

INNOVATE AFRICA CONFERENCE 2026

OFFICIAL CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

THEME

12–13 October 2026
Kigali, Rwanda

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ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The **Innovate Africa Conference 2026** brings together African Heads of State, policymakers, investors, business leaders, innovators, entrepreneurs, creatives, development institutions and global industry experts to explore and unlock Africa's trillion-dollar economic opportunities.

Under the theme **“Driving the Next Trillion-Dollar Economies: Africa's Creative, Agricultural and Energy Sectors”** the Conference will examine how Africa can transform its abundant human, natural, cultural and technological resources into globally competitive industries.

The two-day programme is designed to move beyond dialogue into **investment, partnerships, innovation, market access and actionable policy recommendations**.

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

Strategic Objective	Focus
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Investment Mobilisation	Unlock capital and investment opportunities across Africa's high growth sectors.
Economic Transformation	Advance conversations around industrialisation, innovation, productivity and sustainable economic growth.
Public-Private Partnerships	Connect governments, businesses, investors and development institutions to build scalable solutions.
Policy Advancement	Identify policy reforms required to create an enabling environment for African businesses and investors.
Innovation Showcase	Spotlight African startups, businesses, technologies and creative solutions with potential for continental and global scale.
Trade and Market Expansion	Strengthen regional integration, cross-border commerce and the implementation of AfCFTA opportunities.
Global Positioning	Position Africa as a competitive destination for investment, innovation, enterprise and global partnerships.

THE CONFERENCE'S FOUR GROWTH ENGINES

The 2026 Conference will centre its economic conversations around four interconnected growth engines:

01 — CREATIVE ECONOMY AND CULTURAL GROWTH

Transforming Africa’s creativity, culture, entertainment and intellectual property into globally competitive industries.

02 — AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

Moving from food insecurity and raw commodity exports toward productive, technology-enabled and value-added agricultural economies.

03 — TECHNOLOGY AT SCALE

Building the digital infrastructure, innovation ecosystems and technology companies capable of serving African and global markets.

04 — ENERGY TRANSITION

Unlocking the energy infrastructure, investment and innovation required to power Africa’s industrialisation and economic transformation.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM - October 12th, 2026

DAY ONE		
TIME	SESSION	DETAILS
8:00 AM – 9:00 AM	Registration	Accreditation, VIP arrivals and networking
9:00 AM – 9:30 AM	Opening Ceremony	Housekeeping, Rwandan National Anthem, Welcome Address, Host Country Remarks, Cultural Performance
9:30 AM – 9:50 AM	Presidential Keynote Address by the Vice President of the Republic of Liberia - His Excellency Jeremiah Kpan KOUNG, Sr	Topic: Africa’s Road to Trillion-Dollar Economies

		Key Themes: Economic transformation, industrialisation, regional integration, investment, innovation
9:50 AM – 10:10 AM	Ministerial Leadership Dialogue Speaker: His Excellency, Barrister Nyesom Ezenwo Wike	Investing in Africa's Next Economic Frontier: Building the Infrastructure for Sustainable Growth
		Key Themes: Africa's infrastructure gap; infrastructure as an investment opportunity; transport, logistics and regional connectivity; public-private partnership and innovative financing; urbanization and smart cities; local capacity & African ownership; the call to action building Africa's future

INVESTMENT DEVELOPMENT SESSION		
10:10 AM – 10:40 AM	Global Investment Keynote by Mazi Sam Ohuabunwa	Policy Reforms Driving Africa's Economic Transformation
		Discussion Areas: AfCFTA, ease of doing business, digital economy, investment policy, taxation reforms
10:40 AM – 10:55 AM	Networking Break	Investor meetings, media interviews, VIP networking
11:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Investment Panel: Moderator: Marynsia Magunu Panelists:	Bridging Continents: Structuring Diaspora Investment for Scalable Development

	- Ahmed Farrah (CEO, East African Business Council) - Gloria Kamanzi Uwizera (Chairperson, African Women Entrepreneurship Program) - John Burns (Managing Partner, the Burns Brothers) - Dr. Benaisha Poole-Watson (Owner/President MFS Corporation) - Dr. Kennedy Nnadi (CEO - Penek USA/Nigeria)	
11:30 AM – 11:40 AM	Investment Panel Q&A	
11:40 AM – 12:00PM	Leadership Charge	Vision to Power: The Leadership Imperative for Building Africa's Trillion-Dollar Economies
	Speaker: Dr. Valentine Ozigbo	Immediate Past President and CEO, Transcorp Plc; Founder of Valiant Movement
12:00 PM – 1:00 PM	Lunch & Networking	

CREATIVE & CULTURAL ECONOMY SESSION		
1:00 PM – 1:20 PM	Cultural Display and Dance	
1:25 PM – 1:55 PM	Creative & Cultural Economy Panel	Africa's Cultural Capital: Turning Creativity into a Global Economic Powerhouse

1:55 PM – 2:00 PM	Creative & Cultural Economy Panel Q&A	
	Moderator: Pamela Williams Panelists: - Abimbola Akintola - Susan Peters - Jonny Miles - Nanna Yakubu Dashe - Dr Gillian Richards-Greaves - Mohammed Williams	
2:00 PM – 2:30PM	Fireside Chat with Chioma Ude, Bolanle Austin Peters, Moderator: Mohamed Williams	Building Institutions that Last: Structuring Africa's Film Industry for Global Scale and Investment

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION SESSION		
2:30 PM - 2:50PM	Keynote Speech by Paul Izeoma Chinda (Head of Microsoft Practice CDW Corp)	
2:50PM – 3:20PM	Technology & Innovation Panel Moderator: Obakam Tom George Panelists: - Paul Izeoma Chinda - Dr. Yakama Manty Jones - Dr. Kevin Ngala - Ahmed Tunde Kalok	Building Africa's Next Tech Giants: From Startups to Global Market Leaders

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION SESSION		
3:20PM – 3:30PM	Technology and Innovation Panel Q&A	
3:30PM – 3:40 PM	Break Partners and Sponsors spotlight	

AGRICULTURE SESSION		
3:40PM - 4:00PM	Keynote Speech by Minister of Agriculture Rwanda	
4:00PM – 4:30PM	Agriculture Panel Moderator: Lyzianah Emakoua Panelists:: - Teslim Bello Osagie - Nana Klay - Dr. Williams Ngaje - Judith Okoli	From Food Security to Food Superpower: Scaling Africa's Agribusiness into a Trillion-Dollar Industry
4:30PM – 4:35PM	Agriculture Panel Q&A	

ENERGY, OIL & GAS, AND MINING SESSION		
4:35PM – 4:55PM	Global Keynote Address by Dr. Uchechukwu Ogah (President & Founder, Masters energy Oil and Former Minister of State for Power and Steel Federal Republic of Nigeria)	Energy as Economic Sovereignty: Powering Africa's Industrial Rise to a Sustainable Trillion-Dollar Future

ENERGY, OIL & GAS, AND MINING SESSION		
4:55PM – 5:30PM	Energy, Oil & Gas, and Mining Panel Moderator: Atuzie Favour	Powering Prosperity: Energy and Mining as the Foundation of Africa's Industrial Future
5:30PM – 5:35PM	Energy, Oil & Gas, and Mining Panel Q&A	
	Panelists: - Dr. Mark Igiehon - Yachtze Luchin - Dr. Uche Ogah Closing Remarks: Princess Alugwe	

Day 2: October 13th, 2026

INNOVATE AFRICA INVESTORS' ROUNDTABLE

Theme

Financing Africa's Next Trillion-Dollar Economies

Focus

Creative Economy | Agriculture & Food Systems | Energy | Technology & Innovation

Objective

To connect investors, DFIs, venture capital firms, private equity investors, corporate investors and strategic partners with Africa's most promising businesses and innovators, while identifying the capital, partnerships and policy conditions required to scale Africa's next generation of trillion-dollar industries.

PROPOSED PROGRAMME

Time	Session	Focus
8:00 9:00 AM	– Registration, Networking & Investor Reception	Arrival and registration of investors, founders, delegates and partners. Networking, refreshments and informal introductions.
9:00 9:10 AM	– Official Opening & Welcome Remarks	Welcome guests, introduce the Investors' Roundtable and establish the investment agenda for Africa's next trillion-dollar economies.
9:12 9:20 AM	– Keynote Address - Dr Yakama Manty Jones	Financing Africa's Next Trillion-Dollar Economies — A high-level perspective on where the capital will come from and where the biggest opportunities lie across Africa.
9:25 9:55 AM	– Investors' Panel - Teslim Bello-Osagie Dr Greg Ogbeifun John Burns	What Does It Take to Build an Investable Business? — Investors discuss investment readiness, accessing FDI and other forms of capital, scaling African startups across borders, common founder mistakes, what investors look for, valuation, governance, traction and preparing for due diligence.
10:00 10:20 AM	– Yachtze Luchin Fireside Chat with Pamela	A fireside chat.
10:25 AM – 12:25 PM	The Innovate Africa 20: Startup Pitch Showcase	20 investment-ready African startups across the four priority sectors. Each startup delivers a concise pitch followed by investor questions.
12:27 12:47 PM	– Investor Deliberation & Feedback	Investors discuss the pitches and provide direct feedback on strengths, weaknesses, investment readiness, scalability and areas requiring improvement.
12:50 1:10 PM	– The Deal Room	From Pitch to Deal. Selected founders and interested investors enter structured negotiations around investment, equity, strategic partnerships, market access and other forms of capital.

1:12 1:20PM	- Investment Partnership Announcements	&	Announce confirmed investments, expressions of interest, partnership commitments, investor-founder matches and other significant outcomes from the Deal Room.
1:22 – 1:35 PM	Innovate Africa 20 Recognition Ceremony		Recognition of participating startups, announcement of Best Pitch / Sector Winners / Investors' Choice, presentation of certificates and appreciation of founders, judges and investors.
1:40 2:00 PM	- Conference Feedback Communiqué	&	Presentation of key insights and recommendations emerging from the Roundtable, including investor feedback, founder needs, capital gaps and priority actions.
2:00 2:10 PM	- Convener's Closing Remarks		Final reflections, appreciation of participants and a call to action for continued investment, collaboration and execution.
2:10 PM - 2:30 PM	- Investor & Founder Networking Reception		Informal networking, continued investor-founder conversations and follow-up discussions.

Core Investment Tracks

Sector	Investment Opportunity
Creative Economy & Cultural Growth	Film, music, media, fashion, design, entertainment, culture, intellectual property and creative businesses with global export potential.
Agriculture & Food Systems	AgriTech, food production, processing, logistics, distribution, climate-smart agriculture and modern food systems.
Technology at Scale	Digital infrastructure, AI, fintech, enterprise technology, platforms, applied innovation and technology businesses capable of continental scale.
Energy Transition	Renewable energy, energy access, storage, clean technology, distributed energy and infrastructure powering African industrialisation.

The Innovate Africa 20

Sector	No. of Startups	Format
Creative Economy & Cultural Growth	5	4-minute pitch + 2-minute Q&A
Agriculture & Food Systems	5	4-minute pitch + 2-minute Q&A
Technology at Scale	5	4-minute pitch + 2-minute Q&A
Energy Transition	5	4-minute pitch + 2-minute Q&A
Total	20	2 hours

INNOVATE AFRICA CONFERENCE 2026

GALA NIGHT & AFRICAN EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Theme:
Honouring Africa’s Builders, Visionaries and Economic Changemakers

GALA NIGHT PROGRAMME AGENDA

Time	Programme Segment	Details
7:00PM – 8:00PM	Red Carpet Reception & VIP Arrival	Arrival of Heads of State, Ministers, CEOs, investors, celebrities, award nominees and distinguished guests. Media interviews, photography and press coverage.
8.00PM – 8:15 PM	Grand Opening Ceremony	Opening video presentation showcasing

		Africa's economic potential, conference highlights, investment opportunities and key moments from the conference.
8:15PM – 8:25PM	Welcome Remarks	Welcome address by conference Founder / Chairperson highlighting the vision, achievements and future direction of Innovate Africa Corporation conference.
8:25PM – 8:40PM	Cultural Performance Opening	A world-class African cultural performance celebrating the diversity, heritage and creativity of the continent.
8:40 PM – 9:00 PM	Dinner Begins	Premium dining experience with executive networking.
9:00PM – 9:20 PM	Distinguished Guest Address	Address by a Distinguished African Personality on Africa's future and economic transformation.
9:20 PM – 9:40 PM	Special Recognition Presentation	Recognition of individuals and institutions making exceptional contributions to Africa's development.
9:40 PM – 10:30 PM	African Excellence Awards Ceremony	Presentation of awards celebrating leadership, innovation,

		entrepreneurship, investment and impact across Africa.
10:30 PM – 11:00 PM	Entertainment Interlude	Performance by leading African artists showcasing African music and culture.
11:00 PM – 11:20 PM	Investment & Partnership Spotlight	Announcement of major investment commitments, partnerships, MOUs and strategic collaborations emerging from the conference.
11:20 PM – 11:35 PM	Innovate Africa conference Communiqué Presentation	Presentation of key outcomes, policy recommendations and commitments from the conference.
11:35 PM – 11:50 PM	Lifetime Achievement & Legacy Award	Recognition of an iconic African leader whose work has shaped economic, social or innovation advancement across the continent.
11:50 PM – 12:00 AM	Closing Remarks & Vote of Thanks	Appreciation to partners, sponsors, delegates, governments and participants.
12:00 AM – 1:00 AM	Celebration & Executive Networking After Party	Exclusive networking, entertainment, music and relationship building

		among global leaders, investors and delegates.
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AFRICAN EXCELLENCE AWARD CATEGORIES

Award Category	
African Innovation Leader Award	Technology innovators and breakthrough solutions
African Creative Economy Vanguard Award	Individuals advancing Africa's creative industries globally
African Agribusiness Leader Award	Transformational leaders in agriculture and food systems
African Energy Leadership Award	Contributions to Africa's energy transition and access
African Investment Champion Award	Investors unlocking capital for African businesses
African Business Excellence Award	Companies demonstrating exceptional growth and impact
African Startup of the Year Award	Most promising African startup

Young African Entrepreneur Award	Emerging entrepreneurs creating economic value
Women in Leadership Excellence Award	Women driving transformation across sectors
African Diaspora Impact Award	Diaspora leaders investing in Africa's growth
Public Service & Governance Excellence Award	Policymakers advancing development and reform
Achievements Award Lifetime Achievement	Iconic African contributor with lasting impact