East Africa TV show to inspire African entrepreneurs

By Walter Wafula

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Project Inspire Africa, a reality television show and competition, has been unveiled in East Africa with the aim of engineering successful entrepreneurship in the region. The initiative by Inspire Africa aims at building entrepreneurship in East Africa through identifying the best business minds and rewarding them with startup capital.



Inspire Africa is a human capital development organisation that has teamed up with several television stations in East Africa to offer US$50,000 as a reward for the best three business ideas in the Project Inspire Africa season one.

The money will be awarded to the best contestant in the TV show that is expected to attract 30 finalists out of 50,000 applicants from across East Africa. The show is open to youth above 18 years old with innovative business ideas, according to guidelines issued to the applicants last week.

Project Inspire will be telecast on NTV in Uganda and other major channels in East Africa. According to Nelson Tugume, executive director of Inspire Africa, Project Inspire will be a an eviction-based TV show, wherein locally selected and trained entrepreneurship candidates will compete for the title of the CEO's Best Entrepreneurial Mind in the East Africa Community region.

Scheduled for July

Last week, organisers of the competition invited entrepreneurs in East Africa to participate in the competition requiring contestants to submit their applications by 30 June 2011. The show is scheduled to starting airing on Inspire Africa partner television stations this July.

The television show will closely follow the launch and suspension of another dubbed "Who Wants To Be a Millionaire?" which aired for about one month in Uganda before it was called off by the sponsor - Uganda Telecom Limited.

But the Inspire Africa project is just one of many shows that have been launched in Uganda to boost entrepreneurship

among the youth. Others that have been launched in the past include; the annual Young Achievers Awards, Start Your Business Competition, which is supported by the Private Sector Foundation Uganda, as well as Show Me the Money, a one-off project that was sponsored by the Commonwealth Business Council and the *Daily Monitor*.

These competitions have been held with the aim of supporting young entrepreneurs with the most innovative business ideas, with the core objective of helping the youth to turn their ideas into real businesses with financial support.

While the past four projects have required entrepreneurs to participate without paying fees for anything, Inspire Africa requires contestants to pay US$10 as registration fees to take part in the game. The fee might be an impediment to many young entrepreneurs who may be willing to participate in the challenge but view it as an initiative aimed at yielding US$500,000 from their hard-earned savings.

ABOUT WALTER WAFULA

Walter Wafula is a seasoned journalist who has reported for the *Daily Monitor* newspaper in Kampala-Uganda. He is also a contributor on Bizcommunity.com website. Email Walter at wafwalt@yahoo.com and connect on LinkedIn.

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