

PRESS RELEASE

Cape Town, 17 August 2022

Africa Women Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum (AWIEF) Announces Stellar Speaker Line-up for AWIEF2022 Conference and Awards

Egypt's Ministry of International Cooperation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Amazon Web Services to headline AWIEF2022

The Africa Women Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum (AWIEF) has announced a stellar speaker line-up for its prestigious and benchmarking annual conference and awards taking place on 26 and 27 September on-site in Cairo, Egypt, and virtual.

AWIEF, which is celebrating the 8th anniversary of its award-winning conference, expo and awards, is heading to North Africa for the first time and has partnered with Egypt's Ministry of International Cooperation (MOIC) and Egyptian Businessmen's Association (EBA) for the hosting of this year's event in Egypt.

More than 60 African and global thought leaders and industry experts across business, international development and government are set to share insights and thought leadership on the conference agenda.

The conference theme this year is, *Advancing Africa through gender integration*. The two-day event aims to promote and accelerate MSMEs and SMEs growth for Africa's inclusive economic growth and brings together the African entrepreneurship ecosystem for discussions on entrepreneurship, leadership, technology and innovation, sustainability, intra-African trade, finance and investment, energy and infrastructure, and agriculture and food security.

The powerful and high-level global speaker faculty for AWIEF2022 includes: H. E. Dr. Rania Al-Mashat, Minister of International Cooperation, Egypt; Damilola Ogunbiyi, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General & CEO for SE4ALL and Co-Chair of UN-Energy; Elena Atanasova Panova, UN Resident Coordinator in Egypt; Sherif El Gabaly, Member of Parliament (MP) and Chairman of the African Affairs Committee in the Egyptian Parliament; Hon. Bogolo Kenewendo, Former Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry, Botswana; Ayoade Alakija, WHO Special Envoy for the ACT-Accelerator and Co-Chair of the African Union's African Vaccine Delivery Alliance; Jackie Jones, Director and Chief of Staff, Gender Equality Division, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Dina Saleh, Regional Director, Near East, North Africa, Europe & Central Asia, IFAD; Uzoma Dozie, Founder and CEO, Sparkle Digital Bank, Nigeria; Ali Eissa, Chairman, Egyptian Businessmen's Association (EBA); Patricia Obozuwa, Vice President, Government Affairs, Communications & Sustainability for Africa, The Coca Cola Company; Izabela Milewska, Digital Skills Global Leader, Amazon Web Services (AWS); Dalia Ibrahim, Chief Executive Officer, Nahdet Misr Publishing House and Founder of EdVentures; Amany Asfour, President, Africa Business Council; Chinyere Almona, Director-General, Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI); and Marieme Esther Dassanou, Manager, Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa (AFAWA), African Development Bank Group (AfDB).

AWIEF2022 Sponsors are Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Amazon Web Services, Africa-Europe Foundation, Nedbank, Visa, Sparkle and AGRA.

AWIEF2022 Partners are Egypt's Ministry of International Cooperation, the Egyptian Businessmen's Association (local co-organizers), EdVentures (Edtech Community Partner), APO Group (AWIEF's Principal Partner and Official Newswire); Africa.com (Media Partner), and Ethiopian Airlines.

The 2022 AWIEF Awards and Gala Dinner will take place on Tuesday, 27 September 2022, with Amazon Web Services as Headline Sponsor while Category Sponsors are Visa (Tech Entrepreneur Award) and Nedbank (Young Entrepreneur Award).

According to Minister Rania Al-Mashat, "The hosting of AWIEF2022 in Egypt reflects Egypt's keenness and support for empowering women and enhancing their economic participation and important roles on innovation and entrepreneurship to achieve sustainable development. Such a step also reflects the state's pivotal roles and national efforts on women empowerment to strengthen women's contribution to the labour markets."

Irene Ochem, Founder and CEO of AWIEF, says "The theme for this year's AWIEF event is inspired by the fact that no conversation about empowerment or entrepreneurship can, or should, exclude either women or men. Gender diversity and inclusion is vital for Africa's economic growth. A lot of progress has been made, but there is still a lot of work to be done, especially in relation to access to finance for women entrepreneurs, access to markets, skills training, and networks. Egypt is at the forefront of the African entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem, and we are going to learn and connect with those driving this growing economy and other African economies."

Book for #AWIEF2022 & #AWIEFAwards at: <https://www.awieforum.org/awief-conference-2022/>

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