



The African FOSS Reporter Award

Recognizing excellence in IT Journalism and FOSS Reporting in Africa

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can enter?

The award is open to Africans living in Africa, authors of articles or broadcasts that have been published or aired in the last two years.

Is the competition free to enter?

Yes

How can I enter the competition?

To enter the Competition entrants must pick one or more issues related to FOSS for the African development (e.g. FOSS for education/business development/localisation, etc.) and write a feature/produce a segment on their chosen topic/story for one of the following media:

- newspaper/magazine;
- news web site;
- radio;
- TV.

Can I submit more than one entry?

No

I don't know anything about FOSS (Free and Open Source Software), I need some inspiration

You have complete freedom in writing your feature/creating your broadcast. Familiarise yourself with the definitions of FOSS and the issues related to its adoption in the developing world, especially in Africa. Inquire about FOSS development model and consider the potentialities of the FOSS philosophy for African societies. This will give you an idea of what we are looking for in terms of content.

Issues such as affordability, ownership, and openness that FOSS offers have convinced many people to call for the increased adoption of FOSS in developing countries in general, and in Africa in particular. Could you find some examples/stories and/or some experts that can endorse that?

What are the constraints to the full adoption of FOSS in the African continent? You might also want to pick one of the issues related to FOSS for the African development (e.g. FOSS for education/business development/localisation, etc.) and do a short in-depth report.

Consider the issues raised above and develop them further. You are free to express your journalistic talent and communication skills. Don't forget that you are addressing an African audience.

What style and tone are requested?

Don't be sensationalistic or use hyperbolic, objectifying language. Be measured and objective. The experience of one person – however interesting – may not be representative of the situation.

If you are going to write about something that has not had any publicity in the African media before, you should be able to back up your facts through unimpeachable sources.

Do include first person quotes from individuals and/or representatives of NGOs, governments, academic institutions, lobbying or activist organisations etc. Think about your reader. Who are they? Readers may or may not have any knowledge about FOSS, your theme, or the country you write about, so try to blend in hard facts seamlessly.

Make sure you stick to the theme and keep the length of your feature/segment under control.

Get someone else to read your piece to make sure it has an argument and makes sense. Readers can often see glaring errors the writer can't. Then, ask someone else to proofread your story. Typos and grammatical errors are a big turn-off for judges and editors.

How will I know if I'm shortlisted?

You will be notified by email by February 7th if you have been shortlisted.

How will my article/broadcast be judged?

Your article/broadcast will be judged according to the following criteria: subject matter; insight; writing/communication quality; adaptation to the medium.

Winning entries are articles or broadcasts that are valuable to an African audience, show clarity in their communication and are significant in disclosing, explaining, interpreting and reporting the impact of FOSS on the development of Africa and recognizing newsworthiness.

Will I get paid if my piece appears in the paper or online?

No. However you get a prize if your feature/broadcast is shortlisted.

Can I use an existing piece?

As long as it meets the competition requirements, you can submit an article/broadcast that has previously been published.

Can the deadline be extended?

No

Will I lose any rights to my work by entering the competition?

You will retain ownership of copyright in your entry and any finalist submission. After submission to the competition, we will have the right to use your entry in connection with the competition and for our advocacy activity. If your entry is not longlisted, we will no longer have any rights to use your entry. If your entry is longlisted, we will have the right to copy, edit, display, publish and make available your entry in any format (whether online or in paper or otherwise). This applies to all longlisted entries, whether or not you go on to be a finalist. We will have the right to copy, edit, display, publish, and

make available all finalist submissions in any format (whether online or in paper or otherwise).