



NATIONAL ARTS COUNCIL
OF NAMIBIA

ARTS PULSE

August – October

**2025
Newsletter - Issue I**

VOICE OF THE NACN ADMINISTRATOR



Dear Creative Community,

What a time to be creative! It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the very first edition of the National Arts Council of Namibia (NACN) Newsletter.

This is a milestone for us, as it marks the beginning of a new way of connecting, sharing, and growing together as a creative community.

The creative sector is vibrant and ever-evolving, and through this newsletter we hope to capture some of that energy. Our aspiration is simple: to create a space where stories of our artists, cultural workers, and partners can be told and celebrated. We want this to be a platform that informs you about opportunities, highlights achievements, and sparks conversations that move our sector forward. More importantly, we see this newsletter as a bridge, bringing the NACN closer to you, and a gate you can open to step closer to the heart of our cultural life.

We are excited to begin this journey with you, and we look forward to shaping each edition with your stories, your ideas, and your voices.

Yours sincerely,

Gretta Gaspar

IN THIS EDITION

The inaugural edition of Arts Pulse, the official newsletter of the National Arts Council of Namibia (NACN), celebrates key highlights from Namibia's creative sector.

Applications are open for the 2026 NACN bursaries, supporting studies in creative fields such as Game Design, Curatorship, and Arts Management. The Council also unveiled its new brand identity, designed by Turipamwe Design, symbolising NACN as both a gateway to opportunity and a bridge for collaboration.

This edition's Artist Spotlight features Galilei Njembo, whose NACN-funded opera "You Have Loved Enough" raised awareness on mental health, and Shilongo Israel, organiser of the Windhoek Annual Cultural Festival, celebrating cultural diversity.

NACN strengthened community engagement at the Ongwediva Annual Trade Fair 2025 and showcased Namibian creativity internationally at the Intra-African Trade Fair (IATF) in Algiers under the Creative Africa Nexus (CANEX) platform.

Locally, the 2nd National Literary Festival of Namibia, themed "Open a Book," celebrated storytelling, poetry, and the power of literature, while the Otjomuise Live Arts Festival (OLAF) launched another vibrant season of performances in Windhoek.

Through partnerships with Ma//Gaisa, Katutura Fashion Week, the City of Windhoek Jazz Festival, and Heritage Week, NACN continues to promote inclusivity, collaboration, and artistic growth across Namibia. The arts are alive and Arts Pulse will keep you in rhythm with every creative beat.

Find us at the Government Park, NACN Office, Room 018, contact us via email: administrator@artscouncilnam.org / 061 293 3311 / 0811 450 641 for enquiries

BURSARY APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN FOR 2026

The National Arts Council of Namibia (NACN) is pleased to announce that applications for 2026 bursaries are now open for both undergraduate and postgraduate studies in the arts, cultural, and creative fields. These bursaries aim to support the next generation of Namibian artists and cultural practitioners in advancing their education and skills.

Priority areas of study include:

Game Design · New Media Design · Digital Art · Curatorship · Graphic Design · Jewellery Making · Arts & Cultural Policy and Management · Arts Journalism · Arts Research · Arts Education (Visual & Performing Arts) · Organology

Eligibility:

- Namibian citizens with a Grade 11 or 12 certificate (average C-symbol or 25 points and above).
- Current tertiary students must submit an academic progress report.
- A motivation letter, proof of provisional acceptance, and certified documents are required. Applicants must be under 30 years (undergraduate) or under 40 years (postgraduate) at the time of application.
- NACN encourages people living with disabilities and individuals from marginalized communities who meet the criteria to apply.

Applications close on 21 November 2025 at 16h00.

Application forms are available from the NACN Offices, Regional Arts Extension Officers, or can be downloaded from the website: www.artscouncilnam.org

Submit completed applications to:

The NACN Administrator, Room 018, Ground Floor, Ministry of Education Building, Government Office Park, Luther Street, Windhoek
P.O. Box 149, Windhoek
Email: nacnbursaries@gmail.com

Successful applicants will be announced in January 2026. Don't miss this opportunity to take your artistic career to the next level!



REBRANDING



NACN LAUNCHES BOLD NEW BRAND / A BOLD NEW BRAND FOR NACN

The national Arts Council of Namibia officially launched its new brand on the 6th of March 2024 at a ceremony held at The Village Garden in Windhoek, unveiling a new refreshed logo and a redesigned website.

Speaking at the event, the Deputy Minister of Education, Arts and Culture, Hon. Faustina Caley, described the rebranding as a renewed commitment to inclusivity. Designed by Turipamwe Design, the new logo uses the imagery of a gate and a bridge to reflect NACN as both a gateway to opportunities and a connector for collaborations, and cultural exchange. A dynamic website developed by Interactive IT Solutions now provides easier access to grants applications, Funding resources, and industry updates.

Since its establishment under the National Arts Funds Act of 2005, NACN has empowered artist through grants, bursaries, and partnerships. With this rebrand the council has stepped into the future with promised greater visibility, inclusivity and empowerment for all Namibian creatives.



CREATIVES SPOTLIGHT

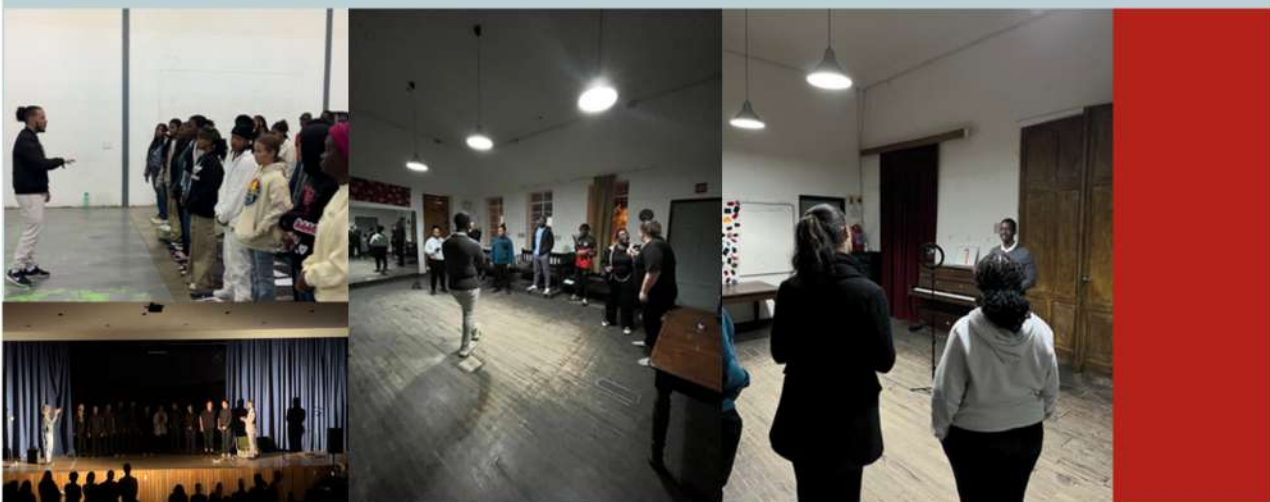
This month, we shine the spotlight on Galilei Njembo, a professional opera singer, composer, cultural producer, and advocate for social issues whose artistry continues to inspire and empower communities. His work highlights the depth of talent and creativity supported by the National Arts Council of Namibia (NACN).

Galilei Njembo – Opera Singer, Composer & Cultural Producer

“I am Galilei Uajenenisa Njembo (25) a professional opera singer, composer, cultural producer and advocate for social issues. I am originally from Windhoek, and completed my studies, a Bachelor of Music Voice Performance and Composition, at McGill University in Canada. Normally, I work as an opera singer in concert and recital. Occasionally, I have been fortunate enough to perform in workshops, operas, musical theatre and concerts in Canada, Mexico, Germany, South Africa, and Namibia. I have also been commissioned as a composer for some local and international choirs over the last 5 years. Currently, I am based in Windhoek, with hopes to make an impact as a director, singer, and vocal teacher and coach whilst using art as a form of advocacy to address social issues.

This year, I was recently awarded a grant from the National Arts Council of Namibia (NACN) and successfully wrote and produced my own opera and theatre-piece, “You have loved enough!” This financial aid was invaluable and brought to life a passion project that would not have been possible without their support.

My play touched on themes of love, loss, and grief, with an acute focus on mental health awareness. I was also supported by mental health practitioners and counsellors, for example, counsellors from OYO Trust. Audience members engaged with the play on a profound emotional degree, and some reached out for professional mental health support thereafter. These grant cycles present a unique opportunity for artists to grow and build capacity in their respective fields. It shows promise for the future of the arts in Namibia.”

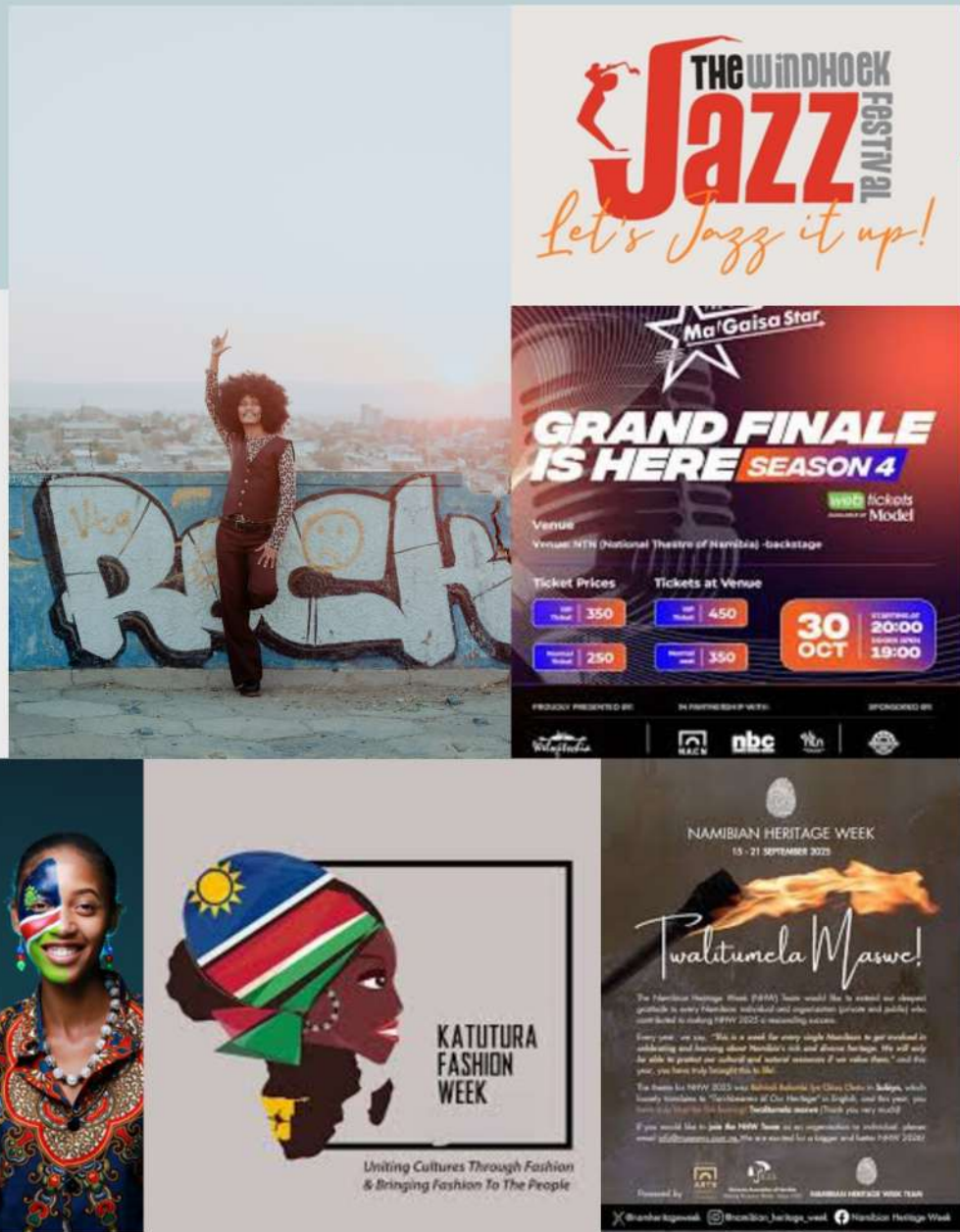


PARTNERSHIPS

The National Arts Council Namibia continues to strengthen its impact in the creative sector through strategic partnerships and collaborations. Some of our partnerships include:

- Ma//Gaisa
- Katutura Fashion Week
- City of Windhoek- Jazz festival
- Heritage week
- OLAF

These partnerships not only celebrate Namibia's diverse creative expressions but also expand opportunities for artists to showcase their talents, engage communities and preserve cultural heritage.



ONGWEDIVA ANNUAL TRADE FAIR 2025

The National Arts Council of Namibia (NACN) proudly took part in the Ongwediva Annual Trade Fair 2025, one of the country's most prominent platforms for showcasing innovation, culture, and enterprise. Throughout the event, the NACN team engaged with hundreds of visitors, providing information about our programmes, grant opportunities, and initiatives designed to support artists and cultural practitioners across Namibia.

Our presence at the trade fair reflected NACN's commitment to connecting directly with communities and ensuring that information about funding and opportunities reaches artists in all regions. By participating in this national event, NACN not only strengthened its visibility but also reinforced its role as a bridge between creatives, stakeholders, and the public. Trade fair provided a valuable space to listen, share, and celebrate the diversity of Namibia's cultural landscape, furthering our mission to unlock the creative potential of the nation.



NAMIBIA SHOWCASES CREATIVE TALENT AT INTRA-AFRICAN TRADE FAIR 2025



“ Namibia's creative voices continue to make their mark on the African stage ”

The National Arts Council of Namibia, in collaboration with the Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB), proudly sent a delegation of artists to the Intra-African Trade Fair (IATF) 2025, held in Algiers from 4–10 September. Through the Creative Africa Nexus (CANEX) platform at IATF, Namibia was represented by creatives including Julia Bonita Fredericks, Melissa Poulton, Luis Munana, Betty Sibeso, Tataleni Ilonga, and Andreas Elifas, whose exhibitions, performances, and networking sessions highlighted Namibian creativity on the continental stage.

The delegation was led by Ms. Gretta Gaspar, Chief Education Officer in the Directorate of Arts, and joined by the Minister of Education, Arts and Culture, Hon. Sanet Steenkamp, accompanied by her Personal Assistant. Supported by the NIPDB team, the Namibian representatives showcased the nation's talent, innovation, and cultural diversity underscoring the country's commitment to expanding market access, fostering cross border collaborations, and strengthening its visibility within Africa's creative economy.

2ND NATIONAL LITERARY FESTIVAL OF NAMIBIA

Celebrating words, stories and Namibian voices

The 2nd National Literary Festival of Namibia, held from 3 to 4 October 2025 at the National Library proved itself again as a vibrant meeting point for Namibia's storytellers, book lovers, and cultural actors. The event was hosted by the National Arts Council of Namibia (NACN) in partnership with the National Library and Archives Service (NLAS) and the Directorate of Arts.

Held under the theme "Open a Book," the festival aimed to promote reading, writing, and literary engagement across all age groups. The programme included poetry performances, author talks, reading sessions, book exhibitions, and discussions on the role of literature in education and cultural preservation.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Ms. M'kariko Amagulu, Chairperson of the NACN Literature Committee, said the festival was a celebration of literature's power to educate, connect, and inspire. "We gather here to celebrate literature in all its forms and affirm its role in shaping society and nurturing critical thought," she said.

University of Namibia Pro-Vice Chancellor, Dr. Ellen Namhila, urged writers to document stories that exist within communities before they are lost to time. She encouraged Namibian authors to reach rural areas where libraries and archives are limited, preserving oral traditions and untold histories.

The event featured book displays by local authors and publishers, interactive workshops, and performances by artists including Lize Ehlers, Zenzo, and Angelina Akawa (Zingerwingz). School groups and young readers also participated in storytelling and creative sessions facilitated by NLAS and partner organisations.

The festival closed with a cocktail networking session, giving established and emerging writers an opportunity to connect and showcase their work.

According to the NACN, the National Literary Festival continues to serve as a national platform for promoting literacy, supporting creative expression, and strengthening Namibia's literary culture.

THROUGH THE LENS: NATIONAL LITERARY FESTIVAL OF NAMIBIA 2025

A visual glimpse into the stories, smiles, and creative energy that filled the National Library during this year's celebration of Namibian literature.



OTJOMUISE LIVE ARTS FESTIVAL - OLAF

Cultivating Community Through Creativity

The Otjomuise Live Arts Festival (OLAF) 2025 was officially launched on 15 October 2025 at the National Theatre of Namibia, marking the beginning of yet another exciting celebration of creativity and community in Windhoek. The launch event brought together artists, partners, and friends of the arts in a vibrant atmosphere filled with anticipation and pride.

The National Arts Council of Namibia, reflected on the festival's impact, noting that "OLAF brings art out of closed spaces and places it right in the heart of the city. It's not just about performance, it's about belonging, expression, and joy." The NACN extended best wishes to the organisers and participants for a successful edition filled with inspiration, collaboration, and meaningful artistic exchange. From 31 October to 1 November 2025, the streets of Windhoek came alive as OLAF returned for its fifth edition, transforming Zoo Park into a hub of creativity. The two-day festival featured live public performances, community storytelling, and artistic exchanges that celebrated the power of art to unite people and inspire shared experiences.

Under the theme "A Garden of Expression: Cultivating Community Through the Arts," OLAF 2025 celebrated creativity as a shared space that connects people. The festival highlighted the importance of artists, audiences, and the stories that bring them together, continuing its mission to champion live art as accessible, relevant, and rooted in public experience. Jointly produced by the Goethe-Institut Namibia (GI) and the National Theatre of Namibia (NTN), with support from the National Arts Council of Namibia (NACN) and Radio 100FM, OLAF 2025 brought together a diverse mix of local and regional artists across multiple disciplines. Reflecting on this year's programme, Ms. Nelago Shilongoh of the National Theatre of Namibia remarked, "OLAF reminded us that public art belongs to everyone. Each year, the festival transforms everyday spaces into creative meeting points, bridging the arts with everyday life. This year, we curated works that sparked dynamic conversations on sustainability in the arts, communities, and our environment."

The 2025 edition once again reaffirmed OLAF's place as a cornerstone of Namibia's creative calendar, an inspiring reminder that art, at its best, grows from the community and blossoms within it.



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF ARTS COUNCILS AND CULTURE AGENCIES - IFACCA

The International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA), in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture of Spain, successfully hosted an insightful side event during MONDIACULT 2025 under the theme “Sustainable Pathways for Charting the Future of Arts and Culture: In Conversation with Public Agencies.”

Held on Monday, 29 September 2025, at the Barcelona International Convention Centre (CCIB), this event brought together an impressive gathering of leaders and senior representatives from Ministries of Culture and Arts Councils around the world. The session served as a dynamic platform to exchange perspectives on how cultural policy and public investment can be strengthened to support the long-term sustainability of the arts and culture sector.

Through rich dialogue and reflection, participants explored the evolving role of public agencies in addressing pressing global challenges from equitable funding and the environmental footprint of cultural activities to innovation, digital transformation, and inclusive cultural governance. The discussion also emphasized the importance of cross-border collaboration and shared learning in reimagining systems that recognize and amplify the true value of culture.

This engaging conversation reaffirmed the global commitment to cultural sustainability, highlighting that the arts and culture are not only drivers of creativity and identity but also essential pillars for social resilience and human development.

The event was open exclusively to registered MONDIACULT 2025 delegates and stands as one of the key moments of the conference, reinforcing IFACCA's dedication to fostering dialogue, collaboration, and collective action among cultural policymakers worldwide.



START TIME: 8PM - 9PM
RED CARPET: 7PM



FRANCO NAMIBIA CULTURAL CENTER - Robert Mugabe Ave, Windhoek

KATUTURA FASHION WEEK 7TH EDITION

20TH NOVEMBER 2025 - TICKETS N\$ 250

ALL TICKETS CAN BE PURCHASED AT FNCC

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