

All in a day's work

Sixty-plus judges from a multitude of professions and industries judged this year's entries. Entries were judged online. The various panels then convened to discussed and debated, to come to the final winners.



Top to bottom, left to right: cluster 2 chief judge, Thabisile Phumo – Sibanye Eyezwe; cluster 5 chief judge, Vicki St Quintin, corporate and healthcare consultant; cluster 7 chief judge, ByDesign founder – Kevin Welman; and cluster 3 young judge, Khangelani Dziba

Cluster 1

Sectors: Travel and tourism, public affairs, public sector, and NGO campaign

Practices: Crisis management

Chief judge: Lucy Balona – Cansa

Judges: Palesa Madumo – Business Connexion, Keri-Ann Stanton – Group Communications: M&N Brands, Natalie Pringle – Personal Brilliance, Tasneem Carrim – GCIS, Charlene Lamb – On Spot Communication, Lizel Esterhuysen – independent communications consultant

Young judge: Boitumelo Molusi

Comment: While most entries demonstrate an understanding of what issues needed to be addressed on behalf of clients, only a few were outstanding and innovative, creative and different.

“ There is definitely room for more creativity. We found the entries lacked measurable objectives, which made it difficult to assess the success of the campaigns. ”

ROI was also referenced in minimal cases. However, we saw a marked increase in the standard of entries – lots of great work. While there was some really good solid sound PR thinking in the awards, we would be keen to have seen some of the entries just push themselves that much further.

Cluster 2

Sectors: Technology, campaign best informed by analytics and big data

Practices: Social media for PR, mobile media for PR, best use of communication in a township revitalisation or education campaign, social media as a primary method of communication, social media as the primary method of communication (best use of social media to lead a programme with no social media spend, best use of social media as a support tool,

social media to launch a new product

Chief judge: Thabisile Phumo – Sibanye Eyezwe

Judges: Ingrid Lotze – Puruma; Maritha Prichard – UJ; Dustin Chick – Ogilvy; Tom Manners – Clockwork Media; Cynthia Mabela – Eyezwe

Young judges: Warren Mposi, Phushaza Sibiya III

Comment: The standard of entries submitted generally impressed and there was more depth in a lot of the campaigns, indicating that PR is being used more and more strategically to drive business goals.



Cluster 2 chief judge, Thabisile Phumo of Sibanye Eyezwe

Cluster 3

Sectors: Investor relations, business to business (B2B), and sponsorship

Practices: Corporate communications, publications

Chief judge: Ed Jardim – Murray & Roberts

Judges: Dave MacLeod – Game Plan Media; Anton van Rensburg – On Channel; Pheliswa Mayekiso – JSE; Kerrin Tessendorf – Bespoke

Young judge: Khangelani Dziba

Comment: Our cluster reviewed 23 entries and only six entries stood out from a creative, business objective and ROI point of view.

Comprehensive research seems to be lacking in most entries each year and with many entries we battled to find the impact of the campaign on tangible business results e.g.: more sales, greater market share, etc.

Cluster 4

Sectors: Media relations, resources, corporate responsibility

Practices: Internal communications

Chief judge: Daniel Munslow – founder, MCC Consulting

Judges: Sharon Piehl – Fleishman Hillard; Andre Oberholzer – Sappi; Nicola Chaning-Pearce – Tynago Communications; Kylie Salmon – Beetle Inc

Young judge: Nontobeko Vilakati

Comment: Overall, the entries demonstrated a solid business-as-usual approach to communication, with good planning and solid implementation. What could have been added to augment this good work is innovative thinking and cutting-edge strategic communication applications – the ‘wow factor’ of new ways of working and execution.

Measurement and evaluation also could have been tighter, showing a direct correlation between communication and business results. While in some cases PR activations are simply aimed at driving awareness, more focus needs to be placed on strategic business outcomes, for example share price, overall reputation, and so on.

Successful projects relied on an integrated approach, incorporating traditional PR tactics, effective social media that encompassed multiple assets, and an experiential element that engages stakeholders. Enhanced reputational equity is about engaging stakeholders as quickly as possible, and steering conversations towards favourable engagement.

Cluster 5

Sectors: Healthcare, environmental

Practices: Launch of a new service, product or category

Chief judge: Vicki St Quintin, corporate and healthcare consultant

Judges: Thandi Moticoe – Purple Room Communication; Ruth Kolevsohn – Burson-Marsteller; Nicky James – Tribeca; Megan Outramm – Atmosphere; Carol Allers – Eskom

Young judge: Wynand Monyeseala

Comment: It is always a great privilege to be a judge of the prestigious Prism Awards and to see the progress over the

years. Entrants are taking much greater care in the preparation of their documents, following the guidelines and generally keeping to the word limit.

Amongst the excellent entries were quite a few that were not worthy of a read and reflected the most basic work. Many entries could have been improved by including relevant and original research. Most lacked the final evaluation shown against the hard objectives – all in one place makes it easier to read.

The winning entries that we judged reflected more than 'great ideas' in the execution and showed real understanding of the client needs and challenges of the project. Excellent and concise writing remain the key to a winning entry, as we as judges can only make a decision based on what is included in the document.



Cluster 5 chief judge Vicki St Quintin, corporate and healthcare consultant

Cluster 7

Sectors: Student campaign, PR on a shoestring, consumer PR for an existing product, service or category

Chief judge: ByDesign founder – Kevin Welman

Judges: Ronel Rensburg – UP; Sonja Verwey – UJ; Corne Meintjies – UJ; Realile Tekateka - Engage Joe Public; Mandy Kojetin – Atmosphere

Young judge: Sanele Mashinini

Comment: Overall, PR on a shoestring and consumer PR for an existing product, service or category were good. As always, there were excellent entries and entries that were average.

As an industry, we should be (and are) proud of the work we do, I think the two categories show the immense value good communication can deliver off limited budgets. In all instances, there was a great relationship between the agency and client, and great things were achieved together.



Cluster 7 chief judge, ByDesign founder – Kevin Welman



Prism Awards 2018 judging panels

4 Apr 2018



Student campaign

For the second consecutive year, I've led the panel of judges in the student category. This year, we had a similar number of entries to last year, but I was pleasantly surprised to see the quality improve dramatically. The entries were all well written, the problem or opportunity was well captured, and the solution made a tangible difference.

The only advice I would give students is to think more widely than social media – a Facebook post or a Twitter content plan doesn't address everyone... don't forget about the media; community, regional and national media are still critical. Please include channels beyond social media. Well done to the three winning campaigns, all three were refreshing and a joy to judge. This is the opinion of founder of the 'Prisms Young Judges' initiative, Palesa Madumo, executive director of strategy at Vuma Reputation Management.



#PrismAwards2018: Call for young judges

Juanita Pienaar 15 Dec 2017



Young judges

The young judges were introduced last year. This gives young practitioners the opportunity to sit in the judging of clusters and experience the industry, while also giving them the opportunity to provide valuable input into the Awards.

What did the young judges think of the judging?

Khangzi Dziba, Senior Brand Architect at DNA Brand Architects

The process of judging the awards was exciting because we got to see all the amazing work created by fellow industry peers, but it was also quite intense; mostly in the sense that it required a great amount of thinking capacity on how the different campaigns presented impacted, shaped and made a difference in the lives of those audiences they were created for.



#Prisms2018: Meet young judge Khangelani Dziba

Jessica Tennant 18 Apr 2018



There was a lot of debating on why we chose to score the way we did and the insights we all drew from the campaigns. This made the sessions a lot more robust and worth all the time that was spent reading through the entries.

Nontobeko Vilakati

This experience has been everything for me as a student, I have learnt so much from the different campaigns and what they actually really do and how they come about it.



#Prisms2018: Meet young judge Nontobeko Vilakati

Jessica Tennant 19 Apr 2018



I got to understand in depth the Why, When, Who, Where and How; and as a student you learn a lot from that, more of the practicality side of what I do in class. My senior judges were of great help.

Wynand Monyeseala

When I got an email informing me that I was selected to be a part of the 2018 Prisa Prism Young Judges I was very excited, because I knew this was the start of a long journey that would yield good results.



#Prisms2018: Meet young judge Wynand Monyeseala

Jessica Tennant 22 Apr 2018



I was a bit nervous at the same time because I knew that I would be judging entries sent by big companies and being a graduate, I felt the pressure that I had to stand out. Most of the entries tackled issues that I thought were really life-changing and educational and that was the point I raised during the final judging day, while defending them to be part of the winners. I really had a great time judging the Prism Awards.

Floyd Magubane

Personally, I found it to be educational more than anything. It was a unique experience for me, so it was intense at times. There were a lot of campaigns to go through, but you learn from both the good ones and the bad ones.



#Prisms2018: Meet young judge Floyd Magubane

Jessica Tennant 20 Apr 2018



From agency and client perspectives, you get to see in detail what goes into having an effective and standout campaign. From the type of research to how the execution was carried out. Even more, you get to see how the different agencies approach and handle their briefs from clients.

Also, the consistencies in key strategies and tactics used were evident. Overall, the whole process was a bit challenging but it was very insightful. It was a great experience.

Simbongile Ndlangisa

As a Prism Young Judge, I have been exposed to some excellent work by the most experienced companies in South Africa and feel I have a better idea of the status of PR in the country as well as window into how the PR world thinks.



#Prisms2018: Meet young judge Simbongile Ndlangisa

Jessica Tennant 18 Apr 2018



Simone Carter – lecturer: department of strategic communication at University of Johannesburg

What an *enlightening* experience! Being a young judge has been exciting and insightful and what I've appreciated the most about the judging process has been the opportunity to have a voice, as well as meet and converse with so many great minds along the way.



#Prisms2018: Meet young judge Simone Carter

Jessica Tennant 21 Apr 2018



Understanding how other industry professionals think, conceptualise, and package themselves has been a fantastic learning experience and I've learnt so much about leadership from working with my cluster judges.

“ I now understand what it means to lead, advise, and execute with a clearly defined purpose in mind and I consider myself lucky to have been given the opportunity to sit in my particular cluster, where I was involved with the judging of the five campaign of the year finalists in a face-to-face process. ”

In line with this, here are some of my takeouts and learnings from my judging experience:

- Being able to position yourself with meaningful information is a skill

- Judging absolutely requires a **growth mindset**, both as an entrant and a judge.
- PR professionals and practice cannot be boxed anymore
- Winning work is the combination of passion, innovative thinking, reflection, and a **clearly defined purpose**

Great initiatives are led by even greater minds behind them and this experience has shaped my thinking for the long term, inspiring me to be innovative and learn more within my space, as well as practice introspection along the way in order to ensure for values-based authenticity.

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