

Wazoku hosts open innovation challenge to address the impact of climate change on food security in low-income countries

New challenge with the Gates Foundation will crowdsource solutions that use AI and ML to identify proteins vulnerable to elevated temperatures in crops

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, January 24, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Global innovation scale-up [Wazoku](#) is supporting the Gates Foundation by hosting a new open innovation challenge to support smallholder farmers across low- and middle-income countries in building climate-resilient food systems.

The challenge - [novel approaches to identifying proteins vulnerable to elevated temperature](#)

in crops – is seeking innovative ways of identifying plant proteins most vulnerable to elevated temperature, aiming to develop targets for innovating the crop breeding process that will enable smallholder farmers to adapt to climate change.

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Simon Hill, CEO, Wazoku

All crops have an optimum temperature for growth, and temperatures over this can result in crop failure. At the core of crop sensitivity to temperatures lies impaired protein function, so it is vital to innovate for accelerated breeding processes to develop crops with more thermos-resilient proteins. This is only possible if the proteins most vulnerable to increased temperature are identified.

“To create a climate-resilient future for our food systems,

we must start at the source,” said Nicholas Bate, senior program officer at the Gates Foundation. “As the world prepares for a warming planet, this open innovation challenge presents a critical



Gates Foundation Challenge

opportunity for our society to reimagine the solutions required to protect the world's staple crops, while also ensuring the livelihoods of small holder farmers and their communities."

Wazoku provides a Total Innovation Ecosystem, working with organisations such as The Geneva Learning Foundation, SunNight Solar, and Mastercard Foundation, to crowdsource and manage innovation. The open innovation component of its ecosystem, [Wazoku Crowd](#), consists of a 700,000-strong network of expert problem 'Solvers', composed of scientists, technologists, CEOs, start-ups, accelerators and more.

"Food security is perhaps our greatest global challenge, and the Gates Foundation has done more than most to try and address this," said Simon Hill, CEO, Wazoku. "This is an important and complex problem. But the Wazoku Crowd comprises some of the world's brightest minds in this field, and its track record in finding solutions to such challenges is exemplary."

For the past 25 years, the Gates Foundation has fought poverty, disease, and inequity around the world, focused on improving people's health and giving them the chance to live a healthy and productive life. The foundation continues to champion global agricultural development as an essential pathway for strengthening food security in impoverished nations, and helping millions of people keep their farms, families, and communities flourishing.

This challenge offers a prize fund of \$25,000 and closes on 03 February 2025.

To learn more about the prize opportunity and application requirements, an online Q&A will be held with the Gates Foundation technical team on Friday 24 January. RSVP here:

<https://community.wazokucrowd.com/c/events-32a8ea/transform-the-world-with-gates-foundation-novel-approaches-to-identifying-proteins-vulnerable-to-elevated-temperature-in-crops>

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For further information about Wazoku, visit <https://www.wazoku.com>

For further information about the Gates Foundation, visit <https://www.gatesfoundation.org/>

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