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Newsletter

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THIS WEEK AT THE LAWYERS HUB

Join the Boost Africa Legal Capacity Workshop for Startup Funders and Founders in Africa

BOOST AFRICA LEGAL CAPACITY VIRTUAL WORKSHOP

'Building the legal capacity of startup funders and founders in Africa'

Dates: 5th April - 13th May
Registration Deadline: 1st April 2022
Commitment Period: 6 weeks

To sign up, visit: <http://www.lawyershub.org/Startups>
www.lawyershub.org

Africa's Startup Policy Priority Survey

Get Your Voice Heard

The Lawyers Hub, in partnership with Mozilla, invites you to take the Africa Innovation Mradi Survey for Startups in Africa that will provide valuable insight concerning the policy priorities for the Startup Ecosystem in Africa.

TAKE THE SURVEY

Lawyers Hub is excited to invite you to participate in a free legal training workshop that we will be hosting for early-stage startup funders and founders in Africa titled **Boost Africa Legal Capacity Workshop** from 5th April to 13th May. Themed 'Building the legal capacity of startup funders and founders in Africa', the **Boost Africa Legal Capacity Workshop** is a virtual workshop that brings together early-stage startup funders and startup founders

from Anglophone and Francophone Africa to learn about legal aspects to setting up start-ups and first-time investment funds as well as build their legal knowledge and capacity to run legally sound ventures. The virtual workshop will cover the following training modules:

I. Workshop 1: Company Formation and Structuring | Intellectual Property
II. Workshop 2: Capital Structuring, Valuation and Fundraising | Fund

management

III. Workshop 3: Taxation | Contracting | Internal Organization Policies

The workshop is a great chance to connect with other startup funders and founders from the African continent while building your legal knowledge and capacity on aspects of running a legally sound startup or fund through customized training delivered by experienced industry experts.

Sign up



Public Policy Discussion: Kenya Film Classification Board (KFCB) Proposed Co-Regulation Framework For Broadcast And Video On Demand Platforms

The Kenya Film Classification Board was established under the Films and Stage Plays Act Cap 222 and mandated to regulate the creation, broadcasting, possession, distribution and exhibition of films in the country with a view to promote national values, cultural aspirations and protect children from inappropriate content.

On 14th March 2022, the Kenya Film Classification Board (KFCB) published the Proposed Co-Regulation Framework For Broadcast And Over The Top (OTT)/Video On Demand (VOD).

The Policy seeks to oversee the classification of programmable content by VODs, OTTs, & digital content creators, with a significant number of followers/subscribers/viewership and output of content in Kenya. The proposed Policy draws its principles from the Film Classification Guidelines set out in the Schedule of the Films and Stage Plays Act.

This Public Policy Discussion explores the key highlights of the Framework and its potential impact on content moderation and the country's creator economy.

[Set a reminder](#) for the Twitter Space



Data Protection Compliance Training

■ The Lawyers Hub and the Africa Digital Policy Institute invites you to attend and participate in the Data Protection Compliance Training targeting all persons handling Data including Officers working in Legal, ICT, Human Resource, Records Management, Finance Departments among others. The training is set to be held on 12th and 13th April, 2022 at the Lawyers Hub. To sign up email hello@lawyershub.ke or call **+254784840228**



The Lawyers Hub attends the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) School of Law Legal Awareness Week

■ The Lawyers Hub had the privilege of interacting with students at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa Legal Awareness Week, the theme of the week being Access to Justice and Legal Empowerment.

The objective of the Legal Awareness Week was to promote the mandate of the Law school by extending legal literacy and awareness to members of the University fraternity and the general public. The Lawyers Hub is pleased to have collaborated with the University, interacting with students to improve their understanding of the intersection between law and technology.



Bank of Ghana issues order to halt Dash's operations

■ This news comes as a shock to the ambitious fintech company that recently raised \$32.8million to fund its move to scale across Africa. Dash has been running its operations in the country since 2019. Kwame A, the Bank of Ghana's Head of Fintech and innovation department, stated that the company was operating without proper approval by conducting cross-border transactions and creating mobile money wallets. All eyes are on the story as we wait to see how it unfolds.

The company was operating without proper approval by conducting cross-border transactions and creating mobile money wallets.

Bank of Ghana's Head of Fintech and innovation department, Kwame A.



Fintech Startup, Bloom, makes the list of YC winter startup 2022 batch putting Sudan on the global startup ecosystem map

■ The startup aims to offer banking services that take into account inflation in the region protecting customers' currency devaluation. Bloom plans to partner with Export Development Bank to offer fee-free accounts for its customers to save in a stable currency, in this case- the dollar and spend in Sudanese pounds as a solution to the region's inflation risk. At the moment, more than 15000 people have signed up for the startup's waiting list, this signifies the startup's potential. Despite the economic risks in the country and the prior political crisis, the founders are confident that they understand the market as they are natives and that they can thrive in volatile regions.

12 African startups qualify for Microsoft's Fast Accelerator programme

■ Out of 800 applicants across 25 African countries, 12 African startups have qualified for Flapmax and Microsoft-backed 12-week Fast accelerator. The chosen applicants are startups that are ready to expand their operations in the region with an already identified product and market. To qualify for the program, the companies had to appeal to any of the Sustainable Development Goals. Participants will have a chance to access funding opportunities, new technologies, and training for sustainable growth. The 12 selected startups are located in Kenya, Nigeria, Egypt, Tanzania, Ghana, and Uganda. See the list [here](#)

Antler- East Africa raises \$13.5 million to invest in early-stage startups

■ The female-led VC company which set out to raise \$10million eventually managed to raise \$13.5million in an investment round that will go toward funding early-stage startups in the region. The round included independent investor Baillie Gifford and other investment companies such as IFC. To date, Antler East Africa has invested in 6 startups across different sectors in two previous cohorts. The firm receives [applications](#) on a rolling basis.

Mercury Restricts Accounts Belonging to African Startups

■ Mercury, a bank for startups, restricted several accounts linked to African tech startups. According to TechCrunch, the number of accounts is unknown but could range from a dozen to 30 — including YC-backed startups and newer startups.

The Bank told some of the startups that their accounts had been flagged and were under review by its compliance team owing to “unusual activity” and could only provide further details once the review was complete. There are speculations that these restrictions could have been influenced by the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

Turaco, a Kenyan insurtech startup, announces its expansion into Nigerian markets

■ Kenyan Startup, Turaco recently announced that it will be expanding into Nigeria. With a huge number of residents unbanked and unable to access financial services, Nigeria offers a lucrative market for the startup which provides innovative technological solutions in the insurance sector. The startup's development will be aided through a partnership with AXA Mansard. AXA Mansard is a leading insurance company with its operations spread across over 54 countries.



Photo: disrupt-africa.com

Google partners with the Kenyan government to offer training for software developers

■ The Ministry of Education together with Google, formulated Android Developer skills Masterplan, a training program for software developers in the country. This programme will contribute to the rise in the number of developers in Africa. The programme is set to run in Technical, Vocational, and Educational Institutions. The Cabinet Secretary of education, George Magoha, emphasised the potential for this partnership to develop the innovation and startup ecosystem in the country.

DATA PROTECTION NEWS

South Africa Regulator Refers Meta to Tribunal Over Dominance

■ South Africa's Competition Commission this week referred Meta to a tribunal for alleged abuse of the Company's dominant position in the market.

In a statement, the regulator accused Meta of "abusing its dominance by engaging in exclusionary conduct geared at preventing competitors or potential competitors from entering into, participating, and expanding in a market". This came after the Meta decided to remove a local platform called GovChat (a start-up that connects government and citizens) and its subsidiary #LetsTalk from its WhatsApp Business Application Programming Interface.

According to WhatsApp, the platform failed to adhere to the company's Terms of Service, leading to removal. The country's Competition Commission is recommending a fine equal to 10% of Meta's South African revenues.



Photo: moneyweb.co.za

Russian government takes initiative to issue TLS certificates to counter western sanctions

■ Following the unprecedented sanctions imposed on the country, the Russian government has formed a Russian Certificate Authority to issue TLS certificates to websites in the country in place of western companies that were providing such services. TLS certificates provide an encrypted connection that secures users' data from hackers on the internet. Additionally, the encrypted connection ensures internet-based businesses' payments. Unfortunately, TLS certificates have to be approved by web browsers. This factor hinders the efficiency of Russia's move as only Russian-based web browsers are readily accepting the replacement certificates. Western browsers are understandably hesitant to adopt these certificates based on the security risks that the Russian government's involvement presents. By providing the TLS certificates, the Russian government now has in its hands the power to surveil users and conduct man-in-the-middle attacks if misused.

Recommendations to India's Data Protection Act set to impact businesses negatively

■ The Internet and Mobile Association of India made a comprehensive impact report on their Data Bill (2019) by the Joint Parliamentary Committee. The organization pointed out that the Bill will adversely affect tech companies and startups in India. The recommendations propose strict data localization rules that have the potential to stifle growth, burden companies with hefty compliance costs leading to a dwindled economy. Moreover, IAMAI highlighted that mandating the Data Protection Authority to seek the government's approval before conducting any cross-border transfer of sensitive data would be superfluous. It defeats the purpose of establishing the Data Protection Authority in the first place. In response to its review, the organization urged for a comprehensive impact assessment and broad stakeholder consultation to better inform the potential changes.



ICANN announces Kenya as the proposed location for one of its data centers

■ ICANN is a non Profit organization working in facilitating internet connectivity and cyber-security. The corporation also coordinates domain name systems in Africa. To ensure protection from potential cyber-attacks in the region, the organization plans to set up root server clusters with numerous servers that have high bandwidth to counter heavy Internet traffic. ICANN recently announced Kenya as a proposed location for one of its data centers to further its work in the region.



Google pushed to the wall to commit to restrictions over its plans to remove third-party cookies

■ The European Publishers Council and Capital Markets Authority have been closely following Google's project to remove third-party cookies from its browsers to ensure it doesn't grossly affect competition. Resultantly, Google has demonstrated commitments to ensure it toes the line as regards the regulator's oversight. One of the ways Google intends to effect this is through applying similar changes made in chrome to its advertising products. The big tech corporation has also submitted that it will endeavor to seek consent from the CMA before implementing any major decisions in this project. Moreover, Google will appoint a monitoring trustee approved by the CMA, who will be obligated to make regular compliance reports.

AI NEWS

The World Food Programme convenes a Programme in Nairobi - Kibera to teach youth digital skills

■ Youth in Kibera have been afforded the chance to gain skills required in AI work such as data annotation, labeling, and segmentation through a programme funded by the World Food Programme, dubbed the “Empact Programme”. This programme allows the residents an avenue to access the digital economy through the training offered. Beneficiaries of the programme also stand to earn income to sustain themselves through successfully completed projects.



Photo: toolkit-digitalisierung.de

LEGAL TECH NEWS

Dispute Resolution Platform Immediation gets funding to expand into the US

■ With the pandemic forcing the legal profession to consider new ways of working including remote working and online collaboration tools, a new opportunity sprang up for innovation in the legal services industry. A Melbourne-founded legal tech startup, Immediation, provides a tailor-made solution with digital courtrooms and mediation tools. It has been adopted by Australian federal courts and New Zealand government agencies and is now expanding in the United States and European markets after raising \$3.6 million AUD (about \$2.7 million USD). Investors include Thorney Investment Group and its founder and chair, Alex Waislitz. Founded in 2017 and launched in 2019, Immediation's users include the Federal Court of Australia, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT), and New Zealand agencies like the Ministry of Justice, Sport New Zealand, and Domain Name Commission NZ. The startup has over the past 12 months, increased its revenues 6x year over year and its user growth has jumped 2,000%. Immediation currently has about 40 employees in five countries, and a panel of more than 100 mediators and arbitrators. Its new funding brings Immediation's total raised to \$10 million AUD.

Thomson Reuters set to acquire Thought Trace, an AI document analysis company

■ Thomson Reuters recently finalized agreements to acquire Thought Trace. Thought Trace is a natural language processing (NLP) driven document analysis, multi-sector company. This acquisition will be useful to Thought Trace for scale considering the broad audience that TR attracts. On top of that, Thomson Reuters can now provide its customers with more AI and analytics options.

Wilson Sonsini becomes first law firm to make it to Fast Company's list of 'most innovative companies'

■ The law firm has paved the way for other firms to be recognized in such a list by actively embracing digitalization and innovation in its operations. Fast Company began its operations back in 1995, it later evolved and became well known for providing credible tech analysis. This recognition is much well deserved for the firm that recently launched new software to cater to startups' legal needs including but not limited to Intellectual Property and incorporation. Through this software installation, the law firm can automate routine procedures while still offering legal advice to startups.

DIGITAL ID NEWS

Verify Me Nigeria and Dalberg Advisors release report on Nigeria's digital ID ecosystem

■ Verify Me Nigeria together with Know Your Customer and Global consulting firm Dalberg, conducted a 33 page report on the country's digital ID status. The report was aimed at exploring the country's digital ID ecosystem and identifying potential development areas. Esigie Aguele, Verify Me's CEO and Co-founder, pointed out that it's important to fully understand the ecosystem in order to facilitate socio-economic growth. The report could also influence policymakers' decisions.

The UK to introduce a new law to secure digital identity

■ People are increasingly able to verify their identities online using new digital technologies. With this in mind, the UK government plans to make the process of verifying digital identities as secure and trustworthy as traditional official identification. Digital identity provides a fast and efficient means of identity verification. Moreover, digital ID reduces the amount of personal data transferable online, in turn combatting the possibility of fraud. Plans are underway to formulate governing law and set up an interim body to govern this process. The Office for Digital Identities and Attributes (ODIA) will be set up in the Department for Culture, Media, and Sports. This interim body will provide trust marks to digital identity technologies signifying their competence to secure users' data.

BLOCKCHAIN AND DIGITAL CURRENCY NEWS

Bank of Ghana shares the Design paper of the digital Cedi (eCedi)

■ The Bank of Ghana this week published its e-Cedi Paper on the country's proposed Central Bank Digital Currency. This comes months after Giesecke+Devrient G+D signed an agreement with the Bank of Ghana to implement a CBDC pilot project for a digital form of the country's currency, the Cedi. The project is part of the 'Digital Ghana Agenda', which aims to digitalize the country of 30 million people and its government services.



Photo: Google

Cryptocurrency offers a relatively secure investment in the face of the Russia-Ukraine crisis

■ Investors around the world are opting to transfer their investments to cryptocurrency assets and Decentralized Automated Organisations (DAOs), believing it to be relatively more secure amidst the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Cryptocurrency assets have reported high-interest rates as compared to previously popular traditional assets such as real estate and bonds. It's fair to say that the Ukraine invasion has accelerated blockchain adoption and investment in digital assets as they provide a relatively stable option amid the conflict. Notably, Crypto startups have recorded the highest valuations and had incredibly oversubscribed investment rounds. Statistics from research firm Fundstrat reveal that \$4 billion of investor funds went into buying crypto assets in the last weeks of February and \$400 million was invested in blockchain startups in the recent week. Moreover, recent data from Coinshare shows that the inflows reported in March of \$127 million are the largest recorded this year after previous weeks of downward spiral outflows. These new developments have contributed to the stable returns in crypto assets.

Players in India's Crypto space seek clarity on crypto trade regulation from Parliament

■ Players in the crypto scene, together with the Supreme Court of India, have been closely following parliamentary sessions awaiting clear legislation on all matters of cryptocurrency trade in the country. The country's Finance Bill 2022 is highly ambiguous when it comes to definitions, taxation, and calculations of virtual digital assets. With the recent rise in the adoption of blockchain technologies and investment in digital assets, stakeholders are impatiently waiting for clear and friendly crypto legislation to regulate the complex and volatile crypto space. Deliberations on comprehensive crypto legislation have been ongoing since 2017. This regulatory suspense stands to negatively impact the sector, almost prompting investors to move to more favorable crypto hubs such as Singapore and Dubai which have in place Independent regulatory authorities.

Cardano tests out loan feature with Kenyan SMEs

■ Cardano, a proof-of-stake blockchain platform, this week tested out a loan feature with Kenyan SMEs. The Director of African Operations at IOHK, the company that maintains the Cardano Platform, John O'Connor this week tweeted, "First loans to Kenyan SME's went out over the weekend. Looking forwards to turning this into a product soon so any Cardano holder can generate yield that's uncorrelated to crypto whilst making impact."

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY NEWS

Kenya Copyright Board issues a directive on the adequate acknowledgment of Copyright holders

■ The Kenya Copyright Board intervened on behalf of copyright holders following the notorious usage of copyright holders' content on social media by other parties without proper acknowledgment. The Board emphasized that under the law, the Copyright owners have moral rights to be properly acknowledged. This falls under fair dealings. To implement this, third parties have to illustrate the copyright owner's names and names of the work where necessary. Additionally, the author's accounts may be tagged on social media.



PRODUCT HUNT

Instagram Launches New Parental Control Feature:

Instagram launched new parental control features to its app on Wednesday 16th March 2022 in the US following its announcement in December. This is the company's "first set" of parental supervision tools, allowing parents and guardians to view and set limits on the amount of time their teens are spending on Instagram, get updates on which accounts they're following and being followed by, and receive notifications when they report another user.

The controls were introduced after the Meta-owned social network came under fire for its impact on younger users. Leaked internal research from the company suggested that Instagram usage had detrimental effects on the mental health of its younger users, particularly teenage girls. Shortly after the research was made public, the company announced it was pausing work on a version of Instagram aimed at children under the age of 13. It also rolled

out a feature that encouraged users to take a break from the app after set periods of time. For now, Instagram says teens themselves will need to initiate the supervision feature from its app on mobile devices, but in June, it's rolling out the ability for parents and guardians to start the process (although teens will still need to grant permission). Additional features, like being able to set specific times when a teen can use Instagram, are also on the way.

POLICY WATCH

Safaricom is set to finalize an agreement with Ethiopia's Ethio Telecom to facilitate its plans to set up shop in the region

Safaricom is in talks with Ethio Telecom to finalize a partnership to enable the two companies to share towers as the former prepares to expand its operations in the country. This partnership is strategic for Safaricom as a telecommunications company looking to traverse an already dominated market. For network sharing, the two companies will have to reach a consensus on charges, compromises, and managing the quality of services during the disruption. Safaricom plans to invest \$8billion in the critical infrastructure needed to set up shop in Ethiopia over the next decade.

Digital Lenders in Kenya to disclose Total Charges on their Loans from September

Digital lenders in Kenya will be required to share details on their loans to customers from September. This will include interest rates, late payment, and rollover fees.

"We have been having issues with mobile lenders and I would like to announce that the law is there and it will streamline the industry. Arising issues of overpricing, misuse of customers' data will be taken care of in the new law with which they have to comply by August 2022," Central Bank of Kenya Governor Patrick Njoroge said early this week.

The National Assembly passed the Central Bank of Kenya (Amendment) Bill, 2021 late last year with the Bank sharing accompanying Regulations in 2022.

Paystack receives Payment Services Provider (PSP) Enhanced License from the Bank of Ghana

Paystack has received a Payment Services Provider (PSP) Enhanced License from the Bank of Ghana. The license will make it possible for businesses in Ghana to collect payments from customers worldwide through Paystack.



Kenya Film Classification Board (KFCB) Publishes Framework to Regulate Video on Demand Platforms

On 14th March 2022, the Kenya Film Classification Board (KFCB) published the Proposed Co-Regulation Framework For Broadcast And Over The Top (OTT)/Video On Demand (VOD).

The Policy seeks to oversee the regulation of exhibition, and broadcasting of programmable content by VODs, OTTs, & digital content creators, with a significant number of followers/subscribers/viewership and output of content in Kenya. The proposed policy draws its principles from the Film Classification Guidelines set out in the Schedule of the Films and Stage Plays Act.

The Board invites submissions on the proposed framework on or before **4th April 2022**.

EVENTS

ICTA Connected Summit 2022- 11th - 14th April

Connected Kenya Summit is the leading ICT thought leadership forum in the region that brings together industry players from the private sector, public sector, and academia. It offers a great platform to engage other stakeholders and partners on how frontier digital technology such as 5G, IoT, and Artificial Intelligence can transform lives, power inclusion, and create sustainable livelihoods," said Peter Ndegwa, Chief Executive Officer, Safaricom PLC.

Africa Energies Summit and Exhibition 2022; 17th -19th May

The Africa Energies Summit brings together Africa's energy industry for a unique event shaped for companies active in Africa's energy game and provides unrivaled insight into the Continent's fast-changing energy landscape. The Africa Energies Summit will be a hybrid event, encompassing an in-person conference in London in which an online audience also participates.

Public Policy Discussion 28th March 2022

The Lawyers Hub invites you to attend a Public Policy Discussion on Proposed Co-Regulation Framework For Broadcast And Video On Demand Platforms. The discussion will be hosted virtually at 12:00 PM EAT.

Register Here: bit.ly/PolicyMonday