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SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES, LITERATURE AND COMMUNICATION
DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURE

ANNOUNCEMENT

**THE MAKERERE UNIVERSITY SHORT STORY WRITING COMPETITION
2026**

In collaboration with Yours2Read, the Department of Literature at Makerere University calls for short story entries into the 2025/2026 Short Story Competition. This competition encourages talent from students in the University at all levels, and offers an opportunity for you to tell your story and to exhibit your creative ability for the world stage.

1. Suggested scenarios for story submissions: choose ONE of these.

- a) He had been mountaineering in the Rwenzori Mountains for many days and reached the peak at Bwindi. As he gazed into the distance, taking pride in his achievement, he suddenly realised he was not alone. He had been followed since leaving base camp but had not even known it. He was now about to find out why and by whom; his life would never be the same again.
- b) He'd served five years for a bank robbery. But what nobody knew at the time was that he'd buried the money before the police caught him. Now, on leaving prison, he was confronted with his worst nightmare: the field in which he'd buried it was now a football stadium, used night and day by national clubs. He needed a solution, and quickly.
- c) She was the fortune teller to the rich and powerful, the reader of cards and tea leaves. It was all a deception, of course, a fraud, until the day a client thanked her for advising him on his lottery numbers, resulting in a 'big win'. Perhaps she had a gift of prophecy after all. Perhaps she could predict her own future. But to see into the future could be a dangerous blessing; was it better not to know?

- d) A ghost story, but not horror or fantasy. The story should be subtle and leave everything to the reader's imagination. Blood, over-descriptive violence in too much detail, exaggerated scenes, will not succeed! Quiet terror, atmosphere, character, and a tingling in the reader's skin as the story reaches its conclusion, will be the preferred approach.

2. Eligibility

- Open to students presently studying at Makerere University.
- Entries must be original works not previously published or submitted elsewhere.
- Limit of one entry per person.

3. Entry Requirements

- **Length:** Stories must be between 3500 up to 5000 words.
- **Format:**
 - Typed, double-spaced.
 - Font Times New Roman, 12 pt.
 - Text justified on both sides.
 - Include page numbers.
- **Language:** English.
- **Title:** Include a front page with the story title and a copyright-free picture illustrating one of the central themes in your story. **Author's name and contact information** (email and phone number) should be provided on the next page. The story should include at the end the following sentence:

“Entry for the Makerere University-Yours2Read short story competition, commencing April 22, 2026, concluding June 15 2026”.

Failure to include this sentence will result in the entry being accepted as a general submission and not for the competition.

4. How to Submit an entry

- Submissions should be made via the Yours2read website. You will need to register (free of charge) as an author first.

- **File Format:** Submit entries as a PDF or Word document.

5. Judging Criteria

- **Creativity and Originality:** How original and innovative is the story?
- **Plot Development:** Is the story engaging and well-structured?
- **Characterization:** Are the characters well-developed and relatable?
- **Writing Style:** Is the language clear, vivid, and appropriate for the theme?
- **Language usage:** is the grammar and spelling of a high standard?
- **Adherence to Theme:** Does the story align with the selected theme?

6. Judging Process

- Entries will be evaluated by a panel of judges with expertise in creative writing.
- The judges' decision is final and will be based on the above criteria.

7. Prizes

- Cash prizes of USD125 for the winner, USD100 and USD50 for the first and second runners up respectively.
- Publication and promotional opportunities on the Yours2read.com website for shortlisted manuscripts.

Winners will be announced at an awards event which will be held two weeks after or as near thereto as possible after the closing date. All participants will be welcome at the event.

8. Rights and Ownership

- All rights in the submitted stories, particularly copyright, will remain with the authors. No entry will be copied or reproduced or passed on to third parties.
- By entering the competition, authors grant the organisers the right to publish their stories in promotional materials or on websites related to the competition, with appropriate credit given to the author.

9. Disqualification

- Entries that do not adhere to the guidelines will be disqualified.
- Any form of plagiarism or use of AI will result in immediate disqualification: all entries will undergo checking through AI and plagiarism detection software as part of the submission process.

For more information, please get in touch with the following

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Good luck!