

Press release
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New makerspace inaugurated in Lagos to enhance career prospects for Nigerian youth

A 25-square-meter learning space equipped with innovative digital equipment is launched today. Part of the BeMINT_Nigeria training project, it offers hands-on Information Technology (IT) training and entrepreneurial skills to high-school graduates in Lagos. With a focus on female participation, this 12-week intensive program unlocks economic opportunities for 400 youth (aged 18 to 24) from low-income families.

BeMINT (MINT is the German abbreviation for STEM: Mathematics, IT, science and technology) is supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by the internationally operative foundation Siemens Stiftung and Nigerian NGO Empowering Africans through Education Initiative (EAE). This three-year training and internship program equips school graduates with practical and digital skills crucial to thrive in the 21st century characterized by technological advancements and digitization.

“While the digital revolution has transformed societies and economies, it has also widened gender and social inequalities. The United Nations estimates that women account for only 22% of STEM jobs. To narrow this disparity, BeMINT_Nigeria encourages female participation and eases access to digital learning for youth from underserved communities. The user-centric training project advances inclusive economic participation and fosters crucial 21st-century skills among the next generation of Nigerians”, says Dr. Nina Smidt, Siemens Stiftung’s CEO and Spokesperson of the Board.

At the heart of this project is the new makerspace that provides a hub for educational advancement and community engagement. It offers easy access to 3D technologies, tools and materials for the participants to realize their initial ideas and prototypes. Additionally, they benefit from free access to “Hours of Engineering”, a cloud-based software from Siemens Digital Industries - offering an intuitive introduction to the world of computer-aided design and encouraging problem-solving thinking.

At the launch, the German Consul General in Lagos Mr. Weert Börner said, “Investments in digital education are the key to economic change. Facilitating digital infrastructure and improving training opportunities that broaden economic avenues for young Nigerians, especially young women, is a core element of Nigerian-German cooperation. 70% of the country’s population is under 35, providing a unique basis for boosting Nigeria’s digital economy.”

Over the course of the next couple of years, nine batches consisting of 45 participants each are introduced to three major focus areas: IT, vocational orientation, and entrepreneurship. Each participant receives comprehensive, multi-disciplinary training, gaining practical experience in working with digital platforms along with securing insights into Artificial Intelligence tools to enhance their market competitiveness.

“We are building on the success of the project’s first phase, launched in 2022, which has produced confident and well-trained alumni - now working at reputed international companies like Google and Microsoft, as well as Nigerian SMEs

and startups. The current batches will benefit from hands-on mentoring by the alumni network, gaining valuable guidance as they embark on their professional journeys,” adds Ms Chinenye Ezeakor, Co-founder of EAE.

160 teachers will undergo training in the makerspace – enabling them to take their learning back to their classrooms and implement innovative practices, this ensures more students benefit from this project. The training culminates in the graduates receiving certification by the Delegation of German Industry and Commerce (AHK) in Nigeria confirming their training to German standards, thus advancing their career prospects.

Empowering Africans Through Education Initiative

Empowering Africans through Education Initiative is an organization with a strong commitment to sustainable development through action. It is committed to supporting science and technology education in Nigeria and Africa at large. Their mission is to expand the interests, participation, and collaboration of young Africans in science and technology-related disciplines and to ensure their engagement in technological innovations and entrepreneurship in Africa. empoweringafricans.org

German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is responsible for German development policy and Germany’s international development cooperation. The framework for its actions is provided by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Climate Agreement. The focus is on the commitment against poverty and hunger and for healthy people in a healthy environment. The BMZ sees itself as a transformation ministry, advancing the global transformation toward a sustainable, climate- and nature-compatible economy while strengthening peace, freedom and human rights.

bmz.de/en

Delegation of German Industry and Commerce in Nigeria (AHK Nigeria)

DGIC International Business Services Ltd (DGIC) is the service company of the Delegation of the German Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Nigeria (AHK Nigeria), which promotes bilateral trade and investment relations between Nigeria and Germany. Its services help German companies to navigate the market, whether it is exploring trade opportunities, finding suitable business partners or agents, or establishing their own presence in Nigeria. DGIC has in the past offered services to Nigerian and German companies in the areas of financing, matchmaking, importing, market entry research, energy consultancy, networking, Financing, Trade Fair Service, Delegation trip B2B and B2C.

nigeria.ahk.de/en/

Siemens Stiftung

The non-profit, internationally operative Siemens Stiftung is committed to sustainable social development. Together with individuals and communities, we create opportunities to actively shape social and ecological transformation. Our work focuses on three areas of action: Essential Services, Digitality, and Climate, addressing challenges and harnessing them as opportunities for innovation and positive impact. Through our projects in Education, Social Entrepreneurship, and Culture, we facilitate access and participation, strengthen future-oriented competencies, and enable collaborative learning. With a focus on Africa, Europe, Latin America, and Asia/India, we connect local actions with global perspectives to cultivate resilience, social cohesion, and regenerative practices.

The world is evolving. Let's shape it. Together.

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