



DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

Press release N° /2020

Date: 20 October 2020

Venue: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The African Union and Estonia launch hackathon to develop digital solutions to accelerate Africa post-COVID recovery

African Union and Estonia, in cooperation with Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg and Poland, with the implementing partners Garage48 and Smart Africa are organizing an online cross-continental hackathon “EU-Africa: The Post Crisis Journey” on 10-13 December 2020. The online hackathon is seeking innovative solutions to socio-economic problems in Africa, exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis.

The event builds on AU-Estonia cooperation agreement in December 2017 and the recommendations of AU-EU task force report in 2018. It is to be noted that spurring digitalization in Africa and seeking innovative development solutions is at the heart and spirit of the AU Digital Transformation Strategy approved in 2020 and in line with Agenda 2063 which gives a prominent place to youth empowerment and participation.

Dr Amani Abou-Zeid, African Union Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, highlighted the timeliness of the event: “[The AU Digital Transformation Strategy](#), approved in 2020, sees digitalization as springboard to rethink African development models and develop new solutions to socio-economic problems. The post-COVID-19 era offers Africa an important opportunity to revitalize our economies under a green and smart framework that supports health and prosperity embracing new technologies. We are confident that youth shall put their creativity, innovation and ingenuity using digital skills into providing solutions that help Africa recover better and faster”.

According to H.E. Andres Rundu, the Foreign Ministry’s Undersecretary for External Economic Policy and Development Cooperation, Estonia has considerably expanded its contacts with the countries and organizations of the African continent in recent years. “Organizing a hackathon with such a level of ambition is a clear demonstration of how Estonia can use its digital strengths to advance the cooperation between the European Union and Africa in several ways. Even before the pandemic, the rapid development of Africa was spurring on a great interest in digital services, and now the digital transformation has gathered even more speed. This hackathon enables us to join the forces of Europe and Africa for a successful digital transformation,” Rundu said.

Dr Blade Nzimande, Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation of South Africa, current Chair of the African Union, emphasized the role of science and innovation at the forefront of the response to COVID-19 in both Africa and Europe: “Cooperation between African and European scientists, innovators and entrepreneurs can make a decisive contribution, not only to defeat the pandemic, but crucially also to accelerate economic recovery. This hackathon will make an important contribution to enable such partnerships and it is, thus, an initiative, South Africa is delighted to support.”

The online hackathon plans to engage 10000 tech-savvy and socially conscious participants, 300 mentors and at least 100 community building organizations from both the Africa and Europe. The hackathon is open to African and European youth to submit innovative ideas that can contribute to mitigating the COVID-19 aftermath.

Registration is open now:

www.euafricathejourney.com

<https://www.facebook.com/euafricathejourney/>

<https://www.instagram.com/euafricathejourney/>

Twitter: @euafricajourney

More information about The Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa (2020-2030)
@ <https://au.int/en/documents/20200518/digital-transformation-strategy-africa-2020-2030>

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