

GITEX leads global tech communities to Africa for inaugural GITEX AFRICA in Marrakech next year

GITEX GLOBAL has announced that it will be embarking on a new journey into Africa - the world's next biggest digital economy - leveraging its ability to forge connections between tech innovators, governments, startups, investors and global innovation hubs, to accelerate, collaborate, and explore new ventures in the world's rising tech continent.

The inaugural *GITEX AFRICA* will take place from 31 May-2 June 2023 in Marrakech, Morocco, focussing the tech world's attention to the vast potential of the globe's youngest continent, and shaping the vision for a more connected, sustainable, inclusive, and tech-driven digital economy. The launch of the *GITEX* brand into Africa will see its ethos, rationale and open spirit unleashed into this new frontier.

GITEX AFRICA has been launched in partnership with the Digital Development Agency (ADD), a strategic public entity leading the Moroccan government's digital transformation agenda under the authority of the Moroccan Ministry of Digital Transition and Administration Reform. This is GITEX's first overseas venture, and the announcement follows its success at GITEX GLOBAL 2022 at

the Dubai World Trade Centre where more than 5,000 exhibitors from 90 countries were present.

© GITEX (L-R) Pardon Mujakachi, Mohammed Drissi Melyani, Trixie LohMirmand, Maryam Al Mehairi and Ramez El-Serafy

Trixie LohMirmand, organiser of GITEX commented: “The time for Africa is now. Against a stuttering world tech market, Africa has risen and punched well above its weight recently, with big tech investments rocketing and start-ups funding recording the best year ever in 2021 at six times over the global average.”

Africa’s tech potential

With an increasingly low average age in Africa, digital is no longer a choice but a necessity and the “leap-frog” advances in banking and telecoms that have already happened bode well for other industries and continued rapid innovation.

Tech-friendly policies are beginning to filter into the continent, and African investment is gathering momentum. Analysts predict the tech market is on track to scale from \$115B to \$712B by 2050, while growth in start-up funding is six times higher than anywhere. In only six years, Africa went from zero to seven unicorns, with four all born last year.

African talent development is also at its fastest pace yet. Microsoft and Google are already setting up billion-dollar innovation and talent hubs in Africa, while the number of people with internet access has grown to 522.8 million (40% of Africans).

Meanwhile, a young population when coupled with the continent’s rapid urbanisation is also accelerating digital growth: 70% of the Sub-Saharan African population are under 30 years of age and 45% of Africans are set to live in cities by 2025.

What this means for the Global tech community

The impact on Morocco’s digital economy (and business tourism) will be dramatic and instant and will help to further enhance its vibrant emerging local ecosystem. More widely the impact will be felt across the continent from Nigeria to Rwanda and with promising economical benefit for the rest of the

world. GITEX has a long history of making strong business connections in the Middle East and showcasing innovation across nations, with this new adventure into Africa, the connections will only get stronger, wider and more accessible for more innovators, stakeholders and business leaders.

Article by DAVID JOHNSON