profitable and revenue-generating businesses.



Vodacom Tanzania's managing director, Hisham Hendi speaking at the launch of Vodacom Digital Accelerator.

Source: APO

The new program, which will run yearly, aims at identifying and supporting startup entrepreneurs in mobile, telecom, fintech, media, health, education, and e-commerce will have three phases which include application, selection and acceleration.

Speaking at the launch event, Vodacom Tanzania's managing director, Hisham Hendi said that the partnership between Vodacom Tanzania and Smartcodes is a crucial move towards providing opportunities to startup businesses via technological paths which will result into workable business models which will benefit communities, especially scores of youth across the country. He encouraged more youth to be innovative and take advantage of this opportunity as a path to economic empowerment through solving social developmental issues in their communities.

*“ Vodacom always aims to create impactful sustainable change in the society where we operate in line with our strategic business focus and, the Vodacom Accelerator aims to do just that,” ”*

He further elaborated that as a company which aims at taking Tanzanians into the digital world, Vodacom Tanzania encourages technology driven ideas that bring sustainable change.

“Digital technology is not only changing the way we do business in Africa but also revolutionising the way we perceive and solve issues of development. It is therefore with great honor that we will once again create an opportunity for such ideas to be recognised, supported and transformed to maximise social impact”, he said.

He also added, “Vodacom has partnered with Smart Lab, a well-known innovation hub that aims to bring tangible results that will disrupt the innovation eco-system. So, this will be an opportunity for startups and innovators in the selected criteria to showcase their products and also gain from the platform including exclusive partnership deals with Vodacom, mentorship, technical assistance, marketing and exposure to Vodacom and Smart Lab’s large network of partners and finally customers to test and experience their solutions’.

Smart Codes chief executive officer, Edwin Bruno added, “the innovation community has mushroomed in Tanzania from just a handful of hubs in 2011 to more than 45 in 2019 but there has been a slower involvement from the corporate side whereas Vodacom in this partnership with Smart Lab will lead in bridging that gap. We look forward to a tech-evolved-future for Tanzania that is full of disruptive solutions which will positively impact the coming generations.”

During the program, which also aims at leveraging corporate resources, networks, mentors, and partners, participants will present their progress to a panel of investors and associates at the end of a three-month acceleration period from which winners will get further support from Vodacom Tanzania Plc, Smart Lab, and partners for an added period of six months.

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