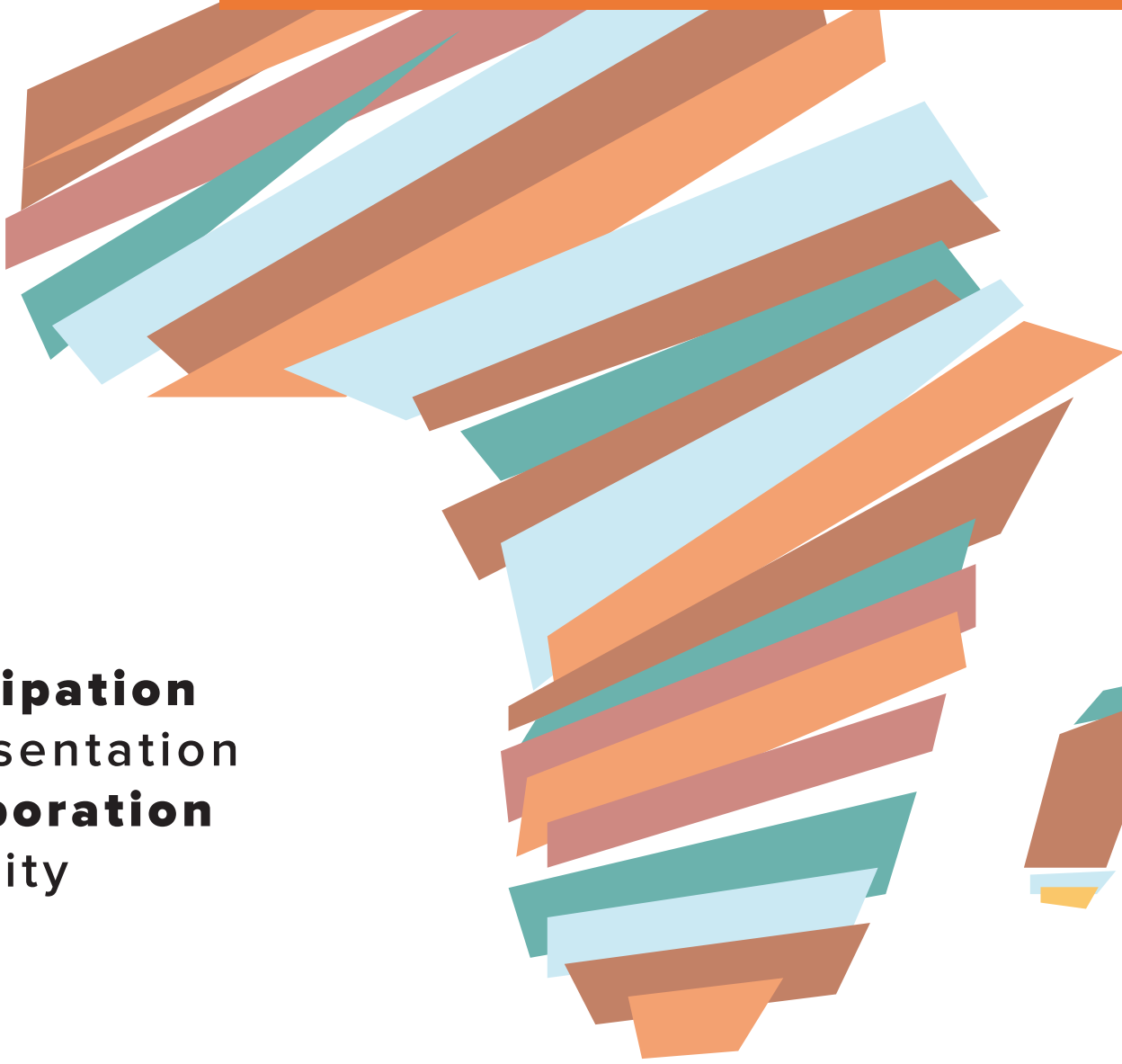
THINK AFRICA

Annual Report 2024



#Participation
#Representation
#Collaboration
#Diversity

info@thinkafrica.fi
www.thinkafrica.fi

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Message From The Chair

Think Africa is 10! It's been 10 years of real work and important achievements for Think Africa. Milestones are an important part of any worthy endeavour, they mark the end of a phase and the beginning of another. To mark the end of a 10-year phase, we had a celebration with our members, sponsor, partners, and collaborators. The year that Think Africa clocked 10 years as an organisation was very eventful. This annual report shows these activities in more detail, I invite you to continue reading.

Think Career grew in value and impact in 2024 with results that we are very proud of. For Inclusive Workplaces, a video series and partnership project showcased members of our community and other communities who are making a difference in their respective Finnish workplaces. In the summer, Cycling Nature Tours hosted many people for cycling tours of the Helsinki region in a bid to promote integration and wellbeing. African Express continued in partnership with the Helsinki International Film Festival. The launch of Afara Marketplace is on track and we have a great team behind that project. From Creatives Corner and Advocacy to Think Lounge and countless other accomplishments, the momentum continues to build.

Over the years, by providing opportunities for internships, Think Africa has been involved in the education and progress of many students. We understand the challenge that it is for members of our community to find a partner for internship positions where they can learn and grow. From their own feedback, our interns have enjoyed a positive and vibrant atmosphere where they have gained valuable skills and experience.

At the end of 10 years, it's important to not only celebrate the achievements of those years, but to also look into the future. 2024 was a year in which Think Africa made a lot of progress and also envisioned the future. The leadership of Think Africa is looking into the future on many fronts; relevance, sustainability, unity, and processes with emphasis on the items that support the core value of Think Africa; collaboration, representation, participation, and diversity.



As the tenure of the current board draws to a close, I'm certain I speak the minds of the members of the board when I say that it's been a great honour to serve our community in this capacity. I'm especially honoured and grateful to have served as chairperson for this tenure and I want to thank all the outgoing members of the board for making Think Africa what it is and a wonderful experience. I express my gratitude to every member who has taken Think Africa very seriously and has worked tirelessly to ensure that we achieve the great goals that we have achieved; there are too many names to name, I thank you all, and I will see you all soon.

Sincerely,
Akin Akinsola
Chairperson. Think Africa ry

2024 in Figures

2 Internships:
Mary Njoroge and Hebella Mengistu

1 Thesis support:
Eugene Ufoka - Diakonia

1 Mentorship support:
Alice Chunga - Åbo Akademi

53 Collaborations & partners

1,689
(previous: 1,458 followers)

3,653
(previous: 3,502 followers)

2,379
(previous: 1,847 followers)

Executive Summary

The 2024 Think Africa Annual Report reflects a year of empowerment, unity, and progress. From expanding mentorship opportunities to elevating creative voices and advocating for inclusive policies, Think Africa continued to support the well-being, representation, and belonging of the African diaspora in Finland. This report highlights our collective achievements and the growing impact of our work, made possible through community commitment and collaboration.

Key Achievements

Think Africa served as a vibrant and responsive support network for the African diaspora in Finland through a wide range of projects and programs:

Advocacy Events – Addressed the impacts of government policy changes on the African diaspora and international artists in Finland in collaboration with Teak International Alumni Network and Globe Art Point.

Afara Marketplace – Continued development of a directory and freelance platform for diaspora professionals; progress made on matchmaking and structure, with ongoing efforts to secure funding and coordination support.

African Express – Curated a selection of African short films in partnership with Love & Anarchy Film Festival, drawing over 120 viewers.

Creative(s) Corner – Featured artist showcases, panels, and exhibitions at Fest Afrika, Afrojazz Club goes Alppipuisto, and a photography series by Damilare Olalude.

Executive Summary

Cycling Nature Tours – Organized 5 summer cycling tours promoting mental and physical well-being, environmental learning, and community integration.

Inclusive Workplaces – A video series and partnership project highlighting immigrants advancing diversity and inclusion in Finnish workplaces.

Internships – In 2024, hosted two interns: Mary Njoroge (web development) and Hebella Mengistu (project coordination and logistics).

Master's Thesis Collaboration – Supported research on Black professionals in the Finnish labor market, contributing to Think Career improvements.

New Member Mixer – Hosted an intimate gathering to welcome and onboard new members through storytelling and community-building.

The Lounge – Held 7 hybrid and in-person sessions on resilience, storytelling, homeownership, sustainability, and well-being, reaching over 260 participants.

Think Africa Day '24 (TA Day) – Celebrated Think Africa's 10-year anniversary with over 60 guests, live performances, and a showcase of community spirit.

Think Career – Our flagship mentorship programme matched over 70 mentees with mentors across two rounds and delivered 18 events, enhancing well-being and professional confidence.

These initiatives strengthened bonds across our community, provided practical tools for advancement, and empowered individuals to lead, create, and connect.

Next, our financial and fundraising reports provide an overview of the organization's income, expenditures, and fundraising efforts over the past year.

Financial Sustainability – The quest for financial sustainability remains a critical aspect of Think Africa's viability and long-term success. Achieving this goal is crucial in ensuring the continuation of key programs and activities that serve our mission and our community. In this regard, our goals included building diverse revenue streams, strengthening financial management practices, and creating long-term financial resilience.

Grant Application and Management – As in previous years, our fundraising team and working groups targeted funding opportunities from government agencies, foundations and regional donors. Despite the lack of dedicated resources for grant writing, we were able to maintain a similar pipeline to 2023, and scored moderate success in securing funding. We stepped up our use of the online platform, Monday.com to manage and track our grant pipeline and to better coordinate our efforts.

Executive Summary

Social Enterprise Development – We continued work on the development of Afara Marketplace, our digital skills matchmaking directory. Once launched, the venture will contribute to the financial empowerment of our listed experts as well as Think Africa as a whole.

Sponsor engagement – In 2024 our fundraising team leveraged the insights of former intern Boniface Kanyathare's financial independence research to begin designing a sponsorship programme aimed at diversifying our funding source. The programme was finalised at the end of 2024 in preparation for piloting in 2025.

Financial Processes – Working with our accountant and treasurer, the board was able to improve its financial management processes, with better cost tracking and payments processing. This was greatly facilitated by the adoption of financial accounting software, which has now been in use for the entirety of 2024.

Conclusion

Despite challenges such as a public funding crunch caused by government austerity, a broader economic downturn that affected corporate and individual donors, we made great strides in preparing the groundwork for securing more flexible funding sources in the future. We look forward to the launch of important programmes such as Afara Marketplace, and will continue our efforts to closely track new grant opportunities to ensure that we can submit strong and timely applications.

Community & Unity – TA Day 2024

TA Day 2024 was a celebration of community spirit, cultural identity, and collective progress. It reaffirmed Think Africa's role in nurturing belonging and representation through inclusive, joyful gatherings.

Our mission, vision, and core values — centered on collaboration, representation, participation, and inclusivity — remain the compass guiding all our efforts. These are detailed in the following section of the report.

Financial Overview

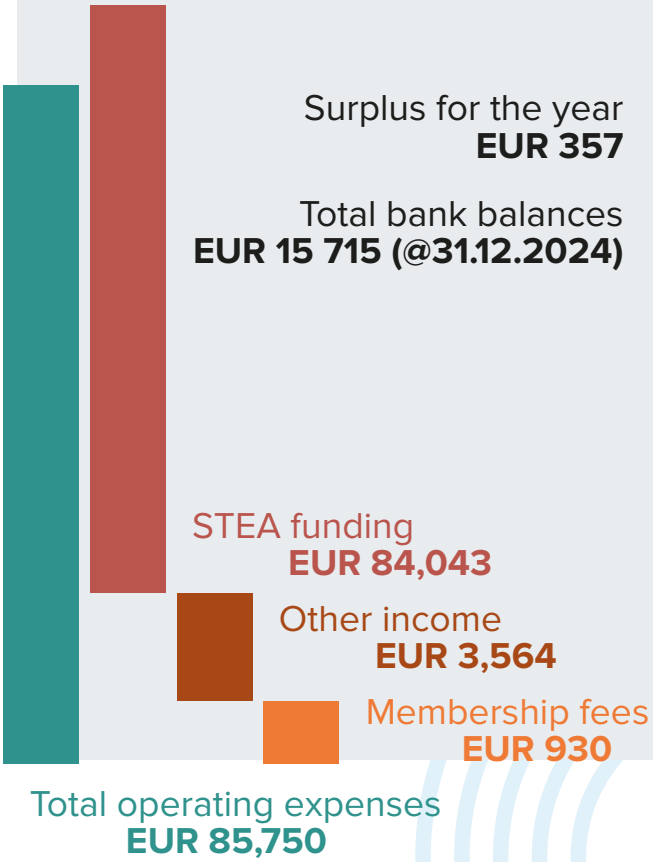
As in 2023, Think Africa's primary source of funding in 2024 came from the Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations, STEA. Total funding received from the government agency in 2024 amounted to EUR 84 043. The amount represented the third year of funding from STEA, and was used to finance Think Africa's flagship programme, Think Career, an initiative that aims to provide concrete support for unemployed and underemployed members of the African Diaspora and other groups.

Staff expenses rose in 2024, as Think Career Programme Coordinator Sofia Achame went on parental leave and was ably replaced by Eleos Zannou toward the end of the year, with some overlap between the two, to ensure a smooth handover of the programme. In addition, we increased the working hours of our Marketing Coordinator Ekaterina Tolkacheva to meet the growing demand for the organisation's communications activities. The results of our employees' efforts can clearly be seen in greater engagement with Think Africa via our online channels and the resulting growth in our social media followers.

Membership fees collected in 2024 amounted to EUR 930, falling well below the EUR 2 311 collected in 2023, and demonstrating that more work is needed to activate the support of our community. However the uncertain economic climate, which has resulted in many job losses and a highly competitive labour market may be partly to blame for the falloff in member contributions. Additionally, despite higher staff costs, no public fundraising activities and fewer grants, we posted a small but positive result at the end of the year, EUR 357, compared to EUR 2 400 at the end of 2023.

In an environment of great economic and geopolitical uncertainty, we will redouble our efforts to diversify our funding sources to ensure that we are less vulnerable to the winds of change. This will continue to drive our activities in 2025 and beyond as we aim for a financially sustainable, responsible and transparent Think Africa. We are pleased to provide our members with our audited financial results, showing the full details of our financial performance in 2024, along with this report.

Selected key figures from 2024



Fundraising Overview

In 2024 Think Africa saw the need to pivot to deeper engagement with existing and potential sponsors in its bid for financial sustainability. At the same time, grant funding remained an important pillar of the strategy for financing key projects and initiatives.

Grant funding

- STEA was the primary source of grant funding, accounting for EUR 84 043, and supporting our flagship project,Think Career, a mentorship programme for unemployed and underemployed immigrants.
- Other grants awarded in 2024 included:
  - EUR 4 000 from Moniheli for TA's Inclusive Workplaces project
  - EUR 2 500 from Moniheli for TA's cycling club activity, executed in collaboration with HEED Association Finland and the Ugandan Community in Finland
  - In 2024, we received a €1,000 grant from the City of Espoo in support of our community initiatives.

Membership fees

- Membership fees collected in 2024 fell short of contributions in 2023, amounting to just EUR 930. Additionally, tracking payment of membership dues, especially by existing members, remained challenging due to information gaps between recording systems. Our General Secretary and Treasurer are working to refine the process for following up on members' payments.

TA Sponsorship programme

- Following a fundraising research project conducted by volunteer Boniface Kanyathare, the TA fundraising working group designed a sponsorship programme aimed at securing flexible funding from existing and new corporate partners. The programme was finalised at the end of 2024, and a pilot was launched in early 2025 among seven selected partners. A report on the results will be delivered later in the year.

Public fundraising

- With Think Africa Week on a hiatus in 2024, TA did not engage the public in any fundraising efforts. It was noted in 2023 that public activation would have to begin in good time and that communications around a fundraising drive would have to be more

Mission, Vision, Values, and Priorities

Mission

We uplift the African diaspora in Finland by promoting their well-being and sense of belonging, advocating for their meaningful representation and participation and supporting their economic empowerment by leading as a trusted and sustainable organization that acts with integrity and transparency.

Vision

Think Africa envisions a future where the African diaspora in Finland is recognized, valued, and actively involved in shaping a diverse, inclusive, and thriving Finnish society.

Core Values Guiding Think Africa's Work

Collaboration – We believe that we will go further by working together.

Representation – We strive for a true and realistic image of Africa, Africans and the African diaspora.

Participation – We strive for equal participation of our members of the African diaspora.

Diversity – We embrace and are strengthened by the diversity in the Think Africa organization.

Organizational Goals (2023–2025)

Empowerment – Empower our members and African diaspora in Finland to utilise their skills and pursue their interests.

Belonging & Wellbeing – Build a sense of belonging in Finland and well-being amongst our members and African diaspora.

Advocacy – Advocate for meaningful representation and participation of the African diaspora in Finland.

Inclusivity – Grow a strong, inclusive and trusted organization.

Transparency & Sustainability – Grow a transparent, accountable and financially sustainable Think Africa.

Strategic Priorities (2023–2025)

Skills development – Creating initiatives to **enhance member competencies**.

Partnership-building – Strengthening external collaborations for **greater impact.**

Operational transparency – Ensuring clear governance, decision-making, and accountability.

2024 Priorities & Key Actions

Strengthening organizational structure:

Establishing an **administrative team** for operational efficiency.

Prioritizing **funding for coordinators** to ensure program continuity.

Enhancing program impact:

Expanding the **Think Career mentorship program**.

Strengthening **monitoring and evaluation mechanisms**.

Advocacy & Outreach:

Scaling up **community engagement and advocacy efforts**.

Improving **communication channels and policy frameworks**.

Financial Sustainability:

Developing a **robust fundraising strategy** to diversify income streams.

Voices of Our Community: Volunteers, Interns & Members

Omalara Odediran

My relationship with Think Africa (TA) spans several years, shaping both my entrepreneurial path and community engagement in Finland. Before officially becoming a member, I was actively involved as a vendor at Think Africa Week for five to six years, showcasing my brand, F'Joy Couture, and connecting with the vibrant network TA fosters.

One of the most significant moments for me was in 2021, during the pandemic, when I had the honour of styling The Future is Africa, an event hosted by Think Africa. Despite the challenges of that time, it was a powerful experience that reinforced the resilience and creativity of our community.

Think Africa has played a role in my business journey, offering a platform for visibility, networking, and collaboration. Becoming a member felt like a natural step to deepen my involvement and contribute to the impact TA has on African entrepreneurs and professionals in Finland. I look forward to growing with this community, sharing knowledge, and continuing to be part of initiatives that empower and uplift.

Hebella Mengistu

My Internship with Think Africa was a turning point for me. Working as a Project Coordinator Intern exposed me to different teams, platforms, and work styles, allowing me to grow my network and adapt to Finland's professional culture. It was inspiring to see how much impact a small organization like Think Africa has, largely driven by dedicated volunteers. The experience gave me confidence, practical skills, and ultimately helped me secure my current job and future career opportunities.

Volunteering is an excellent way to integrate, gain experience, and expand one's network in Finland. It played a key role in my journey, helping me stay active, build confidence, and access opportunities I wouldn't have otherwise encountered. I highly encourage newcomers to engage in volunteer work as a stepping stone into the Finnish job market.

Voices of Our Community: Volunteers, Interns & Members

Mary Njoroge

Interning at Think Africa was an experience that went far beyond the typical responsibilities of a WordPress developer. While my primary role involved designing and maintaining websites, the internship evolved into a multifaceted journey of learning and growth.

One of the most impactful aspects of my internship was my involvement in data analytics and workshop moderation. I gained insights into how data can drive decision-making and help organizations better serve their communities. Helping to moderate workshops sharpened my ability to manage diverse perspectives and keep discussions productive—skills I'll carry forward into any professional setting.

A unique privilege during my internship was working closely with my supervisor and attending key meetings. These were often high-stakes discussions, and observing how seasoned professionals navigate challenging conversations taught me invaluable lessons. I learned how to conduct difficult meetings, handle objections tactfully, and react calmly when faced with demanding clients. This exposure gave me confidence in my ability to adapt to various professional situations.

Another highlight was attending events like World Fest in Helsinki. It was an eye-opening experience to see how global and local communities connect through culture and dialogue. These events reinforced the importance of building relationships and understanding diverse viewpoints—qualities that are just as vital in technology as they are in social work.

My time at Think Africa wasn't just about enhancing technical skills; it was about personal and professional growth. From mastering the art of collaboration to navigating complex situations, this internship offered me lessons I couldn't have learned in a classroom. It's an experience I'll always treasure and one that has shaped my approach to both work and life.

Voices of Our Community: Volunteers, Interns & Members

Hope Makara

When I was invited to lead a Think Lounge session, I was initially hesitant. Unlike my 'Well-being While Job Seeking ' workshops, which emphasize active participation, I was told that Think Lounge sessions were more passive, with an audience primarily listening rather than engaging. However, I wanted to bring awareness to the topic of mental health and make it more accessible to all.

In preparing for my session, 'Fostering Well-being: Tools for Balance and Resilience', I reflected on the complex and often culturally nuanced perceptions of mental health. Through my research and experience, I've learned that mental health does not have a universal definition. In some cultures, the term is stigmatized and associated with illness, while in others, it is seen as a privileged concern of those with the luxury to focus on it. My goal was to shift this perspective and make mental well-being feel relevant, accessible, and actionable for everyone.

During the session, I guided participants through key concepts, starting with an introduction to MIELI Without Borders and an exploration of mental health definitions across different cultural contexts. Then, Eliza, a counselor in training, led a grounding exercise, equipping attendees with a practical way to bring attention to one's surroundings and out of swirling thoughts inside the mind. A core part of the session was The 3 Ms—a simple yet effective framework for maintaining balance and resilience. We concluded with an overview of mental health resources available in Finland and an open Q&A discussion.

By the end of the session, my hope was that participants would walk away with a broader understanding of mental health and practical strategies to navigate everyday challenges. Despite the non-interactive format, it was rewarding to see how the content resonated with the audience, sparking reflection and, hopefully, positive and destigmatized view of mental health.

Highlights: Projects & Programs

Communications Team

In 2024, the Communications Working Group focused on strengthening how we share Think Africa's mission, programmes, and impact with our community and beyond. We worked to create clear, engaging, and accessible communication across multiple platforms—email, social media, WhatsApp, and Slack—ensuring that every member and stakeholder could stay informed and connected. Listening to our community was a priority, so we introduced feedback channels like surveys and polls to better understand member needs and experiences.

A big part of our work was shaping Think Africa's voice as a thought leader, providing insightful content on key topics affecting the African diaspora. Our social media channels grew as we more strategically shared vital information that resonated with our audience. While we didn't engage with traditional media directly as much as planned, we stayed informed on news and discussions impacting the African diaspora, keeping our finger on the pulse of important conversations.

Through all these efforts, the Communications Working Group has helped Think Africa grow as a platform for dialogue, connection, and advocacy—ensuring our members feel heard, informed, and empowered.

Advocacy Team

A new working group was formed to formulate the Advocacy strategy for 2024. With the support from the Finnish Refugee Council, the team was able to make progress in developing its first year strategy. In addition, two events were organised to raise awareness of the impact of the government changes that came in 2024. The first event held in August, the impact of the Finnish government policy changes on the African diaspora, with speakers from the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment discussed recent government changes including changes to the Citizenship Act and Reforms to the Integration Act. Highlights and summary of the session can be found here.

The second event held in November, What Now? Changes to the Realities of International Artists in Finland, was organised in collaboration with TIAN (Teak International Alumni Network) and GAP (Globe Art Point). The info session focused on the effects of the political changes on the international art and culture community in Finland. We invited specialists from education, culture, politics, law and multicultural art & curation to share their insights and expertise with us.

Partnerships

In 2024, the Partnership Team focused on strengthening existing collaborations while laying the groundwork for sustaining and growing partnerships. Key goals included conducting a comprehensive audit of active partnerships and identifying opportunities for restructuring where needed. Additionally, the team aimed to develop a more strategic approach to acquiring new partners that align with Think Africa's mission.

Highlights: Projects & Programs

Think Africa Day

Among the key highlights of 2024 was the celebration of Think Africa's 10-year anniversary. The TA10 celebration took place at Restaurant Kraken in Helsinki in November 2024 and brought together over 60 attendees, including Think Africa members, friends, families, Think Career mentors and mentees, partner organisations, and even some of the original founders of Think Africa. The event served not only as a celebration of a decade-long journey but also as a powerful reminder of the vibrant, talented, and active African diaspora in Finland.

The evening was marked by a festive atmosphere, joyful reunions, and meaningful connections—both old and new. Guests enjoyed live music and performances that showcased the artistic excellence within the community, featuring singer Olivia, DJ Nick, and a dynamic lineup of open mic performers. The music, dancing, and shared moments created a strong sense of community spirit that carried through the entire night.

Think Career

In 2024, Think Career, our mentorship programme for unemployed and underemployed international professionals in Finland, successfully completed two five-month rounds (May–September and September 2024–January 2025). Round 1 matched 30 mentor-mentee pairs, increasing to 40 in Round 2 due to rising interest and mentor availability. We hosted 18 events throughout the year: three for both mentors and mentees, four for mentees, and three for mentors.

The programme expanded outreach by participating in events such as Integration 2024 (Turku), Espoo Career Bootcamp, World Village Festival, University of Helsinki's International Engagement Fair, and Famila ry's work-life course. We also partnered with International Professionals Finland for a degree recognition project.

Preparations began for the Stea performance report. One month after the programme, mentees were surveyed:

- 70% reported improved well-being,
- 69% noted increased professional contacts,
- 91% said they grew their networks (from 3 to 100+ new contacts),
- 70% felt prepared to pitch themselves by the end of the programme, up from 45%.



Highlights: Projects & Programs

Several factors contributed to these outcomes: personalized phone calls to understand mentee needs, thoughtful mentor matching, and regular check-ins. In May, new online marketing efforts significantly increased mentor applications, removing the need for personal outreach and boosting mentee interest, leading to a waiting list.

Think Career mentees stayed engaged, with one completing an internship and two joining Think Africa. One shared her experience on the blog. Mentors also contributed, with three leading events based on their expertise.

Toward the end of 2024, a new project coordinator joined as the current one prepared for parental leave.

Outreach

The Outreach team activities were centered on community building, information sharing, the well-being and integration of our members and volunteers. To this end, we organized a range of activities that were open members, volunteers and the general Think Africa friends. The monthly Lounge hosted discussions on topical and relevant issues, while Nature Cycling Tour invited members to explore Helsinki together in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. The New Members' Mixer engaged newly joined Think Africa members and connected them with ongoing activities and participation opportunities. Grill and Chill offered a low-threshold space for members to connect, interact, and have fun. Meanwhile, Creative Corner brought together Think Africa creatives and artists for collaboration

Think Africa Lounge:

2024 was a year of growth and deepened engagement for The Lounge. Through virtual, hybrid, and in-person sessions, we provided members with spaces for learning, empowerment, and connection.

Our programming centered on creating a supportive environment for sharing knowledge, building motivation, and tackling challenges. Seven monthly sessions were held, balancing motivational talks, practical advice, and thoughtful discussions:

- **Planning and Expectations for 2024** – Goal setting and success strategies
- **Maximizing Time, Resources, and Opportunities** – Tools for personal and professional impact
- **Thriving Against Odds** – Stories of resilience and adaptability
- **Climate Change and Everyday Solutions** – Small actions toward sustainability
- **Owning Our Stories by Writing Our Stories** – Empowerment through storytelling
- **How to Buy a Home in Finland** – Practical real estate advice
- **Wellbeing for Individuals Over 50 of African Descent** – Health, lifestyle, and resilience

Collaborations with organizations like Jade Yhteisö ry, Heed ry, and Teresia added depth to our discussions on social issues, while author Frank inspired participants to share personal narratives. These partnerships enriched our impact and broadened community dialogue.

Highlights: Projects & Programs

Grill and Chill

Our mid-summer Grill and Chill event brought together members, volunteers, and families for the second year in a row. It created a relaxed, inclusive space to socialize and promote well-being. Due to strong attendance and positive feedback, the Board agreed to make it an annual event around June–early July.

New Member Mixer

In April 2024, we hosted our first New Member Mixer, an intimate gathering designed to warmly welcome recent members into the Think Africa community. The event was created to form meaningful connections in a relaxed and personal setting, giving new members a chance to meet each other, engage with the team, and learn more about Think Africa's mission, values, and activities.

The mixer provided space for open dialogue, allowing attendees to share their interests, motivations for joining, and hopes for their involvement in the community. Through informal conversations, storytelling, and light refreshments, the atmosphere was both welcoming and energizing.

This initiative was part of our broader goal to strengthen member engagement and build a sense of belonging from the very beginning. By getting to know our members beyond formal meetings, we aim to support their active participation in our programs and events throughout the year.

The success of the New Member Mixer confirmed the importance of intentional relationship-building and community care at the core of our work. We look forward to organizing similar gatherings in the future to continue nurturing our growing network.

Impact & Participation

Throughout the year, 260 individuals participated in Lounge sessions, Grill and Chill, and the Mixer event. Feedback reflected appreciation for practical content, opportunities for connection, and suggestions for deeper engagement. Participants reported new insights, motivation, and steps toward their goals—confirming The Lounge as a meaningful space for growth and support.

Highlights: Projects & Programs

Creative(s) Corner

Creatives Corner resumed its activities in February by hosting Afrogane, a Helsinki based streaming platform solely focused on Afrocentric music, to share their journey into the vibrant world of Afrocentric music. A session in collaboration with Kulttuurikameleontit ry and HNMKY, and supported by Moniheli.

For the first time, Think Africa's Creative(s) Corner was at Fest Africa (Tampere) on July 13th. The objective of Fest Afrika 2024 was to promote African artists and awareness of African culture. Creative(s) Corner hosted a panel discussion with various artists around the theme of 'Africa is not a country!' where discussions delved into dangerous African stereotypes and music/art as a tool to combat them.

Creative(s) Corner was once again happy to be part of Afrojazz Club goes Alppipuisto with two activities on the 14th July: A panel discussion on the theme of 'Creating in Finland and the Power of Perspective' where we explore the journeys, stories, ideas, and lessons of a variety of women working in the creative field. As well as an artist spotlight project that will be a throughline throughout the summer events culminating in an exhibition by Damilare Olalude's (a new Think Africa member) photography project titled 'Passing Portraits'. The project is centred on capturing the everyday beautiful stories of people from the African diaspora on the go using a phone.







Cycling Nature Tours:

In response to the call for project proposals by Moniheli from its members,Think Africa, in collaboration with HEED Finland and Ugandan Community Finland partnered to implement a nature cycling tour project. Think Africa initiated the project and also coordinated the initial project planning meetings which focused on the aligning partner roles and responsibilities, the budget and project timeline as stipulated in the cooperation plan.

The project goal was to promote personal well-being both physical and mental, facilitate connections between immigrants and locals, and provide an opportunity for participants to learn more about their environment, ultimately fostering integration and a sense of belonging. A total of five tours were organised in July and August, reaching new participants from varying backgrounds.

To this end, we have managed to get four thousand euros for the implementation in 2025 from the City of Espoo. This will largely focus on Espoo residents, in particular young people.

Highlights: Projects & Programs

African Express

Think Africa continued its collaboration with Ubuntu Film Club and Helsinki International Film Festival for African Express - a special segment of Love & Anarchy annual film festival.

This time, our participation was on a smaller scale due to limited resources, focusing on curating films for the African Express Short Station that included four moving stories from filmmakers of African origin. The screening on the 26th September got a lot of interest, gathering 127 people and was almost sold out! Think Africa also gave away 50 free tickets to our community, to enjoy the beautiful ”The Village Next to Paradise” which got its world premiere in Cannes.

AFARA

The work with the development of Afara Marketplace, as a source of self-financing and freelance opportunities to diaspora professionals, continued with a small dedicated team. Progress was made on the directory development, albeit very slowly, and is still in development here. The matchmaking path was also defined. A need for a project coordinator who is able to dedicate more time is needed to push the service forward, and the team will continue to apply for funding and solicit sponsorships.

Inclusive Workspaces:

Working Women of Finland, and supported by Moniheli, Väinö Tanner Foundation, and Jaksomedia.

The 4 Inclusive Workplaces episodes follow the journeys of those that are active in opening doors for other immigrants towards more inclusive workplaces. From sharing information to contributing to their company Diversity, Inclusion and Equity strategies, these actions open up

opportunities for more immigrants. The episodes, which are available on Think Africa's YouTube Channel here, empower employed immigrants to champion for diversity from within. The Magazine feature is also available here.

Master Thesis support

The Being Black In The Finnish Labour Market- A qualitative study of the labour market experience of Black people in Finland research in collaboration with Think Africa explored the impact of race on the employment outcomes and experiences of black people in the Finnish labour market conducted between Autumn 2023 to Spring 2024. The findings revealed that black people in Finland can be subjected to discriminatory practices and biases based on their skin colour, leading to structural barriers to their success in the labour market. The findings called for the implementation of policies aimed at promoting equity and inclusion for black people in the Finnish labour market. In addition, they contributed to our Think Career programme and how it could better support participants who are black.

Highlights: Projects & Programs

Åbo Academy, Social Exclusion and Work-life course, mentorship

Think Africa continued its participation in the Social Exclusion and Work-life course by providing mentorship to one student. The primary aim of the mentorship was to familiarize the student with potential career paths post-graduation. The student completed her mentorship largely under the marketing and communications working group. The student shared her experiences in a blog post here.

Others:

◆ Advisory board of the International Employer of the Year 2024:

☐ JCI Finland, International Employer of the Year 2024 Think Africa was invited by Junior Chamber International (JCI) Finland to join the International Employer of the Year 2024 competition in an Advisory Board role. International Employer of the Year competition seeks organizations who have successfully recruited, onboarded, and retained international talent.

☐ Winners of the competition were as follows:

☐ Large companies : AlphaSense Oy

☐ SMEs : AddSearch Oy

☐ Public organizations : Lappeenranta–Lahti University of Technology LUT

◆ Think Africa completed its two-year term in the Moniheli Board, when a new Board was elected.

◆ One Think Africa member concluded their term on The Nordic Council of Ministers - Migrant Expert Forum, while another Think Africa member got a seat on the Forum, continuing our representation at the Nordic level

◆ Think Africa in May 2024 hosted a delegation of teachers from Nigeria at the office which included the Hon. Commissioner for Housing in his state (Pictures of visit below). This strengthened Think Africa's position in facilitating engagement between the Diaspora and delegations coming from African countries.

◆ Think Africa collaborated with African Anti-Racism Society Finland ry, to plan and implement a training on opening a bank account for an association for Moniheli Network associations. As part of Moniheli cooperation initiative led by AFARS, Think Africa was mainly responsible for communication, advertising of the activities, and outreach.

◆ Think Africa, in collaboration with Afro Sunday, hosted the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) 2024 Finals Watch Party in February 2024. This was a great community building activity in a buzzing atmosphere to watch the game.

◆ Think Africa attended the traditional Ministerial Reception of the Meeting of the Finnish Ambassadors that took place in August 2024 at Helsinki City Hall.

Partners and Collaborators ‘24

HEED, JÄDE, **Ugandan Community Finland Association**, Interpro Finland, **International Working Women of Finland (IWWOF)**, Mieli without Borders ry, **Moniheli**, IKEA, **WithSecure**, TE-Office, **Vantaa City**, Espoo City, **ELY Keskus (Centre for Economic Development)**, Transport and the Environment), **Una Europa/University of Helsinki**, Hyte ry, **Väestoliito**, Familia ry, **University of Helsinki**, Integration 2024, **Turku**, Psychological Practitioners Finland, **DocPoint**, GAP, **Helsinki City**, Finnish African Society, **Kraken Helsinki**, Nany’s Cakes, **Embassy of the Republic of Tunisia**, Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco, **Embassy of the Republic of Namibia**, ETNO, **Helsinki International Film Festival**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Diana ry, **AFAES ry**, IOM, ***Wallcoms***, Finnpartnership

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Think Africa ry
Saukonpaadenranta 20 B 30
00180 Helsinki
Finland

For more info contact:
info@thinkafrica.fi
www.thinkafrica.fi

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