



Alliance for Entrepreneurial Universities in Africa (AEUA)

Editorial

The main objective of the AEUA is to encourage universities to promote, nurture and drive entrepreneurship and business development within the institution, in the region and beyond.

AEUA is gaining momentum and will be present at the first STI in Africa Day, 2 May 2023, to be held at the margins of the STI Forum in New York, with a focus on *STI4SDGs: Priority Areas, Levers and Actionable Steps for Africa*.

The Launch of partnerships for Origin Hub and AEUA will take place at the closing ceremony as the way forward for Africa. The AEUA website will also be launched at the Forum.

A major event planned in October 2023 is an Entrepreneurship Summer School uniting young motivated Entrepreneurs.

AEUA thus continues to grow its efforts to the benefit of the African student population.

Team: Dr Victor Konde (UNECA), Prof Archana Bhaw-Luximon (Mauritius), Dr Samuel Chigome (Botswana), Prof Balla Diop Ngom (Senegal), Dr Geofrey Monari (Kenya), Dr Norah Clarke (South Africa)

**02
MAY**
10:00 AM – 6:00 PM
UNHQ NEW YORK

MORE INFORMATION:
[BIT.LY/STIAFRICA](https://bit.ly/STIAFRICA)

**SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY AND
INNOVATION IN
AFRICA DAY
2023**

Theme: **STI4SDGs**
*Levers, Priority Areas and
Actionable Steps for Africa*

STI FORUM 
Science, Technology & Innovation for
the Sustainable Development Goals
<https://bit.ly/STI2023>

Inside this issue

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African Entrepreneurship Highlight—Part II



Part II—Portrait of an aspiring global Entrepreneur—Walid Elrawy

Walid is from Egypt and the founder of Fit Solar Tech LLC; a startup that provides sustainable solutions for small to medium sized-boats to transition from diesel and petrol to solar-powered engines. Walid shares his experiences on being an entrepreneur. The interview was conducted by Marie Louise Razafy Kjellman, Novia University of Applied Sciences, Finland for AEUA.

What were the major challenges that you faced for Fit Solar Tech and how did you tackle them?

Fundraising was and still is a major challenge. Even though things are changing, there still is a lack of investor community in Africa; I am talking about Africans investing in African startups. I have the feeling that, for some reason those who have the means to invest prefer to invest in foreign companies instead or invest their money abroad. Currently Fintech startups have better chances of raising funds because they bring in revenue faster. Investors are not willing to give entrepreneurs time to grow their business. This is completely different from the startup scene in Finland and the Nordic, where investors understand that it takes time to grow a successful business. I have to mention also that, Entrepreneurship requires a positive mindset and consistency to reach your goal. Entrepreneurs have to be ready, because you will face challenges along your journey. As for me, these are challenges that I am willing to accept, and I am not giving up on my idea.

How did you raise funds for your company?

We are still raising funds to grow our business. There are two ways that I did and still do to raise funds. One is through investors; I do meet a lot of angel investors and venture capitalist companies to invest in Fit Solar Tech. As I mentioned earlier, it is not easy; this is the time when an entrepreneur receives a lot of rejections; so this is the time to be mentally strong and to believe in yourself and your idea. The other way that we raise funds is by promoting our company to our target customers and by increasing the awareness of the advantages that they would get by using our product; this is done to increase sales which is a revenue for the company.

Would you be willing to offer opportunities to new entrepreneurs in Africa and what are the qualities that you are looking for in an entrepreneur?

Yes, I am open to collaborate with other entrepreneurs in Africa. I know that Africa has a lot of smart, talented and ambitious people. Currently, we are looking for dealers to work with. I would like to work with people who has knowledge and ground experience in the field that we are in. I like to work with hard-working and positive people who believe in their roots and who don't give up easily.



You really are a global entrepreneur. You have businesses in Egypt, Dubai and you are planning a new venture in Finland. How do you juggle your businesses whilst living abroad?

It is all about the team and the trust that you put in them. Perhaps your presence is needed more at the beginning but when the business is running, you don't need to be consistently present. You have to trust the people that you work with to conduct the job even if you are not there. Thanks to new technology, it is now possible to collaborate virtually. So, I do a lot of my work online.

What would be the pathways to encourage and support early student entrepreneurship initiatives in Africa?

First and foremost, there should be an increase in the public services to promote entrepreneurship among the youth, this includes education and the space where students can exercise their creative ideas. Entrepreneurship education should be taught early on. Students should be encouraged to have confidence to share their business ideas. Students should also be taught or be given the tools to become an entrepreneur. Most importantly, students should be taught that to be an entrepreneur is to serve and to give back to their community in many ways, and that it is not just about money. Secondly, there should be a community to support the youth. A community of investors, a community of entrepreneurs, a community of educators and mentors to help and guide young entrepreneurs develop their confidence, their skills, and their ideas.

What would you advise for young people who want to go into entrepreneurship?

I would tell them to dream big and to believe in that dream. I would advise them to be hard-working and believe in themselves. They will face challenges, and sometimes disappointments, sometimes it will feel as if the world works against them. I would advise them to use those challenges as an opportunity to develop themselves in addition to studying and improving their skills regularly. Finally, I would advise them, if they can afford it, to travel abroad and discover new ways of doing things and to exchange ideas with other entrepreneurs. As an entrepreneur, it is important to know what's happening on the global stage.



<https://www.fitsolartech.com/>

Female innovators transforming the education in Africa

April 23, 2023

The Innovating Education Expo in Africa.

The Innovating Education in Africa Expo is an annual event of the African Union intended to showcase practical social and technological innovations aimed at enhancing access, quality, relevance and inclusion.

About, 380 innovators submitted applications to exhibit and present papers at the event. The selected top eleven innovators had the opportunity to pitch to an expert jury during the event for a chance to win prizes ranging from USD 5000 to USD 50 000 to scale up their projects under the AU Education Innovation Prize.



Susannah Farr: Making education a co-creative journey

Susannah Farr, CEO of the Gold Youth Development Agency (GYDA) in South Africa, was the top innovator at the Expo. GYDA evidence-based youth peer education model has been used to reach over 55 000 young people in 123 communities across 4 countries.

Anne Nyaboke Wakesho: Enhancing access to literacy through Digital Apps

Her company created Hadithi Hadithi, a literacy app targeting young people out-of-school and early childhood kids in communities and refugee camps. Hadithi Hadithi provides an education content written and illustrated by Kenyan teachers and artists.

Amina Umuhoza: Empowering girls through e-counselling

Amina's initiative, Dukataze, is an online platform equipping girls with the right skills, as well as to mentally, socially and economically empower them to reduce unwanted pregnancies.

Angèle Messa: Designing alternative methods to increase access to education

From Cameroon, Angèle developed, Eduklik, a platform designed to promote alternative teaching methods for children who cannot access the formal education system. Through online and offline technologies.

Anita Antwiwaa: Breaking down space science for young people

Ghanaian Dr. Anita Antwiwaa is the head of operations for All Nations University Space Systems Technology Laboratory, which successfully launched the historic GhanaSat-1, developed by young Ghanaian Engineers from the University in 2017.



Science, Technology and Innovation in Africa Day 2023

Tue 02 May 2023, 10.00 am—18:00; Conference Room 2, Conference Building, UN Headquarters, New York

The first **STI in Africa Day** will be held at the margins of the STI Forum in New York, with a focus on *STI4SDGs: Priority Areas, Levers and Actionable Steps for Africa*. The **STI in Africa Day** has two main purposes: (a) To serve as a vehicle for connecting the global community to cooperate, network, showcase, share experiences, build strategic alliances, and, wherever possible, set in motion concrete actions that advance Africa's STI4SDGs priorities; and (b) to bring the outcomes of the African Regional Science, Technology and Innovation Forum to the global STI Forum and vice versa, with a view to guiding facilitative actions on both ends.

Thematic sessions

- Mobilizing and Engaging Diaspora for STI in Africa
- STI for High Productivity and Economic diversification in Africa
- Role of Youth and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in STI
- Launch of partnerships for Origin Hub and the Alliance of Entrepreneurial Universities in Africa
- Launch of the STI for Africa Coalition - Platform for sharing technology solutions and advancing STI partnerships

Key speakers

- **H.E. Ms. Mathu Joyini**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of South Africa to the UN
- **H.E. Mr. Thomas Woodroffe**, United Kingdom Ambassador to the UN Economic and Social Council
- **Ms. Amina J. Mohammed**, Deputy Secretary-General of the UN and Chair of the UN Sustainable Development Group
- **Dr Bibi Ameenah Firdaus Gurib-Fakim**, Former President of Mauritius
- **Dr Bonginkosi Emmanuel Nzimande**, Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, South Africa
- **Mr. Ibrahima Cheikh Diong**, UN Assistant Secretary General and Director General of African Risk Capacity Group
- **Mr. Charles Murito**, Regional Director Government Affairs and Public Policy Sub-Saharan Africa, Google

The **STI in Africa** Day at the STI Forum is organized DESA and ECA with the support of OSAA, FAO, UNESCO, MIT and other UN agencies

More information at [Science, Technology and Innovation in Africa Day 2023 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs \(un.org\)](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/STI4SDGs/STI-in-Africa-Day-2023)





Entrepreneurship Summer School 2023, Addis Ababa

THE CALL

This call for technological and business innovations offers start-ups, nascent firms and other entities founded and managed by university students (can include 1 University Academic) the opportunity to showcase the innovations and get training and mentorship support to consolidate their business plan and their teams.

The selected teams will also have the chance to meet potential partners, seasoned innovators and entrepreneurs, investors, public funders and industrial research institutes.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

To be eligible:

- 1) The team should comprise of currently registered University students or students that have graduated in the last three years.
- 2) University students studying in the diaspora whose solutions target Africa and are linked to an African university may be considered irrespective of their current location or nationalities.
- 3) The start-up should be at an early stage of business development (younger than 5 years).
- 4) The business should have a clearly identified target population (its end-users and/or customers).
- 5) The business should have measurable performance indicators (e.g. prototype tested, sales, clients etc).
- 6) Have a preliminary business plan (no more than 6 pages).
- 7) The business should have potential for surviving in the market, if not yet the market

REQUIREMENTS

Your business concept may have to meet the following:

- * **Be an entrepreneurial idea, concept and business** from any sector of the economy.
- * The ideas and business **MUST be technical or technological in nature or is advancing** existing business practices. As such, simple buying and selling or poor copy cut of existing businesses in your country or Africa may not be considered.
- * You must have a **product or process** in hand; improving an existing one or designing a new prototype you can showcase. As such, research projects will not be considered.

SELECTION OF TEAM

Submit your idea/project with your business plan (5 pages maximum) through the contact person at your university with a copy to Asfaw and Gedion by 31 May 2023. Please mention clearly your University contact name, function and email. The concepts will be assessed by the Technical Committee.

Selected teams will be informed by 30 June 2023 and will be offered a 3 months of potential mentorship and training if needed. The advanced business plans will be resubmitted to UNECA and your University contact by 15 September 2023.

In all cases, highlight the novelty of the product, process or business model and its current limitations and/or requirements to enable judges and partners fully appreciate your innovation. Final selection will then take place by 30 September 2023..

Send your applications to: Asfaw Yitna – yitna@un.org & Gedion Workneh – workneh@un.org

IMPORTANT DATES

Deadline for Submission of initial ideas: 31 May 2023

Deadline for submission of final project: 15 September 2023



Call for Student Entrepreneurship Societies

The Hub will be a compass for students to navigate the entrepreneurial network and find teammates, partners, and supporters.

The Hub will include two sections:

- ◆ An interest and idea-sharing platform to connect people
- ◆ A directory of resources of the entrepreneurial ecosystem

Interested student societies coordinators, please contact Asfaw Yitna, yitna@un.org or Gedion Workneh, workneh@un.org

Call for Monthly Showcasing of Entrepreneurship initiatives

If you have an entrepreneurship initiative which you would like to showcase to members and the community in the next newsletter **please contact** Asfaw Yitna, yitna@un.org or Gedion Workneh, workneh@un.org

New Members

Please click on the link to fill in the [Membership form](#) and we will revert back to you with more details.

<https://forms.gle/7xsKwK24r4twS8Yf8>