



Press Release

SA Book Awards celebrates 25 years by announcing the 2025 Shortlist

This year marks the 25th annual SA Book Awards, powered by NielsenIQ BookData and supported by PASA and SA Booksellers Association. The awards strive to celebrate books written and published in South Africa, as voted for by South African booksellers and last year recognised authors Deon Meyer, André de Ruyter and Zandile Ndhlovu.

Booksellers have voted in their hundreds for their favourite titles in three categories from a longlist of bestselling titles published in South Africa and written by South African authors, as measured by NielsenIQ BookScan South Africa in 2024.

We are delighted to share the shortlisted titles as chosen by booksellers below:

Fiction Prize

A Short Life - Nicky Greenwall
Spud: The Reunion - John van de Ruit
The Bitterness of Olives - Andrew Brown
The Lost Love of Akbar Manzil - Shubnum Khan
The Tea Merchant - Jackie Phamotse

Non-Fiction Prize

Capitec: Stalking Giants - T.J. Strydom
Disciple: Walking with God - Rorisang Thandekiso & Nkhensani Manabe
Exit Wounds: A Story of Love, Loss and Occasional Wars - Peter Godwin
How Did We Get Here? - Mpoomy Ledwaba
Zapiro Annual 2024: Have I Got GNUs For You - Zapiro

Children's Prize

Cook-off at Gogo's Spaza:(Disaster at Gogo's Spaza 2) –
Salamina Mosese, illustrated by Vian Oelofsen
Into the Uncut Grass - Trevor Noah, illustrated by Sabina Hahn
My First South African Animals - Van den Berg
Springboekie - Fanie Viljoen, illustrated by Elsabe Ebersohn
The Speedy Six Olympics - Roslynne Toerien, illustrated by Julie Smith-Belton

Each category winner will be awarded R5,000.00 and the overall winner, receiving the highest number of votes, will be presented with R20,000.00.

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This year, to celebrate the 25-year Anniversary of the SA Book Awards we also asked booksellers to vote for their favourite title from the list of previous Overall Winners.

Celebrating 25 Years: Favourite previous winner shortlist:

Born a Crime - Trevor Noah (2017 and 2020)
How many ways to say Hello? - Refiloe Moahloli (2021)
Leo - Deon Meyer (2024)
Manage your Money - Sam Beckbessinger (2019)
Recipes for Love and Murder - Sally Andrew (2016)
Spud - John van de Ruit (2006)
The President's Keeper - Jacques Pauw (2018)

On winning last year's Fiction and Overall Prize for *Leo*, Deon Meyer said: *"I am deeply honoured and grateful to receive the two awards bestowed by the South African booksellers. This recognition means the world to me, and I extend my heartfelt thanks to the association's members who have supported my journey as an author over the past thirty years. Their acknowledgment inspires me to keep telling stories that connect and resonate."*

We wish all the shortlisted authors the warmest of congratulations and the very best of luck! The winners will be announced at a virtual ceremony and on social media on Tuesday 23 September 2025. All are welcome to join the ceremony, for more information email: marketing.book@nielseniq.com

To read our special anniversary article: **Celebrating 25 years of South African literature**, visit: <https://nielseniq.com/global/en/insights/commentary/2025/sa-book-awards-celebrating-25-years-of-south-african-literature/>

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