



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa



AfriLabs

Call for Applications:

Africa Youth SDG Innovation Award

Are you a young African entrepreneur who has developed an innovative solution with a demonstrated positive impact on the achievement of the SDGs on the continent? If yes, this call for applications is for YOU.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), through its Subregional office for Southern Africa (SRO-SA), is partnering with the African Youth SDG Summit and AfriLabs to organize a Youth SDG Innovation Award in order to showcase the innovation potential of young African entrepreneurs. The award aims to recognize and reward outstanding young entrepreneurial efforts, that have successfully developed an innovation to resolve a specific development problem for firms, governments, households, and communities and with an impact on the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Who can apply?

The Africa Youth SDG innovation Award is open to:

- any individual of African nationality who was between the age of 18 to 35 as at 31st December 2022
- who has designed an innovative product or designed an innovative process to resolve a specific development problem for society, and with a demonstrated impact on the achievement of the SDGs. The innovation may have been commercialized or is about to be commercialized.
- The innovative product or innovative process must be original and must have been developed no earlier than 31st December 2016.

How will winning applicants be assessed?

In a first round, applicants will be assessed by a jury composed of public and private sector stakeholders and the top 20 applicants will be invited for a short interview. In a second round the jury will select 6 winners. Due consideration will be given to gender balance and geographical diversity when selecting the winners.

What do you win? Several prizes!

The 6 winners will be invited to present their innovation at the African Youth SDG Summit that will be held in Lusaka, Zambia in August 2023. Further information on the African Youth SDG Summit is available at: <https://youthsdgssummit.org/>. All costs in relation to the travel will be borne by UNECA.

The winners will also be invited to participate in person in one training on innovation that ECA SROSA will organize for small and medium-sized enterprises during 2023-2024. Costs of in-person participation will be borne by UNECA.

ECA SRO-SA will also sponsor the costs of their travel and participation to the **Africa Tech Festival** in Cape Town, South Africa, November 14-16, 2023.

How to submit your application?

Applicants should submit a pitch deck of up to 15 slides in PPT, and an accompanying narrative in Word of no more than 1500 words outlining their innovative solution, by **June 11, 2023** at the following website <https://forms.gle/JsPD2HnqJh6oaZ2w5> . Submissions can be in either English or French.

The pitch deck and the narrative should cover the same scope, and include the following information:

- A brief overview of the development problem the innovation addresses
- A clear description of the innovative solution
- An explanation as to why the solution is innovative
- A discussion on how the innovative solution impacts positively on society and on the achievement of the SDGs. The relevant SDGs should be highlighted.
- An explanation on how the innovation was conceived, designed, applied and if applicable, commercialized (your innovation journey) and who were involved (describe your team members)
- Challenges encountered in developing and commercializing the innovation and how challenges were overcome
- A summary of the business model that can be used to commercialize the innovation and potential for scalability
- The stage of the development of the business (idea / Minimum Viable Product MVP/ established business/gaining traction / etc) including relevant figures wherever feasible (Monthly Active Users, Monthly Recurring Revenues, and others as relevant)
- How do you see the market for your innovation evolving and what are your future plans.
- Other information you deem pertinent to include (e.g. challenges for getting innovation patented etc)

Information to include when submitting your application

When submitting your application, please fill in the google form that contains your full name, your country of birth, your country of citizenship, your date of birth, physical address of your company, link for the website of your company (if available), your email address, your cell phone number, and the registration/license number of your company if applicable. Please upload a copy of your passport, and proof of your business license (if applicable) as requested on the Google form.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to showcase your innovative solution and make a difference in Africa! Submit your application today and stand a chance to win the **Africa Youth SDG Innovation Award**.

For any inquiries, please go to Contact Us and phrase your question.

Additional information

Media purposes: By submitting an application, applicants agree to allow the organizers of the **Africa Youth SDG Innovation Award** to use their names, images, and information about their innovation for media purposes.

Disqualification: The organizers reserve the right to disqualify any applicant who fails to comply with the above-cited rules and/or who submits falsified information including counterfeited innovation ideas.

The decision of the jury is final and without appeal.