

THE U.S. - KENYA CREATIVE ECONOMY

FORUM 2025



June 5, 2025



EMARA OLE SERENI

PROGRAM



REGISTRATION

08:00 – 09:00 REGISTRATION & NETWORKING

Attendees arrive, register, and network over light refreshments.

OPENING SEGMENT

09:05 – 09:15 OPENING ACT

The event opens with an energizing live performance.

09:20 – 09:40 WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

The forum will kick off with official remarks under the theme **“Powering the Future of the Creative Economy.”** These remarks will frame the Forum’s objectives, highlighting the growing significance of the U.S.–Kenya partnership in advancing the growth of the creative economy.

SPEAKERS

1. **Maxwell Okello**, CEO, American Chamber of Commerce, Kenya
2. **Marc Dillard**, Chargé d’Affaires, U.S. Embassy Kenya
3. **Hon. Salim Mvurya**, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports

THEMATIC SEGMENT

THE CREATIVE ECONOMY: WHY KENYA, WHY NOW?

09:45 – 10:00 OPENING KEYNOTE

This thematic segment begins with an insightful keynote titled **“The Creative Economy: Why Kenya, Why Now?”** a thought-provoking exploration of Kenya’s untapped potential in the creative economy. The session aims to inspire dialogue and shape Kenya’s economic narrative by spotlighting the creative sector’s capacity to attract investment, drive innovation and fuel entrepreneurship.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Nicholas Weinstock, Founder and President, Invention Studios



10:05 – 11:05

OPENING PANEL

THEME: UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF THE U.S.-KENYA CREATIVE ECOSYSTEM

This high-level discussion brings together industry leaders from film, music, digital content, and sports to explore how strategic U.S.-Kenya collaboration can unlock investment and growth in Kenya's creative economy. Panelists will examine emerging trends, challenges, and scalable opportunities, focusing on how cross-sector partnerships can fuel economic expansion. A pivotal dialogue on building an innovation-driven creative ecosystem between the two nations.

MODERATOR

Hon. Liz Lenjo, Intellectual Property and Entertainment Law Expert; Chairperson, Copyright Tribunal; Founder, MyIP Legal Studio

PANELISTS

- 1. Policarp Otieno**, Producer, Musician, Guitarist - Sol Generation
- 2. Katherine Hiner**, US Patent and Trademark Office, IP Attaché
- 3. Michael Finley**, Kenya Country Lead, NBA Africa
- 4. Tosh Gitonga**, Executive Producer/Director, Primary Picture Ltd

11:05 – 11:35

NETWORKING BREAK

THEMATIC SEGMENT

INNOVATION NEXUS: DIGITAL CONTENT AS THE NEW CURRENCY

11:35 – 12:45

PANEL SESSION

THEME: BUILDING GLOBAL PATHWAYS FOR COLLABORATION, DISTRIBUTION, AND REVENUE

The digital revolution has erased geographic barriers, creating unprecedented opportunities for African creatives to reach worldwide audiences. This dynamic panel brings together digital media, technology, and content creation pioneers to explore how innovations are reshaping cross-border collaboration, distribution, and monetization.

MODERATOR

Dr. Laila Macharia, Director, Africa Digital Media Institute, Aspen Africa Initiative



PANELISTS

1. **Panos A. Panay**, President, The Recording Academy
2. **Muthoni Kiarie**, Group Senior Project Manager, Royal Media Services Limited (ViuSasa)
3. **Martin Nielsen**, CEO and Co-founder, Mudundo.com
4. **Nzola Miranda**, Managing Director, MultiChoice Kenya
5. **Sarah Muyonga**, Public Policy Manager, East and Horn of Africa, Meta
6. **Nikita Kering**, Award-Winning Singer, Songwriter, Performing Artist, Africa's Rising Star, 4 x Afrima Awards Winner

12:45 – 14:00 NETWORKING LUNCH

14:15 – 15:45 CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSION
BREAKOUT SESSION 1**MUSIC: STREAMING POWER AND THE BUSINESS OF SOUND**

This session will explore how Kenyan artists and music entrepreneurs can harness the full commercial potential of the streaming economy. While platforms like Apple Music, YouTube, and Google have made global distribution more accessible, the real challenge lies in turning visibility into viable income. Attendees can expect a practical, grounded discussion, focusing not just on platforms but on the structures that allow artists to retain ownership, attract funding, and scale their music careers into global enterprises.

KNOWLEDGE PARTNER/MODERATOR

Angela Ndambuki, Regional Director for Sub-Saharan Africa, International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) Kenya

PANELISTS

1. **Peng Chen**, CEO, HustleSasa Inc.
2. **Bilha Ngaruiya**, Country Manager, Kenya, OneRPM
3. **Bien-Aimé Alusa Baraza**, Kenyan Musician, Songwriter, and Record Executive, Sol Generation Records
4. **Eric Musyoka**, Music Producer, Chairman, Recording Industry of Kenya (RIKE)



14:15 – 15:45

CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSION

BREAKOUT SESSION 2

FILM: PITCH, PRODUCE, PROFIT: NAVIGATING GLOBAL FILM MARKETS

This session unpacks the business side of filmmaking – financing, production, and global distribution. It targets Kenyan filmmakers and investors looking to break into international markets while keeping creative control. Speakers will walk through the whole journey of a film – from pitch to production to global release – and explore how Kenyan stories can succeed on the world stage. The conversation will also cover legal protections, co-production deals, and how to position Kenya as a top film destination.

KNOWLEDGE PARTNER/MODERATOR

Amb. Thomas Kwaka Omolo HSC, Former Consul General for Kenya to the USA; Chief Executive Officer, Big Box Creative/Conrad Consulting

PANELISTS

- 1. Timothy Owase**, Chief Executive Officer, Kenya Film Commission
- 2. Reuben Odanga**, Executive Producer/Filmmaker, Multan Production Limited
- 3. Pascal Tokodi**, Director, Actor, Entrepreneur
- 4. Phillip Karanja**, Founder, Philit Productions
- 5. Yvonne Muinde**, CEO / Creative Art Director, Ikweta Arts

BREAKOUT SESSION 3

SPORTS: BEYOND THE GAME - INVESTING IN KENYA'S SPORTS ECONOMY

This session examines sports as a powerful economic engine, beyond the field. It focuses on how Kenya can turn athletic success into business through leagues, media rights, merchandising, and talent development. Speakers will explore what it takes to build a thriving sports economy, where athletes, brands, and content creators grow value through licensing, endorsements, and cross-border deals.

KNOWLEDGE PARTNER

Carol Radull, Sports Media Personality, Sporty Media



PANELISTS

1. **Thom Wallace**, Chairman and Co-founder, If We Build It.org
2. **Sandra Kimokoti**, Co-Founder & Chief Commercial Officer, Twende Sports,
3. **McDonald Mariga**, Vice President, Football Kenya Federation
4. **Hon. Edwin Sifuna**, Senator, Nairobi County
5. **Delvin Savara Mudigi**, Artist And Creative Entrepreneur, Sauti Sol, Sol Generation

15:45 – 16:15 NETWORKING BREAK**CLOSING PLENARY****16:20 – 16:40**

The closing plenary will bring the day's ideas, insights, and energy full circle, focusing on what happens next. The Creative Economy Taskforce, comprising industry leaders, will drive collaborative initiatives that transform creative ideas into economic opportunities across borders.

SPEAKERS

1. **Amb. Christopher Kirigua**, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Kenya Embassy in Washington DC
2. **Panos A. Panay**, President, The Recording Academy

17:00 – 20:00 NETWORKING RECEPTION

As the formal program winds down, the evening transitions into a high-energy networking reception, designed to blend culture, commerce, and connection. This curated experience will bring together creatives, investors, policymakers, and entrepreneurs in an atmosphere of relaxed engagement and open dialogue.

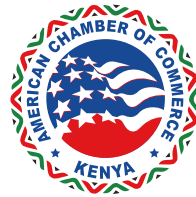
REMARKS

Drew Giblin, Acting Counselor for Public Affairs, U.S. Embassy Nairobi, Kenya





CONVENING PARTNERS



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KENYA



