

Sustainable Footwear Design Competition 2026

Shape the Future of South African Footwear



SAFLEC, through its EFLC program, proudly invites all members to participate in an exciting new initiative — the **Sustainable Footwear Design Competition 2026**. This groundbreaking competition spotlights innovation, environmental responsibility, and creativity across South Africa's dynamic footwear industry. In fact, we are even ok if you can prove the use of recycled products in your range.

The Challenge: Design and propose a sustainable footwear range that reflects eco-conscious design principles, ethical production practices, and real market viability. Show us how sustainability and profitability can walk hand in hand.

Competition Structure x 2 Categories. 1. Existing Factory entries and 2 designer and final year design students.

01	02	03
Written Proposal Submission Submit a comprehensive written proposal outlining your sustainable footwear range concept, following the detailed Terms of Reference provided. Include design philosophy, materials sourcing, production methods, and market positioning. Deadline: 25 Feburary 2026 Submit proposals via email to Sarah@saflec.co.za and Nerisha@saflec.co.za	Panel Presentation Shortlisted companies will be invited to present their innovative range to our expert judging panel at the SAFLEC offices. This is your opportunity to bring your vision to life and demonstrate your passion for sustainable design. Presentation dates and detailed guidelines will be communicated directly to all shortlisted participants.	Final Awards Celebration The final session will be communicated to the finalists

Prize Pool & Recognition

1st Prize R50,000 Plus: Exclusive opportunity to represent South Africa at an international footwear competition, putting your brand on the global stage	2nd Prize R30,000 Recognition as a leader in sustainable footwear innovation within South Africa's industry	3rd Prize R10,000 Acknowledgment for excellence in sustainable design and ethical production practices
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For the young designers there may an exciting opportunity to be placed in existing factories as design interns. (under negotiation)

Why You Should Enter

 Showcase Your Innovation Demonstrate your commitment to design and establish your company as a forward-thinking industry leader in footwear manufacturing.	 Gain Recognition Receive national and international recognition for your initiatives, enhancing your brand reputation and market positioning across multiple platforms.
 Network with Leaders Connect with key industry stakeholders, potential partners, and fellow innovators who share your vision for a more sustainable footwear future.	 Shape the Industry Be part of a transformative movement shaping the future of South African footwear, influencing standards and inspiring others towards design capability.

 **Ready to Inspire Change Through Design?**

Submit your proposal and take the bold step toward becoming a sustainability leader in footwear manufacturing. Let's work together to create a more responsible, innovative, and prosperous industry for South Africa.

We look forward to reviewing your bold, innovative, and responsible creations. This is your moment to make a lasting impact! Look at attached designs previously submitted at the international competition. This year will be the first year South Africa will put in entries for 2026.