

Johnson & Johnson Launches Africa Innovation Challenge 2.0

Press Contacts:

John Lacey
(United States)
+1 781 392 5514
Jlacey1@its.JNJ.com

Ronan Collins
(Europe)
+ 47 4884 2500
rcollin5@its.JNJ.com

Lee Moteetee
(Africa)
+27 72 490 4609
lee.moteetee@ogilvypr.co.za

**Calling on African Entrepreneurs to Submit Ideas in Six Categories:
Mental Health, Consumer Packaging, Botanical Solutions,
Health Worker Support, Digital Health Tools and Essential Surgery**

***Winning Africa-based innovators and startups eligible for mentorship and
US\$50,000 in financial support and resources
to help bring their ideas to market***

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA/LONDON, ENGLAND – NOVEMBER 8,

2018 — Johnson & Johnson today launched the Champions of Science [Africa Innovation Challenge 2.0](#), the second continent-wide competition calling on African innovators to submit ideas for innovative technologies, products and solutions that have the potential to create positive impact for African communities. The challenge focuses on identifying scalable and sustainable solutions to six major health and environmental problems for Africa’s population.

“The growing number of innovation hubs throughout Africa is sparking a new generation of entrepreneurs who are innovating and finding new solutions for issues facing their communities,” said **Josh Ghaim, Ph.D., Chief Technology Officer, Johnson & Johnson Consumer Inc. and member of the Johnson & Johnson Research & Development Management Committee,**¹ who is launching the challenge today at the Africa Women Innovation & Entrepreneurship Forum in Cape Town. “Our goal with the second Africa Innovation Challenge is to expand our support for the region’s entrepreneurs by pushing the boundaries of creative solutions to meet several areas of urgent need. With six new solution categories, Africa Innovation Challenge 2.0 represents an extraordinary opportunity for the region’s growing community of innovators to showcase new ideas with the potential for broad societal impact,” added Ghaim.

“At Johnson & Johnson, we believe a great idea can come from anyone, anywhere, and we work with entrepreneurs around the world to relentlessly pursue innovations that advance and enhance the health of everyone, everywhere,” said **Seema Kumar, Vice President, Innovation, Global Public Health and Science Policy Communication, Johnson & Johnson and member of the Johnson & Johnson Research & Development Management Committee**, who is simultaneously launching the challenge today at the Women Leaders in Global Health Conference in London. “This is an exciting time to be part of Africa’s rapidly advancing innovation ecosystem, which recognizes that people and patients across the continent are waiting for urgent solutions. The Africa Innovation Challenge provides an important platform to support emerging entrepreneurs and help accelerate the development of unique, sustainable health care and environmental solutions.”

The Africa Innovation Challenge 2.0 is designed to address the critical unmet needs of the continent and local communities in Africa while providing support to Africa-based entrepreneurs in creating innovative health care products and services. Among the selection criteria, entries must demonstrate the potential for scale from proof of concept stage to long-term sustainability. Challenge participants with the best solutions will receive up to US\$50,000 in funding and mentorship from the global network of scientists, engineers and business managers within the Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies to bring new solutions forward.

“We are thrilled to be collaborating once again on the Africa Innovation Challenge,” said **Thierry Zomahoun, President and CEO of the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS) and Founder and Chairman of the Next Einstein Forum (NEF)**. “Earlier this year, at our biennial Next Einstein Forum event, we had the pleasure of hearing from the first challenge winners. The incredible success of their businesses provides wonderful examples of leadership and entrepreneurialism and is a testament to the amazing young talent across Africa. We look forward to the winners of Africa Innovation Challenge 2.0.”

“The Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies comprises of one of the world’s largest health care companies and is drawing on over 85 years of engagement in Africa in over 25 countries, and we are proud to support Africa’s rapidly advancing innovation ecosystem,” **said Alma Scott, Vice President, Operations and Partnerships, Global Public Health, Johnson & Johnson.**ⁱⁱ “We’ve learned over time that solving last-mile challenges through local empowerment offers the greatest potential impact in the fight against public health challenges, and that it can also help fuel the local economy and catalyze infrastructure investments.”

Solution Categories for the Africa Innovation Challenge 2.0

The challenge’s six new solution categories aim to address significant threats to Africa’s health care systems and environment:

- **Botanical Solutions:** Sixty to eighty percent of households in Africa still rely on traditional medicine to care for themselves and loved ones.ⁱⁱⁱ We are seeking naturally-derived, plant-based solutions that tap into traditional knowledge and deliver consumer health and wellness benefits through topical application.
- **Packaging Innovations:** Managing packaging waste from the increasing consumption in Africa is a challenge for many communities. We are seeking sustainable innovations for packaging of single-dose units and other affordable product sizes that will reduce or eliminate waste, while protecting the product.
- **Mental Health:** Caring for someone with mental illness, especially the youth, can be very challenging for rural communities. As a result, 75-85% of persons living with mental illness in Africa may not have access to mental health care.^{iv} We are seeking innovations that create awareness for mental illness as a public health problem and offer solutions for patients, caregivers, and their communities to address these issues.

- **Health Worker Support:** African frontline health workers experience high rates of stress and burnout due to the heavy burden of disease and marked health system challenges. We are seeking innovations that support the wellbeing and resilience of nurses, midwives and community health workers at the heart of delivering care.
- **Digital Health Tools:** The African continent has the world's poorest health outcomes, with HIV, TB, Mental Health, Maternal Health and Ebola having especially large impact particularly on women. We are seeking digital tools (including apps and other mobile/web/data enabled tech) for these important health care areas that can inform, educate, communicate and connect people to treatment, support and care through their reach and information and improve health outcomes especially for women.
- **Essential Surgical Care:** A significant portion of the burden of disease in Africa can be treated with surgery. However, many health facilities in certain areas do not have the capacity to deliver even basic surgical services. We are seeking innovations that promote access to timely, safe, and skilled surgical care.

Challenge submissions may originate from anywhere in Africa, and from one or more individuals, teams or companies; subject to certain eligibility requirements set out in the terms and conditions for the challenge. The submitted health care solutions will be evaluated based on their ability to meet the following criteria:

- 1) Idea submission addresses at least one of the six challenge categories.
- 2) Idea submission is innovative and creative.
- 3) Idea submission is scalable.
- 4) Idea submission outlines how the award would help the applicant(s) reach a critical milestone within the timeframe of a single year and provides a full commercialization plan.

To apply to the Challenge and review the applicable terms and conditions, please visit the [Africa Innovation Challenge website](#). The deadline to submit applications is January 16, 2019. Neither Johnson & Johnson nor any of its companies is granted any rights to applicant ideas as a result of their participation in the Challenge. Applicants and winners remain free to continue the further development of their ideas on their own. Award recipients will be announced in Spring 2019.

For more information on the Africa Innovation Challenge and the stories of innovation from past winners, please visit www.jnjinnovation.com/africachallenge/.

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About Africa Innovation Challenge 1.0

The first Johnson & Johnson Africa Innovation Challenge, launched in November 2016, sought novel ideas with a focus on three critical health areas: promoting early child development and maternal health; empowering young women; and improving family well-being.

The three winning concepts embraced these themes as well as the goal of creating ongoing, sustainable businesses:

- **The Big Idea: Reusable Feminine Hygiene Products**
Francoise Nibizi, founder and executive director of SaCoDé, Burundi

Johnson & Johnson mentoring and funding helped Francoise to scale up production of Agateka pads fourfold, opening two new manufacturing locations and creating training and permanent jobs for 20 young women.

- **The Big Idea: Hands-Free Faucets to Fight the Spread of Diseases**
Grace Nakibaala, CEO and Founder of InnovAsepsis, Uganda

After one year of support, patent and trademark applications have been filed for the PedalTap™ device, the device is now being manufactured in Uganda, and the device has been installed in several public bathrooms, reducing the risk of infection and saving water.

- **The Big Idea: Natural Skin Products That Support Small Farmers**
Mahmud Johnson, founder and CEO of J-Palm, Liberia

With Johnson & Johnson's support, Mahmud was able to create 330 new jobs in Liberia, broaden his product portfolio of organic palm kernel oil cosmetics and grow sales by 1100%.

About Johnson & Johnson

At Johnson & Johnson, we believe good health is the foundation of vibrant lives, thriving communities and forward progress. That's why for more than 130 years, we have aimed to keep people well at every age and every stage of life. Today, as the world's largest and most broadly-based health care company, we are committed to using our reach and size for good. We strive to improve access and affordability, create healthier communities, and put a healthy mind, body and environment within reach of everyone, everywhere. We are blending our heart, science and ingenuity to profoundly change the trajectory of health for humanity.

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ⁱ Mr. Ghaim is also CEO of Ghaim LLC.

ⁱⁱ Ms. Scott is an employee of Johnson & Johnson (Proprietary) Limited.

ⁱⁱⁱ Paulo Peter Mhame, Kofi Busia and Ossy MJ Kasilo. Clinical practices of African traditional medicine. WHO: The African Health Monitor Special Issue 13, August 2010. Accessed online: <http://ahm.afro.who.int/issue13/index.html>

^{iv} World Health Organization. Discussion Paper: Mental health, poverty and development. ECOSOC Meeting Discussion Paper, July 2009. Accessed online: http://www.who.int/nmh/publications/discussion_paper_en.pdf?ua=1