

SIMAD iLab is Expanded to Build Somalia's Innovation Ecosystem

MOGADISHU, BENADIR, SOMALIA, October 17, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [SIMAD University](#), a pioneering private university in Somalia, is a good example of change champions in Somalia. Five years ago, the university's mandate was revised to make it an entrepreneurial university; hence, making "social impact" the new university metric. The university established a tech hub called [SIMAD iLab](#) to spearhead this new mandate of the university.

Fast forward five years, SIMAD iLab has achieved remarkable feats. The innovation hub has attracted almost 15,000 applications, supports more than 8,000 alumni members of the university, incubates close to 50 startups, and manages a micro-finance of \$3 million through the generous support of [DirectAid](#).

That nation-building initiative was so successful that it required further expansion after previously going through two upgrades, the last one launched by the President of Somalia, H.E. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud. The new upgrade unveiled by H.E. Farah Sheikh Abdikadir, the Minister of Education, Culture, and Higher Education of the Federal Republic Somalia, has new features new to the Somali innovation ecosystem and makes it one of the most well-equipped innovation hubs in the African continent. The new upgrade features:

- An innovation theatre – a platform for entrepreneurs, thought leaders and experts to exchange ideas and foster knowledge sharing.
- A creative digital studio – cutting-edge tools and technology to enable young entrepreneurs to explore and develop their creative ideas. A space for storytelling for Somalia's innovation ecosystem.
- An executive space – a space built for bringing Somalia's civil servants and private sector



H.E. Farah Sheikh Abdulkadir, the Minister of Education, Culture, and Higher Education of the Federal Republic of Somalia

leaders on board to create synergy and build an inclusive and thriving innovation ecosystem together.

- A dedicated space for startups and MSMEs – an enabling environment for startups and MSMEs to build the next unicorns for Somalia.

“Humans perform best when they tap into their potential. And this new executive arena is a testimony of what Somalis can do when the playing field is leveled for them.” Said H.E. Farah Sheikh Abdulkadir, the Minister of Education, Culture, and Higher Education of the Federal Republic of Somalia. “I see a bright future and platform to change and nurture the mindset of the Somali youth. The ministry will support and collaborate with SIMAD iLab,” said the Minister.

“Introducing SIMAD iLab was a new exercise that was very aligned with our mission of building an entrepreneurial university in Somalia. But what was more exciting was the impact and the numbers achieved in just five years. We really did not expect that quick win,” said Dr. Dahir Hassan, the Rector of SIMAD University. “It just revealed how much the higher education sector was calling for transformations. This new expansion is a direct response to the increasing demand from the Somali youth to expand the reach, capability, and facilities of SIMAD iLab. We are now very hopeful the tech hub will continue to serve the Somali youth better and contribute to reducing the rampant unemployment crisis in the country.”

Since attaining a permanent government in 2012 after a prolonged civil war, Somalia has experienced a positive trajectory of growth. The state-of-the-art facilities at SIMAD iLab exemplify this growth and reflect the changing landscape of the nation. It is time for the world to shift its perspective and see the Somalia of today, rather than fixate on Somalia that no longer exists.

About SIMAD iLab

SIMAD iLab is the largest university-based innovation hub in Somalia. The tech hub is owned and managed by SIMAD University. The basic services include incubation and acceleration programs for startups in Mogadishu.

For more information about SIMAD iLab and its services, please visit <https://ilab.simad.edu.so>

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