

[Press release: UK issues call for proposals for Business Innovation Challenge](#)

The UK Government has issued a call for proposals for a Business Innovation Challenge, under its new four-year Kenya catalytic jobs fund.

The Business Innovation Challenge seeks proposals from enterprises who are developing innovative solutions to create jobs, especially for Kenya's youth. Up to five successful enterprises will receive grant funding and technical assistance worth up to KSH 13million (£100,000) each. The call for proposals targets initiatives that are innovative, scalable, sustainable and which can demonstrate substantial impact. The Challenge is focussed on three broad areas: agriculture and manufacturing, the informal sector, and people in marginalised groups and areas. Shortlisted applicants will present their innovations at a pitch event in front of a panel of expert judges. The Kenya Catalytic Jobs Fund is a KSH 650 million (£5m) 4-year programme, which will test and support innovations with the potential to stimulate large-scale job creation. The new Fund was announced by British Prime Minister, Theresa May, during her visit to Kenya in August 2018 as part of a package of announcements aimed at supporting Kenya's young people to achieve their goals.

Speaking about the Kenya Catalytic Job Fund, the British High Commissioner, His Excellency Nic Hailey said:

More than 70 per cent of Kenyans are under the age of 30, and we know that job opportunities are a priority for them. This fund will harness the innovation and energy of Kenya's entrepreneurs to spur job creation and support our mutual prosperity – and I am delighted that it will provide opportunities for marginalised groups, such as people with disabilities.

The call for proposals for the Business Innovation Challenge will close on Monday 8 April 2019 at 11:59 pm EAT. To enter the Business Innovation Challenge, applicants must submit the online application form found at the [Kenya Catalytic Jobs Fund website](#). The Business Innovation Challenge will be implemented by Mercy Corps as part of the fund's pilot phase.

Notes to editors

- The British Prime Minister, Theresa May, announced a package of new initiatives to support African youth during her visit to the continent last year. This included a number of new initiatives in Kenya. For more information, see [press release](#).
- In 2018, the UK Department for International Development and the British

Council co-funded the Next Generation Kenya research which aimed to understand youth attitudes and aspirations, amplify youth voices and, in turn, make a contribution towards improved youth policy. The report found that Kenyan youth are passionate about their country and are eager to contribute to its future, but highlighted job creation as an area of concern. Find the [2018 Next Generation Report](#).

- The Kenya Catalytic Jobs Fund will focus on creating jobs for young people, including marginalised groups. Disability inclusion is a priority for the UK Government. Following the UK and Kenya government co-hosted Global Disability Summit in 2018, governments, including Kenya, made commitments to fully value the contribution people with disabilities can make to the success of their nations. You can see a [full list of the commitments](#) including Kenya, made at the Summit.