



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Project Creating Opportunities for Youth and Women in Africa (COYWA),

1. Introduction

As part of the implementation of the Creating Opportunities for Youth and Women in Africa (COYWA) program, a call for applications is launched in order to identify and support dynamic, innovative and committed young entrepreneurs.

This programme, which aims to strengthen entrepreneurial capacities and stimulate innovation, supports initiatives with a strong socio-economic impact, in particular in favour of youth and women. It builds on the achievements of the program, the first cohort of which has recorded particularly convincing results. Indeed, 47 young entrepreneurs from 25 African countries were trained through a hybrid system covering key themes such as financial education, digital literacy, branding and digital marketing.

Cohort 1 was distinguished by a 99% success rate, a maximum level of satisfaction on all evaluation indicators, as well as by the distinction of 15 participants who obtained a mention. The latter are now able to intervene as mentor-facilitators in the next phases of the programme.

Based on these results, AUDA-NEPAD and AECID decided to expand the initiative through the launch of Cohort 2, adopting a sub-regional model combining four weeks of online training and five days of intensive face-to-face training.

The first face-to-face session of this new cohort will be held in June 2026 in Praia, Cabo Verde, at the Business Lab of the University of Cabo Verde. It will bring together 75 participants from ECOWAS countries, including 25 from the host country.

2. Purpose of the call

The training in Cabo Verde will serve as an entry point for Cohort 2 into the ECOWAS region and will build on a training model proven in Cohort 1. This session aims to create opportunities to strengthen youth entrepreneurship, promote digital inclusion, foster women's economic empowerment in West Africa and deepen regional collaboration among young entrepreneurs.



It also aims to ensure the sustainability of the COYWA model by integrating the best graduates of Cohort 1 as co-facilitators and mentors. This peer-to-peer learning approach will improve the support of participants and strengthen the contextual relevance of the content and interventions.

At the end of the training, the young people will be equipped, among other things, with financial education, entrepreneurship, branding and digital marketing. It will also help mobilize mentors to strengthen regional networks of entrepreneurs, especially youth and women, within the ECOWAS region.

4. Selection criteria

The selection will be made on the basis of the following:

- Quality and relevance of the project or company
- Entrepreneurial experience of the candidate
- Impact and Scope of Activities
- Motivation to participate in the program
- Alignment with COYIWA Project Objectives
- Ability to contribute to the sharing of experiences.

4. Selection quota

For Cabo Verde, the candidates will be distributed as follows:

- Twenty-five (25) young entrepreneurs including:
 - Fifteen (15) women
 - Ten (10) men

For the other 11 ECOWAS countries, only four (04) candidates will be selected, distributed as follows:

- Two (02) young entrepreneurs, including:
 - one (01) man
 - one (01) woman



- Two (02) women entrepreneurs with a business that has been in existence for at least five (05) years,
- This approach aims to ensure inclusion, gender equity and the valuation of already established companies.

5. Application file

- Candidates must submit a file according to the indications of the application form
- To be filled in according to the template provided (on the site, in the Publication tab, please click on "Resource" to download the form: <https://eywep.cdjscedao.org/>)

6. Selection Process

The process will include:

- Analysis of the application files
- Assessment based on defined criteria
- Final selection of beneficiaries

6. Submission of applications

Complete applications must be sent via, depending on the nationality of the applicant: Specify in Subject: Application for the COYWA program:

Benin: benin.eywep@cdjscedao.org

Cape Verde : caboverde.eywep@cdjscedao.org

Côte d'Ivoire : cotedivoire.eywep@cdjscedao.org

Gambie : gambia.eywep@cdjscedao.org

Ghana : ghana.eywep@cdjscedao.org

Guinée : guinea.eywep@cdjscedao.org

Guinée-Bissau : guineabissau.eywep@cdjscedao.org

Liberia : liberia.eywep@cdjscedao.org

Nigeria : nigeria.eywep@cdjscedao.org

Sénégal : senegal.eywep@cdjscedao.org



Sierra Leone : sierraleone.eywep@cdjscedeo.org

Togo : togo.eywep@cdjscedeo.org

Submission deadline: May 15, 2026

9. Additional information

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.