

Technology

## YTF partners GE Garage to enable tech start-ups

By Oluwatosin Areo  
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Youth for Technology Foundation (YTF). Photo/twitter/Youth for Technology Foundation

To assist Nigerian technology start-ups harness their potential through its 3D Africa program, Youth for Technology Foundation (YTF), in partnership with GE Lagos Garage, has held its pitch and networking session for tech start-ups.

Present at the event with theme: 'Building a Viable Hardware Ecosystem in Nigeria', were the Belgian Minister of Digital Agenda, Philippe De Backer and his Silicon Lagoon Mission delegation, tech start-ups and guests comprised of local and international entrepreneurs, investors, representatives from private-sector companies, and non-profits.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO), YTF/3D Africa, Njideka Harry, said the event is one of the firm's ways of equipping the next generation with necessary skills needed to excel.



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“It is about empowering the next generation of leaders to join the workforce with skills they need to access employment or create their entrepreneurial opportunities in the fourth industrial revolution.

“Our programs utilise technology to inspire youths and women in developing nations to create innovative solutions to their challenges and we are pleased to have been able to collaborate with GE Garage for this initiative,” she said.

She added that the YTF’s 3D Africa would not relent in its quest to change Africa’s narrative from dependence on foreign technology to being self-sustaining through “meeting the increased global demand for emerging and disruptive technologies, like 3D printing.”

Director, Communications & Public Affairs, GE Africa, Patricia Obozuwa, noted that working with technology has exposed them to its numerous opportunities and identified funding as the major challenge for technology hardware start-ups.

“Africa has the opportunity to be more globally competitive if technology is leveraged on. We have developed prototypes and have influenced several businesses across Nigeria. People come to GE with manufacturing ideas and leave with business sense that can work,” she added.

Obozuwa stressed that out of 100 hardware prototypes, only 70 per cent of funding now goes into fintech. This is something we should look for to develop in a balanced nature. The hardware idea should be translated from prototype to the market having met the global standard,” she added.

“The growth in tech ecosystem had been sidelined to software. This is something we should look for to develop in a balanced nature. The hardware idea should be translated from prototype to the market having met the global standard,” she added.

Obozuwa added that partnering with YTF/3D Africa shows the vision alignment and have made our contributions to Lagos’ and Nigeria’s vibrant technology start-up communities,” she said.

Belgian Ambassador to Nigeria, Ambassador Daniel Dargent, Director of International Relations, Startup.be, Frederik Tibau, and founder and CEO, Close-the-Gap, Olivier Vanden Eynde were also among the Belgian delegation at the pitching and networking session.

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