

## Bookings open for 5th annual Africa Women Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum 2019

The 5th annual Africa Women Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum (AWIEF) conference, exhibition and awards are now open for registration. The event aims to promote and accelerate the growth of women-owned and women-led businesses for Africa's inclusive economic growth.



(L-R): Zanele Mbeki, former First Lady of South Africa and Irene Ochem, AWIEF founder and CEO. Credit: AWIEF.

[AWIEF](#) announced the dates for its prestigious annual conference and awards, which will take place at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), 29-30 October 2019. The conference theme this year is, *Enhancing Impact: Digitalisation, Investment and Intra-African Trade*. The two-day event aims to promote and accelerate the growth of women-owned and women-led businesses for Africa's inclusive economic growth.

AWIEF is a platform that sees global thought leaders, industry experts, policymakers, academics, development organisations and investors gather to dialogue, connect, network, share, collaborate and transact in a combined effort to boost Africa's entrepreneurship ecosystem.

"The digital economy is driving business and is enhancing the impact of our work. Investment in women-owned businesses is needed across the continent of Africa," said Irene Ochem, Founder and CEO of AWIEF.

### Conference

The theme will be unpacked as follows at the AWIEF conference in October:

- How to leverage the digital economy.
- How to provide more access to affordable investment and finance to women to drive women entrepreneurship.
- Analysing the importance and role that women have to play in the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA).

“It is important for Africa to trade amongst itself, to collaborate and cooperate. What we need to look at is the critical roles that women have in this integration process,” Ochem explained.



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AWIEF is a Pan-African non-profit organisation with offices in both Nigeria and South Africa, including the annual conference, awards and expo; as well as events all year round and programmes to mentor, fund and grow women entrepreneurs on the continent.

## Programmes

AWIEF runs several programmes for women across the continent, such as the flagship AWIEF Growth Accelerator Programme for getting businesses “investment ready”; the FemBioBiz Accelerator Programme in partnership with HIVOS and NEPAD-SANBio, which builds and supports the growth of women-owned and led businesses in the health and agricultural biotech field and other biosciences, with impact on health, nutrition and food security.

The #VALUE4HER programme is in partnership with the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), an European Union funded institution headquartered in The Netherlands, which strengthens women’s agribusiness enterprises in Africa.

## Awards

The AWIEF Awards each year showcase a diverse representation of finalist entrepreneurs from across the continent, including, in 2018, from Angola, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda and Zimbabwe. The awards have grown exponentially, from entries of just under 300 in 2017 when the AWIEF Awards were launched, to 1200 in 2018. Judges are drawn from thought leaders, decision makers and specialists in the various sectors of the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

AWIEF support comes from global organisations such as UN Women, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the European Union-funded Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA). Partners and sponsors also include: Shell, Nedbank, City of Cape Town, Bank of Industry, Nigeria, GE, AGRA, Embassy of Sweden (Nigeria and South Africa), Embassy of Switzerland (South Africa), IDC, MTI Business, ARC, Johnson & Johnson, Old Mutual, and Tsogo Sun.

Online registration is now open with early bird opportunities. To register for #AWIEF2019, follow the link: <https://bit.ly/2OQJ3qP>. For exhibition and sponsorship opportunities, email: .

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