

Top UK investigative journalist to address Taco Kuiper function

Ben Leapman, deputy news editor of *The Sunday Telegraph* in London, UK, will address finalists of the 2009 Taco Kuiper Award, for original, outstanding investigative journalism, at the award function on Friday, 26 March 2010.



The number and quality of the entries impressed the judges this year - 44 entries from 16 outlets were received from print, television, radio and online media. For the first time entries were received from the SABC, Radio 702, *Politicsweb*, *Sake 24*, *Business Times* and the *Highlands Herald*, with a good mix of entries from younger and older journalists alike.

"I feel very positive about the future of South Africa after reading and watching these entries. Certainly, our democracy is vibrant and our media is even more so. If this country continues to produce this quantity and volume of investigative work, the politicians and shady businesspeople are in trouble," said Justice Malala, one of the judges.

"This is the best evidence that pockets of journalistic excellence exist all over the country," said Prof. Anton Harber, Caxton Professor of Journalism and Media Studies and Director of the Wits Journalism Programme. "These are mostly individual or small groups of journalists who are going the extra mile to dig deep, to shine their torches into dark places, both in the public and the private sector."

Investigative journalism impacts MPs

Leapman began asking questions about MPs expenses over five years ago, doggedly using the UK's Freedom of Information Act to force the facts out of the government. In 2009, the *Daily* and *Sunday Telegraph* scooped the rest of the UK media and revealed just what the MPs had been claiming. Resignations followed, possible prosecutions are pending and numerous MPs will not be standing at the next election.

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