



Call for applications - Kenya Youth-led MSMEs project

Opportunities are open for youth-led Medium Small and Micro Enterprises (MSMEs) designed to recognize and empower young entrepreneurs to harness intellectual property (IP) to strengthen their enterprises. The Kenya Industrial Property Institute (KIPI) in collaboration with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), has commenced a Youth-led MSMEs project in Kenya, which will be implemented in partnership with national and international IP stakeholders and other collaborators.

The deadline for applications is **15th April 2026**

The project aims to build awareness and practical skills around IP assets—covering patents, trade marks, and copyrights—to strengthen MSMEs’ ability to differentiate their products, prevent imitation, and compete effectively in regional and global markets, thereby reinforcing job creation and wealth generation in Kenya among the youth.

The Beneficiaries will profit from a comprehensive training and personalized mentoring program, covering IP tools and their strategic management, business development and market penetration good practices. They will also receive a tailor-made assessment to develop their IP protection and commercialization strategies.

In addition, the project will guide beneficiaries through the processes of registration of IP and protection (such as patent or trade mark applications) and provide orientation on enforcement mechanisms to safeguard their innovations as they explore new markets.

Applications must illustrate how the applicant will leverage IP tools to scale their business and create sustainable opportunities for Kenyan youth.

Criteria for eligibility

1. Must be an MSME or entrepreneurship led by Kenyan man/ woman aged between 18-35 years;
2. Be rolled out or about to roll out into the Kenyan market;
3. Have or are likely to achieve a good economic impact in:
 - a. Food;
 - b. Food processing;



c. Agritech.

4. Each applicant should belong to one MSME or entrepreneurship.
5. Group of beneficiaries should be at a medium production / development stage;
6. The business should have already an installed production capacity, including potential assets, products or services to be protected under IP rights.
7. Originality - should be novel, unique or local adaptation of the existing technology;
8. Sustainability - evidence of viable business model or long-term plan; and
9. Job creation potential- the MSME should be able to articulate how IP protection will enable them to grow and create new, quality jobs for other young Kenyans within the next 1-5 years.
10. Women and persons with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply.

Submission of entries

1. To take part in the competition, participants must fill and submit the Entry form provided below, which can also be downloaded from the [KIPI website here](#).
2. The completed and signed entries should be sent to: YouthmsmeProject@kipi.go.ke.
3. Entries that contain inappropriate or incomplete information will be disqualified;
4. By entering the competition, participants agree that their entries will be made publicly available and may be used by WIPO and KIPI for exhibition and publicity purposes;
5. The deadline for receipt of entries is **15th April 2026**; and
6. Winners will be announced on KIPI website and also notified through a formal communication.



Rules governing the competition/Project:

- 1) The competition is organized and administered by the Kenya Industrial Property Institute (KIPI) in collaboration with WIPO, and is open to all young Kenyan men and women (aged 18-35) except the employees and immediate family members of KIPI and the committee appointed to judge the competition.
- 2) By entering the competition, all participants fully agree to the terms and conditions governing the competition.
- 3) KIPI reserves the right at its own discretion to cancel or suspend the project should matters beyond its control arise that would compromise the objectivity or integrity of the competition.
- 4) KIPI and the Jury undertake to handle all received entries with care and to keep the information contained therein confidential- KIPI and the Jury will not be held responsible for any damage or loss of any entry of the IP rights.
- 6) Innovations entered for the competition must be the original work by the participant(s).
- 7) The finalists shall be notified in writing/email.
- 8) Any cash awards for the winners shall be at the discretion of KIPI and the Jury.
- 9) The decision of the Institute shall be final and the Institute shall not be bound to provide reasons to the participants for any decision made thereof.

Selection Details

A limited cohort of high-potential MSMEs will be competitively selected. Successful applicants must commit to full participation in all programme activities.

For inquiries: info@kipi.go.ke

This programme is part of a broader initiative to strengthen Kenya's innovation ecosystem by empowering youth-led enterprises to leverage Intellectual Property for growth and competitiveness.