



2026 NGOMA AWARDS

ADJUDICATION GUIDELINES





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FOREWORD

Since the first Ngoma Awards were held in 1996, then known as the National Artistic Honours and Awards, the Ngoma Awards have grown into a national brand designed to recognise, celebrate, honour and motivate Zambian artists. It is with great pride and honour that the Government, through the National Arts Council of Zambia, the Zambia Arts Adjudicators Panel, National Arts Associations and partners, recognises hardworking artists on behalf of the Zambian people.

As the arts fraternity celebrates the remarkable milestone of the 21st Ngoma Awards, the Council strongly believes that the arts are an important tool for national identity, unity and national development. The arts provide a platform for healing, informing, educating and entertaining the nation. Through the National Arts Policy and the revised National Film Policy, the Government continues to pursue an agenda that strengthens the role of the arts in national development.

In order to promote quality artistic products and services, the Council, working with the Zambia Arts Adjudicators Panel, has developed these Guidelines, Criteria and Procedures to enhance credibility, consistency and professionalism in the conduct of the Awards. These guidelines promote creativity, innovation and competitiveness in the artistic space by providing a transparent, fair and professional framework for recognising artistic excellence.

We encourage all artists, adjudicators, arts associations and stakeholders to use these guidelines as a reference point in promoting a fair and professional awards process that celebrates the best of Zambian creativity.



Ms. Maureen Lupo Lilanda

Chairperson, National Arts Council of Zambia

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is an honour to once again present this year's Ngoma Awards. The successful organisation of the Ngoma Awards is a collective effort that requires the support, participation and commitment of various stakeholders, including artists, National Arts Associations, the Zambia Arts Adjudicators Panel (ZAAP), the Ngoma Awards Organising Committee, the National Arts Council Secretariat and the general public.

We are also grateful to the entire arts fraternity for its contribution to these guidelines and for its unwavering commitment to supporting the growth of the arts by promoting artistic excellence. The National Arts Council of Zambia sincerely thanks everyone who contributed positively to the development of these guidelines and to the continued growth and development of the Ngoma Awards.

The arts fraternity remains deeply grateful for this valuable contribution.



Maanka A. Chipindi

Director, National Arts Council of Zambia

PREFACE

The practise of arts adjudication continues to evolve in line with changes in artistic production, presentation formats, audience engagement, digital distribution platforms and emerging creative disciplines. As the Ngoma Awards remain Zambia's premier national framework for recognising artistic excellence, it is essential that the adjudication system is anchored on clearly defined standards, transparent procedures, objective assessment criteria and sector-specific evaluation mechanisms.

In developing these guidelines, due consideration has been given to contemporary developments in the arts sector, including the integration of technology, digital and online creative outputs, interdisciplinary practice, innovation, and emerging artistic forms. The guidelines are therefore designed to provide a structured, responsive and forward-looking adjudication framework that can accommodate both established and evolving art forms within a consistent and credible assessment process.

As the creative sector continues to expand and diversify, these guidelines are expected to support the effective implementation of the 2026 Ngoma Awards while contributing to the broader strengthening of quality assurance, artistic standards, professional practice, innovation and competitiveness within Zambia's creative industry.



Moddy Kabungo Muponisi

President, Zambia Arts Adjudicators Panel

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 NATIONAL ARTISTIC HONOURS AND AWARDS

The National Arts Council of Zambia is mandated by the National Arts Council Act 31 of 1994 Part 5, Section (e) to “regulate and provide for modalities for the award of national honours for artistic merit.” As such, this booklet will provide the guidelines, procedure, categories, awards, scope, eligibility criteria and the conduct of adjudication for the Ngoma Awards.

In addition to recognising artistic merit, the Ngoma Awards will also recognise overall contributions to the growth and development of all the arts in Zambia through the various Recognition Awards.

1.2 AIMS OF THE NGOMA AWARDS

- 1.2.1 To recognise and award artistic excellence across diverse genres.
- 1.2.2 To celebrate and honour Zambian artists, works of art, groups and organisations that have excelled during the award calendar year.
- 1.2.3 To motivate Zambian artists to aspire to higher standards of quality, creativity, innovation and professionalism.
- 1.2.4 To promote inclusivity, accessibility and cultural relevance in the arts.



2.0 RECOGNITION AWARDS

2.1 In order to recognise individuals and organisations that have contributed to the growth of the arts, the Ngoma Awards provide for the awarding of recognition awards.

These will be awarded at the discretion of the Council as follows:

- 2.1.1 Presidential Recognition Award
- 2.1.2 Lifetime Achievement Award (Chairperson)
- 2.1.3 Recognition Award - Male (Chairperson)
- 2.1.4 Recognition Award - Female (Chairperson)



3.0 GENERAL ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

- 3.1** Only Zambian artists, artistic works, groups and organisations shall be eligible for entry;
- 3.2** Artistic works may include adaptations, renditions, collaborations and digital productions.
- 3.3** Only published, publicly displayed and/or performed works shall be eligible;
- 3.4** All entries for the Ngoma Awards shall be submitted and considered within the dates stipulated in the call for entry. No entries will be accepted after the specified due dates;
- 3.5** All entries shall be in English, Braille, Zambian Sign Language and/or any of the indigenous local languages of Zambia;
- 3.6** All entries shall be reviewed and considered by the Panel of Adjudicators. The Panel of Adjudicators' decision shall be final and binding;
- 3.7** Each category shall have only one winner.
- 3.8** In case of a public/popular voting system, 40% of the points will come from the public/popular voting and 60% from the Adjudicators.
- 3.9** All results will be independently verified by the auditors.
- 3.10** The Council shall have the final authority to approve the persons appointed by the Zambia Arts Adjudicators Panel as adjudicators for the particular edition as provided for in the Statutory Instrument 129 Part IV Section 6;
- 3.11** Any dispute that may arise in the course of and related to the Ngoma Awards shall be resolved in accordance with Section Seven (7) of these guidelines; and
- 3.12** The following shall not be eligible to compete in the Ngoma Awards;
 - 3.12.1 National Arts Council of Zambia Board Members;
 - 3.12.2 National Arts Council of Zambia Board Subcommittee Members;
 - 3.12.3 Members of the Awards Committees of the National Arts Associations;
 - 3.12.4 National Arts Council of Zambia staff;
 - 3.12.6 Ngoma Awards Organising Committee Members, and
 - 3.12.7 Ngoma Awards Sponsors for that particular edition.
 - 3.12.8 Members of the Executive Committee of the National Association.
 - 3.12.9 Serving leaders of National Associations.

4.0 ENTRY PROCEDURES

- 4.1** The Ngoma Awards Calendar Year shall run from close of nominations of the previous Awards to the current closing date through National Arts Associations (1st November to 2nd October of that particular Ngoma Awards Calendar year).
- 4.2** A call for entries will be publicly made by the National Arts Council through various media,
- 4.3** Individual artists, groups or organisations intending to participate in the Awards shall complete and submit the prescribed Ngoma Awards entry form, individually or through their representatives.
- 4.4** Zambian copyright, performance rights, neighbouring rights and all intellectual property laws shall be strictly observed for all Ngoma Awards Entries.
- 4.5** A piece of artistic work previously submitted in the awards category cannot be resubmitted in the current cycle unless it is a new edition can.



PROMOTING GENDER SENSITIVE
CREATIVE WRITING



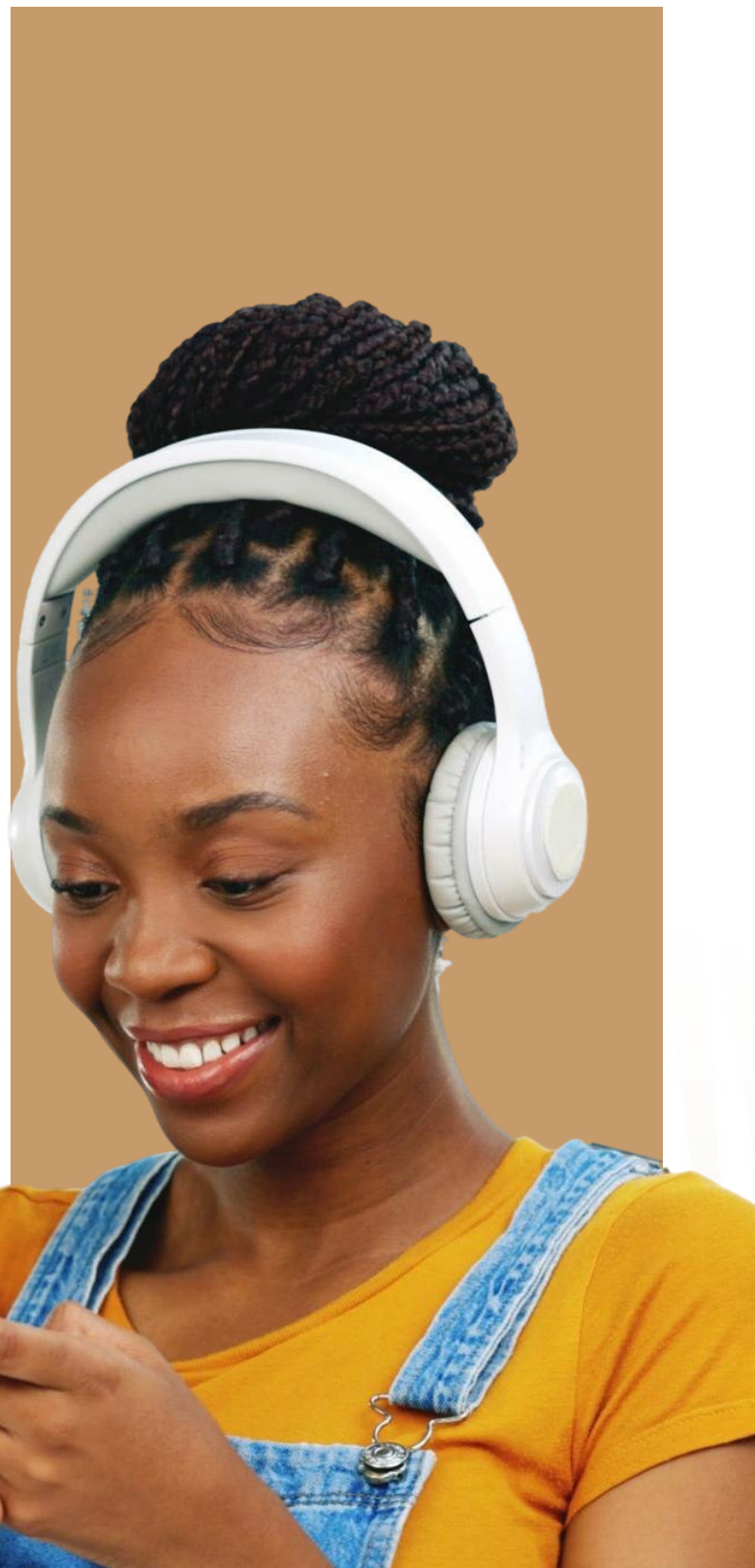
ZAMBIA ARTS ADJUDICATORS PANEL
Promoting Artistic Excellence



5.0 POPULAR NOMINATION AND VOTE

The Awards to be decided by popular vote will be announced during the launch of the Ngoma Awards for that particular year. The following guidelines shall apply for public nomination and voting;

- 5.1** A specific number of categories such as Media Arts, Music, Film, Comedy shall be determined by public vote where members of the public will be invited to nominate and vote through a public platform.
- 5.2** A call for entries for the Popular voting will be publicly made by the National Arts Council of Zambia through various media;
- 5.3** Popular voting and nomination will be conducted through various platforms which will be announced by the Council at the time of announcing the call for entries;
- 5.4** Voting Restrictions: For each of the Awards, Category, a person may cast up to ten (10) votes per award per voting method;



6.0 CATEGORIES AWARD, SCOPE, ELIGIBILITY & ADJUDICATION CRITERIA



6.1 COMEDY CATEGORY

6.1.1 Scope

This category shall encompass stand-up, skit and social media/online comedy that is in the public domain.

6.1.2 Eligibility

- All entries for this category must be individuals or organisations that are fully paid-up members of the Comedy Association of Zambia (COAZ).
- They must have been consistent throughout the year.
- Individuals in the comedy category will be decided through a national platform or festival which will be recognised by COAZ.



6.1.3 The Brighton Sinkala Award for The Most Outstanding Male Stand-up Comedian

This award is reserved for an exceptional male who has exhibited novel creativity, originality, consistency, vibrancy and remarkable execution which captivates the audience.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Originality and Creativity	30	
2.	Stagecraft	20	
3.	Appropriateness of language	20	
4.	Audience Engagement and Captivation	30	
	Total	100	

6.1.4 The Memory Kasweshi Award for The Most Outstanding Female Stand-up Comedian

This award is reserved for an exceptional female who has exhibited novel creativity, originality, consistency, vibrancy and remarkable execution which captivates the audience.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Originality and Creativity	30	
2.	Stagecraft	20	
3.	Appropriateness of language	20	
4.	Audience Engagement and Captivation	30	
	Total	100	

6.1.5 The Godfrey “Kapotwe” Mwape Award for the Most Outstanding Sketch Comedian.

This award is reserved for an exceptional individual or outfit who has displayed innovation, creativity and vibrancy in their works throughout the year. The individual or outfit shall be awarded for their originality and this award will be open for both male and female acts.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Originality and Creativity	30	
2.	Stagecraft	20	
3.	Appropriateness of language	20	
4.	Audience Engagement	15	
5.	Audience Captivation	15	
	Total	100	

6.1.6 The Maximo Chanda Mwale Award for the Most Outstanding social media/online comedian.

This award is reserved for a male or female social media comedian who has captivated and maintained their audience throughout the year. The individual will be awarded for being creatively innovative, original, educative, informative and entertaining content.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Originality and Creativity	30	
2.	Stagecraft	20	
3.	Appropriateness of language	20	
4.	Audience Engagement	15	
5.	Audience Captivation	15	
	Total	100	

6.2 COMMUNITY THEATRE CATEGORY

6.2.1 Scope

This category shall encompass such theatre forms as theatre for development, such theatre forms as popular theatre, physical theatre and mime and aerial performances.

6.2.2 Eligibility

- All entries for this category must be individuals or organisations that are fully paid-up members of the Zambia Popular Theatre Alliance (ZAPOTA).
- All entries in this category shall have a script or synopsis for the productions.
- Adjudication shall take place on location, however, in exceptional circumstances, video clips may be submitted.



6.2.3 The Robert Mphande Award for the Best Community Theatre Production

This Award is reserved for a Community Theatre Production that is coherent and well-coordinated and executed. The production should effectively portray and engage elements of participatory theatre, including but not limited to audience participation, real-life characterisation with language, props and costumes localised to the context of the performance.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Audience mobilisation	20	
2.	Stage craft and Movement	10	
3.	Costumes and Props	20	
4.	Improvising, Characterisation & Acting	10	
5.	Theme treatment & problem identification	20	
6.	Post-performance coordination	20	
	Total	100	

6.2.4 The Mapopa Mtonga Award for the Best in Community Theatre -Innovation

This category will be awarded to outstanding community theatre artists that will display the following attributes; creative execution of role, adapting to different characters and significance of role and the number of productions involved in the period under review.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Stagecraft and coordination	20	
2.	Use of voice	20	
3.	Understanding of lines and role	20	
4.	Improvisation	20	
5.	Overall execution of role	20	
	Total	100	

6.2.5 The Maggie Tembo Award for the Best Community Practitioner - Projects

This category will be awarded to outstanding community theatre artists that will display the following attributes; creative execution of role, adapting to different characters and significance of role and the number of productions involved in the period under review.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Stagecraft and coordination	20	
2.	Use of voice	20	
3.	Understanding of lines and role	20	
4.	Improvisation	20	
5.	Overall execution of role	20	
	Total	100	

6.2.6 The Sailota Banda Award for the Most Consistent Community Practitioner Group

This Award is reserved for a Community Theatre Group display consistency in their performance and adhere to high standards of following the principles and methodologies of community theatre. The group must demonstrate that it is able to maintain its presence in the community as well as keep the partners over the years. The group should be entertaining, educational, consistent, relevant and effectively use local and traditional artistic expressions.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Resourcefulness	20	
2.	Innovation	20	
3.	Community Engagement	20	
4.	Research Methods	20	
5.	Overall Project Sustainability	20	
	Total	100	

6.3 CREATIVE WRITING CATEGORY

6.3.1 Scope

This category shall encompass forms of Creative Writing Genres such as prose, poetry and scripts.

6.3.2 Eligibility

- All entries for this category must be individuals or organisations that are fully paid-up members of the Zambia Women Writers Association.
- The Creative Writing Category shall be published works. Any self-published works shall be cleared by the relevant National Arts Association.



6.3.3 The Most Outstanding Fiction Writer

Scope: Recognises exceptional skill in storytelling through prose fiction.

Eligibility: Published novels, novellas, or short story collections.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Characterisation – depth, realism, development	25	
2.	Plot – structure, coherence, originality	25	
3.	Setting – relevance and vividness	15	
4.	Language – style, clarity, creativity	20	
5.	Overall impact - resonance and reader engagement	15	
	Total	100	

6.3.4 The Most Outstanding Emerging Writer

Scope: Celebrates new voices who show promise and originality in any literary genre.

Eligibility: Writers with no more than two published works.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Originality and innovation	30	
2.	Quality of writing (clarity, creativity)	25	
3.	Relevance and impact of themes	20	
4.	Potential for growth and sustainability	15	
5.	Overall presentation	10	
	Total	100	

6.3.4 The Most Outstanding Emerging Writer

Scope: Celebrates new voices who show promise and originality in any literary genre.

Eligibility: Writers with no more than two published works.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Originality and Creativity	30	
2.	Stagecraft	20	
3.	Appropriateness of language	20	
4.	Audience Engagement and Captivation	30	
	Total	100	

6.3.5 The Author of the Year

Scope: Honours an author whose body of work in the year demonstrates excellence and influence across genres.

Eligibility: At least one major published work in the year under review.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Relevance to theme/subject	25	
2.	Creativity and originality	25	
3.	Coherence of form and structure	25	
4.	Clarity of imagery and language	25	
	Total	100	

6.3.6 The Most Outstanding Poetry

Scope: Recognises poetry that demonstrates originality, creativity and emotional resonance.

Eligibility: Published poetry collections or individual poems in recognised outlets.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Relevance to theme/subject	25	
2.	Creativity and originality	25	
3.	Coherence of form and structure	25	
4.	Clarity of imagery and language	25	
	Total	100	

6.3.7 The Most Outstanding Children's Book Writer

Scope: Celebrates excellence in writing for children, fostering imagination, literacy, and cultural values.

Eligibility: Published children's books (ages 12–3).

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Age-appropriateness of language and themes	25	
2.	Creativity and originality	25	
3.	Educational/cultural relevance	25	
4.	Engagement and appeal to children	25	
	Total	100	

6.3.8 The Most Outstanding Non-Fiction Writer

Scope: Recognises excellence in factual, research-based, or advocacy-driven writing.

Eligibility: Published essays, biographies, memoirs or academic works.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Accuracy and depth of research	25	
2.	Clarity and coherence of argument	25	
3.	Originality and contribution to knowledge	20	
4.	Relevance to Zambian society/culture	20	
5.	Overall presentation	10	
	Total	100	

6.4 FASHION CATEGORY

6.4.1 Scope

This category shall encompass fashion designers and models. It will include fashion, commercials, lifestyle, glamour, child and senior models.

6.4.2 Eligibility

- All entries for this category must be individuals or organisations that are fully paid-up members of the Zambia Association of Fashion Designers (ZAFD).
- Practicing fashion designers in Zambia are eligible. They should be members of the Zambia Association of Fashion Designers.
- Models should have been practicing and active during the Ngoma Calendar Year.



6.4.3 The Paul Mwansa Most Outstanding Male Fashion Designer

This Award is reserved for a male designer who displays versatility, exceptional talent and skill in their design work. The winner should be able to work with different fabrics and design clothes for diverse markets, tastes and styles. The designer should be familiar with the basic elements, principles and practices of fashion.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Visual, Aesthetic, Design, style elements	30	
2.	Fabric, construction, embellishments & accessories	15	
3.	Harmony, contrast, unity and variety	15	
4.	Versatility and uniqueness	10	
5.	Cultural representation – respect for culture, balance between wearable and innovation, storytelling through attire.	30	
	Total	100	

6.4.4 The Angela Mulenga Most Outstanding Female Fashion Designer

This Award is reserved for a female designer who displays versatility, exceptional talent and skill in their design work. The winner should be able to work with different fabrics and design clothes for diverse markets, tastes and styles. The designer should be familiar with the basic elements, principles and practices of fashion.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Visual, Aesthetic, Design, style elements	30	
2.	Fabric, construction, embellishments & accessories	15	
3.	Harmony, contrast, unity and variety	15	
4.	Versatility and uniqueness	10	
5.	Cultural representation – respect for culture, balance between wearable and innovation, storytelling through attire	30	
	Total	100	

6.4.5 The Knox Silavwe Award for the Most Outstanding Male Model - Popular Vote

This Award is reserved for a talented male model who is able to model for fashion, artistic, commercial as well as lifestyle work. The model should have an active modelling calendar throughout the year with a demonstrated ability to work with different designers. The award will be decided by 40% popular vote and 60% adjudication.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Physical elements: Pose, expression, movement, proportion and posture	25	
2.	Style elements: attitude, mood, character, wardrobe and grooming	25	
3.	Runway: strut, turns, posing, facial expressions, audience engagement	25	
4.	Professionalism: Conduct and etiquette	25	
	Total	100	

6.4.6 The Mable Chipasha Award for the Most Outstanding Female Model Popular Vote

This Award is reserved for a talented female model who is able to model for fashion, artistic, commercial as well as lifestyle work. The model should have an active modelling calendar throughout the year with a demonstrated ability to work with different designers. The award will be decided by 40% popular vote and 60% adjudication.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Physical elements: Pose, expression, movement, proportion and posture	25	
2.	Style elements: attitude, mood, character, wardrobe and grooming	25	
3.	Runway: strut, turns, posing, facial expressions, audience engagement	25	
4.	Professionalism: Conduct and etiquette	25	
	Total	100	

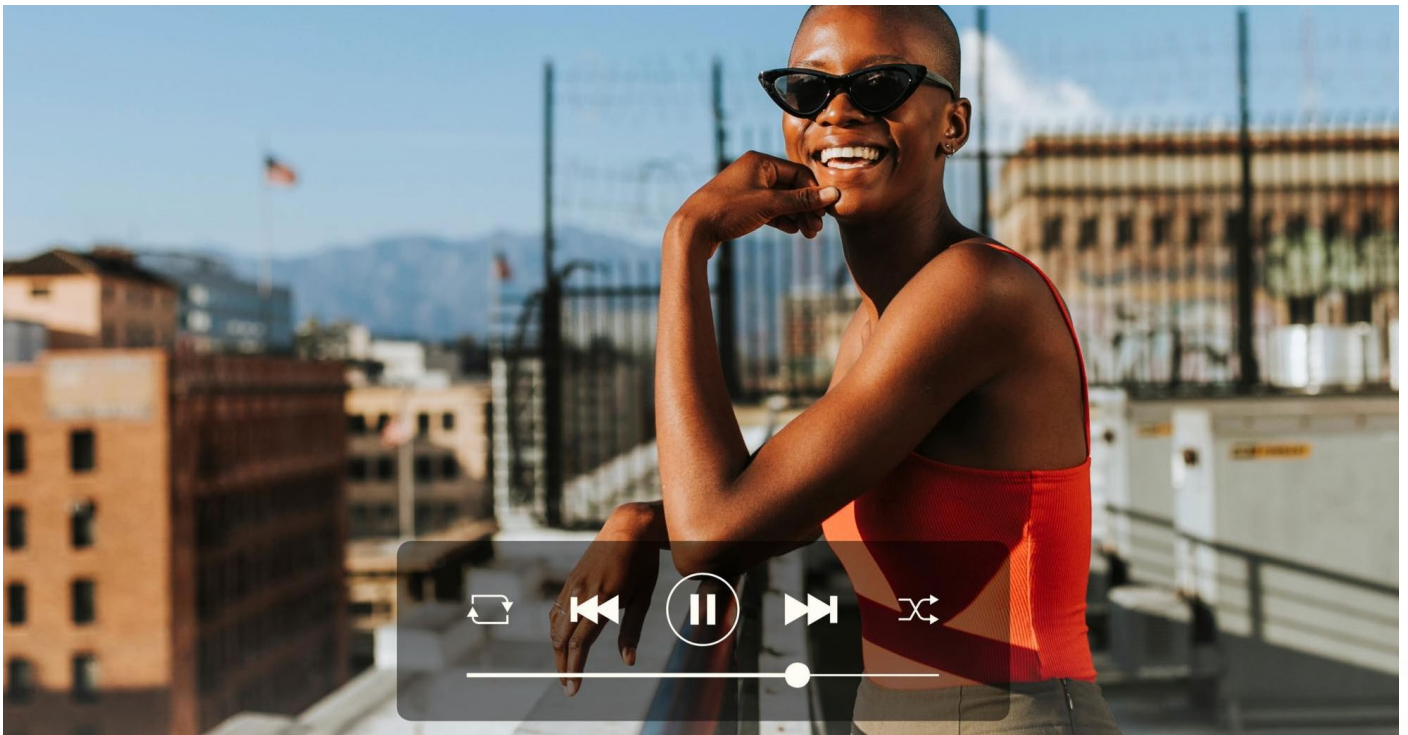
6.5 MEDIA ARTS CATEGORY

6.5.1 Scope

This category shall encompass production for Radio, Television, Film, online or screenplay.

6.5.2 Eligibility

- All entries for this category must be individuals or organisations that are fully paid-up members of the National Association of Media Arts (NAMA).
- All entries produced in a non-Zambian language should be accompanied by subtitles in any of the Zambian languages.



6.5.3 The Agness Mulimbika Award for the Most Outstanding Television Series Popular Vote

The Agness Mulimbika Award for the Most Outstanding Television Series is reserved for an exceptional TV series that displays a high level of creativity, authenticity and the best use of cinematography, editing, sound, costume, directing and the overall production value that captures the spirit of Zambian lifestyle. The award will be decided by 40% popular vote and 60% adjudication.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores	
			Adjudication	Popular Vote
1.	Script/story	25		
2.	Originality	25		
3.	Creativity	25		
4.	Overall impact	25		
	Total	100	60	40

6.5.4 The Augustine Lungu Award for the Most Outstanding Feature Film Actor

The Award is reserved for a male media artist who displays exceptional interpretation, clarity of the theme, creativity, originality, quality of artistic composition and impression to the viewer.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Screen presence and coordination	20	
2.	Use of voice	20	
3.	Understanding of lines and role	20	
4.	Improvisation	20	
5.	Overall execution of role	20	
	Total	100	

6.5.5 The Greg Lungu Award for the Most Outstanding Feature Film

The Greg Lungu Award for the Most Outstanding Feature Film is reserved for a feature film with exceptional creativity, authenticity, consistency of character's performance, cinematography, lighting and costume, sound and editing to effectively tell the story through film. Preferably, the film should capture the spirit of Zambian lifestyle. This film is expected to be between 90 – 120 minutes long.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	script/story	25	
2.	Originality	25	
3.	Creativity	25	
4.	Overall impact	25	
	Total	100	

6.5.6 The Mutale Macholowe Award for the Most Outstanding Feature Film Actress

The Award is reserved for a female media artist who displays exceptional interpretation, clarity of the theme, creativity, originality, quality of artistic composition and impression of the art to the viewer.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Screen presence and coordination	20	
2.	Use of voice	20	
3.	Understanding of lines and role	20	
4.	Improvisation	20	
5.	Overall execution of role	20	
	Total	100	

6.5.7 The Emmanuel Musonda Award for the Most Outstanding Television Series Actor Popular Vote

This Award is reserved for an actor that displays exceptional interpretation, clarity of the theme, creativity, originality, quality of artistic composition and audience engagement. The award will be decided by 40% popular vote and 60% adjudication.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Screen presence and coordination	20	
2.	Use of voice	20	
3.	Understanding of lines and role	20	
4.	Improvisation	20	
5.	Overall execution of role	20	
	Total	100	

6.5.8 The Laiza Phiri Award for the Most Outstanding Television Series Actress

This Award is reserved for an actress who displays exceptional interpretation, clarity of the theme, creativity, originality, quality of artistic composition and audience engagement. The award will be decided by 40% popular vote and 60% adjudication.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Screen presence and coordination	20	
2.	Use of voice	20	
3.	Understanding of lines and role	20	
4.	Improvisation	20	
5.	Overall execution of role	20	
	Total	100	

6.5.9 The Most Outstanding Podcast of the Year

Decision Method: 60% Technical Adjudication / 40% Popular Vote

Technical Adjudication Score: Out of 60 Marks

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Content and Storytelling	15	
2.	Originality and Creativity	15	
3.	Hosting and Presentation	15	
4.	Production Quality	15	
5.	Popular Vote	40	
	Total	100	

6.6 MUSIC CATEGORY

6.6.1 Scope

This scope may encompass: - Zed-beats; kalindula; pop; hip-hop; choral; a cappella; orchestra; rhythm and blues; rap; ragga; reggae; rock; praise and worship/religious music; jazz; classical; brass and other indigenous music genres.

6.6.2 Eligibility

- All entries for this category must be individuals or organisations that are fully paid-up members of the Zambia Association of Musicians (ZAM).



6.6.3 The Joe Chibangu Award for the Album of the Year - Popular Vote

This Award is reserved for the best performing album of the calendar year. This will be through its excellence, aesthetic superiority and may include consideration of airplay, instrumentation arrangement, and quality of recording, sales and impact through online platforms such as Spotify, YouTube, TikTok. The award will be decided by 40% popular vote and 60% adjudication.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Quality of Recording	15	
2.	Originality and authenticity	20	
3.	Elements of music	15	
4.	Impact (Popularity)	50	
	Total	100	

6.6.4 The John Mwesa Award for the Most Outstanding Choir

This Award is reserved for an exceptional choir that displays excellence in harmony, pitching, blend, balance, conducting, timbre, melody, rhythm and overall vocal control. Emphasis shall be on quality performance in three or four-part harmony.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Stagecraft and presence	15	
2.	Originality and authenticity	15	
3.	Conducting	15	
4.	Skillful application of elements of choral music	30	
5.	Overall presentation	30	
	Total	100	

6.6.5 The Lily Tembo Award for the Song of the Year

This Award is reserved for a song by public opinion to be considered the best in that particular year. The criteria may include the consideration of sales, airplay, message, arrangement, instrumentation, vocals and indeed the quality of recording. Song of the Year Award is for any Zambian music work or single with original words and music that gained its greatest activity and awareness during the eligibility period, so long as the work was not previously submitted in the Awards category. The award will be decided by 40% popular vote and % 60 adjudication.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Quality of Recording	15	
2.	Originality and authenticity	20	
3.	Elements of music	15	
4.	Impact (Popularity)	50	
	Total	100	

6.6.6 The Paul Ngozi Nyirongo Award for the Most Outstanding Band

This Award is reserved for a band that has demonstrated a high level of performing skills in all sections and wholesomely well-coordinated, versatile in various genres with a traceable track of consistency and recording.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Presentation and Stage presence	25	
2.	Originality and authenticity	25	
3.	Skillful application of elements of music	25	
4.	Consistency	25	
	Total	100	

6.6.7 The Peter Kalumba Chishala Award for the Most Outstanding Male Musician

This Award is reserved for a male artist that has a unique stage presence; they get their audience involved, captivated and are a crowd-puller. Should have high ability to perform live shows; accompanied or unaccompanied. The award will be decided by 40% popular vote and 60% adjudication.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Presentation and Stage presence	25	
2.	Originality and authenticity	25	
3.	Skillful application of elements of music	25	
4.	Consistency and Impact	25	
	Total	100	

6.6.8 The Violet Kafula Award for the Most Outstanding female Musician

This Award is reserved for a female artist that has a unique stage presence; they get their audience involved, captivated and are a crowd-puller. Should have high ability to perform live shows; accompanied or unaccompanied. The award will be decided by 40% popular vote and 60% adjudication.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Presentation and Stage presence	25	
2.	Originality and authenticity	25	
3.	Skillful application of elements of music	25	
4.	Consistency and Impact	25	
	Total	100	

6.7 STAGE THEATRE CATEGORY

6.7.1 Scope

This category shall encompass such theatre forms as those mainly performed in a proscenium arch theatre and/or amphitheatre.

6.7.2 Eligibility

- All entries for this category must be individuals or organisations that are fully paid-up members of the National Theatre Arts Association of Zambia (NATAAZ).
- All entries in the Stage Theatre Category shall have a written script.



6.7.3 The Kwaleyela Ikafa Award for the Most Outstanding Stage Lead Theatre Actor

This Award is reserved for an actor with the most outstanding or exceptional performance in a leading role in a stage theatre production.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Acting Technique	30	
2.	Character Interpretation	30	
3.	Stage Presence	20	
4.	Overall Impact	20	
	Total	100	

6.7.4 The Paxina Samapande Award for the Most Outstanding Stage Theatre Lead Actress

This Award is reserved for an actress with the most outstanding or exceptional performance in a leading role in a stage theatre production.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Acting Technique	30	
2.	Character Interpretation	30	
3.	Stage Presence	20	
4.	Overall Impact	20	
	Total	100	

6.7.4 The Paxina Samapande Award for the Most Outstanding Stage Theatre Lead Actress

This Award is reserved for an actress with the most outstanding or exceptional performance in a leading role in a stage theatre production.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Acting Technique	30	
2.	Character Interpretation	30	
3.	Stage Presence	20	
4.	Overall Impact	20	
	Total	100	

6.7.5 The Manda Mwila Award for the Most Outstanding Stage Theatre Production

This Award is reserved the production with the most outstanding overall presentation in a stage theatre production.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Overall Concept and Direction	30	
2.	Acting and Execution	30	
3.	Technical Aspects	20	
4.	Impact and Originality	20	
	Total	100	

6.7.5 The Manda Mwila Award for the Most Outstanding Stage Theatre Production

This Award is reserved the production with the most outstanding overall presentation in a stage theatre production.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Overall Concept and Direction	30	
2.	Acting and Execution	30	
3.	Technical Aspects	20	
4.	Impact and Originality	20	
	Total	100	

6.7.6 The Joemwa Msinje Mwale Award for the Most Outstanding Stage Theatre Director

An award reserved and awarded to the director with the most outstanding overall direction of a stage theatre production.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Vision and Interpretation	30	
2.	Performance Direction	30	
3.	Use of Theatre Elements -Technical Aspects	20	
4.	Overall Impact	20	
	Total	100	

6.7.7 The Maurice Tembo Award for Most Outstanding Theatre script

This Award is reserved for a script that exhibits exceptional, clear and creative description of action, dialogue and exchanges. The script should demonstrate depth of details, clarity of subtext and ease to execute by the director, actors and set designers. The category will be open to Theatre scripts.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Plot structure	25	
2.	Language and diction	25	
3.	Characterisation	25	
4.	Effective use of subtext	25	
	Total	100	

6.7.8 The Dr. Pannewell Munatamba for the Most Outstanding Stage Poetry Production

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Plot structure	25	
2.	Language and diction	25	
3.	Characterisation	25	
4.	Elements of Poetry	25	
	Total	100	

6.7.9 The Gracious Mwiya Zeko for the Most Promising Stage Theatre Actor

This Award is reserved for an exceptional young and promising actor who displays the following attributes; creative execution of role, adapting to different characters and significance of role and the number of productions involved in the period under review. The award will be given through the National Schools Arts Festival

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Plot structure	30	
2.	Language and diction	30	
3.	Characterisation	20	
4.	Effective use of subtext	20	
	Total	100	

6.7.10 The Ingutu Mwana'ngombe Award for the Most Promising Stage Theatre Actress

This Award is reserved for an exceptional young and promising actress who displays the following attributes; creative execution of role, adapting to different characters and significance of role and the number of productions involved in the period under review. The award will be given through the National Schools Arts Festival.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Acting Technique	30	
2.	Character Interpretation	30	
3.	Stage Presence	20	
4.	Overall Impact	20	
	Total	100	

6.8 TRADITIONAL FOLK DANCE AND MUSIC CATEGORY

6.8.1 Scope

This category will encompass all Zambian indigenous traditional dances, all contemporary dances and folk music that has been choreographed or presented in its original form.

6.8.2 Eligibility

- All entries for this category must be individuals or organisations that are fully paid-up members of the Zambia Folk Dance and Music Society (ZAFODAMUS).
- All choreographed and adapted dances and folk music should appropriately be identified and cleared by the relevant national arts association. Videos may be submitted for further review only by paid-up members.



6.8.3 The Bernard Hamaundu Award for the Most Outstanding Dance Troupe

This Award is reserved for a Dance Troupe that has demonstrated a wholesomely a high level of performing skills in all sections and is well – coordinated and versatile in various genres, with a demonstrable track record of consistency and recording.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Energy, Prowess and skill	20	
2.	Costume, Expression and Confidence	20	
3.	Competence and coordination	20	
4.	Choreography	20	
5.	Range of dances	20	
	Total	100	

6.8.4 The Eunice Kumwenda Award for the Most Outstanding Traditional Instrumentalist

This Award is reserved for a traditional Instrumentalist who is known primarily as an instrumental performer based on overall recognition and activity. Their prowess and skills are measured in terms of their expressions, confidence, competence, coordination, and creativity. Artists in this award will have to display exceptional abilities in handling traditional instruments to support a wide range of dances and performances within their genre.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Prowess and skill	25	
2.	Expression and confidence	25	
3.	Competence and coordination	25	
4.	Instrumentation – rhythm, blend/balance and variety	25	
	Total	100	

6.8.5 The Harrison Phiri Award for the Most Outstanding Dancer - Male

This Award is reserved for an exceptional male dancer that has distinguished himself through excellent stagecraft, costume, skill, unique choreography and ability to move in tune with the instruments. The Most Outstanding Dancer should be comfortable to perform a wide range of dance moves within their chosen genre.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Energy, Prowess and skill	20	
2.	Costume, Expression and Confidence	20	
3.	Competence and coordination	20	
4.	Choreography	20	
5.	Range of dances	20	
	Total	100	

6.8.6 The Mercy Lungu Award for the Most Outstanding Dancer. Female

This Award is reserved for an exceptional Female Dancer that has distinguished herself through excellent stagecraft, costume, skill, unique choreography and ability to move in tune with the instruments. The most outstanding dancer should be comfortable to perform a wide range of dance moves within their chosen genre.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Energy, Prowess and skill	20	
2.	Costume, Expression and Confidence	20	
3.	Competence and coordination	20	
4.	Choreography	20	
5.	Range of dances	20	
	Total	100	

6.8.7 The Best Choreographer

This Award recognises an exceptional choreographer who has distinguished themselves through creativity, originality and excellence in designing and directing dance performances. The nominee should demonstrate a strong understanding of movement, rhythm, musical interpretation, stagecraft and storytelling. They should also show the ability to develop well-coordinated routines, guide dancers effectively and create memorable performances within their chosen dance genre.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Energy, Prowess and skill	20	
2.	Costume, Expression and Confidence	20	
3.	Competence and coordination	20	
4.	Choreography	20	
5.	Range of dances	20	
	Total	100	

6.8.7 The Best Choreographer

This Award recognises an exceptional choreographer who has distinguished themselves through creativity, originality and excellence in designing and directing dance performances. The nominee should demonstrate a strong understanding of movement, rhythm, musical interpretation, stagecraft and storytelling. They should also show the ability to develop well-coordinated routines, guide dancers effectively and create memorable performances within their chosen dance genre.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Energy, Prowess and skill	20	
2.	Costume, Expression and Confidence	20	
3.	Competence and coordination	20	
4.	Choreography	20	
5.	Range of dances	20	
	Total	100	

6.8.8 The Best Drummer

This Award recognises an exceptional drummer who has distinguished themselves through outstanding skill, rhythm, timing, creativity and stage presence. The nominee should demonstrate mastery of their instrument, the ability to complement and enhance musical performances, and versatility across different styles within their chosen genre.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Energy, Prowess and skill	20	
2.	Costume, Expression and Confidence	20	
3.	Competence and coordination	20	
4.	Choreography	20	
5.	Range of choreography	20	
	Total	100	

6.8.8 The Best Drummer

This Award recognises an exceptional drummer who has distinguished themselves through outstanding skill, rhythm, timing, creativity and stage presence. The nominee should demonstrate mastery of their instrument, the ability to complement and enhance musical performances, and versatility across different styles within their chosen genre.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Energy, Prowess and skill	20	
2.	Costume, Expression and Confidence	20	
3.	Competence and coordination	20	
4.	Choreography	20	
5.	Range of choreography	20	
	Total	100	

6.9 VISUAL ARTS CATEGORY

6.9.1 Scope

This category shall encompass Visual Arts and Crafts. These shall include;

- Two-dimensional (2D) art, which constitutes mainly drawings, paintings, prints, crafts and
- Three-dimensional (3D) art, which constitutes mainly of sculpture.

6.9.2 Eligibility

- All entries for this category must be individuals or organisations that are fully paid-up members of the Zambia Visual Arts Council (VAC).



6.9.3 The Julia Malunga Award for the Most Outstanding Female Visual Artist

This Award is reserved for an exceptional Female Visual Artist who shows exemplary craftsmanship, aesthetic appeal, consistency and proficiency in producing visual works of art. Special consideration will be given to artists that work in various media within their chosen genre.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Conceptual and thematic engagement	25	
2.	Composition	30	
3.	Aesthetic Appeal	20	
4.	Proficiency	25	
	Total	100	

6.9.4 The Henry Tayali Award for the Most Outstanding 2D Visual Artist

This Award is reserved for the Most Outstanding 2D Artwork. It is reserved for an exceptional artwork that shows exemplary craftsmanship, aesthetic appeal and proficiency in producing two-dimensional visual works of art.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Conceptual and thematic engagement	25	
2.	Composition	30	
3.	Aesthetic Appeal	20	
4.	Proficiency	25	
	Total	100	

6.9.5 The Akwila Simpasa Award for the Most Promising Visual artist

This Award is reserved for the most outstanding emerging artist. It is reserved for an upcoming artist who displays an exceptional level of creativity, technical originality and artistic vision. The award will be given through the National Schools Arts Festival.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Creativity	25	
2.	Originality	25	
3.	Artistic vision	25	
4.	Proficiency	25	
	Total	100	

6.9.6 The Martin Phiri Award for the Most Outstanding 3-Dimensional Artwork

The Martin Phiri Award for the Most Outstanding 3-Dimensional Artwork is reserved for an exceptional artwork that shows exemplary craftsmanship, aesthetic appeal and proficiency in producing three-dimensional visual works of art.

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Conceptual and thematic engagement	25	
2.	Composition	30	
3.	Aesthetic Appeal	20	
4.	Proficiency	25	
	Total	100	

6.9.7 The Lutanda Mwamba Most Outstanding Artisan Award

This award is reserved for artisans that display an exceptional level of creativity, technical originality, artistic vision and is producing high quality market-ready products. The Most Outstanding Artisan should produce crafts and/or design products show strong entrepreneurship and commercial viability

	Criteria	Marks	Scores
1.	Design Creativity	25	
2.	Production/Technical originality	25	
3.	Artistic vision	25	
4.	Entrepreneurship and commercial visibility	25	
	Total	100	

7.0 POSTHUMOUS AWARDS, DISPUTE RESOLUTION & OTHER MATTERS

Where an eligible artist dies before the conclusion of the Ngoma Awards process, the artist's entry, nomination or award shall remain valid, provided the work met the prescribed eligibility requirements. Any award or benefit shall be received by the artist's lawful representative or estate upon submission of relevant proof of authority. In the case of a group or collaboration, the Panel of Adjudicators shall determine how the award is attributed. The Council shall determine all related administrative matters in accordance with these Guidelines and the laws of Zambia.

8.0 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

In case of a dispute arising and related to the adjudication of a particular award the aggrieved party shall submit a written complaint to the Council for consideration within 48 hours of the dispute occurring. The matter shall then be referred to the Zambia Arts Adjudicators Panel (ZAAP) who will receive, handle and determine the matter on behalf of the Council and communicate the resolution to the concerned party within 48 hours. If the resolution from ZAAP is not satisfactory, the aggrieved party shall have the right to appeal to the Council. The Council Chairperson shall have the final ruling on any dispute.

9.0 MATTERS NOT PROVIDED FOR IN THE GUIDELINES

The Council reserves the right to consider, determine and issue binding directions on any matter arising during the Ngoma Awards cycle that is not expressly provided for in these Guidelines. In exercising this authority, the Council shall act fairly, reasonably and in the best interests of the integrity, credibility and orderly administration of the Awards.



2026 NGOMA AWARDS

ADJUDICATION GUIDELINES

FOR FURTHER DETAILS AND CLARIFICATION, PLEASE CONTACT



Info@arts.gov.zm



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