

Why Levi's wants you to #UseYourVoice on Election Day

By  Maroefah Smith

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In 2016, the Institute for Security Studies found that [young people don't show up at the polls](#) because of disillusionment with the country's political landscape. In the 2014 national elections, registration levels for 18 and 19-year-olds, with a 73% average, were at 33%.

With the 2019 South African General Election just around the corner, denimwear brand Levi's has approached some of the country's leading influencers to help increase voter awareness and turnout amongst young people. As it did in the US 2018 mid-term elections, during which it partnered with various organisations as well as big name celebrities to help spread the message of "It's Your Voice, It's Your Vote".

"Levi's is all about self-expression and, at this time, your vote is the ultimate expression of your voice. We really wanted to get behind this and create a movement, particularly, amongst the youth. There is power in them hearing this message coming from their favourite actress, musician or sportsperson and we are proud to partner with them to deliver it," said Candace Gilowey, Levi Strauss South Africa's head of marketing.

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[View this post on Instagram](#)



@rouge_rapper "As you know we vote on the 8th of May, don't miss the opportunity to have your voice heard. Every vote counts Reshare this image today, to stand a chance to win one of 75 Levi's® Vote tees.

#YourVoiceYourVote @levis_southafrica"

A post shared by [Levi Strauss South Africa \(@levis_southafrica\)](#) on Apr 25, 2019 at 5:17am PDT

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Key partners taking a stand alongside the brand are DJ and producer Black Coffee, actress Nomzamo Mbatha, actor and comedian Siv Ngesi, rapper Rouge, TV presenters Maps Maponyane, Pabi Moloi and Katlego Maboe, Metro FM DJ MoFlava, rocker Francois Van Coke and Instagram darling Qaanita Orrie. Each will share their personal motivation for voting on Election Day and a portrait image of themselves wearing the iconic Levi's Vote t-shirt. Over 1,000 Levi's limited edition Vote t-shirts will be given away to the public through various competitions on the Levi's South Africa Instagram page as well as through the Instagram pages of the influencers joining the movement.

Levi Strauss South Africa country manager Byron Grant let us in on how these particular influencers were selected, why they were right 'fit' and what Levi's hopes to achieve with this campaign.

■ ***How do you think this campaign will encourage young people to vote?***

We know that more than ever young people look to the influencers that they follow in social media for inspiration so we felt that this message would be well received coming from them in their own language with their own motivation.

■ ***Tell us more about your influencer selection process?***

We looked to partner with influential personalities across a broad spectrum of industries, some who we have had a long-standing relationship with as friends of the brand and in industries where there is a natural fit like music, culture and fashion. We had the lead influencers and then seeded tees to many other micro-influencers and personalities all with influence. In addition, we wanted to give the opportunity to their fans to stand a chance to also be a part of the campaign by reposting and standing a chance to win a tee of their own.



L to R clockwise: Mphahlele Mphahlele, Qhazwa Orrie, Pablon Mboli and Siv Ngesi.

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■ ***What makes them the ideal ‘fit’ for the Levi’s brand?***

One of the most important criteria was a fit with the brand’s positioning of authentic self-expression – they had to be a credible voice in their sphere of influence and they needed to be aligned with our values and messaging around ‘Use Your Voice’, specifically feeling passionate about using that voice to drive awareness and a call to action to vote in the election.

■ ***What are some of your expectations for this campaign?***

Our hope is that we raise awareness and start a conversation specifically amongst young people that sees a higher turnout for the youth in the 2019 elections. We are already seeing good engagement on social media.

We want our local fans to get to know that Levi’s has a legacy of standing up for social causes that define our times.



L to R clockwise: Nomzamo Mbatha, Francois Van Coke, Katlego Maboe and DJ Moflava.

[click to enlarge](#)

■ **Why encourage young people to vote in this particular General Election?**

As I said, doing good is in our DNA and we have many great stories but we haven't really spoken to our fans in South Africa about this until now. The new global brand campaign has just launched – 'Use your Voice' and we will be celebrating the ways in which using your voice can change the world for good.

■ **How can we participate?**

Firstly, join the conversation on social media. You can follow any of the influencers that speak to you or catch them all on our Levi's Instagram [@Levis_SouthAfrica](#), [#LiveInLevis](#), [#YourVoiceYourVote](#)

You can win one of your own tees and, of course, get out and *vote* on 8 May 2019. It's your voice. It's Your Vote. Use it.

ABOUT MAROEFAH SMITH

Enthusiastic UCT graduate with a passion for fashion, film and words.

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