

# Twenty students to benefit from Shs 3.85bn Africa STEM scholarships

**GEOFREY SERUGO**

At least 20 students from underprivileged backgrounds are set to benefit from scholarships worth Shs 3.85 billion to pursue science and technology degree programmes at leading universities in Uganda.

The scholarships are being offered under the Airtel Africa Foundation Tech Fellowship, a newly launched initiative designed to support talented African undergraduates from low-income households in pursuing degrees in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

The programme directly addresses financial and skills barriers that limit young Africans' participation in the digital economy.

Beneficiaries will undertake their studies

at top institutions, including Makerere University, Kyambogo University, ISBAT University, Uganda Christian University, and Mbarara University of Science and Technology.

Speaking at the launch, Soumendra Sahu, the Airtel Uganda chief executive officer, expressed confidence in the scholars' potential to drive Africa's digital transformation.

"This marks a new chapter in the lives of 20 remarkable young Ugandans. Our mission is to create a tangible and lasting impact by ensuring that no bright mind is left behind due to financial limitations. These scholars are on a path to contribute meaningfully to Uganda's and Africa's growing digital economy," Sahu said.

He added that the initiative reflects Airtel's

broader commitment to empowering the next generation of innovators, problem-solvers, and leaders.

"Technology is the language of progress. By equipping these students with education and skills, we are investing in people and solutions that will transform communities, industries, and nations," he said.

The fellowship underscores the Airtel Africa Foundation's commitment to long-term impact in digital education. With a total value of approximately Shs 3.85 billion (about \$1.024 million) spread over four years, the programme represents a significant investment in developing future-ready talent.

One of the beneficiaries, Edgar Baluku from Uganda Christian University, described the scholarship as a turning point in his pursuit of

a career in telecommunications engineering.

"I am very excited about this opportunity. I have been struggling, like many students, to raise school fees for my education. This scholarship gives me the chance to pursue my dreams and make my parents and the entire clan proud," he said.

The Airtel Africa Tech Fellowship forms part of the Foundation's broader strategy to strengthen education and digital inclusion across the continent. The initiative builds on other social investments, including the Airtel-Unicef partnership, which has connected more than 84,000 learners in 246 schools across Uganda to digital learning platforms.

"We want to ensure that financial limitations do not silence talent, ambition, or the power to transform communities," Sahu said.