

Investing in African innovation

The African Innovation Foundation (AIF) driver of The Innovation Prize for Africa (IPA), has launched the sixth edition of the IPA awards by calling for applications to the prestigious innovation competition.



The competition once again offers Africa's top crop of innovators a share in a grand prize of US\$150 000 and additional scalable entrepreneurial opportunities. Enterprises and individuals that have invested in delivering market-oriented solutions for African-led development are especially invited to take part in the competition.

The call for entries runs for three months, starting 27 September 2016 with a submission deadline of 3 January 2017. The IPA is looking for applications in social and economic innovation including manufacturing and service industry, health and well-being, agriculture and agri-business, environment, energy and water, and ICT showcasing ground-breaking innovations. IPA also welcomes innovations beyond the scope of these sectors.

Pauline Mujawamariya Koelbl, the IPA director commented: "We are extremely pleased to officially launch the IPA 2017 edition for African innovators. We strongly believe that investing in today's home-grown innovations will propel tomorrow's prosperity for Africa."

Investing in African prosperity

The theme for IPA 2017 is 'African innovation: Investing in prosperity'. In line with the United Nations (UN) Sustainable

Development Goal (SDG) No. 9, which calls on countries to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation, AIF believes that funding streams, investment and resources are critical to obtain a clear value chain for innovation in Africa, contributing to sustainable development.

Walter Fust, chairman of the AIF Board states: “IPA has demonstrated that African innovation talent is abundant, but funding and resources remain a challenge. For IPA 2017, we are expanding our outreach beyond innovators to include investors and other key movers and shakers across the innovation landscape to help address this challenge. To meet this objective of increasing support to individual innovators, makers, training institutions, existing hubs and networks, the IPA will offer sponsorship opportunities to investors and other innovation enablers who can demonstrate their commitment to support the building of more robust African innovation ecosystems.”

Why enter IPA 2017?

IPA is a leading platform on the African innovation landscape with a network of 6000+ African innovators spanning 50 countries. Its core goal is to strengthen African innovation ecosystems through its platforms and mobilise a network of innovation enablers, driving business development and cross-collaboration.

Now in its sixth year running, IPA is open to all Africans living in Africa or the diaspora. In addition to the lucrative US\$150 000 cash prize, IPA is more than a mere competition. The 10 nominees are featured at the IPA 2017 event, along with lucrative entrepreneurial opportunities such as funding, communications training, active participation in the IPA network of innovators and innovation enablers, publicity in Africa and beyond across major media channels, business opportunities, as well as collaboration with enablers and investors to shape potential innovations for viable business success.

[Last year's winners](#) were selected from nearly 1,000 entries across 46 countries, reflecting the truly Pan-African flavour of the competition. Previous IPA editions were held in Botswana (2016), Morocco (2015), Nigeria (2014), South Africa (2013) and Ethiopia (2012). IPA was endorsed at its inaugural edition in Addis Ababa in 2012 where African ministers at the joint Africa Union (AU) and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) passed a resolution to support AIF to promote innovation-based societies across the continent.

IPA 2017 winners will be announced at an annual awards ceremony in July 2017 (exact dates and country to be confirmed). The Awards bring together innovative talent from multi-disciplinary sectors, as well as media practitioners, investors, innovation hubs and technology parks, government institutions and innovators.

For more details, see the new IPA website www.InnovationPrizeforAfrica.org.

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