Rallying Call-ATU Africa Innovation Challenge 2021

01. Introduction

The African Telecommunications Union would like to thank you for the role you played in the launch of the 2nd edition of the ATU Africa Innovations Challenge and welcomes your participation as we progress into the execution phase of the Challenge. We are pleased to recognize the value you added towards the success of the launch event and for helping set the tone of the Challenge. The ATU Africa Innovation Challenge 2021 with the theme, "Best ecosystem practices in Africa enabling youth ICT innovation" is aimed at identifying and awarding ecosystem stakeholders from the region who have developed and implemented a practice that has created an enabling environment for youth ICT innovation to thrive. The practice could be in form of a programme or a policy.

02. Objectives of the Challenge

The challenge aims to:

1. **Recognize the impact** of partnerships between young innovators and ecosystem stakeholders

2. **Build a network of champions** to develop a youth resilient ecosystem in Africa by sharing their best practices

3. **Provide** information on access to resources from expert communities and build entrepreneurship capability for young innovators

4. **Amplify and replicate** best practices that support youth resilience

5. **Create** an enabling environment to promote inclusivity in the information society to **leverage** the current innovation impetus and **bring** innovative digital solutions into community development

6. **Accelerate** the development of telecommunication/ICTs to **achieve** digital economies in partnership with the ITU.

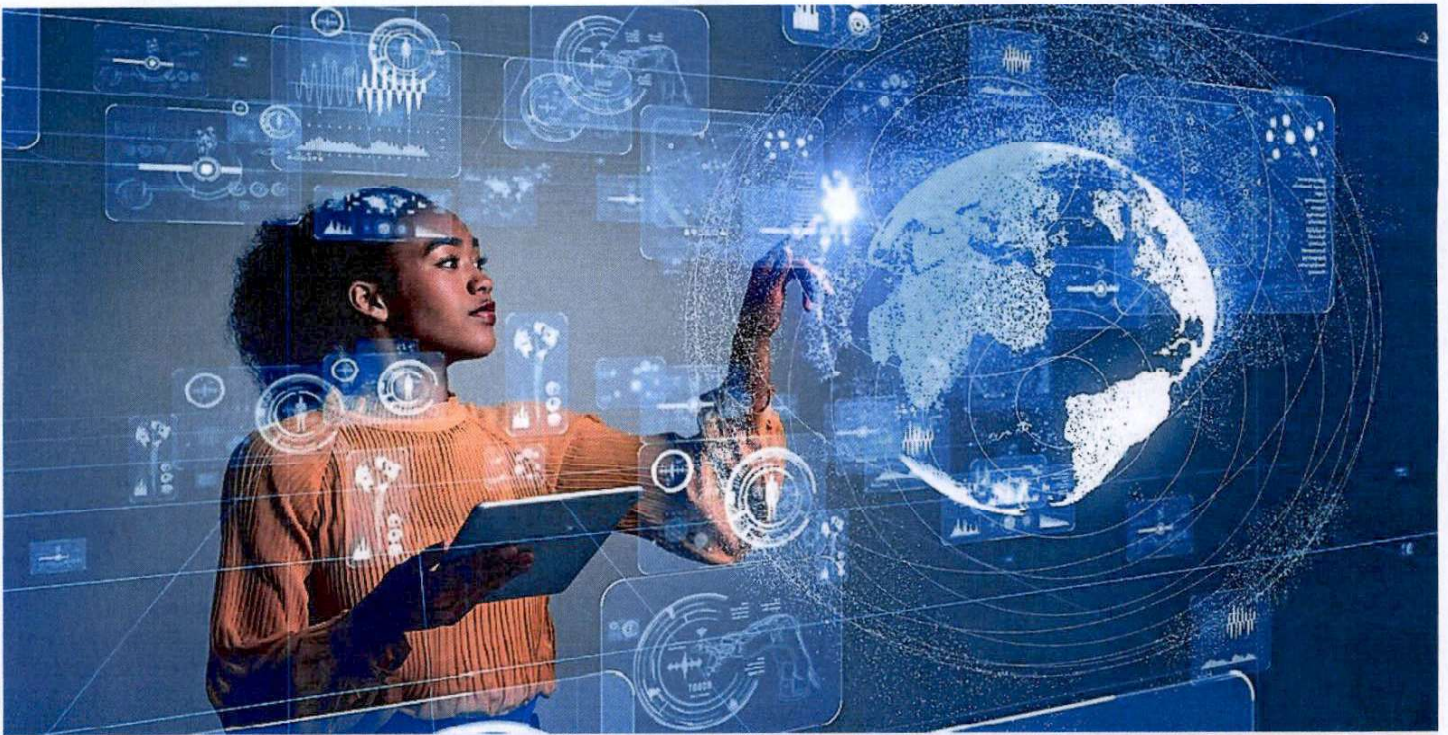# 03. Importance of the ATU Africa Innovation Challenge 2021

This year's challenge comes at a time when the impact of COVID-19 on communities is becoming more and more visible. Youth are among the most vulnerable to this impact, facing challenges such as socioeconomic and workforce inclusion. Everyone, including ICT ecosystem stakeholders and young African ICT innovators, is looking to tackle the challenges facing the African youth. However, the problem owners, solution owners, and resource owners often do not come together to scale up and share their success stories or good practices.

As ICT stakeholders in the region, we need to promote innovation in the African ecosystem. Sustainable, innovation in Africa will only come about when we not only create an enabling environment for innovation to take place, but also take an active role in catalysing partnerships with innovation stakeholders.

It is in this regard that the African Telecommunications Union (ATU) in collaboration with the International Telecommunications Union, together with our partners Huawei and Intel, are seeking to build a network of champions to develop a youth resilient ecosystem in Africa by sharing their best practices.

We acknowledge that we also need the support of our Member States to achieve the objectives of the ATU Africa Innovation Challenge 2021. As we now take on the actual Challenge, we will be privileged to have you on board, considering your experience, knowledge and position that we seek to benefit from as we set the bar for the Challenge. Therefore, we encourage you to participate in the Challenge and actively support this initiative, particularly by enhancing the reach of the Challenge messaging and motivating participation from other key stakeholders within your region.

04. How to be Part of the ATU Africa Innovation Challenge 2021

a. Participate

Submit your entry if you have developed and are implementing a policy or a programme that is enabling youth ICT innovation to thrive.
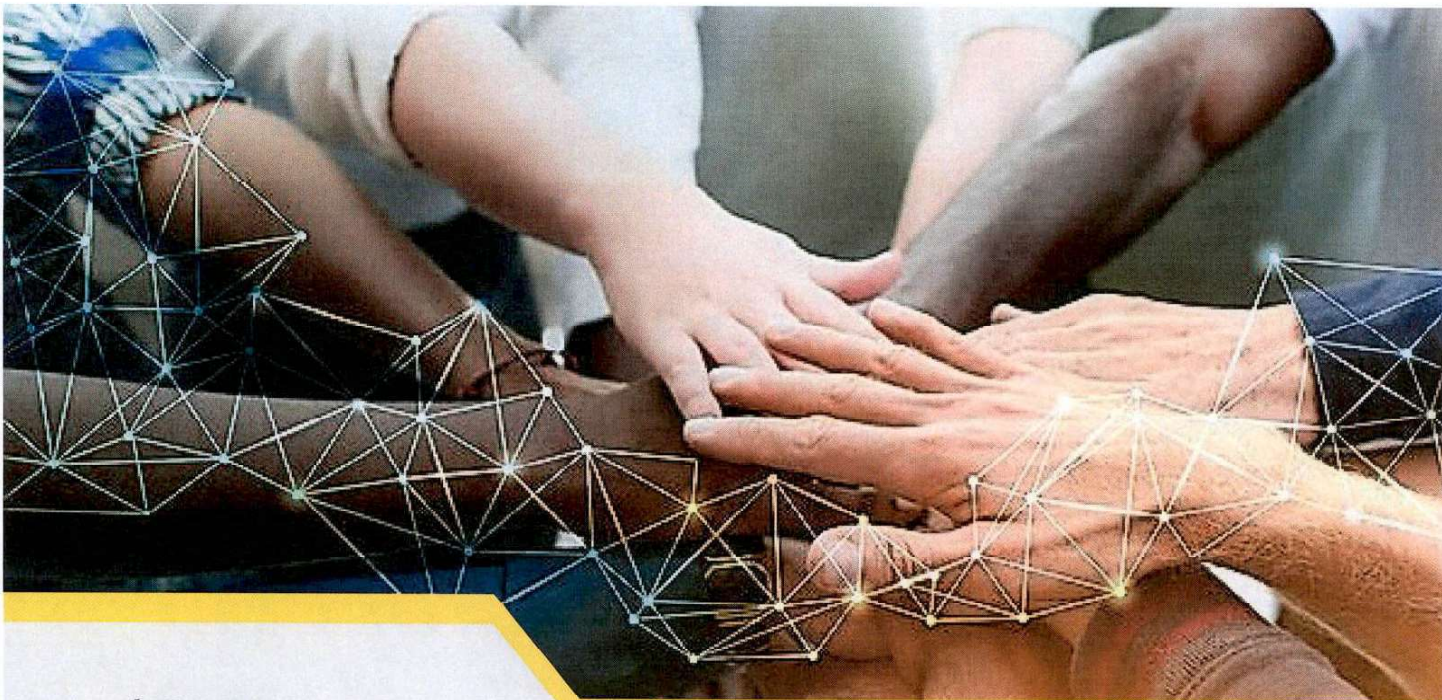
You will be required to submit:

i.   A unique practice that enables opportunities for youth to innovate and create. The practice MUST be an ORIGINAL idea/concept and MUST have been successfully implemented (and running) for a minimum of one year. It can be in the form of a policy, an initiative/programme supporting youth in technology; and

ii. Information about two innovators that have benefitted from this practice.

The practice submitted alongside the innovations' story (as provided for in the submission form) should reflect ANY of the following topical issues:

1. **Policies and regulations:** Policies or regulatory guidance that creates an enabling environment for technology-driven youth innovation.

2. **Socioeconomic empowerment:** Initiatives, platforms, or programmes that enable access to jobs and opportunities, mitigate community and social vulnerabilities among youth, and empower youth to be problem solvers in their communities.

3. **Lifelong skills readiness:** Initiatives, platforms, or programmes building lifelong skills to unlock young people's potential to innovate and thrive in the digital economy.

b. Support

To benefit from the best practices as a region, information about the Challenge and the call to submission should reach all ICT ecosystem stakeholders across Africa. To support this campaign, you can share information about the Challenge with stakeholders such as entrepreneurial support organizations, incubators, accelerators, or any institution such as college/university. You can also share the information through the communication channels available to the organization. Below are the downloadable formats of the communication materials you can share:

1. Promotional Video English:
    https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GQMbtd3-al_F9BOxn42_qWXz6HsGLsGA/view?usp=sharing
2. Promotional Video French:
    https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_AHU4t-DUzX-6pHTuq5ToV601-gnWRiK/view?usp=sharing
3. Social Media Messages English:
    https://drive.google.com/file/d/1k8Np9S7tutdlwl_Sm9IJqC8idCn5pGc4/view?usp=sharing
4. Social Media Messages French:
    https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-TOXw6h88iGv9t-f1NXBsWpMlArVD552/view?usp=sharing
5. Social Media Posters English:
    https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/19PF_mq5jjXK8f_7L_Z8pvZW9v1gmodjL?usp=sharing
6. Social Media Posters French:
    https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Ptej9GezawpTXn6VOBbai7Omq6u_CCvO?usp=sharing
7. Backgrounder English:
    https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-wTR3g-fCDZ5KjAH6J-ZC_FYFswTvDvR/view?usp=sharing
8. Backgrounder French:
    https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SsFGZ5BO1uPfK4kAoh8CXWzyo5KGXKgl/view?usp=sharing
9. Selection and Pre-Selection Criteria English:
    https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Hv9QVFXa1lf7seZEFfTs_UdE2rerv9C2/view?usp=sharing
10. Selection and Pre-Selection Criteria French:
    https://drive.google.com/file/d/16RzIU_sPj5f7_nCVxebOta0yBq7zTCpW/view?usp=sharing
11. Link to all the communication materials:
    https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1X8TQE4oHRmBoFhtq4jYKtYoN9br2EbUq?usp=sharing

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