

Be the next change-maker with the Nation Builder Social Innovation Challenge

Issued by [Nation Builder](#)

29 Mar 2018

In partnership with LaunchLab and the Mergon Group

Nation Builder, together with the Stellenbosch University LaunchLab and the Mergon Group, is inviting business pitches for their inaugural Social Innovation Challenge. The competition aims to identify and support South Africa's social entrepreneurs, with an opportunity to win a share of R150,000 seed capital.



Entrepreneurs with a self-sustainable business idea – no matter how simple or small – that addresses particular social issues, positively impacts communities, empowers the disadvantaged, or has the potential to solve local problems in innovative ways, are invited to enter the Social Innovation Challenge.

Ten finalists will receive exposure to a broader network of business investors at the final pitching event, which will be hosted by LaunchLab in Stellenbosch on 13 June 2018. Three final winners will receive their portion of R150,000 funding capital, as well as business support from LaunchLab.

In addition to social innovation specialists, media and social development experts, the judging panel will consist of astute business leaders who have successfully walked the entrepreneurship journey.

“Social entrepreneurs are those who see social challenges as opportunities, devise sustainable business solutions to meet those needs, and positively impact many South Africans in the process,” says Keri-Leigh MacDonald, executive director of Nation Builder, an organisation that supports businesses in leading social change in South Africa. “Social entrepreneurs are the next wave of change-makers and social reformers. Nation Builder wants to support and showcase some of these great and emerging homegrown social businesses as a means to challenge us all to think differently when addressing our local social challenges,” she adds.

According to Brandon Paschal, head of incubation at LaunchLab, most of the startups that the LaunchLab currently work with already have a strong social conscience. “We have worked with many great small businesses in sectors such as mental health, financial inclusion, job creation, empowerment, and sustainability. We’re excited for them to have this platform with Nation Builder and the broader network of great socially responsible companies. It is a wonderful way for them to gain more exposure, but also to work with like-minded partners that can help take their businesses forward, without compromising on their social conscience and the greater purpose of their business.”

The winning entrepreneur and their business idea will also be showcased at Nation Builder's *In Good Company* conference in Gauteng in August 2018. In addition, they will receive exposure through the various Nation Builder, Mergon and LaunchLab media channels.

“The societal benefits from these enterprises can bring about increased economic activity and opportunities for many more South Africans, while playing a pivotal role in breaking the cycles of social ills that many people are facing daily. The Nation Builder Social Innovation Challenge is a first step in fuelling and highlighting local social innovation solutions,” says Pieter Faure, CEO of Mergon.

Submission requirements: Submit a three-minute video (cell phone footage can be submitted too) of yourself explaining your business idea with your entry form which can be found on the [LaunchLab website](#):

<http://www.launchlab.co.za/nationbuilder2018>.

Pitches (video entries) need to focus on providing the following information:

1. Provide a brief summary of the business/social innovation idea and its history.
2. What is the particular social issue that the business idea aims to address?
3. How does the business idea solve or address the social issue?
4. Explain how the business intends to make money and be sustainable, while clearly describing the target market or customer profile.
5. What key milestones have been achieved within the venture already?
6. What is the strategy to grow the business and scale the social impact?
7. Anything else that the panel needs to know?

Submissions [opened on 14 March](#), and the deadline for online submission entries is **11 May 2018**. The top ten finalists will be notified by the end of May. Finalists' transport to and accommodation in Stellenbosch for two nights will be provided.

LaunchLab's terms and conditions apply, and are available to download here:

<https://launchlab.co.za/innovationchallenges/competition-terms-conditions/>.

The three winning pitches will be announced at the pitching event on Wednesday, 13 June 2018. The panellists' decision is final.

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