

Finalists in Africa women entrepreneurship awards announced

The Africa Women Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum (AWIEF), has announced the top finalists in its annual awards to celebrate women leaders and entrepreneurs in Africa.



The Africa Women Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum Awards' finalists have been announced.

Promoting excellence in entrepreneurship and innovation amongst women-owned businesses in all sectors and across all 54 African countries is the aim of AWIEF, which celebrates the five-year anniversary of its benchmarking annual Conference and Expo this year. The Awards take place on the last evening of the two-day event, October 29-30, 2019, in Cape Town.

“Women-owned businesses are a vital part of our African economy and the women of Africa are our most valuable, untapped resource,” commented Irene Ochem, AWIEF founder and chief executive officer. “Each year the entries to the AWIEF Awards grow in number and this response signifies the importance of recognising and celebrating women in Africa for their achievements and contribution to Africa’s economic and sustainable development.

“Women-owned businesses are growing on the continent and are a vital part of Africa’s future and seven out of 10 of the fastest growing economies in the world, are to be found in Africa. Africa is rising and we must make sure the women of the continent, the backbone of our communities and our families, are given the opportunities to rise as well,” said Ochem.

Twenty-two women founders and entrepreneurs have been selected as finalists, from different African countries, across eight different categories. The AWIEF Awards' panel of judges is made up of high-calibre industry experts and thought leaders spread across the continent.

Birgitta Cederstrom, Frost & Sullivan's Business Development Director for MEA and this year's head judge for AWIEF, said: "The judging panel has had some very busy weeks where we reviewed over 200 shortlists for consideration and we are delighted to see the high standard and quality of entries coming through to AWIEF. This is one of the most robust and independent jury-based Awards programmes that currently is offered in Africa, and we are thrilled to support female entrepreneurs."

Awards event

The [AWIEF Awards winners](#) will be announced at a gala dinner on 30 October 2019, following on from the 2019 AWIEF Conference and Exhibition taking place on 29-30 October 2019 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre, Cape Town. The theme this year is: *Enhancing impact: digitalisation, investment and intra-Africa trade*. Sponsors this year include: Shell, CTA, Nedbank, Bank of Industry Nigeria, AGRA, and City of Cape Town. Frost & Sullivan is AWIEF Awards Auditing Partner.

"Our finalists were rigorously assessed in terms of the sustainability of their businesses, as well as the documented or prospective impact on community development and the economy," explained Ochem.

"Given the huge number and quality of the nominations received this year for the AWIEF Awards, I must say that female entrepreneurship is strong and thriving all across African countries," Ochem emphasised, when announcing the finalists.

New award

This year a new award has been introduced in partnership with APO Group, the leading media relations consultancy and press release distribution service in Africa and the Middle East, which is also principal media partner and official newswire to the AWIEF Conference this year. In honour of the partnership, APO Group is the founding sponsor of a new award: [The African Women in Media Award](#), to honour and celebrate women journalists who support women's entrepreneurship across the continent.

"AWIEF remains Africa's number one voice in driving the agenda for women's leadership in business. The AWIEF brand has grown tremendously over these few years through the sustained support of our trusted partners, local and international, underscoring the great values of AWIEF programmes and projects in accelerating women entrepreneurship as a catalyst of inclusive economic growth," Ochem said.

Finalists

The finalists for the [2019 AWIEF Awards](#) are:

YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR AWARD

Beatrice Haule, AfriAgric Products (Tanzania)
Lola Alli, Lagos Executive Cardiovascular Clinic (Nigeria)
Ola (Orekunrin) Brown, Flying Doctors (Nigeria)

TECH ENTREPRENEUR AWARD

Caroline Corbett, SmartBlade (South Africa)
Rebecca Enonchong, AppsTech (Cameroon)
Diane Temogne, Engineering Consulting and Services (Cameroon)

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR AWARD

Sizani Ngubane, Rural Women's Movement (South Africa)
Efua Asibon, Dislabelled (Ghana)
Laurence Esteve, Zip Zap (South Africa)

GLOBAL BRAND AWARD

Shantelle Booysen, Elim Spa Products (South Africa)

AGRI ENTREPRENEUR AWARD

Evelyn Namara, Vouch Digital (Uganda)
Caroline Pomeyie, ProFish (Ghana)
Affiong Williams, ReelFruit (Nigeria)

EMPOWERMENT AWARD

Mary Inzofu, Njia Empowerment Organisation (Kenya)
Nambula Kachumi, WeCreate (Zambia)
Charlot Magayi, Mukuru Clean Stoves (Kenya)

CREATIVE INDUSTRY AWARD

Kapasa Musonda, Mangishi Doll Co. (Zambia)
Genet Kebede, Paradise Fashion (Ethiopia)
Abby Ikomi, House of Irawo (Nigeria)

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Kristine Pearson, Lifeline Energy (South Africa)
Oumou Sangaré, Festival International du Wassulu (Mali)
Joke Silva, LUFODO Group (Nigeria)

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