

## Industrial Opportunities for Student-made Innovations Beckon as iTATU Opens

- Do you have ideas about solutions that can enhance lifestyles ?
- Can they be turned into attractive products that people want to buy ?
- Have you withheld innovations for fear of 'idea theft'?
- **THINK iTATU**



# About KIEP

Launched in 2019, the Kenya Industry and Entrepreneurship Project (KIEP) is a six year US\$50 million (KSh.7.5 billion) project that aims to deliver on the Government's industrialization agenda by strengthening the entrepreneurship ecosystem, increasing firm level innovation and productivity, and developing technically skilled talent in Kenya. It is being implemented by the Ministry of Investments, Trade and Industry (MITI), with support from the World Bank.

The project, ending in 2024, has three components.

Under the first component, Strengthening Kenya's Innovation Ecosystem (SKIES), KIEP seeks to formalise the innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem in Kenya by building the capacity of incubators, accelerators, and rapid technology skills providers (collectively called 'intermediaries'). This will open Kenya's innovation ecosystem to global innovation scouts of talent and support infrastructure, thereby fostering links

between startups and traditional industries. The International Acceleration Process is being done through a sub-component known as Startup Savanna.

The second component, KIEP 250+, invites small and medium enterprises in select sectors to apply for business training that includes enhancing the managerial and technical skills of their senior staff and improving their access to and use of technology. The goal is to significantly increase the competitiveness of SMEs. SMEs accepted into KIEP 250+ will receive an integrated package of diagnostic and advisory services as well as financial support to address identified gaps. This will enhance their innovation capacity, upgrade processes, increase use of technology and promote market linkages.

The third component is establishment of iTATU, an online government-led e-platform, that promotes academia-industry link for initiation, testing to commercialisation of local innovations. iTATU, seeks

## **KIEP will open Kenya's innovation ecosystem to global innovation scouts of talent**

to create a safe avenue for prototype trials at a national level for mutual benefit of the innovators, the companies and the local economy. iTATU opens Kenya's innovations to the world on a regulated platform that protects the interests of innovators while ensuring local companies have access to new technologies and innovations, not to mention cheaper human capital. The platform will run an annual challenge where industry players interact with new innovations as well as get an opportunity to market their needs to student innovators.

# Industry Academy Platform (IAP) - iTATU



## Introduction

The industry-Academia Platform (IAP) – iTATU- under the Kenya Industry and Entrepreneurship Project (KIEP), is an ambitious component backed by the Ministry of Investments, Trade, and Industry (MITI) and supported by the World Bank Group, aimed to boost innovation and productivity in Kenya’s private sector. The IAP sub-component plays a crucial role in connecting Kenyan corporates with talented students, who tackle challenges posed by companies, in delivering innovative solutions. This collaboration aims to enhance corporate productivity, skills gap bridging and increase competitiveness.

As iTATU continues to bridge the gap between academia and industry, greater strides can be anticipated towards a future that is not only technologically advanced but also sustainable and inclusive.

## The LAUNCH of iTATU

iTATU’s inaugural year stands as a testament to the power of student-driven innovation in addressing the complex challenges of our time. In the fast-paced world of technology and industry, the need for innovative solutions has never been greater. iTATU is an open innovation platform that harnesses the boundless creativity of students to tackle future challenges faced by companies.

On July 25th, 2023, the Maastricht School of Management (MSM) made a significant milestone by successfully unveiling the industry-Academia Platform brand name “iTATU” along with its website and upcoming open innovation challenges through a hybrid launch event.

The event themed “Enhancing industry-academia partnerships through open innovation,” engaged stakeholders from both public and private sectors.

It successfully raised awareness about KIEP and the iTATU brand, generating interest and participation in the platform. The launch marked a significant stride towards reshaping Kenya’s economic landscape.

## Open innovation challenges from the private sectors

iTATU is more than just an innovation platform; it’s a catalyst for change. Through carefully curated challenges, students are invited to put on their thinking caps and devise solutions with support from iTATU facilitators and mentors. In its inaugural year, four prominent companies - Endless Africa, Kenya Power, Milly Fruits, and LRC Foundation - set forth challenges that inspired a cohort of talented students to embark on a journey of innovation.



# “SKIES Program: Nurturing Innovation Ecosystem in Kenya”

In the vibrant heart of Kenya’s entrepreneurial landscape, a remarkable journey is unfolding - one that promises to transform Kenya’s innovation ecosystem. This journey begins with Subcomponent 1a, a visionary initiative under the Kenya Industry and Entrepreneurship Project (KIEP). At its core, Subcomponent 1a is dedicated to strengthening the ecosystem’s support infrastructure for incubators, accelerators, and technology bootcamp providers, collectively referred to as Intermediaries. These crucial pillars of innovation and entrepreneurship are being nurtured to reach new heights, bringing about operational sustainability, expansion, and a higher quality of services to support Kenya’s thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Subcomponent 1a adopts a two-track approach, a strategy carefully crafted to maximize its positive impact. Track 1 focuses on ecosystem intermediaries, such as incubators and accelerators. These critical players will receive financial grants tailored to their unique improvement plans. In Track 2, technology bootcamp providers will receive grants to scale their operations, and Rapid Tech Skills students receive financial support (tuition and upkeep) to support them through the rapid tech skills training. In phase 1 SKIES aims to support 10 Incubators and Accelerators, 8 Technology Bootcamp Providers and 267 Rapid Tech Skills Students.

The primary objectives of Subcomponent 1a are centered around four key outcomes that embody its transformative vision: Establishing a Collaborative System, ensuring Long-Term Intermediary Sustainability, enhancing outcomes

for Entrepreneurs, promoting Technology Skills, Especially Among Women.

The outcomes of Subcomponent 1a align seamlessly with the strategic focus areas of the Ministry of Investments, Trade, and Industry. These areas include increasing manufacturing, attracting investments, and generating employment opportunities. By strengthening the support infrastructure of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, SKIES is actively contributing to the broader economic development goals of Kenya. It is not just a standalone effort but a vital component of the nation’s strategy for economic growth and prosperity.

The official launch of the SKIES initiative marked a pivotal moment. This momentous event took place on the 22nd of August 2023, at the E4Impact Entrepreneurship Center in Karen. The launch was graced by Dr. Juma Mukhwana, the P.S. of the State Department for Industry, who served as the chief guest. Dr. Mukhwana’s keynote address resonated with the spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship. He emphasized the significance of mentorship and the transformative power of technology, stating, “Technology has been known to start small but totally transform the way of doing things. That’s the kind of transformation we are hoping to achieve through SKIES.”

Dr. Mukhwana was not alone in celebrating this auspicious occasion. Accompanying him were prominent figures from the entrepreneurial ecosystem, including Sameer Goyal, the KIEP Task Team Lead, Philip Maitha, the KIEP project coordinator, Anthony Mwangi, CEO

of Kenya Association of Manufacturers, Aly Salim, CEO of the Association of Countrywide Hubs, Mercy Kimalat, CEO of the Association of Startups and SMEs Enablers of Kenya, Virginia Waruingi, representing the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and other ecosystem stakeholders.

The launch event also marked the official call for applications for the SKIES initiative, signaling the beginning of a journey that would transform the landscape of entrepreneurship in Kenya.

The call for applications for the SKIES initiative attracted an impressive number of applicants, underscoring the demand for initiatives like SKIES that empower and support the innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem. A total of 142 incubators, 103 accelerators, 119 tech bootcamp providers, and a remarkable 1167 Rapid Tech Skills Students answered the call for applications. This overwhelming response is a testament to the hunger for support, growth, and innovation within Kenya’s innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem.

SKIES is a promising step toward transforming startups into thriving industrial enterprises. By strengthening the support infrastructure, enhancing outcomes for entrepreneurs, and promoting technological skills, this initiative is a beacon of hope for the future of entrepreneurship in Kenya. It is a commitment to collaboration, sustainability, and empowerment that is set to leave an indelible mark on the entrepreneurial landscape, driving economic growth and opportunity for years to come.



# KIEP 250+ Reigniting Growth In 2023

The Kenya Industry and Entrepreneurship Project (KIEP) has been a cornerstone of growth for the Kenyan small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) landscape. However, a brief hiatus was necessary to reassess the project in light of the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and shifting market dynamics. The pause affected the various KIEP components, including KIEP 250+, an initiative focused on Market Linkages and SME Upgrading. KIEP 250+ aims to enhance the productivity and innovation of established Kenyan SMEs by offering them technical assistance to improve their managerial and technical skills while enhancing their access to and use of technology. In May 2023, KIEP 250+ resumed its activities, picking up where it left off with Cohort 1 SMEs, and has since been working diligently to reignite the spirit of entrepreneurship in Kenya.

## **KIEP 250+ Reaches Out to Cohort 1 SMEs**

The restart of KIEP 250+ brought with it renewed energy and commitment to its mission. One of the key strategies employed was conducting several visits to Cohort 1 SMEs by the dedicated Business Advisors. These visits aimed to evaluate the status of these businesses and engage in constructive discussions about their progress and planned improvement activities.

A notable activity was the participation of Dr. Juma Mukhwana, the Principal Secretary of the State Department for Industry, in some of these SME visits. Dr. Mukhwana's presence highlighted the government's commitment to fostering entrepreneurship and growth in Kenya. SMEs, such as Interveg Exports, Exotic EPZ, and Mr. Green Africa, expressed their gratitude for the diagnostic process that helped them identify gaps in their businesses. They also eagerly anticipated the tailor-made technical assistance that KIEP 250+ would provide to address these gaps as they strove to grow and prosper.



*Caption: Principal Secretary, State Department for Industry, Dr. Juma Mukhwana, speaking at Interveg Exports EPZ Ltd*

### **Quarter 3: A Period of Review and Reassessment**

In Quarter 3 of 2023, Cohort 1 SMEs, with the support of NIRAS Business Advisors, embarked on the critical task of reviewing and revising their Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs). This exercise was essential to ensure that the identified improvement areas remained relevant and to account for any new challenges or opportunities that had emerged during the project's hiatus. The revised PIPs were presented to the Grant Approval Committee (GAC) for review and approval. In relation to this, an out-of-office workshop was organised for both the NIRAS team and Project Implementation Unit (PIU) GAC team to facilitate in-depth presentations and discussions on the SME PIPs. The GAC approved many of the presented PIPs, making it clear that KIEP 250+ was back on track and moving forward.

### **Expanding the Reach: Cohort 2 SMEs**

Parallel to the progress with Cohort 1 SMEs, KIEP 250+ set its sights on Cohort 2. A new call for applications was prepared, and mobilization webinars were conducted in collaboration with strategic partners and their SMEs. These webinars aimed to inform potential applicants about the project's restart and its objectives.

The KIEP 250+ Cohort 2 Call for Applications was officially launched on August 11, 2023, at an event graced by the Ag. Industrialisation Secretary, Nobby Macharia. Key figures in the project, such as Mr. Sameer Goyal, Senior Financial Specialist at the World Bank, Mr. Philip Maitha, the KIEP Coordinator and Senior Economist, and Ms. Florence Gatome, NIRAS Africa Director, joined in the

launch. In this call, priority was given to SMEs in sectors such as Manufacturing, Agriculture, Housing and Settlement, Healthcare, Digital Superhighway, and Creative Economy.

The call garnered significant interest, with 145 applications being submitted. The subsequent shortlisting process aimed to identify eligible applications based on predefined criteria. Furthermore, the application window for Business Development Service (BDS) providers was also opened, allowing interested and eligible providers to continuously submit their applications for review.

Cohort 3 application window was opened on 20th November, 2023 with the application deadline being extended to 16th January, 2024. So far numerous applications have been received indicating interest of the project among the SMEs. The applications will be reviewed and eligible SMEs shortlisted by the end of January, 2024.

### **Contract Grants**

A total of 23 Cohort 1 SMEs signed grant contracts on 4th December 2023 enabling them to implement identified strategies to expand their businesses.

### **Looking Ahead**

With 2023 ending on a high note, the KIEP 250+ project is poised for a dynamic and productive 2024. The momentum gained during this period sets the stage for further engagements and activities aimed at nurturing entrepreneurship, innovation, and sustainable growth in Kenya.

## Elevating innovation at Latitude59 Kenya edition



Panel discussion session moderated by Latitude 59 CEO Liisi Org, during the Latitude59 Expo Centre, Kenya Edition held at Sarit Center

In a thrilling convergence of Kenyan innovators, entrepreneurs, and tech enthusiasts, Startup Savannah proudly facilitated the participation of 12 budding entrepreneurs at the Latitude59 Expo Centre, Kenya Edition, held at the Sarit Center on 6th December 2023.

The event unfolded as an enriching experience, featuring captivating talks, hands-on workshops, and invaluable networking opportunities. Through our commitment to connecting the Kenyan ecosystem with global experts, investments, and support infrastructure,

we are delighted that our participants could leverage this platform to broaden their horizons, contributing to job creation, business growth, and overall sustainability.

## Leveling up with IBM skills build Global Program Manager

Attended by 83 entrepreneurs, the Level Up Series explored crucial topics such as the power of fusion skills, collaboration and teamwork, creativity and design thinking, and strategies for optimal workplace performance

In a bid to empower entrepreneurs with the skills required to excel in the 21st-century workplace, Startup Savannah hosted a virtual session featuring Kate Ross, the Global Program Manager for Workforce Education and Skills at IBM SkillsBuild.

Attended by 83 entrepreneurs, the Level Up Series explored crucial topics

such as the power of fusion skills, collaboration and teamwork, creativity and design thinking, and strategies for optimal workplace performance. This session aimed to equip entrepreneurs with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the dynamic landscape of today's workplace effectively.



## Unlocking investor insights with Asger Trier Bing



Investor Series participants with Asger Trier Bing during the physical session held in Nairobi

Startup Savannah took a deep dive into fostering investor readiness with two exclusive Investor Series sessions featuring Asger Trier Bing, a distinguished serial entrepreneur with a passion for leveraging technology to solve global challenges.

Engaging 88 entrepreneurs in both physical and virtual sessions on 27th November 2023, and 13th December 2023, respectively, Asger shared key insights on creating compelling pitch decks, weaving narratives that resonate with investors,

and crafting strategies to stand out in a competitive landscape.

The events aimed to equip entrepreneurs with the tools needed to attract international investments and elevate their ventures.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

NO	Event Type	Topic	Dates
1	Marketplace Series	Kenya Meets Portugal	16th January 2024 15th February 2024 14th March 2024
		Kenya Meets Spain	30th January 2024 26th February 2024
2	Investor Series	Impact Investing, Angel Investors among others.	18th January 2024 7th February 2024
3	Level Up Series	Product Innovation and Sales Strategy	25th January 2024 7th February 2024
4	International Events	Pre and Post Sankalp events with an international twist	26th – 29th February 2024 4th – 8th March 2024

These events underscore Startup Savannah's commitment to fostering innovation, facilitating meaningful connections, and providing invaluable resources to entrepreneurs on their journey to success. We look forward to more opportunities to elevate the entrepreneurial landscape in Kenya and beyond.

## iTATU Launch



# KIEP 250+ Event



# SKIES Launch Event





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