

Call for Applications

to participate in a Business Sprint for Fostering a Rural & Green Economy in Uganda

Are you an established entrepreneur driven to transform rural livelihoods in Uganda? Do you want to validate your innovative idea in a Business Sprint and pitch for funding as part of the TeamUp Innovation Fund? Does your solution tackle critical challenges in climate and environment, health and well-being, as well as socio-economic developments? If this sounds like you, seize the opportunity and apply now!

Deadline for submissions is January 14, 2025, at 12:00 AM midnight CET.

Context

Entrepreneurship in Uganda plays a critical role in the country's economy, with approximately 35.5% of the active labor force engaged in entrepreneurial activities.¹ Uganda is often ranked among the most entrepreneurial nations globally, driven by a high need for self-employment in the face of limited formal job opportunities. In rural areas, social entrepreneurship has emerged as a transformative force, addressing deeply rooted social and economic challenges. Social entrepreneurs in Uganda tackle issues such as unemployment, lack of access to education and healthcare, and environmental degradation by introducing innovative and community-driven solutions.² Social entrepreneurship is not only transforming rural communities but also contributing significantly to Uganda's broader sustainable development goals. With a young population where over 75% are under 30 years old, these initiatives hold particular promise for empowering youth and unlocking their potential as changemakers in the country's future.

The TeamUp Innovation Fund aligns seamlessly with this dynamic entrepreneurial landscape and builds on the momentum already present in rural communities in Uganda, including the districts of Mityana, Kassanda, Nakaseke, Kyegegwa, and Kikuube, by providing tailored support to individuals and teams who are addressing local challenges. The TeamUp Innovation Fund has been established with the aim to further widen the impact of the TeamUp program, which presents a new cross-sectoral approach to development cooperation initiated by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and managed as well as co-financed through the three foundations Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung (DSW), Hanns R. Neumann Stiftung (HRNS) and Siemens Stiftung.

To support these efforts, Siemens Stiftung is launching a call for applications for social entrepreneurs in Uganda under the theme "Fostering Rural and Green Economy". The call consists of two phases: an initial 10-week Business Sprint, followed by the opportunity to pitch for funding of up to 50,000Euro upon successful completion of the Business Sprint.

¹African Economic Outlook 2017 African Economic Outlook Uganda,

https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/AEO_2017_Report_Full_English.pdf, accessed February 15, 2024.

²Turyakira et al. (2024), <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/jwam-02-2023-0011/full/html>

About the Business Sprint

Siemens Stiftung invites innovative entrepreneurs to participate in the transformative **Business Sprint Program**, a 10-week hybrid journey running **from February to April 2025**. The Business Sprint is designed to validate selected project proposals and accelerate the development of impactful, locally relevant solutions for rural communities in Uganda, particularly youth, women and people with disabilities. To support rural development in Uganda, project proposals must be tailored to local needs, ensuring accessibility, affordability and acceptability for rural communities and focus on addressing the following areas:

- **Climate and Environmental Solutions:** Develop solutions that tackle environmental impact and promote sustainability, that help preserve the local ecosystem while benefiting rural communities.
- **Health and Well-being Enhancements:** Contribute to improving health and well-being conditions for rural communities, women and youth.
- **Socio-economic Opportunities:** Generate economic benefits for the community, including job creation, skills development, and new market opportunities with a particular focus on women and youth.

This Business Sprint provides a dynamic, agile framework for social enterprises with the aim of transforming project proposals into impactful, scalable solutions. Through a blend of in-person and online sessions, participants will gain hands-on experience, practical tools, and expert guidance to refine their approach and enhance their impact.

Business Sprint Structure:

- **Kick-off Bootcamp:** A two-day, in-person event in Kampala that facilitates team onboarding, peer networking, and mentor introductions, laying the groundwork for a successful sprint.
- **Weekly Expert-Led Digital Workshops:** Deep-dive sessions (2–3 hours weekly) covering Market Analysis, Customer Segmentation, Product Development, Production Optimization, Financial Planning, and Accounting.
- **Tailored Mentoring:** Ongoing support from experienced mentors guiding the social enterprises through each stage of the program, both digitally and in person. Mentors work closely with social enterprises to set weekly milestones and actionable tasks, requiring 8–10 hours of dedicated work per week.
- **Final Event:** A two-day culminating event in Kampala, providing an opportunity to present refined proposals, pitch for funding, and engage in peer-to-peer learning.

Note: Travel, accommodation, and per diem expenses for all in-person events in Kampala will be covered by Siemens Stiftung.

Successful participants who have successfully participated in the entire Business Sprint will have the chance to secure **€30,000 to €50,000³** in funding to pilot their solutions from July 2025 to July 2026. Recipients of the funding will also benefit from tailored non-financial support, such as continuous guidance from regional mentors and access to the broader TeamUp network.

³ To qualify for funding exceeding €30,000, an annual turnover of at least €100,000 in the previous year is required. However, if your annual turnover falls below this threshold, funding of up to €30,000 remains available.

Applicant's Profile

Siemens Stiftung is seeking applications from early-stage social enterprises that meet the following criteria:

- **Registered in Uganda** with a proven presence in the rural Ugandan market. Companies operating in the TeamUp districts of Mityana, Kassanda, Nakaseke, Kyegegwa and Kikuube will be preferred.
- **Established track record:** The business must have been operational for at least three years.
- **Demonstrated success:** Proven history of serving paying customers or clients, especially in rural areas.
- **Clear social or environmental mission:** The enterprise should aim to create a positive impact on rural communities.
- **Strong team capacity:** The team must be capable of effectively implementing the proposed solution.
- **Legal standing:** The business should not be involved in litigation or have existing contracts with Siemens Stiftung.

Applications meeting these criteria are strongly encouraged to apply. Siemens Stiftung especially welcome submissions from female-led and youth-led enterprises, including those founded by women and/or youth, as well as organizations actively tackling gender-specific or youth-related challenges.

Please note that applications seeking debt refinancing or those focused solely on financing the core business without introducing an innovative new element or solution are not eligible.

Application Process & Contract Details

Interested applicants are requested to submit their application including all necessary documents electronically via [online submission](#). **The deadline for submissions is January 14, 2025, at 12:00 AM midnight CET.**

Proposals should clearly articulate how the project will address the three core areas: climate/environment, health/well-being, and socio-economic opportunities as well as the team working on the project.



SCAN TO APPLY

Mandatory Attachments

- CVs of core project team
- Registration certificate of company/organization
- Form 1-Notice of Beneficial Owner Particulars
- Proof for existing products and initial users, e.g. photos, data protocol, or blueprint

Siemens Stiftung conducts a thorough due diligence and eligibility check for all project ideas. Up to **ten social enterprises** will be selected, which will be held from February to April 2025.

Data Protection

Your personal data will be processed in accordance with the applicable Data Protection Regulations (GDPR; DSGVO).

The data you provide, which may include personal and company information, will be processed solely for the purposes of conducting the selection process for the “Fostering Green & Rural Economy” Call and facilitating participation in the associated Business Sprint. This includes sharing relevant data with our third-party facilitator, Circle Innovation, who will support the Business Sprint process.

By submitting your application, you consent to the processing of your personal and company data as described above. You may withdraw your consent at any time with future effect by contacting us.

Complaints Mechanism

If, at any stage of the application or evaluation process, the applicant considers that a mistake has been made, the evaluators have acted unfairly or failed to comply with the rules, and the applicant’s interests have been prejudiced as a result, the following complaint mechanism is available. A complaint should be drawn up in English and submitted by email to opencall@siemens-stiftung.org. Please add “Complaint Fostering Green & Rural Economy” to the subject of the email and include:

- contact details,
- the subject of the complaint,
- information and evidence regarding the alleged breach.

Background information

The TeamUp Innovation Fund (TU IF) is dedicated to advancing innovative solutions for improving the living conditions in rural areas, concentrating on three thematic areas of 1) climate & environment, 2) health & well-being, and 3) income opportunities (incl. job generation). The Innovation Fund is funded by Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung (DSW), Hanns R. Neumann Stiftung (HRNS), and Siemens Stiftung. Whereby Siemens Stiftung manages the TeamUp Innovation Fund to provide strategic oversight, financial management, and ensuring inclusive decision-making processes.

Siemens Stiftung

As a nonprofit foundation, Siemens Stiftung is committed to sustainable social development, focusing on the key themes Access to **Essential Services**, **Connected Societies**, and **Climate & Sustainability**. It adopts a proactive approach to shaping the transformations required to tackle these challenges. By working with partners from the fields of **Education**, **Social Entrepreneurship**, and **Arts & Culture**, Siemens Stiftung reinforces collective learning and locally based, sustainable structures. Its projects and networks center around Africa, Europe, and Latin America.

Contact

For further enquiries do not hesitate to contact Ms Laura Stich at laura.stich@siemens-stiftung.org.