

## 2019 MEST Africa Challenge applications now open

The MEST Africa Challenge returns for its second year, offering up to US\$50,000 in equity investment for startups based in Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa and Cote d'Ivoire.



MEST Africa Challenge in 2018

MEST Africa has announced the launch of applications for its second annual MEST Africa Challenge, a pan-African pitch competition for scale-ups based in Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa or Cote d'Ivoire who are ready to expand into new markets.

This year's finalists from each country will attend the MEST Africa Summit in Nairobi, Kenya, 10-12 June 2019, where they will once again compete on a global stage for up to US\$50,000 in equity investment and the opportunity to join the Pan-African MEST incubator community.

"This year we're looking for the continent's most exciting African scale-ups who are ready to expand into new markets, and continue building world-class solutions for African problems," says Aaron Fu, managing director at MEST.

The team at MEST, along with this year's platinum sponsor Microsoft, looks forward to hosting the second edition of the finals at the 2019 MEST Africa Summit, which will bring together leading African and global entrepreneurs, investors, corporate partners and ecosystem players in MEST Africa's newest home, Nairobi, Kenya.

"We are excited to partner with MEST," said Microsoft's senior director, Chris Lwanga. "At Microsoft our mission is to empower every person and every organisation on the planet to achieve more. We firmly believe that innovation is the birth right of every human being and look forward to seeing first hand the amazing innovation coming from Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa and Cote d'Ivoire."

The inaugural MEST Africa Challenge in 2018 saw over 700 applications across four markets, out of which 40 made it into the regional finals in Accra, Lagos, Nairobi and Cape Town.

One representative from each of team was flown to Cape Town, where they presented in front of a jury of judges from Facebook, MTN, and Meltwater, as well as the summit's global audience of investors, pan-African entrepreneurs and corporate leaders. Accounteer, a Nigeria-based cloud accounting company, took home the first prize including US\$50,000 in equity investment and a space in the MEST Incubator Lagos.

### **Apply now**

Applications for this year's challenge opened on 14 January, and will close on **Friday, 15 February 2019**.

If you are a post-revenue tech business, in any vertical, who can show why you should be taken seriously as a leader in your space, you are encouraged to apply. Top companies in each region will be invited to pitch at regional events in Accra, Nairobi, Lagos, Cape Town and Abidjan.

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

- **Accra:** Wednesday, 27 February 2019
- **Nairobi:** Wednesday, 27 February 2019
- **Lagos:** Thursday, 28 February 2019
- **Cape Town:** Thursday, 28 February 2019
- **Abidjan:** Thursday, 28 February 2019

### **Criteria**

Companies must:

- Be post-revenue
- Operate in the market in which they are applying
- Be primarily tech-focused

To apply, go to [2019 MEST Africa challenge](#).

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>