



WOMEN IN AFRICA
— PHILANTHROPY —

March 1st, 2022

Women in Africa launches the 6th edition of the WIA 54 programme, dedicated to African women entrepreneurs

For the 6th consecutive year, African women entrepreneurs can apply to the WIA 54 programme. Launched by Women in Africa Initiative, through its endowment fund WIA Philanthropy and with the support of its partners AXA, DS Avocats, Honoris United Universities, Inetum, Meridiam, Roland Berger, Société Générale, and its local partners Baobab Group, CGEM, AMIC, 2M, LE MATIN, La Marocaine des Jeux et des Sports, Mazars, WIA 54 is a well-established pan-African programme that supports and promotes women entrepreneurship in Africa.

Launched in 2017, WIA 54 aims to encourage women's entrepreneurship in Africa and aims to support 10,000 women entrepreneurs by 2030 through an ambitious programme of training, mentoring, communication and access to finance.

This year, the call for applications opens on March 1st 2022 and will close on May 31, 2022. For three months, African women who want to change the continent's future through their capacity for innovation are invited to submit their application to the Initiative, through the WIA website: <https://wia-initiative.com>.

Each proposal submitted will be examined according to specific criteria such as the social impact rate of the technologies, products and services offered, the scalability of the *business model* and their growth potential or the ability of the teams to execute.

Once pre-selected and placed in the appropriate training pathway, candidates will benefit from rigorous business management training and tailored coaching sessions. At the end of this training phase, women entrepreneurs will again be shortlisted to participate in the six-month mentoring phase. This step will allow selected entrepreneurs to meet high-level mentors, ready to accompany them to combine all the learning of the training in a single coherent document: *the business plan*.

In 2022, following receipt of nominations:

- 540 *finalist start-ups* that will be shortlisted in 54 African countries by WIA will participate in the training bootcamp and mentoring and personalized coaching programme offered by the WIA community;
- 54 winners will benefit from the opportunity to join an MBA proposed by Honoris United Universities;
- 54 winners will benefit from a €5,000 communication campaign on WIA social networks;
- 8 Revelations will benefit from a communication campaign worth €8,000;
- The winner of the *Gold Award* will receive a prize of €10,000.

The best candidates from the mentoring and training phase will participate in a *Pitch competition* in June 2023 that will give them access to investors and seed capital. This will be a unique opportunity to demonstrate business knowledge, convince the jury of the viability of their business project and raise funds to deploy their structure.



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About WIA Initiative

Launched in 2017, and chaired by Hafsat Abiola, Women in Africa (WIA) Initiative is the first international platform dedicated to the economic development and support of African women entrepreneurs. At WIA, we are convinced that Pan-African women contribute greatly, through their actions, to the change and impact they bring to the continent's progress. Among the most important WIA programmes are:

- **WIA 54**, an annual pan-African competition for women-led entrepreneurial projects.
- **WIA HUBS**, which aims to support African women entrepreneurs locally (the first Hub was created in 2019, in Kinshasa, with the Working Ladies).
- **WIA MENTORING**, a programme aimed at mentoring the many African talents.
- **WIA YOUNG LEADERS**, a programme to identify and support young leaders across the continent.
- **WIA CODE** programme, focused on learning computer skills for the next generation.
- **RESEARCH**: The WIA Institute collects and collates data on African women and the economy. In partnership with its sponsors, the institute publishes relevant studies every year.

PR contact

Irina Pungaru

pungaru@havas.com

+33 (6) 13 02 34 76