

MAY 9 - 10, 2026



Life

INSIDE:

How to complete a
BOOK IN A WEEK

Hunger in the land:
A NUTRITIONIST'S
ADVICE



Frank Edwards:

From seven-year-old instrumentalist to
global gospel musician



Beyond The Spotlight

In this issue of Guardian Life, we move through music, fashion, food, technology, books and everyday realities shaping how people live now. Our cover story is about Frank Edwards, who once wanted to become a pilot before music took over his life in a bigger way. His story is not just about gospel music. It is about faith, family, discipline, rejection, growth and finding a sound that speaks to people.

We also look at African fabrics beyond Adire and Aso Oke, and the stories they carry across generations. From there, we turn to the Met Gala and the African stars who showed up with style and presence.

This edition also looks at how AI is entering the kitchen, how busy people can still finish a book in one week, and what hunger really means for families trying to eat better in today's Nigeria.

The grand finale of the 12th AMVCA is this Saturday, May 9, 2026.

Enjoy your weekend!

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Beyond Adire and Aso Oke: African fabrics you should know

by Musa Adekunle

Africa's textile story is wide, rich and deeply rooted in identity. Some fabrics were born on the continent, others arrived through trade and history. But over time, African people shaped them, wore them and gave them meaning. Today, these fabrics are more than fashion. They carry culture, status and memory. Here are some of the textiles that continue to define African style.



Aso Oke

Aso Oke is a handwoven fabric from the Yoruba people of South-West Nigeria. It is closely tied to Oyo State, with Iseyin known as its main weaving centre. Thick, durable and richly textured, Aso Oke is often worn at weddings, chieftaincy events and important celebrations. It is not just clothing. It is pride, heritage and tradition woven into cloth.



Adire

Adire is a Yoruba fabric from South-West Nigeria, known for its patterns and cultural meaning. Made through a resist-dye process, it has grown from traditional wear into a modern fashion favourite, often worn at cultural events, casual outings and even formal occasions.



Kente

Kente cloth comes from Ghana, where it was developed by the Ashanti people in the 17th century. Traditionally woven in towns like Bonwire and Agotime Kpetoe, it was once reserved for royalty. Each colour and pattern carries meaning, from power and wealth to wisdom and unity. Today, Kente has moved beyond the palace into global fashion, while still holding its cultural weight.



Ankara

Ankara, often called African wax print, is one of the most recognised fabrics on the continent. Though its origins trace back to Indonesian batik and Dutch production, West Africans made it their own. Known for its colours and lively prints, Ankara is everywhere, from everyday wear to high fashion. It reflects personality, mood and creativity most expressively.



Bogolan

Bogolan, also known as mud cloth, comes from Mali. It is made using handwoven cotton, natural dyes and fermented mud. Its patterns are not random. They tell stories about identity, protection, social class and history. With its earthy tones and deep meaning, Bogolan has inspired both traditional wear and modern design.



Kikoi

Kikoi is a lightweight cotton fabric from the Swahili coast of East Africa. Recognised by its simple stripes, it is breathable and perfect for warm weather. Traditionally worn as a wrap, Kikoi has evolved into scarves, beachwear and casual fashion. It is simple, practical and quietly stylish.



Kanga

Kanga is more than fabric. It is a voice. Popular across East Africa, this colourful cotton cloth often carries printed Swahili messages. These could be proverbs, advice, humour or subtle social commentary. Women use Kanga not just to dress, but to communicate. It turns everyday clothing into something deeply personal and expressive.

Frank Edwards: From seven-year-old instrumentalist to global gospel musician

by Chinonso Ihekire



Photographs by Wilson Photos & Body Lawson



Popular Nigerian singer, Frank Edwards, has spent close to two decades becoming one of the most powerful voices in the Nigerian gospel music sector.

Since emerging in the late 2000s, the Enugu-born artiste, producer and sound engineer has grown from a church instrumentalist into a trailblazing recording and performing gospel musician.

Earning multiple awards, his several feats include Best Male Vocalist/ Best Hit Single at the LoveWorld Awards and Song of the Year at the Nigerian Gospel Music Awards. He has worked with global heavyweights, including Don Moen, Micah Stampley, Nathaniel Bassey and Sinach.

After years of shaping gospel music through production, performance and ministry, Frank Edwards returns with his 12th studio project dubbed *Heart of Worship*. The seven-track EP unfurls as an intimate, chord-driven and deeply resonant soundscape, a significant sonic drift from his previous projects.

Catching up with *Guardian Music*, the 36-year-old musician peels back layers on his evolution, as well as detailing the lore behind making *Heart of Worship* and his creative process.

“I have never written one song in my life.”

— Frank Edwards

Tell us about your new project, *Heart of Worship*?

I have come to a place in ministry where you have done a lot of projects. You have made a lot of progress in different areas, and you have been on the biggest platforms. Then you realise that this thing is all about God. Sometimes we care so much about the crowd, the streams, the fancy sounds and the fancy lights, but the most important thing that matters is the heart of worship.

The Heart of Worship is a lifestyle. Worship is beyond singing. It is the lifestyle of a believer. When you listen to all of the tracks, it is talking about the heart of worship in such a way that everybody cannot sing, but everybody can worship God.

Did you have other titles before you settled for this?

No, I didn't struggle with the title because it was the title itself that inspired the songs on the album. I didn't finish the album and then try to give it a title.

It was a dream that I had, where I went to a concert, and I was getting ready to minister. When I got there, the hall was empty. There was nobody. As I was about to quarrel with my team and say, “Why didn't you guys do amazing publicity? This is the reason for this little turnout,” I noticed that a chair in the auditorium was glowing with light.

In that dream, it made sense to me that God Himself came to hear me. It was really not about the crowd. It was not about the fancy light or sound. He just came

NEED TO KNOW

Frank Edwards is one of Nigeria's most consistent gospel voices, with a career spanning nearly two decades

He rose from a church keyboardist to a leading artiste, producer and sound engineer, shaping modern gospel music

He built his signature style by blending traditional gospel with contemporary sounds that resonate with younger audiences

He has worked with global gospel figures including Don Moen, Micah Stampley and Sinach

“I discovered a sound young people liked, tweaked it a little, and made it my niche.”

— Frank Edwards



to listen to my heart of worship. That was what inspired the entire album. So, I got the title of the album even before making the music.

What initially drew you to start making music?

I started playing the piano at the age of seven. I first joined the Anglican Youth Fellowship band in Enugu. I was born Anglican, so as a young boy, I joined the band, but they wouldn't let me play because I was too young.

When they set the keyboard on the stand, the keyboard was taller than me. They would have to stack chairs for me to stand on before I could play, and that became a challenge. So, they said, “No, just wait until you grow more.”

One day, they had an event, and their keyboardist did not come. They were playing the music without the keyboard, so I stacked the chairs for myself, climbed up and started playing. They didn't realise I was playing with them until after a while. Then they turned and saw that I had been playing, and whatever I was playing did not spoil the music. That meant I could play.

That was when they allowed me to join the band. I played with the band when I was 11 or 12 years old until I moved to Lagos and joined my uncle's church. There, I was helping them with their music. From there, I joined Christ Embassy and started working with Sinach. I was following her everywhere she went to make music, from one studio to another. From following her to different studios, I started learning how to produce music. That was how my production and music-making journey started.

How did you become a multi-instrumentalist?

I was self-taught. Of course, I later had to go and study sound engineering when I realised that music was it for me. But from the beginning, yes, I was

self-taught.

While moving to Lagos and trying to build a career, did you have any parallel ambitions? And what was your family's response to you choosing music?

Bro, it was war, to be honest. I wanted to be a pilot. Moving to Lagos, I didn't move to Lagos to come and do music. That was not the plan.

Yes, I could do music, but my dad just wanted it to be a hobby for me. He didn't want it to be a career. My mum didn't mind. She was like, “If this is a talent for you, if this is what God wants you to do, why not?” But my dad didn't see it that way. He wanted it to be a hobby, just like it is for him. He is an electrical engineer, but he does music. He doesn't call himself a musician, but he knows music.

How did you discover your style of gospel music?

I discovered that there was a sound young people liked, and if you didn't give them an alternative to that, they would continue to play the other music they were playing. So, I tweaked the sound a little bit. It was still gospel, but it had a today sound.

Of course, people attacked me for it. When I released songs like *You Too Dey Bless Me* and *Oghene Doh* and *Me*, some people said, “Why are you modifying gospel music? Why are you making

it sound groovy?” They were saying that because people were playing it everywhere, even in clubs.

I was attacked for it, but it became my style, bringing some modern sound into gospel music. Then I did more rock-type music, contemporary rock. Sometimes, I fused rock and pop together and still made really nice Christian music. That was how I made the niche for myself.

How would you describe your typical creative process?

The truth is that I don't write. I have never written one song in my life. I have said this countless times in several interviews. I do not write.

What happens is that God gives me the song. For example, during my quiet time, as I'm worshipping God, I might just hear a chorus. When I hear that chorus, I don't leave the quiet time and try to add a verse to it by myself.

What I do is that in the next quiet time, I start to worship God with that chorus that I heard. As I go on, the verse will come. Then in another quiet time, I might think, “Maybe if I worship God today, the third verse will come.” Sometimes, it will not come for one or two months, and I will wait because I know that I'm going through the process of a spiritual download.

You worked with M.I Abaga on *Chairman*, are you still open to working with secular artistes?

To be honest, initially, when I started, I didn't think anything was wrong with it. I still don't think anything is wrong with it. It is just that after I did that one, God just didn't want me to do things like that anymore.

Not because they are bad, but that is how life works. It is not everything that is good that is good for you to do. There are some things you shouldn't do, not because they are bad, but because God just doesn't want you to do them, and you can't question Him.



What are your thoughts about its current structure?

In the gospel sector of the music industry, I feel like one thing we need to improve on is the technical part of it.

We have the spiritual part of it locked down. We know God. We speak in tongues. We know the Holy Spirit. We have received the Holy Spirit. But one of the things the Holy Spirit does for you when He comes is that He makes you super intelligent, so that whatever your hand finds to do, you are able to do it excellently well. You will not do it like a mediocre.

You are not going to make your sound like a joke and think that once you put the name of Jesus behind it, it should fly. When we listen to the sound, and it does not meet up to standard, that is a problem.

Who is Frank Edwards behind closed doors?

Behind closed doors, I am very prayerful, thanks to my mum. I am also a workaholic. I'm always doing this and doing that. I'm a perfectionist too. I think that is basically me.

Do you have any hobbies?

I play table tennis, snooker, PS4 FIFA and chess well.

Tyla, Skepta, Damon Idris, others shine at 2026 MET GALA

by Chidinma Enweani

The Metropolitan Museum of Art became a vibrant showcase for African brilliance this week as the 2026 Met Gala welcomed a distinguished cohort of the continent's brightest stars. This year's gala, which continues to be the most prestigious event in the global fashion calendar, saw African celebrities move beyond mere attendance to command the absolute centre of the spotlight.

South African sensation Tyla returned to the carpet, cementing her status as a global fashion icon. Building on her previous successes, her 2026 appearance pushed the boundaries of wearable art, blending cutting-edge technology with traditional African motifs.

British-Nigerian pioneer Skepta also made a sophisticated appearance, representing the seamless fusion of London's street culture and heritage luxury. Alongside other notable African figures, his participation underscored a night where African identity was both celebrated and elevated to the

highest level of artistry.

The presence of African stars at the 2026 Met Gala marks a significant shift in the industry. By bringing their unique perspectives to this global platform, these icons are proving that Africans are constantly gaining recognition in the international community.

From the meticulous craftsmanship of their garments to their poised presence on the red carpet, the message was clear: these Africa stars are not just part of the fashion conversation; they are leading.



Anok Yai



Skepta



Damon Idris



Mona Kosar Abdi



Wisdom Kaye



Jovana Louis



Ayo Edebiri



Tyla



Kéla Walker

How to complete a book in a week, despite a busy life

by Musa Adekunle



Photos by Magnific

If you can scroll for hours daily, you can finish a book weekly. Here is how to turn spare minutes into a simple reading routine that works.

Many people say they want to read more, but the same excuse keeps coming up: "I don't have time." It sounds true because life is busy. Work, family, traffic, social media and daily stress can make reading feel like a luxury.

But in many cases, the problem is not lack of time. It is how the available time is used. If the average person can spend hours on a phone daily, then reading one book a week is possible with better habits.

Start with the time you already have
Most traditionally published books fall between 200 and 400 pages. A 250-page book can take about four hours to read, depending on the reader and the material. This means a person does not need a full day to finish a book. They only need to

use small pockets of time well.

This can be broken into smaller parts. A reader can do 10 pages in the morning, 5 pages during lunch and another 10 or 15 pages at night. That way, the book no longer feels too big.

Reading during lunch break, while waiting for coffee, inside a waiting room, or during a quiet evening can make a big difference. The goal is not to find time. The goal is to attach reading to time that already exists.

Build reading around your routine

One of the easiest ways to read more is to connect it to a habit you already have. If you drink coffee every morning, read a few pages while it brews. If you eat lunch alone, keep your phone down and open a book.

This makes reading less dramatic. It becomes

part of your normal day, not another task fighting for attention.

Choose books you like

Many people stop reading because they choose books to impress others. They pick what looks serious, popular or intellectual, even when they have no real interest in it.

That is the fastest way to kill your reading habit. Read what pulls you in. Read romance, business, memoirs, thrillers, essays, history or fiction. The book you are excited to pick up is the one you are most likely to finish.

Follow authors, not just titles

A good way to build a steady reading list is to follow authors whose writing you enjoy. When you connect with a writer's voice, you are more likely to read more of their work.

It removes the stress of constantly searching for the next book. One good author can lead you to five more books without forcing it.

Drop boring books without guilt

Not every book deserves your time. Give a book about 50 pages. If it is not working, leave it.

Reading should challenge you, but it should not feel like punishment. Life is too short to drag yourself through a book you hate just to prove a point. Use audio when reading feels hard. Audiobooks can help, especially for people with long commutes or busy schedules. You can listen while walking, cleaning, cooking or sitting in traffic.

Some people even read the physical book and listen to the audio version at the same time. It helps them focus better and finish faster.

Always keep a book close

A book in your bag can change everything. Those spare 10 or 20 minutes in a queue, at the salon, in a waiting room or before a meeting can become reading time.

Small reading moments look useless at first, but they add up quickly. One chapter today, another tomorrow, and before you know it, the book is done.

Make reading social

Reading becomes easier when you have someone to talk to about it. You do not need a formal book club. One friend is enough.

Tell the person what you are reading. Share a line you liked. Ask what they think. That small conversation can push you to finish because the book no longer feels like a private burden.

KEEP THE WEEKLY TARGET SIMPLE

Reading one book a week is not about having a perfect life or plenty of free time. It is about using small moments better. The easiest plan is to read 25 to 30 pages daily. If that feels too much, start with 10 pages a day and build from there. Keep your phone away for a few minutes. Pick books you truly enjoy. Carry a book with you, and the habit will grow from there.

TIPS

Hobbies to try if you love reading

by Musa Adekunle



1. Start a personal journal

Use a notebook to write your thoughts, plans, worries or small wins from the day. It helps you slow down and clear your head.



2. Visit libraries and bookshops

Turn book hunting into a weekend activity. Walk through shelves, discover new titles and enjoy the calm that comes with being around books.



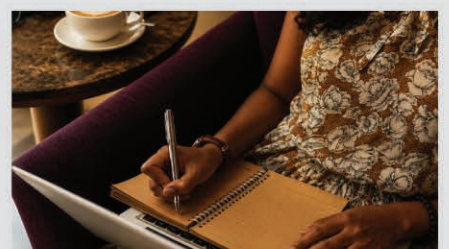
3. Review books

Share short reviews on Instagram, Goodreads, a blog or YouTube. It helps you remember what you read.



4. Join a book club

Reading with others can make books feel more alive. You get to hear different opinions and meet people who enjoy stories as you do.



5. Try creative writing

Write short stories, poems, essays or scenes inspired by everyday life. You do not have to be perfect. Just start with one idea.

Danish envoy **Jette Bjerrum** visits Nigeria, spotlights tech opportunities

by Musa Adekunle



The Consul General and Trade Counsellor of Denmark to Nigeria, Ms Jette Bjerrum, has said Nigeria's youthful population and growing technology sector present major opportunities for global investment.

Bjerrum said this on Tuesday in Lagos during an interview with Guardian Life, where she spoke about Nigeria's talent base, artificial intelligence, technology partnerships and the need to change global perceptions about the country.

According to her, Nigeria stands out because of its energy, large youth population and growing use of technology to solve local problems.

She said, "I think there are three things: one, enthusiasm; two, excitement; and three, insane energy. Also, the youth population is an untapped pool of talent."

Bjerrum noted that Nigerian entrepreneurs were already using technology to address issues in healthcare, financial services and the informal economy.

Speaking on artificial intelligence, Bjerrum said Nigeria must position itself to benefit from the growing AI economy, especially because of its large youth population.

She said, "So tapping into the AI economy is the key opportunity, not least for a large youth population here. We're going to be needing a lot of AI talent. Nigeria can produce really good talent."

On Denmark and Nigeria's partnership, Bjerrum said both countries could benefit from talent exchange, technology sharing and stronger investment links.

"We are investing in the incredible talent here. We also have technology that works

really well in Denmark, and Nigeria has the potential to scale it," she said.

She added that investors in Denmark needed to see Nigeria beyond its challenges and pay attention to the business opportunities in the country.

Bjerrum said, "When we help venture capital firms and investors in Denmark realise that opportunities in this country have great potential, it can also lead to big businesses together."

The envoy also said Nigeria's global image should not be limited to insecurity, politics and negative reports.

She said, "We often hear about Nigeria in the news, but not for the tech talent."

Bjerrum said Nigeria could help change that perception by projecting a more balanced picture of its people, technology and opportunities.

Her remarks came after Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, received Bjerrum and Denmark's Tech Ambassador, Anne Marie Engtoft Meldgaard, at Lagos House, Ikeja, on a courtesy visit.

Sanwo-Olu said the meeting focused on ways Lagos and Denmark could strengthen collaboration, particularly in the technology space.

"Today, I received the Consul General of Denmark, Jette Bjerrum, and Denmark's Tech Ambassador, Anne Marie Engtoft Meldgaard, at Lagos House, Ikeja, on a courtesy visit.

"We focused our conversation on how Lagos and Denmark can strengthen collaboration, particularly in the technology space," the governor said.



Photos: X / jidesanwoolu

Guardian Woman

EMPOWERMENT • ENTREPRENEURSHIP • LEADERSHIP • MENTORSHIP



Toyosi Etim-Effiong:
At 40, I've learned that a full,
meaningful life is not built in
isolation

Toyosi Etim-Effiong is the Founder and Chief Strategy Officer of *That Good Media*. She leads one of Nigeria's most proactive creative industry companies, operating at the intersection of talent management, influencer marketing, public relations and personal branding. She holds a degree in Economics and a post-graduate degree in Economic Development and Policy Analysis from the University of Nottingham. As visionary behind the TGM Academy, Etim-Effiong stands as one of Africa's most credible voices at the intersection of Media, Culture and Business. In this interview she speaks on clocking 40, her vision, the creative sector, her faith, motherhood and others.

by Eniola Daniel

Tell us about the girl you were growing up. Who raised you, who shaped you, and what was planted early that you're still drawing from today?

Family and boarding school raised and shaped me. I had a beautiful relationship with my dad who was a sickle cell warrior. He became very ill when I was 11 and even though a lot of effort was made to shield me from it, I saw him in a lot of pain. He eventually passed away a few weeks after I turned 12. I remember it was third term of JSS 1 and by the first term of JSS 2, I was in boarding school. Survival seems like a strong word to use for a young girl in JSS 2, but I learned survival/independence. I also learned the importance of friendships and relationships. It was also in boarding school I became more aware of my faith as a Christian and over time that faith has become a core part of the infrastructure empowering me.

You run a media company but were trained as an economist, with a Master's in Economic Development and Policy Analysis. How does that lens shape the way you see and operate in the creative industry?

It means I can never just see the art. When I look at a talented person, I'm simultaneously asking: what is the economic model sustaining this talent? Can this talent survive an emergency if one comes up? Is the talent aware that creativity requires structure for impact and longevity? I'm also thinking about the gaps in the industry, what it would take to fix them and the impact that fixing those gaps would have.

You've been described in many ways, media entrepreneur, talent manager, producer, wife, mother, even minister. At 40, which of these feels most true to who you actually are?

I will have to choose three of everything you've listed. Wife, Mother, Talent Manager. Those three give me the deepest sense of fulfilment. They speak to my interaction and connection with other humans beings and playing those roles can be hectic sometimes but I find them deeply satisfying.

From the outside, your life looks defined by steady progress and a clear sense of purpose. Were there seasons when things felt uncertain or unclear? What did those seasons do to you?

Yes, there were seasons that were genuinely frightening. One that stands out is after I had my first child. I felt lost. Like, I wasn't sure who I was, what I was supposed to be doing, where I was going. Things felt strange

and uncomfortable, but that season also became a turning point. It was the first time I really sat with myself long enough to ask the harder questions: What is my identity actually rooted in? Who am I without roles, titles, or expectations? Without the usual markers I would typically lean on. It wasn't an easy process but it was grounding in a way that nothing else had been.

You speak about Talent and Talent Management quite ardently, why do you think Talent management in Africa often lacks structure and long-term financial thinking and what is it costing the industry?

The creative industry was built on passion, relationships and loyalty rather than contracts and systems. For a long time it worked or appeared to work. But relationships without structure are just dependency dressed up as partnerships. The cost to the industry is enormous and largely invisible. There are talented people who peak early and have nothing to show for it financially, careers that could have been generational that ended at 35, brands that wanted to invest in African talent but couldn't find a professional infrastructure to trust, and I'm speaking particularly to the Film and TV industry now because the music guys seem to have their ducks in a row. What many don't really know is that this gap costs us not just money, it costs us legacy.

"The creative industry was built on passion, relationships and loyalty rather than contracts and systems."

- Toyosi Etim-Effiong

Through That Good Media, you've worked with top talent and major brands. What have those experiences taught you about power, value, and money that no classroom could?

That the person who sets the price has the power. And that most creatives surrender that power before the negotiation even begins, through desperation, self doubt, a lack of understanding of what they're actually worth. I've also learned that brands don't buy talent. They buy access to trust. When a creative has built genuine trust with an audience, they are sitting on

an asset that is extraordinarily valuable. The tragedy is that most of them don't know how to convert it and the people around them don't either. That's the gap I'm looking to close.

There are conversations about you launching a creative academy. How is this different from every other creative academy?

The academy is going to be solving a structural problem. It's clear that there is no shortage of creative talent in Africa but there is a profound shortage of the business intelligence, the leadership capacity and the professional infrastructure that allows that talent to become wealth. Most of the existing creative academies train creatives on craft. I'm building something that trains them on business, leadership and longevity. The academy is more for talent managers and aspiring talent managers than creatives. It's for people who have the desire and capacity to convert creativity to currency and with more trained managers in the industry, creatives can focus on creating at their highest levels.

If your vision for the academy fully plays out, what does the African creative industry look like in 15 years and what has fundamentally changed?

It looks like an industry where contracts are standard and not exceptional; an industry where a creative person can build a career that funds a retirement. An industry where fame (creativity) and fortune (currency) intersect because right now there's a lot of fame but not much fortune. It's also an industry where managers, agents, lawyers and strategists around African creatives are as sophisticated as anywhere in the world. Progress in the industry will no longer happen by accident but by design.



"I always say that the values I have as a result of my Faith are beneficial to everyone. My faith functions as a filter."

You're quite open about your Christian faith in an industry that doesn't always align with its values. How does this affect your work?

I always say that the values I have as a result of my Faith are beneficial to everyone. My faith functions as a filter. The industry moves fast and the pressure to say yes to quick money, to fame without a foundation and to access is real. Something has to act as a filter so we're not walking through every open door including those with harm on the other side. So it's not a self-righteousness thing but a genuine internal check that protects me and my talents/clients from the dangers of a fast paced industry. Not everybody gets it though and it's okay.

As you turn 40, what are some things you've had to learn, unlearn and relearn over the past years that have made you become the mother, wife, entrepreneur that you are?

I've had to learn dependence after being quite independent from a young age. I've realised that no one can have a full, rich life as a one-man Mopol. In the same vein, I've had to unlearn the constant 'hustle' mentality and instead learn how to live and work from a place of rest. I'm daily relearning the strength and importance of Gratitude. Gratitude keeps me light.

What is the most persistent misconception about you and what's the truth you want to replace it with?

From some comments I see on social media, I think the most persistent misconception about me is that my life is hollow. There are people who genuinely think and again I've deduced this from comments that my life is empty and I have nothing going for me personally.

"continue reading on guardian.ng"

Nigerian Women in PR appoints first non founder executive team

by Ijeoma Thomas-Odia

Nigerian Women in PR has appointed its first non-founder executive leadership team, marking a significant transition for the professional community as it enters a new phase of institutional growth and expanded impact.

The organisation, which serves as the Nigerian country hub of the Public Relations Women Foundation, confirmed that the five newly appointed executives will assume office immediately and serve a two-year tenure running through March 2028. The move signals a deliberate shift from a founder led structure to a more distributed leadership model designed to strengthen governance, sustainability, and sector wide influence.

Leading the new team is Adaoha Njemanze, Founder of NOVVA Media and Communications, who takes on the role of President with responsibility for strategic direction and oversight. She is joined by Omotoyosi Ajayi, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Stage Africa Media and Advisory, who will serve as Vice President and Programs Director, overseeing programme development and execution across the organisation's initiatives.

Also appointed is Ufuoma Oritsebinone, Assistant Chief Information Officer at the Directorate of Technical Cooperation in Africa, who assumes the role of Partnership and Advocacy Coordinator, bringing public sector experience to strengthen institutional partnerships and policy engagement.

Fatihah Ayinde, Founder of Flagscale PR and Communications, will serve as Communications and Events Coordinator, leading the organisation's messaging and events strategy, while Edose Eromosele of Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Company takes on the role of Membership and Community Engagement Coordinator, with a mandate to expand membership and deepen community participation. The leadership structure reflects a conscious effort to build an inclusive and representative executive team that cuts across agency and

in house practice, as well as private and public sector experience. According to the organisation, the appointments followed months of review and assessment, with a focus on individuals who have demonstrated sustained commitment to the community. Founder and outgoing executive lead, Tolulope Olorundero, who also serves as Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Public Relations Women Foundation, described the transition as a critical step in ensuring long term sustainability.

"It is a privilege to transition leadership to a team that I am confident will build on our foundation and exceed the impact we have achieved to date. Succession planning and impact sustainability are central to how we think about this organisation and with these appointments, we demonstrate that public relations can be an example of how transitions are managed well and how organisations can thrive beyond their founding generation. Nigerian Women in PR has always been bigger than any one person. Today, that becomes fully visible," she said.

In her remarks, the newly appointed President emphasised the importance of strengthening the role of women in shaping the future of the profession.

"I have always been a strong advocate for Nigerian women in public relations, driven by a deep admiration for their remarkable work across the industry. While we must continue to amplify the value of public relations, it is equally important that we remain actively engaged in shaping its future. I am excited about the vision and leadership this executive team brings, and the opportunity to drive meaningful change, strengthen collaboration, and elevate professional standards," she said.

With the new appointments, Nigerian Women in PR is positioning itself to scale its influence, deepen professional development opportunities, and reinforce its role as a leading platform for female public relations practitioners in Nigeria.



Tiwa Savage music foundation awards 18 talents Berklee scholarships

by Ngozi Egenuka

Eighteen young Nigerians have secured more than \$2.1 million in scholarships to study at Berklee College of Music in the United States, following the conclusion of the inaugural Berklee in Nigeria organised by Tiwa Savage Music Foundation.

The scholarships were announced at the Grand Finale Concert and Graduation Ceremony of the programme, at the National Theatre Lagos, drawing over 1,000 attendees.

The five-day intensive programme, organised by the Tiwa Savage Music Foundation in partnership with Berklee, ran from April 22 to 26 and marked the institution's first on-the-ground engagement in Nigeria and the wider West African region.

A total of 120 emerging Nigerian singers, songwriters, producers and music professionals were selected from a record 2,100 applicants to participate in the initiative, which combined lectures, workshops, rehearsals, mentorship sessions and one-on-one scholarship interviews.

Speaking at the event, Berklee's Dean of Admissions, Damien Bracken, said 27 participants were shortlisted after a rigorous audition and interview process, with the top 18 receiving full undergraduate scholarships to study in Boston next year.

"We auditioned and interviewed a total of 27 highly skilled musicians, and today we will award in excess of \$2.1 million in merit scholarships to assist these candidates to enroll at Berklee in Boston next year successfully," he said.

The programme, spearheaded by award-winning singer Tiwa Savage, a Berklee alumna, was designed to bridge Africa's music industry with global education standards. Serving as artistic adviser, Savage worked with Berklee Global and its "Berklee on the Road" platform to deliver training within Nigeria's creative ecosystem.

Training sessions were held at the MUSON Centre School of Music, where participants received daily instruction spanning live performance, songwriting, music production, stagecraft and the business of music.

Participants also engaged directly with Berklee faculty, including Dennis Montgomery, Yoron Israel, Tyrone Chase, Nichelle Mungo, Anthony Nembhard and Jason Camelio, exploring diverse genres such as Afrobeats, R&B, hip-hop, gospel, jazz and fusion.

The finale featured performances by programme participants, who showcased original compositions developed during the training, alongside renditions inspired by global music icons like Stevie Wonder and Miles Davis, as well as contemporary influences including Ayra Starr and Ne-Yo.

Guest performances by the Loud Urban Choir and singer Teni added to the atmosphere, underscoring the depth of emerging Nigerian talent.

All 120 participants were presented with graduation certificates at the ceremony.

In her remarks, Savage described the initiative as both emotional and symbolic of a broader mission to elevate African creatives.

"Seeing these young musicians take the stage at the National Theatre was a deeply emotional and proud moment for me. When we started the Tiwa Savage Music Foundation, the goal was to bring the world's highest standards of music education home to Nigeria, and seeing 18 of our students receive life-changing scholarships to Berklee in Boston is proof that our talent is truly global," she said.

She added that the programme represents the beginning of efforts to equip African creatives with the skills and platforms needed to compete globally.



Adaoha Njemanze
PRESIDENT



Omotoyosi Ajayi
VICE PRESIDENT &
PROGRAMS DIRECTOR



Ufuoma Oritsebinone
PARTNERSHIP AND
ADVOCACY COORDINATOR



Fatihah Ayinde
COMMUNICATIONS AND
EVENTS COORDINATOR



Edose Eromosele
MEMBERSHIP & COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR

BEAUTY

The beauty trends taking over in 2026 so far
— and worth trying right now

by Ashim Ojeh



Beauty in 2026 is moving away from subtle, "barely-there" looks toward bolder, more expressive styles. Across runways, red carpets, and social media, there's a clear shift toward experimentation and individuality. Makeup is no longer just about trends; it's about identity, mood, and self-expression. In the mix of it all, these are the trends that have been taking over our feeds recently

Main character makeup
Bold makeup looks, as skinimalism is slowly taking a back seat.
Bold eyeshadow, statement lips, blush, and bedazzled cheeks are everywhere recently. And these looks command attention the moment someone walks into a room.

The metallic makeup takeover
From the grainy glow, shimmer is coming in with more metallic finishes. Metallic lids, metallic lips, and ultra-highlighted, shimmery cheeks have been really circulating..
Including oils and creams with shimmer, giving the skin a glowing finish from head to toe.

Brows gone wild (in the best way)
People have been extremely experimental with eyebrow designs. Bleaching, shaving, and completely redesigning brows to fit their desired look.

Fashionable teeth (grillz)
For accessories, grillz have been making a statement as a staple within fashion recently.

One standout moment was Fisayo Longe and her husband wore matching grillz for their wedding. Grillz continues to prove itself as one of the most beautiful forms of adornment.

Ice queen glow all year round
Icy tones are making a quiet return. The Y2K-inspired look is reimagined in a dreamier way that still modern. It often features frosted eyeshadow paired with glossy or icy-finish lips.

The art-first makeup movement
The ladies are fully using their face as a canvas on which literally anything can happen. Florals are painted onto cheeks like blush, sticker makeup, graphic details, and all kinds of experimental artistry.

Sculpted, studded, and styled nails
Nail trends may be fleeting, but when they trend, they tend to take over.
Bangle nails and face-mug-inspired nail art are circulating, proving that nothing really disappears, it just reappears differently.

The cloud skin effect
Lately, Makeup finishes are used to create real-life effect. Breathable while still looking luminous. The finishing helps makeup last longer while maintaining a fresh, skin-like appearance.

Romantic blurred lips
Blurred lips trends are taking over lately, emphasising softly dabbed lip tints and smudged colours. The finish creates effortless, airbrushed effect that feels less ultra-defined.

The ever-new hair moodboard
One style can define the moment, but there's always another variation emerging because of just how versatile hairstyles can be. Styles like Shuku and base styles, kinky twists, mini twists, and even bold-coloured wigs and hair extensions dominate timelines.

The rise of science-forward skincare
Instead of surface fixes, there's growing interest in regenerative ingredients that work on deeper skin repair. Products designed to support both skin and mood are emerging. Like the red-light masks and microneedling tools, becoming a regular part of everyday routines.

A space without limits
Across all these shifts is freedom, to exaggerate, simplify, or reinvent our approach. This era of beauty looks like it's being defined by coexistence - bold beside soft, glossy beside matte. As we begin the second quarter of the year, we can't wait to see how far these trends go and what new trends will shape the coming months.

LIFESTYLE

Elevate & Illuminate: In May, the most powerful thing you can do is simply exhale

by Denise Eseimokumoh

May arrives with an exhale. Workers' Day opens the month with an intentional pause, a reminder that the work is only as good as the person sustaining it. It is a distinction worth sitting with. That distinction is the throughline of where I find myself this month. When you are locked in — truly locked in — it is easy to mistake momentum for wellness, and output for wholeness. Style Vitae turns 12 this month. The AMVCAs are here. The Mum Fund is in motion. The calendar is full — and after over a year in this seat, I know exactly how to move through it. But I have learned enough to know that the version of you sprinting through every milestone without tending to herself is not your most powerful self. She is just your most occupied one. So even as we build towards the crescendo of the second half of the year, I am leaving the door open. For ease. For blossoming love. For the rest that is not scheduled but claimed.

Every product in this edit of Elevate & Illuminate is chosen with that balance in

mind. It is for the woman who understands that showing up fully means she has to remain whole in the process. We are not just building. We are blooming, deliberately, on our own terms.

Skincare
Intensive Retinol Cream
NANZSKIN
€23.10
Glow and Hydrating Body Oil

Fragrance
Jump up and Kiss Me Ecstatic
Clive Christian
£490

Divine Couture
Jean Paul Gaultier
N251,000

Flora Gorgeous Jasmine
Gucci
N219,800



Makeup
9-In-1 Eyeshadow Palette in "Smudged"
Zaron
N4,602

Lip Snatcher Waterproof Precision Lip Liner in "Rent Due"
One Size
N30,800

Glossy Finish Pen Inked Black Eyeliner
Didi Beauty
N3,500

Fashion
tutu in "Black" kkerele
N155,000

Kate Court shoes in "Zebra Print"
Lhambi
N195,000

Emilia Maxi Dress Yve
N95,000

Wellness
Happy Hoo-Ha Capsules
OLLY
N32,750

Wild Bluebell Scent Surround™ Diffuser
Jo Malone
N216,832

Wild Bluebell Scent Surround™ Diffuser
Jo Malone
N216,832

The season's affirmations
I am centred and steady in myself.
I am rooted in who I am becoming.
I am present in my body and my breath.
I am guided by my own inner knowing.
I am at home within myself.
I am grounded, calm, and clear.
I am safe to return to myself at any moment.
I am aligned with what feels true for me.
I am whole, just as I am.
I am anchored in my own energy.

COLUMN



Fiyinfoluwa Odukoya is a clinical and public health nutritionist, author, and founder of YourDietBoy. He writes *The Nutrition Gap*, a weekly column on practical nutrition for Nigerian life. He is also the author of *How To Think Like A Nutrition Consultant*.



Why nutrition advice is not working for many Nigerians (2)

by Fiyinfoluwa Odukoya

Nutrition advice is everywhere, yet many Nigerians still struggle to eat better. In this column, Fiyinfoluwa Odukoya explains why the real problem is not ignorance, but hunger, food prices and the daily struggle to find what to eat.

Nutrition advice often assumes that people have options. In reality, many Nigerians do not.

A colleague who works in nutrition outreach in the North-East once shared an experience that has stayed with me. She had gone to a community for an assessment and met a mother sitting outside with her children.

One of the children was visibly thin, not the kind of thinness linked to poor food choices, but the kind that comes from not eating enough over time.

When she asked what they had eaten that day, the woman replied, "We are waiting to see what God provides." It was already afternoon.

That moment captures a problem we do not talk about enough. Conversations about nutrition in Nigeria are often directed at people who can choose what to eat. People who can walk into supermarkets, plan meals, and decide what goes on their plate. But there is another reality that sits in the background.

For many Nigerians, the issue is not about making better food choices. It is about whether there will be any food at all.

The numbers reflect this reality. According to the Global Report on Food Crises, about 31.8 million Nigerians were facing acute food insecurity by the end of 2024. In that same year, an additional 6.9 million people were pushed into severe hunger, making Nigeria one of the most affected countries globally.

Food prices have also risen so high. Food inflation reached 40.9 per cent in June 2024. Beans became about three times more expensive than the year before, while the price of local rice more than doubled. For families already managing limited income, these increases have reduced both the quantity and quality of food they can afford.

The impact is clear in the most affected regions. Around 5.4 million children and nearly 800,000 pregnant and breastfeeding women are at risk of acute malnutrition in states such as Borno, Adamawa, Yobe, Sokoto, Katsina, and Zamfara. These figures are not just data points. They represent households where meals are uncertain, and hunger is part of daily life.

Years of insecurity in the North have made the situation worse. Farming activities have been disrupted, communities have been

displaced, and supply routes have become unreliable. Flooding in 2024 alone affected more than 1.2 million people and destroyed over 700,000 hectares of farmland, further limiting food availability.

In this context, much of the nutrition advice people receive does not match their reality. Telling a mother to include more protein in her meals when she cannot afford basic food does not solve her problem. Advising people to drink more water is equally difficult when access to clean water is inconsistent.

The gap between what is recommended and what is possible is wide, and it continues to grow.

If nutrition is to make sense in Nigeria, it has to begin with access. It has to consider what food is available in local markets, what people can afford, and how conflict, climate issues, and economic pressure have shaped their choices.

The colleague I mentioned earlier did not leave that family with a meal plan. She referred them to an emergency feeding programme because that was what they needed at that moment.

"The issue is not about making better food choices. It is about whether there is any food at all."

Any serious conversation about nutrition in Nigeria must recognise this difference. While some people need guidance on how to eat better, many others simply need access to food. Until that reality is fully acknowledged, nutrition advice will continue to miss the people who need it most.

TIPS

5 simple ways to improve your eating habits

by Musa Adekunle



Balance your carbohydrate intake
Eating too many high-carb staples like rice, garri, or yam without enough protein and vegetables can raise blood sugar and increase fat storage.



Eat more fruits and vegetables daily
Fruits and vegetables supply fibre, vitamins, and antioxidants that support digestion, immunity, and reduce disease risk.



Slow down while eating
Eating too quickly can lead to overeating because the brain needs about 20 minutes to register fullness.



Choose home-cooked meals more often
Home cooking helps control portion size, hygiene, and nutrient quality compared to many street or restaurant foods.



Avoid eating under stress
Stress can trigger hormonal changes like increased cortisol, which encourages fat storage and unhealthy food choices.



Photos by Magnific

Navigating adult friendship breakups and how to move on

by Chidinma Enweani

Just like romantic relationships, friendships sometimes come to an end. When friends break up suddenly, as opposed to gradually losing touch, they may experience many of the same emotions. Even though some friendships last far longer than romantic ones, these endings often do not receive the same level of care, attention, and sympathy. This can leave someone feeling hurt and alone.

As friendships evolve, they may dissolve. This can happen for many reasons, including changes in life circumstances, such as moving away, shifts in priorities or growing apart due to being at different stages of life, conflicts, misunderstandings or unmet expectations can also play a role. These shifts are natural as people grow and change, but they can be hard to accept. Friendships may also end when one person feels they are giving more than they are receiving from their friend or if one friend feels that the relationship is having more of a negative impact on their lives than a positive one.

However, some people react differently. When someone breaks up with a romantic partner, they usually know what to expect, and others know how to support them. Romantic relationships often come with cultural scripts for endings. In contrast, friendship breakups lack clear rituals or closure, which can make them more ambiguous and painful. It's an often unrecognized form of grief that occurs without clear finality.

Adult friendships are the scaffolding of our lives, unlike the friendships of our youth, which are often based on proximity like school or church, adult bonds are chosen. When a chosen bond breaks, it feels like a rejection of who you have become as an adult.

In a society that values connections and long-standing loyalty, the end of a friendship can also feel like a personal failure. However, experts argue that as individuals grow and life stages diverge, some breakups are not just inevitable, but necessary for personal peace.

Why Adult Friendships End

The causes of adult friendship breakups are varied, but they typically fall into this category:

Values Divergence

As people mature, their core values regarding career, family, or ethics can shift. What was once a shared worldview becomes a source of constant friction.

Life Stage Imbalance

The slow fade often occurs when one

friend enters a new phase of life, such as marriage or parenthood, while the other remains in a different rhythm. Without intentional effort, the common ground begins to shrink.

Boundary Violations

In many cases, a breakup is the result of a specific incident: a betrayal of trust, a lack of support during a crisis, or a consistent pattern of one-sided effort.

How to handle this breakup

Navigating this transition requires a blend of emotional maturity and practical boundaries. If you find yourself in the midst of a friendship dissolution, consider these strategies:

Seek Clarity, Not Conflict

If a friendship is salvageable, a conversation is essential. However, if the decision to part ways has been made, avoid the urge to win the argument. Use "I" statements to express how the shift in the relationship has affected you. If the other party has already ghosted or withdrawn, you may have to find closure within yourself rather than through a final confrontation.

Respect the Mutual Circle

In Nigeria's interconnected social and professional circles, a friendship breakup rarely happens in a vacuum. Avoid the temptation to force mutual friends to choose sides. This often leads to further isolation. Instead, maintain a polite stiff upper lip in public settings. You do not need to share the intimate details of the fallout to justify your distance.

Digitally Detach

In the age of social media, moving on is complicated by constant digital updates. If seeing a former friend's posts triggers anxiety or resentment, utilize the mute or unfollow features. You do not need to announce a block, but creating digital distance is a vital part of protecting your mental space during the initial grieving period.

Reconstruct Your Identity

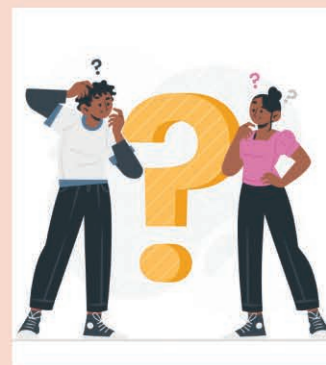
Oftentimes, a best friend acts as a mirror. When that friend is gone, you may feel you have lost a part of yourself. Use this period to reinvest in other hobbies or connections that may have been sidelined. Strengthening other weak ties can help fill the social void and remind you that your identity is not tied to a single person.

The missing point

Perhaps the most difficult part of an adult friendship breakup is the lack of closure. There is no legal paperwork to sign and no formal way to announce the change. To handle this, experts suggest creating a personal ritual. This could be writing a final, unsent letter of gratitude and grievance, or simply dedicating a day to mourning the memories before choosing to look forward.

Your approach to friendship must evolve. You must acknowledge that not all friendships are meant to last a lifetime; some are seasonal, providing essential support for a specific chapter of our journey.

While the end of a long-term friendship is undeniably a tragedy, it also clears the space for new growth. By handling these breakups with grace, simple honesty, and self-compassion, we can ensure that even in loss, we maintain our dignity and our capacity for future connection.



Ask Life's Big Sister

Have a relationship dilemma or burning question? Ask Life's Big Sister by sending your questions to life@guardian.ng. Selected answers will be published in the magazine each weekend. Follow us on social media to join the conversation.



I don't believe in love. Am I okay?

It is more than okay, it is a valid personal perspective. Many people feel this way because they view love as a fleeting emotion or a cultural construct rather than a biological necessity. Sometimes, this feeling stems from a preference for logic and partnership over romance; other times, it is a protective shield after a past hurt.



My husband wants more children after my two C-sections. I'm skeptical, but I want to make him happy. Am I a bad wife?

Prioritizing your safety doesn't make you a bad wife. Two surgeries are a major physical toll, and your skepticism is valid medical caution. You should remember that your husband's happiness also depends on having a healthy, present partner for the family you already have.



I am a woman and I don't want children, but my African parents think I'm mad. What should I do?

In Africa, womanhood and motherhood are connected. Your parents' shock often comes from a fear that you are rejecting your heritage or future security. You don't need to change their minds to live your life, but you must be comfortable with the weight of your decision.

RECIPE



Photos by Magnific

The 3-Ingredient Peanut Butter Cookie

by Oluwagbemisola Sadare

In the world of baking, sometimes less is truly more. This recipe produces a cookie that is remarkably crisp on the edges with a rich, melt-in-your-mouth center and all without using a single gram of flour.

Ingredients

- 1 cup Creamy peanut butter
- 1 cup Granulated sugar
- 1 large Egg

Instructions

Prep: Preheat your oven to 180°C and line a tray with parchment paper.

Mix: Combine the peanut butter, sugar, and egg in a bowl. Stir until the dough is smooth and holds together.

Shape: Roll into 2cm balls and place on the tray. Use a fork to press a classic crisscross pattern into each.

Bake: Bake for 10 minutes. The edges should be lightly golden.

Cool: Let them rest on the tray for 10 minutes to firm up before serving.

Tip: Add a pinch of sea salt for a sophisticated finish. And pair with a glass of milk.

TIPS

The smart kitchen: Check the ways AI is changing how we eat

by Oluwagbemisola Sadare

The heart of the home is getting a quiet, helpful makeover. We have moved past the era of flashy, complicated gadgets that just sit on the counter gathering dust. In 2026, a "smart kitchen" is the support that cuts down on chores, looks out for our health, and makes the simple act of making dinner feel a little less like a second job.



1. Tracking your food items

We have all stood in the middle of the market wondering if we still have eggs at home. These systems are smart enough to tell the difference between a fresh carton of milk and one that is almost empty. By keeping an eye on expiration dates, the kitchen can send a gentle nudge to your phone while you are out, making sure you don't buy things you already have or forget the one thing you actually need.

2. Automatic cooking

AI is taking the stress out of the stove by turning it into a helpful partner. Modern ovens now use sensors to recognize exactly what you have placed on the rack, whether it's a tray of vegetables or a Sunday roast. Instead of you guessing the time and heat, the oven takes over, adjusting the air and moisture to make sure everything comes out juicy and perfectly browned.



3. Better health

By connecting with the health data from your watch or phone, your kitchen can suggest meals based on how your day actually went. If you've been on your feet all afternoon, it might suggest a dinner that helps your muscles recover. If you've had a slower day, it might point you toward something lighter.

4. Cutting food waste

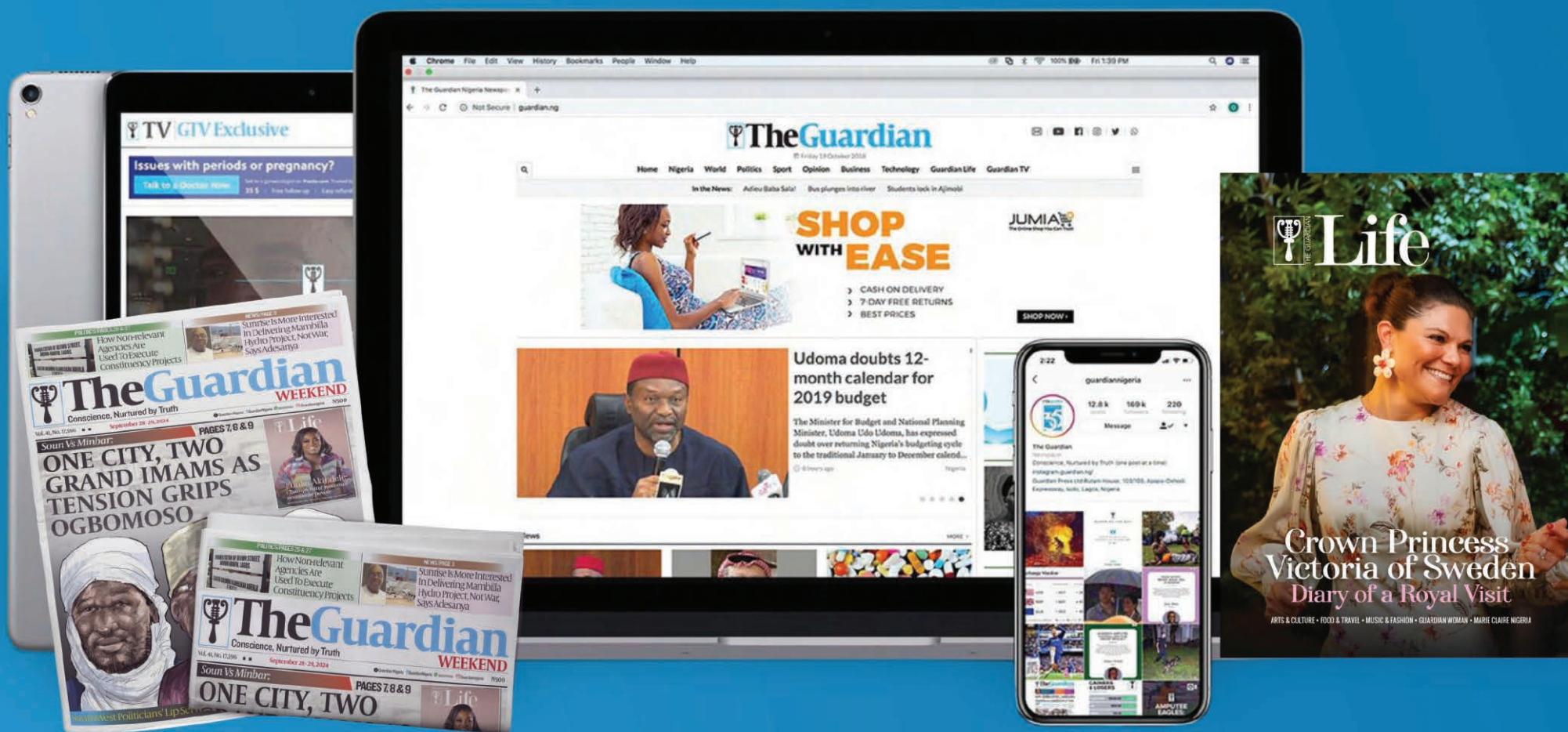
AI is helping us be better neighbours to the planet by acting as a creative guide for what we already own. Instead of making you go out to buy more food, the system looks at the random bits left in your fridge or maybe a lonely onion and some wilted spinach and suggests a delicious meal to tie them together.



5. Teaching to cook

For anyone who has ever felt nervous about their cooking skills, AI is becoming the ultimate teacher. Small devices on the counter can now watch how you prep your food, offering a bit of encouragement or a tip on how to hold your knife safely. They can hear the sizzle in the pan to let you know if the heat is too high, or use sensors to tell you exactly when to flip a piece of fish.

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