

CONCEPT NOTE
Chile 2019 APEC App Challenge
Connecting People, Building the Future

OVERVIEW & OUTCOME

MSMEs account for over 97% of all enterprises in APEC and provide over half of the region's jobs. MSMEs are notable for offering significant jobs and income generation opportunities for women. Globally there are roughly 9.34 million formal women-owned SMEs.¹

The internet is providing new opportunities for these MSMEs to access global value chains and grow², which in turn is significantly expanding employment opportunities for women³. At the same time, digital tools can help contribute to broader inclusive growth, by providing services to improve access to finance, business information, logistics and international marketplaces.

The APEC App Challenge is a joint initiative of the APEC Chile 2019, APEC Secretariat, the Asia Foundation and Google. It involves bringing a number of professional developers from APEC economies meeting in Santiago during the MRT to compete to build an app that helps female entrepreneurs connect to the skills, people and investment they need to grow their small businesses in the digital age.

The outcome of the project will be an app that helps female entrepreneurs across the region engage with mentors and access export and investment opportunities. It can also form a backdrop to constructive discussions on issues relating to digital technology and women's economic empowerment.

This focus is based, in part, on the statement by the High-Level Policy Dialogue on Women and the Economy Forum in 2018 in which members requested to explore ways to create opportunities for women to participate in the global economy including through; fostering conducive environments for women to start and run businesses; promoting women-owned MSMEs and women entrepreneurship in the digital economy; improving access to quality employment; advancing skills and resources, such as digital literacy and identity protection so that women can safely benefit from digital access to the fullest extent; and developing policies to improve access to finance, markets, start-up capital, and capacity building, taking into account language barriers.

¹ International Finance Corporation (2014), Women Owned SMEs <https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/b229bb004322efde9814fc384c61d9f7/WomenOwnedSMes+Report-Final.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>

² Asia Pacific MSME Trade Coalition (2017) MSMEs: New Stakeholders of Trade <http://tradecoalition.org/resource/micro-revolution-the-new-stakeholders-of-trade-in-apac/>

³ Asian Development Bank (2014), Gender Took Kit for MSMEs <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/34125/gender-tool-kit-mse-finance-developm ent.pdf>

The dates for the App Challenge will be 16-17 May 2019. The challenge is open to all developers from the 21 economies.

For more information please visit <https://www.apecchile2019.cl/apec/media/news/apec-app-challenge>.



FAQs

Who are the developers? Developers will be selected from a pool of contestants who have demonstrated both the technical skills necessary to succeed, as well as substantive knowledge and experience in the issue area under consideration.

How does the challenge work for the developers? Developer teams selected for the APEC Challenge will come from economies across the region. They will have more than a month to develop their understanding of the issue area. In the lead-up to the event, the Asia Foundation will support an online discussion and mentorship process, including a series of online video calls to give finalists an opportunity to discuss their ideas with each other. To preserve the excitement of a typical app challenge, teams will be given the core challenge in advance but will be given the final information needed to build an app during a 24-hour coding period.

Who will own the winning app? As is standard with app challenges, the developers would retain ownership and rights in relation to the app. APEC would have the right to reference the app and its support for the challenge.

What is the prize? The winning team will be given a prize of USD5,000 and an exclusive training session with an online export growth expert. There will also be prizes for the second and third placed teams. An 'APEC Digital Prosperity Award' will also be made for the most innovative, workable app. The APEC Digital Prosperity Award spotlights an outstanding new digital product that uses innovation to increase prosperity and inclusive growth across economies in the Asia Pacific region. Last year this was also awarded to the winner of the challenge, which enabled a larger roll-out of the app