

PRIX CIRCOM REGIONAL 2016

The very best television in Europe's regions

ENTRY PACK

Rules, Categories, Criteria

More information and the web-based entry form at

www.circom-regional.eu

CHAIRMAN OF THE JUDGES

DAVID LOWEN

PRIX CIRCOM: RULES OF ENTRY

Please read these rules very carefully because it is important that all entries conform fully. A breach of any of the rules may mean disqualification.

1. Entries can be accepted only from member stations of CIRCOM Regional. Programmes made by independent producers can be considered only if entered by CIRCOM Regional member stations.
2. All entries, when submitted, will need confirmation by the CIRCOM representative (National Co-ordinator) appointed by the national broadcaster of the regional station making the entry. If there is no such appointed representative, approval will be considered by the President of the Prix CIRCOM.
3. Each regional station may enter once in EACH of the following categories:
(1) Documentary, (2) Magazine and News Magazine, (3) Music, (4) Minorities in Society, (5) Video Journalism, (6) Most Original (7) Rising Star, (8) Investigative Journalism (9) Best News Report.

A total of nine category entries may therefore be accepted from any one regional station provided that each entry is in a different category. No programme can be entered in more than one category, although single editions of a series may be entered in different categories and it is also possible for relevant parts of programmes entered in one category to appear also in the personal categories of Rising Star and Video Journalism and in Most Original or Best News Report.
4. Programmes (or items) must have been broadcast for the first time between Saturday 21 March 2015 and the closing date for entries, Friday 11 March 2016, and should not have been entered in Prix CIRCOM 2015.
5. Programmes must be submitted as broadcast, except for additions required by Rule 7.
6. Each entry must be accompanied by an explanation in English or in French which helps the judges understand more about the reasons for making the programme or entry, the qualities of the programme or entry, the impact the programme or entry has had on the audience and any other factors which support the programme or entry as being worthy of consideration. This outline must be no more than 500 words. Please note that, to keep entry costs down for stations, it is acceptable that translations into English or French can be based on Google or similar online based systems.
7. Each entry, including those in English, must have full subtitling in English sufficient for the judges to be able to understand what is being said. The subtitling need not be of full broadcast quality, nor time code accurate. Again, please note it is acceptable that translations into English for subtitling can be based on Google or similar online based systems. Entries without subtitles throughout will be disqualified.
8. The entry forms for programme categories, with outline and support materials, must be delivered by the entry closing date of Friday 11 March 2016.
9. The delivery of video entries is uploading in codec H.264 and the final delivery date is Friday 18 March 2016. The delivery address is on the web site entry form. Confirmation will be given that a video has been received complete.
10. Entrants agree in advance that, should their programme be a category winner (not commended), they permit at least one regional transmission and one repeat of that winning entry by any CIRCOM Regional member station which so wishes within its own region between May 2016 and May 2017 free of any licence or rights payments. Further transmissions will be by bilateral agreement with the winning broadcaster. Failure to guarantee such rights clearance will result in disqualification.

The provision by the winner of an international version, without subtitles, will be required for this purpose and must be delivered to the CIRCOM Secretariat by Friday 27 May 2016.
11. Entrants agree in advance to promotional non-broadcast showcase screenings organised on behalf of the Prix CIRCOM Regional and for other non-broadcast use, including online delivery, for the promotion

of the Prix.

12. Entrants agree in advance that brief excerpts from programmes may be freely broadcast or delivered online as part of regional news reports or promotional items about Prix CIRCOM Regional and in any programme on the award ceremony or about the awards.
13. The winning and commended entrants may be asked to provide a copy of the script in English or French: this will be kept with the programme tape in the CIRCOM Regional archive and helps regional stations wishing to broadcast winning entries. The script is not a requirement for all entries.
14. Any costs of mail despatch, customs, insurance, where incurred, will be paid by the entrant.
15. Programme video and script texts will not be returned but remain in the archives of CIRCOM Regional.
16. Any cash prize or trophy presented will be to the entering CIRCOM Regional broadcasting station. It will be for that winning broadcaster to decide who may represent the station to collect the award at any award presentation and who may keep the money and the trophy.

In the case of the internship for the winner of the Rising Star category, monies may be retained by CIRCOM to ensure that they are used solely for the purpose of the internship and to ease administrative liaison with the host broadcasters. If, for any reason, it proves impossible to agree an internship, an agreement will be reached between CIRCOM Regional, the sponsor (TVR) and the winner on how benefits can accrue to the winning entry.

17. Where the entry is from one station but the programme is a co-produced programme, the submitting station is required to inform any partner stations who have contributed to that programme. The award will be made to the submitting station and it will be for the submitting station to decide how the prize money is allocated.
18. Where more than one co-producing stations submit the same programme, any award will be joint. It will be for the winning stations to decide how the prize money is allocated. In the case of disagreement, the decision of CIRCOM will be final.
19. Co-producing stations may submit different programmes from the same series.
20. It is permitted that a broadcaster who is a sponsor may win its own sponsorship money.
21. It is a requirement that every winning station will ensure that a relevant representative attends the gala presentation to accept the trophy and certificate. Failure to do so may result in the withholding of trophy, prize money and expenses.
22. It is a requirement that every winner and commended entry will ensure that relevant and qualified staff will attend the CIRCOM Conference to take part in a workshop on the Prix if so required by the conference organiser. Failure to do so may result in the withholding of prize money and expenses.
23. The English language version of the Rules of Entry takes precedence over any other version.
24. In any dispute, the decision of the President and Chairman of the Judges, David Lowen, will be considered final and binding on all entrants. Any significant dispute will be reported to the Executive Committee of CIRCOM Regional.

HOW TO ENTER YOUR VIDEO

The method of entry is by FTP upload to the CIRCOM server. You will receive the FTP credentials, with server address, username and password, by email when you submit your entry form.

The maximum size of file which can be accepted is 10GB: remember this is a viewing copy, not a broadcast copy, and the highest broadcast quality is unnecessary.

The required codec is H.264. No other codec can be accepted.

You need to identify your video with its unique entry number, category, title and your station. Failing to do this wastes much time and can result in your entry being lost and not judged. Please remember we have to

deal with up to 200 entries in a relatively short period.

Video entries will be checked daily by Tonja Stojanac of the CIRCOM Secretariat. Each entry will receive a response from Tonja stating whether all is in order or whether there is anything missing, such as subtitles. If there is some fault, you will be advised to upload again. This can only happen if you label and identify your entry properly, so please remember how important this is.

It is very important that you do NOT leave entry until the last few days. If you do, there could be a bottleneck of video traffic which will delay your entry beyond the deadline. Enter early!

SUBTITLING AND TRANSLATION

CIRCOM Regional accepts that the cost of translation and subtitling may inhibit the number of entries that many stations can make. It wishes to reduce such costs to a minimum but still needs to be able to judge programmes effectively.

The quality of the subtitling does not need to match broadcast standard with time-coded accuracy: it is not for viewers at home to see, only judges.

It is important to make clear that the purpose of the translation into the working language of English is so that judges can understand what the programme is about and why it is likely to be worthy of winning. To achieve this level of understanding it is not necessary to have faultless English prose. A rough translation is enough – as long as it makes the programme script understandable to international judges.

The quality of automatic translation is continuing to improve, although mainly for the most-used languages. Tests we have carried out have shown that running some languages through the Google translation system can deliver an acceptable level of English – but with some admittedly strange phrases.

When there are clear mistranslations, improvements can be done quickly by someone at the station with reasonable competence in English. Many stations are already using similar systems and the cost savings are substantial.

The subtitling is needed so that judges can follow the programme without keeping one eye on a written script and avoids asking all entrants to provide scripts, with all the associated costs.

PRIX CIRCOM REGIONAL AWARD CATEGORIES 2016

The following award categories will be contested in 2016:

Grand Prix

ORF Award

- 2000 euros cash (in addition to category prize), certificate and trophy

Documentary

RTÉ Award

- 3000 euros comprising:
 - 2000 euros in cash
 - Trophy for the winning entry
 - Certificates for winner and commended
 - Free travel (economy class) to the Conference and awards Gala in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, for one representative of the winning station entry with up to two nights' accommodation
 - Free travel (economy class) to the Conference and awards Gala in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, for one

representative of the commended station entry with up to two nights' accommodation

Minorities in Society

France Télévisions Award

- 3000 euros comprising:
- 2000 euros in cash
- Trophy for the winning entry
- Certificates for winner and commended
- Free travel (economy class) to the Conference and awards Gala in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, for one representative of the winning station entry with up to two nights' accommodation
- Free travel (economy class) to the Conference and awards Gala in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, for one representative of the commended station entry with up to two nights' accommodation

Magazine and News Magazine

SVT Award

- 3000 euros comprising:
- 2000 euros in cash
- Trophy for the winning entry
- Certificates for winner and commended
- Free travel (economy class) to the Conference and awards Gala in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, for one representative of the winning station entry with up to two nights' accommodation
- Free travel (economy class) to the Conference and awards Gala in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, for one representative of the commended station entry with up to two nights' accommodation

Music Programme

TG4 Award

- 3000 euros comprising:
- 2000 euros in cash
- Trophy for the winning entry
- Certificates for winner and commended
- Free travel (economy class) to the Conference and awards Gala in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, for one representative of the winning station entry with up to two nights' accommodation
- Free travel (economy class) to the Conference and awards Gala in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, for one representative of the commended station entry with up to two nights' accommodation

Video Journalism

BBC Award

- 3000 euros comprising:

- 2000 euros in cash
- Trophy for the winning entry
- Certificates for winner and commended
- Free travel (economy class) to the Conference and awards Gala in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, for one representative of the winning station entry with up to two nights' accommodation
- Free travel (economy class) to the Conference and awards Gala in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, for one representative of the commended station entry with up to two nights' accommodation

Most Original

TVP Award

- 3000 euros comprising:
 - 2000 euros in cash
 - Trophy for the winning entry
 - Certificates for winner and commended
- Free travel (economy class) to the Conference and awards Gala in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, for one representative of the winning station entry with up to two nights' accommodation
- Free travel (economy class) to the Conference and awards Gala in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, for one representative of the commended station entry with up to two nights' accommodation

Rising Star Award

TVR Award in honour of Vanda Condurache

- 3000 euros including:
 - Trophy and certificate for the winning entry
 - An internship at another regional broadcaster (subject to availability, legal and personal agreement), for which up to 2000 euros will be made available to the winning station towards cost of the winner's travel, accommodation and subsistence for the internship. In the event that no internship is taken up, an agreed amount will be paid as cash (see Rule 16).
- Free travel (economy class) to the Conference and awards Gala in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, for one representative of the winning station entry with up to two nights' accommodation

Investigative Journalism

Council of Europe Award

- 3000 euros comprising:
 - 2000 euros in cash
 - Trophy for the winning entry
 - Certificates for winner and commended
- Free travel (economy class) to the Conference and awards Gala in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, for one representative of the winning station entry with up to two nights' accommodation
- Free travel (economy class) to the Conference and awards Gala in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, for one representative of the commended station entry with up to two nights' accommodation

Best News Report

Committee of the Regions' Award

- 3000 euros comprising:
- 2000 euros in cash
- Trophy for the winning entry
- Certificates for winner and commended
- Free travel (economy class) to the Conference and awards Gala in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, for one representative of the winning station entry with up to two nights' accommodation
- Free travel (economy class) to the Conference and awards Gala in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, for one representative of the commended station entry with up to two nights' accommodation

The winners of the categories will be announced at the conclusion of the judging in April but the winner of the Grand Prix of CIRCOM Regional will not be made public until the award Gala ceremony in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, hosted by BNT, on Thursday 19 May 2016.

AWARD CRITERIA

In all categories, judges will prefer regional relevance, although programmes need not be broadcast only in the region in which they are made. Regional productions for the national or international market are acceptable provided they really do represent the efforts of creative talent in the regions.

Programmes which are clearly made by a network or national broadcaster with a national or international audience in mind will be at a disadvantage: these awards seek to encourage regional production and/or regional broadcasting.

It is important that all entrants should check the criteria for each award before entering. Please make sure your programme does qualify for the award category you are choosing. If you enter in the wrong category, you may be disqualified or the judges may be unable to consider your programme fully on its merits.

Judges will not transfer programmes between categories if the programmes have been mistakenly entered. Nor will they move entries between categories for any reason.

Entrants should also read the Rules of the competition to make sure they attach and enclose all the details which the judges require. You should pay special attention to the availability of broadcast rights as outlined in the Rules of Entry.

Entrants should also check they have filled in the online Entry Form fully and that the entry has been accepted. Any entry by any region is subject to confirmation by the CIRCOM Regional national co-ordinator of the broadcaster's country or, if one is not assigned, by the President of the Prix.

GRAND PRIX OF CIRCOM REGIONAL

This award is financially supported by ORF Austria.

No direct entries are accepted for this award. The winner will be selected by the judges, led by the Chairman of the Judges, from the winning entries in the programme genre categories. It is, in effect, The Best of The Best.

DOCUMENTARY

The category is financially supported by RTÉ Ireland.

Entries should be documentary programmes on a single subject. Neither the topic nor transmission is required to be regional but judges would prefer the examination of issues which have particular regional relevance even if set in an international or national context.

Judges will seek evidence of a strong storyline and outstanding professionalism in direction and technique. Programmes of strong journalistic investigation are encouraged (although there is a separate category for Investigative Journalism, see below) but so are programmes with a personal view or an unusual perspective.

Documentaries which show fresh techniques or great imagination are welcome and judges will also consider the artistic and cinematographic qualities of the documentary. The judges will note especially new and inventive ways of storytelling.

Where a documentary is part of a series, only one programme will be viewed.

This category is for complete programmes with only one subject. Magazine programmes must be entered under other categories, as should feature items which are part of a wider or longer programme.

Entrants are reminded that the winning programme must be offered all rights cleared for at least one broadcast and at least one repeat (see Rule 10) by any CIRCOM Regional member station during 2016-17.

MINORITIES IN SOCIETY

This award, sponsored by France Télévisions, serves to remind Europe's public service television stations of their duty to reflect and develop a functional multicultural society.

The judges will look for factual programmes and reports which reflect minorities and matters relating to minority groups in an informed manner and, especially, which bear upon issues of contemporary concern.

The programmes or reports may deal with contentious issues and events but they will be expected to do so in a way which enables viewers better to understand the causes of disagreements and how such disagreements may be overcome and differences narrowed.

The programmes or reports may be created by minority production units or by general station staff. They may be for prime viewing by minority groups but preference will be given to those programmes which are aimed at a general viewer, thereby leading to better understanding between groups which might otherwise be in conflict or fail in mutual understanding.

By "minorities", the judges will expect language, colour or cultural minorities but will not rule out other minority groups in society such as the disabled, sexual difference or the aged.

In common with other categories, the judges will be looking for excellent production skills, technical excellence, story quality, storytelling and viewer impact.

It would be helpful if the judges could be told about any background to the programme or report and any follow up which was achieved.

MAGAZINE AND NEWS MAGAZINE PROGRAMME

This award, sponsored by SVT Sweden, recognises the qualities of the magazine shows, often news based, which are the backbone of television in the regions.

The content of the programme is open to most genres: daily news programmes, weekly news programmes, or a wide range of feature and specialist programmes, all are welcome. However, the judges have expressed a preference in the past for avoiding "special" programmes in which a standard magazine programme edition is varied because of an unusual or outstanding news event. We want the programme style which your viewers see every day or every week.

The programme can contain several topics or concentrate on one topic, always provided that it is created in the style of a linked programme and is not in the documentary form.

The content may be news, social issues, political issues, current affairs, lifestyle, sport, culture or arts – or a mixture of all or any of these. The content must be of regional interest.

The judges will seek a strong “look and feel” to the programme which adds interest for viewers. The judges will expect any interviews to explore and explain the issues well and location reports which are made relevant by intelligent hosting. The programme may be linked in a studio or on location.

Judges will look for good examples of how resources available to television are utilised to make the programme better: camera, sound, video editing, graphics, studio set (if made in a studio), presenter links, personality, interviews, interviewees.

MUSIC PROGRAMME

This category, sponsored by TG4 Ireland, highlights the social value of music and the contribution it makes to regional culture, as expressed in television programmes.

The programmes may be short features, documentaries or coverage of musical performance.

The subject matter is wide. It may be anything from the contribution of individuals to musical life to events based on music. It may be an examination of an issue relating to performance or distribution of music or evidence of how music can contribute to the cohesion of society. As long as music, the value of music, the love of music is at the core of the programme idea, the subject and treatment is acceptable.

Where the programme is in the short report, feature or documentary form, the judges will pay due regard to the quality and interest of the story, the way the story is told, technical excellence and impact.

Where the programme is primarily performance based, the judges will pay special attention to the quality of direction, camera and sound, and staging. However, it must also be made clear how and why such programming is seen as a contribution to regional culture.

VIDEO JOURNALISM

This award, sponsored by the BBC UK, is for the best series of news reports submitted by a video journalist.

Three reports must be submitted and they should be shot, edited and voiced by one reporter working as a video journalist. The three reports should be chosen to demonstrate the broad skills of the reporter as a journalist and as a technician. Each of the reports must be at least one minute long but not longer than five minutes.

It is most helpful for the judges to see an off-air recording which includes any studio link to the VJ reports, as this will help them understand more about the context of the video report. If an off-air version is not possible, the scripted link would be useful.

The judges will be looking for a good news story, well told in pictures, sound and commentary and well structured. In particular, the judges will look for evidence that these reports might have been less effective if they had been shot by a crew rather than a “video journalist” working alone: in this way, the work of a VJ can truly be said to add value to that of crew work.

Supporting information should explain the context of the reports and provide confirmation that the reports are the work of one video journalist. This is not a “cameraman” category, a “reporter” category or an “editor” category: all jobs must be clearly done by the same person.

The reports may have been carried in a regional news bulletin, a sub-regional news bulletin or a regional magazine programme. In this category, two entries will be accepted from any regional station provided that one of the entries is from a sub-regional opt-out.

It would be helpful for the judges to know if any of the VJ work submitted is shot by mobile phone camera (MoJo) and, if so, what equipment was used.

Please note this is a “skills” category, which is why a range of material to demonstrate all the skills of a good VJ is requested. It is not just the ability to cover a “hard” story which will be assessed.

MOST ORIGINAL

This award, sponsored by TVP Poland, seeks to recognise production originality, unusual content, fresh style, technical skills, innovative ideas or presentation flair.

It is hard to define what is meant by “original”. In fact, originality defies advance definition. “Innovative” is perhaps clearer and can encompass anything which is “new” and can include online examples as well as traditional broadcast on-screen.

Judges will be seeking an entry which captures their imagination and surprises them. This may be because the story told is so unusual that it is memorable. Or it may be because the treatment is so different from “everyday” programmes that it stands out as something special. Or perhaps it is a technical advance which can excite others in regional stations?

Perhaps there is the chance to meet some wonderful or unforgettable characters? Perhaps the programme has some special music? Perhaps there is an exciting title sequence? An unusual presenter? A single flash of television brilliance in an otherwise mundane programme? Perhaps the format is new and out of the ordinary? Who knows?

It is something, in short, which makes the entry different to the normal expectations of regional programmes and which makes the judges say: “Wow!”

RISING STAR

The Rising Star Award, sponsored by TVR Romania, was created in honour of Vanda Condurache, the inspirational TVR producer, manager and trainer killed on her way to the CIRCUM conference in Bilbao in 2007.

The award is to recognise the excellence of young on-screen television talent and to encourage young professionals to develop their careers in public service television in Europe’s regions.

By bringing to wider attention the range and depth of talent in the regions, it seeks to assure young television professionals that regional television can offer scope and fulfilment in their aspirations.

The candidate must be aged 30 or under on 11 March 2016 (and give evidence, if required, of date of birth). He/she must be working full-time in the employ of a regional station which has membership of CIRCUM Regional or as regularly employed freelance for that station.

The type of work undertaken by the entrant can be as reporter, video journalist, or presenter.

The entry form should set out why the candidate should be considered a “rising star”. This should include a statement by the entrant on what he/she has achieved, testimonies from senior professionals (not necessarily just from the entering station), video evidence of any skills mentioned in the citation. If the candidate has been on a CIRCUM Regional training course, it would help the judges if this could be mentioned.

The judgement will be taken on a mixture of video, text and other information. In particular, the judges reserve the right to ask for further information from any candidate or from those who know the candidate.

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

This award, sponsored by the Council of Europe, recognises reports, features, documentaries and other coverage which demonstrate an investigative approach to regional television journalism.

News reporting is a core task of regional television, giving information and context to what is happening in the region. Some of that reporting, however, goes deeper than most regular coverage to explore what lies

beneath and behind the daily news or may reveal what some people or organisations may prefer to keep hidden.

Success will demand a sustained and high level of journalistic inquiry, extra journalistic and editing effort, a higher level of resource commitment, more detailed planning, patience and often courage.

Judges will be looking in particular for stories of significance in which the journalistic investigation not only reveals and publicises new truths but may also assist in righting wrongs or promoting public debate.

All subjects of investigative work are welcome but entrants might also usefully bear in mind the objectives of the Council of Europe:

- The protection of human rights, pluralist democracy and the rule of law.
- The promotion of awareness of and encouragement of Europe's cultural identity and diversity.
- The finding of common solutions to the challenges facing European security.
- The consolidation of democratic stability.

BEST NEWS REPORT

This is a new award, sponsored by the Committee of the Regions. It recognises the excellence of one story in one package of no longer than 10 minutes within a regional news bulletin or regional news magazine programme.

The winning entry will demonstrate the reporter skill of storytelling in a concise but convincing way, with full use of location video, graphics, and, if appropriate, studio interview. The entry must be exactly as broadcast with no subsequent editing.

The judges will expect to see a story of regional significance told in such a way that its importance is generated to regional viewers with impact. Judges will place high regard on the ability to tell a story simply but clearly, with an understandable structure, focus and, where appropriate, strong interviews.

The quality of the news journalist must be clear and the judges will want to see how the journalist marshals the techniques of broadcasting to make a distinctive package. However, there is no expectation (as with the Video Journalism category) that the reporter will provide all the skills necessary for the successful package.

If the entry is longer than 10 minutes or is divided into separate packages, it will not be considered in this category but may fulfil the requirements of other categories (especially perhaps Investigative Journalism).

It is always difficult for judges to understand from a distance the constraints under which a story was found, set up, shot, edited and delivered to screen. It is important, therefore, that support information should make this clear.

HOW TO WIN AN AWARD.... WELL, MAYBE

There are no easy answers on how to maximise your chances of winning an award. These few words are offered by me as chairman of the judges over many years as result of the experience gained.

Neither I nor CIRCOM Regional can be held responsible if you enter and fail having followed these suggestions. That is because the judges change every year, tastes change every year and the competing programmes change every year. No two years are identical. No guidance can ensure success.

However.....

Pick your category carefully

The toughest category is without doubt "Documentary". The judges probably see 20 programmes which are of superb standard. Your chances of winning in this category are far lower than in other categories. Check out the possibility of entering other categories, even if your programme is in documentary form.

Read the judges' reports

Every year, a very substantial document is produced in which the judges' comments on each programme are set out. They give superb clues on what the judges are looking for, what impresses them and even what annoys them. Also, every year, the chair of each category makes comments about the range of programmes submitted. These also give very strong indicators of weaknesses in submitted programmes and hopes for the following year. About half the judges from last year's judging will attend the following year, so their views could still be influential.

Target your efforts

With the above information, you could start looking usefully at categories such as Most Original and Rising Star. They attract fewer entries than, say, Documentary and judges are always looking in these categories for new faces and new ideas. There are many missed opportunities!

Good story in a bad programme?

The new category of Best News Report can take some of the strain off entering the Magazine and News Magazine award. It is often the case that news programmes have one good story only. The new category is looking for one, single, special report (of less than 10 minutes). This might make an attractive alternative.

Trust in youth

The Rising Star category is a great opportunity to parade talent and encourage young on-screen talent. In recent years, the entries have been fewer than hoped – so the category offers a great chance of giving you a winning chance. Take it and enter!

Avoid travelogues

These may make popular and easy viewing in your region. But the judges almost always demand something more challenging as a category winner. The travelogues may have beautiful scenery and the station may be very proud of its region – but this is not enough. Good characters may improve such programmes but the quality of storytelling is often missing.

Avoid re-fighting old battles

Like travelogues, history programmes can be a core part of regional television as a region's history is explored in the tensions (and often atrocities) of the past. However, there are many of these programmes presented to the judges and they often fail to be distinctive. They can make interesting historical reflections and essential regional viewing - but do not often produce winners.

Add helpful background information

The judges do read the supporting information carefully. This offers a great chance to argue the case for your programme. You can explain why it is significant in your station's history or output; or why it was so difficult to produce; or the impact it had; or even other awards it has won.

Read the category criteria and the Rules carefully

If you are disqualified, it is often because you have failed to fulfil the requirements of the criteria or the rules. It is pointless, as one region did, to seek to enter a programme without subtitles. The rules are clear and are there because it is impossible for judges to speak every language in Europe: we have to create a common language. Nor does it help to enter but say that rights issues prevent any agreement to transmission by CIRCUM members should you be a winner. Check first that rights are available as required by the Rules of Entry.

If you have a query, ask

Once the competition is launched, I cannot give advice beyond these words. I will, however, explain any rules which you do not understand clearly.

Good luck and best wishes,

DAVID LOWEN, President, Prix CIRCUM, and Chairman of the Judges

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What's the Prix CIRCUM all about?

The Prix CIRCUM has been in existence for more than 25 years. It is the showcase for the best television programmes produced and broadcast by the public service regional stations in Europe. Winning an award does not just mean money and trophy – it means professional kudos for the winning station and a valuable line in a personal curriculum vitae. [>> Prix archive](#)

Who runs the Prix?

There is a President of the Prix who acts as chair of the specialist judges. This role has the duty to identify and agree sponsorship, define categories and criteria for those categories, select qualified judges, find a judging venue and judging host, organise the judging process, confirm the verdict of the judges, arrange the attendance of the winners at the gala award presentation, organise and produce the awards ceremony (often as a live broadcast), create workshops for Meet The Winners at the conference and promote the Prix to the European television community and beyond. The President reports to CIRCUM's Executive Committee and its European Board.

Who sponsors the Prix?

The sponsors are mainly broadcast members of CIRCUM but also associations and organisations which regard regional television broadcasting and production as important. Organisations – including commercial companies – who might consider supporting the Prix should contact the President, d_lowen@btinternet.com or branka.prazic@circum-regional.eu.

What are the rules of the Prix CIRCUM?

The rules are set out (in English) on the CIRCUM web site. They change very little from year to year but you should always check you are reading the latest version. Your own broadcaster is free to make a local translation of the Rules – but the version in English is always the final and approved version.

Who can enter?

Entries are only accepted from the member stations of CIRCUM. If your station has not paid its subscription fee, this will need to be done before an entry can be validated. If you are an independent producer, you will need to contact the station which commissioned your work: only they can enter your programme.

What if my entry is part of a co-production with other stations?

Entries from CIRCUM member stations who are creating co-productions are welcome. If you want to enter a co-production, you will need to check with the other stations that this is OK. If the co-production wins an award, the prize money is allocated to the entering station to distribute.

How many times can I enter?

You can enter once in any category. There are nine categories, so any one station can make a total of nine entries. Note that the rules for entering programmes made as part of co-productions allow different editions of the same series of co-produced programme to be entered by different partners in the co-production.

Does my entry need to be approved?

Yes. Every entry needs to be approved by the representative to CIRCUM of the member broadcaster, normally known as the "national co-ordinator". This is necessary to check that no region is entering twice in the same category and that the broadcaster is happy to approve an entry

How is my entry approved?

When you fill in the online entry form, a version will be automatically sent to your National Co-ordinator who will complete the entry process with formal confirmation. If for any reason, there is no national co-ordinator, the President of the Prix will be asked to approve the entry.

What if I am not on the staff of a CIRCOM member station?

You can still enter your programme but only if approved by a commissioning station which is a member of CIRCOM Regional and entered under its name.

What categories can I enter?

In 2016, there are nine categories: Documentary, Magazine and New Magazine, Most Original, Minorities in Society, Music, Rising Star, Investigative Journalism, Video Journalism, Best News Report. If you want to enter Rising Star, you need to be aged 30 or under. It is not possible to enter the Grand Prix: this is open only to category winners selected by the judges from among the category winners.

How much does it cost to enter?

It's free. Most other competitions charge entry fees - but this competition is free to member stations. There will be costs to be borne in translation and providing a version with subtitles but this is regrettably unavoidable to make sure your entry can be properly judged.

Why must I add subtitles?

The subtitles are essential so the judges can understand what is being spoken in your programme. For practical reasons, English is the common language. We even ask the English-language programmes to add subtitling because regional accents can be confusing for non-English judges.

How good must the subtitles and translation be?

The subtitles do not have to be broadcast accurate. Nor do they have to be language accurate. They are a guide for judges only to help them better understand what is happening. Google Translate and other conversion software can help immensely, although there does need to be final human intervention – especially with the lesser-used languages.

How do I enter?

You can enter only by using the official entry form on the CIRCOM web site. No other method of entry is acceptable

What information do you need to give?

You need to fill in all the spaces as requested on the entry form so we can properly identify your entry and so the judges can better understand why you think the entry is worthy of winning. Please pay special attention to the background of no more than 500 words. The judges find this really helpful when they discuss the merits of the programmes. Make sure you mention why you made the programme, why it is considered special and also any impact it has had.

By what date must I complete my entry?

Entry forms have to be completed by Friday 11 March 2016 and videos uploaded by 18 March 2016.

How do I deliver my entry to CIRCOM?

Video entries need to be uploaded by FTP in the codec H.264. No other way of delivering entries is acceptable. When you have filled in the entry form and told that the entry is accepted, you are instructed how to upload. One tip – do not leave it to the last week to upload or you may find yourself in a very long queue as entries fight for bandwidth and capacity on the server.

Who will judge my programme or entry?

CIRCOM brings together about 14 qualified production and broadcast professionals with substantial experience of making or commissioning programmes. They view the programmes in small groups and discuss what they see. The programmes they think might include the winner or a commended they usually pass to another group to get a further opinion. If any of the judges has made one of the entered programmes or is from the same broadcaster, they are required to point this out to their colleague judges. If

a vote is required for any reason, they will not take part.

What are the judges looking for?

First check the category criteria. This gives the best clue about what you should be offering the judges. After that, it becomes more difficult to be specific. Judges are individuals of great experience and each may have a different view on what makes “a winning programme”. Different categories require different winning qualities. Different judges place priorities on different qualities. Judging is more of an art than a science. Generally speaking, on programme entries, they look for a good story, clearly told, in a way which will entice and inspire viewers, with a supporting use of high quality production techniques. David Lowen, as Chairman of the Judges, has set out some personal views on [“What Makes a Winner?”](#) but, be warned, those views are just personal and cannot be a guarantee of success. Anyway, they are worth a read!

Must the programme be about my region?

Not necessarily. The awards are about the quality of television production in the regions, not just programmes about regions. However, there is no doubt that the judges often prefer regional relevance. The programme need not have been made for broadcast in a region because we want to show how regional productions add value to networks and have the quality to travel around the world also. A programme made by a central production team about a general subject and for broadcast primarily on the national network or internationally will generally be at a disadvantage in these awards.

How do I find out if I am a winner or commended?

The judges reach their verdict at the end of the judging week. You will then be contacted and told you are the winner or commended – subject to assurance that you have complied with all the Rules of Entry. You may be asked for some evidence. No public announcement will be made until such details have been checked.

If I am a winner or commended, when and where do I collect my award?

The winner and the commended in each category are invited to attend the CIRCUM Conference, which usually takes place about 2-3 weeks after the conclusion of the judging. The trophy (winner only) and the certificates (winner and commended) are presented (usually in front of the television cameras) at a gala awards ceremony. You should also register for the Conference on the official registration form but the CIRCUM Secretariat will be in touch to help make such arrangements as are necessary.

Can I bring a friend or colleague to the award ceremony?

The conference is free to anyone from CIRCUM member stations – and to guests of the winners and commended or their work colleagues. However, CIRCUM’s prize money is passed across to the entering station. It is up to that station how the money is spent. CIRCUM only guarantees to pay the flight/travel costs and accommodation (for up to two nights) of the winner and commended. Others have to pay for themselves or be paid for by agreement with their employers, not CIRCUM. Also, everyone (including winner and commended) will have to register for the Conference on the official registration form.

What do I have to do at the CIRCUM Conference?

Most of the time you can enjoy and take part in the debates, watch the presentations, network with Europe’s top public service television executives and producers. However, we do want everyone who attends to have the chance to “meet the winner” and commended and hear something about the winning entry. The usual way is to have a short workshop at which you can show some excerpts and people can ask questions.

If I am the Rising Star winner, how does my internship work?

We have offered this as part of the award for the winner only twice. In October 2015, Tom Brown from BBC East Midlands spent a week with John Inge Johansen, also a video journalist, in his far north region of NRK Nordland. We cannot be specific on how this will work each year. The winner will state a preferred region to

visit and we will request the internship. Some broadcasters have legal or insurance issues about hosting “guests”. Nothing is ever simple! But, with your help and the help of our member stations, we will do our best to fulfil your dreams!

If there’s a dispute, how is it resolved?

Hopefully by discussion, explanation and mutual agreement. If not, the decision of David Lowen, as Chairman of the Judges and President of the Prix CIRCOM, is final.

ANY QUESTIONS?

Questions about or problems relating to the web-based entry form or server delivery option to:

Tonja Stojanac

Email: tonja.stojanac@hrt.hr

Questions about the Rules of Entry only to:

David Lowen

Email: d_lowen@btinternet.com