

Meet young judge Sithulile Mbayi

 By [Jessica Tennant](#)

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In the run-up to the 21st Prism Awards taking place on Sunday, 22 April, we chatted to this year's cohort of young judges about their fresh approach to the judging process.

In this series of interviews, we find out what they've learnt working alongside the cluster judges and what their young minds bring to the table.

"What has made judging even more exciting this year is for the second time, we invited young communication enthusiasts from across the country to participate in the judging process, and selected 11 of the coolest, brightest minds who brought some really fresh insight to the process," says judge and founder of the Prisms Young Judges initiative, Palesa Madumo, executive director of strategy at Vuma Reputation Management.



Sithulile Mbayi, business analyst at Discovery.

Here, our interview with Sithulile Mbayi, business analyst at Discovery...

 ***What does this recognition and opportunity mean to you?***

It means that I am amongst the few that have some level of understanding of the industry and can provide some fruitful contribution to it. And that notion makes me excited, it validates my stances and pushes me to do so well that the next group have a benchmark they should do better than.

📊 **Briefly tell us about your experience in the industry.**

My experience is split in two. The first portion relates to on-screen and off-screen work I have done and continue to do outside corporate. The second portion relates to the corporate world when I have found myself implementing and managing social media tools. What this has done is broaden my understanding of the industry that I see its model changing as more corporates seem to be handling PR and crisis management in-house, using such tools.

📊 **Comment on the judging process.**

The judging process requires one to really apply and genuinely dedicate themselves to it. It is, I think the exciting part of the Awards as one gets to touch base with what the industry is looking like in this day and age. You get a sneak peek into the agency environment. How cool!

📊 **What has the response been to this year's entries?**

There has been a clear cut between really good entries and those that could have been improved – no in-betweens. Personally, entries that could have improved required a little bit more effort and a clear understanding and achievement of the entry objective. Otherwise, all brilliant entries went above and beyond to ensure that their entry represented them very well.

📊 **What makes the winning work stand out?**

Basics first, the winner should be able to follow entry instructions and compile logical information about the work. Most importantly, they must come alive in their presentations, have the X-factor and be unforgettable.

📊 **Prisa also introduced the Student Campaign of the Year in 2016. Why do you think it's important that students and the next generation of PR professionals are included in such initiatives?**

It's important because the students are hopefuls to this industry. They have the theoretical understanding of PR and in this category, they are provided with an opportunity to challenge their knowledge and grow.

📊 **What do you think young minds bring to the table?**

“ We are the generation next in line. We bring new air, new approaches and new energy to the table. We are eager to be part of this. ”

📊 **What have you learnt working alongside the cluster judges?**

I have learnt that insight is very important when judging, and perspective. I got to work with the industry's greats and it is a pure honour to be in the same space as such.

📊 **Comment on the past, present and future state of PR.**

We owe it to fantastic PR work that we even have Africa as a continent that's trending right now.

“ PR is a powerful tool that can be used to alleviate and change a mindset. Gone are those days when it was a limited

service to the elite few or big agencies. ”

We now have a variety of influencers in the social media space due to fantastic PR work. PR has evolved and has influenced the state of new industries that are now an epitome of society.

■ **What would the title of Prisms Young Judge for the 2018 awards mean to you?**

“I can. I will. I just did.” A moment that will one day be used to propel other young hopefuls. More so, because I have a unique background to the mix, a statement that uncovers unbounded grounds.

■ **What are you most looking forward to in terms of this year’s Awards?**

I look forward to the build-up to the day of the Awards. A time where you get to be involved with different minds in the industry. I also look forward to having VIP access to the tension amongst the competitors.

As mentioned, the Awards take place this Sunday, 22 April. Follow us on [Twitter](#) for live updates on the night and visit our [Prism Awards special section](#) for other related content and of course all the winners following the announcement. Here’s the link to our other [social media](#) pages, as well as the Prism Awards’ [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts.

ABOUT JESSICA TENNANT

Jess is Senior Editor: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com. She is also a contributing writer. marketingnews@bizcommunity.com

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