

EP05

0:00:06

(Fred Swaniker Founder & Chairman | African Leadership Group)

Africa doesn't have time. We don't have time to waste. We're going to be 60 % of the world's youth by 2050. All of these are alarm bells.

0:00:13

(David Kasilia Alumnus, ALX Kenya, CEO & Co-Founder | Promptverse)

I will be like your coding partner. I will be like the next companion for you to work with.

0:00:17

Hon. Paula Ingabire Minister of ICT & Innovation | Rwanda

If you want to build a capable workforce, digital literacy is a must.

0:00:22

(Riffat Manji CEO | Kitsilano Technologies Limited)

We have to look at changes around regulation, digital transformation. And one of the most important things is about talent retention. We need to be able to keep those jobs here.

0:00:31

(Teddy Ntawe Alumnus, ALX Rwanda | Ai Career Essential)

Have faith in yourself. Have faith in your ability. and take that first step, because you will not regret it.

0:00:37

(Tina Muparadzi Former Executive Director | Education & Transitions - Mastercard Foundation)

We believe young people are not only participants, but they are agents of change.

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0:01:00

(VO)

Technology is reshaping everything. How we learn, how we live, how we earn. For Africa, its greatest advantage is its people. Young, creative and determined to lead in a world that's changing fast. With the world's youngest population, the question isn't whether the continent can catch up, but how fast it can build what comes next.

0:01:25

Fred Swaniker Founder & Chairman | African Leadership Group

You know, in 2018, I realized that the leaders of Africa needed a new tool, which is technology, right? Because the world was being, you know, taken over by technology. And I realized that, you know, most of the people who are building technology were white men in Silicon Valley, right? We needed more women in technology, we needed more Africans in technology, we needed more people of color, we needed more diversity in technology, right? And Africa shouldn't just be consumers of technology, but we need to be producers.

0:01:56

(VO)

Fred's vision was a call for Africa to shape technology. not just use it. And inside ALX, that vision takes form through learners like Justin.

0:02:06

(Juston Mhipe Founder & CEO | Data Drive Africa)

ALX is different because one thing, there is the community part of it. So you're not just doing this alone. And it also teaches you the soft skills, soft skills as in how do you communicate with people. When you come to ALX is that you don't only get the skills, but you also get are skills for personal growth.

0:02:26

(VO)

For many learners, that personal growth becomes something deeper, the confidence to keep going when things get hard.

0:02:33

(Rita Gitonga ALX Alumna)

In ALX, the first thing you get to learn is, be ready to do hard things. I get to see challenges as a stepping stone or somewhere you learn and grow, not when you encounter a challenge, you back off and be fearful.

0:02:51

(VO)

That mindset to lead with purpose and persistence lies at the heart of ALX's design.

0:02:58

Fred Swaniker Founder & Chairman | African Leadership Group

We were inspired to start ALX after almost a 15-year-old journey within the AL group, where we had started Africa leadership academy Africa leadership university. The central problem we were trying to solve is how do we unlock leadership in Africa at scale and how do we create problem solvers and innovators who can really address big challenges right, in health care, education, urbanization, governance etc.

That thing that I was worried about was that if Artificial intelligence is developed, but it's not infused with the right ethics and values. It can be dangerous for the world. And so I thought, why don't we take the work we've been doing in developing ethical leaders at African Leadership Academy, at African Leadership University, and fuse it with technology.

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(VO)

The result, a generation skilled in technology and grounded in values. It's a difference employers like Riffat, see every day. Young professionals who bring purpose and initiative to their work.

0:04:00

(Riffat Manji CEO | Kitsilano Technologies Limited)

What we've noticed is the hires from ALX have a lot of practical experience and I think that's been one of their biggest assets. With the ALX graduates we were able to throw them into projects right away from day one, where we just assigned them mentors and senior engineers to sort of overlook and sort of verify towards the end of it. But they were literally able to be very self -starter, self -driven and execute projects very well.

0:04:23

(VO)

The impact didn't go unnoticed. What employers like Riffat were seeing in the workplace, policymakers began to champion across the continent.

0:04:26

**(Hon. Paula Ingabire
Minister of ICT & Innovation | Rwanda)**

Building a digitally skilled workforce is a priority not just for Rwanda but for the entire continent. To be a knowledge -based economy means you have to have the right skills. The new jobs are digital in nature.

And so, if you want to build a capable workforce, you must also make sure that they have digital skills, and digital literacy is a must if we are to achieve our ambitions of becoming a knowledge -based economy.

0:05:02

(VO)

To make that vision real takes more than policy. It requires partnerships. That's why institutions like MasterCard Foundation are working with educators and innovators to reshape how learning happens, so it reaches more people and stays relevant in a changing world.

0:05:02

(Tina Muparadzi Former Executive Director | Education & Transitions - Mastercard Foundation)

We are helping to build learning systems that can adapt, scale and serve every learner, regardless of their circumstances. We see edtech as a catalyst for transforming learning systems and making education more accessible, relevant and resilient. Supporting edtech entrepreneurs is one of the key ways that we can integrate technology at scale and with impact.

0:05:50

(VO)

Inside these evolving systems, young innovators are taking their curiosity into creation, like David, a full -stack developer and co -founder of Promptverse, a company he helped build through his experience at ALX.

0:06:02

(David Kasilia Alumnus, ALX Kenya, CEO & Co-Founder | Promptverse)

ALX helped me to understand that I can build my own product scale it, and then reach to masses. What really excited me while we were building Chromecast was the first day we released now the second version, which is the full stack application.

We got 300 users within the first week. So it was validation of what we were building and the need for it in the market. So LX helped me to understand the whole ecosystem, not just being a developer, not just being an entrepreneur, but also being around a community that will help you grow.

0:06:33

(Fred Swaniker Founder & Chairman | African Leadership Group)

When they learn about leadership skills, entrepreneurship skills, ethics and values, how to solve problems, how to work in teams. We want them to understand the big challenges facing the world. And then we train them in software engineering and data science and cloud computing and artificial intelligence, so that you create technology talent with a purpose.

0:06:52

(VO)

That purpose is what transforms talent into impact, supported by institutions investing in entrepreneurs who reimagine learning.

0:07:08

(Tina Muparadzi Former Executive Director | Education & Transitions - Mastercard Foundation)

One of our flagship programs is the MasterCard Foundation EdTech Fellowship, which supports promising African EdTech entrepreneurs to grow their impact. To date, we have supported over 140 EdTech startups throughout the continent.

The fellowship is active in several countries across Africa, working with partners to support ventures that are improving teaching, enhancing digital learning platforms, and addressing connectivity and content gaps.

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(VO)

Across Africa, classrooms and code labs are filling up fast. The sheer number of young people ready to learn and work what makes this mission so urgent.

0:07:47

**(Hon. Paula Ingabire
Minister of ICT & Innovation | Rwanda)**

At our demographics, the largest portion of our population are young people, young people that need to be skilled for the work of the future, which involves a lot of digital aspects and digital jobs and making sure that they have those skills if they're going to thrive in this digital economy that the world is heading towards.

0:08:11

(Fred Swaniker Founder & Chairman | African Leadership Group)

Tools are only as valuable as the direction which you point them in. So before we teach them how to use these tools, we have to first give them a purpose in life. Have these young people develop a mission, understand the big challenges of the world, so that when you now have the tool, you know how to use it properly. ALX is not just about technology for technology's sake. It's about technology for a purpose. We need to start first with a foundation around leadership and problem-solving and ethics, and then you add in these technology skills.

0:08:37

(VO)

That philosophy is changing how young Africans think. how they solve problems and see possibility. Like Teddy, an IT consultant who discovered at ALX that innovation starts with mindset.

0:08:51

(Teddy Ntawe Alumnus, ALX Rwanda | Ai Career Essential)

I feel like a lot of people in the job market right now are taught to do something in a linear way. They never learn to think outside the box per se. And I feel like ALX flipped a switch in my mind that allowed me to actually realise that with the information I've managed to research, there is another way I can fix this and there is another way I can optimise a solution for this problem.

0:09:11

(VO)

That same mindset is inspiring learners to build, to turn ideas into ventures that solve real problems.

0:09:19

(David Kasilia Alumnus, ALX Kenya, CEO & Co-Founder | Promptverse)

ALX transformed me from a developer all the way to an entrepreneur. Most devs just look at maybe becoming a senior dev and then getting job employment, maybe in a big organization. But once I joined ALX, I was able to understand that you will not just be a developer, but you can also be an entrepreneur.

0:09:38

(VO)

And as those ideas scale, ALX itself is scaling, building capacity to train millions across the continent.

0:09:47

(Fred Swaniker Founder & Chairman | African Leadership Group)

Last year, we trained 700,000 people, and we graduated 200,000 people. And with ALX now, we have a system that can, in the next decade, train three to five million people. So we've gone from training 25 people to 700,000, and now millions.

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(VO)

Growth on this scale depends on collaboration, where educators, innovators and policy makers move in rhythm to create opportunity for all.

0:10:16

(Tina Muparadzi Former Executive Director | Education & Transitions - Mastercard Foundation)

This begins by empowering individuals, strengthening institutions and reforming systems to ensure sustainability beyond our funding. We are demonstrating this in the way that we work with over 400 partners across more than 30 countries in Africa.

Our partnerships are grounded in collaboration and local leadership, co-creating solutions with our partners, supporting innovation, influencing policy, and driving scale with inclusion and sustainability in mind.

0:10:54

(Fred Swaniker Founder & Chairman | African Leadership Group)

No one does anything important or substantial alone, right? So the entire African Leadership Group journey would not have been possible without relationships and partnerships. One of the most critical roles are obviously those who invest and believe in the mission and provide the resources to make sure that something like this happens. And of course, MasterCard Foundation has been the single biggest partner in that regard.

Up sound

So, I'll go back just a little bit before 10 years ago to when I first heard about the MasterCard Foundation.

0:11:32

**(Hon. Paula Ingabire
Minister of ICT & Innovation | Rwanda)**

I must say where we are today we wouldn't have been able to achieve the things that we've been able to achieve without the right partners that have been able to bring in the resources, the expertise, but also the market linkages that are required. And so that's why partnerships are very central.

When you look at really the sheer nature, the volume of the ambitions that we have today, we're talking about training all Rwandans. If you're talking about close to 14 million people, this is not a task that single player can do on their own and this is where partnerships really come in handy.

0:12:08

(VO)

Partnerships like these are laying the groundwork for what comes next. New skills, new industries and new ways of learning.

0:12:16

(Fred Swaniker Founder & Chairman | African Leadership Group)

After you've got these foundational skills, we then see ourselves, you know, focusing on five areas. One is software engineering and cloud computing and that's all track. The second is data science and AI.

The third is one thing that we've launched, which I'm really excited about, is what we call creative technologies, which is using AI for film production, music production, gaming, animation, so that we can tell our own stories as Africans. The fourth part, which is coming, is what we call hard tech, which is using drones, robotics, chip design, things like that, right? And then the final part is med tech.

How do we think about maybe training a massive pool of nurses in Africa, but who are AI enabled? Because there's a shortage of 18 million nurses around the world. Africa is the only place that can solve that. And so through ALX, we can take people. But let's not just train regular nurses, let's train AI-enabled nurses.

0:13:10

(VO)

With innovation on the rise across Africa, governments are crafting policies to turn that energy into lasting change.

0:13:17

**(Hon. Paula Ingabire
Minister of ICT & Innovation | Rwanda)**

To support the skilling of young people, but also ensuring that they have employment opportunities, what we've done as the government of Rwanda, first and foremost, is to put in place the digital talent policy. And so, this provides a framework through which we're able to think through how we equip our citizens with the right digital literacy skills.

Within our policy, what we have is almost like a pyramid that shows you the different layers and levels of digital skilling. At the bottom of the pyramid, that's where we have basic digital literacy skills, ensuring that our population has the basic skills.

Today, we have all our services for government that are provided online, how do we make sure that citizens, regardless of where they live across the country, are able to access these services on their own and be able to thrive in this digital economy.

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(VO)

Within these policy frameworks are stories of impact, young Africans showing how digital learning comes to life in practice.

0:14:16

**(Sifa Ornella
ALX | AICE - Data Analytics, TechPlus Student)**

I chose AI because there's a lot of potential in AI and it's a very mysterious topic. Most people till now do not understand what do you mean by AI. AI is something you can use in your day -to -

day life. It's like your own personal assistant, someone that has all the information you'll ever need in just a matter of seconds.

0:14:40

(VO)

SIFA represents a growing wave of young women stepping into technology, finding opportunity and belonging in spaces that once felt out of reach. It's a change, leaders like Riffat are witnessing across the continent.

0:14:57

(Riffat Manji CEO | Kitsilano Technologies Limited)

One of the things that I'm really passionate about when it comes to education in this region is empowering women. And not necessarily just women in tech, but just generally women everywhere.

I think we need to have a lot more programs that support women in the education journey, especially when it comes to rural areas, not just metropolitan cities. In fact, one of the programs that we have here at Kitsilano to enable women to grow in that trajectory.

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(VO)

That kind of advocacy often comes from lived experience. from women who've had to carve out their own space in technology.

0:15:36

(Sifa Ornella

ALX | AICE - Data Analytics, TechPlus Student)

Growing up as a young lady trying to pursue tech, the tech industry, was really hard. Many people didn't believe that we women are able to achieve or do something as great as tech. Most people didn't even know what tech was, right?

0:15:54

(VO)

Yet every barrier overcome, makes the next step easier for someone else.

0:16:08

(Rita Gitonga, SALX Alumna)

Coming here and learning taking up the courses changed my mind set on how I view challenges. So now when I see a challenge I am motivated to sort it and find a solution for it. So getting into tech was like a huge win for me because it's like home I enjoy .

0:16:23

(Sifa Ornella
ALX | AICE - Data Analytics, TechPlus Student)

I am thankful to institutions like ALX and partners like the Mastercard Foundation.

0:16:27

(Tina Muparadzi Former Executive Director | Education & Transitions - Mastercard Foundation)

Sifa's gratitude says it all. Thankful for how far she's come and hopeful for what's ahead. Learners like Liliose carry that same spirit, turning every challenge into a chance to grow.

0:16:41

(Liliose Gashugi ALX | AICE - Data Analytics, TechPlus Student)

They are really shaping the younger African lives, their future, because I think they helped me to shape my own future, knowing what I really want and align my goals well so that I can have a better future and also I can know what I want.

0:16:59

(Fred Swaniker Founder & Chairman | African Leadership Group)

For these learners, opportunity has meant more than new skills. It's a chance to see what's possible and it's that kind of possibility that partners like MasterCard Foundation are working to expand across Africa.

0:17:15

(Tina Muparadzi Former Executive Director | Education & Transitions - Mastercard Foundation)

Inclusion is such an important part of the foundation's strategy because being inclusive actually unlocks untapped talent, strengthens communities, and is key to creating resilient and just economies. It's good for the economy.

0:17:33

Hon. Paula Ingabire
Minister of ICT & Innovation | Rwanda

As you think about inclusion, if our people don't have the right digital skills and literacy, That's the fastest way to ensuring that they're being excluded from all of these important opportunities. And so it's going to be a lifeline for how our people access opportunities on how they can thrive in the future that is being shaped primarily by these digital technologies.

0:17:58

(Tina Muparadzi Former Executive Director | Education & Transitions - Mastercard Foundation)

Beyond funding, our vision is bold. but clear. It is to transform education and skilling institutions and systems so that every young person in Africa can access quality and relevant education and achieve success throughout their journey to dignified and fulfilling work.

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(VO)

The impact of that investment shows up beyond the classroom, in workplaces where young people are putting their skills to work.

0:18:24

(Riffat Manji CEO | Kitsilano Technologies Limited)

A lot of the youth are complaining about the lack of opportunities. So I think the first thing we can do, obviously, is give the opportunities. But at the same time, give opportunities where people are actually able to apply those skills.

It's one thing to have an internship program where you bring on interns and they sort of take on a very administrative role. And then there's a difference between taking on interns and actually giving them access to real -world projects. We took on 10 interns out of the ALX program, and they're actually coming to their six -month end at the end of this month. And we are going to be keeping 80 % of them full -time here at Kitsilano.

0:19:07

(Tina Muparadzi Former Executive Director | Education & Transitions - Mastercard Foundation)

The aspiration is quite simple and profound we must ensure that the future generations inherit it and employment systems that are equitable, inclusive, and responsive to their realities.

0:19:23

Hon. Paula Ingabire

Minister of ICT & Innovation | Rwanda

MasterCard Foundation has been a great partner because of the different facets that they're touching. They go beyond just looking at building a skilled workforce, but really also thinking about how different sectors could benefit from the Foundation's priorities.

And thanks to the partnership that we've had with MasterCard Foundation, we've now been able to scale and one were able to create the data sharing policy that was recently adopted by cabinet.

0:19:52

(Tina Muparadzi Former Executive Director | Education & Transitions - Mastercard Foundation)

The foundation's investments must leave behind stronger institutions, reformed systems, and a generation of empowered leaders who continue the work of transformation.

0:20:07

(Teddy Ntawe Alumnus, ALX Rwanda | Ai Career Essential)

Once we can come together as young Africans and realize that the future of this continent is on our shoulders, then we can start to realize our visions. Our role is absolute. It's up to us. There's no one else coming to help.

0:20:19

(VO)

If you look throughout history, those who control technology control the world. As the world has progressed, if you look at the rise of power, it's always correlated with technology.

0:20:33

(VO)

That power comes with responsibility to guide how technology is used and who it serves. It's a balance governments like Rwanda's are now working to protect.

0:20:47

Hon. Paula Ingabire

Minister of ICT & Innovation | Rwanda

Much as everyone is scared about the risks to do with AI, what we're doing as a government is to make sure that we understand what are those risks for each of those applications and how are we protecting our people from those risks so that we are able to see the upside of AI while we are mitigating the risks that come with using the technology.

0:21:05

(Riffat Manji CEO | Kitsilano Technologies Limited)

We have to look at changes around regulation, digital transformation. and one of the most important things is about talent retention. With today's global economy and the way everybody can work remotely, foreign companies are able to recruit our talent. We need to be able to keep those jobs here with companies within the region.

0:21:26

(VO)

Making this possible means building systems that let young people grow, learn and become. For learners like Sifa, that support has shaped who they are and who they're becoming.

0:21:40

(Sifa Ornella

ALX | AICE - Data Analytics, TechPlus Student)

We are not who we are right now. We are not the future selves that we see ourselves being. My aspirations for the future of education in Africa is seeing an education that is practical and tailored to young Africans, enabling them to be able to solve real life challenges they go through in their different communities.

0:22:04

(David Kasilia Alumnus, ALX Kenya, CEO & Co-Founder | Promptverse)

So the goal is to get started. Don't procrastinate it and say, I'm going to do this tomorrow. do it today, learn about what a computer is, learn what about AI is, sign up for something and just get started. And in the long run, that's the journey. The journey is discovering. The journey is not knowing. The journey is discovering.

0:22:25

(VO)

That spirit of discovery is what defines this generation. Young Africans, learning, adapting and finding their place in a changing world. For Fred Swanika, it's a moment full of possibility.

0:22:41

(Fred Swaniker Founder & Chairman | African Leadership Group)

There's an exciting time to be a young African. The rest of the world is aging. And if you get skills, especially if you have digital skills, you can work anywhere in the world. You can sit in Ghana and work in Germany and the UK and in Australia, right? So think very broadly. The world is your oyster. If you do that, you'll be set up for success. But if you're sitting and waiting for someone to give you something, you'll not be successful.

0:23:05

(VO)

That drive to act is where lasting change begins. And it's what shapes the kind of future we hope to leave behind.

0:23:05

**(Tina Muparadzi
Former Executive Director | Education & Transitions -
Mastercard Foundation)**

My personal aspiration is that we leave behind a world that is more inclusive, leave behind resilient and sustainable African organizations, continue the culture of give back, therefore paying forward creating a catalytic effect for the individual, their families, communities, and society as a whole.