

EDF launches the 3rd edition of the EDF Pulse Africa Award Competition: call for projects targeting African SMEs and Start-ups from the 29th of May until 8th of July 2019

From 29 May to 8 July 2019, EDF invites African entrepreneurs to participate in a call for projects as part of the 3rd edition of EDF Pulse Africa Competition Award. Key objective: spotlighting and supporting African entrepreneurs committed to the development of African energy industry. Endowments ranging from 5 000 to 15 000 Euros as well as a comprehensive support programme are at stake. For this 3rd edition of the contest, EDF has made two major organisational changes: in addition to start-ups, the competition is now open to African SMEs; projects will be screened much closer to their actual location by conducting EDF Pulse Africa Tours covering 7 countries where the EDF Group is active.

With its EDF Pulse Africa awards, EDF is seeking to encourage entrepreneurial ambition in Africa, with two objectives in mind:

- Identifying potential partners for EDF in Africa by unearthing the continent's technological nuggets
- Supporting innovation by offering local entrepreneurs access to EDF's innovation ecosystem.

For the first time ever, the competition is also being opened up to African SMEs with less than 50 employees. Often the source of novel projects, a number of them are faced with the same challenges as start-ups, such as access to funds and operational support enabling them to move from the planning phase to commercial roll-out. Through this initiative, EDF is seeking to assert its position as an essential player when it comes to driving entrepreneurial innovation in Africa, whilst at the same time expanding the pool of future partners.

Another key new feature: EDF is diversifying its project-screening methods so that it can proactively verify the match between the type of project, the local economy's requirements and EDF's business activities in the region.

Following project-screening through the registration platform, entrants from 7 countries where EDF operates (Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, Ghana, Senegal, South Africa, Togo) will be invited to present their projects to a local panel of experts. This will be arranged in conjunction with African incubators and institutional partners. Selected projects will directly be entered into the final stage of the competition, which will take place in Paris. Entrants from the 47 other African countries will be pre-selected using the same criteria as in previous years via the on-line platform: www.africa-pulse.edf.com

Customised assistance

In addition to project development endowments ranging from 5 000 to 15 000 Euros, prize-winners will be comprehensively supported:

- Operational/financial advice
- Project development partnerships with local players such as "Energy Generation" (incubator and training centre specifically geared towards energy start-ups, based in Togo) and with EDF experts, via its subsidiary EDF Pulse Croissance (www.edf.fr/pulse/croissance)
- Access to EDF's innovation ecosystem: EDF's own R&D and creativity labs

Valérie Levkov, EDF's Senior Vice President in charge of the Group's Africa business: "*Since the launch of the EDF Pulse Africa Award Competition in 2017, EDF has provided 8 African start-ups with support. In its first two years of existence, the competition also helped us to build up a network of African incubators and training organisations to provide continuous and locally-based oversight. We are now making the competition's framework evolve in order to reveal, directly in the field, new technologies and products that will address the African continent's energy challenges as well as aligning them with our business portfolio in Africa*".

Key dates

- 29 May to 8 July: Registration of entrants on the <https://africa-pulse.edf.com/> platform
- September to October: Pre-selection of entrants via the platform and local panels for the following countries:
 - MOROCCO: Wednesday 4 September in Casablanca
 - SENEGAL: Thursday 12 September in Dakar
 - GHANA: Tuesday 17 September in Accra
 - SOUTH AFRICA: Thursday 19 September in Johannesburg
 - COTE D'IVOIRE: Tuesday 24 September in Abidjan
 - TOGO: Tuesday 1 October in Lomé
 - CAMEROON: Thursday 3 October in Yaoundé
- 21 November: Final and prize-giving ceremony in Paris

Spotlight on Lono, 2017 prize-winner

LONO is a start-up company from Côte d'Ivoire which has developed a biomass micro-digester, called KubeKo that converts organic waste into biogas. It is available in two versions:

- A version tailored for households: supported by off-grid solar kits, KubeKo produces biogas for cooking as well as compost
- A version suited for businesses from agro and food industry, which enables them to produce biogas for heat and electricity generation

Thanks to the support from EDF Pulse Africa, LONO has successfully moved from a prototype phase to commercial roll-out of its product. In addition to endowment, LONO also benefited from support provided by Energy Generation in structuring its business model as well as from workshops on innovative financing schemes. Thanks to new partnerships and diversification of their business, the founding team generated enough revenue to set an operational team of 10 people.

Find out more at www.lonoci.com/fr/home

A key player in energy transition, the EDF Group is an integrated electricity company, active in all areas of the business: generation, transmission, distribution, energy supply and trading, energy services. A global leader in low-carbon energies, the Group has developed a diversified generation mix based on nuclear power, hydropower, new renewable energies and thermal energy. The Group is involved in supplying energy and services to approximately 39.8 million customers, including 29.7 million in France. The Group generated consolidated sales of €69 billion in 2018. EDF is listed on the Paris Stock Exchange.