

## Draft SA WISE Constitution

### **Article 1: Name**

The name of the organisation ~~shall be called~~ constituted by this document will be the **Association of South African Women in Science and Engineering**.

The organisation's shortened name will be SA WISE.

### **Article 2: Liability**

1. SA WISE will exist in its own right and have its own legal personality including the ability to:
  - Exist even when its membership or office bearers change;
  - Be able to own property and other possessions; and
  - Be able to sue and be sued in its own name.
- ~~1.2.~~ No member of SA WISE shall will by virtue of her/his/their membership have any claim to the assets of the association.
- ~~2.3.~~ No member of SA WISE shall will be liable for fulfilling any obligation or for settling any debts incurred by the association.
4. SA WISE may, at its discretion, award any member or office-bearer reasonable compensation for services rendered.

### **Article 3: Objectives**

The objectives of SA WISE are:

1. To raise the profile of women scientists and engineers.
2. To highlight problems faced specifically by women in science and engineering.
3. To lobby for the advancement of women in science and engineering.
4. To provide input to the development of science policy in South Africa.
5. To provide leadership and role models for young people wishing to enter the fields of science and engineering.

### **Article 4: Powers of the Organisation**

1. To raise and receive funds for the purpose of achieving the objectives of the organization, and to maintain accounts and deposits.
2. To form partnerships with other ethical, charitable or corporate organisations or individuals which help the organization to achieve its objectives.
3. To undertake all educational, printing and publishing services that will benefit the organization and provide information and advice to all interested parties.
4. To apply for and receive financial help in the form of donations, grants and gifts to be used to help the organization achieve its objectives.
5. To pay from the organization's funds all lawful expenses incurred to achieve the organisation's objectives.
6. To enable members to elect voluntary committees. SA WISE may take on any power and authority that it believes it needs to be able to achieve the objectives that are stated in this constitution.

7. [SA WISE has the power and authority to raise funds or to invite and receive contributions.](#)
8. [SA WISE has the power to buy, hire or exchange for anything that it needs to achieve its objectives.](#)

#### **Article 5: Membership and Membership Fees**

1. Membership will be open to all women who:
  - are working, or have worked, professionally in South Africa in the fields of science or engineering, or
  - hold a B Tech diploma, a BSc or BSc(Eng) degree or higher degree in science or engineering, or
  - are, or have been, school teachers of science, biology or mathematics in South Africa.
2. Membership will be open to all men in the above categories who wish to associate themselves with the objectives of SA WISE.
3. Associate membership will be open to undergraduate science students and persons who wish to associate themselves with the objectives of SA WISE.
4. Application for membership ~~shall~~[will](#) be on the prescribed form obtainable from Branch or National Committees or via email [or the SAWISE website.](#)
5. Any person who has been admitted as a member of SA WISE ~~shall~~[will](#) retain ~~her/his~~[their](#) membership until ~~she/het~~[they](#) resigns, or until ~~her/his~~[their](#) membership fees are 12 months in arrears, or until ~~her/his~~[their](#) membership is terminated by the National Committee.
6. Membership fees ~~shall~~[will](#) be determined annually by the National Committee. Reduced fees for students and ~~or~~ retired persons will be decided upon by the National Committee.

#### **Article 56: Committees**

1. Branch Committees shall be elected at each centre where a branch of SA WISE is established. These will consist of a Chair, a Secretary plus two members. Additional members can be co-opted onto Branch Committees at the discretion of the Committee. The terms of office of Branch Committees shall be two years. Members of the Branch Committees shall not be eligible for election for more than two consecutive terms of office, unless there is a definite need for continuity.
2. A National Committee shall be elected to oversee national functions, including the chair, the treasury and the administration of the web site and mailing list. The regional chairs will be represented on the National Committee and will be involved in all decision making. Nominations for these positions will be called for from all existing members of SA WISE. All members of SA WISE will be asked to vote for the members of the National Committee and a simple majority will be required for election. In the case of a tied vote members will be asked to vote again. The term of office of the National Committee shall be two years.
3. If there is only one active Branch Committee then that will become the de facto National Committee. Once more branches are established then a new National Committee can be elected.

~~4. Article 6~~ All Committee decisions shall be reached via committee consensus. All Branch Committee decisions shall be communicated to the National Committee. The National Committee may reverse a Branch Committee decision in the event that the decision violates the objectives outlined in Article 3.

#### **Article 7: Meetings**

1. Meetings of branches (commonly in the form of Annual General Meetings) shall be held at the discretion of the Branch Committees but members may request a meeting. At least one meeting must be held every year. The quorum for these meetings will be 10% of the paid-up membership.
2. Meetings of Branch Committees ~~shall~~will be at the discretion of the Chair and members of each committee. At least one meeting must be held every year.
3. Meetings of the National Committee shall be at the discretion of the Chair and members of the committee but it is envisaged that most of the business of the committee will be by distance communication. At least one meeting must be held every year.
4. Any meeting may be held virtually (including via Skype, IRC or other appropriate communication platform).
5. As far as possible SA WISE must take reasonable steps to ensure the identity of members attending virtual meetings.

#### **Article 78: Fundraising and Financial Statements**

1. SA WISE ~~shall~~will be permitted to raise funds from the private or public sector. All money will be deposited into a central account, which the National treasurer will manage. Requests for money should be made in writing by the person concerned and must be endorsed by the regional chair.
2. The National Treasurer shall submit an audited financial statement of the assets and liabilities of SA WISE to all branches on an annual basis. An auditor or honorary auditor shall be appointed by the National Committee.
3. The SA WISE financial year shall run from 1 October to 30 September.

#### **Article 89: Amendments to the Constitution**

The Constitution can be changed by a 2/3 majority of all members. Members can accept or decline changes by email ~~or at a meeting especially convened for this~~ ~~still needs purpose (e.g~~ AGM). A written notice must go out not less than 14 days before the meeting at which the changes to the constitution are going to be proposed. The notice must indicate the proposed changes to the constitution that will be discussed at the meeting.

#### **Article 910: Dissolution of SA WISE**

SA WISE may be dissolved if at least two-thirds of the members present and voting at a meeting convened for the purpose of considering such matter, are in favour of the dissolution.

On dissolution of SA WISE, after all liabilities have been met, its assets shall be handed over to any organisation or society designated and approved by the National Committee- that has similar objectives.