

**RECKITT UNVEILS "CATALYST"**  
**WITH SERENA WILLIAMS AS ENTREPRENEUR-IN-RESIDENCE**  
**IN SUPPORT OF WOMEN-LED HEALTH AND HYGIENE START-UPS**

- 'Reckitt Catalyst' aims to bring life-changing health and hygiene solutions to five million people worldwide
- Programme to support and scale up to 200 health and hygiene ventures founded by women and under-represented founders by 2030
- Initiative extends Reckitt's long-standing commitment, having provided funding and mentorship to over 60 entrepreneurs in 13 countries over the last five years
- Williams to mentor entrepreneurs to scale their innovative businesses
- Call for entrepreneur entries opens today at [Reckitt.com](https://Reckitt.com)

*CANNES, France, 17 June 2025* - Reckitt, the company behind some of the world's best-loved consumer health and hygiene brands, has launched a global initiative, Reckitt Catalyst, to support and scale up to 200 health and hygiene start-ups founded by women and under-represented entrepreneurs – fuelling solutions that will improve access to health and hygiene for five million people.

Reckitt Catalyst is a five-year, up to £10m commitment to provide funding, mentorship and expertise from Reckitt leaders and Serena Williams, to allow innovative businesses to scale rapidly and help solve essential hygiene and healthcare challenges in communities across the world. In partnership with Yunus Social Innovation, Acumen America, and Health Innovation Exchange (HIEX), Reckitt is scaling its existing commitment to support up to 200 founders over the next five years, in more than 15 countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America.

As a successful entrepreneur and impact investor, Serena Williams is Reckitt's first Entrepreneur-in-Residence and will play an essential role in mentoring and supporting women leading these ventures. Williams and Reckitt announced an open call at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity, encouraging women-led businesses around the world to apply for a seat as one of Reckitt Catalyst's entrepreneurs, by visiting [Reckitt.com](https://Reckitt.com).



"Some of the world's most pressing healthcare challenges can be solved by bold, innovative ideas - if they are given the right support to thrive and scale. This includes mentorship, funding and unwavering belief," said Serena Williams. "I'm honoured to offer that as Reckitt's Entrepreneur-in-Residence and excited to share what I've learned in both business and sport to help visionary ventures grow."

Reckitt Catalyst builds on Reckitt's ongoing work to further strengthen its social impact projects around the world with flexible funding and expert mentorship. Since 2020, the company has supported 60 entrepreneurs across 13 countries, helping unlock access to health, clean water and sanitation for one million people.

Kris Licht, CEO of Reckitt, says: "Reckitt believes that health begins at home, in our communities. Local entrepreneurs are best placed to understand local challenges and have much-needed familiarity and understand the unique needs of their communities."

### **Focus on Entrepreneurs**

Attending the global call for entries at Cannes were several of Reckitt's entrepreneurs who spoke about the power of these support systems, including Nida Sheikh, CEO and co-founder of Tayaba. To date, Tayaba, has delivered half a billion litres of clean water in Pakistan by deploying solar-powered water facilities, water rollers, and now, an H2O Air machine, which converts humidity into 25 litres of clean drinking water a day.

Sheikh commented, "Reckitt's mentorship and funding have been instrumental in advancing our product and sharpening our communications, which secured further investments, allowing Tayaba to bring clean water to more people. The launch of Reckitt Catalyst is important to communities around the world allowing local ideas to thrive, increasing access to health and hygiene solutions."

### **Call for Entries**

Reckitt Catalyst is powered by expert partners who bring decades of deep experience in working with founders and scaling breakthrough innovations.

Acumen America will be Reckitt Catalyst's lead partner in the United States while in other geographies like Nigeria, South Africa, Brazil, Indonesia, and Pakistan, Reckitt will continue to partner with Yunus Social Innovation and Health Innovation Exchange, who have driven its social entrepreneurship health and hygiene programmes in the past.

Acumen America Managing Partner, Catherine Casey Nanda, comments, "We're excited to enter a long-term partnership with Reckitt Catalyst and Serena Williams, which will expand our ability to invest in visionary entrepreneurs and the system-changing health and hygiene companies they are building."



-ENDS-

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## NOTES TO EDITORS:

**About Reckitt:** Reckitt makes the products people trust to care for the ones they love. We are home to some of the world's best-loved consumer health and hygiene brands, including Dettol, Durex, Finish, Gaviscon, Harpic, Lysol, Mucinex, Nurofen, Strepsils, Vanish and Veet. Consumers are at the heart of everything Reckitt does. By creating innovative, science-backed solutions, Reckitt support people every day to live healthier lives.

Reckitt exists to protect, heal and nurture in the pursuit of a cleaner, healthier world. This commitment goes beyond the products it makes. Through its actions, Reckitt expands access to healthcare, education and economic opportunities. The company supports the planet by reducing waste, conserving resources and driving sustainable innovation.

Reckitt believes good health starts at home. With every action it takes, Reckitt strives to make consumers' lives easier, cleaner and healthier, to strengthen communities and to create a more sustainable future.

Find out more, or get in touch with us at: [Reckitt.com](https://www.Reckitt.com)

Reckitt Catalyst is a partnership between Reckitt, Yunus Social Innovation, Acumen America, and Health Innovation Exchange (HIE) across the United States, Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, Brazil, Mexico, Indonesia, India and Pakistan.

**About Serena Williams:** Serena Williams is the most successful female tennis player with 23 Grand Slam titles. She has seamlessly transitioned into entrepreneurship, with the launch of *Serena Ventures*, which she founded in 2017. The venture capital firm focuses

on investing in women and founders of colour, supporting startups across various industries. In addition, she launched *WYN Beauty* in partnership with Ulta Beauty in April 2024. Inspired by her own locker room routine, *WYN Beauty* is designed to inspire people to show up for themselves and others. A fashion icon and respected producer, Serena is also the founder of *Nine Two Six Productions*, a multimedia company focused on diverse voices. She is currently working on her upcoming memoir.

**About Acumen America:** Acumen America is the leading venture capital firm investing in mission-driven entrepreneurs looking to fix the root causes of America's poverty crisis. The firm believes lasting change requires big, new ideas designed to scale—which is why Acumen America backs founders deeply invested in their communities with the knowledge, context, and trust to improve the lives of people in them. Over the last 10+ years Acumen America has invested more than \$23 million across 44 companies which have collectively raised an additional \$1 billion in follow-on funding.

**About YSI:** Yunus Social Innovation (YSI) believes that doing good makes business sense. Together with its international team of impact experts and consultants, they redefine the role of business in addressing global societal challenges. Co-founded by Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Prof. Muhammad Yunus and inspired by his seven principles of social business, YSI partners with leading corporations to design and implement social innovation strategies and programmes that align business success with positive societal and environmental impact.

**About HIE:** The Health Innovation Exchange (HIE) is an UN-born global platform that accelerates the adoption of innovations to improve health outcomes worldwide. Established with the vision of bridging the gap between innovators, governments, investors, and implementers, HIE enables the scale-up of impactful, sustainable, and context-appropriate solutions in climate and health.

Learn more: [[HERE](#)]