

# Google launches second Google News Initiative Innovation Challenge in Africa, Middle East, Turkey

Google announced the second Google News Initiative (GNI) Innovation Challenge in Africa, the Middle East and Turkey with an open call for projects that increase reader engagement and explore new business models for media.



[Google-africa.blogspot.com](http://Google-africa.blogspot.com)

The first GNI Innovation Challenge saw 21 projects in 13 countries receive funding last year. Awardees were from Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Turkey and the UAE.

In South Africa, Daily Maverick developed a “relevancy engine” for small and medium publishers to help them aggregate better reader insights to increase relevancy and increase subscriptions. Ringier Africa Digital Publishing in Nigeria was awarded funding to increase personalisation across its platform using a blend of prediction, recommendation and local information pages to increase user engagement. Kenyan awardee Africa Uncensored is aggregating news from members of the public to produce at scale.

Applications open today and run until 12 April 2021. Established publishers, online-only players, news startups, publisher consortia and local industry associations are eligible to apply. Interested organisations can apply [here](#).

“The selected projects will be funded up to \$150,000, and up to 70% of the total project cost,” says Ludovic Blecher, head of innovation, GNI. “Funding is not available for editorial projects, but should instead be focused on reader engagement and exploring new business models. Google does not take any equity or IP in any projects or submissions. We are looking forward to seeing new ideas, projects and big bets come out of the Middle East, Turkey and Africa, a region rich with talent, potential and opportunity!”

Applications must be made via the website and are open until Monday, 12 April at 23:59 GMT. There will be an online town hall on 3 March at 13.00 GMT with a live presentation on how to apply, with an opportunity to ask questions to the GNI team.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>