

# AFRICAN ENTREPRENEUR COLLECTIVE

THE BRAVE RISE TOGETHER [HEADER IMAGE BEHIND TITLE AND MOTTO]

[Tagline for Google search description: African Entrepreneur Collective works with high potential local entrepreneurs so that they can grow their businesses and create jobs.]

## A CONTINENT OF UNREALIZED POTENTIAL

Africa as a continent is often described in terms of its scarcity. What is forgotten is that a nation's people, especially its young and the entrepreneurial, are its most important, and irreplaceable, resource.

Africa is home to some 200 million people aged 15 to 24, and though while 60% of all unemployed are youth, there is no shortage of innovators with great ideas for transforming their communities. While the rising generation is motivated to create their own jobs through entrepreneurship, they often lack the resources to grow their businesses to a size that can generate jobs for others.

## AFRICAN SOLUTIONS TO AFRICAN PROBLEMS

[header image ?]

African Entrepreneur Collective (AEC) partners with high-potential African entrepreneurs to build their skills, expand their networks, and grow their businesses so that they may employ others. As a business accelerator, we provide African entrepreneurs technical assistance, connection to global markets, direct access to affordable capital, and continuing support so that they can scale up their businesses and have greater impact on their communities.

[video [https://player.vimeo.com/video/271521851?app\\_id=122963&wmode=opaque](https://player.vimeo.com/video/271521851?app_id=122963&wmode=opaque)]

Our vision is an Africa with low unemployment, where young people are engaged, where communities have access to relevant innovations to better their lives, and where African solutions are unleashed to solve African problems.

## MEET THE ENTREPRENEURS

IMAGE CAROUSEL with links to entrepreneur stories. Title above is linked to Entrepreneur page.

## IMPACT

Since launching in Rwanda in 2012, African Entrepreneur Collective has provided training, consulting services, and access to affordable financing to more than 1,600 dedicated entrepreneurs. Our clients include refugees in camps and urban settings, youth in technology, and growing enterprises.

[GRAPHIC: AEC IMPACT CONTINENT-GRAPHIC FROM 2017 ANNUAL REPORT or NUMBER COUNTER a la <https://invest-in-africa.nl/>]

## ~~LOOKING FORWARD~~

~~[SEE ARROW GRAPHIC IN 2017 ANNUAL REPORT]~~

AEC is growing rapidly and scaling up its own enterprise as it helps scale others. As always, AEC's goal is to broaden its geographic footprint to reach entrepreneurs wherever they are, so that they can generate new jobs and transform their communities.

# WHO WE ARE

## WE EAT GOAT!

African Entrepreneur Collective is a group of professional, hard-working, and fun-loving individuals committed to building the capacity of African entrepreneurs. Similar to our entrepreneurs, we are all in, and we work hard to find data-driven solutions to our daily work. Our team members come from all over including Rwanda, the DRC, Burundia, the UK, and the US.

### OUR VALUES

- Movements build, and communities change when people come together through collective intention. The brave rise together.
- People are the source of all great things, and a country's people is its greatest resource. AEC's entrepreneurs are an integral part to the phenomenon of Africa Rising.
- Inclusive growth advances equitable economic opportunity for every section of society. Nobody should be left behind.
- We believe all problems on the Continent have solutions that already exist on the Continent.
- We are committed to continuous learning and growing.

### OUR LEADERSHIP

African Entrepreneur Collective was founded in summer 2012 by social entrepreneurs Julienne Oyler and Sara Leedom, whose experience living and working in Africa convinced them that supporting young entrepreneurs was the most sustainable way to move African nations out of poverty. The leadership team brings a wealth of expertise including over 10 years of experience in education and international development, and over 15 years of growing and managing social impact organizations.

[leadership list and bios, three columns are good, maybe make leadership "cards" with name and title on front, and (shorter) bios on the back]

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

[list]

### INVESTMENT COUNCIL

[list]

## PRESS

[youtube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Db2BVwssUmw&feature=youtu.be>]

[quote from video]

*“Those working in the field are trying several things: Effective accelerators that help make businesses investment-ready, blended finance that allows public or charity funds to de-risk and unlock private capital, and work to build out a system with additional support for these companies.”*

— Devex

## **PARTNERS**

While many organizations in Africa support economic development, most focus on the early stages of new business creation or provide short-term services. These offerings generate an abundance of ideas, but too often fail to generate real enterprises that create meaningful numbers of jobs.

Instead of stimulating new business development, AEC’s programs provide on-going support to existing entrepreneurs to enter new markets, strengthen their operations, and ultimately grow their businesses. The African Entrepreneur Collective believes in a simple concept: In order to create more jobs in Africa, we find the people who are already creating jobs, and help them do it better. In order to do this, we are proud to partner with the following organizations:

[list of partners]

## **TRANSPARENCY**

[for future consideration: section here with links to financial forms, charity watch score, etc.]

# WHAT WE DO

## ACCELERATING INNOVATION

AEC is a collection of business accelerators and incubators that offers business education, technical support and access to affordable capital to viable entrepreneurs. To date, we have worked with over 1,600 entrepreneurs who have generated 5,400 new jobs in their communities.

### OUR FOCUS [WITH GRAPHIC ICONS FOR EACH BULLET]

- **Focus on existing entrepreneurs**
  - Entrepreneurs who have already demonstrated viability at a small scale are most likely to succeed in making the leap to the next level where they can employ others. We support entrepreneurs to expand their small businesses and transform their communities.
- **Develop entrepreneur capacity**
  - The skills it takes to start a business aren't always the skills it takes to grow a business. We provide strategic consulting and practical training to equip entrepreneurs with the skills needed for growth.
- **Remove barriers to growth**
  - As businesses grow to scale, entrepreneurs face additional challenges of management, access to expensive capital, and navigating new regulations. We offer low cost capital and additional support to empower our entrepreneurs to bridge the "pioneer gap."

## APPROACH

AEC's teams work with two kinds of entrepreneurs who are distinguished based on business need and stage of growth. All entrepreneurs participate in the same training and facilitation programs.

### SMALL TO MEDIUM ENTERPRISE (SME) GROWTH

Entrepreneurs with innovative, tested and scalable enterprises are selected by the SME Growth team to participate in accelerator programs that provide them with the practical means to succeed and grow. The SME Growth team focuses on entrepreneurs whose businesses have hit a plateau and offers support and access to capital to scale up their enterprises.

### MICRO-BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

AEC's Micro-Business Solutions team works with refugee entrepreneurs as well as members of the surrounding community. With Sub-Saharan Africa hosting over 26% of the world's refugee population, millions of refugees in Africa have been displaced from the workforce. Entrepreneurs who work with the Micro-Business Solutions team not only contribute to a more financially self-sufficient livelihood for their families, but also contribute to a better economy within, and around, refugee settlements.

## IMPACT [GRAPHICS]

- **\$1.89 MILLION** increased revenues for entrepreneurs in 2017
- **85%** business survival
- **95%** clients increased skills
- **92%** client satisfaction

### AEC ANNUAL REPORT 2017

This report shares updates on our organization, model, and finances, as well as powerful stories of entrepreneurs brave enough to work together to improve their lives, and the lives of others. In 2017, we doubled our impact and we look forward to doubling it again in 2018.

#### [LINKED IMAGE OF REPORT]

Download our annual report below to learn more about our work and impact.

#### [VIDEO URL <HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/9UPCEZKRB40>]

AEC is proud to be working with East Africa's young leaders to build their nations through private sector development. From our early days in Rwanda, here are the voices of young entrepreneurs we have supported in this video.

### MEET OUR ENTREPRENEURS

["Meet our Entrepreneurs" should have its own landing page and menu item. This section in What We Do could be the same as the homepage carousel with scrolling content boxes linking to the entrepreneur, or just a simple link to the Meet Our Entrepreneurs landing page.]



## African Entrepreneur Collective – Website Copywriting Project

August/September 2018

**Project Volunteer** – Hayes Crowley

**AEC Project Lead** – Jamie Belsterling

### Project Description

AEC has grown significantly in the past few years, and our website content has not kept up, or has been updated in a clunky, piecemeal fashion. Plus, as an impact-driven organization, we need to tell the story of our results in East Africa.

As our current content fails to capture the work of AEC – and the cultural spirit of why we do it - having professional copywriting will help AEC clearly communicate our mission, programs, and impact in a way that excites donors and international audiences. Plus, AEC is expanding into new geographies, so we need an easy way to explain our new growth strategy – how do we add information but not overpromise as we still figure things out?

We want the (mostly US audience) to be enthused and entice engagement with AEC's work, and to feel the spirit and culture of AEC's operations in East Africa.

### Optional Phase II – Entrepreneur stories and Design Overhaul

1. AEC Website Redesign – primarily visual design & minor construction updates
  - a. Squarespace platform
  - b. Incorporates the use of photos and other graphic elements to tell the story.
  - c. Website navigation is intuitive
2. Short, easily-absorbed entrepreneur success stories (balance of gender and business type)
3. Additional graphic elements (if needed)

### Project Deliverables

8 pieces of tightly written web copy (200-300 words each). A list of SEO keywords incorporated into the copy.

The 8 chunks of copy should include the following topics (ranked by importance):

1. AEC homepage – very quickly, who we are, what we do (problem & solution), why we do it (culture of the organization), and why the audience should be excited about AEC.
2. What we do – quick, easy to understand overview of the AEC's accelerator program.
  - Includes description of services of our core programs (i.e. training, consulting, access to financing for SMEs and refugees)
  - Includes breakout of affiliate brands (see Background Info below) –should this be under the Who We Are section?

- Includes breakout
- Probably two parts
- 3. What we do – where & who we work with
  - Currently work in Rwanda with entrepreneurs (both refugees and Rwandan SMEs, noteworthy to audiences, how do we tell this story? Entrepreneurs— are the rock stars, they already have the ideas; ).
  - Need for entrepreneur services for these two populations
  - Brief education on economic growth as transformational in African economies (optional)
- 4. Impact – how has AEC made a difference in the world? (could include jobs created, entrepreneurs trained, loans given, etc. Visual? More than Copy? )
- 5. Donate – Clear message that calls people (primarily US audience) to donate.
- 6. Who We Are – staff, team, AEC values, etc. This needs a good clean-up. Values are outdated, rich culture we want to communicate to ‘intl audiences.... Freshen up on values (see annual reports, etc.)

### Timeline



Sept 1, 2018 – September ?, 2018

### Background Info on AEC

#### **African Entrepreneur Collective (AEC) Mission:**

AEC builds the capacity of African entrepreneurs to grow their businesses and create jobs.

#### **AEC Affiliate Brands (wholly owned by AEC):**

		<b>AEC Kenya (Coming Soon)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://www.inkomoko.com">www.inkomoko.com</a></li> <li>• Rwandan implementing company</li> <li>• Inkomoko supports high-potential businesses in Rwanda. Our services empower entrepreneurs to strengthen their business operations and increase their sales and profitability.</li> <li>• Provides business development services including training and consulting to help entrepreneurs grow their businesses and create jobs.</li> <li>• Primary audience: Rwandan clients, partners, and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://www.aecrwanda.com">www.aecrwanda.com</a></li> <li>• Revolving loan fund for entrepreneurs</li> <li>• Low-cost financing to entrepreneurs operating in Rwanda.</li> <li>• Loans up to \$50,000 and a portfolio of \$400,000 total</li> <li>• Only AEC clients (i.e. Inkomoko and soon to be AEC Kenya clients can access this funding)</li> <li>• Primary audience: existing clients in Rwanda, Kiva (fundraising partner)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion of micro-services to refugee entrepreneurs in Kakuma Camp and entrepreneurs in the host community (Turkana District)</li> </ul>





entrepreneurs. Refugee entrepreneurs living in Rwanda.		
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