

Africa becoming the gender hub for gender mainstreaming success - Accenture

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Nominations for the Accenture 11th Africa Gender Mainstreaming Awards, presented by Business Engage, are open. These awards offer a platform dedicated to promoting diversity and excellence with a focus on gender mainstreaming.



In a world where gender equality is not just an aspiration but a strategic imperative, Africa is emerging as the hub for gender mainstreaming success. Business Engage and all the sponsors, including Accenture, AECI, JSE, Vodacom, DP World, RMB, and Assupol, invite corporates and individuals to join us on a journey of recognition, celebration, and empowerment at the Accenture 11th Africa Gender Mainstreaming Awards to be held on 5 October 2023 at Vodacom Dome.

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Says CSI and responsible business lead for Accenture in Africa, Khethiwe Nkuna: "We are proud to be the naming sponsor of the Accenture 2023 GMA Awards that celebrate the fundamental principle of gender equality that we regard as our normal way of doing business.

"To drive change, organisations need to refocus their environments to support the development of women alongside their male counterparts – as equals. Both women and men must become agents of gender equality within their workplaces and spheres of influence. Each business leader must become a champion for change, supporting women's advancement into leadership positions by recognising and promoting capable women where it is due."

Corporates and individuals are invited to celebrate gender mainstreaming by nominating remarkable individuals and corporates who have made a real difference in achieving diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.

"We are extremely proud to have an opportunity to be a sponsor for this year's Gender Mainstreaming Awards, which celebrate those making a real difference in this area. Addressing the ongoing gender inequality that exists in the workplace is a key step in combating skills shortages, improving innovation, and driving progress in our market. This is especially true of the science, technology, engineering, and maths fields where women, especially women of colour are still largely excluded.

For many years now, Vodacom has focused on driving female empowerment through various programmes which promote diversity and inclusion both within our own organisation and generally within the technology space. The improvements to the gender profile of our board which is now comprised of 50% black women and our hugely successful 'Code Like a Girl' programme are testament to our commitment to growing female empowerment in the technology space both at home and across Africa," says Njabulo Mashigo, HR director for Vodacom South Africa.

Over the years, the Gender Mainstreaming Awards have been a powerful indicator of the strides made to create more gender-balanced corporate entities. These awards recognise and reward both corporates and individuals who have shown remarkable commitment to gender mainstreaming.

Says Bridget Mokwena-Halala, Assupol CEO: "Transformation is always at the helm of our agenda; hence we are deliberate in our efforts to appoint women in strategic positions and contribute to a society that supports and embraces the empowerment of its women. Assupol is proud to be involved in the 2023 Gender Mainstreaming Awards. As leaders in our industry, we take the responsibility to lead by example very seriously."

The Gender Mainstreaming Awards have expanded into Africa, encompassing East and West Africa. And are represented by an overall Africa Gender Mainstreaming Champion, as well as Champions in the Southern, East and West Africa regions. The Awards aim to make Africa the gender hub, exporting stories of success to the rest of the world. The 10th Gender Mainstreaming Awards in 2022 comprised very successful simultaneous in-person events with 500 attendees in Gauteng, South Africa, 300 in Nairobi, Kenya and 100 in Accra, Ghana. The event was also streamed online, hosting 6,800 attendees from across Africa.

"Our partnership with the Gender Mainstreaming Awards aligns closely with our continuous drive for gender diversity, gender equality and women empowerment in the workplace – ensuring that as a business and individuals, we hold ourselves accountable to being the change we want to see. We have a long-standing history with Business Engage and have felt the significant impact that these awards bring to businesses and people. We look forward to this year's entries and the continued commitment by corporate South Africa to driving and supporting women empowerment," says Esha Mansingh, executive head of sub-Saharan Africa corporate affairs and sustainability at DP World.

Vuyo Lee, director: marketing and corporate affairs at the JSE adds: "As the JSE, we recognise and understand that gender equality is both a moral imperative and important driver of financial inclusion in South Africa. For this reason, we support the Gender Mainstreaming Awards, as they are a vehicle for recognising organisations that are making meaningful contributions to the progression of women in their businesses and communities. In our organisation, 64% of our board of directors and 80% of our executive members are women. We are proud of this achievement and our participation in the awards. We hope this serves as a catalyst for more companies to focus on gender mainstreaming in our economy."

Currently, there are eleven private sector categories for corporates and individuals to enter.

There are eight corporate awards:

- Women on Boards
- Women on Executive Committees in Multinationals
- Economic Empowerment
- Mainstreaming Gender and Disability
- Economic Empowerment
- Investing in Young Women
- Women Empowerment in the Workplace
- Empowerment of Women in the Community

There are three individual categories:

- Positive Role Model

- Inclusive Leader Award
- RMB African's Fearless Thinker Award

"Our long-standing relationship with the Business Engage and the Gender Mainstreaming Awards is an attestation to our commitment to a more gender-equal future. We continuously work towards creating an environment where women feel they are empowered to achieve their individual career goals and are committed to growing the number of women in leadership in financial services." says Dharshni Padayachee, head of diversity and inclusion, RMB

Corporates and individuals should note that all entries are submitted online with supporting documentation under the Enrolment Form tab on <http://gender-mainstreaming.awardsplatform.com>. We have entries for East Africa, West Africa and Southern Africa. It is a condition of entry that finalists attend the Gender Mainstreaming Awards.

The deadline for entries has been extended to 20 June 2023. The semi-final event for individual categories in southern Africa will follow on 28 July 2023. The judges will interview all shortlisted companies and individuals from 4 July 2023 to 28 July 2023, and finalists will be announced by 2 August 2023.

"We believe the best way to influence change is to strengthen and grow the current conversation, then couple that with deliberate actions," concludes Colleen Larsen, chief executive of Business Engage.

Visit www.genderawards.com for more information or to enter.

- " **Allergies and sensitivities during seasonal changes, by Medshield** 13 May 2024
- " **Unlocking your benefits - Medical aid tax credits and subsidies, by Medshield** 22 Apr 2024
- " **Medical aid cover for physical rehabilitation and physical therapy in South Africa, by Medshield** 28 Mar 2024
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