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OLIVER

TOP EMPOWERMENT

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ENTRY FORM GUIDELINES

A guide on how to prepare and submit your nominations to South Africa's iconic empowerment event of the year. For entrepreneurs, executives, employees, & organisations.



About the Oliver Top Empowerment Awards

In its 24th year, South Africa's most established premier Awards for leadership and innovation in empowerment and transformation, the Oliver Top Empowerment Awards, has created a legacy of inspiration for the country's business elite.

Taking place on the 31 July 2025, The Top Empowerment Awards has given South Africa the opportunity to recognise outstanding leaders – individuals or organisations who have exemplified inspiration, vision, innovation, leadership and action for empowerment and transformation. Their success is legendary in the world of business today.

This brochure explains how to prepare and submit your nomination.

STEP 1: Review the categories and choose the categories in which you'll participate.

The category breakdown will outline how to submit your entries. All of this information is also available on our website.

STEP 2: Start collating all of your information and supporting documents (articles, press releases videos, accolades, news articles and testimonials).

STEP 3: Write a motivation or shoot a short video (mobile phone will do)

STEP 4: Submit



How to submit your entries



STEP 1

Go to the website and click “Enter Now”



STEP 2

Follow the instructions to complete your registration form that creates your entry-submission



STEP 3

Within your entry-submission, ensure that you complete all the relevant details



STEP 4

Once you’ve created your entry, time to SUBMIT



STEP 5

Our Nominations Manager will be in touch with you

Motivation

A clear and defined set of targets (that has been reached according to the programme’s initial model) must be explained in the nomination motivation.

The judges will review your nomination on the following points.

1. The organisation needs to show alignment to the category and clearly articulate the goal. (total of 10 points)
2. How unique and innovative are your programmes? (total of 10 points)
3. Demonstrate the impact of the organisations goals, job creation and how it has been justified through relevant evidence and supporting documents. (total of 60 points)
4. How has the program/initiative contributed to the organisations growth and it is scalable? (total of 10 points)

5. If your vision for the future is sustainable. (total of 10 points)

Once all entries are closed, the entries are assessed in accordance with the criteria set out for each award, resulting shortlisted finalists for each of the categories.

The list of finalists for each category are then independently verified to ensure that they meet the criteria per category and a ‘judge’s pack’ is prepared for our external judging process. The shortlisted finalists are announced in the press and all companies/individuals advised of their inclusion.

The judges will then convene to decide on the winners for each category. The ‘judge’s pack’ containing all the relevant information, provided by the entrant, for each finalist in a category is presented to the independent, external judges.

The winners are chosen by majority votes.

CATEGORIES: **ORGANISATIONAL AWARDS**

The organisation awards look to celebrate the successes of Top companies exemplifying innovation, impact, vision and action in South Africa.

Top Empowered Company: Fast Growth Black-Owned SMME of the Year Award

This award celebrates small, medium and micro enterprises across all sectors, who have displayed both growth and a dedication to empowerment. This category will be measured against the five pillars of empowerment, as per the B-BBEE scorecard.

Eligible companies must have an annual revenue R35 million and must post a year-on-year turnover growth of 20% in the last financial year. To qualify, entrants must also have either a Level 1 – 4 scorecard or 50.1% black ownership. The company must be in operation for more than two years.

Your entry should include:

- Evidence of your empowerment status
- Demonstration of company growth and performance
- Details of the company's vision for empowerment

Top Empowered Company: Sustainable Business of the Year Award

This award goes to an organisation that demonstrates excellence in implementing the 3 pillars of ESG: Environment, Social and Governance. The winning entry will be a company that has a proven track record in policies and practices that focus on

1. Environmental impact
2. Social impact for staff and community
3. Good Governance

The company will have an empowerment status with Level 1 – 4 scorecards. Eligible companies must have an annual revenue R35 million

Your entry should include:

- Evidence of the B-BBEE scorecards and policies
- Details of company performance as a result of ESG programmes
- Demonstrate projects with a commitment to sustainability through implementing the 3 pillars

Top Empowered Business of the Year Award Sponsored by Nedbank

This award goes to an organisation that demonstrates excellence in implementing the seven pillars of empowerment.

The winning entry will be a company that has recorded improved financial performance along with a commitment to empowerment and will need to demonstrate a robust empowerment status with Level 1 – 4 scorecards. Eligible companies must have an annual revenue R35 million

Your entry should include:

- Demonstration of the company's empowerment programmes – including supply chain imperatives
- Examples of empowerment successes and advances
- Details of the company's vision for the pillars of empowerment [Ownership, Management Control, Skills development, Enterprise development and Socio-Economic Development (Social Responsibility)]

Top Empowered Company: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the workplace of the Year Award

This category is for companies that celebrate diversity across all levels of employees. This award is not just for those businesses that empower women; it's for companies that embrace multiculturalism and inspire their employees to create an inclusive workplace.

An award-winning entry will show diversity in preferential recruitment policies, skills development programmes and a representative workplace. Eligible companies must have an annual revenue R35 million

Your entry should include:

- Examples of your recruitment policies and skills development programmes
- Details of gender empowerment projects and proof of their success
- Demographics of your company and examples of diversity, equity and inclusion
- Details of the company's vision for diversity, equity and inclusion.

Top Empowered Company: Digital Transformation of the Year Award

This category celebrates a company that has developed technology-based innovation to improve productivity, price, quality, effectiveness, and efficiencies. At the heart of this company's solutions is a drive to improve the competitiveness of the South African economy. This award is open to companies that have developed an internal system or a product available to the public. Award winners will not only need to show a track record of empowerment but also that their solutions advance industry. Eligible companies must have an annual revenue R35 million

Your entry should include:

- Evidence of innovative technology solutions
- Demonstration of how your solutions have transformed industry
- Examples of empowerment programmes and policies

Top Empowered Company: Public Sector of the Year Award

This category is open to national and provincial government departments, parastatals, and non-profit agencies. The award winner will demonstrate significant black empowerment, from employee level to suppliers. They will also have demonstrated successful programmes and policies that encourage empowerment and serve as an inspiration to others. This award celebrates leaders that show accountability and commitment to developing previously disadvantaged individuals. Eligible companies must have an annual revenue R35 million

Your entry should include:

- Evidence of successful programmes and policies
- Demonstration of empowerment among staff and suppliers
- Examples of committed leadership promoting empowerment

Top Empowered Company: Enterprise and Supplier Development of the Year Award Sponsored by Nedbank

This category recognises organisations that show a commitment to growing the economy through empowering black-owned businesses. Entrants must demonstrate policies that accelerate the development and sustainability of suppliers, particularly small enterprises and emerging businesses. The winning entry will have to demonstrate the impact of their programmes on their suppliers' business success. Eligible companies must have an annual revenue R35 million

Your entry should include:

- Details of company turnover (above R35 million) and investment into skills development
- Evidence of solutions to growing black-owned supplier companies
- Demonstration success of programmes on supplier profitability or productivity.

Top Empowered Company: Localisation of the Year Award

This award goes to an organisation that demonstrates a proven commitment to job creation and stimulation of the local economy via government spending on goods and services that have been produced locally or have local value add.

Localisation policy is guided by the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework and deals with public procurement by the state. The winning entry will provide evidence of local job creation and successful, sustained growth of goods and services production via government funding. The winning entry will need to demonstrate an empowerment status with Level 1 – 4 scorecards. Eligible companies must have an annual revenue R35 million

Your entry should include:

- Evidence of B-BBEE scorecards and policies
- Details of job creation and provision of goods and services as a result of government spending
- Demonstrate plans for growth and scalability

Top Empowered Company: Education and Skills Development of the Year Award

This award celebrates innovative learnerships and skills programmes that support empowerment. These programmes will focus on youth development and promote career advancement for black employees. The winning entry will be an organisation, with revenue above R35 million, that invests at least 2% of its payroll into skills development for black employees. Eligible companies must have an annual revenue R35 million

Your entry should include:

- Details of company turnover and investment into skills development
- Evidence of effective and sustainable skills development programmes and policies
- Demonstration success of skills development programmes for black employees

Top Empowered: Socio Economic Development of the Year Award

This category celebrates organisations with a passion for rural development, and that can demonstrate that they have improved the living conditions of disadvantaged and black communities.

The award will go to a company that invests more than just funds into projects, using their overall knowledge, resources and reputation to improve the lives of the disadvantaged. Organisations will be required to demonstrate their efforts in SED while proving their knowledge of best practices. Eligible companies must have an annual revenue R35 million

Your entry should include:

- Details of company turnover (above R35 million) and investment into SED
- Evidence of solutions investment into rural development
- Demonstration success of investments on the community upliftment and organisational performance

Top Empowered: Job Creation Award of the Year Award

Companies that are committed to creating meaningful employment are ideal candidates for this category. This award celebrates organisations that have contributed toward reducing the country's high unemployment rate, through programmes that give participants meaningful work experience and improved employment prospects.

Eligible companies must have an annual revenue R35 million

Your entry should include:

- Demonstrate the company's commitment to alleviating poverty
- Details of work experience programmes and the candidates participating in them
- Evidence of the success of programmes in creating employment

Top Empowered: Youth Development of the Year Award Sponsored by Nedbank

This category is open to organisations that empower youth, with a focus on training and providing funds for small business development. Government departments, corporate business, labour and civil society organisations are eligible for this award.

The winning award will need to demonstrate youth empowerment along with a passion for creating economic opportunities. Eligible companies must have an annual revenue R35 million

Your entry should include:

- Demonstrate your organisation's commitment to youth development
- Details youth skills development or funding programmes
- Evidence of the impact of these programmes

CATEGORIES: INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

The individual awards aim to showcase the Top individuals in South Africa. From CEOs to Young Achievers climbing the corporate ladder, we celebrate leaders who are making a clear impact in the world of Empowerment.

Richard Fletcher Entrepreneur of the Year Award

The award celebrates an inspirational individual who is passionate about empowerment and building an enterprise that reflects that. This award will go to an individual with a track record of excellence in their field of business. Eligible companies must have an annual revenue R5-35 million in a business that is older than two years and must employ at least ten people. The winner will have proven financial growth alongside demonstrable empowerment policies.

Your entry should include:

- Evidence of turnover and financial growth
- Details of programmes and policies that promote empowerment
- Anecdotal evidence from employees and peers detailing your passion for empowerment

Top Empowered: Young Achiever of the Year Award

Calling all black executives under 40 years old – this award celebrates your hard work, dedication, and outstanding results. This category showcases the achievements of young black executives, who can demonstrate their outstanding contribution to the organisations' success and performance.

The winner will not only boast excellent results but will also show leadership skills and a track record of conceptualising and implementing innovative strategies and solutions. Eligible young achievers will need to show evidence of their career journey while climbing the corporate ladder in companies with an annual turnover of R35 million or more.

Your entry should include:

- Details of successfully implemented programmes
- Evidence of your impact on your organisation's performance
- Accounts from employers and peers detailing your leadership skills and value to the company

Top Empowered: Business Leader of the Year Award

This award celebrates those at the helm of large organisations, who use their leadership positions to inspire others and promote empowerment. This category is open to leaders of significantly sized organisations that generate revenue of more than R100 million per annum.

The winner will need to demonstrate a passion for B-BBEE through the strategic implementation of enterprise development, social-economic development, skills development, and employment equity programmes. These programmes will need to show beneficial business performance. Eligible companies must have an annual revenue R35 million

Your entry should include:

- Evidence of the B-BBEE programmes you have championed
- Details of company performance as a result of these programmes
- Accounts from employees and peers detailing your leadership skills

Top Empowered: Public Sector Leader of the Year Award

This category is open to leaders in national, provincial, and local government departments, parastatals and other public sector agencies. The winning entry will go to an individual who has achieved outstanding results in the last year, because of excellent financial management and environmental and sustainable development.

This award will go to an inspirational leader who not only meets business targets but also shows innovation in fulfilling their service delivery mandate. This category is for leaders who believe in impacting South Africa's economy positively. Individuals under administration will not be eligible to enter. Eligible companies must have an annual revenue R35 million

Your entry should include:

- Details of results in the last 12 months, and how you achieved them.
- Evidence of the programmes you have implemented to improve your organisation's performance
- Accounts from peers detailing your leadership skills



Please complete the following entry form and submit it to the relevant party.

1. CHOSEN CATEGORIES (PLEASE INDICATE WITH A X)

Organisational Categories	
	Top Empowered Company: Fast Growth Black-Owned SMME of the Year Award
	Top Empowered Company: Sustainable Business of the Year Award
	Top Empowered Company: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the workplace of the Year Award
	Top Empowered Company: Digital Transformation of the Year Award
	Top Empowered Company: Localisation of the Year Award
	Top Empowered Company: Public Sector of the Year Award
	Top Empowered Company: Education and Skills Development of the Year Award
	Top Empowered Company: Enterprise and Supplier Development of the Year Award
	Top Empowered: Socio Economic Development of the Year Award
	Top Empowered: Job Creation Award of the Year Award
	Top Empowered Business of the Year Award
	Top Empowered: Youth Development of the Year Award
Individual Categories	
	Richard Fletcher Entrepreneur of the Year Award

	Top Empowered: Young Achiever of the Year Award
	Top Empowered: Public Sector Leader of the Year Award
	Top Empowered: Business Leader of the Year Award

COMPANY DETAILS			
FULL COMPANY NAME:			
PHYSICAL ADDRESS:			
TELEPHONE :		FAX:	
EMAIL:		WEBSITE:	
MAIN CONTACT (CEO / MD)			
NAME & SURNAME:		DESIGNATION:	
TELEPHONE NUMBER:		EMAIL ADDRESS:	
APPLICANT DETAILS			
NAME & SURNAME:		DESIGNATION:	
EMAIL ADDRESS:		MOBILE NUMBER:	
TELEPHONE NUMBER:		FAX:	
FINANCIAL INFORMATION			
Please provide the required financial information for the past three years in the table below. Companies that have been operating for less than three years should provide summaries for all years of operation.			
COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER:			
FINANCIAL YEAR END:		YEARS OF OPERATION:	
TURNOVER:	2024	2023	2022

NET PROFIT AFTER TAX AS A % OF TURNOVER:			
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:			
SECTOR CHARTER:	HOLDING COMPANY:		

B-BBEE INFORMATION	
Valid B-BBEE Certificate Level	
BEE Verification Agency	
Black Ownership as a percentage of total Ownership	
Black Female Ownership as a percentage of total Ownership	
Employment of Black Top Management as percentage of total Top Management	
Employment of Black Disabled People as percentage of total Employees	
Skills Development Spend on Black employees as percentage of Total Annual Payroll	
Procurement spend on BEE Compliant Business as percentage of Total Procurement	
Enterprise Development (ED) Spend as percentage of NPAT	
Notable ED programmes:	
Social Economic Development (SED) Spend as percentage of NPAT	
Notable SED programmes:	
OWNERSHIP BREAKDOWN MALE FEMALE	
AIC: (AFRICAN INDIAN COLOURED)	

D: (PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES)			
W: (WHITE)			

AUTHORITY DETAILS

NAME & SURNAME:	DESIGNATION:
EMAIL ADDRESS:	MOBILE NUMBER:
TELEPHONE NUMBER:	FAX:

AWARDS ENTRY

Your entry includes:

- 1 x Organisation category
- 1 x Individual category
- Welcome post on Social Media – thank you for entering
- Administration and judging process of your entry (Judges) – both internal and external
- You will qualify for a 5% discount on a Corporate Table & VIP Table

If you become a **finalist**, you will receive:

- Topco Media PR exposure press pack (mentioned in our press release, finalist badge, digital certificate, social media posts)
- Access to All the Awards Photos & Videos

R5000.00

(Excl. VAT, Agency commission and 5% Service Fee)

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Self-nomination is allowed. Only organisations operating within South African qualify to enter (in certain categories exceptions may apply) One organisational entry and one individual entry is free, thereafter companies and/or individuals will be charged a fee of R2 500 per additional entry. • Entries are limited to qualifying as finalists in three categories, if a separate motivation and supporting documentation is provided for each category. Only one entry form with company details needs to be submitted. • An independent judging panel will assess the entries. Nominations will be judged on how well they meet the published criteria for each category and not judged against each other. Judges look for clear and concise applications.

Examples may be used to demonstrate how the nominee meets the criteria of the category. The judges' decision is final, and no correspondence will be entered into. No sponsor is eligible to enter the Awards. Should sponsorship take place post nominations, this will result in immediate withdrawal of the company and/or individuals entry. Holding companies and subsidiaries may not enter the same categories. Entrants must also be prepared to meet and be interviewed by members of the media. The Awards logo will be provided to you for use on your websites, and your logo is required for our marketing material. No one employed as an independent contractor by Top Media Communications is eligible for entry.

No one acting as a Judge is eligible to enter, or to judge the entry of a company or department he or she may be employed by in any capacity. On conclusion of the Awards, all copies of submissions will be destroyed and therefore not returned. Entrants are advised to keep copies of their submissions, supporting documentation and other attachments. Information provided by entrants will be treated as confidential by all senior executives of Top Media Communications, members of its research department and the Judges. No information provided will be released by Top Media Communications to any other party without the express written consent of the entrant. By filling in the entry forms provided and summing it to Top Media Communications, entrants are thereby acknowledging that all information supplied is correct to the best of their knowledge and agree to be contacted for final phase auditing and related publishing purposes.

IF YOU ARE SELECTED AS A FINALIST, ATTENDANCE TO THE EVENT IS COMPULSORY AT A COST. AT YOUR OWN EXPENSE.
ALL FINALISTS WILL BE CONTACTED TELEPHONICALLY OR BY EMAIL.

ENTRY CHECKLIST



Entry form



Motivation of 1200 words



Company blurb (50 - 100 words)



Signed and approved by a senior member of the organisation



Company logo (300 dpi)



A current 2 page CV of individual entering



Submit three photographs in jpeg of your business with relevance to the category entered to be used for the presentation evening




A head and shoulders photograph in jpeg format of entrants in individual category



A valid SANAS B-BBEE certificate or valid share certificate and letter of 50.1% ownership from an auditor

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Together lets Unlock Africa's Economic Potential

Celebrate African transformation and enter the Oliver Top Empowerment Awards 2025





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