

ALX'S WOMXN AND TECH INITIATIVE SET TO HELP BRIDGE THE TECH GENDER GAP IN AFRICA

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ALX's commitment to addressing the digital gender divide and increasing the participation of women in tech kicks off with their first-ever female only programme, aiming to provide up to 50,000 women in Africa with Software Engineering skills.

NAIROBI, Kenya , March 7, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- In celebration of International Women's Day (IWD) taking place on 8 March, ALX announced its first dedicated Software Engineering cohort for women, enabling up to 50 000 women across Africa to participate in the global technology revolution and helping to transform the tech status quo throughout the continent.

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Fred Swaniker, Founder and CEO of African Leadership International (PRNewsfoto/African Leadership International)

The cohort forms part of ALX's 'WomXn and Tech' initiative and was inspired by the United Nations IWD theme of 'DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality.' ALX is showing its commitment to bridging the digital gender divide in Africa, increasing the representation of women in the technology sector and driving the participation of women to innovate and create solutions for a diverse world. This cohort will provide a launchpad for women to grow their careers in one of the most exciting and in-demand fields in the world.

Part of African Leadership International (ALI), ALX is a leading technology training provider that offers world-class programmes to thousands of young people across Africa, equipping them with both the professional and technical skills that enable them to thrive in high-growth industries.

The statistics make for grim reading. Women comprise just 5% of global software engineers. Considering that there are an estimated 690 000 software engineers in Africa, even applying the global average means that there is a significant gender divide that must be addressed.

It is through this female cohort that ALX will take the steps necessary to reduce this considerable disparity. Thanks to its partnership with the Mastercard Foundation, ALX is offering sponsored placements to thousands of young women who meet the eligibility requirements for this programme.

"ALX knows that our collective future depends upon a female voice, a female brain, and her perspective in devising solutions for the world of tomorrow. Through 'WomXn and Tech', we are boldly proclaiming our call to action for women across the continent and the rest of the world to not just have a seat at the table, but to redesign the table. This 100% female software engineering cohort we are introducing helps to accomplish this," says Fred Swaniker, Founder and CEO of ALI.

The programme has been made possible following the recent acquisition by ALI of leading Silicon Valley institution, Holberton Inc. ALX is now one of the largest software engineering trainers in the world, which aligns with the organisation's mission to develop Africa's human capital at scale and enable women with best-in-class digital skills and excellence.

"Imagine a world where every voice is heard, where every perspective is valued, where every person can contribute their unique talents and insights to create the best possible products and services. This is the world we must strive for in technology, where women make up half of all users but are often excluded from the engineering process," says Julien Barbier, co-founder of Holberton and Chief Product Officer at ALI.



"By tapping into the full potential of our diverse communities, we not only foster innovation but also unlock the boundless talent and creativity of all Africans," he adds.

The cohort has been designed to support women from the start of their training and throughout their career journeys as they become part of The ROOM, ALI's community of top technology professionals from across the globe.

"We want to encourage young women in Africa to see technology as a pathway to a great career. As such, we are investing in young women to give them the support they need to thrive and either pursue a career in technology or embark on technology ventures themselves," says Sharon O'Donnell, Chief Experience Officer at ALI.

Reeta Roy, President and CEO of the Mastercard Foundation, adds: "The quality of a girl's future is determined by the quality of the opportunities she has to learn and develop work-relevant skills. The Mastercard Foundation is committed to addressing systemic barriers inhibiting young women from accessing relevant learning and dignified economic opportunities. Through our partnership with ALI, we are working to help enable women to become catalysts and advocates for change in their communities, creating opportunities for future generations of girls and the economy as a whole."

Applications for the ALX Software Engineering intake for women close on 15 March. The programme will start on 27 March.

No prior experience or background in IT is required to apply. For more information on the programme and its entry requirements, please visit www.alxafrica.com/women-in-tech/.

Editor's notes/ additional information about ALX and the Mastercard Foundation

ABOUT ALX

ALX is a leading technology training provider that equips young Africans with both the technical and professional skills that enable them to thrive in the digital economy. Its world-class programmes are designed to help learners build their careers in high-growth industries and become agile digital leaders for the 21st century. As part of African Leadership International, ALX is connected to an innovative ecosystem that has been successfully producing competitive talent and placing them with the world's top employers over the past two decades. Together with its partners - the Mastercard Foundation and The ROOM - its mission is to transform the future of Africa by enabling 2 million young professionals to secure dignified and meaningful work opportunities by 2030.

For more information about its courses or to find out more about ALX, please visit www.alxafrica.com.

ABOUT THE MASTERCARD FOUNDATION

The Mastercard Foundation works with visionary organisations to enable young people in Africa and in Indigenous communities in Canada to access dignified and fulfilling work. It is one of the largest private foundations in the world with a mission to advance learning and promote financial inclusion to create an inclusive and equitable world. It was established in 2006 through the generosity of Mastercard when it became a public company. The Foundation is an independent organisation, and its policies, operations, and program decisions are determined by its own Board of Directors and senior leadership team. It is a registered Canadian charity with offices in Toronto, Kigali, Accra, Nairobi, Kampala, Lagos, Dakar, and Addis Ababa.

For more information on the Foundation, please visit: www.mastercardfdn.org

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