

By Maxwell Ofori

The government of Ghana has earmarked a total of three million Ghana cedis as a grant for the thirty finalists in this year's Presidential Pitch.

The initiative, undertaken by the National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (NEIP), is designed to promote youth entrepreneurship and innovation.

The announcement was made by the President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, during the grand finale of Season 5, held on Friday, August 23, 2024 in Accra.

During the ceremony held to honour the first ten finalists, who pitched their business ideas in the presence of the President, dummy cheques reflecting the various amounts were given to them, after a team of adjudicators scored the ten contestants based on their pitches.

The overall winner is set to receive a

GH¢3m grant for 30 Presidential Pitch Finalists; as John Kumah is Honoured

grand prize of 200,000 cedis, an increase from last year's 150,000 cedis.

As a gesture of his personal contribution, as he had been doing since season one, the President announced that he would add GH¢50,000 to the overall winner's prize money.

HONOUR

Additionally, he declared that starting next year, the week preceding the Presidential Pitch, will be known as the John Kumah Week of Entrepreneurship, in honour of the late John Kumah.

The first-place award for the winner was named the Dr. John A. Kuma Prize for Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

AWARDS

The overall winner for Season 5 of

the Presidential Pitch was Smart Switch, owned by Naamgwinaa Samuel, who took away GH¢200,000 plus the President's personal contribution of GH¢50,000.

The second prize of GH¢150,000 went to Freshline, owned by Boadu Torkomoor Wisdom; the third was Decor Plus, owned by Bismark Osei - GH¢140,000; the fourth was Smart Watch, whose CEO is Amanda Aninygyei and had GH¢110,000.

The rest were OGames Studio - Onyx Terchi-Duku - GH¢110,000 for placing fifth; Oasal Limited - Nyaro Lartey Billton - GH¢80,000 for emerging sixth; Hullsnovation - Ziblim Abdul-Rahim was seventh and was awarded GH¢80,000; the eighth was Ecovon, co-owned by Isaac Brenya and Foster Osei - GH¢80,000; the ninth position was Verte Tower - Georgina Boamah - GH¢80,000, and the tenth was Green-Heart SE - Caleb Lomo - GH¢80,000.

HOPE

In his address, President Akufo-Addo, who instituted the programme on assumption of office in 2017, remarked that The Presidential Pitch, which has become a beacon of hope for young entrepreneurs across the nation, continues to discover and nurture exceptional talent.

The President commended the Chief Executive Officer of the National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme

(NEIP), Mr. Kofi Ofori Nkansah, and his team for their dedication to the initiative.

He also acknowledged the foundation laid by the former Minister for Business Development, Ibrahim Awal Mohammed, and the late CEO of NEIP, John Kumah, who was also the Member of Parliament for Jerusalem and former Deputy Minister for Finance.

"Over the past four seasons, I have witnessed firsthand the remarkable talent, resilience, and indomitable spirit of Ghana's youth," the President remarked.

He lauded the contestants who have participated over the years, noting that their ideas have transformed into enterprises and their passion into purpose.

The President reflected on the suc-

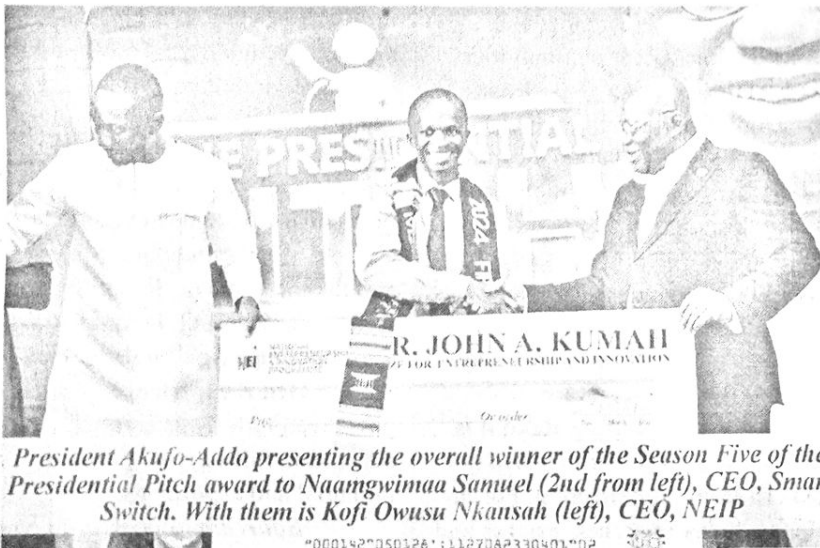
cess stories from previous seasons, mentioning the various contestants and the changes the initiative had brought to their ideas.

OPPORTUNITY

The President emphasised that entrepreneurship is about seeing opportunities where others see obstacles and turning challenges into triumphs.

He proudly noted that the winners of the Presidential Pitch have created over 2,000 direct jobs and 3,000 indirect jobs, many in rural communities.

He singled out Christian Boakye Yiadom, the mind behind Pizzaman Chickenman, and Adjei Mensah, creator of the Deaf Can Talk app, as shining examples of what the youth can achieve with the right support.



President Akufo-Addo presenting the overall winner of the Season Five of the Presidential Pitch award to Naamgwinaa Samuel (2nd from left), CEO, Smart Switch. With them is Kofi Owusu Nkansah (left), CEO, NEIP

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