

Digital Africa innovation programme launches

A new edition of Digital Africa, an innovation competition to take up the challenge of digital transition in Africa, has been launched. The deadline for startups to submit their projects is October 22, 2017.



For the 40th birthday of Proparco, the subsidiary of the [Agence Française de Développement](#) (AFD, French Development Agency) focused on private sector, AFD, Bpifrance and the [La French Tech](#) have launched the second edition of Digital Africa.

The first edition of the Digital Africa challenge, launched in October 2016, received more than 500 applications and rewarded 10 start-ups which convinced the judging panel on the potential impact of their innovation.

Building on this success, AFD, Bpifrance and La French Tech have decided to renew the experience with the objective of offering a long-term support to the emergence of mature and solid digital ecosystems, catalysers of new economic opportunities.

Accelerator of Africa's development

Digital revolution is transforming the African continent. It's an innovative catalyst that revolutionises economies and societies. Ecology, energy, culture, education, artistic creation, governance, and media: digital technology has a transversal and multiplying impact in all those key sectors.

"Digital innovation is abundant in Africa. Africans are making a technological leap that accelerates the emergence of the continent. Through Digital Africa, AFD supports emblematic start-ups of the digital African ecosystems, and fulfils its mission of development in the service of education and innovation, in the digital age. Development is now moving in both directions, between the two shores of the Mediterranean," said Rémy Rioux, AFD executive director.

Nicolas Dufourcq, Bpifrance executive director added: "We are proud to participate in the Digital Africa challenge and to support five French start-ups in their development on the African continent which nowadays offers great opportunities. This challenge represents a straight continuation of our action for the internalisation of enterprises and their cooperation with the African continent."

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"Innovation in Africa is showing extraordinary development, ecosystems are being structured, and start-ups are spreading across the continent. By promoting the links between French and African entrepreneurs today, our ecosystems are building a common future. Digital Africa is for French Tech an additional step to bring this ambition with Africa," said David Monteau, La French Tech director, Ministry of Economy and Finance.

Customised program

All the startup winners of this second edition of the Digital Africa challenge will benefit from a high visibility and access an international network of partners, clients and investors. They will be part of a community that gathers the best talents of digital innovation in Africa and for Africa, in order to share experiences and good practices.

The five African winning startups will be accompanied by the AFD through an “acceleration pack”, a customisable, technical and financial support up to a 30,000 euros value.

The five French winning startups will be accompanied by Bpifrance up to a 10,000 euros value support pack to strengthen their expertise and develop new opportunities on the African continent: Bpifrance Université training, networking and discovery trip to Abidjan and Cape Town with the French entrepreneurs community in the French Tech Hubs.

"For a young startup, Digital Africa offers a great opportunity to gain a continental and international visibility," said Dieu-Donné Okalas Ossami, of E-Tumba, the winning startup of the first edition of Digital Africa.

Selection criteria

For the second edition of [Digital Africa](#), startups are invited to propose innovative projects linked to the following themes:

- Territory (urban challenge, rural transformation, and Smart City etc.).
- Citizenship (e-government, civic engagement, activism, and alternative media etc.).
- Knowledge and creativity (education, formation, creative and cultural industries etc.).
- Environment and climate (green tech, clean tech, sustainable transportations, blue economy, and renewable energies etc.).

The relevance of the solutions proposed, their feasibility, sustainability and potential impact will be key criteria in the selection process divided in several steps:

- An extensive analysis of the projects, of their innovative nature and of their business model.
- A review of the pre-selected projects by AFD and Bpifrance experts.
- A final selection by a jury composed by experts of the technological and entrepreneurial ecosystem in Africa.

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