

AGRI-WATER OPEN INNOVATION CHALLENGE

PROBLEM STATEMENT/ BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY:

More than 50% of SA's agricultural exports move through the Western Cape, with the EU being one of the biggest export destinations. However, the Western Cape currently faces a serious drought due to poor rainfall over several seasons, with the 'zero water' D-Day approaching rapidly.

In an effort to help address this problem, the Austrian Trade Commission (ATC), the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), Silicon Cape and RIIS have partnered in order to run an open innovation challenge to identify water saving technologies; particularly in regards to water use in agriculture.

Submissions from entrepreneurs, SMMEs, companies and other interested parties are encouraged; either English or German submissions are welcome.

For more information, and to submit your proposal, please go to: www.agriwater.org.za

Contact details of campaign manager

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BACKGROUND:

The Western Cape (WC), a province in South Africa (SA), currently faces a serious drought and has been declared a disaster area. As a result, Day Zero – the day the City of Cape Town turns off the taps and water will be distributed at collection points – is constantly monitored and updated. Between 12 December and 9 January (28 days), the forecast Day Zero was brought forward by a full 26 days. More simply put: for every day closer to Day Zero, the forecast date is brought closer by a day. As of January 26, 2018, Day Zero sits at April 12, 2018.

While this situation obviously has significant humanitarian consequences, a further impact is on industry, in particular, the agricultural industry in the Western Cape. This sector relies heavily on a reliable and sustainable water supply in order to produce good crops and sustain livestock. Currently the losses in the deciduous fruit industry are edging close to a billion South African Rand (about 60 million Euro). The WC Agriculture Department estimates a negative socio-economic effect of the drought, with as many as 50,000 seasonal workers being jobless due to the financial strain on farming. More than 50% of SA's agricultural exports move through the WC, with the European Union (EU) being one of the biggest export destinations. The value added in the sector

amounts to more than 14 billion South African Rand (ZAR) per annum. The WC also accounts for almost 75% of annual offshore wine sales, worth ZAR 5 billion. Thus, the impact on industry results not just in commercial implications, but also have very real social consequences for the thousands of people that will be affected by a loss of employment opportunities.

Against this background, the Western Cape and South Africa have a vested interest in innovations in water and agriculture. Given the dire situation, we believe, many innovators and entrepreneurs are already working on a variety of solutions. Austria is at the forefront of a wide range of technologies that are addressing the need to protect the environment and help us all be sustainable. Success in 'green technologies' has helped Austrian companies to develop an excellent worldwide reputation.

PARTNERS:

ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA Johannesburg is part of the worldwide ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA NETWORK, Austria's official Trade Promotion Organisation (TPO). We offer worldwide support to all Austrian businesses that want to conduct business in South Africa. And we offer support to South African companies or other organisations wishing to obtain goods or services from Austria, to invest in Austria or establish other types of business relationship. ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA should be their first port of call.

SILICON CAPE is a non-profit company committed to building and catalysing the technology ecosystem in the Western Cape. Its primary focus is supporting the development of high growth, high tech businesses in the Western Cape to kick-start meaningful economic growth, build new industries and create jobs. It supports the growth of the ecosystem by attracting the right stakeholders to the ecosystem and by working with entrepreneurs, regulators, governments and corporate businesses to create an environment where startups can thrive.

THE TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION AGENCY is a national public entity that serves as the key institutional intervention to bridge the innovation chasm between research and development from higher education institutions, science councils, public entities, and the private sector, and commercialisation. TIA's objective is ultimately to support the State in stimulating and intensifying technological innovation in order to improve economic growth and the quality of life of all South Africans by developing and exploiting technological innovations.

RIIS is a pioneering open innovation firm that established the first open innovation programmes together with TIA in 2009, and has subsequently established and run a variety of open innovation programmes. This includes the development of open innovation ecosystems for public and private sector organisations, both within South Africa and across Southern Africa. Its work cuts across industries, sectors and levels of maturity, always striving to accelerate innovation through partnerships and collaboration.

The initial partners are therefore looking for solutions from the Austrian & South African innovation community, with a specific focus on solving agricultural water use challenges. Given the importance of agriculture to the Western Cape, and the reality that water will remain a critical issue into the future, building a community of innovators focused on agricultural water technologies could act as a major risk mitigator in the future.

This search for solutions takes the form of an open innovation call for technologies and solutions. An open approach to innovation, akin to crowd sourcing, believes that the best ideas can often be

found outside of a single organisation. Open innovation helps organisations to rapidly identify and source ideas and solutions in a safe and low risk manner.

VALUE PROPOSITION:

The ultimate aim for this programme is to assist entrepreneurs and companies to contribute solutions to the water crisis in the Western Cape, and in so doing, build profitable and sustainable businesses.

The programme therefore specifically looks to connect solution providers (you) with the organisations that need – and will pay – for your solution. The programme therefore seeks to facilitate market access through a number of mechanisms:

	South African Applicants	Austrian Applicants
One Full day Business Development Workshop developing a clear value proposition and business model (by RIIS)	20 April 2018	
Full Day workshop on building a business in SA (by RIIS, Silicon Cape and TIA)	2 May 2018	
Agri-tech immersion tour - facilitated business to business meetings and site visits (by Silicon Cape and RIIS)	3 May 2018	
Networking Café – a refreshing take on pitching in a relaxed conversational manner	4 May 2018	
TIA Futures and Foresights training (via distance learning)	16 May 2018	

Selected finalists will be invited to submit an application to TIA for localization and product development support.

In addition, the following prizes will be available:

- Von Seidels Attorneys will sponsor (free of charge) a South African provisional patent application, a South African trade mark application OR a South African registered design application (depending on the nature of solution).
- I Make Foundation will provide Research and Development assistance for a selected finalist with a pre-commercial project.

OUTCOME CRITERIA:

Each solution will be evaluated independently, given the wide range of potential solutions. Ultimately, the solutions will be evaluated on the basis of their ability to solve the water challenges in Agriculture.

- **Evaluation Criteria:**

Technical criteria:

- Impact
- Feasibility
- Team capability and experience

- Novelty

Preference will be given to submissions from applicants that are based in, or have connections with either South Africa or Austria (or both). Submissions which are based on a business or software solution are encouraged. Where the submission is based on a technological solution or innovation, preference will be given to technologies that have undergone significant development.

- **Participation Criteria:**

Submissions from entrepreneurs, SMMEs, companies or other interested parties are welcome.

Applicants will be required to complete a brief application form and upload the following information in any format:

- Description of Proposed Solution
- Project Plan and Pathway to Commercialization
- Team and Experience
- Signed Disclaimer regarding IP ownership (if needed)

Submissions in both English and German are welcome.

CHALLENGE TIMELINE:

The call will be launched on 30 January and submissions will be accepted for 8 weeks.

Phase 1:	Open Innovation Challenge	Deadline: 15 March 2018
Phase 2:	Evaluation of Submissions	Finalists announced: 30 March 2018
Phase 3:	Entrepreneur Support Programme	Commences: 2 May 2018