Are you a startup entrepreneur eager to learn how to better pitch your business and become more investable? Does your startup use technology and innovation to make a societal impact in Southern Africa? Is your startup based in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, or Zambia?

If you answered yes to all of the above, we invite you to apply for BOOST UP 2021.

sais2.org/boostup

APPLY HERE:
(one application per startup team):

About BOOST UP 2021

BOOST UP is a three-part startup support programme organised by the Connected Hubs network and the Southern Africa Innovation Support Programme (SAIS 2) in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zambia. BOOST UP targets startups that use technology and innovation to solve a societal challenge and are looking for skills that could help them to pitch their business and become more investment-ready.

The BOOST UP series comprises Set Up training events, Stand Up pitch competitions, and the Scale Up incubation programme.

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1. BOOST UP Set Up

BOOST UP Set Up provides entrepreneurs with practical tools to package their business idea and develop a pitch to attract their target market. The Set Up training is organised separately in each of the BOOST UP countries: Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zambia.

2. BOOST UP Stand Up

At BOOST UP Stand Up, committed startups who are eager to make an impact, have a scalable business model, and want to become more investable will compete in national pitching competitions in their countries. Connected Hubs representatives will select startups from the Set Up participants that completed the training and invite them to pitch at Stand Up. At the pitch competitions, panels of expert judges will select the top startups to advance to interviews. After the interviews, the most promising startups in each country will be selected to take part in the BOOST UP Scale Up incubator.

3. BOOST UP Scale Up

BOOST UP Scale Up is an incubation programme for impact-driven startups eager to become more investable. Scale Up includes an online incubation programme (September–November) and on-site Bootcamp in Helsinki, Finland, in November–December 2021, which culminates in Slush 2021.

1 In the event that COVID-19 restrictions prevent travelling and/or organising the Bootcamp in Finland, an alternative plan will be considered.
We encourage you to apply for the BOOST UP Set Up training if:

- Your startup is a registered business located in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, or Zambia.
- Technology and innovation play a key role in your business model to address a societal challenge in Southern Africa.
- You have a scalable business model.
- You are developing or finalising a prototype, or have a prototype ready.
- Your startup has a minimum of two team members interested in participating.
- You or your startup have not won a SAIS 2-associated national pitch competition and participated in the BOOST UP Bootcamp in 2020 or 2019, Slush Global Impact Accelerator 2018, or been sponsored by SAIS 2 to participate in Slush 2017.

**NOTE:** applications from female-led startups are particularly encouraged.

"Technology and innovation" here includes, but is not limited to:

- Applications
- Internet of Things
- Artificial Intelligence
- Drone technology
- Renewable Energy and Circular Economy
- Smart City/Smart Environment
- Big Data
- Communications (e.g. internet connectivity services)
- Anything that uses technology and innovation to improve a product or service in any way. Please look at the previous years' finalists for examples of the type of startups we accept.

**HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BOOST UP STAND UP NATIONAL PITCH COMPETITIONS**

The Connected Hubs network will select the Stand Up pitch competition participants from the startups that participated in the Set Up training.

**To be selected to pitch, your startup will be required to:**

- Have participated in the Set Up training
- Be a registered business located in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, or Zambia
- Have a prototype ready

In addition, you must be 18 years or above. Alternatively, if you are under 18 and selected to the Scale Up incubator and Bootcamp, you must be accompanied by your guardian. The guardian will be responsible for her/his own travel costs.

A limited number of startups per country will be selected to participate in the Set Up training and the Stand Up pitch competition. This is how we will make the selection:

- Does the solution make a societal impact?
- Is the solution novel in the market?
- Does the solution have the potential to scale up?
- Does the solution have growth potential and commercial viability?
- Does the team show commitment and ability?
- What is the stage of prototype development?