

Africa Netpreneur Prize Initiative Announces Top 10 Finalists

Spearheaded by the Jack Ma Foundation, the Finale Event will take place in Accra, Ghana, on 16 November 2019

14 October 2019 - The Africa Netpreneur Prize Initiative (ANPI) has identified the top 10 finalists for its grand finale event taking place in Accra, Ghana on 16 November 2019.

The finalists were chosen from nearly 10,000 applicants from 50 African countries. After months of judging and deliberation, the finalists were shortlisted and will now go on to pitch their business directly to four finale judges - **Jack Ma**, Founder of Alibaba Group and the Jack Ma Foundation; **Strive Masiyiwa**, Founder and Executive Chairman of Econet Group; **Ibukun Awosika**, Chairman of First Bank of Nigeria and Founder/CEO of The Chair Centre Group; and **Joe Tsai**, Executive Vice Chairman of Alibaba Group - during a televised finale event called “Africa’s Business Heroes”. The winners will receive a share of the \$1 million USD grant prize pool.

The Jack Ma Foundation will host a full-day Africa Netpreneur Summit, an invitation-only conference where African and global entrepreneurs, investors, educators, and leaders will convene to discuss how best to enable entrepreneurship and the digital economy across the continent. Guest speakers at the conference will include Ban Ki-moon, Former UN Secretary General and Co-chair of the Ban Ki-moon Centre for Global Citizens. The conference will be followed by the “Africa’s Business Heroes” event in the evening.

“We launched the Africa Netpreneur Prize Initiative to identify top entrepreneurs from across the continent, not only to reward them but to inspire a whole new generation of potential gamechangers for Africa. I have been inspired by the entrepreneurs I met in Africa, many of whom are dealing with the same challenges we faced when we started Alibaba years ago. I truly believe the potential of Africa’s business heroes is limitless,” said Jack Ma, Founder of Alibaba Group and the Jack Ma Foundation.

“Africa’s Business Heroes” will air on November 29. More details of how to tune in to the program will be released in the coming weeks. Highlights from the Africa Netpreneur Summit will also be shared via ANPI social media handles. Follow along on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

The diverse group of 10 finalists represent a range of industries and experience.

Meet the finalists:

Waleed Abd El Rahman, CEO, [Mumm](#) (Egypt)

Mumm is a virtual cafeteria for businesses, harnessing the power of shared economy through technology, cloud kitchens and an online marketplace for home-based entrepreneurial cooks. Waleed is a seasoned entrepreneur with 12+ years in food tech. He is also the former founding managing director of MIT Technology Review-Middle East and a member of the Advisory Committee of the World Economic Forum’s Global Shapers Community.

Ayodeji Arikawe, co-founder, [Thrive Agric](#) (Nigeria)

Thrive Agric is an agricultural technology-enabled company that works with smallholder farmers to enable them with greater access to finance, as well as improve their income and harvest

distribution. Today, Thrive Agric works with 22,000 farmers in Nigeria, but the company is aiming to build the largest network of farmers in Africa. They are on a mission to “build an Africa that feeds the world and itself.” Ayodeji is an accomplished software engineer and serves as both co-founder and CTO for Thrive Agric.

Temie Giwa-Tubosun, founder and CEO, [LifeBank](#) (Nigeria)

LifeBank is a medical distribution company that uses data and technology to help health workers discover critical medical products. The company has saved over 5,300 lives in Nigeria. Founder Temie has over 10 years of health-management experience with Department for International Development, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Development Programme and Lagos State. In 2014, BBC listed her as one of the 100 women changing the world. She was also recognized by Quartz and the World Economic Forum.

Mahmud Johnson, founder and CEO, [J-Palm](#) (Liberia)

J-Palm Liberia (JPL) was founded with the goal of making premium consumer goods while creating income-earning and employment opportunities through sustainable palm-oil production. When JPL was first founded, palm oil kernels had been going to waste in Liberia, but founder and CEO Mahmud Johnson found a way to innovate productive uses for this overlooked natural resource. Today, JPL has created a range of beauty and clean-energy products, built a robust network of partnerships across the country, and helped to create jobs for hundreds of Liberians. Mahmud holds a degree in economics from Dartmouth College and is a 2017 recipient of the Order of the Star of Africa conferred by the President of Liberia.

Kevine Kagirimpundu, co-founder and CEO, [UZURI K&Y](#) (Rwanda)

UZURI K&Y is an African-inspired ecofriendly shoe brand established in Rwanda. Kevine is the co-founder and CEO of UZURI K&Y, and she is passionate about ending global waste while also leveraging her creativity to create employment opportunities for her community. UZURI has made a direct impact on more than 750 people through employment and skills training. In addition to obtaining her degree in creative design, she has participated in numerous entrepreneurship programs to enhance her skills in business development. In 2017, she was recognized as the winner of the Made in Rwanda Enterprise of the Year.

Christelle Kwizera, founder, [Water Access Rwanda](#) (Rwanda)

Water Access Rwanda pioneered INUMA™, a Safe Water Microgrid that reclaims broken boreholes and transforms them into state-of-the-art solar-powered water kiosks and pipelines. The water is sold for \$1/1000 litre and creates off-farm jobs for youth. Currently, Water Access Rwanda employs 68 people, and allows 47,612 customers to access water daily across 86 stations. Christelle is a mechanical engineer and was named INCO’s woman entrepreneur of the year in 2019, among other high-profile awards.

Dr. Tosan J. Mogbeyiteren, founder, [Black Swan](#) (Nigeria)

WeMUNIZE by Black Swan Tech Ltd is helping to solve Nigeria’s public-health challenges by deploying an automated scheduling, GPS-enabled software-as-a-service that uses a combination of digital record keeping and community engagement to increase birth registration and early childhood immunizations. Black Swan is working with USAID Nigeria to expand WeMUNIZE

coverage in northern Nigeria. Tosan is a public-health specialist with more than 13 years of experience in deploying technology to solve development challenges in Nigeria.

Chibuzo Opara, co-founder, [DrugStoc](#) (Nigeria)

DrugStoc is a cloud-based pharmaceutical IT and logistics platform focused on eliminating counterfeit drugs, expanding access to pharmaceutical products and improving transparency in pricing for healthcare providers and the product supply chain. Chibuzo is a health economist and medical doctor with over 12 years of experience in the health sector. He has worked with the World Health Organization, the World Bank, and the International Finance Corporation.

Dr. Omar Sakr, founder and CEO, [Nawah-Scientific](#) (Egypt)

Nawah-Scientific is the first private research center in the MENA region focused on natural and biomedical sciences that offers analytical and scientific services online and on-demand. Dr. Sakr has 13 years of pharmaceutical experience, has worked as an adjunct assistant professor of entrepreneurship at Zewail City of Science and Technology, and holds scientific and business awards for innovative product design.

Moulaye Taboure, co-founder and CEO, [Afrikrea](#) (Cote D'Ivoire)

Afrikrea.com is the leading “Made of Africa” fashion, art and handicraft online marketplace. The marketplace has processed more than \$4 million in sales across 101 countries and supports merchants from all over the world. After growing up in Mali and working for companies like PricewaterhouseCoopers and Alstom, Moulaye now dedicates his time to building the global infrastructure for African culture.

About the Finale Judges

Jack Ma, Founder and Director, Alibaba Group; Founder of Jack Ma Foundation; United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Advocate

Jack Ma founded Alibaba Group in 1999 and served as Executive Chairman of Alibaba Group from 1999 to September 2019. He served as Chief Executive Officer of Alibaba Group from 1999 to May 2013.

Jack currently serves as a member of the Board of Trustees of the World Economic Forum, President of the General Association of Zhejiang Entrepreneurs and Chairman of the China Entrepreneur Club. He has been appointed by the United Nations Secretary General António Guterres as Co-Chair of the UN High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation since 2018.

Jack graduated from Hangzhou Normal University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English education.

Strive Masiyiwa, Founder and Executive Chairman, Econet Group

Strive Masiyiwa is the Founder and Executive Chairman of the Econet Group. He serves on several international boards including Unilever and National Geographic, and the Global Advisory boards of Stanford University and the Council on Foreign Relations. A board member of the Rockefeller Foundation for 15 years, he also served as Chairman of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa until August this year (now Chair Emeritus). In September 2019, Masiyiwa was awarded the prestigious World Food Prize Medallion.



Strive is a Co-Founder of the Carbon War Room and the Global Business Coalition on Education, is Co-Chair of Pathways for Prosperity Commission and serves as Commissioner on the Global Commission on Adaptation. Strive also serves on the Advisory Board of the Bloomberg New Economy Forum and drives continent-wide digital transformation as the only private sector member of the SMART Africa Board.

Since 2013, Strive has devoted his time each week to mentoring the next generation of African entrepreneurs through his Facebook page, which has a followership of over four million young people from across the continent and the world. He and his wife, Tsitsi, co-founded the Higherlife Foundation and are signatories of the Giving Pledge.

Strive has been selected twice, in 2014 and 2017, to Fortune Magazine's list of the "World's 50 Greatest Leaders" and has received honorary doctorates from Morehouse College, Yale University, Nelson Mandela University and Cardiff University.

Ibukun Awosika, Chairman, First Bank of Nigeria Limited

Ibukun Awosika is the Chairman of First Bank of Nigeria Limited, Nigeria's premier and most valuable banking brand. She is also the founder and CEO of The Chair Centre Group.

Ibukun chairs a number of corporate and not-for-profit boards amongst which are: Convention on Business Integrity, Digital Jewel Limited, House of Tara International and Afterschool Graduate Development Centre. She sits on the boards of Cadbury Nigeria Plc., International Women's Entrepreneurial Challenge, Imperial Gate School and Peniel Apartments Limited.

Ibukun is a graduate of chemistry from University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University), Nigeria. She is also an alumna of the Chief Executive Programme of Lagos Business School, the Global Executive MBA of IESE Business School, Barcelona-Spain, and Global CEO Programme of Wharton, IESE and China European International Business School.

As a fellow of the African Leadership Initiative, Aspen Global Leadership Network, Institute of Directors and Society for Corporate Governance Nigeria, Ibukun, through her projects aspires to use her opportunities in life to help entrepreneurs to create jobs for the large unemployed youthful population. She is a member of the Nigerian Economic Summit Group, served on the National Job Creation Committee, and sits on the International Advisory Board of IESE Business School, Barcelona-Spain and the Governing Council of Pan-Atlantic University.

Ibukun is a multiple award-winning entrepreneur and the first Nigerian recipient of the prestigious International Women Entrepreneurial Challenge Award as a nominee of the US Department of State in 2008.

Joe Tsai, Executive Vice Chairman, Alibaba Group

Joe Tsai joined Alibaba Group in 1999 as a member of the founding team and has served on the Board of Directors since the company's inception. He was Chief Financial Officer until 2013 and is currently Executive Vice Chairman. He serves on the Investment Committees of Alibaba Group and Ant Financial, and is a founding member of the Alibaba Partnership.

From 1995 to 1999, Joe was a private equity investor based in Hong Kong with Investor AB, the main investment vehicle of Sweden's Wallenberg family. Prior to that, he was General Counsel of Rosecliff, Inc., a management buyout firm based in New York. From 1990 to 1993, Joe was an



associate attorney in the tax group of Sullivan & Cromwell LLP, a New York-based international law firm.

Joe is the governor of the Brooklyn Nets of the National Basketball Association (NBA) and chairman of Barclays Center. He is also the owner of the New York Liberty of the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) and the San Diego Seals, a professional indoor lacrosse team in the National Lacrosse League (NLL).

Joe is qualified to practice law in the State of New York. He received his bachelor's degree in Economics and East Asian Studies from Yale College and a juris doctor degree from Yale Law School.

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About the ANPI

The ANPI is a philanthropic initiative spearheaded by the Jack Ma Foundation aimed at supporting and inspiring the next generation of African entrepreneurs across all sectors, who are building a more sustainable and inclusive economy for the future of the continent. For the next ten years, the ANPI will host the "Africa Business Heroes" show where ten finalists will compete in a pitch competition to win a share of \$1 million USD in grant money.

Media contact:

Bridget Lombard, Edelman
bridget.lombard@edelman.com
+27 (0)60 360 6271