

Women in Tech Challenge: from women 2 new business leaders

Do you have a digital project that creates impact for women in your community?

Eighteen billion dollars could be added to the global GDP if women were as active as men in the digital sector. Join the challenge, and let us make it happen!

Current statistics show that we have a long way to go to close the digital gender divide. Women are significantly behind men when it comes to accessing ICTs, digital literacy skills, careers in ICT and digital entrepreneurship.

This challenge builds on successful efforts undertaken by the EQUALS Global Partnership to Close the Gender Digital Divide at ITU Telecom World 2019¹, as well as work by EQUALS partners such as World Bank² and Ernst & Young³.

Through this challenge, ITU and EQUALS will support standout women tech innovators whose solutions are making a difference in their communities; and who are helping and empowering other women to excel in accessing and using ICTs to improve their productive and economic capacity in all sectors (i.e. agriculture, textiles and apparel, health and finance, among others).

Projects may fall under the following categories:

- **Digital agriculture solutions:** may include knowledge platforms for agricultural production and marketing, climate-smart agriculture, precision agriculture, smart fertilizer and blockchain technology.
- **Digital textile and apparel solutions:** may include clothing and garment design, smart tailoring, production lines, e-commerce solutions for SMEs, mobile banking, design thinking and technology innovation, and Internet of things for entrepreneurship.
- **Digital health solutions:** may include AI, e-health applications, m-health, and wearable devices.
- **Tech solutions for communities:** this may include virtual schooling, locally produced low-cost ventilators, etc.

Your solutions should:

- Ensure that women are: able access to ICT platforms, Internet connectivity and digital tools; equipped with digital skills through training and use of tech tools; and/or offered the chance to develop leadership potential (such as entrepreneurial skills, network building and financial inclusion) by being active members of the digital society.
- Focus on facilitating and improving processes in which women are represented in significant numbers as both business owners and employees by supporting their ICT access and use for development through scalable and innovative solutions that will help them increase their participation in the economy.

1 <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/bdt-director/Pages/News.aspx?ItemID=197>

2 <https://www.ces.tech/Global-Tech-Challenge/Solutions-for-Women.aspx>

3 https://www.ey.com/en_gl/growth/velocity

Additional information

The innovation challenge is open to individual women tech innovators and all eligible start-ups that are at least 30 per cent woman-owned, managed and controlled.