



# **RCV Music Awards 2026**

Celebrating Christian Excellence

# **GUIDELINES**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. ABOUT RADIO CHRISTIAN VOICE
2. BACKGROUND
3. RATIONALE
4. THE AWARDS
5. CRITERIA, CLASSIFICATIONS AND PROCEDURES
6. CATEGORIES
7. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA
8. ARTIST SIGN UP
9. NOMINATIONS
10. SELECTION OF WINNERS
11. VOTING
12. ADJUDICATION
13. INVALID NOMINATIONS AND VOTES
14. CATEGORY DEFINITIONS AND CONSIDERATION CRITERIA
15. CODE OF CONDUCT
16. THE AWARDS CALENDAR
17. CONCLUSION



## 1. ABOUT RADIO CHRISTIAN VOICE

Radio Christian Voice (RCV) is an independent radio station in Zambia, established by Christian Vision (CV) in 1994. Our programming delivers biblical content geared towards enabling all members of the family to become mature Christians who share their faith daily. RCV transmits to millions of listeners across seven provinces in Zambia and through its website, transmits across the world. RCV is the oldest private radio station and the largest Christian broadcaster in the nation.

### Our Vision



To see every Christian in Zambia living out their faith daily and sharing it boldly.

### Our Mission



To empower and equip believers for the Great Commission by delivering Godly and relevant content that speaks to each member of the family.

## 2. BACKGROUND

The RCV Music Awards (RCVMAs) were launched in 2024 as part of RCV's 30th anniversary celebrations. As the largest private radio broadcaster in Zambia, RCV has the platform, the audience and a great opportunity to positively contribute to the music industry. By awarding those who are making great strides as well as recognising up and coming artists with promising talent, RCVMAs will play a crucial role in supporting this vibrant industry.

Through RCVMAs, RCV aims to set a standard for Christian music artists and enable them to break barriers and compete at an international level. While the award show presented a new frontier for the radio station, it is not the first contribution that it is making to the Christian music scene in Zambia. As far back as the 90's, RCV has played a significant role in the growth of the music industry.

In the late 90's, RCV built a multi-track studio to aid in the recording, producing and mastering of music for Christian artists. This was a time when commercial recording studios were very rare in Zambia and artists would have to travel to Zimbabwe or South Africa to create music. After producing their songs, RCV would promote the artists and their music on radio. Furthermore, RCV played a crucial role in the founding of Zambian Music Copyright Protection Society (ZAMCOPS) which has the mandate of collecting and distributing copyright royalties. In the early 2000's, RCV hosted a pioneering concert at the Mulungushi Conference Center with a magnitude that had never before been witnessed in Zambia, featuring Christian artists from the region. It set RCV apart as an industry leader in the sphere.

## 3. RATIONALE

While there are multiple awards shows in Zambia, they focus on the secular sphere and Christian artists are recognized only in the 'gospel' category. This created a gap in the Christian music scene where artists lack a stage to be recognised, appreciated and empowered. The RCVMAs exist to fill this gap and accelerate the growth of Christian artists and their ministry.

At the heart of its mission, RCV works to equip and empower believers towards fulfilling the Great Commission. Through the RCVMAs, RCV furthers this mission by coming alongside artists who boldly proclaim the message of Christ.

## 4. THE AWARDS

The RCV Music Awards, a brainchild of Radio Christian Voice, are designed to exclusively celebrate and honor music works of Christian artists, and their team engaged in the music sector.

We believe that all music created by a Christian artist is redeemed and can be used as a powerful tool for evangelism and discipleship. We care deeply about lyrical content, and that it is substantially derived from the Holy Bible.

The prologue of gospel music owes its grandeur and its sense of veracity to Thomas Andrew Dorsey who is called the “Father of Gospel Music.” He combined Christian praise with the rhythms of jazz and blues. Just as much of the contemporary Christian music of today may sound like R&B and Hip-Hop or indeed Rhumba and Kalindula, so did most of the early gospel music which sounded like the Blues. To reach the widest possible audience, there are no style or genre restrictions on Christian music; only the thematic content, and the devotion of the artist to Christ, remains constant.

## 5. CRITERIA, CLASSIFICATIONS AND PROCEDURES

The criteria, classifications and procedures for the smooth conduct and management of the RCV Music Awards are outlined and laid down in this guidelines document. Winners will be selected not only through popular vote but also a thorough judging process by a panel made up of well-respected industry professionals. The judging (adjudication) will be based on the set criteria that will be made available to all participating artists and the public. Transparency and professionalism will be the hallmark in the awarding process as our ultimate hope is to raise the standard and to build more capacity and efficiency that will enable the industry to favorably compete at an international level.

## 6. CATEGORIES

The Awards shall have 35 categories in 2026. Two systems (adjudication and populist) will be used when deciding winners for the sake of adherence/upholding of professional standards and the concept of public (consumer) involvement respectively.

For this third edition of the RCVMAAs, the period under review, apart from the lifetime achievement award that shall always go with a lifetime period, is April 01, 2025 – March 31, 2026.

## List of Categories

1. Artist of the Year (Male)
2. Artist of the Year (Female)
3. Song of the Year
4. Album of the Year
5. Music Video of the Year
6. Breakthrough Group of the Year
7. Breakthrough Artist of the Year (Male)
8. Breakthrough Artist of the Year (Female)
9. RCV – Most Requested Artist
10. Rap song of the Year
11. R&B Song of the Year
12. Indigenous Song of the Year
13. Rhumba Song of the Year
14. Acapella Song of the Year
15. Afro-Pop Song of the Year
16. Reggae/Dancehall Song of the Year
17. Jazz / Soul Song of the Year
18. Pop Song of the Year
19. High Praise Song of the Year
20. Slow Praise Song of the Year
21. Choir of the Year
22. Collaboration of the Year
23. Music Packaging of the Year
24. Live Recording of the Year
25. Lifetime Achievement Award

## Provincial Awards

26. Artist of the Year Central Province
27. Artist of the Year Copperbelt Province
28. Artist of the Year Eastern Province
29. Artist of the Year Luapula Province
30. Artist of the Year Lusaka Province
31. Artist of the Year Muchinga Province
32. Artist of the Year Northern Province
33. Artist of the Year North-Western Province
34. Artist of the Year Southern Province
35. Artist of the Year Western Province

## 7. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The RCVMA's award Christian artists. This is defined as someone who is actively pursuing a career in the music/creative industry, professes to be a born-again Christian, planted in a local church, accountable to spiritual leadership who can confirm their testimony of salvation, exhibiting a lifestyle and character that lives up to biblical standards and using his/her craft to glorify God and expand His kingdom. The following shall be eligible to be awarded;

- All Christian artists active in the music industry
- Works done in the period under review
- A Zambian artist residing in the country or abroad, or a foreign national who is a permanent resident in Zambia

The following shall not be eligible to be awarded;

- All non-original and unpublished works
- Works published/released outside the eligibility period
- Staff of RCV or their immediate family members
- Foreign (non-Zambian) artists who do not reside in the country

## 8. ARTIST SIGN UP

All Christian artists, producers and songwriters who would like to participate in the awards have been invited to sign up using the link on RCV's website – [www.rcv.co.zm/rcvmas](http://www.rcv.co.zm/rcvmas). It is necessary for any artists who will make the final nomination to have opted-in through this online sign-up portal. If an artist is nominated, yet has not signed up for the awards, the organizing committee will extend a final invitation for signing up.

## 9. NOMINATIONS

The process of nominations in the RCVMA's has been specially designed to involve the artists and enable them to self-nominate. Furthermore, media houses (i.e radio stations) across the nation are given an opportunity to nominate at least 3 art works/artists in each category. To this effect, at the call for nominations, all entries shall be submitted by way of filling in an online nomination form that will be made available via email.

After the close of nominations, the designated committee and adjudicators shall sit to sort, verify and tally the nomination entries. In addition to the tally of entries, adjudicators will also rely on their

prior knowledge of the industry and monitoring of artistic events in that awards year when validating the nominees. The top works will make the final list to be announced as finalists.

Any entries for nominations sent after the closing date will not be considered.

## Nomination-Rationale

The nomination process has been designed to ensure that ***all artists, regardless of popularity or exposure, have the opportunity to have their work recognized.*** By allowing self-nomination, individual artists who may not yet have widespread visibility can submit their works for consideration, ensuring inclusivity. At the same time, involving media houses such as radio stations across the nation helps to ***capture a broad spectrum of talent,*** reflecting both emerging and established voices in the Christian music industry. This approach balances ***equal opportunity for individuals with professional input from the industry,*** strengthening the credibility and fairness of the RCVMA's.

## 10. SELECTION OF WINNERS

In all the categories, a 'hybrid' system consisting of two consideration criteria will be used to select winners. Each category will be subjected to a 20% public vote and 80% technical adjudication.

## 11. VOTING

After the announcement of the finalists, the public shall be invited to vote for their favourites in each category using the voting system that will be provided. Public vote will make up 20% of the consideration criteria. Any votes sent after the closing date(s) will not be considered.

## 12. ADJUDICATION

Adjudication will make up 80% of the consideration criteria in each category. Zambia Arts Adjudicators Panel (ZAAP) in consultation with RCV designated committee will appoint professional and experienced adjudicators in the industry for the task of adjudication. The team shall apart from adjudicating, be engaged in monitoring, sorting, verification and tallying to evaluate the artists and the art works that proceed to become finalists. Further, in a case that there is an independent auditing firm to audit the public vote, the adjudicators shall work hand in hand with that body to verify the system and indeed the votes.

Adjudication to determine the winners from the listed finalists will be out of 80% and it will commence immediately after the announcement of the finalists. Adjudication forms will be used as the key tool to the adjudication process. The adjudicators' decision, which makes up 80% of the consideration, and the audited 20% public vote, shall be final.

## 13. INVALID NOMINATIONS AND VOTES

All entries/votes which do not conform to or correspond to a specific category in which they are entered, shall be considered as spoiled entry/vote and shall not count. For example, a male artist nominated under the category choir of the year, or instead of an album, you enter a name of the artist.

## 14. CATEGORY DEFINITIONS AND CONSIDERATION CRITERIA

### Artist of the Year (Male)

This category shall honour and recognize male artists who have exhibited exceptional talent, skill, positive influence and representation of Christian values and beliefs. Should have high ability to perform live shows accompanied or unaccompanied where; stage presence, creativity and versatility are paramount. The style, content, mood, lyrics, and flair should be highly uplifting and inspiring. Other considerations include;

- Consistency in the quality of music they produce (songs and videos) throughout the eligibility period.
- Sales, airplay, online streams, chart performance of their music and indeed the positive reception from critics and peers.
- Most requested for performances, features and international tours in that awards year.
- Considerable impact on the fans, evidenced by testimonials, widespread use of their songs in worship settings.
- Contribution and impact on the overall growth of Christian music through tours, performances, engagement with fans and support to up-and-coming artists.

## Artist of the Year (Female)

This category shall honour and recognize female artists who have exhibited exceptional talent, skill, positive influence and representation of Christian values and beliefs. Should have high ability to perform live shows accompanied or unaccompanied where; stage presence, creativity and versatility are paramount. The style, content, mood, lyrics, and flair should be highly uplifting and inspiring. Other considerations include;

- Consistency in the quality of music they produce (songs and videos) throughout the eligibility period.
- Sales, airplay, online streams, chart performance of their music and indeed the positive reception from critics and peers.
- Most requested for performances, features and international tours in that awards year.
- Considerable impact on the fans, evidenced by testimonials, widespread use of their songs in worship settings.
- Contribution and impact on the overall growth of Christian music through tours, performances, engagement with fans and support to up-and-coming artists.

## Song of the Year

This category shall honor and recognize a song which has been considered an outstanding song in that particular year. Such a song should display a great storyline, arrangement and creativity that have something interesting to draw the listeners in; well-crafted impactful Christian message (lyrics) that get the story and the depth of feelings across in a clear and accessible manner. Further, a catchy melody and instrumentation/vocals that are not only memorable but also have the propensity to complement the lyrics. The criteria for consideration will include;

- Sales, airplay, online streams, chart performance, and indeed the positive reception from critics and peers.
- Considerable impact on its listeners/viewers, evidenced by testimonials, widespread use in worship settings.
- Quality of recording which should be of high quality, with clear sound, blend and balance.
- Should be original works, not covers or adaptations of existing hymns or songs.
- Positive reception (feedback) from critics and peers.
- The extent of collaboration involved in the song, including contributions from featured artists, vocalists, instrumentalists, producers, songwriters, and other creative inputs.

## Album of the Year

The category shall honor and recognize a collection of high-quality recordings consisting of at least seven © songs released or made available for download or distributed as a CD or record. The songs should be melodically catchy and impactful in both vocal delivery and lyrical message. Further, the collection should demonstrate artistic excellence in style, as well as variety in arrangement and instrumentation.

The key adjudication criterion will include;

- Sales, airplay, online streams, chart performance, and indeed the positive reception from critics and peers.
- Artistic excellence and creativity demonstrated in songwriting, production and packaging.
- Critical acclaim and recognition within the Christian music community.
- Chart performance and commercial success.
- Diversity and depth of musical styles, lyrics and variety of themes represented on the album.
- The extent of collaboration involved in the song, including contributions from featured artists, vocalists, instrumentalists, producers, songwriters, and other creative inputs.

## Music Video of the Year

This category shall honour and recognize music videos with a unique and innovative blend of the music track(s) and the visual materials, performance, choreography and the use of close-ups. The picture quality, rhythm, message/lyrical content, sales, online streams and airplay shall also be a key consideration criterion. Further;

- Visual creativity and storytelling that enhances the message in the song.
- Production quality and technical excellence demonstrated in the video.
- Representation of Christian values and themes in the visual content.
- Massive engagement with viewers on online and other digital platforms creating impact that leaves a lasting impression.
- The extent of collaboration involved in the video, including contributions from set designers, directors, animators and other roles contributing to the creative output.

## Breakthrough Group of the Year

This award shall honor and recognize a group that performs together as an act (duets, quartets etc) that have recently made a notable appearance into the music market and received overwhelming public commendation. The extent of airplay of their music, online streams, public performances, stage craft, record (album or singles) sales and media write-ups shall be taken into consideration. Further criteria will include;

- Emerging talent with promising potential for future success in the Christian music industry.
- Quality of musical output and performances during the eligibility period.
- Positive reception from audiences, critics and industry professionals.
- Demonstrated commitment to Christian values and principles
- Engagement with fans and participation in industry events and initiatives.

## Breakthrough Artist of the Year (Male)

This award shall honour and recognize male solo artist who has recently made a notable appearance into the music market and received overwhelming public commendation. The extent of airplay of their music, online streams, public performances, stage craft, record (album or singles) sales and media write-ups shall be taken into consideration. Further criteria will include;

- Emerging talent with promising potential for future success in the Christian music industry.
- Quality of musical output and performances during the eligibility period.
- Positive reception from audiences, critics and industry professionals.
- Demonstrated commitment to Christian values and principles
- Engagement with fans and participation in industry events and initiatives.

## Breakthrough Artist of the Year (Female)

This award shall honour and recognize female solo artist who has recently made a notable appearance into the music market and received overwhelming public commendation. The extent of airplay of their music, online streams, public performances, stage craft, record (album or singles) sales and media write-ups shall be taken into consideration. Further criteria will include;

- Emerging talent with promising potential for future success in the Christian music industry.
- Quality of musical output and performances during the eligibility period.
- Positive reception from audiences, critics and industry professionals.
- Demonstrated commitment to Christian values and principles
- Engagement with fans and participation in industry events and initiatives.

## RCV - Most Requested Artist

This category shall honour and recognize any male or female artist who is on popular demand; whose music is the most requested for on RCV, has demonstrated consistency in the quality of music being requested for by fans throughout the eligibility period as monitored by RCV.

Consideration criteria include;

- Airplay, online streams, RCV chart performance of their music and indeed the positive reception from critics and peers.
- Considerable impact on the fans; evidenced by testimonials, frequency of call-ups, widespread use of their songs in worship settings as monitored by RCV.
- Contribution and impact on the overall growth of Christian music through tours, performances, engagement with fans and support to up-and-coming artists as monitored by RCV.

## Rap Song of the Year

This category shall honour and recognize a high-quality recorded rap song, released for public consumption as a CD, record, or available online as a download. Rap is rhythmic poetry delivered over a beat, where lyrical content, rhythm, and musical production combine to create impact. While rap is part of the broader Hip Hop genre, this category focuses on the artistry of the rap performance in harmony with its musical backing.

Consideration criteria will include;

- Creativity and originality/authenticity in crafting lyrics and melodies.
- Considerable impact on the fans, evidenced by testimonials (public acclaim and recognition), widespread use of the song in worship settings.
- Strong vocal performance with a strong lyrical message that upholds Christian values and teachings.
- Sales, airplay, online streams, chart performance, and indeed the positive reception from critics and peers.
- Contribution to Christian music in terms of outreach and influence.
- Excellence in storytelling and message delivery.
- The extent of collaboration involved in the song, including contributions from featured artists, vocalists, instrumentalists, producers, songwriters, and other creative inputs.

## R&B Song of the Year

This category shall honour and recognize a high-quality recorded RnB (Rhythm and Blues) song, released for public consumption as a CD, record, or online download. Contemporary RnB features expressive vocals and lyrical storytelling, often exploring themes of love, longing, heartbreak, and relationships, supported by smooth rhythms, melodic accompaniment, and modern production that enhance the song's feel and emotion.

Consideration criteria will include;

- Creativity and originality in crafting lyrics and melodies.
- Considerable impact on the fans, evidenced by testimonials (public acclaim and recognition), widespread use of the song in worship settings.
- Strong vocal performance with a strong lyrical message.
- Sales, airplay, online streams, chart performance, and indeed the positive reception from critics and peers.
- Contribution to Christian music in terms of outreach and influence.
- The extent of collaboration involved in the song, including contributions from featured artists, vocalists, instrumentalists, producers, songwriters, and other creative inputs.

## Indigenous Song of the Year

This category honours and recognises a high-quality recorded song that expresses indigenous identity through a fusion of native Zambian language and traditional musical rhythms and sounds, released for public consumption on either hard/soft copy or online.

Eligible songs must demonstrate a clear integration of local language with traditional rhythmic, melodic, or instrumental elements, reflecting authentic cultural expression rather than language alone. Contemporary influences may be present, but the indigenous sound and feel must remain central.

Consideration criteria will include;

- Creativity and originality/authenticity in crafting lyrics and melodies.
- Considerable impact on the fans, evidenced by testimonials (public acclaim and recognition), widespread use of the song in worship settings.
- Strong vocal performance with a strong lyrical message that uphold Christian values and teachings.
- Sales, airplay, online streams, chart performance, and indeed the positive reception from critics and peers.
- Contribution to Christian music in terms of outreach and influence.
- Excellence in storytelling and message delivery.
- The extent of collaboration involved in the song, including contributions from featured artists, vocalists, instrumentalists, producers, songwriters, and other creative inputs.

## Rhumba Song of the Year

This category shall honour and recognize a high-quality recorded released for public consumption on either hard/soft copy or online. Rhumba is a Cuban word to mean party. Rhumba music typically features intricate guitar work, percussion, and smooth vocal harmonies. It is also known for its energetic and syncopated lively rhythms that encourage dancing.

Consideration criteria will include;

- Creativity and originality in artistic crafting and integration of rumba elements with Christian worship style.
- Lyrical content that is edifying and in line with biblical principles.
- Considerable impact on the fans, evidenced by testimonials (public acclaim and recognition), widespread use of the song in worship settings.
- Strong vocal performance with a strong lyrical message that uphold Christian values and teachings.
- Sales, airplay, online streams, chart performance, and indeed the positive reception from critics and peers.
- Contribution to Christian music in terms of outreach and influence.
- The extent of collaboration involved in the song, including contributions from featured artists, vocalists, instrumentalists, producers, songwriters, and other creative inputs.

## Acapella Song of the Year

This category shall honour and recognize a purely vocal song which by its great storyline, arrangement, creativity, melody, message and impact has been considered an outstanding song in that particular year. For purposes of RCVMA's, we shall define acapella as music performed by a singer or group of singers without instrumental accompaniment, purely vocal performance (in the style of the chapel).

The criteria for consideration will include;

- Well-crafted impactful Christian message (lyrics) that get the story and the depth of feelings across in a clear and accessible manner.
- Sales, airplay, online streams, chart performance, and indeed the positive reception from critics and peers.
- Considerable impact on its listeners/viewers, evidenced by testimonials, widespread use in worship settings, or other measurable means.
- Quality of recording which should be of high quality, with clear sound, blend and balance.
- Should be original works, not covers or adaptations of existing hymns or songs.
- Positive reception (feedback) from critics and peers.
- The extent of collaboration involved in the song, including contributions from featured artists, vocalists, instrumentalists, producers, songwriters, and other creative inputs.

## Afro-Pop Song of the Year

Afro pop is a genre of music that combines traditional African music with elements of pop, hip hop, and electric dance music. Afro pop is a catch-all term encompassing the rich variety of contemporary African music styles typically urban, electric dance music. As each of Africa's 54 countries is home to dozens of distinct languages and musical traditions, Afro pop is a blanket description of the continent's many diverse styles. Many Gospel artists have also adopted this style as their own bringing out great combinations of Christian lyrics and expressions.

Consideration criteria for an outstanding Afro pop song of the year will include;

- Creativity and originality in crafting lyrics and melodies.
- Considerable impact on the fans, evidenced by testimonials (public acclaim and recognition), widespread use of the song in worship settings.
- Strong vocal performance with a strong lyrical message crafted in a unique style.
- Sales, airplay, online streams, chart performance, and indeed the positive reception from critics and peers.
- Contribution to Christian music in terms of outreach and influence.
- The extent of collaboration involved in the song, including contributions from featured artists, vocalists, instrumentalists, producers, songwriters, and other creative inputs.

## Dancehall/Reggae Song of the Year

Dancehall and Reggae are two genres of music which are closely related but with clear distinctions in certain characteristics. Dancehall music heavily relies on 'riddims' which are prerecorded rhythm tracks (bass guitar and drums) that deejays or singers perform over with a faster tempo than reggae, creating a dynamic and energetic feel. The lyrical content covers a wide range of topics, including social commentary, celebrations, positive and empowering Christian messages, promoting love and unity. On the other hand, Reggae is a music genre that originated in the late 1960s and is characterized by a strong bassline, guitar or keyboard rhythm, and an emphasis on the off-beat. It also features lyrics that often focus on social and political issues. Gospel versions of these genres have influenced many artists, worshipers and the Christian community in general.

Consideration criteria will include;

- Creativity and originality in artistic crafting and integration of Dancehall/Reggae elements with Christian worship style.
- Lyrical content that is edifying and in line with biblical principles.

- Considerable impact on the fans, evidenced by testimonials (public acclaim and recognition), widespread use of the song in worship settings.
- Strong vocal performance with a strong lyrical message that uphold Christian values and teachings.
- Sales, airplay, online streams, chart performance, and indeed the positive reception from critics and peers.
- Contribution to Christian music in terms of outreach and influence.
- The extent of collaboration involved in the song, including contributions from featured artists, vocalists, instrumentalists, producers, songwriters, and other creative inputs.

## Jazz/Soul Song of the Year

Jazz originated in the African-American communities of New Orleans in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It is characterized by swing and groove-driven rhythms, rich chord progressions, live instrumentation, improvisation, and dynamic interaction between musicians.

Soul is a genre rooted in African-American musical expression, drawing from gospel, rhythm and blues, and blues. It is known for its emotive vocal delivery, heartfelt storytelling, strong rhythmic feel, and a deep emphasis on feeling and lyrical expression.

Songs in this category may be distinctly Soul, distinctly Jazz, or a creative fusion of both, with the defining factor being the presence of core stylistic elements from either or both genres.

Consideration criteria for the Jazz/Soul Song of the Year will include:

- Demonstration of creativity and originality in lyrics, melody, and overall composition, reflecting core elements of Soul and/or Jazz such as emotional expression, musicality, and rhythmic depth
- Meaningful impact on listeners, evidenced by public acclaim, audience connection, and use in worship or inspirational settings
- Strong performance across platforms, including sales, airplay, streaming, and chart presence, alongside positive reception from critics and peers
- Significant contribution to Christian music through its message, outreach, and overall influence
- The extent of collaboration involved in the song, including contributions from featured artists, vocalists, instrumentalists, producers, songwriters, and other creative inputs.

## Pop Song of the Year

Pop music is a genre characterized by its wide appeal, memorable melodies, and accessible sound. Rooted in modern popular culture, it often blends elements from various genres while maintaining a strong focus on catchy hooks, structured songwriting, and polished production.

Pop songs are typically driven by clear vocal delivery, relatable themes, and contemporary production techniques, making them easily engaging and commercially appealing to a broad audience.

For the award of **Pop Song of the Year**, consideration criteria will include;

- Innovation and contemporary sound that captures the attention of listeners/audiences, including the effective use of modern production techniques and catchy, memorable elements
- Sales, airplay, online streams, chart performance, and indeed the positive reception from critics and peers
- Considerable impact on its listeners/viewers, evidenced by testimonials and strong audience connection, including use in worship settings where applicable
- Quality of recording which should be of high standard, with clear sound, good blend, balance, and polished production
- The extent of collaboration involved in the song, including contributions from featured artists, vocalists, instrumentalists, producers, songwriters, and other creative inputs.

## High Praise Song of the Year

High Praise refers to upbeat, energetic Christian music that expresses celebration, thanksgiving, and joy. It is typically fast-paced, rhythm-driven, and designed to create an atmosphere of excitement, declaration, and corporate praise. It is often led by a band or praise team and is commonly used in lively church worship expressions.

High Praise songs are stylistically influenced by contemporary genres such as pop, Afrobeat, and gospel praise, while maintaining a clear Christian message of rejoicing and exaltation.

Consideration criteria will include:

- Well-crafted and impactful Christian message expressed through joyful, declarative, and uplifting lyrics.

- Strong musical energy, arrangement, and delivery that encourages participation and engagement
- Considerable impact on listeners, evidenced by testimonials, widespread use in church services or settings and other Christian gatherings
- Quality of recording with clear sound, balance, and professional production
- Sales, airplay, online streams, chart performance, and positive reception from critics and peers
- The extent of collaboration involved in the song, including contributions from featured artists, vocalists, instrumentalists, producers, songwriters, and other creative inputs.

## Slow Praise Song of The Year

Slow Praise refers to **mid-to-slow tempo Christian music** that focuses on reflection, intimacy, and reverence. It creates a calm atmosphere that encourages gratitude, surrender, and personal encounter with God.

Slow Praise songs are typically led by vocals with soft, slow-paced instrumentation such as piano, acoustic guitar, strings, and subtle band arrangements. The style prioritizes atmosphere and lyrical depth over energy and rhythm.

Stylistically, it is influenced by contemporary worship, gospel ballads, and soulful Christian music, while maintaining a clear message of devotion and exaltation.

Consideration criteria will include:

- Strong Christian message expressed through reflective, worshipful lyrics
- Mid-to-slow tempo that supports a calm and reflective worship atmosphere
- Considerable impact on listeners, evidenced by testimonials, widespread use in church services or settings and other Christian gatherings
- Quality of recording, production, and commercial performance (streams, airplay, sales)
- The extent of collaboration involved in the song, including contributions from featured artists, vocalists, instrumentalists, producers, songwriters, and other creative inputs.

## Choir of the Year

This category shall honour and recognize a musical ensemble of singers (group) that qualifies to be called a choir (chorale or chorus). A choir is a body of singers who perform together as a group consisting of four sections (soprano, alto, tenor, bass) intended to sing in four-part harmony, but there is no limit to the number of possible parts (could be more or less) as long as there is a singer available to sing the part. Choirs can sing with or without instrumental accompaniment. Inclusion of solos or descant parts within the song(s), hymns or anthems is an embellishment to the performances. Issues of tone colour, blend, balance, diction, breath management, phrasing and dynamics in all performances shall be important to the quality/standard of the group.

Consideration criteria shall include;

- Excellence in vocal performance, harmony, and musical arrangement.
- Impact on the worship experience and spiritual growth of congregations.
- Recordings and live performances that showcase the choir's talent and dedication.
- Outreach and community involvement through music ministry.
- Considerable impact on members of the public (listeners/viewers), evidenced by testimonials, widespread use the choir's songs in worship settings.

## Collaboration/Feature of the Year

This category honours two or more performing artists who come together on a song, combining their talent, creativity, and musical expression to produce a single collaborative work. It includes both equal collaborations and featured contributions, without emphasis on ownership or percentage splits.

The category recognizes artistic synergy where each contributing artist adds distinct value to the song through vocals, performance, style, or creative input, resulting in a unified musical piece.

Consideration criteria will include:

- Strong creative blend of voices, styles, and musical expression
- Overall impact of the collaboration, including audience reception and use in worship settings
- Quality of performance and the distinct contribution of each artist to the final work
- Commercial and public response, including streams, airplay, and chart performance
- Contribution to unity, growth, and collaboration within Christian music

## Music Packaging of the Year

This category shall honour and recognize music packaging that is eye-catching, packaging that grabs potential buyers' attention. Music packaging showcases your brand's personality and style. It's an opportunity to visually communicate what you stand for and helps people remember your music and associate it with your unique identity. Whether it's on a store shelf or in a digital storefront, compelling packaging encourages people to explore further and consider your music.

The criteria for consideration will include;

- Visual appeal, blend of colours and overall design of the album or single cover.
- Creativity, originality and uniqueness in the presentation and packaging concept.
- Alignment of the packaging with the Christian themes of the music.
- Quality and suitability of any additional materials included (e.g., booklets or brochures).

## Live Recording of the Year

Live recording, in the context of music refers to capturing a performance as it happens in real-time, using live instruments as opposed to computer manipulated sounds. Live recordings also aim to capture the entirety of a performance, including the musicians, the venue, and any audience energy, all in one go. Unlike studio computer manipulated recordings, live recordings typically involve recording the entire band or artists playing live instruments and or vocals together simultaneously, with minimal or no post-production editing.

Consideration will be based on;

- Quality of recording; clarity in sound devoid of distortion, blend and balance.
- Artistic excellence, tonal variation and creativity demonstrated in songwriting, production and coordination.
- Critical acclaim and recognition within the Christian music community.
- Chart performance and commercial success.
- Sales, airplay, online streams, chart performance, and indeed the positive reception from critics and peers.
- The extent of collaboration involved in the song, including contributions from featured artists, vocalists, instrumentalists, producers, songwriters, and other creative inputs.

## Lifetime Achievement Award

This category shall honour and recognize individuals (artists or non-artists), companies/institutions that have successfully accomplished an outstanding life record of positive and significant contribution to the growth and development of the gospel music subsector. This award is honorary in nature administered by the management of Radio Christian Voice after a thorough scrutiny by the appointed judges in consultation with other industry gurus, on consideration that such individual, or institution has had;

- Significant and enduring contributions to the Christian music industry over the course of a career.
- Influence on the development and evolution of Christian music in Zambia.
- Contributed to the growth of gospel artists in Zambia.

## Provincial Awards

In the 2025 edition of the RCVMA, provincial awards were introduced to celebrate artists from respective provinces in order to promote local visibility and support unique talents domiciled in the various provinces.

### Artist of the Year Central Province

This category shall honour and recognize any male or female solo artist or groups (duets, quartets etc) who have exhibited exceptional talent, skill, positive influence and representation of Christian values and beliefs in Central Province. The extent of airplay on local and community radios of their music, online streams, public performances, stage craft, record (album or singles) sales and media write-ups shall be taken into consideration. Further criteria will include;

- Quality of musical output and performances during the eligibility period.
- Positive reception from audiences, critics, peers and industry professionals.
- Demonstrated commitment to Christian values and principles
- Engagement with fans and participation in industry events and initiatives.
- Contribution and impact on the overall growth of Christian music in that respective Province

## Artist of the Year Copperbelt Province

This category shall honour and recognize any male or female solo artist or groups (duets, quartets etc.) who have exhibited exceptional talent, skill, positive influence and representation of Christian values and beliefs in Copperbelt Province. The extent of airplay on local and community radios of their music, online streams, public performances, stage craft, record (album or singles) sales and media write-ups shall be taken into consideration. Further criteria will include;

- Quality of musical output and performances during the eligibility period.
- Positive reception from audiences, critics, peers and industry professionals.
- Demonstrated commitment to Christian values and principles
- Engagement with fans and participation in industry events and initiatives.
- Contribution and impact on the overall growth of Christian music in that respective Province.

## Artist of the Year Eastern Province

This category shall honour and recognize any male or female solo artist or groups (duets, quartets etc.) who have exhibited exceptional talent, skill, positive influence and representation of Christian values and beliefs in Eastern Province. The extent of airplay on local and community radios of their music, online streams, public performances, stage craft, record (album or singles) sales and media write-ups shall be taken into consideration. Further criteria will include;

Quality of musical output and performances during the eligibility period.

- Positive reception from audiences, critics, peers and industry professionals.
- Demonstrated commitment to Christian values and principles
- Engagement with fans and participation in industry events and initiatives.
- Contribution and impact on the overall growth of Christian music in that respective Province.

## Artist of the Year Luapula Province

This category shall honour and recognize any male or female solo artist or groups (duets, quartets etc.) who have exhibited exceptional talent, skill, positive influence and representation of Christian values and beliefs in Luapula Province. The extent of airplay on local and community radios of their music, online streams, public performances, stage craft, record (album or singles) sales and media write-ups shall be taken into consideration. Further criteria will include;

- Quality of musical output and performances during the eligibility period.
- Positive reception from audiences, critics, peers and industry professionals.
- Demonstrated commitment to Christian values and principles
- Engagement with fans and participation in industry events and initiatives.
- Contribution and impact on the overall growth of Christian music in that respective Province.

## Artist of the Year Lusaka Province

This category shall honour and recognize any male or female solo artist or groups (duets, quartets etc.) who have exhibited exceptional talent, skill, positive influence and representation of Christian values and beliefs in Lusaka Province. The extent of airplay on local and community radios of their music, online streams, public performances, stage craft, record (album or singles) sales and media write-ups shall be taken into consideration. Further criteria will include;

- Quality of musical output and performances during the eligibility period.
- Positive reception from audiences, critics, peers and industry professionals.
- Demonstrated commitment to Christian values and principles
- Engagement with fans and participation in industry events and initiatives.
- Contribution and impact on the overall growth of Christian music in that respective Province.

## Artist of the Year Muchinga Province

This category shall honour and recognize any male or female solo artist or groups (duets, quartets etc.) who have exhibited exceptional talent, skill, positive influence and representation of Christian values and beliefs in Muchinga Province. The extent of airplay on local and community radios of their music, online streams, public performances, stage craft, record (album or singles) sales and media write-ups shall be taken into consideration. Further criteria will be;

- Quality of musical output and performances during the eligibility period.
- Positive reception from audiences, critics, peers and industry professionals.
- Demonstrated commitment to Christian values and principles
- Engagement with fans and participation in industry events and initiatives.
- Contribution and impact on the overall growth of Christian music in that respective Province.

## Artist of the Year Northern Province

This category shall honour and recognize any male or female solo artist or groups (duets, quartets etc.) who have exhibited exceptional talent, skill, positive influence and representation of Christian values and beliefs in Northern Province. The extent of airplay on local and community radios of their music, online streams, public performances, stage craft, record (album or singles) sales and media write-ups shall be taken into consideration. Further criteria will include;

- Quality of musical output and performances during the eligibility period.
- Positive reception from audiences, critics, peers and industry professionals.
- Demonstrated commitment to Christian values and principles
- Engagement with fans and participation in industry events and initiatives.
- Contribution and impact on the overall growth of Christian music in that respective Province.

## Artist of the Year North-Western Province

This category shall honour and recognize any male or female solo artist or groups (duets, quartets etc.) who have exhibited exceptional talent, skill, positive influence and representation of Christian values and beliefs in North-Western Province. The extent of airplay on local and community radios of their music, online streams, public performances, stage craft, record (album or singles) sales and media write-ups shall be taken into consideration. Further criteria will be;

- Quality of musical output and performances during the eligibility period.
- Positive reception from audiences, critics, peers and industry professionals.
- Demonstrated commitment to Christian values and principles
- Engagement with fans and participation in industry events and initiatives.
- Contribution and impact on the overall growth of Christian music in that respective Province.

## Artist of the Year Southern Province

This category shall honour and recognize any male or female solo artist or groups (duets, quartets etc.) who have exhibited exceptional talent, skill, positive influence and representation of Christian values and beliefs in Southern Province. The extent of airplay on local and community radios of their music, online streams, public performances, stage craft, record (album or singles) sales and media write-ups shall be taken into consideration. Further criteria will include;

- Quality of musical output and performances during the eligibility period.
- Positive reception from audiences, critics, peers and industry professionals.
- Demonstrated commitment to Christian values and principles
- Engagement with fans and participation in industry events and initiatives.
- Contribution and impact on the overall growth of Christian music in that respective Province.

## Artist of the Year Western Province

This category shall honour and recognize any male or female solo artist or groups (duets, quartets etc.) who have exhibited exceptional talent, skill, positive influence and representation of Christian values and beliefs in Western Province. The extent of airplay on local and community radios of their music, online streams, public performances, stage craft, record (album or singles) sales and media write-ups shall be taken into consideration. Further criteria will include;

- Quality of musical output and performances during the eligibility period.
- Positive reception from audiences, critics, peers and industry professionals.
- Demonstrated commitment to Christian values and principles
- Engagement with fans and participation in industry events and initiatives.
- Contribution and impact on the overall growth of Christian music in that respective Province.

## 15. CODE OF CONDUCT

This code shall constitute the values that all stakeholders (the adjudicators, sponsors and competitors) shall abide by in the administering of the whole Awards process. Below are the summary points of the code;

- **Professionalism**
- **Integrity**
- **Confidentiality**
- **Adherence to the guidelines**

## 16. THE AWARDS CALENDAR



**The Awards** shall be streamed on various social media platforms and carried on national and continental TV days later

## 17. CONCLUSION

The RCVMA's place great value on the role of music's contribution to the spread of the Gospel, and the need for constant innovation and growth within the industry. Thus, as Radio Christian Voice, we are honoured to continue to support the growth of the Zambian Christian music industry by honouring and setting professional benchmarks.

These guidelines may, as and when necessary be reviewed to allow for innovations and improvements.



# RCVMAs

RCV