

2026 NAMIBIA ANNUAL SPORT AWARDS

Technical Brief on the Awards Framework, Categories and Implementation Timeline

Programme Director,

Mr. Irvine Ndjavera representing the office of the Deputy Minister

Chief Administrator,

Distinguished Guests,

Representatives of National Sport Federations and National Umbrella Sport Bodies,

Members of the Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

It is my privilege to provide a technical overview of the **2026 Namibia Annual Sport Awards**, with particular focus on the revised Awards framework, award categories, nomination process and implementation timelines for this year's Awards cycle.

The Namibia Annual Sport Awards remain the country's highest recognition of sporting excellence and continue to honour athletes, coaches, technical officials, administrators, sport organisations and individuals whose contributions continue to advance sport in Namibia.

The qualifying period for the **2026 Namibia Annual Sport Awards** covers sporting achievements attained between **1 September 2025 and 31 August 2026**. Accordingly, all nominations submitted must reflect performances and achievements realised within this prescribed period and comply with the provisions of the revised Namibia Annual Sport Awards Rule Book.

Following the conclusion of the previous Awards cycle, the Namibia Sport Commission undertook a comprehensive review of the Rule Book. This process was informed by lessons learnt from previous editions, governance considerations and extensive stakeholder consultations involving National Sport Federations, the Namibia National Olympic Committee, the Awards Judges Panel, legal practitioners, athletes and other key stakeholders.

The review sought to strengthen governance, improve transparency and accountability, eliminate duplication, and align the Awards with the **Sport Act, 2003**, and recognised international best practice.

Revised Awards Structure

One of the most significant outcomes of the Rule Book review is the restructuring of the Awards into two distinct groupings.

The first grouping comprises the **Performance Excellence Awards (Competitive)**, which recognise outstanding sporting achievements attained during the qualifying period.

The second grouping comprises the **Special Commendation Awards (Honorary Recognition)**, which recognise exceptional leadership, governance, integrity, service and lifetime contributions to the development of Namibian sport.

This revised structure ensures that excellence in competition is recognised while also acknowledging those whose work behind the scenes continues to strengthen and transform sport in Namibia.

Key Changes to the Rule Book

Several important amendments have been introduced to improve the credibility and integrity of the Awards.

The **Sport Star of the Year** will no longer be a nomination category. Instead, the recipient will automatically be determined from the highest overall scoring finalist across all eligible athlete categories using the approved adjudication framework.

To improve efficiency and eliminate duplication, the former **Federation of the Year Award** and **Community Inspiration Award** have been merged into a single category known as the **Federation and Community Impact of the Year Award**. This category will now recognise National Federations that demonstrate excellence not only in sporting performance but also in governance, grassroots development, safeguarding, inclusion, community impact and compliance with the standards of the Namibia Sport Commission.

Similarly, the previous media awards have been consolidated into a single **Sports Journalist of the Year Award**, bringing together print, broadcast and digital journalism into one competitive category. This change strengthens competition, recognises excellence across all media platforms while aligning Namibia with regional and international best practice.

Performance Excellence Awards (Competitive)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me now to introduce the **Performance Excellence Awards**, which remain the cornerstone of the Namibia Annual Sport Awards.

These categories are:

1. Sport Star of the Year
2. Sportsman of the Year
3. Sportswoman of the Year
4. Junior Sportsman of the Year
5. Junior Sportswoman of the Year
6. Sportsman of the Year with a Disability
7. Sportswoman of the Year with a Disability
8. Junior Sportsman of the Year with a Disability
9. Junior Sportswoman of the Year with a Disability
10. Sport Team of the Year
11. Coach of the Year
12. Umpire/Referee of the Year
13. Federation and Community Impact of the Year
14. Sport Development Programme of the Year
15. Sports Journalist of the Year
16. Professional Shining Star Award
17. **People's Choice Award- Following the announcement of the finalists, the Commission will open public voting for the People's Choice Award, allowing the public to vote for their favourite sports personality from the shortlisted finalists.**

These awards recognise excellence demonstrated through outstanding sporting performance during the qualifying period.

Special Commendation Awards (Honorary Recognition)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The second grouping comprises the Special Commendation Awards, which honour individuals and organisations whose contributions extend beyond competition and have made a lasting impact on the development of Namibian sport.

These categories are:

17. Chairperson's Award
18. Namibia Sport Hall of Fame
19. Lifetime Achievement Award
20. Sport Administrator of the Year
21. Safe Sport Award
22. Fair Play Award
23. Sustainable Sport Initiative Award

Among these, four awards have been introduced for the first time.

The **Sport Administrator of the Year Award** recognises excellence in sport administration and governance.

The **Safe Sport Award** reflects the Commission's commitment to safeguarding athletes and promoting safe sporting environments.

The **Fair Play Award** recognises integrity, ethical conduct and sportsmanship.

The **Sustainable Sport Initiative Award** recognises organisations and initiatives that promote environmental responsibility, social impact and sustainable practices in sport.

Nomination Process and Timeline

The Commission encourages all recognised National Sport Federations, National Umbrella Sport Bodies and eligible stakeholders to familiarise themselves with the revised Rule Book and submit deserving nominations within the prescribed timelines.

The implementation timeline for the 2026 Awards cycle is as follows:

- **17 July 2026** – Official opening of the online nominations portal.
- **31 August 2026** – Closing date for the submission of nominations.
- **September 2026** – Verification and validation of all nominations, including eligibility, anti-doping and Safe Sport compliance.
- **October 2026** – Independent adjudication of all eligible nominations.
- **End of October 2026** – Official announcement of the finalists.

Conclusion

In closing, Ladies and Gentlemen,

These enhancements are not merely amendments to the Rule Book. They represent the Namibia Sport Commission's unwavering commitment to ensuring that the Namibia Annual Sport Awards remain relevant, credible, transparent and responsive to the evolving needs of Namibian sport.

We therefore encourage all National Federations, National Umbrella Sport Bodies and eligible stakeholders to familiarise themselves with the revised Rule Book and submit deserving nominations within the prescribed nomination period.

I thank you.