

UVUMBUI NEWSLETTER

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Enabling Innovation for Socio-economic
Development

FOREWORD



Greetings and happy new year from Kenya National Innovation Agency (KeNIA). KeNIA is an agency that was established to develop and manage the National Innovation System. The agency has significant potential of shaping the innovation agenda of our institutions and by extension the country.

Starting September 2020, I took office as the first substantive KeNIA CEO and I have used the first few months to sharpen the priorities of the agency for the coming years. We will focus on two pillars:

- 1.) Supporting the growth of a strong framework for commercialization of research from our institutions and
- 2.) Strengthening the startup ecosystem in the country.

I encourage you to continuously engage with us on these pillars.

Besides shaping up the institutional guiding documents like the PC, workplans, budget revisions, and growing human capacity in the agency, during the last four months, we have defined three new initiatives that are being rolled out.

- 1.) Innovation Champions program, where selected individuals across institutions will be trained on various aspects of innovation & commercialization, given access to information, tools and contacts as well as remain contact points to KeNIA from institutions.

They will become the agents to keep and sustain innovation momentum at the institutional level, training others, following through activities, scouting innovations, and supporting institutional leaders on introducing and implementing reforms to catalyse innovation.

2) Innovation Academy will now be the home of various training programs organized and coordinated by KeNIA. In 2021, we will roll out one course on Technology Transfer and Research Commercialization and another on incubation management. From 2022, we expect to roll out several other courses.

3) Kenya Innovation Week: The Board approved the establishment of KIW, a national forum that will bring together innovation stakeholders once a year to celebrate the efforts and initiatives while promoting the momentum for the next year. The inaugural KIW shall be held in **December 2021, 6th to 10th** in a venue to be announced.

- The focus will be:
- 1) **Research and Commercialization Summit**
 - 2) **Startup Kenya Summit**
 - 3) **4th Industrial Revolution Summit and,**
 - 4) **Technology Summit.**

There will be numerous seminars, workshops, bootcamps, and hackathons. We will also have a huge exhibition of innovations and solutions.

We look forward to a charged second half of the financial year as we shape and nurture the innovation ecosystem.

Thank You,
Dr. Tonny Omwansa
CEO, Kenya National Innovation Agency (KeNIA)
ceo@innovationagency.go.ke

News and Updates

KeNIA launches Innovation Champions program

The Kenya National Innovation Agency (KeNIA) has launched an Innovation Champions Program. The program is designed to enhance capacity of innovation-enthusiastic individuals in institutions who wish to become transformative agents of their community.

KeNIA will support the champions to build networks, access resources, plan and execute local initiatives that would energize the local innovation movement.

KeNIA organizes training programs that champions will be invited to attend, including but not limited to 1. Innovation management, commercialization of research, technology transfer, incubation management, and resource mobilization.

As part of an initial five-day induction workshop, in April 2021, the innovation champions will be guided to develop localized and realistic plans for their institutions and would be supported by KeNIA in the most practical way to implement these plans over time.

KeNIA will remain in touch with champions to support the implementation of their plans. The plans will include practical activities such as planning and executing innovation summits, building partnerships, developing incubation policies, proposing institutional reforms among others.

INNOVATION CHAMPIONS PROGRAM

APRIL 12, 2021

Orientation Session

For Innovation Champions

APRIL 13 - 15, 2021

Technology Transfer & Research Commercialization Workshop

APRIL 16, 2021

Domesticating Individual Plans

For Innovation Champions

The "Technology Transfer and Research Commercialization Course" helps you to appreciate the approach and steps for moving ideas and research to innovations of societal value. The course is for individuals involved in promoting innovation in research institutions, TVETs, Universities, Research Hospitals, Consulting firms etc. with a specific focus on Intellectual Property (IP) commercialization.

Learning Objectives

1. Appreciate the process and systems of transferring IP from a lab to market
2. Understand the basics of IP transfer, including identification, assessment and protection of IP, developing and managing of partnerships (engagement, negotiation, contracting, maintaining)
3. Conceptualize plans of action that can help achieve the transfer of a particular IP in your local context

Topics to be covered:

1. Foundations of Technology Transfer
2. Technology Transfer Process
3. Technology Transfer Monitoring
4. IP Lifecycle (identification, assessment, protection, exploitation)
5. Partner Management (engagement, deal making, negotiations, contracting)

Cost: KES 50,000

Covering; facilitation, workshop material, daily tea/snacks, lunch & certificate of completion.

Venue: Naivasha*

For more information on Innovation Champions: champions.innovationagency.go.ke

News and Updates

Kenya National Innovation Agency Unveils First Substantive CEO, Ambitious Roadmap

Dr. Omwansa said by working with partners, KeNIA is building a digital innovation bridge to support linking research outputs to industry partners

The Kenya National Innovation Agency (KeNIA) showcased its four-year ambitious roadmap as Dr. Tony Omwansa was unveiled as substantive CEO.

This took place in a breakfast meeting held on 26th November, in Nairobi. The agency whose core mandate is to develop and manage the National Innovation system and responsible for coordination and promotion of the National Innovation Ecosystem has been without a substantive CEO since its establishment under the Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Act, No. 28 of 2013 under the Ministry of Education.

The agency's roadmap will comprise two key pillars; Research Commercialization Support and Startup Ecosystem Support, aiming to sustainably support commercialization of over 1000 innovations from individuals, TVETs, Universities, and Research Centers by attracting and nurturing appropriate partnerships, in addition to identifying and transforming 10,000 idea stage, 1,000 growth stage, and 100 high impact startups.

On Commercialization, Dr. Omwansa said that "Working with partners, KeNIA is building a digital innovation bridge to support linking research outputs to industry partners." The former don added that the digital platform will link innovations and research to market, partners, funders, and consumers to accelerate commercialization. He further urged the government to create policies to explicitly link science, technology, and innovation with economic & employment growth.

Dr. Omwansa who founded the Nairobi Innovation Week, indicated that KeNIA will work with a number of partners to roll out Kenya Innovation Week that will climax the innovation activities on an annual basis.



New Kenya National Innovation Agency (KeNIA) CEO Dr. Tony Omwansa, speaking during the unveiling of the Agency's roadmap at Park Inn by Radisson, Nairobi. Photo KeNIA

Tony Omwansa who has a PhD in Information Systems joins the agency with a great wealth of experience in the innovation space, having founded Nairobi Innovation Week (NIW), C4DLab Innovation Hub, authored MPesa book – Money Real Quick and boasts of over 10 years University experience as a faculty member.



OMWANSA

The agency's roadmap will comprise two key pillars; Research Commercialization Support and Startup Ecosystem Support, aiming to sustainably support commercialization of over 1000 innovations from individuals, TVETs, Universities and Research Centers



News and Updates

KeNIA's latest beneficiary, The Sixth Sense eyeing 10,000 Visually Impaired users in 2021

The team is planning to scale up to the global market, noting that mobility challenges for the visually impaired is not only for the Kenyan populace but is a global challenge.

Hope Tech Plus Limited with its signature product, the Sixth Sense is optimistic of gaining 10,000 users by end year, 2021.

The startup which currently has a user base of about 1,600, targets the visually impaired with their hand-held mobility assistive device dubbed The Sixth Sense – a small, handheld walking companion to the visually impaired which imitates echolocation and sonar techniques by using ultrasound sensors to detect objects.



Brian Mwenda demonstrating how the 6th sense device works to President Uhuru Kenyatta and former UK Prime Minister Theresa May during an exhibition at Strathmore University. Photo Courtesy, Hope Tech Plus

The device vibrates in different ways to warn the user when they're close to an object, with the frequency of vibrations increasing as user gets closer to an object

This unique mobility aid is a brainchild of Brian Mwenda, an assistive tech enthusiast and Electrical and Electronic Engineer whose passion for innovation was triggered by his close association with the physically challenged. "When I joined the University of Nairobi to study Electrical and Electronic engineering, I met friends with Physical challenges and I had an urge to develop a product to assist them," he says.

Currently incubated at the Meru University's Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship Centre (IIEC), the Sixth Sense completely replaces white canes and gives sufficient information about the physical environment of a user for them to navigate safely.

The Startup recently received a commercialization grant from the Kenya National Innovation Agency (KeNIA) to further their innovation and improve their technology, and Mwenda says that most of the funds will go towards the development of the hardware, user education and trials over the next one year.

"We've just started the partnership with KeNIA and for the next one year we're looking at more collaboration. KeNIA has committed to connect us with stakeholders in the industry to help us scale up our product with a view of reaching as many people as possible. We are looking at a product which is socially acceptable by the community. Even though it has never been in the market, it has the potential to significantly transform someone's life."

The youthful innovator however says that although the startup journey is quite challenging, the training accorded to them by KeNIA and its partner institution, the Royal Academy of Engineers created a sort of a community around where they can talk, support each other, meet up and collaborate. The agency has also supported them in terms of publicity and branding.

The Sixth Sense has won numerous awards since its inception three years ago; notable among them is the 2019 National Diversity & Inclusion Awards & Recognition, where it won the Diversity and Inclusion Award for Inclusive and Innovative Deployment of Technology category.

The team is planning to scale up to the global market, noting that mobility challenges for the visually impaired is not only for the Kenyan populace but is a global challenge, and are urging the young and upcoming innovators to always think about inclusivity and universal accessibility in whatever innovative product they are working on.

At the same time, Mwenda says the team is working round the clock to create a world with zero barriers to participation for over 285 million visually impaired people globally.

1,600

The number of current users of the Sixth Sense Device

10,000

The number of visually impaired users the Sixth Sense is targeting in 2021

News and Updates

Sapama CEO: KeNIA is a walking stick that Startups require

Sapama Technologies CEO Edwin Mugendi has described KeNIA as a walking stick that startups need to start walking

Mugendi says that his experience with the Innovation Agency is one he can never forget about, as his startup is one among the many startups that have benefitted from the agency's funding programs.

Through its outfit, Sapama ERP, the startup was awarded Ksh. 0.5 million grant funds by the Kenya National Innovation Agency through its National Innovation Awards program.

"We received half a million in form of grant from KeNIA through the National Innovation Awards to advance our technology.



Sapama Technologies Chief Executive Officer, Edwin Mugendi during an interview with KeNIA. Photo KeNIA

The funding came at the right time because it helped us procure office equipment, pay our staff and hire more staff," Mugendi says. He however states that a simple advert by KeNIA on a daily newspaper was what made the difference for his struggling business at that time.

At the same time, the entrepreneur advises the young innovators to be persistent and patient in whatever they are doing.

"If you want to succeed in this field, it is important to be very patient. The young entrepreneurs should most importantly look at the value proposition and customer retention.

The money paid by a client should be equal to the value you offer."

Mugendi has hailed the current KeNIA CEO Dr. Tonny Omwansa, saying that he is very capable of propelling the agency to the next level and breathe a life into the agency, but he is also urging the Innovation ecosystem players to build partnerships and generate unicorns that will help catalyze the growth of the country's economy.

In Other News

Education CAS, Hon. Zack Kinuthia drums up support for KeNIA funding

Speaking during the unveiling of KeNIA's four-year roadmap and 1st substantive CEO, Education CAS, Hon. Zack Kinuthia said the state wants KeNIA to support the dissemination of research findings to the community beneficiaries, adding that the propositions to establish incubation and innovation hubs in universities, TVETs and research centers, is a valuable way to catalyze commercialization of research

The CAS however recognized the financial and human resource deficiencies facing the agency assuring the ecosystem players that the government will address the situation."At these initial stages, KeNIA has a small budget and a very lean staff. "We are going to support KeNIA to ensure that it has the financial and human resources necessary to execute on its mandate", he said.



Education CAS, Hon. Zack Kinuthia speaking during the unveiling of KeNIA's new CEO. Photo, KeNIA



KINUTHIA

We are going to support KeNIA to ensure that it has the financial and human resources necessary to execute on its mandate



Feature

Moi University wins grant to foster innovation in health Science departments of African Varsities

Moi University in partnership with Makerere University (Uganda), University of Cape Coast (Ghana), Stellenbosch University (South Africa)

and Linköping University (Sweden) has been selected for the European Union (EU) co-funding for the Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme – a scheme that supports higher education cooperation between countries in Africa.

The Kenyan institution is among six other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) which have successfully been selected for funding and will receive grants of up to 1.4 million euros.

“I am pleased to inform you that your application has been selected for EU co-funding. It received 87/100 points, which is above the minimum threshold for funding of 50/100 points given the available budget. The maximum amount of funding to be awarded to your project is 1,399,025.00 Euro.”

The confirmation letter from the EU’s Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency reads in part. “For your information, out of the 142 eligible applications, 7 have been selected for funding and 3 have been placed on a reserve list.” The letter continues.

The project titled Partnering for Health Professional Training in African Universities is set to start in January 2021 and is projected to end in December 2025, and will catapult innovation in the Health Science departments of the selected Higher Education Institutions in the African region.

Motivated by the young and vibrant African population that faces several challenges often amplified by the demographic explosion; youth unemployment, climate change, food crisis, and poor health systems, the project seeks to foster collaboration and harmonization of higher education health professional training to produce quality (skilled and competent) graduates for efficient health systems on the continent, thereby increasing the employability of graduates, improving the quality of higher education and strengthening the modernization and internationalization of African Higher Education Institutions.

Conversely, the project seeks to alleviate the infrastructural deficiencies within the Health Science departments of the partner African Higher Learning Institutions. “Additional challenges that face healthcare human development in Africa focus on physical infrastructure, accreditation systems, and faculty recruitment.

These challenges are a result of differences in training approaches and lack of mobility in student/staff in the African continent. To address these challenges, deliberate efforts should be focused on upgrading the skills and mobility of students/staff in healthcare at a regional level.

Collaboration amongst African Institutions and partnerships with technically apt institutions is required to systematically address the challenges and result in sustainable solutions that will have an impact on individual, institutional and regional level health professional training has a particularly important role to play in addressing the health workforce shortage.” The project proposal reads in part.

This project will see the training of at least 42 postgraduate students (30 Masters and 12 PhD students) in various but complementary health subjects, strengthening of human and research capacity in health science in the selected HEIs in Africa, Improvement in quality and relevance of higher education in Africa through academic collaboration and staff exchange in selected HEIs; and Improving internationalisation and visibility of selected academic programmes in Africa hence strengthening capacity of the Health Sector in Africa to respond to existing and emerging medical health challenges and thus, contribute to achieving European Union (EU) and African Union (AU) vision on health care and SDGs 3 and 17 which Kenya is a signatory.

The project which will be headed by Immunology Professor, Simeon Mining is targeting twelve academic programmes; Master of Science in Clinical Psychology, Master of Science in Field Epidemiology, and PhD in Immunology for Moi University. Master of Public Health and PhD in Health Sciences for Makerere University, M. Phil Drug Discovery and Development, M. Phil Infection and Immunity, PhD. Drug Discovery and Development for the University of Cape Coast and Masters in Nursing, MSc. Molecular Biology and Human Genetics, MSc. Medical Micro Biology, PhD Molecular Biology and Human Genetics for Stellenbosch University.



I am pleased to inform you that your application has been selected for EU co-funding. It received 87/100 points, which is above the minimum threshold for funding of 50/100 points given the available budget. The maximum amount of funding to be awarded to your project is 1,399,025.00 Euro

Reads the confirmation letter



Feature

Sign-IO: Smart glove invented by a Kenyan youth turns sign language into audio speech

Have you ever had an encounter with a deaf person? Well, most of us will certainly ignore the person and pretend not to be interested because we can't comprehend their language.

This is practically possible with strangers, but what if the hearing impaired person is a close relative?

This was the case for Roy Allela whose six-year-old niece was born deaf. She found it difficult to communicate with her family, none of whom had the knowledge of sign language. Allela, a 25 years old Kenyan technology evangelist who works for the Intel and tutors data science at Oxford University had a strong urge to communicate with his niece.

Smart gloves

He embarked on a journey that would see him invent smart gloves that convert sign language movements into audio speech. The gloves named Sign-IO have flex sensors that quantify the bend of the fingers stitched on to each finger thereby processing the letter being signaled. The gloves are then paired via Bluetooth to a mobile phone application which then vocalizes the letters.



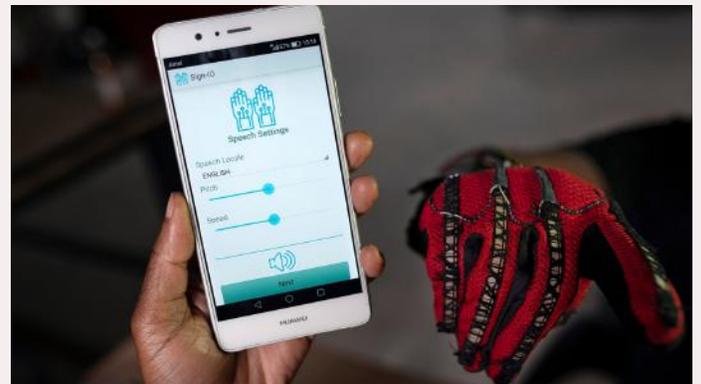
Roy displaying the Sign-IO smart gloves. Photo Courtesy

"My niece wears the gloves, pairs them to her phone or mine, then starts signing and I'm able to understand what she's saying." he says, adding that the invention has taken into consideration the speed of speech making it comfortable for use by both the fast and slow speakers. Users can also set the language, gender and pitch of the vocalization through the app.

Awards

With an accuracy result averaging 93%, the smart gloves have won the hardware trailblazer award from the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), Pitch @ Palace people's choice award and were the second runner-up for the Leaders in Innovation Fellowship, a partnership between the Kenya National Innovation Agency (KeNIA) and the Royal Academy of Engineering.

During his Mashujaa day fete address at the Gusii Stadium in Kisii County, President Uhuru Kenyatta also recognized the smart gloves as one of the great inventions by a brilliant Kenyan youth, urging the youths to find solutions to problems that bedevil the society.



A view of the Sign-IO mobile interface. Photo Courtesy

"A good starting point for our young people is to look for a problem and solve it. If you solve a problem, heroism and success will naturally follow you.", said President Kenyatta.

The head of state added that the smart glove is a heroic invention by a Kenyan youth and there are many more young people finding solutions to Kenyan problems. "It is clear that Kenya has a pool of talented and gifted young people. Where these transformative innovations came from, there are many more. All we need to do is look and if our national attention moves to the search for solutions, our natural energy will flow to a positive place.", he said.

Allela's goal is to place at least two pairs of gloves in every special needs school in Kenya, and believes they could be used to help the 34 million children worldwide who suffer disabling hearing loss, with a pilot already done at a special needs school in Migori County.

93%

The average accuracy result of smart glove that turns sign language into audio speech

Feature

KeNIA helped us make the streets a safer world - Upesy

Upesy received Ksh. 5 million seed funds and was part of the Leaders in Innovation Fellowship (LIF)

Leaders in Innovation Fellowship (LIF) beneficiary, Upesy World Limited has come out to speak about the pivotal role played by KeNIA to ensure the success of their venture.

Upesy World Limited co-founder, Eric Murithi notes that the idea of an enterprise came about as a result of a mugging experience that he and his friend went through after being accosted by thieves one evening on their way home. Without a means to reach out for help from the police and even friends, they had to endure that traumatic experience.

Following the scary ordeal, Murithi who is an electrical engineer teamed up with Edna Kendi, a software engineer, and Vincent Awino, a geospatial engineer to turn the mobile phone into a panic button. Resulting in the birth of Upesy; a one-stop-shop for all matters emergency.

How the App Works

The user is to press the power button four times which then automatically sends an alert to the emergency contacts included in the app and the police manning the Integrated Command, Control, and Communication (IC3) center who can then assign such tasks to officers on the ground. For paid-up subscribers, the alert also goes to private companies such as security and ambulance services.

The firm is in partnership with security firms, G4S, Secure and 911 Group as well as AAR and St John Ambulance for ambulance response services in case of accidents.

Through the LIF programme, Mr. Murithi underwent rigorous training at the Royal Academy of Engineers in the UK, and the team was granted access to expert coaches and opportunities for international networking.

"Before we got seed funding from the Kenya National Innovation Agency (KeNIA), the mobile app was known as TukoChonjo. The team wasn't working full time and we were outsourcing most of the development from third parties. We didn't even know how to turn our prototype into a business. The trip to the Royal Academy of Engineers helped us a great deal." Eric Murithi says.

Application

Around July 2017, when Eric and his two colleagues, Edna and Vincent were very eager to find someone to inject capital into what they were doing, he unexpectedly came across a call for LIF application advert in a daily newspaper.

Without any prior knowledge of the existence of KeNIA, he decided to try his luck. "I had not heard about KeNIA before but I decided to try my luck and apply blindly. The application exercise took us around 2-3 hours and it entailed what we do, the economic impact we're creating, how we'll create employment opportunities, and why this was a great product. Of course, the chance to travel to the UK also enticed me. I love traveling a lot." He says, smiling.

LIF Experience

The team, now working from home due to the Covid 19 pandemic says that the partnership between KeNIA and the Royal Academy of Engineers was a game-changer for them. "The partnership between KeNIA and the Royal Academy was our biggest gain. We learned Intellectual Property, negotiation, customer-centric products, product development, and commercialization.

We realized that we had put so many features in our app which were not necessary. Interacting with career mentors and international subject matter experts really opened our eyes and shaped our thinking." Eric states.



Team Upesy demonstrating their product to President Uhuru Kenyatta. Onlooking is CS Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs, Joe Mucheru. Photo Courtesy, University of Nairobi

Feature

Business Impact

Eric and Vincent reiterate that with the injection of Ksh. 5 million seed funding into their business, KeNIA accelerated their growth process as they were able to engage with local investors, attract top tier partners who came on board, and were also able to scale up and bring greater impact to the target market.”

This was a great boost and it helped us because we were able to own the product, we hired two full-time app developers who dedicated their time to work on the app, we registered our utility model, the funding gave us leverage to have more partners on board and grew from just one partner to seven partners and three more are also soon coming on board.”

“We were able to organize and execute a six-month pilot at the Kenya police to help them understand how the app operates, our customer base grew from about 1000 to 5000, and it helped us realize a steady stream of revenue and had investors coming on board.”

A More Funded KeNIA

According to Vincent Awino, tech startups being very expensive to run and sustain, are as good as the money behind them. Eric Murithi however reiterates that building KeNIA’s capacity in terms of finances and man power is necessary for a greater impact.

“I would love to see a KeNIA which is more funded and capacitated to help more young people realize their entrepreneurial and innovative dreams.

KeNIA can impact thousands and thousands of lives. Unlike us who didn’t know about KeNIA, there is a need for more publicity.

People need to know that the Kenya National Innovation Agency exists.” Murithi says. They add that KeNIA should bring together the network of investors (both local and international) to the market and it should also have a database of promising startups which they can closely monitor and even invest in.

Advice to Startups

The Global Startups Ecosystem report released in June 2020 featured Nairobi, Kenya as one of the top emerging startup ecosystems in the world. However, starting a startup does not guarantee its success, and Vincent Awino advises prospective innovators to first find out what is valuable to the customers and focus on that.

“Start with the idea you have, ensure the minimum viable product is attracting customers then you can seek seed funding. The next step is where you grow with the market in terms of what the market wants. But most importantly, collect data of what your customers want. Data is the most vital thing that you should base your decisions upon.

“99% of people on the streets, in matatus or in offices, if are in an emergency situation don’t know what to do. This narrative should change because with Upesy, anyone with a mobile phone is able to get help from other parties and it is KENIA that has made us make these streets a safer world.” Murithi concludes.

Pictorial



From left (Seated) Nairobi Senator, Hon. Johnson Sakaja representative Mr. Njoroge, Education CAS Hon. Zack Kinuthia and KeNIA CEO Dr. Tonny Omwansa with startup ecosystem players during the unveiling of KeNIA's new CEO.



Left: KeNIA CEO Dr. Tonny Omwansa and University of Kabianga DVC (Academics and Student Affairs) Prof. Omwenga when the CEO paid a courtesy call to the institution.



From left Nairobi Senator, Hon. Johnson Sakaja, Mr. Njoroge, and KeNIA CEO Dr. Tonny Omwansa during a consultative meeting on the Startup Bill 2020.



KeNIA and National Research Fund board members during a joint governance workshop.



KeNIA CEO Dr. Tonny Omwansa and Moi University staff when he paid the Institution a courtesy call to discuss ways of collaborating.



Left: KeNIA CEO Dr. Tonny Omwansa and Kenyatta University Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Paul Wainaina. The two discussed on how they will collaborate to commercialise research among other items.



Display of laptops designed and assembled at Moi University's digital assembly plant. The initiative is supported by the National Government.



KeNIA CEO Dr. Tonny Omwansa during his visit at the University of Embu



KeNIA CEO Dr. Tonny Omwansa, with the SC Ventures team. KeNIA and SC Ventures are exploring collaboration on supporting more startups in Kenya



KeNIA CEO Dr. Tonny Omwansa when he visited Eco Blocks and Tiles, a startup previously funded by KeNIA. KeNIA will support the startup on customer base expansion.



Left: Zetech University DVC (Academics, Research, Extensions, and Student Affairs) Dr. Alice Njuguna and KeNIA CEO Dr. Tonny Omwansa during his visit at the institution.



A light moment when the World Food Programme(WFP) team paid a courtesy call to KeNIA CEO, Dr. Tonny Omwansa. The teams discussed collaboration engagements on innovation in food security

Pictorial



From left KeNIA CEO Dr. Tonny Omwansa, ASSEK Chairman Bernard Chaira and KoTDA CEO, Eng. John Tanui. The 3 discussed on mechanisms of enhancing collaboration and coordination efforts in the innovation ecosystem.



The University of Nairobi Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Stephen Kiama and KeNIA CEO Dr. Tonny Omwansa. The two discussed how they can tap innovations from the institution and safeguard IP.



The 2019/2020 startups admitted to KeNIA's accelerator programme with the agency's CEO, Dr. Tonny Omwansa at the NACOSTI building.



From Left KeNIA CEO Dr. Tonny Omwansa, Amref International University VC, Prof. Marion Mutugi and DVC (Academic Affairs) Prof. Anselimo Makokha. Discussions on how to collaborate to support Health Innovations were held.



Innovators at Meru University showcasing some of their products to KeNIA CEO Dr. Tonny Omwansa. Discussions on supporting the commercialization of innovations & research projects from the institution were held.



An Innovator at the Chandaria Innovation Center in Kenyatta University demonstrating how their product works to KeNIA CEO Dr. Tonny Omwansa. The CEO toured the center to identify how best to support startups at the hub.



The newly admitted Leaders in Innovation Fellowship (LIF) fellows at the KeNIA offices.



A light moment when KeNIA CEO toured Strathmore's innovation and startup incubation hub iLab



From left Upesy CEO Erick Murithi, KeNIA CEO Dr. Tonny Omwansa, and Upesy Chief Technology Officer Vincent Awino. Upesy is a beneficiary of KeNIA's LIF programme and has since scaled and expanded its customer base following the support it received from KeNIA.



Top Left KeNIA CEO Dr. Tonny Omwansa, Acacia Innovations CEO Elana Laichena and Solar E-Cycles General Manager Alex Makaliwa during the Mika Startups Virtual Conference in Sep 2020. KeNIA has since then adopted Mika, which is an initiative meant to showcase Kenya's Most Promising startups.

Meet Our Leadership



Prof. Reuben Omwega Marwanga
Chairman of the Board



Prof. Linus Muthuri Gitonga
Chairman, Finance &
Administration Committee & Board
Member



Prof. Simeon Kipkoech Mining
Chairman, Technical Committee
& Board Member



Dr. Rosemary Akunghu Emongor
Chairperson, Audit & Risk
Management Committee & Board
Member



Prof. Samuel Gudu
Board Member



Prof. Esther Wangui Muchira Tirima
Board Member



Dr. Jemimah G. Onsare
Board Member



Dr. Stephen Karimi Kibiru
Board Member



Dr. Gideon Kivengea
Representative of Principal Secretary,
Ministry of Education & Board Member



Dr. Tonny K. Omwansa
CEO & Secretary to the Board



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