



## Tony Elumelu Foundation to Host Belgian Digital Minister and Tech Delegation in Lagos, Nigeria

ON MARCH 20, 2019

*Lagos, Nigeria – On Wednesday, March 20th, The Tony Elumelu Foundation (TEF), the leading African philanthropy committed to empowering African entrepreneurs, will host the Belgian Minister for Digital Agenda and Telecommunications, Philippe De Backer, and a delegation of 40 Belgian start-ups, entrepreneurs and NGOs. The Foundation recently hosted President Emmanuel Macron of France in a convening of over 2000 young Africans and will now offer participants of the Belgian “Silicon Lagoon” Mission an opportunity for an interactive ‘pow-wow’ with stakeholders of the Nigerian entrepreneurship ecosystem.*



The event's keynote remarks will be delivered by Tony O. Elumelu, CON, Founder of the Tony Elumelu Foundation, and Group Chairman of the United Bank for Africa Plc, Africa's global bank with operations in 20 African countries and presence in UK, USA and France.

Mr. Elumelu is the most prominent champion of entrepreneurship in Africa. In 2011, Mr. Elumelu iterated the term Africapitalism, which has revived the African entrepreneurial landscape by positioning the private sector as a catalyst for growth across the continent.

Inspired by his philosophy of Africapitalism which mobilises Africa's private sector to lead in the social and economic transformation of the continent, Mr. Elumelu committed US\$100m to empowering African entrepreneurs and championing entrepreneurship in Africa. Through its flagship Programme, the Tony Elumelu Foundation is empowering over 10,000 African entrepreneurs over a 10-year period, supporting each entrepreneur with a non-returnable seed funding of \$5,000, one-one mentoring, access to knowledge resources and key networks, and an intensive 12-week business management training.

Following Mr. Elumelu's session, the Belgian Minister Philippe De Backer will engage in a Q&A session alongside the incoming CEO of the Tony Elumelu Foundation, Mrs. Ifeyinwa Ugochukwu, fielding questions from the audience on global technology trends, the digital economy, and strategies for African entrepreneurs to leverage technology for good in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A new documentary chronicling the impact of the TEF Entrepreneurship Programme will also be screened.

Select Belgian entrepreneurs in the "Silicon Mission Delegation" and Tony Elumelu entrepreneurs in attendance, will present fast-paced exciting pitches to the audience, showcasing the potentials of their business ideas. Participants will also be treated to a garden cocktail, where local tech influencers, investors, start-ups, accelerators, and other members of the ecosystem will closely network, igniting partnerships and cooperation between Nigerian and Belgian businesses.

The Silicon Lagoon Mission is organized by **Startups.be** and **Close the Gap** with the mission to create potential partnerships and raise awareness about Digital for Development opportunities, a goal also shared by the Tony Elumelu Foundation.



## **ABOUT CLOSE THE GAP**

**Close the Gap** is an international social enterprise that aims to bridge the digital divide by offering high-quality, pre-owned computers donated by large-and medium-sized corporations or public organizations to educational, medical, entrepreneurial and social projects in developing and emerging countries. Close the Gap also powers Worldloop (sustainable e-waste recycling), the Leap2 program (supporting entrepreneurship and innovation), and the Digital for Development platform, all contributing to creating impact in Africa and other developing countries. [www.close-the-gap.org](http://www.close-the-gap.org).

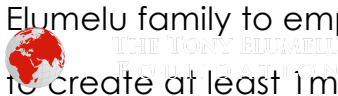
## **ABOUT STARTUPS.BE**

**Startups.be** is the one-stop-shop for Belgian tech entrepreneurship. They partner with start-ups to achieve their global ambition, facilitate joint innovation with business partners worldwide, and are the independent reference centre of excellence in the Belgian start-up ecosystem. Startups.be recently merged with Scale-Ups.eu, the top-of-mind time squeezer for scale-ups in Europe. [www.startups.be](http://www.startups.be) and [scale-ups.eu](http://scale-ups.eu)

## **ABOUT THE TONY ELUMELU FOUNDATION**

The Tony Elumelu Foundation (TEF) is the leading African philanthropy committed to empowering African entrepreneurs. Founded by African investor and philanthropist, Tony O. Elumelu, CON, the Foundation is guided by the philosophy, Africapitalism, which proposes that the private sector holds the key to unlocking the sustainable development of Africa.

Through its flagship Entrepreneurship Programme, the Foundation empowers African entrepreneurs and the entrepreneurship ecosystem across 54 African countries. The Tony Elumelu Foundation Entrepreneurship Programme is a \$100million commitment by the

 Elumelu family to empower 10,000 African entrepreneurs over a 10-year period. The goal is to create at least 1 million jobs and contribute over \$10 billion in revenue to the African economy.

Since its inception in 2015, the Programme has empowered 4,000 African entrepreneurs directly and an additional 470 entrepreneurs supported by the Foundation's global partners.

## **MEDIA CONTACTS**

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**La Fondation Tony Elumelu annoncera le 22 mars 2019 les noms des candidats sélectionnés pour l'édition 2019 de son programme d'entreprenariat**

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