

Winner of MTN entrepreneurship challenge announced

MTN, in partnership with the MTN Solution Space at the University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business and Jumia, have announced that team MedRX from Ghana emerged as the winner of the inaugural MTN Entrepreneurship Challenge powered by Jumia.



Winning team MedRX from Ghana

The Pan-African competition, which launched on 15 February 2016, came down to the wire on Friday, 27 May 2016, at the MTN Entrepreneurship Festival held at Philippi Village in Cape Town. The three finalists from Nigeria, Ghana and Tanzania faced a panel of experienced business leaders comprising, Jérémy Hodara, co-CEO Africa Internet Group; Professor Walter Baets, director of the University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business; and Herman Singh, MTN group chief digital officer, as they battled it out for the US \$25 000 cash prize to start-up their own unique business.

The three finalists had to pitch their unique digital application or smart solution to combat a challenge faced in Africa and it was Victoria Acheampong, Hayford Brako and Yannick Kabu Bosomprah of team MedRX from Ghana who received top honours.

The judges concurred that MedRX had the best online to offline capability, meaning that one can go online to get services offline. “We were really impressed with the width of their functionality and the depth of the integration of the application, handling a very complex challenge that actually delivered astonishingly great human value,” said Herman Singh, chief digital officer from the MTN Group.

Winning application

The winning application aims to connect patients, doctors and healthcare professionals like never before. The application is an interactive health platform which connects users to health personnel from various fields of practice including hospital, pharmacy, laboratory and academia.

"It's like having a pharmacy on your phone and having access to medication," says Victoria Acheampong from Team MedRX.

"It's such an amazing feeling. We actually just entered the MTN Entrepreneurship Challenge to get exposure and it is such a great feeling to be announced the winner. Health is very important to move any nation forward and this trend can be seen across the African continent.

"As a team we wanted to make this integral connection easier between medical resources and the people on the ground, and the MedRX application does just this. The implementation of our application will give us the opportunity to be more effective in our country and create positive change and it will be our ultimate goal to upscale and take this positive change to everyone across Africa. We truly hope that this is the beginning of a very bright future for us," adds Acheampong.

The winning team also walked away with a year-long partnership with Jumia, a Facebook Start Program to the value of US \$15 000 and the opportunity to be incubated at the MTN Solution Space at the University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business and at Jumia.

Team MedRX will have access to world-class marketing teams, mentors to help them along and the environment and structure to be successful.

"Congratulations to team MedRX. I have no doubt that they will go on to do even greater things and change the business and innovation landscapes in Africa. I would also like to commend our runners-up. The calibre of these young entrepreneurs and the potential they have shown is incredible. I am excited about their future and wish them every success," says Singh.

Innovative runners-up

The two-runners up each received US \$5 000 towards their projects, which were team Pass.ng from Nigeria and Team Vicoba from Tanzania. Team Pass.ng came up with a web, desktop and mobile-based application based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy that focuses on examination preparatory and testing that will assist candidates to excel in all the major Nigerian Examinations and tests.

Team Vicoba developed an application that creates a collaborative platform to assist Tanzanians who do not have access to conventional bank accounts, to access informal investment groups. The application creates a collaborative platform that includes existing tools for financial and task management in a way that is adapted for the African market.

Bankole Cardoso, head of communications at Africa Internet Group added, "We recognise that the best way to have an impact in Africa is by investing in and promoting entrepreneurship. With that in mind, we launched this challenge with the simple goal to support the network of quality entrepreneurs around Africa and to help these entrepreneurs interact with accelerators/incubators and investors in their local countries and across the Continent. I am so pleased to see that we've met this goal and I am particularly looking forward to seeing how these three startups evolve over the next year and I am eager to discover even more African startups."

This 'first of its kind' challenge in Africa aimed to boost entrepreneurship and innovation, as well as stronger and more sustainable businesses on the continent. It involved a total of 26 countries, 61 Universities and 1529 applicants across the African continent, which included 734 big ideas, 30 hours of live pitching over seven days in 11 countries, 411 hours of judging to determine the finalists and the winner of the MTN Entrepreneurship Challenge powered by Jumia.

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