

Nairobi Innovation Week kicks off on a high note

The climax of Nairobi Innovation Week 2017 peaked today, March 8, 2017, when the Cabinet Secretary, ICT, Mr. Joe Mucheru officially opened it.

The highly attended ceremony held at the University of Nairobi Towers drew participation from partners from various sectors of the industry as well as the government.

In the key note address, the Cabinet Secretary, commended UoN for the consistency in hosting the event.

“The government will continue to support the Nairobi Innovation Week as a national event,” he said. Mr. Mucheru highlighted the initiatives by the government to support innovation and entrepreneurship among the youth with specific focus on the use of technology.

“We have rolled out various programmes targeting the development of the Kenyan youth. For example, we have the ‘Talent ni Kazi’ whereby the government has set up music studios in different counties to support upcoming young artists,” he said. “The youth must be encouraged to get into the innovators hub, develop innovations and earn an income. I challenge the youth to have a job creating mentality instead of job searching.”

The UoN Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi, said that since inception in 2015, the Nairobi Innovation Week has recorded significant results so far.

“We have seen research products get launched, startups scale and policy environment improve as a result of this initiative,” he said. “As a University, we have identified specific projects and programmes that we are focusing on that are aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals. We are revising curricula and launching new academic programs. We have also started initiatives like the Bicycle Sharing initiative to transform urban mobility and reduce the over-reliance on motorized transport. We have built new partnerships to enhance our commercialization of research, among other initiatives.”

Prof. Mbithi announced that the Nairobi Innovation Week 2018 will be held from March 5th to 9th, 2018.

The UoN Chancellor, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi gave a moving speech, thanking all the partners and sponsors for supporting the University.

“I am extremely happy and humbled by your support through participation, mobilization of resources, and generation of ideas that have made the Nairobi Innovation week a successful and truly global event,” she said. “My sincere thanks go to the H.E the President and the entire government of Kenya for consistently supporting us morally and materially. I also want to extend unfathomable gratitude to all our partners, sponsors and the UoN community for immense support they have put.”

The Nairobi Innovation Week 2017 strategic partner is UNICEF. The title sponsor is Barclays Bank of Kenya. The gold sponsor is KCB group while Safaricom is the silver sponsor.

The Bronze sponsors include Konza Technopolis, Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA), NIC Bank, Kenya Climate Change Innovation Centre, University of Nairobi Enterprise services (UNES), University of Nairobi Alumni fraternity, Strathmore University, AALTO University from Finland and the Embassy of Finland, UBER, National Research Foundation.

The partners are the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Cooperatives, Ministry of ICT, Ministry of Education, ICT Authority, Embassy of Israel, KENET, DEMO Africa, IBiz Africa, Metta, NIC Bank, Chase Bank, Samsung, IBM and Nation Media Group.