



# NTN Theatre Awards

POLICY DOCUMENT

National Theatre of Namibia (NTN)



## Background

Conceived by the National Theatre of Namibia (NTN) and the Namibia Film Commission (NFC) in 2010, the Namibian Theatre & Film Awards (NTFA) celebrate, recognise and honour theatre and film practitioners, including all those who contributed towards the development of performing arts in Namibia. The Namibian theatre and film industry has grown over the past decade, resulting in milestone achievements with international partnerships and technological and creative expansions.

The official partner and organisers of the biennial theatre awards are the National Theatre of Namibia and Namibia Film Commission. For each year, the institutions take turns in chairing the preparations and development of the awards ceremony. The two institutions finance the operations and logistical preparations of the awards ceremony equally, and further seek sponsorships for their respective categories separately.

### GENERAL CRITERIA

1. As a national theatre awards project, the NTFAs should reflect a national agenda by offering fair opportunities and representation in terms of:
  - Awareness of the awards nationwide, not limited to sectoral circles in urban areas (for awards applications not to be exclusive and limiting)
  - Geographical reach (not limited to Windhoek city only or urban areas).
  - Cross-cultural, artistic and linguistic reach (offering opportunities for various performing artistic, cultural and linguistic forms to be evaluated for the awards)
2. Critical areas of award evaluations are:
  - i. *Literature*
  - ii. *Tech (production design, set and technical elements)*
  - iii. *Stage acting & directing*
  - iv. *Dance, movement and choreography*
  - v. *Musicality*
  - vi. *Stagecraft (costume and make-up)*

3. Judging of productions is not automatic and should be applied for through accessible NTN forms.
4. All award applicants must be +18 years or older.
5. NTN productions are automatically evaluated for awards.
6. NTN co-productions should be evaluated for the awards, upon written approval of the co-producer.
7. Multimedia stage productions are eligible for evaluation.
8. An annual budget in the production department should be dedicated to the tasks and operations of the theatre judges.
9. All productions to be judged should be electronically recorded for the following main reasons:
  - i. Availability of a panel of judges
  - ii. Refresh deliberations at the end of each award season for judges; and
  - iii. PR & Marketing purposes
10. Electronic recordings should contain good light and sound quality for fair viewing, and should be submitted in the following format:
  - i. MP4/MPEG-4
  - ii. At least 720p to 1080p
  - iii. Stereo Audio
11. The NTN will biennially award at least one lifetime achiever for dedicated work in the performing arts.
12. The NTN will biennially award at least one corporate institution for its dedicated investment in the performing arts.
13. Judges will be remunerated in total on a biennial basis, per cycle.
14. The NTN would look at developing, expanding and strengthening the theatre sections of the theatre awards for each cycle/season.
15. The NTN reserves the right to deny a production to be evaluated for the awards, for the following reasons:

- i. Incomplete application
- ii. Application form submitted late
- iii. Criteria for applications not met
- iv. Lack of concise information and compliance from the applicant

## JUDGING PRE-REQUISITES

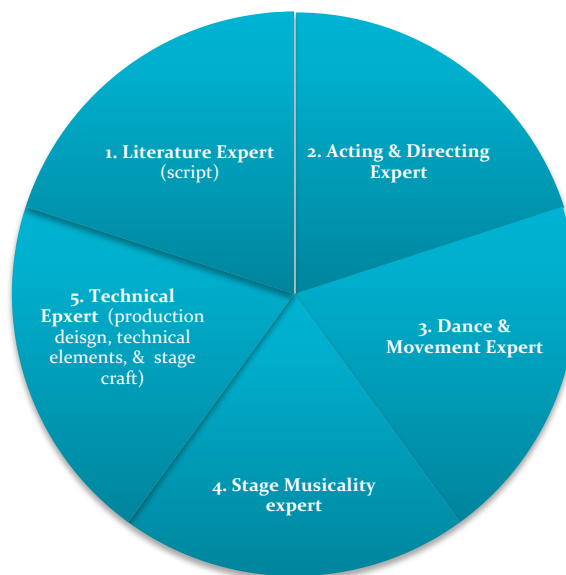
The pool of main judges should be a mixed match of professionals with a sound knowledge of the various processes of the performing arts. Ideally, each judge should have expert knowledge of the major processes of the performing arts. However, given Namibia's small performing arts sector, the judges are required to have a sound (general) knowledge of the various processes of the performing arts.

The following are the general pre-requisites of a theatre judge for the awards:

1. The total panel of judges should be an odd number, for the purposes of deliberations and decision-making.
2. The total panel of judges should at all times be no less than five.
3. The pool of judges should have a fair representation of genders.
4. 80% of the pool of judges must be Namibian citizens or permanent residents.
5. Each judge should be a practising professional (not a newcomer or emerging) in their specific area of expertise for at least five years.
6. Each judge should be in possession of a contract for each cycle of the awards.
7. A judge may not be part of the NTN's script and production concept evaluation committee.
8. Judges must submit the NTN-approved evaluation forms no later than one working week after a production, or viewing of an electronic version of a production.
9. It is required that at least three judges be present to evaluate a live staging of a production.
10. Critical areas of expertise are:

- i. Literature (English and indigenous languages)
- ii. Technology (production design, set and technical operations and elements)
- iii. Stage acting and directing
- iv. Dance & movement
- v. Musicality
- vi. Stagecraft (costume and make-up)

The following is a visual representation of the complementary expertise required in the Panel of judges for sound deliberation to take place.



11. There should be an existing panel of supporting judges (literature), to offer evaluations on productions expressed in local languages.
12. Judges should not be involved in any form or manner in the works that they are judging. Should a judge be implicated in a production being evaluated for the awards, then they should recuse themselves from evaluating the production altogether.

13. All employees of the National Theatre of Namibia (NTN), including the Artistic Director, are not eligible to be considered for awards adjudicated through the NTFAs. While the NTFAs is a separate and externally managed process commissioned by the NTN under the office of the NTN General Manager, the exclusion applies to all NTN staff to maintain impartiality and transparency in adjudication.
14. Nonetheless, the vital contributions of NTN employees to the creative process and execution of theatrical and film productions will be publicly acknowledged and celebrated through appropriate channels, including event programmes, promotional materials, and public statements.
15. The logistics of the judging systems of the NTFAs are administered by the Production Coordinator, and the committee is chaired by the General Manager, with the support of external auditors. Additionally, the judging procedures are audited by an independent and external auditor per awards season.
16. The NTN General Manager does not serve on the panel as a judge.
17. All evaluation sheets must be submitted electronically / physically to the NTN Production Coordinator and be sealed for the deliberation session nearing the nominations, at least one working week after a viewed production

## CATEGORIES

The following is the total pool of theatre awards categories as of 2022.

### 1. Best Staged Production

*Refers to the best-staged production (play, dance/movement, multimedia, or musical) in the theatre cycle.*

#### Criteria:

- The production must have been staged in Namibia during the applicable awards cycle.
- The production must have a minimum running time of 45 minutes.
- The lead creative, director, or choreographer must be a Namibian citizen or permanent resident.

## **2. Best Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA) Production**

*Refers to an outstanding theatrical production created for, or predominantly performed by, children and young people. The award celebrates excellence in artistic quality, audience engagement, educational value, and the overall theatrical experience offered to young audiences.*

- Must be staged in Namibia.
- Must be 45 minutes+ long in duration
- Must have a Namibian as the head creative / choreographer/director
- *The production must be primarily intended for audiences between the ages of 0 and 18 years; or*
- *The production must be predominantly performed by children and young people between the ages of 18 years and below.*
- *The production may be drawn from any theatrical genre, including drama, musical theatre, dance theatre, puppetry, physical theatre, or multidisciplinary performance.*

## **3. Best Script (original)**

*Refers to the best original written script evaluated by a linguist. This is not limited to English only, and is open to the local languages of Namibia.*

### **Criteria:**

- The production must have been staged in Namibia during the applicable awards cycle.
- Script must be 20 pages + longer, 12 fonts, double spacing, and New Times Roman.
- The script can be written in any local Namibian language.

## **4. Best Score (original)**

*Refers to the best original composition and lyricism written for a theatrical production.*

### **Criteria:**

- The production must have been staged in Namibia during the applicable awards cycle.
- Score must be original.
- Score must feature for 20+ minutes in the given staged production.
- Score can be live or backtracked.
- Score must be submitted in recordings to the NTN for archival purposes.

## **5. Best Stage Director**

*Refers to the individual who has demonstrated the highest standard of direction in a theatrical production, including but not limited to stage plays.*

### **Criteria:**

- The production must have been staged in Namibia during the applicable awards cycle.
- The production must have a minimum running time of 45 minutes.
- The lead creative, director, or choreographer must be a Namibian citizen or permanent resident.
- The production must have been directed by, and appropriately credited to, the nominated director.

## **6. Best Choreographer**

*Refers to outstanding choreography in a dance or theatrical production that predominantly incorporates dance and movement elements.*

### **Criteria:**

- The production must have been staged in Namibia during the applicable awards cycle.
- The production must have a minimum running time of 45 minutes.
- The lead creative, director, or choreographer must be a Namibian citizen or permanent resident.
- The choreography of the production must be attributed to the rightful choreographer.

## **7. Best Production Design/ Set Design**

*Refers to outstanding set design and overall visual and technical design quality in a theatrical production. (play, dance/movement, multimedia, or musical).*

### **Criteria:**

- The production must have been staged in Namibia during the applicable awards cycle.
- Must be Namibian or a permanent resident.
- The nominee may be an ensemble.

- The production design of the production must have belonged to the rightful production designer.
- Should cover areas of set design, furniture, props, stage structures, and general visual design of the production.

## **8. Best Technical Execution**

*Refers to outstanding technical execution in a production, recognizing the individual or team responsible for delivering an exceptional technical experience through stage operations, sound, audiovisual, and lighting elements.*

### **Criteria:**

- The production must have been staged in Namibia during the applicable awards cycle.
- Must be Namibian or a permanent resident.
- Technical set-up and operation of the production must have belonged to the rightful technician/engineer.
- Can cover areas of:
  - o Sound design and operation
  - o Lighting design and operation
  - o Audiovisual (AV) design and operation
  - o Stage management and operation
- The nominee may be an individual or an ensemble/team where technical responsibilities were collectively executed.

## **9. Best Stage Manager (Merit Award)**

*Refers to outstanding achievement in stage management within a theatrical production. The award recognizes excellence in the planning, coordination, execution, and overall management of production operations, ensuring the effective delivery of a live performance.*

### **Criteria:**

- The nominee must be a Namibian citizen or permanent resident.
- The nominee must have served as the Stage Manager, Production Stage Manager, or Assistant Stage Manager of an eligible theatrical production staged during the applicable awards cycle.
- The nominee must have been appropriately credited in the production's official programme, promotional materials, or production records.

- Consideration shall be given to the nominee's ability to coordinate rehearsals, manage technical and artistic departments, maintain production documentation, facilitate communication among stakeholders, and ensure the smooth execution of performances.
- The nominee must demonstrate professionalism, leadership, organizational skills, problem-solving abilities, and effective management of production processes.
- The award may take into account the complexity and scale of the production, as well as the overall effectiveness of the stage management function.
- This category is a merit-based award and may be determined through deliberation by the NTN judging panel, with consideration given to industry recommendations and professional contributions.

#### **10. Best Stagecraft: Costume & Wardrobe Design**

*Refers to the best stagecraft designer in the areas of costume design and production in a theatrical production.*

##### **Criteria:**

- The production must have been staged in Namibia during the applicable awards cycle.
- Must be Namibian or a permanent resident.
- Costume and make-up must be of original design.
- Can be an ensemble.
- Costume design, wardrobe production and makeup design must have belonged to the rightful costume designer and make-up artist.
- In the absence of a credited costume designer, the award would go to the head creative / director/choreographer/stage manager, depending on who the responsible party is.

#### **11. Best Stagecraft: Make-Up**

*Refers to the best stagecraft designer in the area of stage make-up in a theatrical production.*

##### **Criteria:**

- The production must have been staged in Namibia during the applicable awards cycle.
- Must be Namibian or a permanent resident.
- Make-up must be of original design.
- Can be an ensemble.
- The make-up of the production must have belonged to the rightful make-up artist.

- In the absence of a credited make-up artist, the award would go to the head creative / director/choreographer/stage manager, depending on who the responsible party is.

#### **12. Best Lead Stage Actor (Male or Female)**

*Refers to the best performance by a male actor in a leading role in a theatrical production.*

##### **Criteria:**

- The production must have been staged in Namibia during the applicable awards cycle.
- Must be Namibian or a permanent resident.
- Must have featured for the dominant part of the production.
- Can be a newcomer, upcoming or experienced actor.

#### **13. Best Supporting Actor (Male or Female)**

*Refers to the best performance by a male/female actor in a supporting role in a theatrical production.*

##### **Criteria:**

- The production must have been staged in Namibia during the applicable awards cycle.
- Must be Namibian or a permanent resident.
- Should not have featured dominantly for the role under evaluation.
- Can be an absolute newcomer / upcoming, or experienced performer.

#### **14. Best Newcomer Stage Actor (Male or Female)**

*Refers to the best absolute newcomer performance by a male/female actor in a leading/supporting role in a theatrical production.*

##### **Criteria:**

- The production must have been staged in Namibia during the applicable awards cycle.
- Must be Namibian or a permanent resident.
- Must be an absolute newcomer.
- Could have been featured in a leading or supporting role.
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### **15. Best Lead Dancer (Male or Female)**

*Refers to the best performance by a female dancer/movement artist in a leading role in a theatrical production.*

#### **Criteria:**

- The production must have been staged in Namibia during the applicable awards cycle.
- Must be Namibian or a permanent resident.
- Must have featured for the dominant part of the production.
- Can be an absolute newcomer.
- Could have been featured in a leading or supporting role.

### **16. Best Supporting Dancer (Male or Female)**

*Refers to the best performance by a male/female dancer or movement artist in a supporting role in a theatrical production.*

#### **Criteria:**

- The production must have been staged in Namibia during the applicable awards cycle.
- Must be Namibian or a permanent resident.
- Should not have featured dominantly for the role under evaluation.
- Can be an absolute newcomer / upcoming, or experienced performer.

### **17. Best Newcomer Dancer (Male or Female)**

*Refers to the best absolute newcomer performance by a male/female dancer or movement artist in a leading/supporting role in a theatrical production.*

#### **Criteria:**

- Must be Namibian or a permanent resident.
- Must be an absolute newcomer.
- Could have been featured in a leading or supporting role.

### **18. Best Corporate Support**

*Refers to the corporation that has invested and supported the performing arts sector in a significant manner, in the identified period.*

**Criteria:**

- Must be a Namibian-based company.
- Should have invested significantly across the performing arts disciplines in Namibia.
- Award deliberated by NTN staff.

**19. Lifetime Achiever (Theatre)**

*Refers to the individual/ensemble that has spent a significant period of their lifetime practising in the performing arts sector in Namibia.*

**Criteria:**

- Must be a Namibian or permanent resident.
- Must be of significant age. 50 years+
- Should have practised the performing arts for a significant part of their lifetime in Namibia.
- The award shall be adjudicated by the NTN judges in consultation with industry recommendations.

**20. Special Recognition Award**

*Refers to the individual/ensemble that has been specially recognised by the NTN for their service, support and or international representation of the Namibian performing arts sector.*

**Criteria:**

- Does not have to be a Namibian strictly.
- Does not have to be of significant age.
- Should have performed valuable services and work in the Namibian theatre sector.
- The award shall be adjudicated by the NTN judges in consultation with industry recommendations.

## APPLICATION SYSTEM

*The following are application rules and guidelines:*

1. Authorised applicants must be Namibian or hold permanent residency.
2. The authorised applicants must be 18 years and older.
3. Applications must be filled out and approved for a production to be evaluated.
4. Applications must be approved one month before judges are booked.
5. Application forms must be filled out by either the producer, creative director, stage director or choreographer only.
6. The application form must be attached with the following:
  - i. Full, finalised script/text/concept
  - ii. Production poster
  - iii. Rehearsal photos
  - iv. Headshots and details of the creative team, cast and crew
7. Within a month of the staging of the production, the applicant must submit the following:
  - a. Production photos
  - b. Full recording of the production (Format: MP4/MPEG-4, at least 720p to 1080p, and with stereo audio)
  - c. Failure to provide the above immediately disqualifies the production from the awards.
8. The NTN is not responsible for the video recordings of independent productions.
9. Video recordings of productions must have adequate sound and picture quality.

10. The full, finalised script must be attached to the application form. The script must be 20 pages + long, 12 fonts, 1,5-line spacing, Times New Roman.
11. The NTN will not be held liable for disputes to follow after the NTFA results. The NTN will facilitate the evaluation system based on the submitted information on the approved application form only.
12. Productions staged outside Namibia do not qualify for evaluation.
13. A production must be at least 45 minutes long to be approved for evaluation.
14. Scripts must be at least 20 pages long to be approved for evaluation.
15. The status of newcomer / emerging/experienced must be stipulated in the application form as per the following:

|                                                |                                                                                                             |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b><i>Newcomer Artist/ Practitioner</i></b>    | A professionally inexperienced individual holds no record of professional theatre work on their resume yet. |
| <b><i>Emerging Artist/Practitioner</i></b>     | An individual who has more than two professional theatre works in their resume.                             |
| <b><i>Professional Artist/Practitioner</i></b> | An individual who has more than 5 professional theatre works in their resume.                               |

16. The status of leading/supporting roles must be stipulated in the application form as per the following:

|                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i><b>Leading role</b></i>     | Refers to an <b>individual</b> role, in which the performer is the main character, and features dominantly in the narrative and on stage.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <i><b>Supporting role</b></i>  | Refers to an <b>individual</b> role, in which the performer is important to the plot, but is not the main character.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <i><b>On-stage support</b></i> | <p>Refers to <b>individuals</b> or <b>undistinguished performers</b> who build the bulk of the production characters for mass or visual effect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- choirs</li> <li>- body props</li> <li>- dancing groups, etc.</li> </ul> <p>These performers do not feature significantly and are not regarded as individual characters for award evaluation.</p> |

The application form is enclosed on the NTN website.

## PRODUCTION INFORMATION SHEET

The [production sheet](#) is the property of the production department.

This sheet is prepared by the NTN Production Coordinator and handed over to the judges for production evaluation. The script will be attached for literary evaluations.

## AWARD PRIZES

The following are the general matters regarding prizes for the awards:

1. Each award is recognised physically with a labelled statue.
2. Ensembles would be rewarded with only one statue.
3. Statues would be supplemented with sponsored monies. A prize would thus be a combination of a statue and a financial prize. This is subject to change.
4. Should an ensemble be awarded, then the funds would be split equally among the rightful individuals.

*The award for Best Stage Craft: Make-up was awarded to \*Peter Swartbooï and \*Ndapewa Shiweda.*

*- x1 Statue embedded with both names*

*- N\$ 10 000 / 2= N\$ 5 000 for each individual.*

5. The amounts of monetary prizes are subject to the funds available for each cycle of the awards season and are dependent on the sponsors' input.
6. The award for *Special Recognition* qualifies for a financial prize, provided it is local only.
7. The award for *Best Corporate Support* does not qualify for a financial prize.
8. In the event of the death of an award recipient, the NTN will withhold the financial prize to be transferred to a representative. In case the award of a deceased is sponsored, the NTN will rearrange the funds to be spent elsewhere.
9. All statues are handed over on the night of the event, and the financial prize is transferred within 7 working days after the awards ceremony, upon submitting the banking details of the recipients.
10. The NTN will not be held liable for disputes to follow after the NTFA results. The NTN will facilitate the evaluation system based on the submitted information on the approved application form only.

## EVALUATION AWARDS PER CYCLE

The following are the general matters regarding award cycles:

1. The NTN would look at developing, expanding and strengthening the theatre sections of the theatre awards for each cycle/season.
2. The NTN would look at boosting and refreshing the pool of awards judges for each cycle/season.
3. The NTN would look at maintaining long-serving judges in the general pool, for a thorough and smooth process to proceed with the newer judges.

//end