

Freetown Pitch Night

SNAPSHOT: SHOWCASING ENTREPRENEURS IN SIERRA LEONE

What is Freetown Pitch Night?

Freetown Pitch Night is a monthly event that gives budding entrepreneurs a platform to pitch their post-revenue business to a vibrant entrepreneur community while connecting them with the mentors, advisors, leaders, and experts they need to grow their business.

At Freetown Pitch Night, entrepreneurs have the opportunity to not just market their business, but also solicit feedback, and foster potential partnerships.

"Freetown Pitch Night was created to highlight the work entrepreneurs are doing in the country while helping to foster collaboration towards building a strong and sustainable entrepreneur ecosystem in Sierra Leone."

- Jason Eaves, SOBA's Business Innovation Hub Senior Lead.

Objectives

- Increase desirability and confidence to pursue entrepreneurship.
- Provide pitch practice to entrepreneurs.
- Offer opportunities for mentorship.
- Foster linkages to markets, investors, customers, suppliers, business support services, and capacity developers.
- Provide stability to entrepreneurship activities by maintaining a first Wednesday of the month schedule.

Partners and Collaboration

As a grassroots driven platform, each Pitch Night is run and sponsored by a collective of organisations looking to grow the private sector in Sierra Leone. This collective helps pick the theme for each event, choose pitchers, and ensure financial support. SOBA's iLab is providing the short-term technical assistance to establish the platform's sustainability.

To date Freetown Pitch Night has been done in association with:



Entrepreneurs Across Many Sectors

There have been four Pitch Nights to date and each one has centered around a different theme to showcase the breadth of entrepreneurs that exist across various sectors.

Inaugural Night -Theme: [Food Processing- 1/3/2017](#)

The first Freetown Pitch Night opened the stage for food processing businesses that exist in Sierra Leone. The keynote speaker was Dr. Zed Bahsoon, Founder and CEO of [Bennimix](#) and a food processing icon in Sierra Leone.

Second Pitch Night -Theme: [Female Entrepreneurs- 5/4/2017](#)

Freetown Pitch Night partnered with [PowerWomen 232](#) to put a spotlight on female entrepreneurs from different sectors. Power Women 232 is a network for female professionals in Sierra Leone that aims to bring professional women and entrepreneurs together to promote development in all fields. The keynote speaker was Dr. Eva Roberts, owner of [Morvigor](#).

Third Pitch Night -Theme: [Powering Sierra Leone- 5/3/2017](#)

This Pitch Night brought solar power providers together to pitch their products as solar uptake increases. Solar power is becoming an ever-important and growing market sector in Sierra Leone. The keynote speaker was Ami Dumbuya, [Power for All Sierra Leone](#) Campaign Director, and Partner and National Project Manager, Masada.

Fourth Pitch Night -Theme: [Planting Seeds for Success- Agri Businesses- 7/6/2017](#)

This agribusiness-themed Pitch Night brought together

agricultural input suppliers, including a SOBA partner, Nianda. The keynote speaker was also a SOBA partner: Donald Ola Smart from [Mountain Lions](#).

Fifth Pitch Night - Theme: Tech & Media: The Digital Leap 5/7/2017

This Pitch Night will showcase entrepreneurs that are leveraging the power of digital platforms in their business.

The Impact

Pitch Nights have been attended by close to 300 distinct participants since inception averaging over 100 people at each event. The SOBA team has received very positive feedback:

I want to say a very big thank you for this opportunity to pitch our Mobile Power Project. I am truly appreciative of the help and support you gave me in the preparations and the test pitch. You all are a rare gem that must be treasured.

- Eugene Tani-Luke Freetown Pitch Night Presenter- Solar Power Edition

Personally I like the timing of the program. The Freetown Pitch Night was awesome, very much interactive and it was impressive to listen to Dr. J Zed Bahson for Bennimix Food Company. Fatim product, Hannah coffee etc.... all were so interesting and have passion for their business. And as well appreciate the presenter Angela B. and also section pitch training's, before Freetown Pitch Night... everything extremely likely.

- Post event Survey Monkey response

The opportunity given to young entrepreneurs to showcase their products/services or innovative ideas to would be financiers or partners, experts and the public as a whole which is lacking in our country.

- Post event Survey Monkey response

Q&A: How to Run a Pitch Night

Freetown Pitch Night is easily to replicate. Below are some of the frequent questions and answers people ask about this event.

Q: How do we advertise Pitch Night?

A: Social media, emails, word of mouth. Other methods can be tried – radio announcements, flyers, TV adverts etc.

Q: Who are the target audience for Pitch Night?

A: Investors, bankers, marketing institutions, developmental organizations, friends and everyone who is interested in the growth of Sierra Leonean businesses.

Q: Are there ideal locations for Pitch Night?

A: There is no set venue for Pitch Night but your target groups should be taken into consideration when selecting a venue.

Q: How do we prepare pitchers for Pitch Night?

A: For a quality Pitch Night, pace and interest to the audience are most important. Pitchers meet with the event team three times before the event to practice their pitch. All pitches must be below five mins, clearly outline a problem and value proposition, where the business is heading, and what help they need from members of the audience.



To learn more visit sobasl.org