Global Gateway

CIRCULAR VENTURE BUILDER EAST AFRICA

An Open Innovation Platform for Industry-Ready Circular Solutions

Strengthening Circular Value Chains in Kenya and East Africa

The Circular Venture Builder East Africa is a joint initiative by **SPARK**, implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on behalf of German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), in collaboration with Bosch Business Innovations Africa.

Together, GIZ SPARK and Bosch Business Innovations Africa collaborate to strengthen circular approaches in East Africa—starting in Kenya—by jointly implementing an **open innovation Venture Builder program** focused on circular electronics and e-waste solutions.

The Circular Venture Builder EA pilots a model that combines:

- Best-practice venture building support
- Catalytic, purpose-fit financing pathways
- Direct access to BOSCH's technological domain expertise and global networks.

This integrated approach is designed to move startups from proof-of-concept to industry-ready, investable scale.

The Challenge

Africa is one of the fastest-growing markets for electrical and electronic equipment, yet formal systems for safe collection, high-quality recycling, and second-life use remain underdeveloped. E-waste and industrial plastics are often landfilled, informally dismantled, or exported—leading to environmental harm, health risks, and the loss of valuable secondary raw materials.

At the same time, industries rely heavily on imported virgin materials, increasing costs and carbon intensity.

Circular ventures offer a clear pathway forward—but many struggle to scale due to:

- Capital-intensive, hardware-heavy business models
- Limited access to industrial off-take partners
- A financing "missing middle" (USD 250k–1m)
- Weak integration between startups, researchers, and corporates

The Circular Venture Builder addresses these systemic bottlenecks directly.

An Open Innovation Model with Industry at the Core

This initiative is structured as an **open innovation concept**, where startups co-develop and validate solutions alongside industry.

The Role of Bosch

Robert Bosch GmbH is a global technology and engineering company active across mobility, consumer goods, industrial technology, and energy and building technology. With deep expertise in electronics, IoT, advanced manufacturing, and lifecycle management, Bosch brings critical industrial capabilities to circular transformation.

Through the Circular Venture Builder, Bosch Business Innovations Africa provides:

- **Technical expertise** in electronics, manufacturing, and systems integration
- **Access to technology platforms and engineering know-how**
- **Industry validation pathways** aligned with global quality and environmental standards
- **Access to regional and international networks,** including potential customers and supply-chain partners

This ensures that supported ventures are not only innovative—but aligned with real industrial demand and standards.

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SPARK

BOSCH

The Role of SPARK

SPARK is a climate-tech ecosystem strengthening initiative implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on behalf of German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). It focuses on unlocking inclusive, gender-responsive, and research-based climate innovation across Africa.

Within the Circular Venture Builder East Africa, SPARK acts as a **strategic ecosystem integrator**—not only a funding partner.

SPARK:

- **Bridges research and entrepreneurship** by supporting the translation of scientific and technical knowledge into commercially viable circular ventures.
- **Co-creates purpose-fit financing mechanisms,** including catalytic and blended finance approaches tailored to capital-intensive circular business models.
- **Strengthens ecosystem cooperation** by aligning startups, research institutions, intermediaries, investors, and industry actors.
- **Ensures gender-responsive and climate-smart design,** embedding inclusive growth and measurable climate impact into venture development.
- **Provides structured venture building support,** including mentorship, governance strengthening, investment readiness preparation, and peer learning networks.

By combining SPARK's ecosystem expertise with Bosch's industrial capabilities, the Venture Builder de-risks circular business models and significantly increases their pathway to scale and investability.

FOCUS AREAS

Circular Electronics & E-Waste

1. Home & Consumer Electronics – Second Life

- End-to-end track & trace systems
- Repair, refurbishment, device-as-a-service models
- Secure spare-parts availability
- Incentives for lifecycle data sharing

2. E-Waste Collection & Recycling

- Safe collection and dismantling models
- Integration of formal and informal actors
- Incentives for device return
- Scalable material loop closure

3. Recovered Materials & Industrial Re-Use

- High-quality recovery of plastics, PCBs, and metals
- Compliance with environmental and security standards
- Secure supply of recycled inputs for industry
- Market access for recyclates

Why Should You Join?

If you are building in circular electronics, e-waste, or advanced material recovery, this Venture Builder is designed to help you scale beyond pilot stage and unlock industrial relevance.

By joining, you will gain:

- **Direct Industry Collaboration**
  Work alongside engineers and experts from Bosch Business Innovations Africa to co-develop and validate your solution against real industrial requirements.
- **Access to Technical Expertise & Technology**
  Leverage Bosch's engineering know-how and technology capabilities to strengthen product robustness and compliance readiness.
- **Market Access & Networks**
  Tap into regional and international value chains, potential off-takers, and strategic partners.
- **Structured Venture Building Support**
  Receive hands-on support from validation to commercialization—covering business model refinement, operations, governance, and investment readiness.
- **Purpose-Fit Financing Pathways**
  Benefit from catalytic and stage-appropriate financing approaches tailored to circular and hardware-heavy ventures.
- **Stronger Investability & De-Risking**
  Reduce technical and commercial risk through ecosystem alignment, mentorship, and industry validation - positioning your venture for follow-on investment.

If you have any questions or require further clarifications, please contact: capital-stack@giz.de

For more information, please visit: https://project-spark.africa/

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