

ANPI announces top 10 finalists

Spearheaded by the Jack Ma Foundation, the Africa Netpreneur Prize Initiative (ANPI) has identified the top 10 finalists for its grand finale event taking place in Accra, Ghana on 16 November 2019.



The finalists were chosen from nearly 10,000 applicants from 50 African countries. After months of judging and deliberation, the finalists were shortlisted and will now go on to pitch their business directly to four finale judges - Jack Ma, founder of Alibaba Group and the Jack Ma Foundation; Strive Masiyiwa, founder and executive chairman of Econet Group; Ibukun Awosika, chairman of First Bank of Nigeria and founder/CEO of The Chair Centre Group; and Joe Tsai, executive vice-chairman of Alibaba Group - during a televised finale event called “Africa’s Business Heroes”. The winners will receive a share of the \$1 million grant prize pool.

The Jack Ma Foundation will host a full-day Africa Netpreneur Summit, an invitation-only conference where African and global entrepreneurs, investors, educators, and leaders will convene to discuss how best to enable entrepreneurship and the digital economy across the continent. Guest speakers at the conference will include Ban Ki-moon, former UN Secretary General and co-chair of the Ban Ki-moon Centre for Global Citizens. The conference will be followed by the “Africa’s Business Heroes” event in the evening.

“We launched the Africa Netpreneur Prize Initiative to identify top entrepreneurs from across the continent, not only to reward them but to inspire a whole new generation of potential game-changers for Africa. I have been inspired by the entrepreneurs I met in Africa, many of whom are dealing with the same challenges we faced when we started Alibaba years ago. I truly believe the potential of Africa’s business heroes is limitless,” said Jack Ma.

The diverse group of 10 finalists represent a range of industries and experience.

Meet the finalists

- **Waleed Abd El Rahman, CEO, [Mumm](#) (Egypt)**

Mumm is a virtual cafeteria for businesses, harnessing the power of shared economy through technology, cloud kitchens and an online marketplace for home-based entrepreneurial cooks. Waleed is a seasoned entrepreneur with 12+ years in food tech. He is also the former founding managing director of MIT Technology Review-Middle East and a member of the Advisory Committee of the World Economic Forum's Global Shapers Community.

- **Ayodeji Arikawe, co-founder, [Thrive Agric](#) (Nigeria)**

Thrive Agric is an agricultural technology-enabled company that works with smallholder farmers to enable them with greater access to finance, as well as improve their income and harvest distribution.

Today, Thrive Agric works with 22,000 farmers in Nigeria, but the company is aiming to build the largest network of farmers in Africa. They are on a mission to "build an Africa that feeds the world and itself." Ayodeji is an accomplished software engineer and serves as both co-founder and CTO for Thrive Agric.

- **Temie Giwa-Tubosun, founder and CEO, [LifeBank](#) (Nigeria)**

LifeBank is a medical distribution company that uses data and technology to help health workers discover critical medical products. The company has saved over 5,300 lives in Nigeria.

Temie has over 10 years of health-management experience with Department for International Development, the World Health Organisation, the United Nations Development Programme and Lagos State. In 2014, BBC listed her as one of the 100 women changing the world. She was also recognised by Quartz and the World Economic Forum.

- **Mahmud Johnson, founder and CEO, [J-Palm](#) (Liberia)**

J-Palm Liberia (JPL) was founded with the goal of making premium consumer goods while creating income-earning and employment opportunities through sustainable palm-oil production. When JPL was first founded, palm oil kernels had been going to waste in Liberia, but Johnson found a way to innovate productive uses for this overlooked natural resource.

Today, JPL has created a range of beauty and clean-energy products, built a robust network of partnerships across the country, and helped to create jobs for hundreds of Liberians. Mahmud holds a degree in economics from Dartmouth College and is a 2017 recipient of the Order of the Star of Africa conferred by the President of Liberia.

- **Kevine Kagirimpundu, co-founder and CEO, [UZURI K&Y](#) (Rwanda)**

UZURI K&Y is an African-inspired eco-friendly shoe brand established in Rwanda. Kagirimpundu is passionate about ending global waste while also leveraging her creativity to create employment opportunities for her community. UZURI has made a direct impact on more than 750 people through employment and skills training.

In addition to obtaining her degree in creative design, she has participated in numerous entrepreneurship programs to enhance her skills in business development. In 2017, she was recognised as the winner of the Made in Rwanda Enterprise of the Year.

- **Christelle Kwizera, founder, [Water Access Rwanda](#) (Rwanda)**

Water Access Rwanda pioneered INUMA, a safe water microgrid that reclaims broken boreholes and transforms them into solar-powered water kiosks and pipelines. The water is sold for \$1/1000 litre and creates off-farm jobs for youth.

Currently, Water Access Rwanda employs 68 people and allows 47,612 customers to access water daily across 86 stations. Kwizera is a mechanical engineer and was named INCO's woman entrepreneur of the year in 2019, among other high-profile awards.

- **Dr. Tosan J. Mogbeyiteren, founder, [Black Swan](#) (Nigeria)**

WeMUNIZE by Black Swan Tech Ltd is helping to solve Nigeria's public-health challenges by deploying automated scheduling, GPS-enabled software-as-a-service that uses a combination of digital record keeping and community engagement to increase birth registration and early childhood immunisations.

Black Swan is working with USAID Nigeria to expand WeMUNIZE coverage in northern Nigeria. Mogbeyiteren is a public-health specialist with more than 13 years of experience in deploying technology to solve development challenges in Nigeria.

- **Chibuzo Opara, co-founder, [DrugStoc](#) (Nigeria)**

DrugStoc is a cloud-based pharmaceutical IT and logistics platform focused on eliminating counterfeit drugs, expanding access to pharmaceutical products and improving transparency in pricing for healthcare providers and the product supply chain. Opara is a health economist and medical doctor with over 12 years of experience in the health sector. He has worked with the World Health Organisation, the World Bank, and the International Finance Corporation.

- **Dr. Omar Sakr, founder and CEO, [Nawah-Scientific](#) (Egypt)**

Nawah-Scientific is a private research centre in the MENA region focused on natural and biomedical sciences that offer analytical and scientific services online and on-demand. Dr. Sakr has 13 years of pharmaceutical experience, has worked as an adjunct assistant professor of entrepreneurship at Zewail City of Science and Technology, and holds scientific and business awards for innovative product design.

- **Moulaye Taboure, co-founder and CEO, [Afrikrea](#) (Cote D'Ivoire)**

Afrikrea.com is a "Made of Africa" fashion, art and handicraft online marketplace. The marketplace has processed more than \$4 million in sales across 101 countries and supports merchants from all over the world. After growing up in Mali and working for companies like PricewaterhouseCoopers and Alstom, Taboure now dedicates his time to building the global infrastructure for African culture.