**lsu Elihle Competition Information 2023**

1. General Overview:

**1. Stages of the Competition**

**First Stage: Submission of the story idea.**

* Journalists submit their story ideas before or on the deadline indicated below. These ideas will go through an adjudication process, undertaken by a panel of judges made up of children, child rights experts and independent media practitioners. Following the adjudication process, the top six finalists will be announced online and across social media platforms and where possible on mainstream media.

**Second Stage: Producing and publishing the full story.**

* The top six journalists will be given financial support of up to R10 000 each to research and develop their concepts into publishable news items, which will then be published or broadcast, by a mainstream news media house of their choosing. **Please note that individual journalists must take sole responsibility to approach a mainstream media house and secure an agreement to publish/broadcast with the media house in question should their story idea be selected as part of the top six.**
* The top six stories will undergo adjudication and only the top three are guaranteed to win a cash prize. There is a fourth cash prize, that is “The Isu Elihle Mandy Rossouw Accountability Category” (MRC). This fourth prize is conditional, it will only be awarded if there is a story (in the top six) that meets the criteria for the category. The amount of money to be awarded for the Mandy Rossouw prize will be determined by the quality of the story published.

**2. Prizes**

| **Winner Categories** |  | **Cash prize** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Overall Winner |  | R25 000 |
| First runner up |  | R15 000 |
| Second runner up |  | R10 000 |
| Mandy Rossouw Category (“MRC”) |  | Between R10 000 and R25 000 |

\*Please note that it is possible for one of the top 3 winners to be selected as the winner of the Mandy Rossouw Category. In this case they would take two cash prizes. It is also possible that the MRC will not be awarded to any participant based on the judges’ decision.

**3. Isu Elihle Awards Timeline 2023**

| **Activity** | **Dates** | **Duration** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Story idea submission | 15 May -15 June 2023 | 4 weeks |
| 1st round adjudication | 15 June 2023 - 15 July 2023 | 4 weeks |
| Finalists’ announcement & mentorship | 20 July - 30 July 2023 | 2 weeks |
| Finalists produce and publish stories | 1 August 2023 - 30 September 2023 | 8 weeks |
| Announce final winners | October 2023 |  |

**\*Please note the timeline above is subject to change and due notice will be given should it change**

1. **Isu Elihle Journalist Awards 2023 Rules & Guidelines:**

\*Please note by submitting your entry, you confirm that you have read and agree with the following rules:

1. The Competition is open to professional journalists, whether directly employed or freelancers, working in the continent of Africa.
2. No entry fee is payable.
3. Employees and the immediate families of Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) and the adjudicators are not eligible to participate in the competition.
4. Previous Isu Elihle Award winners are not eligible to apply. By winners, MMA refers to the journalists that made it to the top 3 of the Isu Elihle Awards in previous competitions.
5. The Competition is held in English. Therefore, all entries and story ideas must be in English.
6. Each Applicant is strictly limited to a maximum of one entry; however, each media house can have as many applicants as it wishes.
7. Entries should be made in accordance with the instructions given on the competition entry form and must be submitted on, or before, 00:00 (CAT) 15 June 2023. After this date, no extensions or concessions will be granted.
8. Late, incomplete, illegible and/or fraudulent entries will be disqualified.
9. MMA reserves the right to refuse entries that do not comply with the above rules. No correspondence will be entered into in this regard.
10. A panel of distinguished, independent judges with appropriate knowledge and experience of children and the media will adjudicate the competition. The panel of judges will be determined by MMA at their sole discretion. Children will also form part of the judging panel.
11. No handwritten applications will be accepted. All applications must be completed online using the online form, which is available here. (please add application link )
12. The judges reserve the right to transfer entries for consideration in other categories at their discretion, for instance the Isu Elihle Mandy Rossouw Accountability Category.
13. The judges’ decision is final, and no correspondence will be entered into.
14. The top six finalists selected by the panel of judges will qualify for the final story-writing/production round of the competition. MMA will provide financial support to enable the journalists to write and complete their stories in the timeline provided. All finalists will be individually responsible and accountable to MMA for their costs. Each finalist is also required to provide MMA with invoices and any other supporting documents for all expenditure related to production of the story. Any irregular expenditure will lead to the finalist being disqualified and being held liable to repay to MMA any amount claimed and already spent.
15. Should MMA require the top six finalists to travel to the Awards or to other related activities, sufficient notice will be given, however each finalist will be required to arrange for their visas and any other documentation required for travel. MMA will cover travel and accommodation costs.
16. Finalists will be expected to be available for the duration of the programme and participate fully in the calendar of events that are expected to take place on those dates as indicated under the Isu Elihle Awards Timeline.
17. Finalists must acknowledge that this is only a competition, and the awarding of any prize does not give rise to an employment agency or joint venture relationship or partnership arrangement between the finalist and MMA.
18. The top six finalists are required to confirm (through a letter of support from their preferred media house) that they will publish in that mainstream news media outlet. Failure to do so may result in journalists being disqualified.
19. MMA must be acknowledged in the published story i.e. (***This reporting was supported by Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) as part of the***[***Isu Elihle Awards***](https://isuelihle.org.za/)*.)*
20. Individuals and media houses enter this competition at their own risk. MMA and its affiliates cannot be held liable for any injury or accidents, fatalities or damage incurred whilst participating in this competition including any incurred while traveling to research.
21. By submitting your entry, you confirm that you have read and agree with these rules and agree that should you be in breach of the terms, you may be disqualified from the competition.
22. Journalists must submit new story ideas and not ones that have been previously published or previously presented to their media house in a finalised version. Stories are required to be newsworthy and current.
23. Journalists are required to submit a high standard of work.

**C. Criteria for judging entries: Please note that both the story idea and the published story will be judged according to the criteria below.**

* **Journalists must ensure that the** focus of the story idea/story is on an issue that impacts children and that extensive voice is given to children. Children are defined as any persons between the ages of 0-17 (under 18).
* Story ideas and the published story must be ethical, newsworthy and impactful. Journalists must:
  + Consider the best interests of children,
  + report ethically on the story and consider the most ethical manner in which children can be treated by the journalist when reporting on them, as well as,
  + determine how to give children a voice in the story [(Ethical Guidelines](https://mma-ecm.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/mma_editorial_guideline.pdf)).
* Journalists must adhere to ethical practices and principles in the planning and execution of the story as MMA will not tolerate the violation of children’s rights in any way, shape or form.
* Journalists must ensure that the story takes a fresh, innovative, and different approach/perspective to children’s issues and/or includes an excellent investigative angle when reporting on child related issues.
* Journalists must be able to complete the story in the stipulated time frames.
* Journalists must in their submission, ensure that there is clarity on the issues at hand and must consider the extent to which the story will engage and capture its audience. The story could be about an area that is not commonly given a children’s angle such as the economy or economic impact on children, land issues, investment or an existing/trending news story and giving it a children’s focus.
* Stories must highlight possible solutions to the problem or issues that children face.
* Journalists must ensure that the story challenges common negative stereotypes about the roles of children in society, especially within the gender debate.
* The story should also explore relevant legislation or policy issues related to the issue being explored.

**5. The Isu Elihle Mandy Rossouw Accountability Category**

The Isu Elihle Mandy Rossouw Accountability prize will be awarded once all stories have been published during the second round of adjudication. This Prize will be awarded to the journalist (if so determined) who made the best attempt at holding the powerful to account especially on issues specifically related to children.

**The Legacy of Mandy Rossouw**

On 08 March 2018 Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) honoured the legacy of Mandy Rossouw through the launch of an awards category dedicated to the memory of the esteemed journalist who passed away in 2013. The Mandy Rossouw Award for holding key institutions accountable.

While working for the Mail and Guardian in 2009, Mandy Rossouw was the first journalist to break the story on the government's wasteful expenditure on former president Jacob Zuma’s private home in Nkandla KwaZulu Natal. She was one of the brave journalists who played a critical role in exposing the State Capture project. It is because of her dedication towards holding the powerful to account that MMA was inspired to include a category within Isu Elihle Awards for those journalists in the competition who show remarkable bravery towards holding governments and relevant institutions accountable to ensure that the rights of children on the continent are met.

Mandy was also one of the first journalists who volunteered to be on MMA’s Children’s News Agency advisory Board.  She was not only an excellent committed reporter, but she also cared deeply about journalism and ensuring children’s role was valued and their views heard.

Once all the Top 6 Finalists have published their stories and submit them to MMA, the Isu Elihle Awards adjudicators will select one story that was well executed journalistically and that was geared towards holding the powerful to account with regards to addressing a critical need/s faced by children in a particular country in Africa. **Please note: there is no requirement to submit two stories, the judging panel will select a winner for this category from the final published and submitted stories. This prize will not be awarded if all submitted stories do not hold the powerful to account or meet the relevant criteria for the category.**