AfriTech Innovation Center
Innovative Ideas. Practical Solutions.

PROPOSED LAUNCH DATE:

VENUE/PROGRAMME SITE:
MOSORIOT, NANDI COUNTY, KENYA.

AfriTech Innovation Center (ATIC) is founded on the basis of providing a platform for youth to brainstorm on innovative ideas and help transform those ideas into practical solutions to local challenges.

ATIC will be hosted at Elite Institute of ICT (EICT), as an expansion phase of the Digital Literacy Programme (DLP).

Our primary goal is to give back to the community and create opportunities to expand socio-economic growth and digital literacy among the youth.

Empowering young generation with coding tools and skills they need to thrive in the 21st Century workforce and become key actors of both self-development and Kenya’s economic development.
Founder’s Story.

I was born and raised in Kenya, East Africa, as one of eight children. My father was a regional Farmers Cooperative Society Manager back in the 70’s and retired in the late 80’s right about the time of my birth. My mother was a homemaker and didn’t get to experience some upper elementary education due to her becoming an orphan after the death of her mother (single parent) when she was only 7 years old. Growing up in my family was unique and interesting in that I had the best childhood typical for a child from my family’s economic status – the lower middle class. Many time if you weren’t home during meal times, the food would be gone and you’d stay hungry as you wait for the next meal, which during some seasons was not guaranteed. But all in all, this improved my life and taught me all the survival skills possible.

When I graduated from high school in 2006, I had a lot of passion and interest to get the best college education in the world. There wasn’t any better place I could think of or imagine, other than the United States of America. I was blessed to get a work and study visa in Oct. 2007 and immigrated in December of the same year. My landing in the U.S. was a bit soft for me, courtesy of my former high school buddies who hosted me. However challenges were bound to come. The little money I brought with me lasted only two months. Fortunately, I found a caretaker job at a lawn and property management company in Gardner, KS, which sustained me and supported my family back in Kenya for quite some time.

After 3 years of being in this state, I felt the need to awaken the dream within – the dream of achieving the best education possible. With my good grasp of math and overall hands-on skills, I knew I wanted to get into a technical/engineering field. I took action and enrolled in classes at Kansas City Kansas Community College (KCKCC), receiving my pre-engineering Associates degree in 2013. I immediately transferred to the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) in the fall of the same year and enrolled in the BSc. in Electrical & Computer Engineering degree. Merely a month after getting into the program at UMKC, I saw a post for a part-time NOC technician job at AOScloud (now Unitas Global), a then division of AOS (now ConvergeOne). I took a step of faith and submitted my application for the position. I was very much a beginner, but the hiring manager saw something in me and gave me a chance.

By the end of that year, they offered me a full-time position. I did my best for two and a half years in the position, after which I got promoted to a Security Operations Engineer in their SOC Division at the Cloud in April, 2016. Another SOC Engineer opportunity opened up for me at Optiv Security, Inc in August, 2016. This was right toward the end of my graduation in December, 2016. I have since added numerous credentials under my belt with several Security Certifications and trainings, and I now plan to enroll in M.S. Cybersecurity & Information Assurance in 2019.

Abraham K. Rotich
Founder and Exec. Director
AfriTech Innovation Center (ATIC)
Giving Back in Kenya with AfriTech Innovation Center (ATIC) (2019 & Beyond)

After so many years of going through struggles and challenges, I had a lot of support and encouragement from many people from different walks of life. I have made it this far, both out of hard work, resilience and belief in two things: *That the future can be better than the present, and that I have the power to make it so*; - AND - by standing on the shoulders of giants. It’s out of this that my passion and desire to give back to the community where grew up in Kenya has increased enormously. I aspire each and every day to be an agent of change for my generation and generations to come. It’s out of this inspiration and more that led to the birth of the AfriTech Innovation Center (ATIC).

ATIC is founded on the basis of providing a platform for youth brainstorming on innovative ideas and transforming those ideas into practical solutions. ATIC will be hosted at the Elite Institute of ICT (EICT), as an expansion phase of Digital Literacy Program (DLP). In September, 2015, we drafted a plan to start the Elite Institute if ICT (EICT). The goal was to give back to the community and create opportunities to expand digital literacy among youth. Due to low income status in the area and lack of funding, schools have yet to include ICT in their curriculum.

DLP’s primary focus was aimed at preparing deserving yet underprivileged students from the community for college and potential employment opportunities by teaching the basics of Microsoft Office Suite, internet research development, and life-impacting presentation skills necessary to help them succeed.

**Outcome of DLP (# of students successfully completed the course)**
2016: 48 students.
2017: 218 students.
2018: 143 students (so far this year)
ATIC’s Mission:
To empower young people with the coding tools and skills they need to thrive in the 21st century workforce and become key actors of Kenya and Africa’s economic development.

ATIC’s Vision:
To increase the number of young people in the digital space by empowering them to become innovators in STEM fields, leaders in their communities, and builders of their own futures through exposure to science and technology.

Our 5 Core Values:

Integrity -- We believe that by adherence to honest and moral and ethical principles, we will build long-term trust relationships. We conduct ourselves at all times in a professional, friendly, and polite manner.

Accountability -- We hold ourselves and each other accountable daily for fulfilling our mission and purposes and adhering to our core values.

Up-Serve Attitude -- We enthusiastically strive to provide our trainees with quality support services that consistently exceed their expectations - every day, every time.

Excellence -- We hold ourselves and our trainees through dedication and commitment, to the high standards of program excellence required to prepare them for successful future careers.

Teamwork -- We work together to optimize our trainees’ lives through quality training and produce results.
ATIC will focus on **two areas of interest** at this time: **uCODE2** (a Code Immersion Program) and **The Emerging Young Entrepreneurs Society (EYES)**.

### A. uCODE2 – A Code Immersion Program.

1. **uCODE2 programs.**

   AfriTech’s uCODE2 programs are the perfect launching point for those who are passionate, persistent, and eager to learn code. Our course-work will cover variety of areas, ranging from the fundamentals of web & App development, in-depth programming & software development, and robotics.

   The establishment of AfriTech Innovation Center aims to promote youth engagement in order to prevent idleness, reduce crime, and to effectively build resilience of at-risk youth. Strengthening the social-economic skills of youth is not only a key objective in minimizing risk factors and maximizing protective factors related to crime, violence and drug use, but also acts as an important tool in job creation, economic growth, and Kenyan innovative and entrepreneurial ingenuity in solving common challenges.

   **Here are the highlights of the uCODE2 programs:**

   - HTML & CSS (web development)
   - Python, JavaScript (software development)
   - Mobile APP development & APIs
   - Robotics (starting with simple programmable devices using Arduino).
   - CAD and 3D Printing.
In addition to our core curriculums, we’ll implement a guest speaker series, company tours, and other community events that put students in front of professionals who are excited about getting to know them and connecting them with potential opportunities. The technology opportunities are continuously expanding and our uCODE2 programs are a great way to dive in and start building something.

2. Operation and Classes
All operations will be taking place in a central place, in Mosoriot Centre, Nandi County, Kenya. The County is made up Six (6) constituencies, with a total of 30 wards.

We are looking to recruit a total of 150 trainees for the year 2019 from the entire County; five (5) from each ward, totaling approximately 20-30 trainees from each constituency.

The trainees will be placed into Six (6) Cohorts, with Five (5) Hives within a Cohort containing Five (5) trainees randomly placed from the accepted list.

The classes will run for 8 weeks, where the students will get immersed into coursework of the selected area. Students can expect to be proficient in the concepts listed and more specifically, have a strong foundational base in those areas.

After the 8 weeks, the students will have another 4-8 weeks to perfect their skills and try to build something of their own. From weeks 16-24, trainees will regroup in their Hives again and brainstorm on a local problem/challenge that they'd like to build a solution for. Here we’ll work on putting together industry experts and mentors to help them shape up their idea(s) into practical, workable solution to the identified issue.

After this time duration, a close event for the program year will take place, giving trainees the opportunity to showcase their gained skills and capstone project in front of potential investors who may invest in bringing this solution to fruition for the benefit of the trainees and most importantly, our local community.

Our 2019 minimum estimated operational budget for launch of the AfriTech and uCODE2 program is $50,000.

This amount will cover:
- Rent, space remodeling, furniture, classroom resources and materials, and salaries for a director, two tutors, and two program coordinators.

We are also in dire need of thirty (30) 24” iMacs and accessories, though we have secured 20 used Windows computers for interim use from the host – Elite Institute of ICT.

Other miscellaneous needs include PlayStations, Rubik’s Cubes, and other interactive games for student after-program relaxation and interaction.

We request that you invest in giving these young people a platform by helping us meet our fundraising goal. Donations given are received by EICT Foundation Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization here in the U.S., and donations are 100% tax deductible.
B. Emerging Young Entrepreneurs Society (EYES).

1. Program Background.
   As Kenya continues to grow economically, youth development and empowerment have become vital factors in ensuring a bright future for the nation. Reducing unemployment, eradicating poverty, and providing a quality education and the right opportunities are central to nurturing young people and unleashing their potential. This will allow them to achieve their aspirations and lead a rewarding and fulfilling life, become critical thinkers and today’s problem-solvers.

   The Emerging Young Entrepreneurs Society (EYES) is a groundbreaking and exciting development initiative program that transforms high school students, aged 14-21 into real, confident entrepreneurs. Throughout the holiday forums, students will learn about business and entrepreneurship, develop business ideas, write business plans, conduct market research, and pitch their plans to a panel of program advisors. With continued mentorship, we’ll then help them to actualize their dreams of making a change in the society by launching and running their own real companies and social movements.

   The EYES brings entrepreneurship concepts and know-how to junior and senior year students in selected high schools and local communities. It’s designed to identify and nurture potential and talent, as well as a spirit of innovation. The initiative aims to help students identify persistent economic and social problems that can be solved, familiarize themselves with the crucial factors behind resources planning, developing a business plan, and achieving a successful mindset.
Students get the opportunity to hear as well as get inspired by several established guest speakers. The list will comprise of entrepreneurs from some of the top industrial houses in Kenya as well as some of the larger e-commerce start-ups. In addition, students take behind the scenes, fun, field trips to some of the successful businesses. They will work with mentors from across top consulting and venture capital enterprises in Kenya. At the end of the program year, they will participate in a "Shark Tank" style Investor Panel, where they will present their business ideas to a panel of successful business leaders for the opportunity to secure real funding to launch their businesses.

The EYES development initiative is not only a wonderful tool to teach students about entrepreneurship, but also a great way to build confident leaders with values. An excellent instrument to unify the business and educational communities, EYES looks forward to scaling rapidly throughout many Counties to fulfill its mission of teaching more students how to make a job and not just take a job.

2. Eligible Fields:
   - Agro-Allied
   - Food Processing / Preservation
   - Creative Industry (tourism, arts & craft)
   - Manufacturing / Cottage Industry
   - Information & Communication Technology (ICT)
   - Power & Energy
   - Education & Financial Inclusion
   - Health-Allied
   - Others

3. Operation and Mentorship Session.
   We are looking to recruit and interrogate ideas from high school students in each constituency. The ideas have to meet the minimum base requirements, that:
   a) It falls on the areas listed on section 2 above, and
   b) The idea focuses on solving a local problem.

   Our interaction with students in various high schools will begin in April - July, 2019. This is through speeches and mentorship sessions. Student will have an opportunity to submit their proposed project ideas during the August holiday session. Submission opens August 1st through 31st. Vetting will begin on September 15th and the top 20 selected ideas will advance into a mini “Shark Tank” presentation session in December, where the top 10 will advance into the 2020 program year and receive all the program training and exposure described in Section 1.

   The cycle will begin in April, 2020 for 2021 EYES mentees.

4. Operational Budget.
   The initial operating budget for EYES for 2018/2019 will be $25,000. This amount will cover: program schools visit expenses, required resources and materials, organizing speaker sessions and mentees holiday class forums, students develop business ideas and business plan writing research, mini “Shark Tank” event organizing, etc.
My Future Hopes for ATIC (2020 & Beyond)

I have many dreams, goals, and desires for AfriTech’s growth. For 2020 and beyond,

1. We are hoping to secure a piece of land where we’ll build a modern-day Innovation Center and bring in more computers to help better educate the youth and give them more opportunities.
2. We are also looking forward to holding workshops at the Elite Institute of ICT and other local universities. I’d like to create a program where any of our esteemed donors and volunteers here in the U.S. could come to help give a lecture or speech once or twice a year.
3. Another potential project we’ve been considering is establishing an internship/exchange program. Our partner companies and colleges here in the U.S. can sponsor several of these youth to come and shadow in their IT/Engineering units. They will then take their gained knowledge back home to help create solutions for problems in their local communities.

Your Partnership with & Giving to ATIC.

AfriTech’s goal of engaging Youth in Kenya (and Africa at large) in Science, Technology, Math and Engineering (STEM) is one of the most important factors in creating Kenya’s ingenuity, tomorrow’s skilled workforce and strong problem-solvers.

Beyond simply expanding digital literacy, we are equipping youth with the tools and the training to become community leaders. We are helping change the mentality of waiting for someone else to come in and fix local problems, and we are instead supporting them as they gain the skills needed in the 21st century so they can ultimately find solutions themselves.

We are launching our 2018/2019 ATIC Launch Fundraising Campaign by December 31st 2018. Our goal is to raise $75,000 to help 150 student trainees get into our uCODE2 Programs and help us reach out to high school student through EYES program.

When people ask why I decided to do this, I say people like YOU are the reason. I do this because people like YOU and companies like YOURS have believed in my dream and vision to help make the dreams and passions of the youth in community come true. We, therefore, would like to request for your company’s assistance in helping us provide this opportunity to AfriTech’s Youth. **We can’t do it without your help.** We look forward to partnering with you in meeting this goal.

*Donations are received by:*
  - Name: EICT Foundation, Inc.
  - Category: A Kansas, 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization.
  - **Donations are tax deductible.**