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## Open Innovation Africa Summit provides essential platform for Africa's innovators

*Nairobi, 23 May 2012* – The stage is set for more than 200 of Africa's top policy makers, developers, entrepreneurs and private enterprises to engage in three days of intense debate at the Open Innovation Africa Summit (OIAS) held in Nairobi, Kenya next week. The OIAS exists to stimulate discussion about the role of entrepreneurship, innovation and ICTs in Africa – not just among participants, but also virtually – and to explore the transformative innovations necessary to successfully address many of the challenges facing Africa today.

This year's OIAS – the second one of its kind – is organized by Nokia, CapGemini and *infoDev*, a technology, entrepreneurship and innovation program in the World Bank. The main aim of the summit is to empower African thought-leaders to find ways to spur technological innovation within their own local context.

This year's summit, themed "Leadership in Innovation", brings the spotlight on the leadership required to drive acceleration of African entrepreneurship and innovation, in order to reach ambitious targets for socio-economic development across the continent. After years of lagging in ICT, Africa is now emerging as a recognized innovator in areas such as financial inclusion and mobile app development, demonstrated by the growing number of firms from the continent now competing on the international stage.

"Without open innovation enabling business environment and seamless collaboration, creation of new innovative enterprises and locally relevant solutions becomes incredibly challenging," says Jussi Hinkkanen, Nokia's VP of Corporate Relations and Business Environment for the Middle East and Africa. "This event underscores that Nokia and *infoDev* believe in the power of partnerships and that Africa is ready for an entrepreneurial revolution".

"We want that 'switch' to click in the minds of the policy-makers, innovators and business leaders who can envision change and make it happen," says Valerie D'Costa, Program Manager of *infoDev*. "In the end, we want it to lead to new sustainable businesses creating new jobs. Both Nokia and *infoDev* believe that mobile innovations can change lives for the better, leading to improvements in education, health, agriculture and overall livelihoods".

The summit will also celebrate the winners of the open 'Ideas to Innovation' challenge, an online competition held earlier in the year for turning ideas into successful businesses.

For more information, visit [the infoDev website](#) or Nokia's OIAS [web page](#).