

# JOINT INNOVATION FACILITY (JIF)

## CIRCULARITY CALL

### Connecting African circular businesses with European partners to develop commercially viable circular joint venture solutions

The **Joint Innovation Facility (JIF) – Circularity Call** connects African circular businesses with European partners to develop commercially viable partnerships and joint ventures that introduce or expand circular business activities.

Building on the **JIF approach developed through SPARK**, the initiative combines catalytic funding, technical expertise, business partnerships and market connections to create pathways for promising circular solutions to develop, test and scale.

### WHY JIF CIRCULARITY CALL?

Across East and Southern Africa, businesses are developing innovative approaches to reduce waste, extend product lifecycles and use resources more efficiently. Yet circular businesses can face barriers related to **finance, technology, market access, technical expertise and international partnerships**.

JIF Circularity Call brings together African and European businesses to address these barriers through **cross-border commercial partnerships, catalytic funding and complementary technical support**.

#### Africa × Europe

Cross-border partnerships that combine complementary capabilities, networks and market opportunities.

#### Circularity × Business

Circular solutions with market demand, commercial potential and pathways for growth.

#### Finance × Expertise

Non-dilutive funding complemented by technical assistance, business support and ecosystem connections.

#### Introduce × Scale

Circular business activities with potential to reduce material resource consumption, grow across markets and be replicated.

### WHAT DOES THE CALL FOCUS ON?

The JIF Circularity Call focuses on two priority value chains:

#### PLASTIC PACKAGING & PLASTIC WASTE

#### ELECTRONICS & E-WASTE

Eligible circular economy activities include:

- **Circular design and production** — including design for durability, repair and reuse, material reduction, and the use of recycled inputs
- **Circular use** — including reuse, repair and other lifetime-extension approaches
- **Value recovery** — including recycling and material recovery
- **Circularity-enablers** — such as digital tools, applications, marketplaces and data solutions that facilitate circular business activities

The call welcomes **upstream, midstream and downstream approaches**, with particular interest in innovative upstream and midstream solutions – for example, solutions that prevent waste and reduce resource use through circular design and production, or keep products and materials in use for longer through reuse, repair, refurbishment or other circular business models.

Projects should demonstrate a clear contribution to circularity within the selected value chain and identify how their impact will be measured.

### WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

The JIF Circularity Call supports **Africa-EU consortia of 2–3 partners seeking to build long-term commercial partnerships, including existing or planned joint ventures**.

#### AFRICAN LEAD PARTNER

The consortium must be led by an **African for-profit company** that:

- Is based in an eligible SWITCH-2-CE country
- Has been in operation for at least **3 years**
- Has an established or emerging commercially viable business model
- Demonstrates revenue generation and potential for growth and replication

- Has the technical and operational capacity to lead the project

**Eligible African countries:** Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, South Africa and Zambia.

### EU PARTNER

The consortium must include an **EU-based for-profit company** registered in one of the **27 EU Member States**.

European partners can contribute:

- Technology and technical expertise
- Commercial capabilities and networks
- Market access
- Complementary products, services or business models
- Opportunities for longer-term commercial partnerships

### THIRD PARTNER

Where applicable, a third consortium partner may include an **applied research organisation, non-profit organisation, public-sector entity or another eligible for-profit company** from Africa or the EU.

## WHAT DOES JIF CIRCULARITY OFFER?

**€100,000–€200,000 Non-dilutive, milestone-based grant funding:** Funding can support the integration or expansion of circular business activities in Sub-Saharan Africa and the EU.

**Technical Assistance:** Tailored support to strengthen business models, investment readiness and scaling potential.

**Ecosystem Connections:** Access to networks and opportunities across Africa and Europe, including:

- Investors and funding partners
- Innovation hubs and accelerators
- Corporates and market actors
- Research and innovation networks

**Africa–EU Partnerships:** Support to develop commercially viable partnerships and longer-term collaboration beyond the JIF funding period.

## WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

**Circular Impact:** A clear contribution to the transition towards a circular economy by reducing material resource consumption and improving practices beyond business as usual in the local market.

**Commercial Viability:** Built on a tested solution or business activity that demonstrates market demand and an established or emerging commercially viable business model.

**Africa–EU Value Creation:** A clear partnership objective, complementary capabilities and mutual value for African and European partners.

**Growth & Replication:** A credible pathway to growth and replication potential, including cross-border market expansion where relevant.

**Long-Term Sustainability:** A clear pathway for the circular business activity and partnership to continue beyond JIF funding.

**Strong Teams:** Committed teams with the technical and operational capacity to deliver the project and achieve its milestones.

**Gender-responsive and women-led ventures are especially encouraged to apply.**

### KEY FUNDING CONDITIONS

**50% minimum co-financing:** including a minimum **25% cash contribution**

**Revenue requirement:** Any partner receiving JIF funding must have generated revenue in the previous 12 months equivalent to at least **50% of the JIF funding requested**.

**Africa-led with EU partner:** The consortium must be led by an eligible African for-profit company and have an EU for-profit partner.

**For more information, please contact:** [jif.circularity@giz.de](mailto:jif.circularity@giz.de)

## About SPARK & SWITCH-2-CE

The JIF Circularity Call is a collaboration between **Project SPARK and SWITCH-2-CE in East and Southern Africa**, combining complementary approaches to strengthen circular businesses and Africa–Europe partnerships. The Call falls under the SWITCH-2-CE ESA Financing Facility, implemented by Expertise France and GIZ on behalf of the European Union. The Facility aims to improve access to and use of financing for circular economy businesses and business models in the region, providing catalytic financial instruments tailored to the needs of different private sector segments.

**Project SPARK** is a regional initiative implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). SPARK strengthens African innovation ecosystems and supports research-based, climate tech and gender-responsive innovation, including improved access to finance, markets and strategic partnerships.

**SWITCH-2-CE in ESA** is a regional project funded by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). It supports the transition towards a circular economy by strengthening enabling conditions, skills and access to finance for circular economy businesses, with a focus on plastic packaging and plastic waste and electronics and e-waste.

Together, the two initiatives are exploring how the JIF approach can create opportunities around **commercially viable circular solutions, cross-border partnerships and pathways to scale**.

