

## Africa Netpreneur Prize Initiative winners announced

The Jack Ma Foundation hosted its first annual Africa Netpreneur Prize Initiative (ANPI) grand finale awarding \$1 million in prize money to 10 entrepreneurs from across Africa.



Africa Netpreneur Prize Initiative awards Top 10 winners

The ANPI is a flagship initiative of the Jack Ma Foundation, created by Jack Ma after his first trip to Africa in 2017. The aim of the prize is to support and inspire the next generation of African entrepreneurs who are building a more sustainable and inclusive economy for the future.

In its inaugural year, nearly 10,000 entrepreneurs from 50 countries across the continent applied. The Jack Ma Foundation has committed to running the competition for 10 years.

The finale event, called “Africa’s Business Heroes,” was held in Accra, Ghana, where the top 10 finalists pitched their businesses directly to four prestigious judges including Jack Ma, founder of Alibaba Group and the Jack Ma Foundation; Strive Masiyiwa, founder and executive chairman of Econet Group; Ibukun Awosoji, chairman of First Bank of Nigeria and founder/CEO of The Chair Centre Group; and Joe Tsai, executive vice chairman of Alibaba.

The specifics of the prize pool division are listed below. Each finalist is receiving a share of \$1 million. The top three finalists were:

- Temie Giwa-Tubosun, founder and CEO, LifeBank (Nigeria) – First Place, winning \$250,000
- Dr. Omar Sakr, founder and CEO, Nawah-Scientific (Egypt) – Second Place, winning \$150,000
- Christelle Kwizera, founder, Water Access Rwanda (Rwanda) – Third Place, winning \$100,000

“It was an incredible honour to be named Africa’s Business Hero. I was truly inspired by my fellow winners today’s Netpreneur Summit. The Africa Netpreneur Prize will give me the resources to grow LifeBank and expand our presence in Nigeria and throughout the rest of Africa. I look forward to continuing my journey to solve problems and make a significant impact on the future of Africa,” said Temie Giwa-Tubosun, founder

and CEO of LifeBank.

The remaining finalists, who each received \$65,000, are listed below:

- Waleed Abd El Rahman, CEO, Mumm (Egypt)
- Ayodeji Arikawe, co-founder, Thrive Agric (Nigeria)
- Mahmud Johnson, founder and CEO, J-Palm (Liberia)
- Kevine Kagirimpundu, co-founder and CEO, UZURI K&Y (Rwanda)
- Dr. Tosan J. Mogbeyiteren, founder, Black Swan (Nigeria)
- Chibuzo Opara, co-founder, DrugStoc (Nigeria)
- Moulaye Taboure, co-founder and CEO, Afrikrea (Cote D'Ivoire)

“The finalists who competed in ‘Africa’s Business Heroes’ should be an inspiration for Africa and for the world. Each of these entrepreneurs looked at big challenges facing their communities, and saw them as opportunities,” said Jack Ma, founder of the Alibaba Group and Jack Ma Foundation.

“It is my strong belief that entrepreneur heroes, like these finalists, will change the world – creating companies that drive inclusive growth and opportunity for the continent. Everyone is a winner tonight.”

“This competition demonstrates the overwhelming entrepreneurial talent that exists across Africa. I’m very excited about the future of industry and entrepreneurship for this continent,” said Strive Masiyiwa, founder and executive chairman of Econet Group.

“ *The top 10 truly show the limitless potential of African business.* ”

“What really struck me about the finalists was that they each addressed specific African problems with a specific African solution in a fresh way, leveraging technology that wasn’t available previously,” said Ibul Awosika, chairman of First Bank of Nigeria and founder/CEO of The Chair Centre Group. “If this is an indication of the future of entrepreneurship on the continent, then Africa’s future looks bright.”

The initiative will host a pitch competition where 10 finalists from across the continent will compete for \$1 million in total prize money every year through 2028. All entrepreneurs across Africa, are encouraged to apply. Entries for next year’s prize will open in the first half of 2020.

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