

Calling all clean technology entrepreneurs: Deadline for applications looms

South Africa's brightest minds and boldest entrepreneurs with a heart for clean technology innovation have less than two weeks to submit their applications for the Global Cleantech Innovation Programme in South Africa ([GCIP-SA](#)) for small, medium and micro-sized enterprises (SMMEs).

The GCIP was initiated by Cleantech Global and introduced to South Africa by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in 2011. Other partners include the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) as the local host and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as the key funder.

Mr Barlow Manilal, TIA CEO, says, "The GCIP is South Africa's largest 'cleantech accelerator' and offers a unique competition-based approach to identify innovative SMMEs. We are calling on all entrepreneurs whose technology innovations support climate change mitigation and adaptation to participate in this programme.

"Globally, we are facing increasing pressure to produce and consume more sustainably. We believe that, as was the case with the information technology revolution, the majority of clean technology innovation will come from the entrepreneurial community".

"The GCIP is an excellent global vehicle to find, foster and connect the most promising entrepreneurs focusing on tackling environmental and economic challenges in the categories of energy, efficiency, renewable energy, waste beneficiation, water efficiency and green buildings.

"Selected entrepreneurs are not just left to fend for themselves. The programme combines a competition and a business accelerator curriculum where SMMEs and start-ups are trained, mentored and assessed on their business models, investor pitches, communication and financial skills to improve their chances of success in the market."

The closing date for applications is 29 April 2016. The semi-finalist teams will be announced on 19 May 2016 and will be brought together to participate in the GCIP-SA National Academy at the end of May 2016. They will also have access to webinars and mentoring as well as business clinics with subject matter experts in each area of business. They will receive help in composing an investor pitch, which will be delivered in Round 2 where the finalists will be selected.

The year's programme will culminate in a GCIP-SA gala awards event in October and the winner of the programme will, apart from financial benefits and ongoing business advisory support, also receive a trip to Silicon Valley in California, US, to participate in the Cleantech Open Global Forum in February 2017.

The GCIP South African 2015 winner was Khaya Power (now *ekasi.energy*) for its development of a micro-gasifier stove with an electrically driven fan, which is smoke free and burns biomass efficiently. The innovation targets households in developing countries that have inadequate, unreliable or no access to grid supplied power. The company went on to take the ultimate honours as overall global winner in Silicon Valley in November 2015.

Dave Lello, CEO of *ekasi.energy*, comments, ““I want to recognise the contribution that the Global Cleantech Innovation Programme has made. Without the structured knowledge-sharing about entrepreneurship; our ideas would still be trapped in our heads. The programme helped us to understand and articulate our dreams more concretely.”

Manilal concludes, “This is an opportunity not to be missed. Not only do entrepreneurs in this field benefit, but South Africa and other countries are also taking up their responsibility to address climate change challenges. The GCIP community is vibrant – once a Cleantech entrepreneur, always a Cleantech entrepreneur.”

For information on how to enter: <http://southafrica.cleantechopen.org/>

Ends.

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