



NATIONAL ARTS COUNCIL
OF NAMIBIA

ARTS PULSE

JANANUARY 2026

Newsletter - Issue 3



A NEW YEAR FOR CREATIVITY

As we welcome 2026, we step into a year filled with possibility, imagination, and renewed purpose for the creative and cultural sector. Arts continue to be a powerful force for expression, dialogue, and economic opportunity, connecting communities and shaping how we see ourselves as a nation.

This year invites us to reflect on how far we have come, while looking ahead to new ideas, collaborations, and creative pathways yet to unfold. From emerging artists finding their voice to established practitioners expanding their reach, the creative sector remains a space of growth, resilience, and innovation.

As we move forward, the National Arts Council of Namibia remains dedicated to supporting creativity in all its forms, fostering opportunity, strengthening platforms, and ensuring that the arts continue to thrive across regions and disciplines.

Here's to a year of bold ideas, shared stories, and creative momentum.

VOICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR



Dear Creative Community,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2026 edition of Arts Pulse, the official newsletter of the National Arts Council of Namibia. As we step into a new year filled with promise and creative possibility, we are excited to share important developments that continue to shape and strengthen our arts ecosystem. As we prepare for the new financial year, we also hope to open the Call for Grants in February, a key opportunity for artists, organisations, and creative innovators to bring impactful projects to life. We encourage all eligible creatives to apply and to make use of this platform designed to strengthen artistic expression, cultural preservation, and sector development.

To our current grant recipients, a gentle reminder: please ensure that all grant reports are submitted before the end of the financial year, 31 March 2026. These reports are vital in demonstrating accountability, celebrating achievements, and shaping future support mechanisms for the sector. Thank you to all artists, partners, and cultural stakeholders for your ongoing passion and commitment. Your creativity continues to inspire, challenge, and uplift our nation. Wishing you a year filled with purpose, collaboration, and boundless artistic growth.

Warm regards,

Gretta Gaspar

IN THIS EDITION

This third edition of Arts Pulse, the official newsletter of the NACN, looks back on a year shaped by creativity, growth, and meaningful exchange across the cultural and creative sector.

A special feature, Reflecting on 2025: Atja Pekaravi Youth League, highlights the NACN supported journey to Francistown, Botswana, which strengthened cultural connection, community exchange, and regional collaboration.

The Creative Spotlight section shares the story of Tataleni Ilonga, CEO and Co-Founder of Edu-Game Namibia and founder of TL Entertainment, whose participation at Africa Games Week and the Rage Expo showcased Namibian innovation on international platforms.

This edition further reflects on the National Dialogue on Namibia's Creative Industries, where stakeholders came together to discuss policy, protection, and participation as key building blocks for a sustainable creative economy.

Readers will also find a write-up on Understanding the National CCI Strategy (2025–2030), insights into the UNESCO-Aschberg Programme Funding 2026 for Artists and Cultural Professionals, updates on the ongoing NASCAM “Know Your Rights” Campaign, and a reminder to the 2025/2026 grant recipients.

Finally, the NACN Secretariat contact details are provided for inquiries and further engagement.

As we look ahead to 2026, NACN remains committed to supporting artists, opening doors to opportunity, and nurturing a vibrant, connected creative sector.

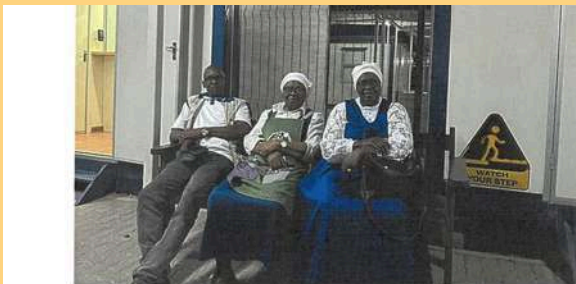
Find us at the Government Park, NACN Office, Room 018, contact us via email:
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REFLECTING ON 2025

As we reflect on the creative journeys that shaped 2025, NACN spotlights mobility supported initiatives that expanded Namibia's cultural footprint beyond its borders. The Atja Pekaravi Youth League travelled to Francistown, Botswana, where they hosted a landmark concert, conference, and church engagements that strengthened cross border cultural and faith based exchange.

In the same spirit, Tutaleni Ilonga, CEO and Co-Founder of Edu-Game Namibia and founder of TL Entertainment, represented Namibia at Africa Games Week and the Rage Expo through NACN's Mobility Fund, showcasing locally developed games and innovative approaches to gamified learning. Together, these journeys reflect how mobility support enables meaningful exchange, global exposure, and sustained growth within the creative sector

ATJA PEKARAVI YOUTH LEAGUE



Among the creative journeys supported in 2025, the Atja Pekaravi Youth League illustrates how mobility support can enable meaningful cultural exchange. With assistance from the National Arts Council of Namibia (NACN), the youth league travelled to Francistown, Botswana, where they hosted a concert, conference, and church engagements that strengthened cross-border cultural and faith-based collaboration.

In their reflection, the group shared that *"your support made a meaningful impact, and we are truly thankful for the trust you have placed in our mission."* The initiative not only marked a historic moment in their church calendar but also inspired their Botswana counterparts to plan a reciprocal event in Namibia in 2026.

This journey highlights the value of NACN's Mobility Fund in expanding access, fostering regional partnerships, and amplifying the creative voices beyond borders. Looking ahead, NACN remains committed to supporting artists and cultural groups whose work continues to build connection, exchange, and sustainable growth within the creative sector.

REFLECTING ON 2025: TUTALENI ILONGA'S JOURNEY

Tutaleni Ilonga, CEO and Co-Founder of Edu-Game Namibia and founder of TL Entertainment, represented Namibia at Africa Games Week and the Rage Expo through support from NACN's Mobility Fund. His participation showcased locally developed games and innovative approaches to gamified learning, demonstrating how mobility support can expand Namibian creativity beyond borders while strengthening the creative sector at home.



My name is Tutaleni Ilonga, CEO and Co-Founder of Edu-Game Namibia and founder of TL Entertainment, I'm on a mission to transform Africa into a thriving hub for game development and gamified education. With 7+ years of experience, I've built bridges between Namibia, Brazil, and global gaming ecosystems, driving innovation, investment, and sustainability in the industry. As the founder of TL Entertainment and co-founder of Edu-Game Namibia, I've Spearheaded partnerships like Game Jam+ to connect African and South American game developers. Pioneered gamified education, developing curricula to revolutionize Namibia's learning systems. Elevated Africa's gaming potential on global stages, from Gamescom Latam to Forbes 30 under 30 (Top 3 Finalist, 2024).

Key Achievements:

- First African Speaker at Gamescom Latam 2025 – Advised global brands on entering Africa's gaming market.
- Forbes Top 3 Pitch Finalist – Positioned Edu-Game Namibia as a leader in sustainable gaming.
- Xbox Games Camp Alumni | Game Industry Africa Award Winner | Boost Up Pitch Champion.

Now: Building an innovation hub to ensure gaming becomes a profitable, scalable industry for future African generations. Let's connect if you're passionate about gaming, ed-tech, or cross-continental collaboration!

In December, my teammates and I, (Vaughan Weiss and Mutaleni Ya Toivo) had the privilege of participating in Africa Games Week in Cape Town and the Rage Expo in JHB. These platforms brought together innovators, developers, and educators from across the continent, and it was inspiring to see how African creativity is shaping the global gaming industry.



At the Africa Games Week, I shared insights on culturally rooted board game design and gamified learning, while at Rage Expo Mutaleni Ya Toivo exhibited games created in Namibia as well as games that were created by Namibian High School and Primary School students during the NUST/MTC Game Jam, we connected with youth and gamers who reminded me why playful learning matters. Both events reinforced the importance of collaboration and gave me fresh ideas for how Edu-Game Namibia can scale its impact.

The support of the National Arts Council of Namibia (NACN) was pivotal in making my participation at Africa Games Week possible. Their investment allowed me to travel to Cape Town, engage with international peers, and represent Namibian creativity on a global stage. Beyond the logistics, NACN's backing affirmed the value of my work, showing that culturally rooted, educational games are not only relevant locally but worthy of continental recognition.

Thanks to their support, we were able to share Edu-Game Namibia's vision with diverse audiences, build networks with developers and educators, and gain exposure to new technologies and creative practices. These experiences are already shaping projects back home, from curriculum-linked board games to inclusive digital platforms for neurodiverse learners. NACN's contribution ensured that Namibian voices were part of the conversation about Africa's creative future, and it strengthened my resolve to scale our impact across the continent.

Looking ahead to 2026, I am excited about building on the momentum from Cape Town and expanding Edu-Game Namibia's reach across Africa. My focus will be on deepening partnerships that celebrate cultural authenticity in games, while creating platforms that empower young people to learn, collaborate, and express themselves through play.

Equally, I am eager to showcase Namibian creativity on larger stages, ensuring our voices are part of the global conversation about the future of education and gaming. 2026 will be a year of scaling impact, strengthening networks, and continuing to prove that African innovation can inspire the world.



NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON NAMIBIA'S CULTURAL CREATIVE INDUSTRIES



The Directorate of Arts in the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sport, Arts and Culture (MEIYSAC), represented by Ms. M'kariko Amagulu, Director of Arts, participated in a national discussion on *Talk of the Nation* on 26 January 2026, focusing on the state and future of Namibia's Creative Industries. The discussion brought together creative entrepreneur Joel Haikali, creative industries consultant Patrick Sam, and BIPA Intellectual Property Executive Onesmus Joseph, and was moderated by Denver Kisting.

The dialogue highlighted the creative sector as a national priority and explored government's role under NDP6 in building an enabling environment for creatives. Key themes included the need for supportive policy and regulatory frameworks, stronger protection of intellectual property, and balancing cultural preservation with the demands of a modern, competitive creative economy. Panelists emphasised that policy, protection, and participation must advance together for the sector to thrive sustainably.

Speaking during the discussion, Ms. Amagulu highlighted the importance of collaboration across government to unlock opportunities for creatives, noting that *"as a ministry, what we've been doing is trying to create a lot of synergies, not only with the ministry of international relations, because now they are responsible for trade. So we are looking at trading services and opportunities for people to be employed remotely, seeing how we can bring them to the table."*

The engagement reinforced the growing focus on positioning the creative industries within broader economic and trade conversations, while expanding access to markets and employment opportunities for artists and cultural professionals.

Understanding the National CCI Strategy (2025–2030)

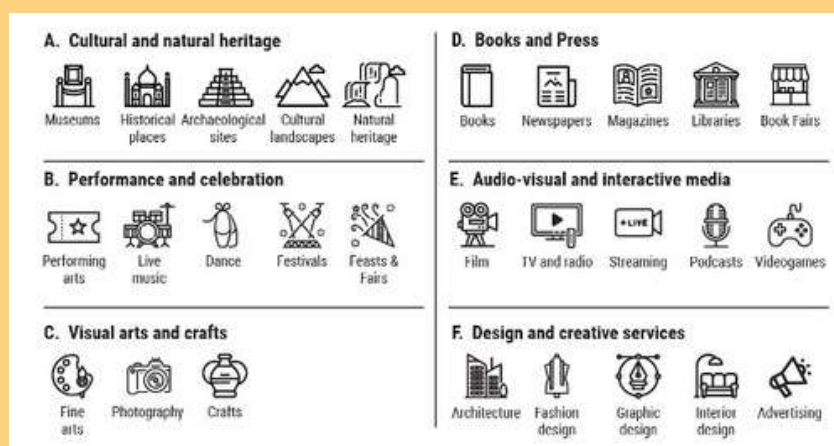
The National Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) Strategy 2025-2030 is Namibia's long-term framework for strengthening the creative sector as a driver of economic growth, social development and cultural expression. It recognizes artists, cultural practitioners and creative entrepreneurs as essential contributors to national development, while acknowledging the unique challenges they face in sustaining their livelihoods.

The strategy is designed to create an enabling environment where creatives can thrive. Key focus areas include improved access to funding and financing mechanisms, skills development and professionalisation, market access at local, regional and international levels, and the development of creative infrastructure. It also emphasises the importance of intellectual property protection, fair remuneration, and the role of digital technologies in expanding opportunities for artists across disciplines.

For creatives, the CCI Strategy is significant because it brings structure, coordination and visibility to the sector. It aligns government ministries, public institutions, funding bodies and industry stakeholders around shared goals for creative sector growth. This coordinated approach is intended to reduce fragmentation, strengthen partnerships, and ensure that arts and culture are fully integrated into national development planning, including employment creation and innovation agendas.

The strategy also places strong emphasis on inclusion and sustainability. It seeks to ensure that creatives from all regions, backgrounds and artistic disciplines can access opportunities, while promoting cultural diversity and heritage preservation alongside modern creative industries. By strengthening policy and regulatory frameworks, the strategy aims to improve working conditions for artists and create more predictable, supportive systems within which they can operate.

Over the 2025-2030 period, the implementation of the CCI Strategy is expected to support a more resilient and globally connected creative economy. For artists and cultural professionals, this strategy is more than a policy document, it is a commitment to building pathways that allow creativity to flourish as both cultural expression and a viable, sustainable profession in Namibia.



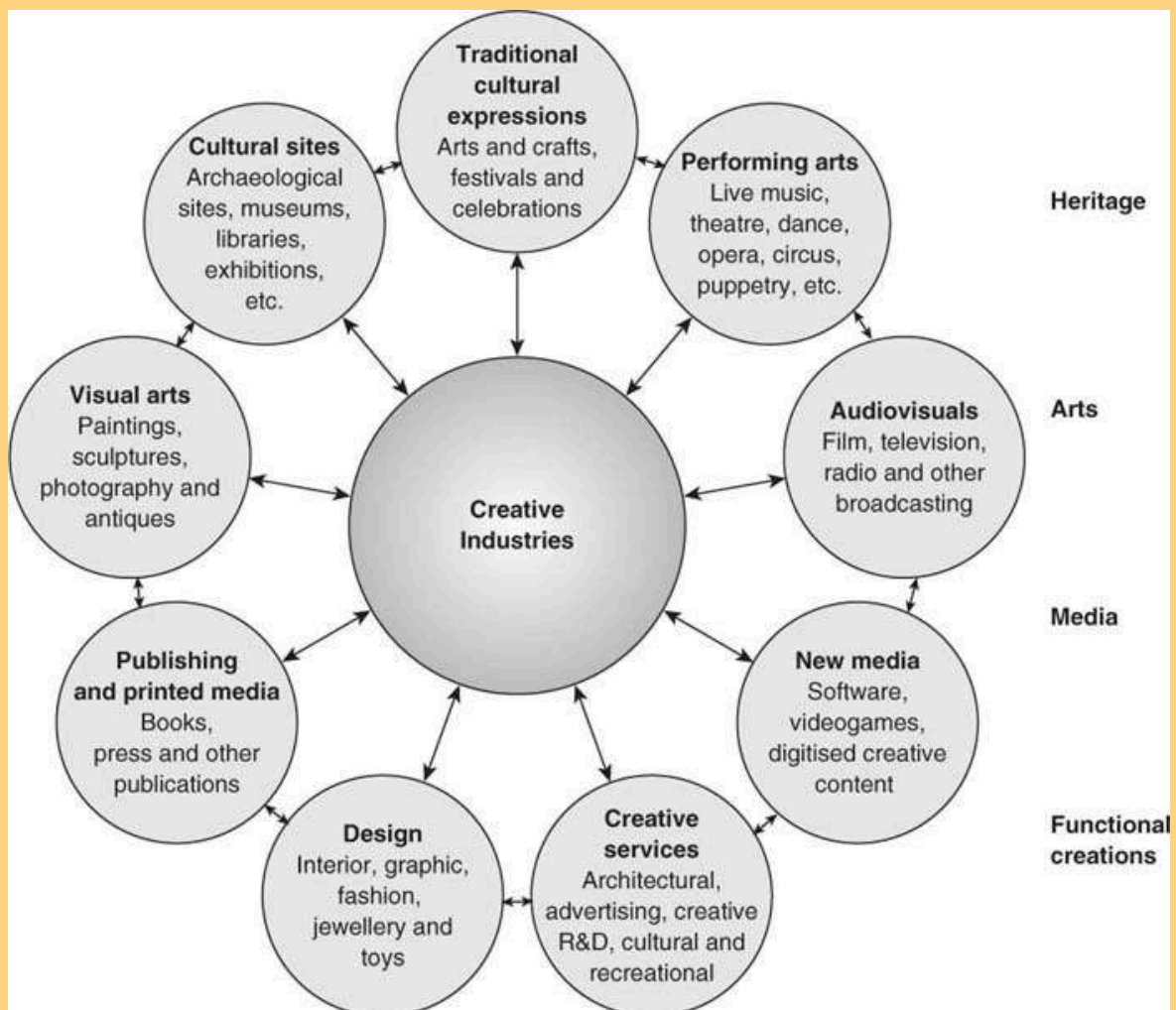
Understanding the National CCI Strategy (2025 –2030)...continued

How this affects you as an artist

For artists and cultural practitioners, the CCI Strategy is about real opportunities. It supports:

- Better access to funding, grants and mobility support
- Skills development, training and professional growth
- Increased visibility and access to local, regional and global markets
- Stronger policies that protect artists' rights and creative work
- Improved working conditions and recognition of artists as professionals

Over time, this means more structured support, clearer systems, and increased chances for creatives to earn a sustainable living from their work.



UNESCO-ASCHBERG PROGRAMME FUNDING 2026 FOR ARTISTS AND CULTURAL PROFESSIONALS

The UNESCO-Aschberg Programme for Artists and Cultural Professionals is a global initiative dedicated to protecting artistic freedom, promoting the status of artists, and strengthening cultural mobility and exchange. Through research, capacity building, and technical and financial support, the programme helps artists and cultural professionals overcome structural challenges, access new opportunities, and engage with international networks, with a strong focus on creators from Africa and the Global South.



UNESCO has launched an open call for governments, public institutions and civil society organisations to support initiatives that advance the status of the artist and artistic freedom. These initiatives aim to improve the social, economic and legal conditions under which artists work, including fair remuneration, social protection, mobility and enabling policy frameworks.

The National Arts Council of Namibia (NACN) is a recipient of UNESCO-Aschberg funding, which supported the drafting of regulations for the National Arts Fund Act (Act 1 of 2005). This contributed to strengthening the legal framework guiding arts funding, governance and sector development. Thus, NACN encourages eligible organisations and institutions to apply and actively contribute to initiatives shaping the future of the creative sector.



Ongoing NASCAM “Know Your Rights” Campaign

The NASCAM “Know Your Rights” initiative is an ongoing national campaign aimed at empowering Namibian musicians and creators with essential knowledge about copyright, intellectual property, and royalty collection. Led by the Namibian Society of Composers and Authors of Music (NASCAM), the campaign helps artists understand their rights, income streams, and the importance of protecting and registering their creative works.

In late 2025, the initiative was strengthened through a National Copyright Perception Survey, implemented in partnership with the Business and Intellectual Property Authority (BIPA). The campaign continues to focus on improving copyright awareness, promoting fair remuneration, encouraging registration of works, and addressing the use of music without proper licensing, particularly in broadcasting and public spaces.

The campaign was implemented with the support of NACN, and it remains active into 2026, contributing to stronger industry accountability and equipping artists with the knowledge needed to sustainably earn from their creative work in a changing digital environment.

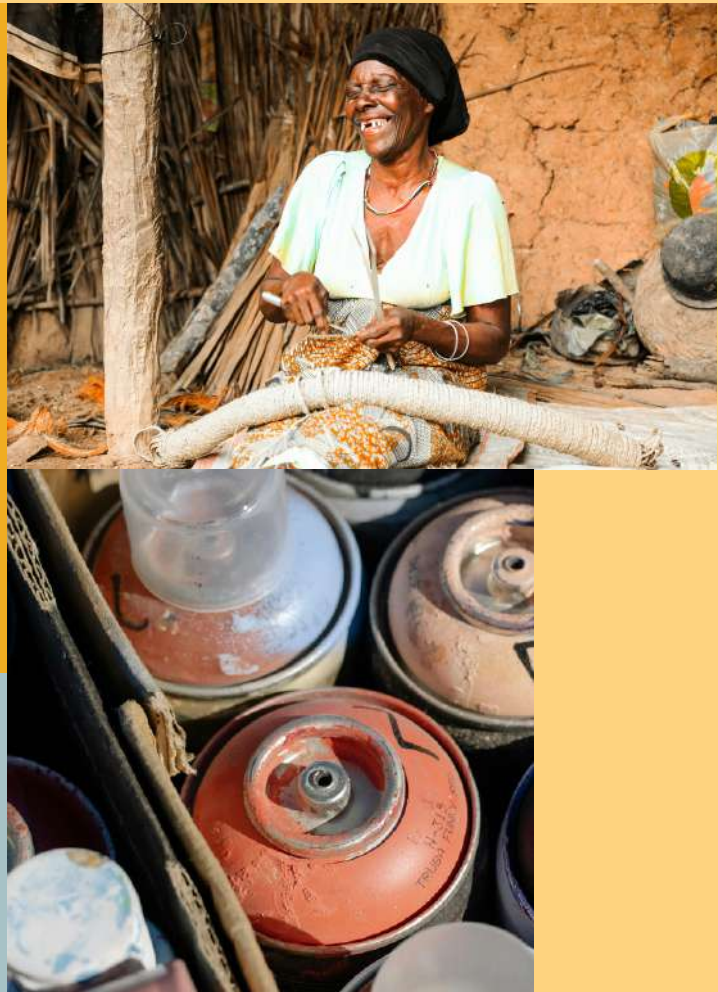
NASCAM

REMINDER TO THE 2025/2026 GRANT RECIPIENTS

Kindly submit your reports by 31 March 2026.

- **All outstanding invoices/quotations must be submitted by 28 February 2026. No new invoices/quotations will be accepted after this date.**
- **Quotations and invoices submitted after 31 March 2026 will not be processed.**

Thank you for your cooperation and continued commitment to strengthening the creative industry.



About NACN Grant

NACN Grant is a financial support programme designed to assist artists, cultural practitioners, and creative organisations to develop, produce, and present artistic work. The grant supports a wide range of creative activities, including artistic projects, capacity building, research, festivals, training initiatives, and sector development programmes.

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