

Meet young judge Wynand Monyeseala

 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.



Unisa PR graduate Wynand Monyeseala.

Here, our interview with University of South Africa (Unisa) public relations graduate Wynand Monyeseala...

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

To me this is the beginning of a long journey as a PR professional. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience professionalism from both the entries and the senior judges, because they have been doing this for years.

They have enough experience to groom me into being one of the very best PR professionals, and this is also an opportunity to observe the process with the intention of entering my own campaigns into the Prism Awards one day.

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

I recently graduated from Unisa with a Diploma in Public Relations Management. I have been practicing PR for about four years now, assisting businesses mainly from my community (Ivory Park) with their PR, as there is a huge information gap within the community.

■ ***Comment on the judging process.***

The judging process in general is very exhausting, having to spend hours reading entries and having to debate those entries with people who have been in the industry for years. But at the same time, it is very interesting and informative. The same entries sort of give you an overview of how the PR industry looks at the moment and the senior judges make the process easier by providing guidelines on how to tackle the entries.

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

Without disclosing any content, I would say this year's entries were very competitive. Everyone made sure they submitted their best work of the year and it took us hours to finally come up with the winners. Competition was tough!

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

We were looking for a special ingredient called the wow-factor...

“ *Campaigns that not only increase the client's ROI and meet the judging criteria, but that also go beyond that by addressing issues that affect ordinary South Africans on a day-to-day basis and that come up with creative solutions as to how the issues can be addressed.* ”

■ ***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?***

“ *The inclusion of young minds in such initiatives is vital because we are the future of the industry, and so that we can take over where the previous generation (our elders) have left off.* ”

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

As times change, the industry also grows further and the importance of young minds is to bring fresh and innovative ideas that keep up with the current standards of life. The communications industry is very broad and it evolves daily, it therefore requires one to keep abreast with all the elements like target audiences and how to communicate with them. This may involve social media and all other technologies available.

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

Working with cluster judges has taught me how to pay careful attention to detail when it comes to PR. Even the smallest mistake you make can result in your campaign being ineffective. They have also taught me how to look beyond what is being presented. Extra research is vital, especially when dealing with PR campaigns.

The aim is not to cater for everyone but your research methods should incorporate everyone. One last thing I have learnt is how to be strict when judging campaigns. I should not compromise, if the campaign does not deserve to win it does not deserve to win, finished!

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

PR has evolved enormously. With the current availability of technological devices, it is in a better place. Unlike in the past where press releases had to wait for the postman to collect and deliver them or to be faxed, digital media has made it possible for one to send a press release to the media and get published within a matter of minutes. As technology evolves, I think the future looks bright for PR.

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

Above everything I am looking forward to meeting the teams behind the campaigns I have been judging. I already know who the winners in my cluster are, but I am just looking forward to congratulating everyone for the great job they have done.

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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