



Judges' Report

We received a total of 250 entries for this competition. Of these, 32 submissions were deemed ineligible, having failed to meet the fundamental requirements outlined in the brief. Common issues included the absence of a complete brand identity (comprising a logo and associated design elements) and a lack of three distinct kit designs. Several entries were duplicate submissions under different names, while others were inaccessible due to expired links or incorrect file formats. In such cases, follow-up emails were sent requesting resubmission, many of which were responded to. A total of 218 entries were ultimately judged.

The judging process began with an initial meeting of the seven judges to agree on the evaluation criteria and descriptors (see Appendix). Each judge then received a spreadsheet listing all eligible entries with scoring columns aligned to the agreed criteria. The highest average score awarded was 66%, and the lowest was 71%. This range reflects the fact that, while there were some promising submissions, overall, in the judges' view, there remained room for development using a more specific brief. The judges engaged in detailed discussion and debate throughout the process, with judges documenting, presenting, and explaining their individual scores. We prioritised brand identity over kit design, recognising that the brand has the potential for greater longevity and national impact.

It is worth noting that the use of generative AI appeared to be widespread across submissions. While some employed AI in thoughtful and innovative ways, others relied on it heavily and without sufficient refinement, resulting in generic or incoherent outcomes. Entries that performed well demonstrated both originality and imagination in their brand and kit design. These submissions successfully incorporated Zimbabwean visual elements in a fresh, distinctive manner. High-scoring entries often reflected a strong, culturally resonant concept, with thought given to both the brand name and visual storytelling. Conversely, lower-scoring entries typically lacked a cohesive brand identity.

From this process, we selected a shortlist of 12 entries for the public vote. This list included each judge's top pick. We acknowledged at this stage that some brand names and emblematic elements overlapped with existing commercial or national identities. We also recognised the importance of selecting a name and image with clear and broad Zimbabwean resonance and relied on the public vote to inform that.

The public voting process proved to be immensely valuable. It challenged our assumptions, validated several of our concerns (especially around appeal), and ultimately refined our final decision. We combined the results of the public vote with our own scoring and discussions, narrowing the selection down to two finalists.

After extensive deliberation, we agreed on a choice: The Gallant Brand.



We were drawn to the way the name 'Gallant' resonated with the idea of 'Warriors', an identity historically associated with the national team and could be suitable for a commercial brand. The submission also stood out for its use of symbolic imagery, including the conical tower and the Zimbabwe Bird, both of which carry strong national significance.

However, we believe that the brand name and logo will benefit from further refinement. The kit design will also require work to improve its overall aesthetic and style.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my fellow judges Desmond Maringwa, Sapi Bachi, Brett van Rooyen, Eb Ayisa, Danayi Madondo, and Carl Ncube. I thank them for their time, dedication, and professionalism throughout this process. The initial round of judging, which involved reviewing hundred of entries in a variety of formats submitted via email, required each judge to commit several days to assessment. In addition, many hours were spent in robust and respectful debate. Your collegial spirit and commitment to excellence were invaluable.

Dr Crispen Sachikonye
Chair of the Panel of Judges



Competition Mark Sheet

Item	Criteria	Descriptor
Brand identity	Creativity and originality (20 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A highly original and imaginative concept that is both relevant and thought-provoking. Uses visual elements in a unique or unconventional way, showing a willingness to experiment with layout, colour, typography, and imagery.
	Capacity to build emotional and personal resonance with supporters (20 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The brand reflects a distinctive Zimbabwean style or approach that sets it apart from typical or derivative work. Delivers a Zimbabwean message or aesthetic, that pushes boundaries while maintaining clarity and communication.
Branded kit	Aesthetics (40 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outstanding design with street credibility Successfully integrates the brand and the kit design. Appropriately integrates and balances innovative, Zimbabwean elements (national symbols, heritage, and Zimbabwean identity) to enhance meaning or impact. Designs convey strong narrative or thematic depth, evoking emotion or provoking thought through visual storytelling and styling choices across the collection of kits. Demonstrates a clear and distinctive Zimbabwean style, with strong originality in (materials, textures, or garment construction).
Brand application	Commercial potential (20 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers unexpected solutions to design challenges, revealing depth in thinking and versatility in execution. Has significant potential to generate high sales and high usage.