



Meet Africa's New Generation of Health Innovators

Dakar, Senegal, 16 September 2021- The [International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations \(IFPMA\)](#) and [Speak Up Africa](#), have announced Conrad Tankou, CEO, [GIC Space](#) (Cameroon); John Mwangi, CEO, [Daktari Media](#) (Kenya) and [Imodoye Abioro](#), CEO, Healthbotics (Nigeria) as the winners of the [Africa Young Innovators for Health Award](#).

The *Africa Young Innovators for Health Award* is IFPMA and Speak Up Africa's flagship programme to provide young entrepreneurs in the healthcare sector an opportunity to develop their business ideas and advance promising solutions to support, equip, protect, and train healthcare workers. Applicants must be 18 to 35 years and be a national or resident of an African country.

The Award winners will take home a total of \$75,000 in financial support and benefit from a business mentorship programme, media training and technical support with intellectual property protection, plus exposure to a renowned network of global health leaders.

First prize winner, Conrad Tankou, CEO of GIC Space developed five proprietary medical technologies, under the GICMED platform, to remotely screen and diagnose women for breast and cervical cancers. The second prize winner, John Mwangi, CEO, Daktari Media invented Daktari Online, an online medical learning platform that offers continuing medical education to healthcare professionals. The third prize winner, Imodoye Abioro, CEO, Healthbotics created an AI-powered Electronic Medical Records system, Mediverse, which is built on the blockchain and allows health workers to input and retrieve patient records with their voice, working with or without Internet access.

First prize winner, Conrad Tankou said *"It is an honour to receive the first-ever Africa Young Innovators for Health Award. This is a true endorsement of our accomplishments and testament to our goal – improving access to screening and diagnosis of breast and cervical cancers for women, even in the most remote areas. With the Award's financial and business mentorship support, we can upgrade our technologies and start scaling our solution much quicker by investing in manufacturing capabilities and building more local partnerships."*

Speak Up Africa's, Founder and Executive Director, Yacine Djibo said *"I continue to be impressed by the dedication, vision and creativity of young people in the healthcare sector. The Award programme is a testament to the potential but also the concrete solutions that already exist to some of the most challenging health issues not only in Africa but around the world."*

Recognising that only one fifth of applications came from women, IFPMA and Speak Up Africa also launched the **Women Innovators Incubator**, an initiative aimed at addressing the gaps in female-led innovation and tackling the additional hurdles women have to face to help take their business ideas from concept to implementation. Female applicants of the Award will be eligible for the programme. Participants will receive financial support, a business mentorship programme, media training and access to an expert network of supporters and partners working across, digital, healthcare and media.

Thomas Cueni, Director-General at IFPMA explained that *"Our three award winners have had an amazing journey and are working on some really important innovations; and the Africa Young Innovators Award will continue in following years to find more new innovation talent. But in future years, we would like to see more young women come forwards. There are significant imbalances between men and women in access to funding, training and skills development, professional networks, and overall participation in competitive environments. The incubator is our response to tackling these inequalities and improving access to opportunities for women"*

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in the health innovation landscape. If we miss the potential of young women innovators, we are losing 50% of Africa's power to innovate.”

The **Africa Young Innovators for Health Award** is supported by [AMREF Health Africa](#), [BroadReach](#), [Ecobank Academy](#), [Forum Galien Africa](#), [IntraHealth International](#), [Microsoft4Afrika](#), [the Organisation Africaine de la Propriété Intellectuelle](#), [the RBM Partnership to End Malaria](#), and [Social Change Factory](#), alongside our media partners: [Africa.com](#), [TéléSud](#), and [SciDev.Net](#).

Notes to Editor

1st Prize Winner: Conrad Tankou, 34, Global Innovation and Creativity Space (GIC Space), Cameroon. GIC Space, through its flagship product, GICMED provides access to breast and cervical cancer care to women in remote and peri-urban areas of sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). With over 400,000 annual deaths recorded in SSA due to inadequate access to screening and diagnosis services, absence of required diagnostic equipment, and scarcity of qualified medical specialists; GIC Space strives to ensure access to quality healthcare services through training frontline health workers in use of their innovative and sustainable med-tech solutions, to remotely screen and diagnose women with real time pathology confirmation at the point of care and thereafter link to onsite treatment through a mobile treatment unit.

Co-founded by, Dr. Tankou, after already launching an e-health venture that has scaled to 5 countries, helping over 200,000 pregnant women. Dr. Tankou was previously on Quartz Africa Innovators top 30 list of pioneers. Previous awards, grants and honors include, best health innovation in Africa at the Next Einstein Forum Global gathering in Kigali, Rwanda.

2nd Prize Winner: John Mwangi, 35, Daktari Media Africa, Kenya. Daktari Media Africa aims to improve the quality healthcare services in Kenya through ensuring health practitioners remain updated in this evolving field of health. Through its flagship product, Daktari Online, Daktari Media Africa provides an avenue through which the community of healthcare professionals (HCPs) can interact, train, publish research papers, attend and earn Continuous Professional Development (CPD) points. The platform – currently reaching 9,000 HCPs - is accredited as the first online continuous professional development (CPD) provider by the Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentists Council (KMPDC). It is accredited by the regulatory bodies for pharmacists, pharmaceutical technologists, and clinical officers (physician assistants). Daktari Media Africa was recently one of five startups that won the 2020 Next Innovation with Japan (NINJA) Business Plan Competition in response to COVID-19 organized by Japan International Cooperation Agency.

3rd Prize Winner: Imodoye Abioro, 27, Healthbotics Limited, Nigeria. Founded six years ago, Healthbotics Limited is committed to solving Africa's perennial healthcare access challenges. Through Mediverse, Dr. Abioro seeks to improve the efficiency of the health worker in delivering quality healthcare and support the health authorities track disease outbreaks faster, even in places where internet has not yet reached. Powered by artificial intelligence, Mediverse is an electronic medical records system that allows health workers to input and retrieve patient records with their voice, working with or without internet access on every device. Mediverse seeks to be *the* fundamental solution upon which we can build a sustainable healthcare infrastructure in Africa and directly improve quality of care with data. Dr. Abioro is a 27 year-old serial innovator and entrepreneur and is not only a medical doctor but also a self-taught IBM Cloud software developer. Dr. Abioro and his team were one of the top 30 finalist of the WHO Africa Innovation Challenge; semi-finalists at the recent 2021 Nigerian Drone Business Competition and the only two-time semifinalist innovation in the history of the CISCO Global Problem Solver Challenge.

Contact

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To learn more about the *Africa Young Innovators for Health Award*, please visit <https://africayounginnovatorsforhealth.org/>

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You can find access to photos of the winners [here](#)

About the Partners



the world. Based in Geneva, IFPMA has official relations with the United Nations and contributes industry expertise to help the global health community find solutions that improve global health.

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SpeakUpAfrica. Speak Up Africa is a policy and advocacy action tank dedicated to catalyzing leadership, enabling policy change, and increasing awareness for sustainable development in Africa. Through their platforms and relationships, and with the help of partners, Speak Up Africa ensures that policy makers meet implementers; that solutions are showcased, and that every sector – from individual citizens and civil society groups to global donors and business leaders – contributes critically to dialogue and strives to form the blueprints for concrete action for public health and sustainable development.

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