

Nestlé launches agri competition to encourage agripreneurship across east and southern Africa

Nestlé East and Southern Africa (ESAR) have launched the Nestlé Needs Youth (NNY) Agri Competition, in partnership with the Branson Centre of Entrepreneurship South Africa.



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The competition presents an opportunity for youth agripreneurs to win mentorship and coaching opportunities totalling over US\$30,000 through the Branson Centre's Ignite Investor Readiness and Go-To-Market Programme. The drive is to encourage agripreneurship amongst young people across east and southern Africa.

Speaking on the competition and the partnership, Nestlé East and Southern African Region Head of Learning and Development, Desiree Zikalala, says: "Many of Africa's economies have an agrarian foundation from community all the way to national level and through this competition, we are looking to support and encourage young people to participate in this economic sector. There are several transformative prospects in agriculture that desperately need young people to step in and lead, and we believe that the Ignite Programme placements that are up for grabs will help facilitate those opportunities.

"Successful agribusiness ventures have a catalytic effect in communities as their development impact goes beyond the agripreneurs themselves to various verticals that deal directly and indirectly with the sector. We intend for the NNY Agri Competition to open further dialogue on young people in agriculture, and help build transformative networks that support agripreneurship, employment and employability."

Filling the skills gap

A solution to the pervasive skills gap in agriculture in Africa is capacity development, mentorship, and coaching support. This will accelerate the evolution of the sector and the achievement of better efficiencies, improved processes, and cutting-edge technologies. Young people, as drivers of innovation, on the continent are well poised to lead and leapfrog this shift. Inherent in agripreneurship are economic development, job creation and skills development for better employability, and focusing on young people centres these opportunities on them.

Nwabisa Mayema, strategic partnerships director at the Branson Centre comments: "This is an important partnership to accelerate some of the top solutions to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable

agriculture through youth-led innovations. We look forward to building on and supporting the top three pitches with Nestlé Needs Youth to enable their access to finance, new markets and networks through Ignite."

The NNY Agri Competition

The competition will award three winning entries placement in the Branson Centre's Ignite Investor Readiness and Go-To-Market Programme.

The first prize is the Ignite Investment for Scale Programme, an intensive six-month mentorship and coaching programme that will help the winning agripreneur get their business investor ready. The programme features fortnightly mentoring, and access to industry professionals and business coaches across eight critical areas in business, namely, purpose, planning, product, brand, people, processes, finance, and partnerships.

The second prize is the Ignite Access to Markets Programme, a three-month programme tailored to mentor, coach and enable agripreneurs in the early stages to build a strong platform to win new partnerships and gain access to market. The programme features fortnightly mentoring, access to industry professionals and business coaches across four critical areas in business, namely, purpose, planning, product, and partnerships.

The third prize is the Ignite Ideation into Action, a one-month mentoring programme with access to industry professionals and business coaches across three critical areas to help guide ideation into action, namely, purpose, planning, and product.

The NNY Agri Competition is open to people of all genders aged 18–30, living in the east and southern Africa region. Entries are open from 21 June 2022 and will close on 31 July 2022. In the month of August, a shortlist of five candidates will be drawn, and these will pitch for one of the three top prizes, worth a total of US\$30,000, courtesy of the Branson Centre of Entrepreneurship SA.

Entries are to be submitted online, on the NNY Agri Competition [platform](#).

[More information.](#)

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