

Gender Equality Entrepreneurship Track launched

Seedstars, SAFEEM and GIZ have joined forces to increase women participation across all levels to achieve an improved gender balance. The project aims to increase and catalyse investments for women-led startups in sub-Saharan Africa, drive more inclusive training opportunities for women-led startups across the continent, highlight more women entrepreneurs and to create a tool kit of best practices that aim at achieving an improved gender balance.



Source: pixabay.com

Seedstars is partnering with The Swiss Association for Entrepreneurship in Emerging Markets (SAFEEM) and GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit), the German Development Agency that supports the German Government, especially the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), in achieving its objectives in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development.

Together they are launching the Gender Equality Entrepreneurship Track and will focus on achieving gender balance during the Seedstars World competition, a seed-stage startup competition for emerging markets and fast-growing startup scenes.

The overall objective of the gender equality entrepreneurship project within the Seedstars World Competition is to achieve and improve gender balance across all levels of human participation within the Seedstars World initiative and support the growth of women-led high growth startups in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Seedstars, SAFEEM and GIZ on behalf of the BMZ hope to reach multiple goals through the initiative: Increase the number

of women finalists, increase the number of women stakeholders across all levels of the Seedstars World Competition (jury, speakers and investors) as well as increasing the number of women-led startups closing their fundraising round.

The initiative will also focus on highlighting more women role models as part of Seedstars global series of webisodes covering entrepreneurs from a number of emerging markets. Lastly, the initiative aims to uncover and collect a number of best practices related to achieving a better gender balance in entrepreneurship support initiatives.

Through the gender equality track, it is expected that 50-75 women-led startups will be directly impacted across four countries (Mozambique, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, South Africa).

The project will pilot in Mozambique, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and South Africa.

In each of these countries, the best women entrepreneurs will be invited to participate in the Seedstars Local Event Bootcamps. In addition, the initiative will award the "Women Entrepreneurship Prize" as part of the Gender Equality track and will join the Seedstars Summit Africa in December, as part of an all-women delegation in South Africa in December organised by SAFEEM.

Five supplementary prizes will be awarded to aspiring women entrepreneurs (ideation stage) who will be able to apply through a separate application portal.

The Women Entrepreneurship Prize given will consist of an all-inclusive flight, accommodation, VIP access to the Regional Summit for 10 women-led startups. At the regional summit, they will receive 1:1 mentoring, group mentorship sessions, 1:1 investor meetings, access to expert workshops, full executive access to the Africa Summit (main day).

Criteria

To be eligible for the prize, women entrepreneurs should meet the following criteria:

- applied to the local competition OR pitched during the local event
- She must be part of the founding team

Moreover, an all-women delegation will be formed to attend the Africa Summit, consisting of winners of the Gender Equality Entrepreneurship Track, local entrepreneurship support organisations that are women-led, women investors, women speakers and women experts and mentors.

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