

## News Release

### **F-LANE final: five international startups with the potential to make the world a better place**

- **Around 180 startups and social ventures in 50 countries that utilise technology to empower women applied for a place in the Vodafone Institute accelerator**
- **Five young female entrepreneurs from Great Britain, Uganda, Mozambique, Australia and USA made it into the final**
- **Finalists take part in a six-week acceleration programme in Berlin that includes mentorship, training, access to networks and funding**
- **Launch of F-LANE Twitter account @flane\_vfi**

Berlin, 6 September 2017. Five innovative and high-potential digital impact ventures focusing on female empowerment have secured a place in the first Vodafone Institute initiated Europe-wide accelerator programme. The Vodafone Institute selected the five most impressive startups for F-LANE. They include social ventures from Great Britain, Uganda, Mozambique, India and USA which can now look forward to the six-week accelerator programme in Berlin, including a stipend, mentorship, training and access to networks.

The programme mission is to foster the participation of women in technological development and to empower girls and women around the world through technology. F-LANE has collaborated with the Impact Hub Berlin and the Social Entrepreneurship Akademie to source innovative technology startups around the world that focus on women, provide an enterprising solution to a social problem and have the potential to make a wide impact.

The six-week accelerator programme in Berlin begins on 9 October 2017 and culminates in the F-LANE pitch to investors and selected decision makers in business and politics on 16 November 2017. The venue for this year's pitch is the "Capital Junge Elite Gipfel", a conference hosted by German business magazine CAPITAL.

Alice Steinbrück, Director of Strategy and Programmes, Vodafone Institute:

"The global response, particularly from the USA and Africa, has made this round of F-LANE very impressive. The five selected projects demonstrate in different ways how technology can be used to initiate positive social change and improve the situation of women in the technology sector."

These are the teams that made it to the F-LANE final:

#### ***Washington DC, United States of America***

##### Sou Sou

Sou Sou is a mobile investment platform that partners with financial institutions and angel investors to decrease the time, cost and risk associated with lending to startups and early stage companies.

The aim is to close the access to capital gap that is crippling women globally by connecting investors

and banks to high performing women borrowers that meet their lending criteria. Fonta Gilliam, Co-Founder of Sou Sou, worked as an American Diplomat in Africa where she spent countless hours helping women pitch to banks and investors for business loans. They were consistently overlooked by existing financial institutions yet still managed to finance their businesses through village and communal savings, a system called "Sou Sou" in West Africa. This brought Gilliam to the idea of modernizing this practice "Sou Sou" through technology.

[www.investsousesou.com](http://www.investsousesou.com)

Founder names

Fonta Gilliam | Innocent Ephraim

Washington DC, United States of America

### ***Bristol, United Kingdom***

Gapsquare

Gapsquare provides tools through technology that enable gender analysis within companies to develop plans for managing diversity and to narrow the gender gap.

This means for example providing instant visual insights into a company's gender pay gap, using HR and payroll data. The dream is a world where women are paid the same as men for doing the same work. Gapsquare's mission is to help organisations make sense of their gender pay gap data.

Companies outperform their sector averages when they have broad gender diversity. This is why it is so important to have insight into a company's gender pay gap, thus having an easy tool to provide the insight.

<https://www.gapsquare.com/template/whatwedo>

Founder names

Zara Nanu | Ion Suruceanu

Bristol, United Kingdom

### ***Ibanda, Uganda***

Kaaro Health

Kaaro runs a telemedicine hub that provides a network of rural clinics with access to the services of qualified maternal and child health specialists. Health facilities located in rural areas that cannot afford specialized staff can make use of Kaaro's "telemedicine-as-a-service" instead. This allows clinics, in exchange for a small fee, to interact with physicians and specialists stationed at Kaaro's central hub. This fee is just a fraction of the cost required to hire a similarly qualified staff member. Many of the birth attendants or community health workers in these rural areas are unqualified with no formal training to handle women who need to deliver by Caesarean section or otherwise need advanced care. By providing these clinics with real-time access to qualified specialists, Kaaro Health is making a contribution in reducing maternal mortality.

[www.kaarohealth.com](http://www.kaarohealth.com)

Founder names:

Angella Kyomugisha; Brenda Nantongo; Joyce Nakawungu; Francis Xavier Asiimwe

### ***Australia, Sydney***

Good On You

Good On You is a mobile app that delivers ethical brand ratings to millions of consumers around the globe, who want to make more ethical choices.

Through this mobile shopping app, Good On You connects retailers to conscious consumers, thus making it easy for people to shop according to their values.

Many of the clothes we buy cost the world's poorest people and the environment a high price. There are shoppers who want to make ethical choices and buy cruelty free fashion, however it's hard to know how a brand treats its workers, the planet and animals. This is where Good On You comes into play, by offering you information and ratings on brands and their social responsibilities, you are therefore able to make conscious choices.

<https://goodonyou.eco/about/>

Founder names

Sandra Capponi; Gordon Renouf

### ***Maputo, Mozambique***

#### Mowoza

Mowoza strengthens Women Owned Micro and Small Retailers in Mozambican informal markets by integrating these MSEs into 'digital retail communities'.

By applying smart, cutting edge technologies, to the informal retail sector they change marketplaces and retail in Mozambique and eventually in Africa. Private Blockchain solutions fit the transactional distributed processes in the sector. They each individually place orders, transact and request deliveries independently of their peers

In 8-10 years time they would like to impact at least 10 million micro and small business women retailers.

<http://www.mowoza.com/>

Founder name:

Suzana Moreira

### **About F-LANE**

F-LANE is introducing its own Twitter page ([@flane\\_vfi](#)) for those who want to stay up to date on the teams and latest happenings, but also to provide a platform for those who are interested in insights regarding women in tech and want to be part of topics related to female empowerment and entrepreneurship. Around 180 startups from 50 countries applied to join the accelerator in the current round of F-LANE. F-LANE sources innovative technological startups around the world that focus on women and provide an enterprising solution to a social problem. Their business concept should ideally have the potential to make a wide impact and empower girls and women through technology.

Five startup entrepreneurs are selected to take part in the intensive six-week accelerator programme. There will be at least two programmes each year focusing on funding, coaching, training and networks.

To apply for F-LANE contact: Alice Steinbrück, Director Strategy & Programmes, Vodafone Institute, e-mail: [alice.steinbrueck@vodafone.com](mailto:alice.steinbrueck@vodafone.com)

Further information: [www.f-lane.com](http://www.f-lane.com)

[www.facebook.com/flaneaccelerator/](http://www.facebook.com/flaneaccelerator/)

Vodafone Institute partners:

<https://berlin.impacthub.net/>

[www.seakademie.de](http://www.seakademie.de)

[www.women-in-digital.de](http://www.women-in-digital.de)

**About the Vodafone Institute for Society and Communications**

The Vodafone Institute is Vodafone's European think tank. We explore the potential and responsible use of digital technologies for innovation, growth and sustainable social impact. Through research and events, we provide thought leadership and offer a platform for dialogue between business, academia and politics. We are committed to improving access to technology for all parts of society, thus develop and support on-the-ground projects for female empowerment. The wide ranging expertise of the Advisory Board members reflects the Institute's intention to act as a cross-sectoral platform.