



# Youth Essay Contest on 'The Africa We Want'

## Africa's youth participation in the development of the continent

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Agenda 2063 is the strategic framework for socio-economic transformation of the African continent over the next 45 years. Aspiration 6 of the AU Agenda 2063 speaks of an "Africa where development is people driven, unleashing the potential of its women and youth". Young Africans, women and men will be the pioneers of the African knowledge society that will contribute significantly to innovation and entrepreneurship. The creativity, energy and innovation of African youth will be the driving force behind the continent's political, social, cultural and economic transformation. Youths do not only play a critical role in the socio-economic development of Africa, but will also be the beneficiaries of Agenda 2063.

The rationale behind the establishment of the African Union Development Agency/NEPAD (AUDA/NEPAD) is that it shall be a vehicle for the better execution of the African Union Agenda 2063.

In this regard, the mandate of the AUDA/NEPAD is:

- (i) To coordinate and execute priority regional and continental projects to promote regional integration towards the accelerated realisation of Agenda 2063;
- (ii) To strengthen capacity of African Union Member States and regional bodies; advance knowledge-based advisory support, undertake the full range of resource mobilisation, and serve as the continent's technical interface with all Africa's development stakeholders and development partners.

Unfortunately, many of the governance structures in African societies have largely marginalised youths in the decision making space. However, the changing demographic status underscores the urgent need for active participation of youth in shaping 'The Africa We Want' and driving Africa's development, including Agenda 2063. The fastest growing and most youthful population in the world today can be found in Africa, with over 40% of its population under the age of 15 and 20% between the ages of 15 and 24<sup>1</sup>.

In an effort to promote African youth's active participation in the continent's development, the African Union Development Agency/NEPAD is running a short essay contest, targeting young African people and its diaspora in proposing concrete pathways through which Agenda 2063<sup>2</sup>, the

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<sup>1</sup> Source: *United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, The Demographic profile of African countries, 2016*

<sup>2</sup> Read more about Agenda 2063 at <http://www.nepad.org/agenda-2063> and <https://au.int/en/agenda2063>

continent's framework for transformation, can be fast-tracked. The contest aims to provide the space through which youths can express their views freely on "The Africa We Want" by articulating their aspirations and ideals for shaping the future of our continent.

## 2. SHORT ESSAY CONTEST

AUDA/NEPAD recognises African youth as important stakeholders in achieving the Agenda 2063 goals and aspirations. In this regard, deliberate efforts are being made to harness the intellectual insights and energies of the youth in shaping the pathways and participating in the implementation of Agenda 2063. Accordingly, AUDA/NEPAD is organising a short essay contest that will serve to solicit novel ideas from Africa's youth.

### 2.1 Rules and requirements

The rules and requirements for this short essay contest are outlined below:

The short essay subject is "The Africa We Want". Participants are invited to submit their innovative ideas through a short essay format – the ideas or proposals should be those that can potentially have positive societal impact currently, or those that will transform the African continent in years to come through action/s that need to be taken now.

The essays will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

- 1) Content and relevance in terms of Africa's development;
- 2) Innovation and creativity;
- 3) Potential for implementing the idea on a large scale using Africa's own resources.

#### Entry dates, deadlines and announcement of winners

This contest opens on 21 January 2019 and closes at midnight on 28 February 2019. Essays must be received by 11:59PM GMT on 28 February 2019 OR postmarked by 28 February 2019 if sent by post.

Winners will be announced in April 2019 at the 'Championing of Agenda 2063 for #TheAfricaWeWant' advocacy event in Johannesburg, South Africa. ***We urge all entrants residing outside South Africa to therefore have their passports ready, as the top five winners will be invited to the prize-giving ceremony in Johannesburg!!*** The winners will all be notified prior to the event by email or phone number provided in the submission.

#### Eligibility

Contestants must be aged between 15 and 35 years by the contest deadline. Only one proposal per contestant will be accepted. Contestants must be African citizens; non-African citizens are not eligible to participate in the contest. All youths (between the ages of 15 and 35) and especially girls, women and people living with disabilities are strongly encouraged to participate.

## Requirements

All contestants must submit a completed and signed version of the document below. Please place a check next to each item below to be certain you have not missed anything!

- The essay – as per the instructions below
- Parental consent (Applicable only to those below the age of 18)
- Consent Form

## Essay instructions

Type the essay on A4 paper size, 2-3 pages maximum. Handwritten essays are accepted and should be on A4 paper size, 2-3 pages maximum. Please include your name on the essay.

**LANGUAGE:** Essays can be written in any of the African Union (AU) official languages namely: Swahili, English, French, Arabic and Portuguese.

## 2.2 Submitting your entry

**If sending by EMAIL:** Scan your entry documents to a .jpg or .pdf format and attach them to the email. Please send the email to [essay@nepad.org](mailto:essay@nepad.org)

**If sending by POST:** Address the mail to: NEPAD Agency, 230, 15<sup>th</sup> Road Randjespark, Midrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.

\* If posting your entry, please be sure to paperclip all of your documents together, including the essay.

**RIGHT OF PUBLICATION:** All essay submissions will become the property of AUDA/NEPAD. Announcement of winners' names, photographs and essay content will appear in print and/or electronic media - at the sole discretion of AUDA/NEPAD.

**JUDGING PANEL:** The judging panel is comprised of five independent individuals who will be nominated by the AUDA/NEPAD. The panel will review the essays and will select a total of five (5) finalists. The finalists will be invited to a high level platform in April 2019, called 'Championing of Agenda 2063 for #TheAfricaWeWant' in Johannesburg, South Africa. In addition, the best essays will be posted on AUDA/NEPAD's website and other platforms. All five winners will be awarded with prizes at the awards ceremony attended by high profile leaders in Africa.

## Contact information

### **African Union Development Agency/NEPAD**

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# YOUTH SHORT ESSAY CONTEST ON 'THE AFRICA WE WANT' CONSENT FORM

Participants and/or their parents (where applicable) must review the Consent Form and sign where indicated below.

I confirm that I have read and thoroughly understood the rules and requirements of this contest as explained above. I verify that the youth participant meets the eligibility requirements outlined above.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT: \_\_\_\_\_

AGE: \_\_\_\_\_

SEX: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT / PARENT / GUARDIAN (for participants under the age of 18)

\_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

PROVINCE/STATE & COUNTRY: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE OR MOBILE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

I declare that the work submitted in this contest is my own original work and hereby grant permission for this essay and my name and picture as the author to be used by the African Union Development Agency/NEPAD and other African Union bodies in public communications including digital and social media platforms.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT / PARENT / GUARDIAN (for participants under the age of 18)

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