

Nestlé launches innovation challenge in 6 African countries

Nestlé has launched a Research and Development (R&D) innovation challenge in sub-Saharan Africa to provide a platform for startups and universities to contribute to local sustainable growth by bringing breakthrough ideas to the market. The challenge kicked off yesterday in Ghana, but will also take place in Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa.



Image credit: Nestlé

The R&D innovation challenge calls for novel solutions across four areas: environmentally-friendly packaging solutions, sustainable cocoa plantlets, affordable nutrition and new routes to market. The goal is to work collaboratively with startups and universities to identify sustainable and scalable science and technology solutions that help to accelerate the innovation of products that meet local consumer needs.

The initiative forms part of the multinational food and drink company's efforts to contribute to the region's innovation ecosystem.



ESG

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During the accelerator programme, selected startups and university teams will have access to Nestlé's R&D expertise and infrastructure, including shared labs, kitchens and pilot-testing equipment. At the end of the programme, teams will have the opportunity to pitch their proof of concept to Nestlé management.

Turning promising ideas into reality

Stefan Palzer, Nestlé chief technology officer said: "There is a growing number of Africa-based entrepreneurs and local researchers with creative ideas to address issues facing their communities. This R&D innovation challenge presents for our company an exceptional opportunity to leverage the outstanding creativity, while helping to turn the most promising ideas into reality."

FMCG

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To engage with local startups, Nestlé partnered with Kinaya Ventures as part of the Spring Fellowship Program, which is designed to accelerate corporate startup partnerships and catalyse digital entrepreneurship. The challenge also calls upon universities in Central and West African countries to submit solutions.

The R&D innovation challenge is part of Nestlé's Global Youth Initiative, which has the ambition to help 10 million young people around the world have access to economic opportunities by 2030.

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