

Proudly South African unearths homegrown inspiration

The inaugural annual awards programme from Proudly South African, the Homegrown Awards 2004, has unearthed and exposed inspirational PSA companies and individuals that have devised and built successful businesses for the creative benefit of South Africa.

While there is no cash incentive to winning an award, the recognition earned will have direct benefit on the bottom line of the winning companies as the number of submissions attests. The competition has attracted an impressive 368 submissions from 198 SMME companies and 25 corporates, and includes a myriad of innovations ranging from Lobola contracts to retractable scalpels.

Requirements for entry were tight, spanning 10 categories and judged according to three main criteria: relevance, presentation and proof. The three most popular categories include Product of the Year, Innovator of the Year and Service of the Year. Each category will have two winners - one for an SMME (of less than 150 employees) and one for a corporate company (more than 150 employees).

Judges were hard pressed to select approximately 50 short-listed companies who will now go through to the final round of the four-phased judging process. Judges will include representatives from the Proudly South African Board, the Department of Trade and Industry, Labour and Community as well as the main sponsor, WesBank.

"The calibre of the 50 short-listed companies at this stage in the competition is extremely high," says Sheryl Ozinsky, project manager of the Homegrown Awards and former manager of Cape Town Tourism. "Their entries illustrate a range of unique ways in which South African companies are visibly embracing and embodying the principles of Proudly South African in their operations and activities, and in so doing demonstrating a commitment to local content, quality, fair labour practice and environmental responsibility in their approach to business."

The 10 categories in the Homegrown Awards competition are designed to span a diverse spectrum of companies and as a result have attracted a variety of companies, large and small. Needless to say, the Homegrown Awards have unearthed several inspirational Proudly South African companies and individuals that are going out of their way to embrace the challenges of our nation.

Noteworthy submissions include: African Innovation, a company that specialises in Lobolo/ Magadi contracts; Beekeeping for Poverty Relief (BPR); The Due South Craft Route Project; Medi-Safe Surgicals; Monkeybiz, a non-profit beadwork initiative; The Port Elizabeth Early Learning Centre (PEELC); Global Strake Security; The Rain Factory range of products; Pick 'n Pay; The Franchise Training Centre; and so on.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>