



SAIS 2
INNOVATION
FUND



CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2020/3

RE:innovation

CHALLENGE PROJECTS



FOREWORD

The overall objective of the Southern Africa Innovation Support Programme (SAIS 2) is to support enhanced regional innovation cooperation and national innovation systems contributing to inclusive business and development. The SAIS 2 Innovation Fund awards grants to locally implemented projects through competitive calls for proposals (CfP). The RE:innovation challenge call (SAIS 2020/3) took place from August to October 2020. The RE:innovation challenge called for projects wishing to pilot or validate solutions that would build startup ecosystems' resilience to external shocks. The applicant projects all had to be coordinated by an innovation support organisation from and implemented in at least one of the SAIS 2 partner countries (Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, or Zambia).

Each of the five projects selected are showcased in this brochure. Visit www.saisprogramme.org to find out more about SAIS 2 and the SAIS 2 Innovation Fund.

PARTNERS



Ministry for Foreign
Affairs of Finland



Southern African
Development
Community



Ministry of Higher
Education, Training
and Innovation



Ministry of
Infrastructure, Science
and Technology



Ministry of
Higher
Education



Ministry of
Education Science and
Technology



science & innovation
Department
Science and Innovation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



INDEX

BeFound Digital Masterclass.....	4
DoDigi.....	6
Edpreneurs: Networking and Empowering Education Entrepreneurs towards a Resilient EdTech Ecosystem in Southern Africa.....	8
Integrated Reforesting for Service Providers.....	10
Strengthening Resilience of Botswana's Innovation Ecosystem through Co-Creation and Foresight.....	12
Call for Proposals 2018/1 Projects	14
Call for Proposals 2018/2 Projects	15

BEFOUND DIGITAL MASTERCLASS



“Our BeFound Digital Masterclass is an excellent opportunity for entrepreneurial women and ambitious young startups to get the skills and tools they need to make their business resilient and prosper, especially in the current economic situation.”

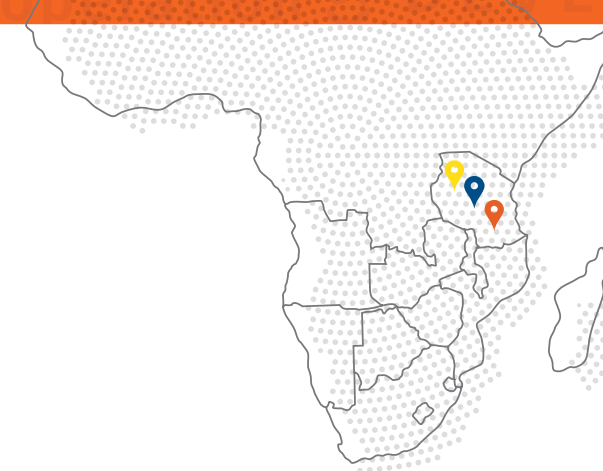
ABOUT THE PROJECT

The BeFound Digital Masterclass enables small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to create compelling digital marketing strategies according to their business goals and customer needs. The SMEs will be taught how to build functional websites and how to maintain them as well as Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) skills to improve their website's visibility on locally available search engines. Using these skills, SMEs will be able to attract more clients, leading to improved revenues and helping them to become more resilient.

Participants are taught by industry experts and entrepreneurs who have more than six years of experience in their fields and trained facilitators who have teaching experience in digital marketing, online branding, website development on WordPress, and SEO. The project also provides to the participants a single-page business website with a custom domain and email addresses.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- Develop a curriculum to train business owners on digital marketing, website strategy and development, and content and search engine optimisation (SEO) strategy.
- Enable the businesses to improve their communications and discoverability using digital channels.
- Enable the businesses to increase the revenues of their companies by 10% and their customer base by 3.5%.



Project Partner

Tanzania Data Lab (dLab)



Project Coordinator

Smart Lab (Smart Codes Limited),
Tanzania



Implementing Country

Tanzania

DODIGI



“Boosting local economies through social commerce solutions in COVID-19 times”

ABOUT THE PROJECT

DoDigi is a pilot project seeking to enable and empower 60 entrepreneurs in low-income communities to increase their business revenues with e-commerce, specifically chatbot-powered sales channels over Whatsapp. Doing so, the project aims to mitigate losses and closures of businesses due to curfews, lockdowns, and restrictions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

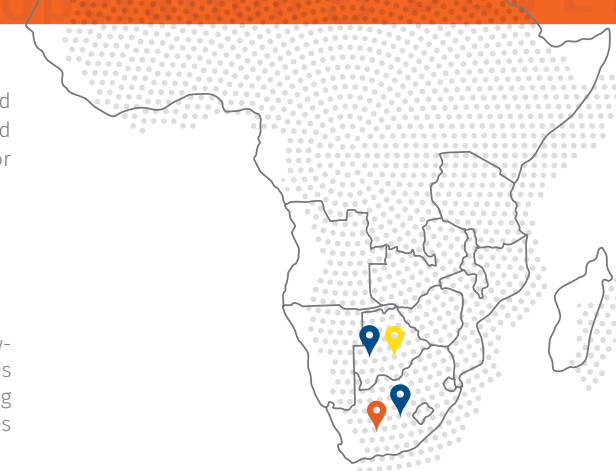
The project offers a unique and innovative learning experience that combines academic study with real-world surroundings and activities (trading through the Meeticks platform) to improve their beneficiaries' academic, business, and economic outcomes. DoDigi's beneficiaries are trained in digital technologies so that they can use the Meeticks platform as well as other digital platforms effectively, bridging the gap between those with access to technology and those without. These beneficiaries, about 60% of whom are women, are enabled to market their businesses and connect with potential customers and suppliers. These skills will increase their opportunities to make sales, which will lead to higher incomes and improve their SMMEs' abilities to continue operating.

DoDigi is run as a consortium led by the Dream Factory Foundation, which empowers youth and women in marginalised urban and rural communities through education with skills for sustainable livelihoods, and Meeticks, a Botswana-based startup that bridges the digital divide through social commerce. As project partners, the Dream Factory

Foundation and Meeticks are working together to empower marginalised entrepreneurs in the Cape Flats townships of Cape Town, South Africa, and the youth business community in Francistown, Botswana, with possibilities for synergies between the two countries.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- Pilot an innovative technological solution for 60 SMMEs based in low-income communities in order to support the shift of their business activities towards digital channels (social commerce) so they can continue doing business and become more resilient in the face of economic challenges during and after COVID-19 restrictions.
- Align with SDGs 1,5 and 8: no poverty in any of its forms; gender equality and empowerment of women; and promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment, and decent work for all. This is to be done by facilitating trading for all beneficiaries (60% being women) on Meeticks to enable them to continue and sustain their businesses.
- Address the lack of skills, knowledge, and access to economic opportunities which affect SMMEs' ability to sustain their business – especially in times of crisis – by connecting 60 entrepreneurs with mentors and training them in digital technologies, financial management, and resilience-building skills and techniques through the Dream Factory Foundation's Emergent Business Academy.
- Promote and facilitate local and cross-border trade and knowledge exchange initiatives/transactions between SA and Botswana through the project's beneficiaries interacting and marketing their products on the Meeticks platform.



Project Partner

Meeticks (Pty) Ltd, Botswana



Project Coordinator

Dream Factory Foundation, South Africa



Implementing Countries

South Africa, Botswana

EDPRENEURS: NETWORKING AND EMPOWERING EDUCATION ENTREPRENEURS TOWARDS A RESILIENT EDTECH ECOSYSTEM IN SOUTHERN AFRICA



“Exploring available digital platforms, create new ways on how to build a resilient EdTech ecosystems, and also serve as the learning prospects for other role players, edupreneurs in particular.”

ABOUT THE PROJECT

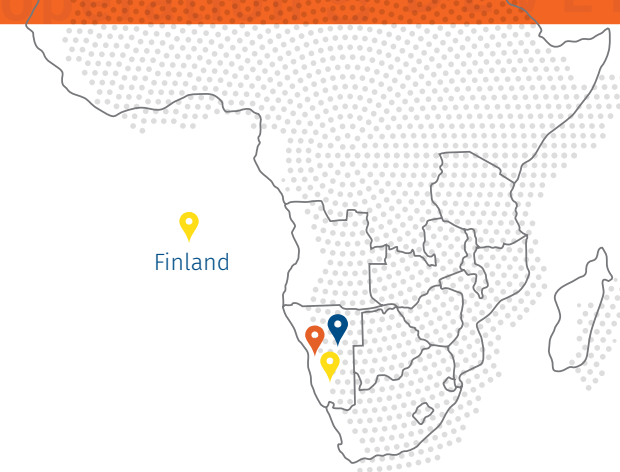
The purpose of this project is to develop a digital business ecosystem in Southern Africa able to leverage the EdTech infrastructure and education software development in the region. Such an ecosystem would help to solve challenges that arise due to the lack of digital infrastructure and personnel with digital competencies, a challenge that has been exacerbated by the restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although there are a few relevant EdTech solutions across Southern Africa, such initiatives remain isolated, decreasing the potential of consolidating successes at the regional level.

The project's approach aims to build a strong network between its stakeholders through participatory design and deeper collaboration. For the initial stage of building up the ecosystem, the consortium members will guide all the project stakeholders through a participatory design and co-creation methodology to think collectively about the project's three final objectives. Together, these objectives solve current problems in the Southern African startup ecosystem as they help to provide the digital infrastructure for business networking, capacity building for empowering stakeholders, and knowledge transfer for broader scalability. In addition, the project consortium will

ensure that all the project stakeholders will establish and maintain functioning cooperation and communication connections with each other so that the ecosystem becomes sustainable.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To build a digital platform for strategic partnership. The project will provide the necessary digital infrastructure for entrepreneurs to collect and process data about potential customers across the region, to network with relevant stakeholders (B2B and B2C), and to promote their services and products.
- To increase beneficiaries' digital and business competence through capacity building. The project will empower education stakeholders, software developers, and entrepreneurs on digitising processes and innovating businesses towards sustainable economic growth and resilience in challenging times.
- To publish a policy paper on building up a resilient business ecosystem. The project will integrate practical experience with knowledge creation, resulting in a policy paper that can support Southern African governments in consolidating resilient startup ecosystems in sectors other than the EdTech field.



Project Partners

edux, Finland
Glowdom, Namibia



Project Coordinator

Namibia Business Innovation
Institute (NBII)



Implementing Country

Namibia

INTEGRATED REFORESTING FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS



"Entrepreneurship and innovation in commercial forestry is possible when startups are providing market-driven solutions with reliable technology."

ABOUT THE PROJECT

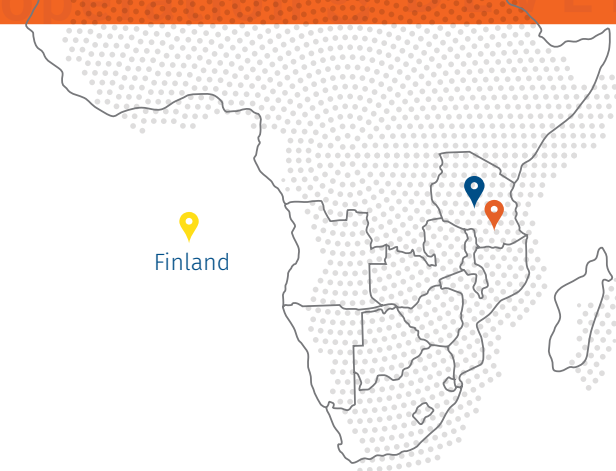
Although reforestation and afforestation have been on the rise in SADC, the involvement of startups service providers has been limited due to the lack of access to affordable forestry solutions. The Integrated Reforesting for Service Providers project seeks to solve the challenge faced by Tanzanian urban investors, diaspora, and forestry companies in transparent service provision for sustainable forestry management. The project's proposed innovation helps to remotely track the progress of forestry operations on the ground while also ensuring that the appropriate forestry guidelines are being adhered to.

Consortium member Risutec LTD already offers existing technology to meet this need, but it is based in Europe and has yet to fully penetrate the SADC market. The project will initially validate the proposed solution in the Tanzanian commercial forestry market while also training service providers and trainers on the best handling and maintenance practices of the new technology. In addition, the project will develop a vocational training curriculum to help future forestry service provider startups in Tanzania.

The validation process will involve three pilot service provider startups that are already operating in the country with a diverse customer base. The project will increase these service providers' web presence during the project's lifetime.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To build capacity in market-led reforestation for service providers and contractors in the Tanzanian commercial forestry sector.
- To launch and test a commercially viable market-led reforestation solution for service providers and contractors in Tanzania.



Project Partner

Risutec Ltd, Finland



Project Coordinator

African Forestry (AF), Tanzania



Implementing Country

Tanzania

STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE OF BOTSWANA'S INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM THROUGH CO-CREATION AND FORESIGHT



“This project will assist the creation of valuable insights and innovation sparks to be captured in participating SMEs and companies’ strategy and innovation work. It will do this by facilitating the exploration of global future impacts and driving forces in order to create better visions of the future and so to build resilience.”

ABOUT THE PROJECT

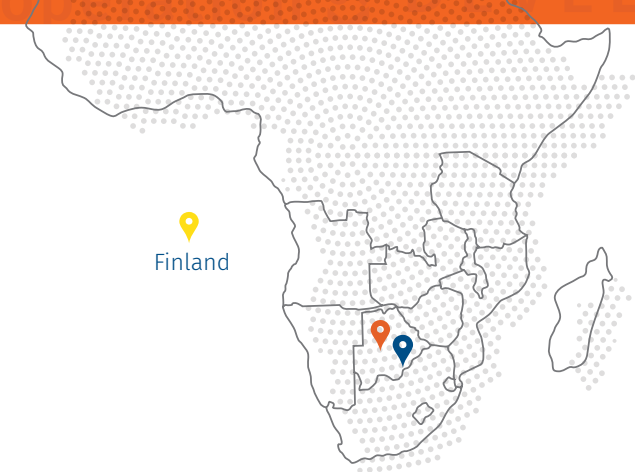
The uncertainties brought about by COVID-19 has left many SMEs and startups in Botswana on the brink of halting their operations. This situation is exacerbated by the SMEs’ lack of preparedness and difficulties in accessing digital solutions that can mitigate the risks.

The project will utilise team-based group work activities to provide SMEs and startups with the skills they need to create innovative solutions that augment their businesses’ resilience to external shocks. The companies participate in the projects as co-creation partners and are involved in defining the context for future projects, which ensures the relevance of the projects from the businesses’ points of view. The collaboration focuses on learning by doing and is results-oriented.

Demola Global and the University of Botswana, through the University–Industry–Government Co-Creation platform, the Computer Science Department, and the Business School, are responsible for forming and guiding teams through the process, methods, and training.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To inculcate an innovative approach and proactive culture of solving problems during adversity.
- To develop rapid proof of concepts together with SMEs and demonstrate the resilience of working online solutions.
- To work with SMEs in the Botswana ecosystem (including startups) to validate a technology-enabled service that improves recovery during unforeseen circumstances.
- Conduct knowledge sharing seminars on creating business value through mega trends future foresight.
- Promote global collaboration and diversity in working teams.
- Train participating organisations on the process of adapting well in the face of adversity.



Project Partner

Demola Global, Finland



Project Coordinator

The University of Botswana



Implementing Country

Botswana

CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2018/1 PROJECTS

WINDOW 1 PROJECTS

1. CiTi Piloting a Biotech Incubator, South Africa
2. Universities, Industries, and Government Co-Creation Platform, Botswana
3. Regional Open Innovation Platform, South Africa
4. Developing Additive Manufacturing Ecosystem, South Africa

WINDOW 2 PROJECTS

5. Ntaka Hyperlocal Soil Health Advisory Services, Zambia
6. Developing EdTech Startups and the EdTech Ecosystem, South Africa
7. Start-Up Regional Connectivity & Global Visibility, South Africa
8. TechTribe Accelerator, a Scalable Virtual Technology-Driven Accelerator, South Africa

WINDOW 3 PROJECTS

9. Economic Inclusion Incubator, South Africa
10. Dololearn – Piloting Future Education in Namibia, Namibia
11. ITTHYNK Tech Academy, South Africa
12. Advanced IT training & Online Incubator for Women, Tanzania

CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2018/2 PROJECTS

WINDOW 1 PROJECTS

1. Testing C4G Ecosystem Analytics Platform in SADC
2. Angel Investor Training in Southern Africa

WINDOW 2 PROJECTS

3. Scaling Anaesthesia Innovation in the SADC Region
4. Seedstars Investment Readiness Programme
5. Transfer of Low-Cost Water Filter Technology

WINDOW 3 PROJECTS

6. Africa Food 360 Accelerator
7. IDIN-SADC Consortium
8. Living Permaculture
9. Precision Desert Agriculture as a Job Creator

CONTACT US

✉ info@saisprogramme.org

f SAISProgramme2

🐦 @SAISProgramme

P. O. Box 9020
Eros, Windhoek, Namibia

www.saisprogramme.org