

Enter Africa innovation challenge for local health solution

Johnson & Johnson has announced the launch of the Africa Innovation Challenge, an initiative to support Africa's vibrant and growing innovation ecosystem and to help develop important and locally sustainable consumer health solutions.



The challenge is the latest initiative in the company's comprehensive approach to advancing health and innovation worldwide. The Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies' presence in Africa dates back more than 80 years and includes business operations, public health programs and corporate citizenship.

"Through the [Africa Innovation Challenge](#), we have the opportunity to support the continent's top entrepreneurs through mentorship and other resources, and by working together with local talent, to bring forward new solutions to local health care challenges," said Paul Stoffels, MD, executive vice president and chief scientific officer, Johnson & Johnson.

Earlier this year, Johnson & Johnson announced its global public health (GPH) strategy in Cape Town, South Africa, where its companies also opened their GPH operations headquarters. The operations expand upon the company's legacy and presence in Africa, which began in 1936, and brings additional investments to the more than 1,500 employees and three manufacturing sites within the Johnson & Johnson family of companies already present on the continent.

"Our goal is to improve the health and well-being of families and communities around the world," said Jost Ghaim, chief technology officer, Johnson & Johnson Consumer. "With its focus on consumer health care, the Africa Innovation Challenge will help to surface important issues impacting local communities. We look forward to engaging with the continent's top entrepreneurs and scientists, and through collaboration, helping advance their ideas and bringing meaningful solutions across three very important health care areas."

The Africa Innovation Challenge seeks novel ideas that focus on three critical health areas: promoting early child development and maternal health; empowering young women; and improving family well-being. Challenge participant(s) with the best solutions will receive up to US \$100,000 in funding and mentorship from scientists, engineers and researchers in the Johnson & Johnson Consumer Research & Development organization.

“The Africa Innovation Challenge is an exciting initiative for our entrepreneurial and scientific communities, said Thomas Maina Kariuki, director, Alliance for Accelerating Excellence in Science in Africa, African Academy of Sciences (AAS). “The challenge provides the kind of mentorship and resources that can really advance an entrepreneur’s vision, and it showcases the terrific young talent across Africa. AAS is proud to support this initiative and we look forward to collaborating throughout the challenge.”

The winner(s) of the challenge could also receive dedicated space at a lab facility in Africa throughout their product or service development, dependent on the needs of the solution submission. Award recipients will be announced in February 2017.

Challenge submissions may originate from anywhere in Africa, and from one or more individuals, teams or companies; subject to certain eligibility requirements set out in the terms and conditions for the challenge. Solutions will be evaluated based on their ability to meet the following criteria:

- Solution submission addresses at least one of the three challenge categories: Promoting Early Child Development & Maternal Health in Africa; Empowering Young Girls in Africa; Improving Family Well-being in Africa.
- Submission is innovative and creative.
- Submission is scalable.
- Submission outlines a commercialisation plan and how the award would help the applicant reach a critical milestone within the timeframe of a single year

To apply to the challenge and review the applicable terms and conditions, please visit the Africa Innovation Challenge [website](#). The deadline to submit applications is January 17, 2017.

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