




YOUTH ECOPRENEUR AWARDS



YOUNG ECOPRENEURS AND THE TRIPLE PLANETARY CRISIS

To tackle today's climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution at a global scale, bold and innovative solutions are essential.

While young entrepreneurs in least developed and developing countries are often seen as the victim of the environmental crisis, they can actually be agents of change and drive the transformation of our global economy. With their ideas, they have the potential to build and grow innovative ventures, that offer solutions to the triple planetary crisis - and contribute to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement.

At the same time, ecopreneurs often face challenges in scaling up their businesses: youth-led ventures have more difficulties getting access to knowledge, networks, collateral, and financial opportunities than older entrepreneurs. Moreover, they face the challenge to earn investors' trust without a solid track record - and compete with established players in complex business environments.

ABOUT THE YOUTH ECOPRENEUR AWARDS

Against this backdrop, the International Trade Centre (ITC) launched The Youth Ecopreneur Awards - a green business award competition specifically targeted at young entrepreneurs from least developed and developing economies that offer solutions to environmental challenges.

The Awards offer a stage and sounding board for youth ecopreneurs to showcase their sustainable and scalable solutions to accelerate the green economic transition and to receive support on this journey.

The Awards recognise ventures in three categories: water, energy and waste.

THE 2021 EDITION OF THE AWARDS

This booklet presents the winners and finalists of the 2021 edition of the Awards in the categories of waste, water, and energy.

The finalists were selected through a competitive judging process between August and November 2021. From over 650 applications received from more than 80 countries, they were selected in a two-staged evaluation process: technical committees reviewed their application materials and narrowed down the field. The resulting nine finalists pitched their ventures to a high-level jury from different domains on 23 November 2021. The winners were directly announced in the official Awards ceremony.

Each winner took home USD 5,000 to propel their business, a ticket to attend the world's leading start-up event SLUSH 2022, one-to-one assessments, advice on financial readiness and legal matters, and speaking slots at international events - all provided by ITC and the Awards partners.

In addition, all finalists can join a coaching programme, matchmaking with investors, networking, as well as opportunities to get involved in ITC's GreenToCompete networks and the Ye! Community.

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE SUPPORT OF OUR AWARDS PARTNERS

Ambitious Africa, the Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs, the Fondazione Italiana Accenture, GreenTec Capital Partners, Sidley Austin LLP, SME Finance Forum, and Sustainable Business Consulting.

We also wish to thank the many people and organizations for their continued support throughout the Awards projects.

MEET THE WINNERS



WASTE CATEGORY

Vedant Gandhi

India



Vedant is Founder & Director at recycleX. Vedant has over 5 years of experience in social impact sector & specialized in conducting environment & social impact assessments for startups & governments.

He is passionate about building an ecosystem for climate, clean tech and sustainability focused entrepreneurship and is helping businesses to scale up.

RecycleX manufactures green building products such as bricks, paver blocks, tiles and various furnitures that are made from 100% recycled materials, like low value plastic waste, industrial waste and construction debris.

"Our solutions enable the production of cement-free, carbon-negative concrete using mineral waste and CO2 as raw materials. The whole manufacturing is not only utilizing waste but also consume carbon making it carbon negative."

WATER & OTHERS CATEGORY

Lidia Diaz

Dominican Republic



Lidia is a nutritionist with 10 years of experience in the research and development of biotechnology of plant-based products.

She founded Plant Powered in 2017 with the mission of offering high-quality plant-based products through the main supermarket chains.

Plant Powered's product combines a proprietary food technology and cultural and gastronomic heritage, making it a unique option that combines quality and authenticity.

"Our diet choices are one of the most important factors in which we contribute to climate deterioration. We've been offering solutions for this problem for the past 5 years, employing our own limited resources.

Every validation and recognition we receive helps us in our goal of exposing and expanding our unique proposal."

ENERGY CATEGORY

Douglas K. Baguma Uganda



Douglas K Baguma is a renewable energy expert focusing on solar energy. He is an engineer with a business training from Kellogg School of Management.

He is the managing director of Innovex, a technology company that is using IoT digital tools built in-house to help solar companies solve problems around operations & maintenance of solar systems.

With his team, he developed 'Remot', a cloud based IoT solution enabling solar companies, EPC & distributors to remotely monitor and manage their energy systems.

'Remot' has transformed the way many solar companies in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, DRC, and Ethiopia in doing their business. It has reduced downtime and improved accessibility.

"We aim to inspire African innovators and entrepreneurs that dream to build solutions that will drive the green economy for Africa"



MEET THE FINALISTS

WASTE CATEGORY

Fauzal Rizki

Indonesia



Fauzal Rizki is the CEO and co-founder of Sampangan. He started his career building CIMB X, a digital team for one of the largest banks in Southeast Asia, before joining fintech payment Xendit as Head of Business Development.

Fauzal is now on a mission to build a world where all waste is converted back into value, and to accelerate circular economy.

"There is a gap in the market for environmentally sustainable and efficient waste processing."

With the team of Sampangan, he has created a carbonized waste processing technology called the Magic Box that sustainably processes all unsorted waste and transforms them into high value materials to be used in circular economy.

The machine uses heat radiation with low electricity usage, zero pollution, and capable of same day zero waste.

WASTE CATEGORY

Ghislain Irazoke

Rwanda



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With a passion for creating a waste-free world, Ghislain founded Wastezon, a waste traceability tech startup based in Rwanda.

Wastezon app assists the recycling actors to outsource their raw materials while on the other hand helping the households to get rid of their e-waste by selling them.

Backed by mineralogical laser scan technology, the app detects the mineralogical content of e-waste, providing an array of minerals contents and their provenance levels, hence allowing households to get price transparency.

The app also assists them in proper sorting, tracing the e-waste materials throughout the value chain and providing route optimization for recyclers for their e-waste reverse logistics.

Ghislain is a UNEP Young Champions of the Earth Finalist and a GreenBiz 30 Under 30 Awardee.

WATER & OTHERS CATEGORY

Aya Laraki

Morocco



Aya is passionate about sustainable fashion since she was young.

She founded Cuimer, a start-up that transforms waste of fish into exotic leather that has the same characteristics of snake and crocodile leather.

For her, going green in fashion can be an effective way to respond to market trends and change the mode of consumption that harms the planet.

"Through Youth Ecopreneur Awards, we hope to give the consumer a more responsible choice in fashion and benefit from the advice and experience sharing of experts and jury"

WATER & OTHERS CATEGORY

Bilal bin Saqib

Pakistan



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Bilal founded a social enterprise that works for the betterment of marginalized communities named Tayaba.

Tayaba invented H2O wheel, an alternative to traditional mud pots, that helps women & children who have to carry liters of water for several kilometers to their home. H2O prevents water contamination, saving hundreds from waterborne diseases.

In addition, they invented H2O Soaps. They are repurposed lightly used & discarded hotel soap bars, recycled with the intention of providing them to people in need of hygiene products, and reducing waste.

For his contribution to the society, Bilal made it to the Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia 2020 and awarded 'Successful Youth Leader' title by the Pakistani Prime Minister.

ENERGY CATEGORY

Kwizera Pike

Uganda



Kwizera Pike is a mechanical engineering designer specializing in design of machine elements with great technical know-how in product design and development.

Pike established Ehega Bioenergy to create a greener alternative to the most widely consumed resource in Uganda, that is, cooking energy, and divert the pressures exerted on forest cover required to meet the biomass energy demand.

Ehega Bioenergy is a renewable energy company that manufactures eco-friendly cooking briquettes for household and commercial cooking, and industrial heating processes using highly regenerative biomass.

We aim to substitute traditional biomass like trees with waste streams from water weed landfills and sugar factories bagasse.

Utilizing these waste streams is one way to mitigate environmental degradation leading to climate change and foster revenue generation in communities through job creation."

ENERGY CATEGORY

Norah Magero

Kenya



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Norah Magero is a Mechanical Engineer and a Renewable Energy Expert. She is the founder of Drop Access - a women-led and youth-led social enterprise that develops sustainable rural African communities through energy access.

She leads the VacciBox Initiative - a local production of solar refrigerators in Kenya that is designed to transport and store vaccines, blood and blood products, and other medical items.

The box can be mounted on a motorbike or boat when deploying healthcare facilities to rural, remote and inaccessible areas. It has a capacity of 40 litres and can maintain a temperature range of +2 to +10 degrees Celsius for 24 hours since it has a battery backup.

The box also has a data management platform that healthcare workers can remotely monitor data collection in real-time.

Norah's aim is to bridge cold chain gaps of rural communities in Kenya.

WHO ARE WE?

The International Trade Centre (ITC) is the joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization (WTO) supporting micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) from developing countries to become more competitive and access international markets. ITC works closely with partners along global value chains, business support institutions and policymakers.

GreenToCompete is ITC's activator for the transition to a green economy that nurtures both people and planet. Through GreenToCompete, we are providing knowledge, expertise and our networks to small businesses in developing countries, so that they can develop a competitive advantage by going green.

ITC's Youth and Trade Programme supports youth economic empowerment across two tracks: youth skills development for employment, and youth entrepreneurship. Its global Ye! Community of youth entrepreneurs connects youth businesses to the resources, networks, mentors, opportunities and support they need to succeed.

More info: bit.ly/youthecopreneurawards

Contact: YouthEcopreneurAwards@intracen.org