

## MEST Africa Challenge now open

The MEST Africa Challenge returns for its third year, offering up to \$50,000 in equity investment for startups based in Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sénégal, South Africa and Tanzania.



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The MEST Africa Challenge (MAC) is now accepting applications from tech software entrepreneurs in nine emerging markets in Africa. Expanding from last year's reach, the 2020 pitch competition is targeting startups in Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sénégal, South Africa and Tanzania.

The MEST Africa Challenge is a search for Africa's emerging tech entrepreneurs with the aim of providing them with investment capital, coaching, and access to a continent-wide network of startup hubs. MEST has been strengthening the ecosystem for tech startup success since 2008.

Now in its third year, the MEST Africa Challenge is a trans-continental pitch competition offering up to \$50,000 in equity investment to talented entrepreneurs as they build and scale successful businesses that add value to African economies.

As the Covid-19 pandemic develops, the startup regional pitch competitions will have to move to digital if the need arises. The regional finalists will pitch in the final competition in June 2020 (TBC). There they will compete in front of global expert judges for \$50,000 in equity investment and the opportunity to join the Africa-wide MEST incubator community.

"There is more talent in Africa than there are opportunities. This is what we've learned after twelve years of training, funding, and supporting tech founders and startups. In order to bring more investment to African economies and strengthen the tech ecosystem (as a whole) for startups to thrive, we've expanded the MEST Africa Challenge to four new markets this year," said Ashwin Ravichandran, managing director, MEST.

### **Apply now!**

Applications for this year's challenge are now open. You can find more information and apply here. All business leaders with post-revenue startups, in any vertical, from Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sénégal, South Africa and Tanzania are encouraged to apply.

Regional pitch events will be held on the following dates, at MEST Hub locations or local partners spaces:

- Lagos, Nigeria: Friday, 1 May
- Johannesburg, South Africa: Monday, 4 May
- Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: Friday, 8 May
- Accra, Ghana: Monday, 11 May
- Nairobi, Kenya: Monday, 11 May
- Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire: Tuesday, 12 May
- Kigali, Rwanda: Thursday, 14 May
- Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: Monday, 18 May
- Dakar, Sénégal: Friday, 22 May

### **Application Criteria**

- Pre-seed or seed-stage (have raised \$100k total or less cumulatively since inception)
- Currently generating revenue
- Can demonstrate traction in one or more of the nine MAC Markets (Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Côte d'Ivoire, Sénégal, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Rwanda)
- Has been in operations for 2 years or less
- Tech-enabled (software company)
- Industry agnostic
- Any business model (B2B, B2C, B2B2C, B2G, etc...)
  
- All applications and pitches must be in English

### **Application close 18 April 2020**

Apply here for the [2020 MEST Africa Challenge](#)

*Due to Covid-19, MEST currently advises against all non-essential local and international travel. The startup regional pitch competitions will have to move to digital if the need arises.*

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