



Telecommunication
Development Bureau (BDT)



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Geneva, 1 October 2021

Administrations of ITU Member States
ITU-D Sector Members
Academia
Regulators
Regional organisations

Subject: ITU Global Innovation Forum 2021, virtual, 25 - 29 October 2021

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am pleased to invite you to participate in the second edition of the Global Innovation Forum, which will be held online from 25 to 29 October 2021, under the theme **Building partnerships to mainstream entrepreneurship**.

More than a year in, the COVID-19 crisis continues to have a significant impact on society. It has exposed the fragility of the current economic system across the globe, but also provided a powerful lens to examine the underlying conditions that led to this fragility and illuminated gaps in economic and social value chains, providing the opportunity to improve economic resilience and related issues.

Entrepreneurship-driven digital innovation has the potential to increase communities' resilience, protect jobs in key sectors of the economy and increase economic inclusion. However, the enabling environment for digital innovation is not adequate to create sustainable impact in many countries.

The forum is a five-day, immersive event that will take participants on global and regional learning journeys to learn the "why", "what" and "how" of building new partnerships that ensure that communities have the right innovation capabilities to be resilient and competitive with digital technologies.

ITU's 2021 Global Innovation Forum will empower participants with new insights, skills, tools, frameworks and relevant case studies to understand how to leapfrog the digital innovation divide, prepare and recover from global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and accelerate job creation.

The following topics will be covered during the forum:

- Day 1: The forum's opening day will highlight the innovation divide and its impact on social conditions in the COVID-19 era, as well as the role of entrepreneurship-driven digital innovation in closing the digital innovation gap.
- Day 2: Participants will engage in discussions about specific mechanisms that can accelerate entrepreneurship-driven innovation.
- Day 3: The forum will bring in a regional dimension, examining the state of countries' readiness and show practical cases of how key sectors of the economy can benefit by nurturing digital innovation.
- Day 4: The forum will continue regional deep dives by sharing good practices, stories of digital change-makers and offer insights for new partnership actions at the regional level.

- Day 5: The forum's closing day will bring the discussion full circle by recognizing the winners of the 2021 Innovation Challenges and providing a recap of the week through the lenses of challenge winners and the Generation Connect community.

The event is targeted at digital change-makers, policy-makers, the private sector, academics, entrepreneurial support organizations, entrepreneurs, financiers, community development managers, international organizations and media.

For more information about the ITU Global Innovation Forum, please visit <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Innovation/Pages/2021-ITU-Global-Innovation-Forum.aspx> or send an email to Mohamed.Ba@itu.int. Please register at <http://itu.int/go/GIFREG> to participate in the forum's virtual meetings.

I also invite you to share this invitation with local stakeholders, youth and start-up communities in your country. I look forward to your active participation.

Yours faithfully,

[Original signed]

Doreen Bogdan-Martin
Director