

## International Tourism Film Festival Africa celebrates first official awards ceremony

On Friday, 27 November, the International Tourism Film Festival Africa (ITFFA) was finally able to celebrate its first official awards ceremony of The Lockdown Edition of the ITFFA 2020 at the Radisson Red Hotel, V&A Waterfront.



Image via [International Tourism Film Festival Africa](https://www.itffa.co.za/)

The ITFFA was started in 2019 after Caroline Ungersbock, co-founder and chair of the Sustainable Tourism Partnership Programme (STPP), had been invited to attend the Committee of International Tourism Film Festivals (CIFFT) member festival in Portugal (Art&Tur) as a speaker on sustainable economic development in 2017.

Ungersbock noticed that no entries had come from Africa or South Africa. Given the talent and skills that the African continent possesses, she felt it her duty to introduce them to the CIFFT circuit. In rapid succession the South African entrants won prizes in all the tourism film festivals. It was then decided that South Africa and Africa had to be contenders in this prestigious event that takes place on the global stage.

In 2019, the ITFFA boasted more than 860 entries, from over 89 countries. In 2020, the Africa edition received 150 entries from 24 African countries.

In 2020 an Africa Specific Edition was set for the event to showcase South Africa's local talent. Prior to lockdown, the ITFFA had planned to host the Africa Awards ceremony, in Cape Town in April 2020.

**Pushing forward, overcoming adversity**

The onset of Covid-19 and the country's subsequent national lockdown lead to the creation of the Official Lockdown Edition 2020 Awards announcement. This had to be followed up with an actual awards ceremony that needed to take place at a time deemed safe and responsible to do so. The opportunity presented itself when South Africa lifted international travel restrictions and de-escalated lockdown to level one.

With the support of the V&A Waterfront, the Radisson Red Hotel and CIFFT, the team forged ahead and hosted the first official awards ceremony. "We had to finish this year on a positive note, and honour those whose hard work and tireless efforts make this country as great as it is," said Ungersbock.

To further commemorate the event, the director of CIFFT flew in from Europe to present the Cannes Dolphin to Wesgro and Sledgehammer Studios. "We were absolutely blown away by the support shown by all the award-winning entrants," said James Byrne, co-director of the ITFFA. "People literally poured in the support, knowing that we are fully self-funded, they offered to contribute in every way that they could."

Alderman James Vos, mayoral committee member for economic opportunities also attended and said "it was such a pleasure to attend the first official awards ceremony."

"Soapbox Films' Refiloe Chakela-Gava and Brendan Stein were instrumental in making this event the success that it was," said both festival directors, Ungersbock and Byrne. A special mention of thanks to Cape Cobra Hire, Jeep Tours, Radisson Red Hotel, the V&A Waterfront as well as Hendricks Gin and Belvidere Vodka, and last but not least De Grendel wines.

"This event was created and shaped by those that attended, and we are beyond grateful to have shared in this journey with them," said Ungersbock.

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