

## East African Comic Competition

### "Inhabiting the World"

**Organized by the Alliances Françaises of Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and the French Institutes of Burundi, Djibouti, Rwanda**

#### **Context**

The network of French language and cultural institutions in East Africa is dedicated to promoting the French language, cultural diversity, and artistic creativity. Comics as a universal form of expression are an ideal tool for telling stories, sharing ideas, and promoting inter-cultural dialogue. This comics competition invites young comic artists residing in the East African region to showcase their creativity, storytelling ability, and artistic skill by responding to a specific theme.

The competition aims to:

- Promote young talents by offering a visibility platform.
- Stimulate creativity and innovation in graphic and narrative arts.
- Contribute to the broader appreciation of comics as a powerful art form that combines illustration, narrative, and imagination.

Through this initiative, the network seeks to foster the development of the creative sector in East Africa and reinforce its role as key actors in cultural cooperation.

In addition, between April and July 2026, a series of online masterclasses in scriptwriting, storyboard and character design will be held, facilitated by French comic book authors and illustrators and including [Géraldine Grenet](#), [Lili Sohn](#) and [Cookie Kalkair](#).

The Jury will be chaired by [Nicolas Grivel](#), a literary agent specialized in the sale of rights (paper, digital and media) of comics and graphic novels around the world, who will also facilitate a 5-day masterclass at the Alliance Française de Nairobi in October.

#### **Article 1: Theme**

The theme of the 2026 competition is: 'Inhabiting the World'. It invites participants to broadly explore both literally and metaphorically the concept of inhabiting this world in our time. Participants are required to comply with this theme in their submissions

## Article 2: Eligibility

- The competition is open to anyone between 18 and 35 years old residing in an East African country (Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda), whether previously published or not.
- Participation is free of charge

## Article 3: Entry Requirements

- The submitted comic must be **original and unpublished**
- It must constitute a **complete short story**.
- The work must not infringe upon copyright, trademarks, or any other personal or property rights of any individual or entity.
- A maximum of one submission per person is permitted.
- Maximum 6 pages in A4 portrait format including title.
- Dialogue and text can be in French, English, or Swahili.
- The comic can be hand-drawn, digital, hybrid, color, or black and white.

## Format

- one version in A3 format intended for printed exhibition
- another version in A4 format intended for digital distribution
- JPEG or high resolution PDF files
- Each file must be named as follows: "Title of the comic\_A4\_01" / "Title of the comic\_A3\_01"

Works must be submitted by email before the deadline and must be accompanied by the completed registration form addressed to the Alliance Française or Institut Français corresponding to the participant's country of residence (see list in the form). Only complete applications will be accepted.

Each participating Alliance Française or Institut Français will verify the completeness of the application. Once validated, a country-level preselection will be carried out. The evaluation of the submitted projects will be based primarily on their artistic quality and on their compliance with the theme of the call. Selected applications will then be forwarded by email to the Alliance Française of Nairobi, which serves as the coordinator of the competition for East Africa.

## Article 5: Calendar

- Participants must submit their work by 31 July 2026.
- Jury selection between by 31 August 2026
- Shortlisted candidates announced by 4 September 2026

#### **Article 6: Jury and Selection Criteria**

The jury will consist of comic book professionals, artists, and representatives of cultural institutions.

Criteria include:

- originality and creativity
- graphic quality
- story quality
- Relevanceto the theme
- Complete story
- innovative use of the comic medium. Submissions that incorporate interactive or digital elements such as QR codes, an Instagram-adapted version, or audio components for ex., will be given consideration

#### **Article 7: Prizes**

**1st Prize:** The winner will receive 800 euros awarded by AF Nairobi and long-term support from literary agent Nicolas Grivel at major international fairs: Angoulême Festival, Bologna Book Fair, Frankfurt Book Fair to present a creative project.

**2nd Prize:** 400 euros awarded by AF Nairobi.

**3rd Prize:** A selection of French comic books.

**For the top 10 entries:**

- Exhibition of their comics across the East African network of the French language and cultural institutions.
- Digital publication
- A 5-day masterclass with Nicolas Grivel from 5 to 10 October 2026.
- Depending on possibilities of AF and IF outside Kenya: one plane ticket to attend the award ceremony in Nairobi on October 6.

#### **Article 8: Copyright**

Participants retain the rights to their works but authorize the organizers to use them for promotional purposes (exhibition, online publication).

**Article 9: Acceptance of the terms and conditions**

Participation in the contest implies full acceptance of the above conditions.