

**AFRICA  
SOFT  
POWER**

# AFRICA SOFT POWER SUMMIT

RAW WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE,  
CREATIVE INDUSTRIES & INNOVATION CONFERENCE,  
AND THE AFRICA SOFT POWER GALA & AWARDS

**KIGALI**

**23 - 27 MAY 2023**



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# Founder's Notes

**I first launched Africa Soft Power during lockdown.** At that time, connection with the outside world was at a minimum, and it became clear quite early on that the global content being served to us by platforms like Amazon and Netflix was all but completely devoid of authentic African input. Unlike the ever-present Hollywood hills and British accents of the algorithms' choosing, the communities that we in Africa had closed the door on at the start of the pandemic had not been shipped onto the digital screen.

And so we set-up the original Africa Soft Power Series, a virtual event held across 15 days in August and September 2020, inclusive of 50+ speakers. The convening was a huge success, and showed that there was not only an appetite for - but also a real need to - propel African creativity and innovation into the mainstream, where our individuals and industries can play a more active role on the world stage.



What the pandemic also showed us was the accelerated importance of the creative and digital sectors. Africa is predicated to house 25% of the world's population by 2050, and particularly if we want that population to be above sea-level, we had better find new ways of generating the economic growth of tomorrow.

Fast forward to 2023, and we are delighted to be hosting our second 'physical world' Africa Soft Power Summit in Kigali, Rwanda this May. Across five action-packed days, we'll stage three key events including our main Creative and Innovative Industry Conference (CII), the Africa Soft Power Gala and Awards, and – most excitingly of all – the introduction of the inaugural RAW Women's Leadership Conference.

Raw is Real, it's Africa-hosted, and it's women-led, seeking to push the reset button on traditional gender discourse and ask the question: If the Diversity, Equality, & Inclusion (DEI) movement had been invented TODAY, how might we approach it differently?



Across the entire summit, there'll be leading speakers from the fields of business, finance, law, media, technology, sports, art, entertainment, academia, philanthropy, politics and more.

At RAW, we'll look at key themes surrounding the private sector's position in redefining gender roles, what gender discourse can learn from the changing climate narrative, closing the gender gap in start-up funding, and more. The CII Conference brings together leading practitioners from both the public and private sectors, to discuss some of the key intersectional themes of the day, such as staying ahead in the AI race, the economies of tourism and sports, and more broadly how to create new attitudes and carve out new pathways to success.

All of this which will be enriched with a whole host of accompanying activities across the five days, from the highly anticipated Africa Soft Power Gala & Awards, to networking and roundtables, lunches and drinks receptions, trips out to the NBA Africa playoffs (which are taking place at the Kigali Arena at the time of staging the summit), and wider cultural outings.

If I sound excited about this year's summit, it's because I am! During the past half-year, Africa Soft Power and our non-profit arm, African Women on Board, have staged packed-out events in Washington, New York, Miami, and Hollywood. But there's nothing more appealing than staging our own African soft power event, on African soil, and in the fabulous city of Kigali, Rwanda!

And while it's Africa-led, and Rwanda-staged, it's important to note that the ASP Summit is for the entire world, examining the industries of today that will fuel the global economic growth of tomorrow.

**Nkiru Balonwu**  
**Founder & Creative Director, Africa Soft Power**



# Africa Soft Power Summit (Programme Overview)

Bringing together key public and private sector organisations, as well as pioneering individuals from the fields of business, finance, law, media, technology, sports, art, entertainment, academia, philanthropy, politics and more, ASP's flagship Africa Soft Power Summit hosted in Kigali from May 23<sup>rd</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023 represents the highest-level convening of women's leadership as well as the African creative, knowledge and digital sectors.



## May 23<sup>rd</sup> | Speakers & Partners Mixer

Hosted by Dr. Ozonnia Ojielo, Resident Coordinator and Representative of the UN Secretary-General to Rwanda

## May 24<sup>th</sup> | RAW Women's Leadership Conference

COMPÈRES:	Mayen Ekong, General Counsel, Gurin Energy Anita Erskine, CEO, Anita Erskine Media
8:30am-8:50am	Arrival/Registration
8:50am-9:00am	<b>Welcome Remarks:</b> Dr. Nkiru Balonwu
9:00am-9:55am	<b>Revolutionizing Systems: Women's Leadership as the Catalyst for Change</b> Amb. Amina Mohamed, Fmr. Minister for Sports, Education & Foreign Affairs, Kenya Adefunke Adeyemi, Secretary General, The African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) Chike Obianwu, Deputy Managing Partner, Templars Clare Akamanzi, CEO, Rwanda Development Board Michelle Moore, Author & UK's 50 Most 'Influential Women in Sports' (Moderator)
10am-10:55am	<b>ESG: The Time is Now! Why the Private Sector is Key to Achieving Gender Equity</b> Kaniaru Wacieni, Senior Investment Director, Africa50 Adebola Toyin Oruma, Group Head, Gender Business Group, Bank of Industry Rosa Nduati Mutero Managing Partner, Anjarwalla & Khanna

Zano Mataruka, Regional Representative, International Finance Corporation  
 Rosemary Akpo, Managing Director, EXP Marketing Nigeria (Moderator)

11:00am-11:15am **Spotlight: Made in Kenya, The story of Africa's only running shoes company by Christopher O.H. Williams, Chairman, Enda Athletic Inc.**

11:15am-11:30am **[Short Break]**

11:30am-12:25pm **Money Talks: Achieving Gender Parity through Funding & Investment [in Women]**

Aaron Craig Mitchell, Co-Founder & CEO, PVSC



Amma Mensah, Founder & CEO, Reign Rum  
 Christopher O.H. Williams, Chairman, Enda Athletic Inc.  
 Gwladys Watrin, Investor Relations & BD - Europe, North-Africa  
 Tolagbe Martins, Founder, Wynton 45 Limited (Moderator)

12:30pm-1:25pm **[LUNCH BREAK] – Book Signing: Real Wins by Michelle Moore**

1:30pm-2:25pm **Cannot Lead?: Unravelling the Paradox of Women's Numerical Advantage and Exercising Real Power**

Faith Odhiambo: VP, Law Society of Kenya (LSK)  
 Loretta Aniagolu: CEO, F.I.T. Group; Fmr. Gubernatorial Candidate  
 Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, Executive Director, National Basketball Players Association Foundation & Fmr. Mayor of Baltimore  
 Abosede George-Ogan, Founder, Women in Leadership Advancement Network (Moderator)

2:30pm-3:25pm **Hidden in Plain Sight: Knowledge Production, How Bad Data Erodes Equitable and Sustainable Growth**

Bruno Akpaka, Director of Strategic Partnerships, Migo  
 Daniel Manjarrés, Institutional Relations Advisor, PretaHub  
 Nkiru Balonwu, Founder & Creative Director, Africa Soft Power  
 Mercy Akamo, Chief Communications Officer, Mara  
 Carol Abade, Group CEO, EXP (Moderator)

3:30pm-3:55pm **Culture is no Excuse – Challenging Africa**

In conversation:  
 Dr. Ozonnia Ojielo, Resident Coordinator and Representative of the UN Secretary-General to Rwanda

HRH Nnaemeka A. Achebe, King of Onitsha; Chairman, Unilever Nigeria

4:00pm-4:55pm **From Awareness to Action: How Changemakers Harness Media and Technology**

Farai Ncube, Regional Arts Director, Sub-Saharan Africa, British Council  
Ego Boyo, Founder, Temple Productions  
Balkissa Idé Siddo, Director for Sub-Saharan Africa, Meta  
Pauline Fischer, Founder & Principal, PMF Media Group, Inc.  
Anita Erskine, CEO, Anita Erskine Media (Moderator)

4:55pm-5:00pm **Closing**

7:00pm **Women's Leadership Dinner** - powered by Templars

### **May 25th | Creative & Innovative Industries Conference**

8:30am-8:50am Arrival/Registration

8:50am-9:00am Welcome Remarks

9:00am-9:10am **Spotlight: the Single African Air Transport Pilot Implementation Program (SAATMPIP) - Adefunke Secretary, The African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC)**

9:10am-10:00am **New Pathways: Travel, Tourism & Trade in Africa**

Adefunke Adeyemi, Secretary General, AFCAC  
Michaela Rugwizangoga, Chief Tourism Officer, Rwanda Development Board  
Tariro Washe, Filmmaker; Managing Director, Meso Maviri  
Wilmot Allen, Founder & Chairman, VentureLift Africa  
Tina L. Taylor, Managing Director, UNUM Capital Investment (Moderator)

10:00am-10:55am **Powering the Creative Economy: The Role of Private Capital in Propelling Innovation**

Juliet Yaa Asantewa Asante, CEO, National Film Authority of Ghana  
Temwa Gondwe, Senior Manager, Intra-African Trade Bank, Afreximbank  
Folake Akindele, Founder, Tiffany Amber Nigeria  
Zelda Akindele, Partner, Finance Practice Group, Templars (Moderator)

11:00am-11:10am **Spotlight: National Basketball Association (NBA) Africa – by Victor Williams, CEO, NBA Africa**

11:10am-12:00pm **The Economy of Sports: Driving Transformative Impact in Africa's Sports Ecosystem**

Michelle Moore, Author & UK's 50 Most 'Influential Women in Sports'  
Victor Williams, CEO, NBA Africa  
Joakim Noah, Founder, Noah Arc Foundation & 2-time NBA All Star  
Lyzz Ogunwo, VP International Devt. & Global Impact, Nat'l Basketball Players Association  
H.E. Belén Calvo Uyarra, Ambassador of the European Union in Rwanda (Moderator)

12:00pm-12:55pm **AI, The Future of Work and Art: Collaborator or Competitor, Where is**

### **Africa in this?**

James Hewes, President & CEO, International Federation of Periodical Publishers (FIPP)

Kola Oshalusi, Founder, Business of Photography

Julia Defabo, Curatorial Lead, Road to 100 Million Climate Soldiers'/ASP Climate Change Photo Essay Prize

Nnenna Onyewuchi, Executive Director Strategy & Innovation, YBR

Ugochukwu-Smooth Nzewi, Curator, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (Moderator)

12:55pm-1:00pm Closing Remarks

### **7pm Africa Soft Power Gala & Awards**

#### **May 26<sup>th</sup> | Masterclasses and roundtables**

##### **9:00am Golf with ASP – Powered by Templars & EXP**

Hosted at the Kigali Golf Resort and Villas “This design masterpiece is an 18-hole golf course located in the vibrant center of the capital city of Rwanda. Accessible for the amateur golfer, the course has the superior advantage of challenging even the best golfers amongst us.

##### **1:00pm-2:25pm Youth Power & Building Movements: Security, Climate Change, DEI**

How do young people initiate social movements and systems change? From security to climate change and beyond, how do we harness the immense potential of youth activism in addressing pressing global challenges and building a sustainable future?

Christian Intwari, Activist/Founder, Our Past Initiative

Julia Defabo, Curatorial Lead, Road to 100 Million Climate Soldiers'/ASP Climate Change Photo Essay Prize

Buhle Ndlovu, Vice President (Investment), Kasada Capital Investment

Folashade Anozie, Podcaster, Creative Strategist & Lawyer (Moderator)

##### **2:30pm-3:55pm Creative Power: Building a Sustainable Photography Career & Maximizing Profits – Masterclass with Illume Creative Studio & Business of Photography (BOP)**

A masterclass for photographers and interested creatives on linking creative endeavour with commercial viability - monetising talent, building a client base and community, and leveraging emerging technology.

##### **6:30pm Cocktails & Conversations: The Business of Lifestyle - powered by BellaNaija! + POP UP Store**

#### **May 27<sup>th</sup> | Activities**

12:00pm **Shopping Tour:** To patronize and connect with participating designers from the ASP Gala: Rwanda Clothing, Kezem, and Asantii.



# Speakers & Partners Mixer

The Africa Soft Power Summit 2023 opened with a Speakers & Partners Mixer on May 23rd hosted by Dr. Ozonnia Ojielo, Resident Coordinator and Representative of the UN Secretary-General to Rwanda.

Guests in attendance included: HRH Nnaemeka A. Achebe, King of Onitsha/Chairman, Unilever Nigeria; H.E Amb. Guy Nestor Itoua, Ambassador of the Republic of Congo-Brazzaville to Rwanda & Dean of the Diplomatic Corps in Rwanda; H.E. Belén Calvo Uyarra, Ambassador of the European Union in Rwanda; Marc De Santis, Regional Director of Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation (SDC); Rolande Simone Pryce, World Bank Country Manager, Rwanda and others.









# RAW Women's Leadership Conference

Powered by African Women on Board and showcasing leading female and male voices alike, from minute one, the RAW conference pushed the reset button on traditional gender discourse. If DEI had been invented TODAY, what would we do differently? How would we think about, or communicate, or move towards, greater equality in both the workplace and society at large? If we began with a blank canvas in 2023, what would true global diversity, equality, and inclusion look like?









# RAW Leadership Dinner

Held on the evening of the RAW Women's Leadership Conference, the Leadership Dinner sponsored by Templars, a preeminent African Law firm, provided an opportunity for Summit guests to continue the conversation through dinner.









# Creative & Innovative Inds. Conference

A convening of leading businesses and individual voices from around the world, the CII Conference focused on how the African creative sectors can deliver growth and return on the continent, as well as how these industries can be used to better tell the modern African story on the world stage, changing perspectives, shifting global dialogues, and strengthening relationships with the diaspora community along the way.







# Africa Soft Power Gala and Awards

The Africa Soft Power Gala and Awards was a veritable feast of African creative and cultural output in action, in real-time! Modern African culture is still often misrepresented on the world stage – even across the diaspora community – and this celebration showcased what true African creativity looks like today, for all the world... and all the continent... to see!

## **Programme:**

### **Arrival of guests**

**Editorial Photo Studio:** Business of Photography, and Illume

**Opening performance:** DJ Fiston with Musafiri on talking drums

**Welcome remarks:** Carol Abade, Board Chair, Africa Soft Power/Group CEO, EXP

**Remarks on the occasion of Africa Day:** By H.E Amb. Guy Nestor Itoua, Ambassador of the Republic of Congo-Brazzaville in Kigali & Dean of the Diplomatic Corps in Rwanda - Presented by H.E. Amb. Charity Manyeruke, Ambassador of Zimbabwe to Rwanda

**Speech:** Amadou Fall, President, Basketball Africa League (BAL)

**Fashion presentation:** featuring collections from Turfah, Kezem, Rwanda Clothing, Asantii, and IZUBAA

**Music performance** by Alyn Sano

### **ASP Awards for 'Innovator propelling Africa forward'**

*ASP Award for Innovative Strategies in Youth Development and Sports:*

Recipient: Amadou Fall, President, Basketball Africa League (BAL)

Presented by: Markus Green, Board Member, Attorney General Alliance & VP/Ass. General Counsel, Pfizer Inc.

*ASP Award for Sustainable Transformation in the Creative Arts:*

Recipient: 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair

Presented by: Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, Executive Director, National Basketball Players Association Foundation & Fmr. Mayor of Baltimore

Accepted on behalf of 1:54 by: Ugochukwu-Smooth Nzewi, Curator, The Museum of Modern Art, New York

*ASP Award for Transformative Strategies in Financial Integration for Africa:*

Recipient: Ecobank Transnational Inc.(ETI)

Presented by: Dr. Ozonnia Ojielo, Resident Coordinator and Representative of the UN Secretary-General to Rwanda

Accepted by: Oriane A. Canfrin, Head, Marketing & Communication, Ecobank Côte d'Ivoire



*ASP Award for Systems Change and Innovation in Women's Leadership:*

Recipient: Adefunke Adeyemi, Secretary General, The African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC)

Presented by: Ambassador Christine Nkulikiyinka, CEO, Rwanda Cooperation Initiative

*ASP Award for Innovative Strategies in Travel and Tourism:*

Recipient: Republic of Rwanda

Presented by: Dr. Nkiru Balonwu, Founder, Africa Soft Power Group

Accepted by: Michaela Rugwizangoga, Chief Tourism Officer, Rwanda

**Closing performance:** DJ Fiston with Musafiri on talking drums





# Africa Soft Power Gala and Awards







# Meetings & Masterclasses

For day 2 of the Creative & Innovative Inds. Conference, we partnered with Norrsken Kigali House to host: Youth Power & Building Movements: Security, Climate Change, DEI, and Creative Power: Building a Sustainable Photography Career & Maximizing Profits.







# ‘Cocktails & Conversations’ with BellaNaija

BellaNaija, Africa’s leading tech-driven media platform, joined ASP to host an extraordinary evening of inspiration, connection, and empowerment during the Africa Soft Power Summit in Kigali. The event, Cocktails & Conversations II, brought together influential figures, industry leaders, and creative minds to explore the immense potential of digital media in driving Africa’s soft power.









# Media Coverage Overview

**AFRICA GLOBAL FUNDS** | How Data Poverty Equates to Missed Opportunities in Africa | May 23, 2023

<https://www.africaglobalfunds.com/analysis/interviews/how-data-poverty-equates-to-missed-opportunities-in-africa/>

**AFRICAN BUSINESS** | Africa needs to wield its soft power | May 23, 2023

<https://african.business/2023/05/trade-investment/africa-needs-to-wield-its-soft-power>

## **ASAASE RADIO**

Africa Soft Power Summit set to take place in Rwanda this month | May 7, 2023

<https://asaaseradio.com/https-asaaseradio-com-africa-soft-powwanda-this-month/>

Travelogue: A visit to the hilly state of Rwanda | May 29, 2023

<https://asaaseradio.com/travelogue-a-visit-to-the-hilly-and-genocide-surviving-state-of-rwanda/>

Africa needs deliberate policies to provoke women's leadership – ASP panel | May 24, 2023

<https://asaaseradio.com/africa-needs-deliberate-policies-to-provoke-womens-empowerment-asp-panel/>

AfCFTA Implementation: An integrated air and visa free travel regime paramount – ASP panel advocates | May 25, 2023

<https://asaaseradio.com/afcfta-implementation-an-integrated-air-and-visa-free-travel-regime-paramount-asp-panel-advocates/>

## **ARISE NEWS**

Ahead Africa Soft Power Summit in Kigali - Nkiru Balonwu | May 18, 2023

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OjCwzROEVtM>

## **BELLANAIJA**

Africa Soft Power Summit: Kigali to Host the Continent's Biggest Gathering of Creative Minds and Innovators | February 25, 2023

<https://www.bellanaija.com/2023/02/africa-soft-power-summit-kigali/>

Unveiled: Here's Why You Need To Be A Part Of The 1st-Ever Africa Soft Power Gala & Awards Night | May 16, 2023

<https://www.bellanaija.com/2023/05/asp-gala-awards-kigali/>

What Will Africa's Power Women Wear To The 'Africa Soft Power Gala & Awards' Debut? Find Out | May 24, 2023

<https://www.bellanaija.com/2023/05/style-asp-gala-awards/>

Exclusive Moments from BellaNaija's Cocktails & Conversations at the Africa Soft Power Summit in Kigali | May 29, 2023

<https://www.bellanaija.com/2023/05/bellanaija-cocktails-conversations-africa-soft-power-summit/>

#BNatASP2023: Everything You Missed From the BellaNaija Cocktails & Conversations II at the Africa Soft Power Summit in Kigali, Rwanda | May 29, 2023

<https://www.bellanaijastyle.com/bn-soft-power-summit-cocktails-conversations-in-kigali-rwanda/>

An Exclusive Look At The Inaugural Africa Soft Power Gala & Awards Night | June 3, 2023

<https://www.bellanaija.com/2023/06/what-went-down-asp-gala-awards/>

## **BUSINESS INSIDER**

Full agenda for Africa Soft Power Summit announced | May 23, 2023

<https://africa.businessinsider.com/local/careers/full-agenda-for-africa-soft-power-summit-announced/m8xdlqm>

Winners of the inaugural Africa Soft Power Awards announced | June 2, 2023

<https://africa.businessinsider.com/local/lifestyle/winners-of-the-inaugural-africa-soft-power-awards-announced/xm9bcls>

From creative power to women's leadership – How Africa Soft Power is propelling African thought leadership globally | June 13, 2023

<https://africa.businessinsider.com/local/leaders/from-creative-power-to-womens-leadership-how-africa-soft-power-is-propelling-african/3728grq>

## **CNBC Africa**

Unlocking Africa's soft power for economic growth | May 30, 2023

<https://www.cnbc.com/africa/media/6328482368112/>

## **NEWS CENTRAL**

Africa Soft Power Summit: Stakeholders Call For More Women Participation In Leadership | May 27, 2023

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0Lai3ZWLEM>

Africa Soft Power Summit: Key Stakeholders Gather In Rwanda, Advocate For Gender Equality | May 30, 2023

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rHRmckfVwc>





## **THE GUARDIAN NIGERIA**

Collaboration, Dominant Theme as The Africa Soft Power Summit Gears Up For Kigali | February 16, 2023

<https://guardian.ng/life/events/collaboration-dominant-theme-as-the-africa-soft-power-summit-gears-up-for-kigali/>

Africa Soft Power summit holds next month in Kigali | April 12, 2023

<https://guardian.ng/news/africa-soft-power-summit-holds-next-month-in-kigali/>

Africa Soft Power Summit to hold in Rwanda this month | May 7, 2023

<https://guardian.ng/arts-2/africa-soft-power-summit-to-hold-in-rwanda-this-month/>

Africa Soft Power summit returns to Kigali | June 15, 2023

<https://guardian.ng/news/africa-soft-power-summit-returns-to-kigali/>

## **THE NEW TIMES (RWANDA)**

Africa Soft Power Summit set to return to Kigali | May 8, 2023

<https://www.newtimes.co.rw/article/7298/news/featured/featured-africa-soft-power-summit-set-to-return-to-kigali>

## **VANGUARD**

African innovators converge in Kigali for summit | May 29, 2023

<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2023/05/african-innovators-converge-on-kigali-for-summit/>

## **VENTURES AFRICA**

From creative power to women's leadership – How Africa Soft Power is propelling African thought leadership globally | June 13, 2023

<https://venturesafrica.com/from-creative-power-to-womens-leadership-how-africa-soft-power-is-propelling-african-thought-leadership-globally/>

## **SEMAFOR**

Why African soft power matters | May 7, 2023

<https://www.semafor.com/article/05/06/2023/african-soft-power-afrobeats>

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