



INNOVATION COMPETITION ON DECENTRALISED ENERGY SOLUTIONS FOR ETHIOPIA

As a result of Ethiopia's rapid economic and population growth over the past years, demand for electricity has been steadily increasing. Despite Ethiopia's vast energy potential from diverse sources (hydro, wind, solar, geothermal) and sustained economic growth, more than 50% of the Ethiopian population still lack access to electricity, most of them living in rural areas. Several state-led initiatives have been launched to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 7 in Ethiopia, such as the National Electrification Plan (NEP 2.0) aiming at universal electricity access by the year 2025, of which 35% will be achieved with off-grid solutions.



A woman installing a small solar PV system

Six million rural households without grid connectivity shall be provided access with off-grid electricity systems. Such clean energy solutions provide reliable, cost-effective and sustainable energy for essential services, including healthcare, water and food supply and can help overcome challenges imposed by the current COVID-19 crisis. Apart from this, decentralized energy systems enable the establishment of rural industries. To support this effort, the Ethiopian-German Energy Cooperation Programme is seeking innovative business ideas by Ethiopian students, researchers, entrepreneurs, and start-ups.

What kind of ideas are we looking for?

The Innovation Competition invites early-stage business proposals - from ideation to start-up phase. We are looking for business ideas that contribute to the off-grid ambitions of the Ethiopian National Electrification Plan (NEP 2.0). Submissions should address decentralised electrification approaches that demonstrate unique innovation in terms of feasibility and adaptation, scalability, replicability, affordability and sustainability, in Ethiopia. The lead applicants must be Ethiopian nationals working on an idea/a solution that is based or will be implemented in Ethiopia. Applicants can partner with individuals or companies from Germany or the European Union.

Submissions that propose measures responding to the COVID-19 crisis, and submissions by female innovators are especially encouraged! Winners will receive incubation

support from the Ethiopian-German Energy Cooperation to develop their innovation into a viable business case.

The application and selection process

Applicants must submit their business idea via the submission form on the Ethiopian_German Energy Cooperation website before 28 February 2021. The competition's jury - leading experts from Germany and Ethiopia - will assess the submitted proposals based on the following criteria:

- **Innovation**
- **Economic viability**
- **Gender and Social impacts**
- **Climate change and environmental impact**

In the pre-selection process, the organising team will screen out applicants that do not meet the innovation competition's general criteria.

Ten applicants will be invited to present their business idea during a pitch competition at the competition's final event in July 2021 in Addis Ababa, where the winners will be selected.



The prizes for the finalists and winners

	Training and Coaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on entrepreneurship for all finalists • Presentation & pitch coaching for all finalists
	Exposure to international networks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linkages with senior experts in Ethiopia and Germany • Participation at international energy conferences
	Incubation support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring on business plan development • Facilitation of seed funding and project scale up through the German-Ethiopian Energy Cooperation
	Award <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All finalists will receive a digital award and certificate • Top three winners and best pitch will receive a monetary prize

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Registered offices
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Project: Bilateral Energy Partnerships in Developing and Emerging Countries
Contact: Ethiopian-German Energy Cooperation
Gurd Sholla, CMC Road
P.O.Box: 12994
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Florian Fritzsche
Head of Secretariat
Email: energy-cooperation-et@giz.de
Website: www.energy-cooperation-et.com
Tel.: +251 116 145 10 20

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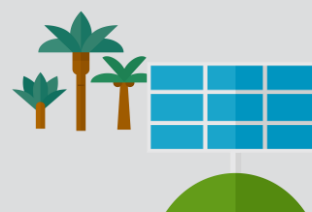
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Cross-cutting issues



Gender equality

Gender equality will be promoted throughout the competition design and implementation. Gender equality can already be addressed in the call for proposals by encouraging female applications, as well as gender-sensitive proposals. Furthermore, a gender-balanced experts' jury should be ensured; and female applications might be given preference with applications of equal quality.

Social and environmental sustainability

Social and environmental aspects are included as assessment criteria and the "do-no-harm" principle applied in the possible realisation of supported pilot projects. Furthermore, only proposals promoting low-carbon energy systems will be considered. In view of the current situation, business ideas that propose measures responding to COVID-19 will receive specific attention.

Digitalisation

Projects including innovations in digitalisation of the Ethiopian energy sector will be encouraged in the call for proposals and digital technologies will be applied throughout the innovation competition, e.g. through the online application and networking platform, the video pitch, and digital voting opportunity for the audience via

Young Journalists Programme

The Innovation Competition will be complemented with a "Young Journalists (YJ) Programme". This programme will have the following benefits:

- Increased public awareness for the competition
- Visibility for the finalists in Ethiopian media
- Better awareness by young journalists on clean energy issues in Ethiopia

The following process will be applied for the YJ:

1. Launch a call for applications for YJ in Ethiopia to cover the innovation competition
2. Select five YJ, and brief them on the competition and YJ programme
3. Selected YJ disseminate the competition's call for proposals through their networks
4. The YJ visit the selected finalists and report on their projects by creating and publishing news articles, videos, blog entries, social media posts
5. YJ join and cover the final event
6. YJ receive a gift of appreciation, as well as visibility on the German-Ethiopia Energy Cooperation website