



Southern African Association for Institutional Research

Constitution of the SOUTHERN AFRICAN ASSOCIATION OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH (SAAIR)

(Ratified by the AGM held on 21 September 2010)

ARTICLE 1: NAME AND SCOPE OF OPERATIONS

- 1.1 The name of this organization shall be the *Southern African Association for Institutional Research* (SAAIR).
- 1.2 The Association shall be a nonprofit organisation operating mainly in the Southern African region.
- 1.3 The Southern African region is defined as all countries, which are fully, or partly south of the equator on the African continent or islands near its coast.
- 1.4 Members from other countries on the African continent may also be allowed to join on request.

ARTICLE 2: STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- 2.1 The major purpose of SAAIR shall be to benefit, assist, and advance institutional research leading to improved understanding, planning and operation of institutions of higher education.
- 2.2 In keeping with the dynamic nature of institutions of higher education, the Association shall encourage the application of appropriate methodologies and technologies from many disciplines.
- 2.3 It shall also publish and exchange information with respect to institutions of higher education and shall use such means as are necessary and proper to accomplish its goals, including the raising of funds.
- 2.4 SAAIR also serves its members by providing capacity development and national, regional and international networking opportunities
- 2.5 Another SAAIR goal is to contribute significantly to the understanding, planning and operational efficiency of higher education institutions and the higher education systems in the Southern African region and beyond.

ARTICLE 3: MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Membership of SAAIR and election or appointment to any committee is not based on race, ethnic origin, gender, age, disability, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or religious conviction.

3.2 Approval, categories and duration of membership

3.2.1 Approval of application for membership is the responsibility of the Executive Committee.

3.2.2 There shall be the following categories of SAAIR membership:

- (a) regular ;
- (b) student ;
- (c) emeritus ; and
- (d) distinguished.

3.2.3 A membership year shall be from September to August.

3.3 Regular membership

To be eligible for regular membership, a person must be:

- 3.3.1 either actively engaged in any of the following domains: Institutional Research (IR), Institutional Effectiveness (IE), Institutional Planning (IP), Management Information Systems (MIS), Quality Assurance (QA), Academic Development (AD) or a related domain, with the aim of improved understanding, planning, operation and monitoring of institutions of higher education or other related organisations;
- 3.3.2 or interested in the methodology, practice and results of any of the domains indicated in 3.3.1 above.

3.4 Student membership

To be eligible for student membership, a person should:

- 3.4.1 be actively pursuing formal studies at any recognised HEI in the Southern African region (see clause 1.3 above) ; and
- 3.4.2 not be employed on a full-time basis ; and
- 3.4.3 engaged or interested in the methodology, practice and results of any of the domains indicated in 3.3.1 above.

3.5 Emeritus membership

To be eligible for emeritus membership, a person must be retired and must have been an active member of SAAIR.

3.6 Distinguished membership

- 3.6.1 Distinguished membership may be awarded to members or former members who have made distinguished contributions to institutional research in its broader sense, in Higher Education, especially within the Southern African region.
- 3.6.2 Nominations for distinguished membership shall be made by an existing SAAIR member to the Secretary.
- 3.6.3 An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Executive Committee shall be required for the awarding of distinguished membership.

3.7 Eligibility to vote and hold elective office

All categories of members (Article 3.2.2) shall be eligible to vote on SAAIR's business and hold elective office in the Association:

3.8 Termination of membership

- 3.8.1 The Executive Committee may, by two-thirds majority vote, terminate the membership of any individual who becomes ineligible for membership, because of changes in professional activities or interests or do not comply with this Constitution.
- 3.8.2 Members whose dues are not paid within three months after the due date, shall automatically cease to be members of the Association.

3.9 Membership fee structure

- 3.9.1 The membership fee structure shall be reviewed periodically by the Executive Committee and any proposed change shall be submitted to the voting members for consideration at the Annual General Meeting.
- 3.9.2 A simple majority vote of the members at the Annual General Meeting shall be required in order to change the membership fee structure, if and when required.

ARTICLE 4: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

4.1 Composition of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of:

- 4.1.1 the President ;
- 4.1.2 the Vice-President;
- 4.1.3 the Treasurer ;
- 4.1.4 the Secretary ;
- 4.1.5 the Forum Chairperson ;
- 4.1.6 the Immediate Past President (if appropriate);
- 4.1.7 two additional members;
- 4.1.8 co-opted members per exco decision if and when required.

- 4.2 **Quorum**: A quorum at any meeting of the Executive Committee shall consist of 50% of the members.

4.3 Responsibilities of the Executive Committee

- 4.3.1 The Executive Committee has full authority to act for and on behalf of the Association, except as otherwise specified in the Constitution.
- 4.3.2 The Executive Committee is responsible for the planning, execution and monitoring of the Association's Statement of Purpose, as outlined in Article 2 and its individual Clauses.
- 4.3.3 The Executive Committee shall be responsible for recommending a budget for approval by the membership at the Annual General Meeting, after an annual independent audit of the Association's financial records.

4.4 Chair, Vacancies and Term of Office of the Executive Committee

- 4.4.1 The President is the Chairperson and the Vice-President the Vice Chairperson of the Executive Committee.
- 4.4.2 In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chairperson, the Executive Committee shall elect an Acting Chairperson with all the powers of the Chairperson.
- 4.4.3 Vacancies on the Executive Committee shall be filled by appointment (or co-option) by the Executive Committee for the unexpired term.
- 4.4.4 The term of office of each Executive Committee member, which is two years (unless the Annual General Meeting determines otherwise), shall commence at the end of the Annual General Meeting. In the case of a vacancy arising before the end of a member's term, a new member may be elected or coopted for the remainder of the term.

- 4.4.5 In the case of the President, a minimum of one year as Immediate Past President is required after the completion of his/her two year term as President.

ARTICLE 5: OFFICERS

- 5.1 The Officers of the Association are the President, the Vice-President, the Treasurer, the Secretary, and the Forum Chairperson.

5.2 The President

- 5.2.1 The President shall Chair the Executive Committee and preside at the business meetings of the Association.
- 5.2.2 The President shall also represent the Association in relation with other professional and educational organisations, foundations, and governmental agencies.

5.3 The Vice-president

- 5.3.1 The Vice-president shall serve as Vice Chairperson of the Executive Committee.
- 5.3.2 The Vice-president shall represent the President when the latter is unable to perform the duties specified in 5.2 above.

5.4 The Treasurer

- 5.4.1 The Treasurer shall be responsible for the receipt and disbursement of all funds of the Association and for the establishment and maintenance of appropriate records of all fiscal transactions.
- 5.4.2 The Treasurer shall ensure that all expenditures are within the approved budget and have been properly incurred under the policies of the Association.

5.5 The Secretary

The Secretary shall be responsible for the minutes of the meetings of the Executive Committee and of the Annual and any Special General Meetings, the maintaining of the list of members of the Association, the sending of notices and handling of correspondence.

5.6 The Forum Chairperson

The Forum Chairperson shall be responsible for chairing the annual Forum, for organizing the Forum, and for supervising the activities of the various committees and subcommittees established to support or develop Forum activities.

5.7 Compensation for services rendered

Except for the distribution of information, reports and other similar documents to members and officers, no part of the assets of the Association nor any income or gains to it shall inure to the benefit of its members or officers. Reasonable and normal compensation for services actually rendered and/or reimbursement of expenses properly incurred may be paid to members or officers.

ARTICLE 6: NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

- 6.1 There shall be a Nominations Committee, convened by the Immediate Past President or another member appointed by the Exco, no later than two months before the next AGM.
- 6.2 At least two months (60 days) before the annual Forum, the Nominations Committee shall issue a call for nominations to serve on the Executive Committee, for which the term is scheduled to expire.
- 6.3 Such nominations must carry the signature of the proposer, as well as the signature of the candidate, the latter signature serving as guarantee that the candidate is willing to

- serve upon election. The candidate as well as the proposer must be members in good standing.
- 6.4 At least a month (30 days) before the annual Forum, the nominations committee shall scrutinise the nominations received, check compliance with all relevant requirements, compile the list of nominees and present it to the Secretary to be included in the AGM agenda
 - 6.5 In exceptional cases the AGM may consider additional nominations during the annual Forum, before commencement of the AGM.
 - 6.6 Voting takes place at the AGM.
 - 6.7 The President will be elected first by a simple majority. After the President has been elected, the other six members of the Executive Committee will be elected.
 - 6.8 The other six candidates that obtain the highest number of votes will serve on the Executive Committee. Individual positions will be decided upon by the Executive Committee itself.
 - 6.9 All members present at the AGM are eligible to vote.

ARTICLE 7: MEETINGS

- 7.1 The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Association shall be held in conjunction with the annual Forum.
- 7.2 The business to be transacted at the AGM shall be:
 - 7.2.1 to confirm the minutes of the AGM and of any Special General Meeting (SGM) that may have been held since the preceding AGM ;
 - 7.2.2 to receive and consider the audited financial statements for the past financial year(s) ;
 - 7.2.3 to receive and consider the reports of the President and relevant committees on the affairs of the Association for the preceding year(s) ;
 - 7.2.4 to consider any resolution of which due notice has been given (provided for in Article 11) and to consider any business or resolutions concerning the affairs, constitution or interests of the Association, which may be brought under consideration ; and
 - 7.2.5 to announce and introduce the members of the incoming Executive Committee.
- 7.3 **Quorum of the AGM or SGM:** Ten (10) members attending an AGM or SGM of the Association shall constitute a quorum.
- 7.4 A Special General Meeting (SGM) may be called by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall be obliged to call a SGM on receipt of a requisition signed by 20% of the membership of the Association.
- 7.5 The Secretary shall be responsible for notifying all members of the date and place of the AGM (or a SGM) at least sixty (60) days prior to the annual Forum (in the case of the AGM) or a SGM meeting.

ARTICLE 8: COMMITTEES

- 8.1 The Executive Committee shall recommend to the membership the establishment or disbanding of Standing Committees of the Association.
- 8.2 Standing Committees shall operate under Terms of Reference which shall be approved by the Executive Committee. These Terms of Reference shall include:
 - 8.2.1 the charge to the Standing Committee ;
 - 8.2.2 the number or range of numbers (i.e. minimum/maximum) of members ;
 - 8.2.3 the criteria/method of selection and terms of office of members ; and
 - 8.2.4 any other substantive guidelines for the operation of the committee.

8.3 The President shall establish such ad hoc committees as shall be deemed necessary.

ARTICLE 9: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

- 9.1 The Association shall foster Memoranda of Understanding with other international institutional research associations.
- 9.2 The MoUs in Clause 9.1 are encouraged because the Association shares the belief that the members of all these associations should gain an increased understanding of the international dimension of their professional activities, that the institutions for higher education represented by the memberships of the associations cover on a global scale the professional, theoretical and practical solutions and data needed with respect to those issues.
- 9.3 To facilitate an unimpeded flow and exchange of ideas and knowledge between the various international institutional research associations to the benefit of their memberships and the institutions they represent, the Associations will:
- 9.3.1 formalise the co-operation between them, offering mutual access to conferences, workshops, professional development institutes, publications;
- 9.3.2 publish a joint directory of their memberships to facilitate contact between members on different continents ;
- 9.3.3 commit themselves to find ways to facilitate the exchange of people, to support cross-national institutional research, etc. in order to provide deeper insights into differences between national higher education systems, the resulting constraints in applying solutions practiced in other countries and the changes needed to increase the viability of institutions ; and
- 9.3.4 work closely together in emerging countries in an attempt to make skills available that often provides basic needs in running a modern institution of higher education.
- 9.4 The Association will participate in a co-ordinating body of international Institutional Research associations.

ARTICLE 10: AFFILIATED GROUPS

- 10.1 Regional, provincial, or other interest groups, whose purpose is to advance the broad practice of institutional research among their membership in ways consistent with the purposes of the Association, may be recognised as affiliates.
- 10.2 To apply for affiliation, a group mentioned in Clause 10.1, shall forward a request to the Secretary, which include:
- 10.2.1 a statement giving the name and purpose of the group ;
- 10.2.2 a copy of the constitution and bylaws of the group, if such exist ;
- 10.2.3 a list of current members, or participants if membership is informal ; and
- 10.2.4 the name of the person(s) from the group, who is/are also a member(s) of the Association, designated to serve as liaison.
- 10.3 The Executive Committee of the Association will act on all requests for affiliation.
- 10.4 The Executive Committee shall enter into a formal agreement when granting affiliation.

ARTICLE 11: AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

- 11.1 Amendments to the Constitution may be initiated by any of the following means:
- 11.1.1 through action originating in the Executive Committee and approved by a majority vote of the Committee ; or

- 11.1.2 through a duly proposed and seconded petition submitted by any voting members of the Association.
- 11.2 The Executive Committee shall be responsible for printing the proposed amendment, if duly and properly initiated, and submitting it to the voting members (in accordance with procedures provided for in Article 7), for vote.
- 11.3 An amendment(s) to the Constitution must be approved by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting.

ARTICLE 12: DISSOLUTION

Although it is intended that the term for which it is to exist is perpetual, in the event of dissolution, all assets of the Association shall be distributed only to an organisation or organisations with the same or similar purposes.