

Meet young judge Sanele Mashinini

 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.



Sanele Mashinini, UJ graduate and intern at Burson-Marsteller.

Here, our interview with, University of Johannesburg graduate, Sanele Mashinini and intern at Burson-Marsteller...

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

Being a part of the Prisms Young Judges means I am amongst the top upcoming professionals in the country. This is a great opportunity for me to learn more about the PR industry and to get knowledge and tips from professionals that have been doing this for many years.

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

I finished my studies at the University of Johannesburg in 2017 and I have been doing my internship at Burson-Marsteller for the last seven months.

📊 ***Comment on the judging process.***

I received some guidance and tips from my cluster chief on what I must look for when doing my initial scoring. I was also tipped on what makes a good entry and what makes a bad one. My initial thoughts were that I had scored the entries too high but come final judging day I realised that I hadn't missed the mark that much.

The final judging day was very insightful and for our cluster very quick. Most of the senior judges had been judges before and they knew exactly what they were looking for. It was not tough for us to come to a final decision as we were all in agreement.

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

Some of the entries have been excellent and some have been quite poor.

“ A lot of the smaller and less well-known agencies have submitted some good work, instead of the bigger agencies dominating as is often the case. ”

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

An important thing to keep in mind is that we do not judge the campaign, but we judge the entry. We judge what is on the paper in front of us. A good entry is one that has met all the criteria set out in the Prism Awards guidelines.

📊 ***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 is great for students to get involved in the industry at a tertiary level. Students have done some great work in the past and they must get recognition for that. It will encourage them going forward.

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

Young minds bring a new perspective to the table, the mixture of the senior judges' experience and that perspective ensure that all aspects are taken into consideration.

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

The campaign with the most hype and that is 'in your face' might not necessarily be the best campaign. All campaigns need to have clear objectives because without those there is no way you can measure the effectiveness of the work done.

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

The industry is moving away from the state where if you tell someone what you do for a living, they have to ask you several questions because they do not know what PR is.

“ Ceremonies like the Prism Awards are repositioning the industry and I think if it carries on this way, in future we will have a lot of business owners that understand what the industry entails and how PR professionals can help their businesses thrive. ”

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

I am looking forward to finding out which campaign eventually gets crowned Campaign of the Year. This is a very prestigious award to get.

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.

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