

CONSTITUTION OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN SOCIETY FOR PLANT PATHOLOGY (SASPP)

1. NAMES AND STATUS

- 1.1 The Society shall be named the "Southern African Society for Plant Pathology", abbreviated as "SASPP", hereinafter referred to as "the Society".
- 1.2 The Society shall be an association not-for-gain and shall be a juristic person, the bearer of its own rights and duties with perpetual succession capable of:
 - 1.2.1 existing in its own right, separate from its members;
 - 1.2.2 continuing to exist even when its membership changes and when there are different office bearers;
 - 1.2.3 suing and being sued in its own name;
 - 1.2.4 being able to own property and other assets; and
 - 1.2.5 acquiring rights, including obligations and entering into legal and binding transactions.
- 1.3 The Society does not pursue any financial gain for or through its members and no member is entitled to any of the assets of the Society by reason of membership, either before or after the dissolution of the Society.
- 1.4 No member of the Society and no member of the Council of the Society are liable for the fulfilment of any duty or the payment of any debt, which might be incurred by the Society.
- 1.5 Donations made to the Society must be underpinned by documents of agreement outlining the objectives and requirements pertaining to the donation. These must be approved by Council and ratified by members at a BGM. The Society further undertakes to honour the specific undertakings of agreements pertaining to donations.

2. AIMS

The aim of The Society is to promote Plant Pathology in Southern Africa by:

- 2.1 Acting as the official mouthpiece of plant pathologists in Southern Africa;
- 2.2 Providing opportunities for plant pathologists to meet and exchange information of mutual scientific interest;
- 2.3 Coordinating affiliation with related scientific societies in Southern Africa, as well as with corresponding and related foreign societies;
- 2.4 Gathering and disseminating information on Plant Pathology.

3. POWERS

In order to promote the objectives of SASPP, the Society will be empowered to in a non-profit manner:

- 3.1 Register, sell, hire or let, or deal with in any other way, any movable or immovable property in the name of the Society.
- 3.2 Operate and close any accounts, whether bank accounts, deposit accounts, savings accounts, investment accounts or other accounts.
- 3.3 Acquire, undertake, cede, assign, take over, dispose of, give up and/or in any other manner deal with any rights or duties.
- 3.4 Register or deal with in some other manner to the advantage of the Society, any trade mark or heraldic registration or copyright or other protection in respect of any emblem, names, words, marks, publications and other things used, developed or designed by the Society.
- 3.5 Take on such power and authority that it needs to be able to achieve the objectives of the Society in terms of this constitution.
- 3.6 The Society's funds shall be deposited into an account/s at a registered bank or other financial institution and all financial transactions shall be conducted by means of such account/s.
- 3.7 After the election of a new Council, the president shall inform the manager of the bank or financial institution where the Society's funds are invested, of the newly elected Treasurer and shall ensure that the Treasurer is granted authority to transact upon the Society's account/s.
- 3.8 All powers granted in terms of this clause shall only be exercised in a manner that is consistent with this constitution.

4. MEMBERSHIP

4.1 Eligibility and application for membership

- 4.1.1 Any person possessing at least a bachelor's degree in Plant Pathology or an equivalent degree in a related discipline, from a recognised university, and registerable as a Natural Scientist or Natural Scientist in Training in accordance with the requirements of the Natural Scientific Professions Act 106 of 1993, as amended, is eligible for Ordinary Membership.
- 4.1.2 Any person or group associated with Plant Pathology or a related discipline or activity and deemed acceptable by the Council on the grounds of training, experience or position is eligible for membership in any of the categories listed in this Constitution.
- 4.1.3 Application for membership shall be on the prescribed form obtainable from the Secretary. All applications shall be considered for approval by the Council. The successful applicant becomes a member on payment of the appropriate membership fee.

4.2 Membership categories:

Membership may be conferred in one of the following categories:

- 4.2.1 Ordinary Members:
Ordinary membership may be conferred on any person possessing at least a bachelor's degree in Plant Pathology, or an equivalent degree in a related discipline from a recognized university, or otherwise deemed acceptable by Council on the grounds of training, experience or position.
- 4.2.2 Affiliated Members:
Any person possessing a technical diploma in Plant Pathology or a related discipline, or whose work is connected with Plant Pathology or a related discipline, but who does not qualify for Ordinary Membership, may be admitted as an Affiliated Member.
- 4.2.3 Student Members:
Bona fide postgraduate students in Plant Pathology or a related discipline, who are not employed on a full-time basis, may apply for student membership.
- 4.2.4 Honorary Members:

The Society may confer Honorary Membership upon retired members on the grounds of outstanding contributions to Plant Pathology in southern African. They shall be eligible to pay half the ordinary membership fee. Guidelines for the acceptance of Honorary Membership are those outlined in the “Policies and Procedures” document of the Society.

4.2.6 Fellows

The Society will elect Fellows in recognition of outstanding service and support to plant pathology over an extended period of time. Guidelines for the election of Fellows are those outlined in the “Policies and Procedures” document of the Society.

4.2.7 Patrons:

Any person, organization or institution may, with the approval of Council, become a Patron of the Society after payment of an annual fee to be determined at the Biennial General Meeting.

4.3 Rights and privileges

4.3.1 In compliance with Statute 5 of the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), the Society endorses the right of scientists throughout the world to associate with and participate in international scientific activities without discrimination on the basis of race, religion, political philosophy, ethnic origin, citizenship, language or sex.

4.3.2 Ordinary and Associate Members have all the rights and privileges of the Society, including the right to vote at General Meetings.

4.3.3 Honorary Members have all the rights and privileges of Ordinary Members but are exempt from membership fees.

4.3.4 Student and Affiliated Members have all the rights and privileges of Ordinary Members except the right to vote at General Meetings.

4.3.5 Patrons have all the rights and privileges of Ordinary Members. Each Patron may accredit a Representative to attend General Meetings. The credentials of the Representative must be submitted to the Secretary for ratification before the General Meeting.

4.3.6 All members shall have access to all scientific and social meetings organized by the Society and its recognized Local Branches, Sections and Groups.

4.3.7 All members shall receive all publications, notices and circulars distributed by the Society.

4.4 Membership fees

4.4.1 All membership fees shall be determined at the Biennial General Meeting (BGM). Provided that such fee may be increased by at least the prevailing CPI (Consumer Price Index) or such higher amount as the BGM may determine.

4.4.2 Membership fees of Associate and Student Members shall be one half of that paid by Ordinary Members.

4.5 Termination of membership

4.5.1 A person admitted as a member of the Society shall remain a member until he/she resigns in writing to the Secretary; or is two (2) years in arrears with the payment of membership fees; or has his/her membership terminated by the Council.

4.5.2 A person whose membership has been terminated because of non-payment of arrear membership fees may, within thirty (30) days of receiving notice to this effect, and after paying all arrear membership fees, as well as an additional levy equal to half of the prevailing annual fees, be reinstated as a member.

4.5.3 The Council shall be entitled to suspend or terminate the membership of any member on the basis of serious misconduct which has the effect of bringing the Society into disrepute, after having given such member the opportunity to make representations in their defence. A member whose membership is terminated by the Council shall be informed to this effect in writing.

5. REGIONS

The society shall function in the following regions:

5.1 Northern Region: The northern provinces of South Africa being Gauteng, Limpopo, and Mpumalanga west of the 30° meridian, as well as Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe;

- 5.2 Southern Region: Western Cape and Eastern Cape;
- 5.3 Eastern Region: KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga east of the 30° meridian, as well as Mozambique and Swaziland;
- 5.4 Central Region: Free State, North West and Northern Cape, as well as Lesotho.
- 5.5 Proposed changes to the delimitation of the regions may be made at the Biennial General Meetings.

6. COUNCIL

- 6.1 The business of the Society shall be conducted by a Council all of whose members shall reside in the same region, and which shall be situated in a different region every four (4) years rotating in the following cycle: North, East, Central, and South.
- 6.2 Written nominations for a complete Council, on official nomination forms, shall be submitted to the Secretary at least two months prior to the Biennial General Meeting. Each nomination shall bear the signatures of two enfranchised members as proposer and seconder, and the nominees shall express acceptance of the nominations by signature on the nomination form. If no nomination is received for any particular office on the Council, the office shall be filled by nomination and election at the Biennial General Meeting.
- 6.3 The Council shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The outgoing President shall serve a further year (1) on the new Council in an advisory, non-voting capacity.
- 6.4 Each region will elect a representative that will act as the regional facilitator for organising regional meetings, reporting on behalf of, and back to, their region, and other related activities.
- 6.5 The term of office of Council Members shall be four (4) years from 01 April to 31 March.
- 6.6 The Council may at its discretion co-opt two (2) additional persons and in the case of death, disability or resignation of a Council Member, a successor to serve for the unexpired term of office.
- 6.7 No Council Member shall receive a salary or any other compensation for services rendered to the Society.

- 6.8 The Council shall meet not less than twice a year and shall decide on its own operating procedures. The President or, in her/his absence the Vice-President, shall act as chairperson at Council Meetings.
- 6.9 Three (3) members shall constitute a quorum of the Council.
- 6.10 The Council shall have power to co-opt members for particular purposes.
- 6.11 The Council shall conduct the affairs of the Society in accordance with the terms and requirements of this Constitution and of any policies of the Society.
- 6.12 Each member of the Council shall be accountable only for his/her own acts, and shall not be accountable for any act done or authorised to which s/he has not expressly assented. No member of the Council shall incur any personal liability in respect of any loss or damage incurred through an act, authorised or allowed by her/him, in good faith for the benefit of the Society, although in excess of her/his legal powers. Provided that nothing herein contained shall indemnify a member of Council from gross negligence or wilful misconduct.

7. BIENNIAL CONGRESS

- 7.1 A Congress of the Society shall be held every two (2) years at a locality determined at the preceding Biennial General Meeting. Written notice including the agenda of the Biennial Congress shall be sent to each member at least sixty (60) days prior to the Congress.
- 7.2 The Biennial Congress shall include:
- 7.2.1 The Biennial General Meeting; and
- 7.2.2 A symposium for scientific discussion.
- 7.3 Arrangements for the Biennial Congress shall be made by a Congress Organising Committee (COC) in consultation with the Council and according to the relevant Policies.
- 7.4 The COC shall consist of three (3) members elected at the BGM of the Society until the next Congress.
- 7.4.1 All members of the COC should preferably reside in the centre where the next Congress is to be held.

7.4.2 The COC shall appoint its own convener and shall decide on its own procedure. It has the right of co-option.

7.5 The Vice-President shall be an *ex officio* member of and serve as liaison between the COC and the Council.

8. GENERAL MEETINGS

8.1 All members in good standing may attend the Biennial General Meeting and take part in the discussions.

8.2 The President or, in his/her absence the Vice-President, shall be the Chairperson at a BGM.

8.3 Twenty percent (20%) of the members in good standing of the Society shall constitute a quorum at a BGM.

8.4 The BGM shall deal with the following matters:

8.4.1 The President's report;

8.4.2 The Treasurer's report, which shall include a financial statement, audited by an auditor appointed by the Council, of funds received and administered by the Society;

8.4.3 Reports of Branches, Sections, Groups, Committees and Representatives of the Society;

8.4.4 Approval of the appointment of members of the Council for the next term of office;

8.4.5 Election of members of the Organizing Committee for the next Congress;

8.4.6 Confirmation of the appointment of the Society's representatives;

8.4.7 Transaction of any other business and the adoption of resolutions on any matter of importance to the Society.

8.5 Deferred Biennial General Meeting (BGM)

8.5.1 If a quorum of members in good standing is not present at the appointed time of a BGM, the meeting shall adjourn for thirty (30)

minutes. If a quorum is not present on reassembly, a Deferred Biennial General Meeting shall be held with those members present.

8.5.2 The Agenda prepared for the BGM shall be dealt with by the Deferred BGM.

8.5.3 The Deferred BGM shall have the same powers and functions as a BGM, but may neither consider nor adopt proposed changes to the Constitution of the Society.

8.6 Extraordinary General Meeting

8.6.1 An Extraordinary General Meeting may be convened by the Council when deemed necessary.

8.6.2 The Council must convene an Extraordinary General Meeting within thirty-five (35) days if requested in writing to do so by at least five percent (5%) of the members in good standing of the Society.

8.6.3 Notice of an Extraordinary General Meeting must be sent to members at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the date proposed for the meeting.

8.6.4 Only matters for which the Extraordinary General Meeting has been convened shall be dealt with at such a meeting.

8.6.5 Twenty (20%) per cent of the members in good standing of the Society shall constitute a quorum for an Extraordinary General Meeting.

9. AFFILIATIONS, BRANCHES, SECTIONS, GROUPS AND COMMITTEES

The Council may approve that the Society may:

9.1 affiliate with other organisations locally, regionally or internationally;

9.2 establish Local Branches in any centre;

9.3 establish Sections or Groups representing specific subject fields; and

9.4 appoint Committees to further the aims of the Society. Provided that any such Committee shall have a specific convenor, written terms of reference and shall report to the Council and the Biennial General Meeting.

- 9.5 Each Branch, Section or Group shall elect its own office bearers and may draw up its own Policies, which shall be submitted to the Council for approval.
- 9.6 Committees, Branches, Sections or Groups shall arrange their own meetings and functions.
- 9.7 The Council shall, if practical and possible, provide Committees, Branches, Sections and Groups with reasonable financial and other assistance.
- 9.8 Branches, Sections and Groups shall present written reports on their activities to the Biennial General Meeting.
- 9.9 The establishment, functions, and rules of procedure of all Local Branches, Sections, Groups and Committees of the Society shall be in accordance with the terms and requirements of this Constitution and of any policies of the Society.

10. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The rules and regulations relating to Awards made by the Society, Publicity and the holding of Congresses are outlined in a separate Policies and Procedures document. These Policies and procedures form part of the Constitution of the Society and are binding upon all of its members.

11. LANGUAGE MEDIUM

- 11.1 All communication by and of the Society including international and national notices, shall be in English.
- 11.2 The language used by speakers at any meeting or gathering of members may be any of the national languages of the country in which it is held, as considered appropriate by the speaker; however, the speaker should present summaries in English, where this is not the language of presentation. Any member will have the right to ask for a translation of any formal proposal or other official transaction where this was not given in English.

12. AMENDMENTS

- 12.1 This Constitution may be amended only during a Biennial General Meeting of the Society and by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members present

and entitled to vote whereas changes to the policies only require a simple majority (50% of quorum)..

- 12.2 Proposals for amendments shall be made in writing and shall be proposed and seconded by two members in good standing, and must reach the Secretary at least thirty (30) days prior to the BGM.
- 12.3 The Secretary shall circulate proposed amendments to all members to reach them at least ten (10) days prior to the BGM.
- 12.4 Proposed changes which are submitted to the Secretary but which cannot be considered by the BGM because of the lack of a quorum, shall be placed on the agenda of the following BGM.
- 12.5 Policies of the Society may be amended after acceptance of written or verbal proposals during a BGM by a simple majority vote of the members present who are in good standing. Provided that if the Council deems it necessary to change any policy between BGMs, it shall be entitled to do so, provided such changes are ratified at the next BGM.

13. DISSOLUTION

- 13.1 The Society may be dissolved after acceptance of a motion to this effect by a two thirds (2/3) majority of the members in good standing present at a Biennial General Meeting. The provisions of clauses 11.2 and 11.3 shall apply to any such motion.
- 13.2 Upon the dissolution of the Society and after payment of any liabilities, its assets shall be transferred to an institution, organisation or society having similar aims and nominated and approved by the BGM.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN SOCIETY FOR PLANT PATHOLOGY (SASPP)

1. INTRODUCTION:

These Policies have been adopted by the Southern African Society for Plant Pathology (“the Society”) in terms of its Constitution and are binding on all its members.

The policies may be amended as provided for in the Constitution.

2. SOCIETY AWARDS AND HONOURS:

The Society may honour members by electing them as Fellows of the Society or granting them honorary membership as provided for in the constitution. The Society also has various other awards that may be made to members or non-members, depending on the terms and conditions of the particular awards.

Rules of nomination:

- Written nominations with motivations must be signed by a proposer and seconder, both of whom must be members in good standing of the Society.
- The nomination must be submitted to the President of the Society.
- The deadline for nominations for this award will be 31st October in the year immediately preceding the biennial Congress.
- Nominations shall be adjudicated by a SASPP Awards Committee. The decisions of this committee will be final and no correspondence regarding these shall be entered into.
- No awards shall be made to the same person twice.
- The President of the Society shall present members with awards during the Biennial Congress.

3. SASPP Awards Committee

The Society shall convene an SASPP Awards Committee before the Biennial Congress to consider award nominations. The SASPP Awards Committee will normally consist of the President of the Society and four (4) additional Members, appointed by the Council. Each additional member of the Awards Committee must be a member in good standing of the Society for a period of at least five (5) years. In the case of “Fellowships” and the “Person Medal”, the committee

should include members holding that status. Nominations and the adjudication process shall be confidential..

2.1 Fellows

Any member of the Society may be elected as a Fellow in recognition for outstanding accomplishments in Plant Pathology as well as support for and service to the Society and to Plant Pathology in southern Africa.

To be considered for nomination as a Fellow, nominees must have:

- at least ten (10) years uninterrupted membership;
- served and promoted the interests of the Society; and
- made significant contributions to Plant Pathology in research, teaching, or extension services.

2.2 Honorary members

Honorary Membership is awarded to members, who have served the Society for extended periods of time, usually throughout their careers. Honorary Membership is typically awarded to members at the end of their careers and at the time of retirement. Although not mandatory, a guideline for this award is that it is made to leaders of the society, past office holders and recipients of major awards. Any member of the Society may nominate a person for election as a Honorary Member on the grounds of such significant contributions to Plant Pathology in southern Africa or to the Society.

To be considered for nomination as a Honorary member, nominees must have:

- had at least ten (10) years of uninterrupted membership;
- served and promoted the interests of the Society; and
- made significant contributions to Plant Pathology in research, teaching, or extension services.

2.3 The Christiaan Hendrik Persoon Medal:

The Christiaan Hendrik Persoon Medal is the most prestigious award of the Society and is made to members unequivocally known as world-leaders in the field of Plant Pathology. It recognises the highest levels of achievement in the field as judged by international standards.

To be considered for the Persoon medal, nominees must have:

- recognition as global leaders in Plant Pathology;
- served and promoted the interests of the Society;
- be long-standing and highly recognised members of the Society.

Any member of the Society may nominate a candidate for the award. The nomination must be fully motivated and signed by not less than ten (10) senior members of the Society, typically including Fellows and past recipients of the award.

The award shall be made not more often than once every four (4) years.

The award shall be an engraved medal with a gold content to be determined by the Council.

2.4 The John and Petakin Mildenhall Award

The award is made biennially to outstanding PhD students in the field of Plant Pathology who are South African citizens. The research may be either of an applied or a basic nature.

To be considered for the John and Petakin Mildenhall Award, nominees must have:

- demonstrate academic excellence and potential; and
- have at least one (1) publication in an accredited journal according to the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI).

Nominees should have been a member of the Society for at least two (2) years and will be given to students at a doctoral level.

Nominators must submit:

- a covering letter indicating the suitability of the nominee;
- a curriculum vitae of the nominee;
- copies of published journal articles; and
- a short essay (1500 words) by the nominee, outlining their research and the contribution this will make to plant pathology.

The Award will consist of a cash prize and a certificate.

2.5 J.E. Vanderplank Award

This award is made to an outstanding "young" plant pathologist based on evaluation of his or her research. Nominees must have received their doctoral (PhD) degree within the ten (10) year period immediately preceding January 1st of the year in which the award is made. This will thus normally be an individual who received his or her degree seven to ten (7-10 years) previously.

To be considered for the JE van der Plank award, the nominee must have:

- been a full members of the Society for at least five years; and
- published original research of high quality as judged by normal international standards. Guidelines used will include ISI metrics such as the H-factor.

Nominations should come from senior members of the Society.

The documents required to accompany any nomination for this award shall be the following:

- a current curriculum vitae of the nominee;
- reprints of the nominee's most significant papers to date;
- a letter of support from the nominator that clearly outlines the nominee's merits;
- at the nominator's discretion, additional supporting letters.

The award consists of a plaque. Presentation of the award will take place at a social function held during the Biennial Congress.

2.6 Applied Plant Pathology Award

This award specifically recognises the contributions of plant pathologists who have made significant contributions specifically in applied aspects of plant pathology. Under exceptional circumstances, this award can be made to persons who are not members of the Society

To be considered for the Applied Plant Pathology award, the nominee must have made a substantial contribution towards resolving plant disease problems.

The nomination for this award must include documentary evidence of the contribution to applied plant pathology.

The award consists of a certificate.

2.7 Publicity Award of the Society

This award is made to recognise his/her recent contributions towards promoting general public awareness of plant pathology and related issues.

To be considered for the Publicity award, the nominee:

- Must be a member of SASPP; and

- must have shown evidence of his/her outstanding contribution to promoting the general public awareness of plant pathology and related issues.

The nominator must be a member of good standing of the SASPP and self-nomination is not allowed.

The award may be made to the same person more than once.

The nomination must include documentary evidence of outstanding contributions to publicise Plant Pathology.

The award consists of a certificate.

3. PUBLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Society may publish newsletters, bulletins, information circulars or other publications intended to further the aims of the Society or to inform members, institutions or the public of the activities and achievements of the Society and its members or affiliates.
- 3.2 The Society may maintain and update an electronic website held in the public domain, and employ other electronic means, to disseminate news and information to further the aims of the Society or to inform members, institutions or the public of the activities and achievements of the Society and its members or affiliates.
- 3.3 The compilation, preparation and distribution of all publications shall be the responsibility of the Council.
- 3.4 General publications shall, if practically possible, normally be distributed free of charge to members.

4. BIENNIAL SASPP CONGRESS

- 4.1 The Congress shall consist of the scientific sessions at the biennial general meeting for the presentation of papers or posters by members and non-members. Congress sessions shall be open to the public.
- 4.2 Authors of papers and posters shall submit abstracts of such papers or posters to the secretary of the Congress Organizing Committee (COC) by the date prescribed in the preliminary notice of the Congress.

- 4.3 Abstracts of papers and posters shall be made available to all members of the Society, as well as to Patrons, sponsors, donors or other supporters.

5 CONGRESS ORGANISATION

The Congress Organizing Committee shall be responsible for all aspects of the organisation of the Congress, including:

- 5.1 Accommodation for delegates;
- 5.2 Venues for meetings, discussion groups, etc. and provision of all facilities and equipment such as data projectors and audio equipment;
- 5.3 Receptions, entertainment, meals, tea breaks and other refreshments;
- 5.4 Preparation and distribution of circulars and other notices, the Congress Programme, and the Congress Proceedings;
- 5.5 Arrangements for speakers for Keynote Addresses, although invitations to these speakers must come from the Council;
- 5.6 Choice of a speaker for the opening keynote address, presented in honour of Dr. J.E. Vanderplank, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the field of Plant Pathology and to science. This address should be thought-provoking, and capture the spirit of JE van der Plank's philosophy. Preference should be given to inviting leading South African scientists to make this presentation.
- 5.7. Choice of a speaker for the Dr. Ethel M. Doidge memorial lecture. This should be in the field of microbial systematics/taxonomy, or a related topic.
- 5.7 Invitation of persons to chair the congress sessions;
- 5.8 Acceptance of papers and posters;
- 5.9 Arrangements for the evaluation of oral and poster presentations by student members of the Society;
- 5.10 All financial arrangements for the Congress;
- 5.11 Report to Council, within three months of the Biennial Congress, on all expenditure incurred and income received during the Congress.