



Concept Note for South African Youth Day 2018: *Re-Imagining Democracy: in search of silenced voices*

I. BACKGROUND

*Multimedia, written pieces and artwork,
The intensification of feelings and expression through word, sight and sound,
Have proven to be powerful and inspiring means around the world,
To share stories and create change.*

On **16 June 2018**, the CIVICUS Youth Working Group¹ along with partners [Emerging Leaders in Internet Governance](#) (ELIG) and [Woke Project](#) will join the rest of the country in celebrating **Youth Day** by organizing a creative symposium of young voices under the theme ***Re-imagining Democracy: in search of silenced voices***.

The aim of the symposium is to bring young voices from diverse settings in South Africa to creatively share their critical ideas, perspectives and hopes about democracy for the country and the world. Participants will share **poems, short stories, songs, drawings, short films, etc.** (in text, audio or video format) in **any of the 11 official South African languages** and the general public will help to select the most inspiring entries together with a selected judging panel. The top 15 submissions will be awarded with fulfilling learning and networking opportunities to connect and collaborate with very dynamic active citizens and organisations from the country.

UBUNTU by [Suzette Richards](#)
*Success is within our grasp
the fear of failure should not be
entertained
visualising the outcome will bring it
to pass
sharing our success empowers
most others
thus, elevating us to new heights of
achievement
collectively the engineers of a new
nation
Ubuntu the inherent spirit of Africa
I'm what I am because of who we
all are*
Published in The PoetrySoup, 2013

II. PROCESS

In partnership with diverse arts institutions, poetry centres and civil society organisations, [CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation](#) will launch an open call for all young people (30 or under) in South Africa, to write and share a **written, visual or multimedia piece** created by them related to the theme: *Re-imagining Democracy: in search of silenced voices*. Call will

¹ [CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation](#) is a global network of civil society organisations and activists dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society around the world.

be launched on South Africa Human Rights Day: **21st March 2018** and will be open until **30th April 2018**.

The three categories are:

- Written arts: poems, short stories, essays (500 words max.)
- Visual arts: drawings, cartoons, paintings
- Multimedia arts: short films (2min max), songs

A selected judging panel will publish a shortlist of 5 entries from each category on the [CIVICUS Facebook page](#) during the last two weeks of May and the general public will vote through 'likes' until **31st May**. The top 15 artists will be awarded with an **all costs covered** dedicated workshop on storytelling and digital security in Johannesburg on **Friday 15 June 2018**.

The online general public vote will represent a 60% of the final evaluation score to select the top 2 in each category. The remaining 40% will be based on the audience reception and the selected judging panel present at the Youth Day open mic celebration on Saturday 16 June in Johannesburg.

The best written, visual and multimedia piece will be published in the State of Civil Society Report in September 2018.

III. PRIZES

1. One-day workshops run by CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation and partners on storytelling and digital security on Friday 15 June in Johannesburg for the top 15 submissions. All travel costs covered (transport, food and accommodation).
2. Top 2 symposium participants of each category (written, visual and multimedia) will win cash prize, which will be divided for themselves and as a donation to an organisation of their choice. They will also obtain a fee-waived CIVICUS voting membership (after following the regular voting membership registration procedure).
 - 1st place: 500\$US
 - 2nd place: 300US\$
3. Publication of the best (3) submissions in the 2018 State of Civil Society Report.

IV. THEME

Drawing from the [State of Civil Society Report](#) 2018 theme, **Re-Imagining Democracy**, the Youth Day 2018 symposium seeks to gather, present and discuss the **views and feelings of young people on the current state of democracy and their role (or their organisations' or communities') in rethinking and rebuild it from the ground up**. The idea is for their writing to express what democracy really means to them - what it looks like and what it feels like in everyday life and through actions other than just putting a ballot in a ballot box: organising, thinking and writing, working alongside others, protesting, expressing solidarity, being part of a community, engaging locally. Contestants can also submit their views, ideas and dreams about a democracy that is true to its name – 'rule by the people' – and how it would play out in their communities, as well as their own stories of youth empowerment and leadership connecting, mobilising and creating for positive change in South Africa and beyond.



Sub-themes:

- **Diversity- We are One!** Stories about intersectional identities (gender, race, sexuality, age, ethnicity, nationality, etc.)
- **Culture and society - Breaking Barriers for all!** Stories intercultural-interreligious integration and “decoloniality”
- **Economic justice.** Stories of solidarity economy, democratisation of labour, youth social entrepreneurship and just transition
- **Democratisation of education**
- **Unsilenced youth/ silenced youth - Hear my voice!** The experience of driving a rights-based agenda: organising, speaking up, mobilising.

V. PARTICIPANTS ELIGIBILITY

- Authors must be 30 and under by 16 June 2018
- Respect to the deadline: 30th April 2018
- Only one submission per person
- Original content
- Submission in any of the 11 official languages
- CIVICUS member ([sign up](#) for free).

VI. SUBMISSIONS EVALUATION CRITERIA

- Creativity
- Authenticity
- Connection to the theme
- Connection to struggle & contributions to community
- Youth perspective

*Consideration will be given to ensure gender, ethnic and religious diversity of contestants.

VII. YOUTH DAY 2018 SYMPOSIUM PARTNERS ROLE

- Promote the call within their networks to ensure a great diversity of young people can take part of the symposium
- Include the winners/ runners up in upcoming publications: newsletters, social media posts, mailers, etc.
- Potentially offer physical and internet connection for young people outside Johannesburg unable to attend the workshop on Friday 15 June 2018.
- Event support to organise the Youth Day celebration on Saturday 16 June 2018 under an ‘open mic’ or ‘poetry slam’ format with a space for a facilitated conversation with participants and the audience.

POWERED BY: CIVICUS Youth Working Group

CIVICUS launched its first Youth Working Group ([CYWG](#)) in 2016, an ever-growing community of over 800 youth-led and youth serving public interest movements, organisations, platforms, councils, networks and individuals from 175 countries and territories across the globe. CYWG unites forces and fosters collaboration and networking opportunities between youth movements and among young active citizens worldwide, to protect and promote our rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly in a safe, efficient and creative way. We produce and exchange knowledge and experiences to influence the wide spectrum of civil society around meaningful youth inclusion in the sector.

At the CIVICUS Youth Assembly in [2016](#) and [2017](#), young delegates raised the need to foster creativity and use of the arts for young people to express their struggles, stories and most pressing issues. Today, CIVICUS is encouraging young voices to get their message heard and inspire the national and international civil society community to take action in the construction of stronger democracies around the world.

