Facebook, AWS partner with AfricArena to empower entrepreneurs

Facebook and Amazon Web Services (AWS) have teamed up with AfricArena to empower the next generation of tech entrepreneurs that are on a trajectory to build a better Africa.

Christophe Viarnaud, founder of AfricArena

Christophe Viarnaud, founder of AfricArena, says "While Africa is growing substantially, it still faces problems in ICT infrastructure and systems to keep up with population and market demands. This is why the continent is looking to the innovations of startups and entrepreneurs to address the problems of today, whilst simultaneously designing a prosperous and sustainable future. Through our impactful relationships with notable corporates and institutions, we have been able to help African startups access bigger markets and raise more capital. We are therefore thrilled to be working with AWS and Facebook, which will enable us to do so on an even bigger scale."

Support for startups

Through its startup programme, Amazon Web Services provides startups with the low cost, easy-to-use infrastructure needed to scale and grow. With the AWS Activate programme, startups get access to resources to quickly get started on AWS – including credits, training, and support.

Additionally, the new AWS Africa Region, set to open in Cape Town in 2020, will enable organisations to leverage advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Internet of Things (IoT), mobile services and more, to drive innovation.

AfricArena scours the continent for the best innovative startups
Evan-Lee Courie 10 Sep 2019

Facebook runs several programmes across the continent designed to empower startups to build and grow their businesses. For developers, Facebook supports Developer Circles, a community-driven initiative that members join for free - allowing them to connect, share ideas, learn, and collaborate.

There are now approximately 45 Developer Circles across 17 countries in sub-Saharan Africa (the most in any region globally) with over 52,000 members in cities such as Johannesburg, Accra, Lagos, Kinshasa, Dakar and Nairobi.

Celebrating the stars of the AfricArena Summit

As part of its collaboration with AfricArena, AWS will be supplying prizes valued at over $200,000 at the upcoming AfricArena Summit, taking place from 11-12 November 2019, where the most game-changing startups from each of the major capitals on the continent will be showcasing their solutions on 'the stage for Africa's tech future'.

First place winners taking part in each of the 46 pitch battles will walk away with $10,000 in AWS Promotional Credit (valid for two years); one year (or up to $5,000) of AWS Business Support and 80 credits to use at their Self-Paced Labs (valued at $80).

The runners up will receive $3,000 in AWS Promotional Credit (valid for two years); one year (or up to $5,000) of AWS Business Support and 80 credits to use at their Self-Paced Labs (valued at $80).

In addition, each participating startup will take home $2,000 in AWS Promotional Credit (valid for two years); one year (or up to $5,000) of AWS Business Support and 80 credits to use at their Self-Paced Labs (valued at $80).

Over and above these, the startups will receive useful resources with their AWS Activate account, including Tutorials and Projects; AWS Developer Tools and SDKs; AWS Overview Whitepaper (PDF); AWS Well-Architected Framework; and AWS CloudFormation Templates.

Facebook will deliver a keynote address and participate in a panel discussion (which will include three South African startups) on how Facebook developer tools can be leveraged for business growth.

"The support from and presence of Facebook and AWS at the Summit all contribute towards uplifting the next generation of technological innovators in Africa," concludes Viarnaud.