

Zanzibar film festival open for entries

The 21st annual Zanzibar International Film Festival (ZIFF) has announced the opening of submissions for competition and screening for 2018.



© ktsdesign via [123RF](#)

ZIFF has announced two new categories for 2018: Best TV Series and Best Web Series. With the increased focus on content for TV and digital, and the breaking down of barriers between content types, ZIFF has identified the need to support producers and directors who are working in these mediums.

The category for Best African TV Series will be open to any African produced or co-produced and broadcast within the last two years. Three episodes would need to be submitted for consideration via the on-line application process as below.

The Best African Web Series Award category will have the same eligibility requirements and will recognise excellence in the rapidly expanding area of digital content.

Festival director Fabrizio Colombo has these words to inspire filmmakers: “ZIFF 20th marked a turning point in the history of our festival. We are geared up and focused on both the business and and the passion of what we all love - Cinema. With the big step this year of ZIFF’s partnership of DISCOP Zanzibar, we are ready and excited to welcome all the players in the business of film, television and content production. TV and digital communication will gather transforming ZIFF in a great platform to boost East Africa industry.”

Every year ZIFF has a theme that helps drive programming, with the theme for ZIFF 2018 being *Speak up and be heard!* As Colombo explains, ZIFF's new partnerships and competition categories will provide the opportunities for African cinematic voices to be seen and heard.

“Our theme this year, *Speak Up and be Heard – Sema na Usikike*, is so appropriate, as it is often the artist, the filmmaker, who has the courage raise a voice to defend, to denounce and to provoke societies when human dignity and life is attacked under systems of power and injustice.”

Festival award categories

In acknowledgement of the role that films play in contemporary society, festivals bestow film awards as a measure of the value that the industry accords festivals, and offers filmmakers a tribute to their creativity, innovation, and craft. The official prize list for ZIFF 2018 includes:

Official ZIFF awards (the Dhows gold and silver)

Best Feature Film
Best Short Film
Best Documentary
Best Feature - Dhow countries
Best Short - Dhow countries
Best Film - International
Best Animation
Best East African Film
Best TV Series
Best Web Series

Special awards (These film are judged awarded by independent jury panels).

- Chairperson's or Bibi Kidude Award (from ZIFF board).
- ZIFF Lifetime Achievement Award (from ZIFF board).
- Sembene Ousmane Prize: GIZ and ZIFF will award the Sembene Ousmane prize for development films for the three best short films made by an African or an African in the diaspora.
- Bongo Movies Awards: popular culture films in Kiswahili.
- Emerson of Zanzibar Prize Films: films of all genres about Zanzibar, made by or made in Zanzibar.
- SIGNIS Awards (Best African Film and Best East African Talent Award). The SIGNIS Jury will present its Award to a film that is deemed to exemplify universal and spiritual values that enhance human dignity, justice and tolerance through the art of cinematic expression.
- EAFF Award (European African Film Festival).
- Adiaha Award for Best Documentary by an African female filmmaker.

Deadline for submission is 15th March 2018. All submissions must be done through the ZIFF platform on www.festhome.com.