

Sikuvile Awards set to honour top journalists

In just two days, on Thursday, 19 October, the winners of the Sikuvile Journalism Awards will be announced at The Venue Greenpark also known as Johannesburg World Trade Centre in Sandton, Gauteng. The day of the Awards marks exactly 40 years after the banning of *The World* newspaper by the Apartheid regime and the detention of its editor Percy Qoboza.



Last year's Journalist of the Year, Siphe Macanda of the *Daily Dispatch*.

"The 2017 Standard Bank Sikuvile Awards is both a memorial honour and a reminder of Qoboza's values and belief in courageous and ethical journalism," says Moshoeshoe Manare, deputy managing director, Tiso Blackstar and a director at the Publishers Support Services (PSS). He adds that the anniversary is both a reminder of where we come from and the responsibility bestowed on journalists operating in a free open democracy.

"The Publishers Shared Services (PSS), in partnership with Standard Bank, continues to support this prestigious initiative to celebrate and honour men and women "who dedicated themselves to telling the truth in an undisguised manner."

He adds that the PSS's commitment to the values espoused by Qoboza is also reflected in the theme of this year's awards: Fake Free News. "As PSS, which represents the industry with more than 500 newspapers and magazines, we are extremely concerned by the consequential effect of fake news on the journalism profession and its negative influence on the public trust."

Limitation of the constitutionally entrenched media freedoms

The challenge facing the media today is not only the external pressures geared towards the limitation of the constitutionally entrenched media freedoms, but also a legitimacy crisis posed by this dangerous phenomenon he says. "The purveyors of fake news seek to delegitimise and cast aspersions on the integrity of credible media organisations and journalists such as the recipients of our awards."

The irony is that the free flow of information that Qoboza and his peers fiercely defended, and new media platforms that everyone in our industry embrace today are being framed as key drivers of the proliferation of fake news. He adds. “Of course, this is incorrect.”

Fellow PSS director, Hoosain Karjieker, *Mail & Guardian* CEO, adds to this. “As our view of the world is increasingly fuelled by falsehood, distortion and deceit, we realise the importance of journalism as an act of truth telling. It is crucial that journalists retain their duties as watchdogs of democracy, in pursuit of the truth and in service of an accurate perspective of the world we inhabit.”



Sikuvile Journalism Awards recognises excellence in journalism

29 Sep 2017



Public interest should drive and inform agenda

Manare says the answer to the crisis of fake news is not to reject social media or limit free flow of information, but to empower the public to draw the distinction between the values Qoboza stood for and those who seek to abuse the social contract between the media and the public.

“We can only crystallise this distinction through strict adherence to the press code and by ensuring that public interest – and nothing else – drives and informs our agenda.”

When it comes to the Awards, Karjieker, says this annual recognition of excellence in South African journalism not only seeks to reward the best journalism in the country but to further encourage the best practice of journalism, especially among young people.

“I commend the finalists on the quality of their work and I hope these Awards help you to continue telling the stories that keeps our leaders honest, and our society free.”

This year the Awards incorporate the Frewin, McCall and Joel Mervis Awards.



New newspapers enter to win Frewin, McCall, and Joel Mervis awards

11 Oct 2017

