

YOUNG LIONS COMPETITION



Heineken® × SK GREAT MOMENTS AT
THEIR GREATEST

WHAT IS THE YOUNG LIONS 2026 ALL ABOUT?

Ster-Kinekor, the official representative to Cannes Lions in South Africa, is proud to partner with Heineken® as the official sponsor of the Digital category of the Cannes Young Lions Competition. For the second time, two briefs will be shared across two categories: Film and Digital, giving creatives under 30 the opportunity to showcase their talent and represent South Africa on a global stage.

Each year, Ster-Kinekor also screens winning work from the international Cannes Lions Festival at select cinemas, inspiring the next generation of creative leaders.

BACKGROUND

Ster-Kinekor manages the local Young Lions Competition, inviting teams of two young professionals (typically a copywriter and an art director) to respond to a brief in just 48 hours. Winners are selected by a panel of industry experts and go on to compete at the Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity in France, alongside the world's best.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

This year's competition includes two categories:

1. **FILM** sponsored by Ster-Kinekor

Create a 45 or 60-second commercial that reconnects audiences emotionally with the cinema experience, in a way that feels honest, fresh and true to how young people live today.

2. **DIGITAL** sponsored by Heineken®

Create an 8-slide presentation to promote Heineken® via creative digital storytelling through Urban Cultural Intervention with consideration for OOH.

KEY DATES:

- Registration closes: Tuesday, 10 March 2026 at 17:00
- Briefs go live: Friday, 13 March 2026 at 12:00 on <https://www.cannesyounglionssouthafrica.co.za/>
- Briefs will also be emailed to your registered email address

- Submissions close: Sunday, 15 March 2026 at 17:00. Winners announced: Before end of 30 March 2026
- Cannes Lions Festival: From Monday, 22 - 26 June 2026

Please note: All teams must use their own equipment and resources to complete their entries.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Teams must consist of two young professionals (eg, an art director and copywriter).
- All participants must be 30 years or younger (born on or after 26 June 1995).
- Open to professionals in:
 - Creative communications
 - Advertising
 - Digital
 - Production

Please note:

- Freelancers are eligible and encouraged to apply.
- We do not accept students.
- In-house creative teams from client companies may also enter the competition.

THE PRIZE

The winning teams will represent South Africa at the Cannes Young Lions International Competition, proudly competing in the Film or Digital category against top creative talent from around the world. Prize includes flights, accommodation, and registration. Any additional expenses such as transfers to accommodation, meals, and personal costs during the Young Lions' stay will be at their own expense.

THE RULES COMPETITION MANAGEMENT:

- The South African Young Lions Competition is managed by Ster-Kinekor Theatres (Pty) Ltd (Reg. No. 2018/482630/07).

ENTRY RULES:

- Teams of two creatives, aged 30 or under (born on or after 26 June 1995).
- Open to South African citizens working in the specified industries.
- All teams must pre-register and be available to attend Cannes if selected.

COMPETITION TIMELINE:

- Opens: Friday, 13 March 2026 at 12:00

- Closes: Sunday, 15 March 2026 at 17:00
- No late entries will be accepted.

GENERAL PROVISIONS:

- Individuals involved in organising the competition or their immediate families may not enter.
- Creative teams must obtain signed release forms for any individuals featured in their work.
- All production costs are the responsibility of the participants.
- Ster-Kinekor's decisions are final. No correspondence will be entered into.

MEDIA & PUBLICITY:

- Winners' names, images, and locations may be publicly shared.
- Winners may be invited to participate in promotional activity, though this is voluntary.
- Refusal to sign required prize documentation may lead to disqualification.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

FILM

- Final 45 or 60-second commercial
- Written explanation – if necessary (150 words for cultural/context insight)
- Subtitles must be in English (if applicable)
- File format: .mov or .mp4
- File name: Film_YourEntryNumber.mov or .mp4 (eg, Film_12121.mp4)
- Max attachment file size: 20MB zipped
- Submit via: <https://www.cannesyounglionssouthafrica.co.za/>

DIGITAL

- Presentation deck (max 8 slides) in PDF, PowerPoint or Keynote
- Clear digital solution to promote Heineken® via creative digital storytelling through Urban Cultural Intervention with consideration for OOH.
- File name: Digital_YourEntryNumber.pdf, .pptx or .key (e.g., Digital_12121.pdf)
- Max attachment file size: 20MB zipped
- Submit via: <https://www.cannesyounglionssouthafrica.co.za/>

TERMS & CONDITIONS:

1. USE OF ENTRIES

All submissions become the property of Ster-Kinekor Theatres (Pty) Ltd and HEINEKEN Beverages. Entries may be used for exhibitions, presentations, publicity, and marketing, without payment or royalties.

2. PERMISSION AND RIGHTS

Entrants confirm they are legally authorised to grant these rights. If underage, legal guardian consent is required.

3. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND LEGAL INDEMNITY

Entries must not infringe on any third-party rights. Entrants indemnify Ster-Kinekor and HEINEKEN Beverages against any legal claims, including copyright or privacy violations.