



Continental Logo and Visual Identity Competition

AU Theme of the Year 2027

AU at the Dawn of its 25th Anniversary: Leveraging the Full Potential of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) and New Technologies for Continental Integration

Submission deadline: Friday, 23 October 2026

1. Background

The 39th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union adopted the AU Theme of the Year 2027 through Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.952(XXXIX): **"AU at the Dawn of its 25th Anniversary: Leveraging the Full Potential of SAATM & New Technologies for Continental Integration."**

The Theme presents the African Union's 25th anniversary as both a moment of commemoration and an opportunity to renew continental ambition. It connects the Union's journey and future direction with the wider goal of African integration, viewed through two enabling lenses: the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) and new technologies.

Agenda 2063 sets out the African Union's vision of an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and acting as a dynamic force in the world. Physical, digital and institutional connectivity is central to that vision because it enables Africans to move, trade, communicate, innovate and participate more fully across borders.

SAATM is a flagship project of Agenda 2063. It was formally launched in January 2018 during the 30th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union in Addis Ababa, building on the 1999 Yamoussoukro Decision and the 2015 AU Assembly Declaration on establishing a single African air transport market.

SAATM seeks to advance a unified, competitive and liberalised African air transport market by progressively removing restrictions on market access, traffic rights, frequencies, capacity and air tariffs among participating Member States. It also supports common rules on fair competition, consumer protection and dispute settlement. Better air connectivity can support intra-African trade, tourism, investment, regional value chains, youth mobility and the free movement of people, while making continental integration more visible in citizens' daily lives.

New technologies—including artificial intelligence, digital identity, cybersecurity, data governance, digital public infrastructure, interoperable payments, space technologies, and smart mobility systems—are reshaping how Africa connects and competes. These advancements are underpinned by key continental frameworks, including the African Union Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa (2020–2030), the Continental Artificial Intelligence Strategy, the AU Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection (Malabo Convention), the AU Data Policy Framework, the AU Interoperability Framework for Digital ID, and the African Digital Compact. Harnessed responsibly, inclusively, and in alignment with these frameworks, these technologies can accelerate the implementation of the AfCFTA, improve public and private services, strengthen cross-border exchange, and expand opportunities for young people and women.

2. Purpose of the competition

The African Union Commission is organising a continent-wide competition inviting young African creatives to propose the official logo and visual identity concept for the AU Theme of the Year 2027. The selected proposal will serve as the creative foundation for the final identity and may be technically refined with the winner's participation and under African Union branding guidance.

3. Objectives

- Engage young Africans directly in shaping the public identity of a major continental priority.

- Generate early awareness, ownership and momentum around the AU Theme of the Year 2027.
- Translate AU at 25, Africa's integration, SAATM, and new technologies into one clear, coherent visual idea.
- Select a concept that reflects African Union values, Agenda 2063 and the aspirations of a connected, inclusive and digitally enabled Africa.
- Create the foundation for a consistent visual identity for use by the African Union and its partners throughout 2027.
- Recognise and create meaningful visibility for emerging African creative talent.

4. Competition deliverables

Each applicant must submit one proposed logo and a concise visual identity concept. The submission must include:

- A primary logo mark that works with or without the campaign title.
- Colour, monochrome and reversed versions suitable for light and dark backgrounds.
- A basic colour palette and recommended typography direction.
- A short explanation of the concept, symbolism, colour choices and relationship to the complete Theme.
- Three simple mock-ups showing the design on a digital card, an event backdrop and a publication cover.

5. Creative direction and design principles

The identity must communicate the Theme as one integrated continental story. Entries are not expected to depict every idea literally; they should distil the strongest concepts into a simple, distinctive and recognisable symbol.

5.1 Strategic architecture

Element	What the logo should communicate
AU at 25	A major institutional milestone: 25 years of evolution, solidarity and collective action, expressed as a bridge between achievements to date and the Union's future direction.
Africa's integration	One Africa becoming more connected: movement across borders; linked people, markets and institutions; unity in diversity; and continental ownership.
SAATM	Open African skies and safer, easier and more efficient air connectivity. Aviation imagery is optional and should support - not replace - the wider integration story.
New technologies	African-led innovation, artificial intelligence, digital identity, cybersecurity, data governance, digital public infrastructure, interoperable payments, space technologies and smart mobility systems, anchored in digital connectivity, can serve people, expand opportunity and accelerate continental integration.

5.2 Core keywords and messages

Keywords: AU at 25; African unity; continental integration; open African skies; movement; connectivity; SAATM; new technologies; artificial intelligence; digital identity; cybersecurity; digital public infrastructure; interoperable payments; smart mobility systems; digital transformation; African ownership; youth; inclusion; opportunity; shared prosperity; and Agenda 2063.

- Open African skies accelerating Agenda 2063 and continental integration.
- New technologies unlocking the potential of Africa's youth and expanding inclusive opportunity.
- A connected Africa advancing shared prosperity through African-owned solutions.
- AU at 25: honouring the journey while designing Africa's integrated future.

5.3 Visual interpretation

Design caution

Avoid national flags or political symbols, distorted maps, cultural stereotypes, copied stock icons, overly literal combinations of aircraft and circuitry, and details that disappear at small sizes.

6. Eligibility

- The competition is open to citizens of all African Union Member States who are aged 18-24 on the submission deadline.
- Entries must be submitted by individuals. Joint or team submissions will not be accepted.
- Students, designers, artists, illustrators, digital creatives, innovators and communication professionals are encouraged to participate. Formal professional qualifications are not required.
- Each applicant may submit only one entry.
- Employees and officials of the African Union Commission, members of the competition's organising, screening or evaluation committees, and employees of partner organisations directly involved in administering the competition, as well as their immediate family members, including spouses and children, are not eligible to participate.

7. Required submission package

- Completed application form, including the applicant's name, nationality, date of birth, contact details and brief profile.
- Proof of nationality and age. These documents will be used only for eligibility verification.
- One presentation PDF containing the primary logo, colour version, black-and-white version, reversed version and the three required mock-ups.
- Preview files in PNG or JPEG format with a minimum width of 3,000 pixels.
- A concept notes of no more than 500 words explaining the idea, symbolism, relevance to the complete Theme, colour choices and intended adaptability.
- A signed originality, intellectual-property and disclosure declaration using the form provided with the call.

8. Technical, originality and AI requirements

- The logo must be original, created specifically for this competition and not previously published, licensed, sold, awarded or submitted to another competition.
- The entry must not reproduce or imitate the African Union emblem, an existing institutional logo, a national symbol, stock artwork, a trademark or other third-party material.
- The design must remain recognisable in colour and monochrome, at small sizes and on light and dark backgrounds.
- The symbol should remain usable without embedded text. Any wordmark must allow adaptation into African Union working languages without compromising the identity.
- Shortlisted applicants must provide editable vector source files (SVG, EPS or Adobe Illustrator .ai), linked fonts and supporting assets within three working days of request. Failure to provide usable source files may result in disqualification

Generative AI is not permitted

All entries must be original, human-created work produced by the individual applicant. Logos generated, modified or substantially enhanced, in whole or in part, using generative artificial intelligence tools will not be accepted. Standard graphic-design software may be used, provided its generative AI features are not used.

Shortlisted applicants may be required to submit preliminary sketches and other evidence of their design process. The African Union Commission may undertake originality, reverse-image, metadata and technical checks at any stage. Any misrepresentation, plagiarism, copyright infringement or prohibited AI use will result in disqualification and may lead to withdrawal of an award.

9. Submission procedure and deadline

1. Download and read the competition documents available on the official webpage.
2. Prepare the complete submission package in the required formats.
3. Remove the applicant's name, signature, photograph, social-media handle and any other identifying mark from the logo presentation. Applicant information must appear only in the application form.
4. Submit all materials through the [official competition entry form](#), accessible via the competition webpage.
5. Retain the automated acknowledgment or submission receipt as proof of successful delivery.

Submission deadline / Friday, 23 October 2026 at 23:59 East Africa Time (UTC+3). Late, incomplete, corrupted or inaccessible submissions will not be considered.

10. Evaluation criteria

Eligible entries will be evaluated against the following criteria:

Criterion	Assessment focus	Weight
Relevance to the complete Theme	Integrates AU at 25, Africa's integration, SAATM and new technologies into a coherent concept with clear public value.	25%
AU values, Agenda 2063 and Pan-African identity	Reflects unity, African ownership, inclusion and the aspirations of the Africa We Want without privileging one country or region.	20%
Creativity, originality and visual impact	Presents a distinctive, fresh and ownable concept with strong visual presence and no evident imitation.	20%
Simplicity, clarity and recognisability	Is easy to understand, memorable and effective at both large and small sizes.	15%
Adaptability and technical execution	Works across print, digital, video, merchandise, events and multilingual applications, in colour and monochrome.	10%
Accessibility, cultural sensitivity and multilingual usability	Uses inclusive and respectful visual language, suitable contrast and a symbol that works across languages.	5%
Quality of the concept note	Explains the design choices clearly and consistently with the submitted work.	5%
TOTAL		100%

11. Selection process

Stage	What happens
Administrative review	Submissions will be checked for timely receipt, eligibility, completeness, file accessibility and signed declarations.
Technical evaluation	Eligible entries will be anonymised and evaluated against the published criteria by a communication- and design-focused panel.
Shortlist verification	Shortlisted applicants may be asked for vector files, sketches and evidence of process. Additional originality, rights and usability checks may be undertaken.
Final adjudication	An adjudication committee will consider the shortlisted entries and recommend one winner and a reserve entry.
Approval and refinement	The selected entry will undergo institutional approval and professional refinement with the winner before final release.

The African Union Commission may decide not to make an award if no submission meets the required standard or if verification identifies unresolved concerns.

12. Award and recognition

The winning applicants will receive:

- **First place:** USD 5,000
- **Second place:** USD 2,000
- **Third place:** USD 1,000
- A certificate of recognition
- Official acknowledgement through African Union platforms
- Training opportunities

The winner will also have the opportunity to participate in the AU Summit, where the winning logo will be officially unveiled.

The winning concept will be refined in consultation with the applicant and in accordance with African Union branding guidelines for official use throughout 2027. Any additional recognition arrangements will be communicated on the official competition webpage.

All awards and opportunities are subject to final approval, availability of funds and confirmation by partners.

13. Intellectual property and data protection

1. Applicants retain ownership of their entries during the competition while granting the African Union Commission a limited, royalty-free licence to receive, copy and display the work solely for administration, evaluation, verification and approved competition communication.
2. As a condition of receiving the award, the winner will assign to the African Union Commission the copyright and other transferable intellectual-property rights in the selected design and final identity files through the required assignment instrument.
3. The winner agrees that the selected design may be reasonably adapted, translated, animated, reproduced and refined for official use.
4. Applicants warrant that the work is original, that they hold the necessary rights and permissions, and that it does not include prohibited generative-AI content or unauthorised third-party material.
5. Personal data will be collected only to administer the competition, verify eligibility, contact applicants, conduct due diligence and publish approved recognition. Access will be limited to authorised personnel and handled in accordance with applicable African Union rules.

Applicants should monitor the official competition webpage for notices. If a change to the public timetable becomes necessary, it will be communicated through the same official channel.

15. Applicant checklist

1. **Completed application form and brief profile.**
2. **Proof of nationality and age.**
3. **Presentation PDF containing all required logo versions and three mock-ups.**
4. **High-resolution PNG or JPEG preview files.**
5. **Applicant Declaration and Consent Form**
6. **Applicant identity removed from the design presentation.**
7. **Complete package submitted through the official channel before the deadline.**