**COVID-19 Innovation Challenge 2020**

**For**

**Africa Innovation and Investment Forum 2020**

**Closing date for applications: 5 June 2020**

**Introduction to the Forum**

The novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) threatens to undo the hard-earned health, economic and social development gains that Africa has registered since 2000. COVID-19 has overrun well-resourced healthcare systems of some developed and developing countries and several organizations, including WHO, have issued cautionary statements encouraging African countries to boost their healthcare capabilities to meeting the impending surge in infections.

Africa traditionally depends on external supplies of medical equipment, diagnostic reagents and tools, protective gear and medicines. With a global scramble for limited medical supplies, Africa may have to turn inwards. The continent may need to leverage the limited technology and innovation capabilities, harness and stimulate its full entrepreneurial talent to respond, deepen national and regional supply chains and optimise global knowledge partnerships to meet the challenges posed by COVID-19 and beyond.

It is in this regards that the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and its partners are pleased to invite researchers, firms, public and private development agencies, government leaders, innovators, youths and development partners to showcase their innovations at the first **Africa Innovation and Investment Forum 2020 with a focus on COVID-19, from 15-19 June 2020**.

**The Innovation Challenge 2020**

The Innovation Challenge 2020 of the Forum seeks to identify and showcase some of the top technologies and innovations from across Africa and beyond; explore investment and market needs and; identify business opportunities in the following areas:

1. *Affordable rapid testing;*
2. *Enhance medical devices and personal protection gear design and fabrication*
3. *Alternative tools for efficient and effective contact tracing and isolation*
4. *Development and production of potential drugs and vaccines in Africa*

**Participation:**

The Innovation Challenge 2020 is open to all firms, individuals, research centres, innovation hubs, universities and institutes as well as government leaders and agencies and business leaders of all sizes and ages.

**Why should you participate?**

Besides the opportunities to meet business and government leaders, the top 20 innovations selected in each of the 5 categories will be profiled on the ECA and partners’ websites at the Tech Market and Exhibition for Entrepreneurs and Investors; and the top 10 in each category will be given the opportunity to convince and get the support of governments, investors and potential partners and collaborators.

**Where to apply?**

Submit your application at the Innovation Bridge at: <https://innovationbridge.info/ibportal/?q=covid-19/challenges>

**Required information for application:**

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| * Participant’s Names (or Team Leader): | * Email: * Website link: |
| * Focus Areas: | * Project keywords: |
| * Countries being implemented: | * Partners: |
| * Number of (current or potential) users/clients: | * Number of employees (or team members): |
| * Project Description:   State clearly:   * + 1. The problem     2. Your solutions – include advantages and limitations     3. Application or use     4. Stage of development (concept; working demonstration; prototype tested; approved/mass production)     5. Next steps (to fully realize its potential, including opportunities and barriers) | |
| * Illustrations and/or exhibitions (a maximum of 4) | |

**Submission deadline:** 17:00 hrs East African Time of 05 June 2020.

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