



Africa Startup
Ecosystem Builders
Summit & Awards



**Three Years of Impact: Transforming
Africa's Startup Ecosystems –**

The Africa Startup Ecosystem Builders Summit and Awards (ASEB) 2024 Impact Report

**OCTOBER 1-4, 2024
ACCRA, GHANA**



Co-organized By :





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Foreword

Message from the Founder & Convener: McKevin Ayaba

It began with a question: *What if Africa's startup ecosystems could become the engine of the continent's economic transformation?* At the heart of this vision lies the idea of ecosystem building—not merely as a strategy, but as a powerful tool for economic development. Ecosystem building connects people, ideas, and resources, creating environments where innovation thrives, businesses grow, and communities prosper.

The **Africa Startup Ecosystem Builders Summit and Awards (ASEB)** was born from this belief. Since its inception in 2021, ASEB has been more than an event—it has been a movement dedicated to celebrating and empowering the unsung heroes of Africa's entrepreneurial journey: ecosystem builders. These individuals and organizations are the architects of innovation, creating pathways for entrepreneurs to succeed and enabling the growth of resilient communities.

This year, in Accra, Ghana, ASEB celebrated its third edition with over 200 participants from over 35 countries from October 1-4, 2024. The theme, **"Inclusive Entrepreneurship: Designing Africa's Startup Ecosystem on Diversity & Inclusion,"** reflected the spirit of the event—a call to action for a future where no one is left behind.



Foreword Continues

Stories That Transcend Borders

ASEB 2024 brought together an extraordinary mix of stakeholders, including a delegation from Mayotte led by **Haouthani Massoundi of Mayotte In Tech**, whose insights into cross-border collaboration electrified the room. Haouthani reminded us that ecosystem building transcends geography. It's about connecting smaller, emerging ecosystems with established ones, creating a ripple effect of growth and innovation across Africa.

But the story doesn't stop there. ASEB is about the people who transform ecosystems. Take **Kekeli Yaw Dornkenoo**, a young Ghanaian making waves with his innovative contributions to ecosystem building. Kekeli joined the ranks of changemakers like **Rym Jarou from Smart Africa**, who is driving digital transformation across the continent, and Dr. Alphonsine Mukayisenga, whose work at UR-CAVM Envisage Youth Agribusiness Incubator at the University of Rwanda promotes inclusive innovation. These individuals embody the spirit of ASEB—a commitment to creating opportunities and breaking barriers.

Organizations like **Fetola** continue to uplift underserved entrepreneurs, while **Indalo Inclusive** advocates for sustainable business practices. Even storytellers like **Gerald Black from Discovering New Tech Destinations Across Africa** amplify the voices of African entrepreneurs, ensuring their narratives are heard far and wide.



Foreword Continues

A Movement Built on Partnerships

ASEB 2024 was a collaborative effort made possible by its co-organizers:

Setup A Startup and **Orange Corners**.

- **Setup A Startup**, the home of ASEB, is a pioneering organization dedicated to empowering ecosystem builders, fostering cross-border partnerships, and championing entrepreneurship as a driver of economic growth.
- **Orange Corners**, a Dutch initiative, is renowned for nurturing young entrepreneurs across Africa. Its focus on training, mentorship, and funding aligns perfectly with ASEB's mission to create opportunities and reduce barriers for entrepreneurs.

This collaboration provided the foundation for ASEB's success, ensuring that every aspect of the summit—from its panels to its awards—reflected a commitment to inclusivity and innovation.

But the story would not be complete without the generous support of our sponsors:

- **Brand South Africa**, a steadfast believer in Africa's innovation potential.
- **Fidelity Bank**, whose commitment to financial inclusion mirrors ASEB's dedication to inclusivity.
- **Growth Africa**, a powerhouse in empowering startups to scale and succeed.



Foreword Continues

A Movement Built on Partnerships

Our ecosystem partners were equally instrumental in bringing this vision to life:

- **UVU Africa**, driving knowledge-sharing across borders.
- **NEIP (National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme)**, nurturing Ghana's entrepreneurial talent.
- **Growthwheel South Africa**, equipping entrepreneurs with tools to grow and scale.
- **ASENTI Africa**, amplifying emerging market voices.
- **Ghana Digital Innovation Week**, fostering collaboration within Ghana's tech landscape.
- **Ennovate Bllck**, redefining creative spaces.
- **XConnect**, co-hosting the Ecosystem Mixer, which brought people together in an atmosphere of celebration and connection.
- **Synertium**, for its commitment to driving measurable impact in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Every partnership, every collaboration, every contribution became a building block in the ASEB story.



Foreword Continues

Beyond Numbers: Stories of Impact

ASEB 2024 was remarkable not just for the numbers — **2,089 nominations**, **45 winners**, **30 award categories**, and **panel discussions**, **workshops**, and **keynotes** — but for the connections forged and the communities strengthened. It was about moments like these:

- Delegates from different countries exchanging ideas during a breakout session.
- Delegates gaining invaluable insights during workshops facilitated by industry experts.
- The shared joy of celebrating unsung heroes at the **ASEB Awards Gala**.
- Participants were immersed in Ghana's dynamic innovation ecosystem through visits to leading entrepreneurial hubs



Foreword Continues

Looking Ahead: An Invitation to Join the Movement

As I reflect on ASEB 2024, one thing is clear: the power of this movement lies in the collective. Every sponsor, partner, ecosystem builder, and participant brought something unique to the table. Together, we are proving that ecosystem building is not just about startups—it's about creating a legacy of innovation, resilience, and prosperity.

To those hearing about the Africa Startup Ecosystem Builders Summit & Awards (ASEB) for the first time, this is your invitation. Whether you are a sponsor looking to amplify your impact, a partner eager to collaborate, or an ecosystem builder ready to make a difference, ASEB is your platform. It is your opportunity to be part of a story that is transforming Africa, one ecosystem at a time.

McKevin Ayaba

Founder & Convener, Africa Startup Ecosystem Builders Summit & Awards
Founder & CEO of Setup A Startup



To our sponsors, partners, speakers, and participants—thank you for making ASEB 2024 an unforgettable experience. Your belief in the power of ecosystem building is what drives this movement. To every entrepreneur, innovator, and ecosystem builder: this is your story. Let's continue writing it together.

ASEB 2025 is on the horizon, and the journey continues. Together, we will build a collaborative, inclusive, and thriving ecosystem that drives Africa's economic transformation. Join us in shaping the future of entrepreneurship on this great continent. With gratitude and determination,

About the Africa Startup Ecosystem Builders Summit and Awards (ASEB)

Over the past three years, the **Africa Startup Ecosystem Builders Summit and Awards (ASEB)** has emerged as a cornerstone of Africa's entrepreneurial transformation. Startups, recognized globally as the engines of innovation and economic growth, rely heavily on the strength of their surrounding ecosystems. Without strategic investment in these ecosystems, regions risk stagnation, unable to harness the potential of technological advancements and entrepreneurial activity.

In response to this urgent need, ASEB has championed a pioneering approach to economic development: **entrepreneurial ecosystem building**. This methodology focuses on creating thriving environments that empower entrepreneurs, foster collaboration, and drive inclusive growth. At its heart, ASEB is not only about advancing ecosystem development but also about honoring the often-overlooked heroes of this work — the **ecosystem builders** who dedicate themselves to nurturing entrepreneurial communities.

Since its launch, ASEB has established itself as a transformative platform for ecosystem building across the continent. Each year, the summit convenes a diverse group of community builders, economic developers, program managers, and innovators from across Africa. Through its dynamic sessions and prestigious awards, ASEB has amplified the voices of ecosystem enablers, professionalized the discipline of ecosystem building, and inspired action to drive sustainable growth.

The impact of ASEB over the past three years is undeniable. By raising awareness, fostering collaboration, and celebrating excellence, ASEB has become a beacon of innovation and resilience. It has empowered regions to embrace the transformative power of startups and equipped them to harness the potential of vibrant ecosystems for the benefit of their communities. Through ASEB, the foundation has been laid for a thriving, inclusive, and dynamic entrepreneurial future for Africa.



Mission and Vision Statement of ASEB

✓ Mission Statement

The **Africa Startup Ecosystem Builders Summit and Awards (ASEB)** is dedicated to advancing ecosystem building as a transformative approach to economic development across Africa. ASEB's mission is to empower the unsung heroes of the entrepreneurial ecosystem—ecosystem builders—by fostering collaboration, celebrating their contributions, and creating platforms that support the growth and sustainability of startups. ASEB strives to promote inclusivity, diversity, and resilience in entrepreneurial ecosystems, driving innovation and uplifting communities.

✓ Vision Statement

To build a unified, inclusive, and sustainable African startup ecosystem that inspires economic transformation, fosters collaboration across borders, and creates opportunities for all. ASEB envisions a continent where innovation thrives, entrepreneurs succeed, and ecosystem builders are celebrated as catalysts of change, paving the way for a brighter future for Africa. By aligning its mission and vision, ASEB serves as a beacon for ecosystem builders and partners committed to creating a thriving entrepreneurial landscape across Africa.



ASEB 2024, Accra, Ghana: Why Ghana?

Every journey has milestones that mark its growth, and the **Africa Startup Ecosystem Builders Summit and Awards (ASEB)** is no exception. When ASEB was launched in **2022 in Johannesburg, South Africa**, it was more than an event—it was a bold declaration of intent. It was the beginning of a movement that aimed to unify and empower Africa’s ecosystem builders. In Johannesburg, the **Southern Africa** region laid the foundation for a collaborative and inclusive approach to entrepreneurship. It was the birthplace of a vision to connect ecosystem builders across the continent.

By 2023, ASEB’s journey took it to **Nairobi, Kenya**, a city brimming with entrepreneurial energy. Here, the **Eastern Africa** region embraced ASEB, creating bridges across diverse ecosystems and sparking new ideas for cross-regional collaboration. Nairobi was alive with the stories of innovation and resilience, proof of what happens when ecosystem builders come together to share, celebrate, and collaborate.

In **2024**, it was time for **Western Africa** to take center stage. **Accra, Ghana**, stood out—not just for its reputation as a hub of creativity and innovation, but for the vibrant entrepreneurial spirit that flows through the city. Accra has long been a leader in **West Africa’s startup ecosystem**, with its dynamic tech hubs, inclusive startup initiatives, and a culture of collaboration that resonates with ASEB’s mission. It is a city where entrepreneurs don’t just dream—they build.

Choosing Ghana was more than a strategic decision—it was a celebration of a region that has been instrumental in driving Africa’s entrepreneurial narrative. Accra became the canvas on which ASEB’s next chapter would be written. It provided the perfect backdrop for a gathering of over **200 participants from 35 countries**, over days, all united by a shared purpose: to shape the future of Africa’s entrepreneurial ecosystem.

As delegates arrived, the excitement was palpable. This wasn’t just another summit; it was a moment to connect, to share, and to dream together. Over four days, Accra transformed into a space where stories were told, partnerships were forged, and the power of ecosystem building came alive. The stage was set for an unforgettable experience, and ASEB 2024 did not disappoint.



Four Days of Immersion and Impact

Day 1: Pre-Event and ASENTI Summit Collaboration

ASEB 2024 began with a vibrant and collaborative engagement at the **African Summit on Entrepreneurship and Innovation (ASENTI)**, a Pan-African annual forum that convened over 200 delegates and 30+ speakers. Hosted at the **Ghana-India Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence in ICT**, the summit revolved around the theme “**Africa Innovating for a Sustainable Future and Beyond.**” This pre-summit collaboration set the stage for meaningful discussions on the future of entrepreneurship and innovation across the continent.

A pivotal moment of the day was **McKevin Ayaba**, ASEB’s Founder and Convener, participating as a panelist in the session titled “**Innovative Ecosystem Enablers.**” With his characteristic passion and insight, McKevin spoke on the importance of fostering collaboration as the cornerstone of thriving ecosystems. He encouraged ASEB attendees to use the platform to forge connections, exchange ideas, and create impactful partnerships that extend across borders.

The day’s discussions and networking activities created a fertile ground for meaningful interactions. Delegates engaged deeply with one another, exploring Ghana’s dynamic innovation landscape and exchanging strategies for ecosystem building. The energy of the ASENTI Summit not only ignited fresh ideas but also established a strong sense of community among participants.



Four Days of Immersion and Impact

Day 2: ASEB Summit

The second day of **ASEB 2024** was a day of inspiration, collaboration, and impactful dialogue, officially marking the opening of the **Africa Startup Ecosystem Builders Summit and Awards (ASEB)** as part of the **Ghana Digital Innovation Week (GDIW)**. Delegates from across Africa and beyond gathered in Accra to embark on a journey of connection and transformation.

The day began with a compelling keynote address by the Founder and Convener of ASEB. With passion and purpose, McKevin introduced ASEB as not merely an event but a solution — a platform designed to empower ecosystem builders, the unsung heroes of Africa's entrepreneurial journey.



Four Days of Immersion and Impact

Day 2: ASEB Summit

McKevin outlined the summit's mission to foster collaboration, celebrate ecosystem builders, and drive actionable change across Africa. Highlighting the significance of partnering with GDIW, he emphasized, "This partnership showcases the power of collective action, demonstrating how local ecosystems can serve as models for innovation and growth across the continent."

The opening address touched on key themes:

- **The Heart of ASEB – The ASEB Awards:** Celebrating the individuals and organizations that drive entrepreneurial growth across the continent.
- **Key Milestones and Success Stories:** Reflecting on ASEB's journey from Johannesburg to Nairobi and now Accra, showcasing its impact in empowering ecosystem builders and startups.
- **The Future of Ecosystem Building:** A roadmap for expanding ASEB's reach, fostering inclusivity, and strengthening collaboration across Africa's regions.



Panel Discussion: “Fostering Entrepreneurial Growth through Regional and Cross-Border Collaboration”

The momentum of the morning continued with a thought-provoking panel discussion that brought together some of Africa’s most influential voices in ecosystem building. Moderated by **Marietjie Engelbrecht**, Head of Staff at **UVU Africa** and ASEB Advisory Board Member from South Africa, the panel explored how regional and cross-border collaboration can unlock new opportunities for entrepreneurs across the continent.

The panel featured an impressive lineup of experts:

- **Dr. Alphonsine Mukayisenga Dushimimana** (Rwanda): A senior professional in career and entrepreneurship development at the University of Rwanda as one of the Breakout Room Leader for Francophone delegates.
- **Sherif Ghali** (Ghana): Founder & CEO of the Ghana Chamber of Young Entrepreneurs, emphasizing Ghana’s role as a bridge for cross-border entrepreneurial efforts in West Africa.
- **Zipho Zwane** (South Africa): Portfolio Manager of International Partnerships at the Technology Innovation Agency, discussing the role of partnerships in scaling innovation.
- **Calvin Jodisi** (Kenya): Founder and CEO of ASENTI AFRICA, sharing experiences on regional collaboration to strengthen entrepreneurial ecosystems.
- **Bekere Amassoma** (Nigeria): Oracle Academy Program Manager for Southern Africa.



Discussions revolved around:

- The value of regional partnerships in creating scalable ecosystems.
- Harmonizing policies to support cross-border entrepreneurial efforts.
- Leveraging Africa's diverse strengths to address common challenges.

The panel left delegates with actionable insights and a renewed commitment to fostering collaborative ecosystems across the continent.

Tech Ecosystem Mixer: Building Connections That Matter

As the sun set over Accra, Day 2 concluded with an electrifying **Tech Ecosystem Mixer**, co-hosted by **ASEB** and **XConnect Africa**, and supported by **Impact Hub Accra**, which served as the host venue. The mixer offered an informal yet impactful setting for delegates to connect, share ideas, and explore partnerships.

Entrepreneurs, investors, ecosystem enablers, and policymakers gathered to forge new relationships and strengthen existing ones. The evening was a testament to ASEB's mission to build networks that transcend borders, enabling meaningful collaboration among Africa's ecosystem builders.

The mixer wasn't just an end to Day 2; it was a celebration of the connections made, the conversations sparked, and the shared commitment to shaping the future of Africa's entrepreneurial landscape.



A Day of Purpose and Progress

Day 2 of **ASEB 2024** was a powerful reminder of the potential within Africa's entrepreneurial ecosystems. From **McKevin Ayaba's** inspiring keynote to the engaging panel discussion and the vibrant networking mixer, the day embodied ASEB's core mission: to empower, connect, and transform.

For those present, it was a day of meaningful engagement and connection. For those reading the story, it offers a glimpse into the collective effort shaping Africa's entrepreneurial future — one conversation, one collaboration, and one celebration at a time.



Day 3: Designing Inclusive Ecosystem Strategies

The third day of **ASEB 2024** was dedicated to exploring how inclusivity and diversity can shape thriving entrepreneurial ecosystems across Africa. Held under the theme “**Designing Inclusive Ecosystem Strategies**,” the day offered participants a series of powerful discussions, workshops, and keynotes that emphasized the importance of collaboration and innovation in creating equitable opportunities for all.

The day began with a **welcome note** by the Founder and Convener of ASEB. McKevin reflected on the highlights of Day 2, setting the stage for the day's focus on fostering inclusion within Africa's entrepreneurial ecosystems. He outlined the importance of ensuring that diverse voices are represented in the ecosystem-building process, calling on attendees to embrace diversity as a driver of innovation and growth.



Keynote Speech: Diversity as a Cornerstone of Inclusive Entrepreneurship

Speaker: Franklin Owusu-Karikari, Director of Business Support & Policy, NEIP (Ghana)

The day's first keynote was delivered by **Franklin Owusu-Karikari**, who highlighted how diversity fuels innovation and drives economic growth. He explored strategies for ensuring underrepresented voices are heard and shared actionable approaches for ecosystem builders to create inclusive environments. His message resonated deeply with the audience, emphasizing the transformative potential of collaboration across cultures, genders, and regions.

Panel Discussion: Spotlight on Ghana's Inclusive Startup Ecosystem

Moderator: Calvin Jodisi, Founder and CEO of ASENTI Africa (Kenya)

Panelists:

- **Amma Gyampo**, Cofounder and Director of Strategy ScaleUP Africa (Ghana)
- **Daniel Kwabena Owusu**, Country Youth Lead, World Bank Y2Y Community (Ghana)
- **Evans Ofori Gyebi**, Innovate BLCK Hub (Ghana)
- **Gerhard Malah**, Head of Projects, MEST Africa (Ghana)

This panel used Ghana's thriving ecosystem as a case study to showcase how policies, partnerships, and initiatives have fostered inclusivity. The discussion highlighted the successes and challenges faced in building a collaborative entrepreneurial environment, offering valuable lessons for other African nations.



Spotlight on Mayotte's Emerging Inclusive Ecosystem

Fireside Chat: Haouthani Massoundi, Director of Mayotte in Tech

In a captivating fireside chat, **Haouthani Massoundi** shared the story of Mayotte's emerging startup ecosystem. She discussed how smaller ecosystems can leverage diversity and collaboration to grow and integrate into broader regional ecosystems, providing inspiration for participants from underserved regions.

Panel Discussion: Empowering Diverse Entrepreneurs from Underserved Communities

Moderator: Kriston Wilson

Panelists:

- **Lungile Maile**, Founder of Nubians Smart (South Africa)
- **Ngumih Fien**, Founder of Bitter Kola (Cameroon)
- **Fiona Komugish**, Cofounder of Imagine Her (Uganda)
- **Vanessa Kisowile**, Cofounder & Executive Director of SheFound (Tanzania)

This session focused on the unique challenges faced by entrepreneurs from underserved communities. Panelists shared their success stories and explored strategies for ecosystem builders to support and empower diverse entrepreneurs. The discussion highlighted how inclusivity in ecosystem design leads to richer, more innovative entrepreneurial outcomes.



Workshop: Mapping Inclusive Ecosystems

Facilitator: **Eugene Eluerkeh**, Senior Growth Advisor/Catalyst at GrowthAfrica (Ghana)

Breakout Rooms Leader: **Marietjie Engelbrecht**, Chief of Staff at UVU Africa and **Dr. Alphonsine Mukayisenga Dushimimana**, University of Rwanda In this hands-on workshop, participants worked collaboratively to map inclusive startup ecosystems. They identified key stakeholders, resources, and collaboration opportunities, gaining practical tools to develop strategies for building inclusive and collaborative entrepreneurial environments in their communities.

Panel Discussion: Fostering Collaboration to Bridge the Investment Readiness Gap

Moderator: McKevin Ayaba

Panelists:

- **Rest Kanju**, Executive Director at Indalo Inclusive (South Africa)
- **Jöel Tembo**, Managing Director of Kivu Entrepreneurs (DRC)
- **Marietjie Engelbrecht**, Group Chief of Staff at UVU Africa (South Africa)
- **Oge Nnaife**, Executive Director of Innovation Support Network (ISN) Hubs (Nigeria)

The final panel of the day addressed the challenges of investment readiness for diverse startups. Panelists shared strategies for collaboration and partnerships that help entrepreneurs become investment-ready, emphasizing the role of ecosystem builders in fostering an inclusive investment landscape.



A Day of Inspiration and Collaboration

Day 3 of ASEB 2024 was a testament to the transformative power of inclusion and diversity. From inspiring keynotes to engaging panels and hands-on workshops, the day provided attendees with practical tools, actionable insights, and meaningful connections to drive inclusive ecosystem building. It was a day that not only celebrated Africa's diversity but also empowered participants to harness it as a cornerstone for innovation and growth.

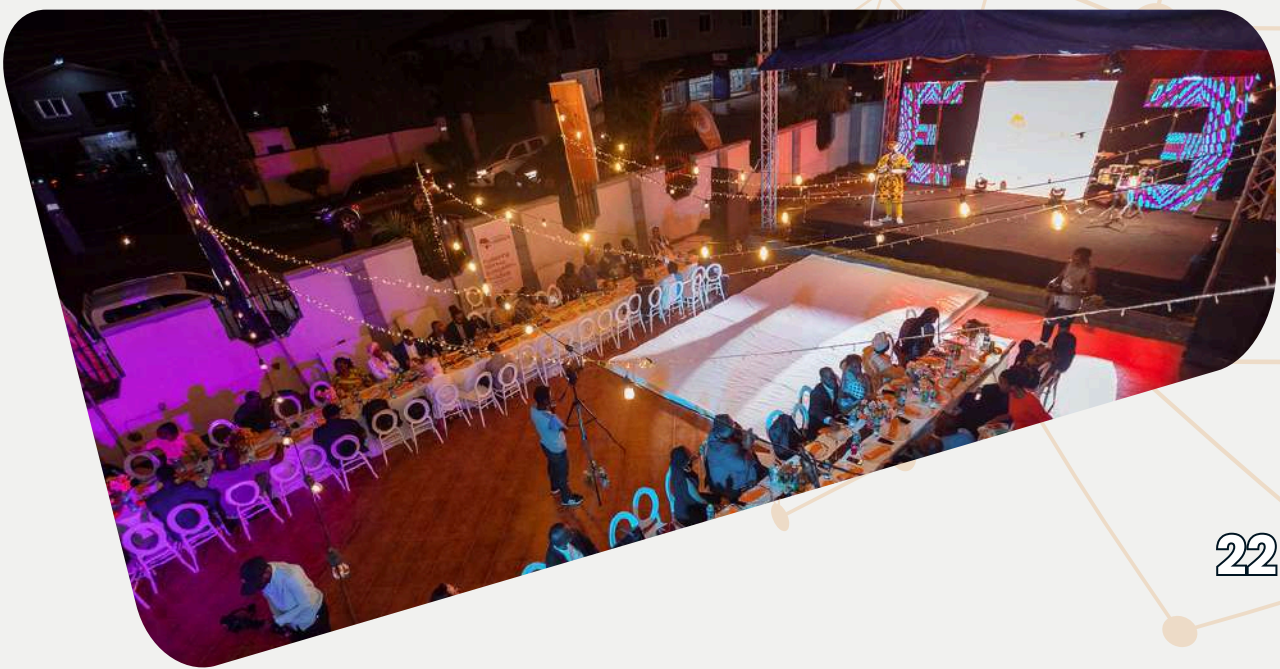
Day 3: Awards Gala – Celebrating Diversity: Spotlight on Africa’s Inclusive Startup Ecosystem Builders

As the day’s insightful discussions and workshops concluded, the **ASEB Awards Gala** emerged as the crowning event of **Day 3**, wrapping up the proceedings with elegance and purpose. Held under the theme “**Celebrating Unsung Heroes: Spotlight on Africa’s Startup Ecosystem Builders**,” the gala was a heartfelt tribute to the individuals and organizations whose tireless, behind-the-scenes efforts have been instrumental in driving innovation and entrepreneurship across the continent. Hosted at the stunning Ennovate B1ck Hub, the evening celebrated **45 winners across 30 categories**, shining a well-deserved spotlight on the changemakers shaping Africa’s entrepreneurial future..

The atmosphere was electric at the beautifully decorated venue as attendees gathered for an evening of recognition, celebration, and inspiration. Hosted by the charismatic **Sherif Ghali** of Ghana, the event set the stage for an unforgettable celebration of Africa’s ecosystem builders.

Networking and Registrations

The evening began with a lively networking session. Delegates, nominees, sponsors, and ecosystem builders from across Africa mingled, sharing stories and building connections in a relaxed and elegant setting.



Welcome Speech and Awards Introduction

We welcomed the audience with an inspiring speech that highlighted the importance of celebrating Africa's unsung heroes. "Tonight, we recognize the ecosystem builders whose efforts often go unnoticed but whose impact is immeasurable," he said. McKevin set the tone for the evening, emphasizing that the awards are not just accolades but symbols of the collective power of collaboration and innovation.

Sponsor Address

A word from **Mr. Gustav Nii Ayi Mokobi Aryee**, Head of Commercial Banking at Corporate & Investment Banking, underscored the critical role of financial institutions in supporting ecosystems. As a proud sponsor of ASEB 2024, he expressed his admiration for the ecosystem builders driving innovation and pledged continued support for initiatives that empower entrepreneurs across Africa.

Keynote Address

The keynote, delivered by **HRH King Taka IV**, was a powerful reminder of the transformative role ecosystem builders play in shaping Africa's entrepreneurial landscape. Speaking with a blend of authority and warmth, the King honored the resilience and dedication of ecosystem enablers, calling them the "backbone of Africa's innovation journey." His words left a lasting impression, inspiring attendees to continue their mission with renewed vigor.



Announcing ASEB 2024 Award Winners

The highlight of the evening was the announcement of the **ASEB 2024 Award winners**. Amid applause, tears of joy, and standing ovations, outstanding ecosystem builders, startups, and enablers were recognized across multiple categories. From individuals championing inclusive innovation to organizations driving cross-border collaboration, the winners embodied the best of Africa's entrepreneurial spirit.

Celebration and Reflection

The gala concluded with a celebratory toast and informal networking. Attendees reflected on the evening's achievements, exchanged congratulatory messages, and looked forward to the future of Africa's ecosystems.



ASEB 2024 Awards: Celebrating the Unsung Heroes – Spotlight on Africa's Startup Ecosystem Builders

The **ASEB 2024 Awards Gala**, held on the evening of **Day 3**, recognized 45 winners across **30 categories**, ranging from **Startup Ecosystem Builder of the Year** to **Best Entrepreneur Support Organization**. Each award celebrated exceptional contributions to building thriving and inclusive ecosystems. The winners represented diverse sectors and regions, showcasing the collective effort driving entrepreneurial success across Africa.

Startup Ecosystem Builder Champion of the Year

- **Rym Jarou**, Smart Africa (Tunisia)
- **Ahmed Bastawy**, ICEALEX (Egypt)

Incubator of the Year

- **Kivu Entrepreneurs** (DRC)

Startup Mentor of the Year

- **Serge ABIHONA** (Benin)
- **Onyeka Akumah, Treepz** (Nigeria)

Youth Ecosystem Builder Champion of the Year

- **Kekeli Yaw Dorkenoo, Keldork Global Innovations** (Ghana)
- **Kodjo Maligbe Ayedjenou, La Succession SARL** (Togo)

Entrepreneur Support Organisation of the Year

- **Fetola** (South Africa)
- **YGAP** (Kenya)
- **These Hands** (Botswana)

Accelerator of the Year

- **La Plage Accelerator** (Mauritius)
- **Impact Hub Ghana** (Ghana)

Startup Coach of the Year

- **Abd Razack Midingoyi, MARCK Consulting** (Benin)
- **Dr. Alphonsine Mukayisenga Dushimimana, University of Rwanda** (Rwanda)

Innovation Hub of the Year

- **Ghana Innovation Hub** (Ghana)
- **Grit Lab Africa** (South Africa)

ASEB 2024 Awards: Celebrating the Unsung Heroes – Spotlight on Africa' Startup Ecosystem Builders (Continues)

Immigrant Ecosystem Builder Champion of the Year

- **Tafadzwa Chiganga, Muzambiringa SL Limited** (Sierra Leone/Zimbabwe)
- **Auri Evokari** (Finland/Namibia)
- **Prof. Abejide Ade Ibijola, Grit Lab Africa** (Nigeria/South Africa)

Startup Service Provider Champion of the Year

- **Bitter Kola** (Cameroon)

Startup Research and Development Initiative of the Year

- **Moroccan Foundation for Advanced Science, Innovation and Research (MAScIR)** (Morocco)

Startup Financing Initiative of the Year

- **Future Africa** (Nigeria)

Ecosystem Internationalization Champion of the Year

- **Tech Connect Africa** (Ghana)

Entrepreneurship Education Champion of the Year

- **Umgibe Farming & Training Institute** (South Africa)
- **DirectEd Development** (Kenya)

Coworking Space of the Year

- **UR-CAVM Agribusiness Incubator (Busogo)** (Rwanda)
- **Duapa Workspace** (Ghana)

Ecosystem Development Partner of the Year

- **GIZ** (Ghana)

Woman In STEAM of the Year

- **Alida Ahouandjinou, Oyayi Cosmetics** (Benin)
- **Dr. Shikoh Gitau, Qhala** (Kenya)

Technology Transfer & Commercialization Champion of the Year

- **MEST Africa** (Ghana)
- **National Higher Polytechnic School of Douala** (Cameroon)

ASEB 2024 Awards: Celebrating the Unsung Heroes – Spotlight on Africa' Startup Ecosystem Builders (Continues)

Cross-Border Collaboration Initiative

- **Discovering New Tech Destinations Across Africa** (Nigeria)
- **Open Startup** (Tunisia)

Investor Readiness and Matching Initiative of the Year

- **CcHub** (Nigeria)

Government Initiative for Startups of the Year

- **Eswatini Development Finance Corporation (FINCORP)** (Eswatini)

Diversity and Inclusion Initiative of the Year

- **SheFound** (Tanzania)

Policy Initiative of the Year

- **i4policy** (Rwanda)

Corporate-Startup Collaboration Champion of the Year

- **Indalo Inclusive** (South Africa)

Ecosystem Media & Content Creator of the Year

- **TechCabal** (Nigeria)

Ecosystem Collaboration Champion of the Year

- **Innovation Support Network (ISN)** (Nigeria)

Startup Event Initiative of the Year

- **AfricArena** (South Africa)

Angel Investor of the Year

- **Sewu-Steve Tawia, Jaza Rift Ventures** (Kenya)

Ecosystem Funder of the Year

- **Knife Capital** (South Africa)

Social Entrepreneurship Support Initiative of the Year

- **African Management Institute (AMI)** (Kenya)

Objective and Outcome

The **ASEB Awards Gala** served as a beacon of recognition, shining a spotlight on the unsung heroes whose work often happens behind the scenes. By celebrating their achievements, the gala inspired future leaders and highlighted best practices in ecosystem building. The evening was not only a celebration but also a call to action, urging all present to continue driving the mission of creating inclusive, collaborative, and thriving entrepreneurial ecosystems across Africa.

It was a night to remember, leaving everyone with a sense of pride, purpose, and possibility as ASEB 2024 continued its journey of transformation and impact.







Day 4: Ecosystem Tour and Final Reflections

The final day of ASEB 2024 was a journey of discovery, reflection, and inspiration. Delegates gathered in the morning for the much-anticipated **Discover Accra Ecosystem Tour**, sponsored by **GrowthAfrica**, with excitement evident in their conversations. Many attendees, some still holding their awards from the previous night's gala, shared smiles of pride and fulfillment as they prepared to explore Ghana's innovation hubs.

Before boarding the bus, **McKevin Ayaba**, took a moment to reflect on the success of **Day 3** and the memorable Awards Gala. He shared his personal journey, describing the sacrifices and joys of being an ecosystem builder. "Ecosystem building is not just a profession or a job," he said, "it is a **calling** — a commitment to serve others, often with little to no financial reward, but with the immeasurable fulfillment of knowing you're creating impact." He emphasized the power of collaboration, urging attendees to work together to ease the challenges and achieve greater results. He also called on development organizations to recognize and support the vital role of ecosystem builders in Africa's entrepreneurial journey.



Discover Accra Ecosystem Tour

The delegates set off on the tour, eager to immerse themselves in Ghana's dynamic entrepreneurial landscape. The tour highlighted key innovation hubs, each providing unique insights into the city's thriving ecosystem.

Stops on the Tour:

1. **ALX Hub Accra:** This vibrant hub showcased its focus on developing Africa's next generation of leaders and innovators. Delegates were inspired by its programs designed to empower young entrepreneurs with essential skills.
2. **iSpace Hub Accra:** Known for fostering collaboration, iSpace Hub provided a glimpse into how shared spaces are nurturing creativity and supporting startups in Accra.
3. **University of Ghana:** A detour through the prestigious university campus offered a perspective on how academic institutions are shaping entrepreneurial mindsets and fostering innovation.
4. **Buro Hub in Osu – Home to MEST Africa and GrowthAfrica:** The final stop brought delegates to one of Accra's most influential innovation spaces.

At the **Buro Hub**, delegates were welcomed by **Jesse Baddoo** from **GrowthAfrica**, who opened up about the transformative work their organization does in supporting African entrepreneurs. They shared GrowthAfrica's mission to bridge gaps in funding, mentorship, and market access, offering programs that help startups scale and succeed. Their insights demonstrated how strategic support and collaboration can empower entrepreneurs to navigate challenges and create lasting impact.



Final Panel Discussion: The Role of Entrepreneur Support Organizations”

The tour concluded with an engaging panel discussion at the Buro Hub, moderated by **McKevin Ayaba**. The session explored the critical role of **Entrepreneur Support Organizations (ESOs)** in creating thriving, resilient ecosystems.

Panelists:

- **Rym Jarou**, Unit Manager for Technology-Driven Entrepreneurship at Smart Africa and ASEB 2024 Startup Ecosystem Builder of the Year, shared how Smart Africa fosters cross-continental collaboration to drive innovation.
- **Olufemi Adewumi**, Programs Director, MEST Africa, highlighted the importance of mentorship and skill development as foundational to entrepreneurial success.
- **Josiah Eyison**, Founder of iSpace Hub Accra, spoke about creating inclusive spaces for entrepreneurs to collaborate and innovate.
- **Eugene Eluerkeh**, Growth Catalyst at GrowthAfrica, discussed bridging funding gaps and creating access to resources for startups.

The discussion reinforced the importance of ESOs in addressing systemic challenges faced by startups. Delegates gained valuable insights into how collaboration, strategic partnerships, and tailored support can drive the success of entrepreneurs across diverse contexts.



A Day of Legacy and Inspiration

The **Discover Accra Ecosystem Tour** provided more than a window into Ghana's innovation landscape; it offered actionable lessons and inspiration for delegates to carry back to their own ecosystems. The final stop at the Buro Hub, with its impactful panel discussion and insights from GrowthAfrica, underscored the importance of collaboration in building sustainable entrepreneurial environments.

As the tour concluded, delegates reflected on the transformative journey of ASEB 2024. The event wasn't just a summit; it was a movement—a collective effort to celebrate, empower, and uplift the ecosystem builders who shape Africa's entrepreneurial future.

The day ended with a shared commitment: to take the lessons, connections, and inspiration of ASEB 2024 and turn them into actionable steps for creating inclusive, thriving ecosystems across the continent. This was more than the end of the tour; it was the beginning of a renewed mission to transform Africa's entrepreneurial landscape.



Presentation of Certificates of Appreciation

The **2024 Africa Startup Ecosystem Builders Summit & Awards (ASEB)** concluded with a moment of gratitude as **McKevin Ayaba**, alongside **Marietjie Engelbrecht**, ASEB Board Member, presented **Certificates of Appreciation** to recognize the invaluable contributions of sponsors, partners, and ambassadors who made the event a success.

Honoring Sponsors and Partners

Certificates of Appreciation were awarded to:

- **Brand South Africa**
- **Fidelity Bank**
- **Growth Africa**
- **National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (NEIP)**
- **Innovate BLCK**
- **GrowthWheel SA**
- **Ghana Chambers of Young Entrepreneurs**

These organizations were celebrated for their steadfast support and commitment to ASEB's mission of empowering entrepreneurs across Africa.

Recognizing Ambassadors

Two remarkable ASEB Ambassadors were also honored with **Certificates of Appreciation** for their dedication and advocacy for ASEB's mission:

- **Lungile Maile**, Founder of **Nubian Smart** (South Africa), and the official **Master of Ceremonies (MC)** of the summit. Lungile's dynamic role and passion for African innovation brought energy and professionalism to the event, inspiring attendees to engage with ASEB's vision.
- **Sally Njoh**, Founder of **HappyHealth** (Cameroon), recognized for her unwavering dedication to ASEB's goals and her impactful initiatives that promote health and entrepreneurship within her community and beyond.



The Three-Year Impact of ASEB

In just three years, the **Africa Startup Ecosystem Builders Summit and Awards (ASEB)** has grown into a transformative force, uniting ecosystem builders, entrepreneurs, and stakeholders from across the continent. Since its launch in 2022, ASEB has not only celebrated the contributions of Africa's unsung heroes but has also laid the groundwork for a thriving and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Unifying a Continent

ASEB has successfully brought together **600 ecosystem builders and entrepreneurs** from **44 African countries**, fostering collaboration and innovation on an unprecedented scale. By creating a platform for dialogue, learning, and celebration, ASEB has connected diverse ecosystems, ensuring that knowledge and resources are shared across borders.

Recognizing Ecosystem Builders

Over the past three years, ASEB has recognized and celebrated more than **400 ecosystem builders**, highlighting their critical roles in nurturing startups and fostering economic growth. Prestigious honors such as the **Lifetime Achievement Awards** have been bestowed on pioneers like **Tomi Davies, Rebecca Enonchong, and Tervern Jafta**, acknowledging their transformative impact on Africa's entrepreneurial landscape.

The Leadership Achievement Awards have honored changemakers like Bernard Chiira and Rym Baouendi, whose strategic foresight and dedication have driven meaningful progress in their respective ecosystems.

Expanding Networks and Partnerships

ASEB has established a robust network of **10 Country Partners and Ambassadors**, who champion its mission at both the local and continental levels. These partnerships have been instrumental in ensuring ASEB's initiatives are deeply rooted in the unique challenges and opportunities of Africa's diverse ecosystems.

Guided by Expertise

At the heart of ASEB's strategy is its **Advisory Board**, a distinguished group of leaders who provide invaluable guidance and ensure the initiative's alignment with Africa's entrepreneurial needs. This board has been pivotal in driving ASEB's growth and impact.

Driving Collaboration and Innovation

Through its summits, panel discussions, and ecosystem tours, ASEB has sparked conversations that lead to action. By bringing together stakeholders from startups, corporates, governments, and development organizations, ASEB has created a collaborative environment that addresses key challenges, such as access to funding, mentorship, and market opportunities.



The Three-Year Impact of ASEB (Continues)

Championing Inclusion and Sustainability

ASEB has consistently emphasized the importance of inclusivity in entrepreneurship. Its initiatives have showcased diverse voices, celebrated underrepresented groups, and championed sustainable solutions that create equitable opportunities for all.

Building a Movement

ASEB is more than an event; it is a movement that celebrates achievements, drives collaboration, and inspires action. Its three-year journey has demonstrated the power of ecosystem building as a tool for economic development, leaving a legacy of empowerment and progress.

The Next Chapter: Africa Startup Ecosystem Builders Society (ASEBS)

As we look ahead to 2025 and beyond, the **Africa Startup Ecosystem Builders Summit and Awards (ASEB)** is poised to enter an exciting new chapter. Starting in 2025, ASEB will operate under the banner of the Africa Startup Ecosystem Builders Society (ASEBS), a dedicated non-profit organization that will focus solely on ecosystem building and activities aimed at strengthening Africa's startup and innovation ecosystems.

This evolution represents a natural progression of ASEB's mission. By establishing a permanent organizational framework, ASEBS will ensure that ecosystem building remains at the forefront of efforts to support entrepreneurs across the continent. The society will not only continue to host the annual ASEB Summit and Awards but will also expand its work through year-round initiatives, programs, and collaborations designed to address the unique challenges facing Africa's startup ecosystems.

ASEB will act as a hub for knowledge sharing, capacity building, and policy advocacy, bringing together stakeholders from across the continent to co-create solutions and foster inclusive growth. Its efforts will amplify the impact of ecosystem builders, enabling them to work more effectively and collaboratively toward a shared vision of a thriving, innovative Africa.

The journey that began with the ASEB Summit and Awards will now take on a broader and deeper mandate, ensuring that the momentum built over the past three years is sustained and scaled. Together with its partners, supporters, and the vibrant community of ecosystem builders, ASEBS will drive forward the work of creating an Africa where entrepreneurs have the support they need to succeed and where ecosystems thrive as engines of innovation and opportunity.

This transition is not just a milestone—it's a commitment to the future. The Africa Startup Ecosystem Builders Society is ready to take up the mantle and continue the important work of building the ecosystems that will shape Africa's entrepreneurial destiny. We invite all stakeholders to join us in this journey of collaboration, innovation, and impact.

An Invitation to Join the Movement

As ASEB evolves, it calls on more partners, sponsors, and ecosystem builders to join this journey. Together, we can create an Africa where ecosystems thrive, entrepreneurs succeed, and innovation flourishes.



Testimonials: Stories of Triumph and Inspiration from ASEB Winners, Sponsors and Attendees



Jimmy Ranamane, Global Markets GM, Brand South Africa

"When McKevin Ayaba first approached us with the concept of ASEB, his passion was contagious. He articulated a vision for solving one of the greatest challenges faced by African entrepreneurs: the need for a supportive and thriving ecosystem where their ideas can grow and flourish. We believed in that vision, and from its inception, Brand South Africa has proudly stood by ASEB as a founding supporter. Three years later, ASEB has surpassed all expectations. It has become a transformative force in Africa's entrepreneurial landscape—a platform that unites ecosystem builders, empowers entrepreneurs, and celebrates the unsung heroes working behind the scenes. ASEB is not just an event; it is a movement reshaping the future of startups and ecosystems across the continent.

Our partnership with ASEB has been one of our most impactful commitments. We've watched it inspire collaboration, spark innovation, and create meaningful change. Now, as we look ahead to ASEB 2025, we remain fully committed to this incredible journey.

We invite other sponsors and partners to join us in supporting ASEB. This is more than a sponsorship opportunity; it's an investment in Africa's future. Together, we can build ecosystems that empower entrepreneurs, drive inclusive growth, and unlock the continent's immense potential. ASEB is proof that when we work together, we can achieve extraordinary things."



Rym Jarou from Smart Africa– 2024 ASEB Ecosystem Builder Champion of the Year

"Dear McKevin, thank you and the ASEB team for an incredible four days in Accra. The guidance and support you provided were remarkable, and I feel extremely proud, honored, and grateful to have been recognized as the Africa Ecosystem Builder Champion of the Year.

There were so many highlights from my experience at ASEB: the amazing networking opportunities, the high-quality content and discussions, and the ecosystem tour, which was particularly impactful for me as it was my first time in Ghana. The connections you facilitated through the program were invaluable, offering me a deeper understanding of the vibrant innovation landscape and its inspiring stakeholders.

ASEB provided a platform that not only celebrated our efforts but also gave us tools and connections to strengthen our ecosystems further.

I am very much willing to support ASEB as an event and between events as much as needed"



Testimonials: Stories of Triumph and Inspiration from ASEB Winners, Sponsors and Attendees

Haouthani Massoundi – Managing Director, Mayotte In Tech



"ASEB 2024 in Accra was a transformative experience for me and the delegation from Mayotte. As a French territory often overlooked in discussions about Africa's entrepreneurial ecosystems, it was both surprising and exciting to learn that about 98% of the delegates at the event had never heard of Mayotte. ASEB provided a powerful platform to change that and to introduce Mayotte as a territory with immense potential and a desire to collaborate with Africa.

The fireside chat was a defining moment for me. It allowed me to share Mayotte's story, who we are as a country, and why building a vibrant and collaborative ecosystem is so important for our growth. I emphasized the unique position of Mayotte, as a French territory closer to Africa geographically and culturally, and why forging connections with Africa's innovation hubs is essential for our future.

Bringing a delegation of five, including startups, to ASEB was a significant step in creating those connections. The event's rich networking opportunities, insightful panel discussions, and the ecosystem tour gave us invaluable exposure to Ghana's thriving entrepreneurial scene. ASEB was not just an event—it was a movement that reinforced the importance of collaboration in building stronger ecosystems.

I leave Accra inspired, empowered, and committed to ensuring Mayotte becomes an integral part of Africa's entrepreneurial landscape. ASEB has given us the visibility, tools, and relationships to make that vision a reality."

Hilton Theunissen, Managing Director, GrowthWheel SA

"GrowthWheel SA has been a proud partner of ASEB since its inception in 2022. ASEB addresses a critical need in Africa's entrepreneurial landscape: creating a conducive environment where businesses can not only survive but thrive. Without such an environment, building sustainable businesses remains a challenge. ASEB is championing this cause by uniting ecosystem builders, facilitating collaborations, and recognizing the unsung heroes who are vital to entrepreneurial success.

For GrowthWheel SA, supporting ASEB is not just a commitment—it's a shared mission. The platform's focus on empowering startups and strengthening ecosystems aligns perfectly with our values. Seeing ASEB grow and impact so many lives across the continent reaffirms the importance of this initiative.

As ASEB continues to expand its reach and influence, I encourage others to join this movement. Together, we can lay the foundation for stronger ecosystems and ensure that Africa's entrepreneurs have the environment they need to succeed. Supporting ASEB is more than an investment in an event—it's an investment in the future of Africa's entrepreneurial success."



Testimonials: Stories of Triumph and Inspiration from ASEB Winners, Sponsors and Attendees



Lisa Ngcolomba, COO, Fetola

"At Fetola, we've always admired ASEB and its dedication to empowering ecosystem builders across Africa. Over the years, some of the programs we support have been recognized at ASEB, but winning the Entrepreneur Support Organization of the Year award in 2024 was an incredible milestone for us. It's a testament to the impactful work we do in nurturing entrepreneurs and strengthening ecosystems.

Attending ASEB 2024 in Accra was a truly enriching experience. It gave us the chance to witness the remarkable work ASEB is doing across the continent—work that goes beyond awards to creating real, lasting change. The energy, connections, and commitment to collaboration were palpable throughout the event. Experiencing this firsthand made it clear that ASEB is much more than a summit; it's a movement driving meaningful progress for Africa's startup ecosystem.

We are excited to explore how Fetola can continue to be part of ASEB in 2025 and beyond. Being involved in ASEB has shown us the power of collective effort in building thriving entrepreneurial communities, and we look forward to contributing to this important mission."



James Otai and Fiona Komugisha, Co-Founders, Imagine Her, Uganda

"Dear McKevin, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude for the incredible ASEB 2024 Summit and Awards held in Accra, Ghana. It was an honor and a privilege to be part of such a transformative event that brought together passionate ecosystem builders from across Africa.

The summit's theme, 'Inclusive Entrepreneurship: Designing Africa's Startup Ecosystem on Diversity and Collaboration,' resonated deeply with us. The opportunity to participate in engaging discussions, attend impactful panels, explore innovation hubs during the ecosystem tour, and connect with like-minded professionals was truly inspiring. Attending ASEB 2024 further enriched our experience and provided valuable insights we are eager to implement in our work with rural entrepreneurs in Uganda.

We are especially grateful for the recognition of Imagine Her (IH) with the 'Entrepreneur Support Organization of the Year' award for 2023—a moment we had long anticipated. This acknowledgment strengthens our commitment to creating opportunities for underserved communities and reinforces the importance of fostering collaboration in the entrepreneurial space.

Your leadership, vision, and dedication were evident throughout the summit. It's clear how much you care about fostering growth and collaboration in Africa's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Your remarks, actions, and the inspiring journey of ASEB showcase a true Pan-African spirit and a commitment to driving meaningful change.

We look forward to staying connected and contributing to ASEB's mission of empowering social entrepreneurship across the continent. Thank you once again for an extraordinary experience and for creating a platform that truly embodies the spirit of collaboration and progress. Wishing you continued success in this impactful journey."



Testimonials: Stories of Triumph and Inspiration from ASEB Winners, Sponsors and Attendees



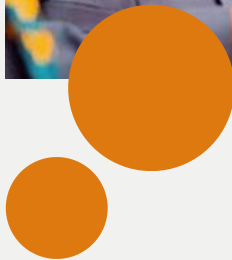
Rest Kanju, Founder and CEO, Indalo Inclusive

"After hearing McKevin's keynote address on the official opening day of ASEB 2024 and attending the panel discussion on 'Fostering Entrepreneurial Growth Through Regional and Cross-Border Collaboration,' I knew this was an initiative I wanted to be a part of. The insights shared and the conversations that unfolded during those sessions highlighted the urgent need for platforms like ASEB to drive collaboration and innovation across Africa.

As I continued to attend the summit over the following days, I was in awe of the depth of discussions, the caliber of participants, and the commitment to fostering inclusive and sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystems. What stood out most to me was the realization that, despite the incredible work being done, there are still too few partners supporting this initiative. Understanding the importance of building businesses from the ground up, ASEB's impact was clear—it is inspiring and needs to be encouraged to grow even further.

The moment our organization, Indalo Inclusive, was announced as the winner of the Corporate-Startup Collaboration Champion of the Year award, it all sank in. This recognition affirmed the value of our work and the shared vision we have with ASEB for a collaborative and thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem.

I have pledged my commitment to supporting this initiative, and I believe many who attended ASEB 2024 would echo my sentiments. ASEB is not just an event; it is a movement, a call to action for everyone who believes in the power of collaboration to drive meaningful change across Africa."



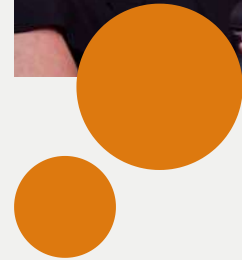
Marietjie Engelbrecht, Chief of Staff, UVU Africa & Board Member, ASEB

"From the moment I was introduced to ASEB, I was captivated by its purpose. Having worked with entrepreneurs for over 20 years, I deeply understand the importance of creating a conducive environment for growth, fostering collaboration, and ensuring inclusion. I've witnessed firsthand the critical role ecosystem builders' play in shaping entrepreneurial success—often without recognition. ASEB has stepped in to change that narrative.

Every year, ASEB continues to blow my mind. The caliber of individuals and organizations it brings together, the meaningful conversations it sparks, and the solutions it inspires are nothing short of extraordinary. The platform has become a catalyst for collaboration and innovation, celebrating the unsung heroes of ecosystem building and amplifying their impact.

As both a Board Member of ASEB and a representative of UVU Africa, I am honored to be part of this movement. The purpose of ASEB aligns seamlessly with that of UVU Africa, which is why we have remained so committed to supporting it. Winning the ASEB Award in 2023 further affirmed the importance of our shared mission to build thriving, inclusive ecosystems.

Being part of ASEB has been a privilege, and I look forward to continuing this journey of collaboration, innovation, and purpose."



Key Partners List



Thank You

To Our Esteemed Sponsors, Partners, Ambassadors, and Participants,

We extend our deepest gratitude for your incredible support in making the ASEB 2024 a resounding success. Your contributions have been pivotal in fostering collaboration, empowering ecosystem builders, and advancing Africa's entrepreneurial landscape.

As we prepare for the ASEB 2025, we look forward to continuing this journey of impact, collaboration, and innovation together.

Team ASEB



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