



Young Ideas — South Africa's Future Gold Standard

CIPC IP Youth Awards 2026

Johannesburg, **South Africa – 19 February 2026:** The Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) is proud to announce that they will be hosting the CIPC Intellectual Property (IP) Youth Awards 2026. The Competition is a dynamic platform designed to celebrate bold thinking, fresh innovation, and the next generation of business leaders. The awards ceremony will take place on **Thursday, 26 March 2026, in Sandton, Johannesburg.**

Since its launch, the CIPC IP Youth Awards have played a vital role in championing young entrepreneurs, opening doors to valuable resources, meaningful networks, and real growth opportunities. The programme continues to inspire and equip emerging innovators with the tools they need to transform their ideas into thriving enterprises.

Following the strong success of the inaugural event, this second edition promises to be even more impactful, expanding its reach, strengthening support for youth innovation, and promoting the critical role of IP protection across South Africa's entrepreneurial landscape.

These prestigious awards recognise and reward young creators whose visionary ideas show genuine commercial potential, reinforcing the importance of IP protection and commercialisation while celebrating the creativity and ambition that will shape the businesses of tomorrow.

This initiative is more than an awards ceremony — it is a national call to action for young innovators to step forward, protect what they create, and turn their ideas into real economic value. Through the CIPC IP Youth Awards, we are not only recognising excellence, we are actively building a culture of innovation, ownership, and commercial courage among South Africa's youth. The future of our economy will be shaped by these young minds, and we are committed to ensuring they have the support and





protection they need to succeed.” — Adv Rory Voller, Commissioner of the CIPC.

Award Categories

Innovation Ideas for Sustainable Impact

- This category recognises forward-thinking innovations and ideas that use technology, creativity, and practical design to deliver measurable environmental, social, or economic benefits. It celebrates solutions that address real-world challenges while promoting sustainability, inclusivity, and responsible growth.
- Entries may include products, services, platforms, processes, or programmes that improve resource efficiency, reduce environmental harm, expand access and inclusion, support community development, or create sustainable economic opportunities. Innovations can be at concept, prototype, or early implementation stage, provided their potential impact is clearly demonstrated.

Women Shaping IP

- This category celebrates women innovators, creators, entrepreneurs, and leaders who are making a strong and measurable impact through IP. It recognises women who are using IP, such as patents, designs, trade marks, copyright, or other protected creations — to turn ideas into value, grow businesses, support communities, and drive innovation.
- Entries are welcome from women at any stage of their journey, from emerging innovators to established leaders whose work shows initiative, influence, and real results in creating, protecting, managing, or promoting IP.

MSME's Innovation Excellence

- This category recognises medium, small, and micro enterprises (MSMEs) that are using IP strategically to drive innovation, business growth, and market competitiveness. We are looking for MSMEs that have successfully used IP, such as patents, trade marks, designs or copyright, to develop products or services,





strengthen their brand, enter new markets, improve revenue, or build long-term business value.

- Suitable Entries may include, IP-protected products or technologies brought to market; Strong trade mark or brand-driven business growth; Design or patent-led product differentiation; Copyright-based digital or creative enterprises; Successful IP commercialisation or licensing models; IP strategies that improved competitiveness or market access.

Innovative Ideas on the Fight Against Counterfeit Goods and Post-Seizure Waste Solutions

- This category recognises innovative solutions, tools, technologies, campaigns, or systems designed to detect, prevent, report, or reduce the spread of counterfeit goods — as well as practical, responsible ways to manage confiscated and forfeited materials.
- Entries may include product authentication methods, digital tracking platforms, supply-chain safeguards, awareness initiatives, enforcement-support innovations, and environmentally sustainable approaches for recycling, repurposing, safe disposal, or value recovery of seized goods. Judges will assess originality, measurable impact, feasibility, scalability, and the potential to deliver both anti-counterfeiting and waste-reduction outcomes.

Creative IP Excellence

- This category celebrates outstanding original work in the creative industries and recognises creators and innovators who use copyright and related IP protections to turn creative ideas into real value. It is aimed at entrants working across creative sectors who are producing, enabling, or commercialising original content.
- We are looking for creative works and creative technologies that show originality, quality, and clear IP awareness, whether through creation, protection, distribution, or monetisation of content.
- Entries May Include: Film, video, and animation Music and sound productions Photography and visual art Books, scripts, and written works Software and creative





apps Games and interactive media Digital and multimedia content Tools that help creators protect or distribute their work

Application Criteria to be considered for the CIPC IP Youth Awards, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- You must be between the ages of 18 and 35.
- The idea must be unique and demonstrate originality. Submissions should showcase measurable or potential societal, environmental, or economic benefits.
- Alignment: The entry must align with the specific goals of the selected award category.
- Presentation: A clear and concise concept document, including supporting documentation such as prototypes, designs, or media samples, must be included.

How to Apply - Submitting your entry is simple! Follow these steps:

1. Visit the official website at www.cipcipyouthawards.co.za.
2. Complete the application form and upload your supporting documents.
3. Deadline for submissions: **13 March 2026**. Winners will be announced at an exclusive gala dinner to be held in Johannesburg on **26 March 2026**. Do not wait – submit your entry today and let your “*gold standard*” shine!

Ends.

About The CIPC IP Youth Awards

The Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) is a South African regulatory body responsible for the registration of companies, intellectual property (trade marks, patents, copyrights), and the enforcement of business compliance laws.

It operates under the Department of Trade, Industry, and Competition (the dtic) to ensure corporate governance, transparency, and fair business practices. The CIPC also facilitates business rescue processes and promotes innovation by protecting intellectual property rights.





The CIPC IP Youth Awards are an initiative that CIPC is spearheading to celebrate young innovators who are creating models and ideas that will make a difference. CIPC IP Youth Awards "Celebrating Innovation, Protecting Creativity."

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