

ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
Minutes	and no comments offered.
Matters arising	Note: Actions arising from previous minutes are <i>in italics</i> . Current actions are underlined. Actions arising from Finance Sub-Committee (“FSC”) meetings are noted in italics (<i>11 Feb FSC</i>).
3 ASSA Comms	<p>3. Communication</p> <p>3.1 Communications document <i>Permanent item</i> The latest draft is attached. Pages 4, 5 and 6 were updated.</p> <p>3.2 Website <i>Permanent item: <u>Section Directors and Centre Chairs</u> are reminded to ask John Gill to effect any change to their pages on the website if they cannot do it themselves.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Work is in progress to refresh the Publications pages on the website (<u>J Gill, D Bullis, C Rijdsdijk, C Stewart, Auke</u>) 2) Hosting of previous editions of Nightfall is under discussion (<u>D Bullis, C Stewart, J Gill</u>). 3) SGAS “marketing” – including for e-version - to be placed on website when available from Struik (<u>Auke, J Gill</u>) <p>3.3 Update/Comments from Centres and Section Directors <i>Permanent item: <u>Section Directors and Centre Chairs</u> are welcome to send any item of note to L Cross in prep of the Council meeting to include in the agenda.</i></p> <p>3.3.1 Change of Johannesburg Observatory Landlord Alison Coulter gave a short update on the change of Landlord of Johannesburg Observatory site from NRF SAASTA to the South African Radio Astronomy Observatory (SARAO). Handover process has commenced and is apparently likely to only be completed in ~ a year and a half.</p> <p>3.4 Cooperation between Centres and ASSA Piet Strauss started a general discussion on how Centres can cooperate for mutual benefit. He noted new opportunities, e.g., Durban and Johannesburg Centres shared virtual meetings and potential candidates from far afield to present at Centre meetings. M Reitz also noted similar experiences and noted “the world is our oyster” now.</p> <p>Further to discussion around security of online sessions, these options were noted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) People who control the meetings are responsible for managing the session link; 2) A notification can be sent to ASSA_Announce .io mail group but then the meeting details would need to be requested from the meeting coordinator or a person asked to register to attend. This to ensure that bots do not also try and join the meeting; 3) A notification can be shared with other Centre Chairs for distribution; 4) Considerations of how Country Members can also benefit to be given: a curated list for Country Members, or an .io group, which could be copied. <p>3.4 Other Astronomical Societies / Affiliations <i>Permanent item</i></p> <p>3.4.1 African Astronomical Society (“AfAS”) <i>From 2020: Niruj Mohan Ramanujam, Chairperson, Outreach Committee, African Astronomical Society https://www.africanastronomicalsociety.org contacted ASSA for</i></p>

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	<p><i>cooperation on several items.</i></p> <p>L Cross wrote to Niruj who confirmed there is no outstanding item at this time to discuss and ASSA Members can be alerted to the AfAS conference 8 – 11 March. (Suggestion: Before the item is closed: consider finding suitable place for links to “Other Astronomical Societies/Affiliations” on the website).</p> <p>3.4.2 NRF/SAAO App (restricted discussion) <i>(21 Sep) An app is in progress by the SAAO on which the SAAO would like input from ASSA. As the app has not yet been launched, this info should be treated as restricted information.</i></p> <p><u>L Cross</u> wrote to Pran Govender at SAAO asking if there is any outstanding item to discuss or to be shared with ASSA members and undertook to follow up with him.</p> <p>3.5 Astronomy Education <i>(20 Apr) Council agreed proposal with aim to curate information supplied electronically to deserving parties to further ASSA aims.</i> <i>(8 June) It was agreed that the first step was to collect and curate diverse information, with links on the website for people to browse & access.</i> <i>(13 July) A Versfeld agreed to be custodian of content for now.</i> <i>(16 Nov) Doug Bullis shared his work after the meeting ref to Astronomy Starter Kit.pdf attached to the minutes. Doug spoke with 3 educators and a secondary school librarian on how to best introduce young people to astronomy, aka a 'Starter Kit'. Doug intend to reproduce an extensively illustrated version in the next Nightfall.</i></p> <p>The FSC at their meeting 11 Feb proposed that a Section Director – Astronomy Education, be sought and appointed. <u>AJ Nel</u> offered to draft a short definition of the scope of the role for consideration.</p> <p>Council discussed the proposal. Key points raised which will be considered in due course once the role is agreed by Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) It would be good if ASSA website can point to material/resources in support of the country’s education system (which could be useful to Educators/Teachers) as well as for general astronomy education of visitors to the ASSA website; 2) Meeting was informed of the Special Edition of Nightfall (referred to as a Starter Kit) which was recently shared by D Bullis on ASSA-Discussion further to his own research in content and discussion with people in education on what their needs may be. 3) It was proposed that a link similar to that of Ask an Astronomer be incorporated on the website who can field a question related to the current curriculum; 4) It was noted that Communication and Education go hand in hand. Bosman Olivier made the point that ASSA need to be more proactive in outward communication. He referred to the recent 2020’s Great Conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn which ASSA did not place anything in the media. He noted that ASSA has specialists / experts in the community that can be called upon to draft content and make this available to the media. Auke noted that there has been lack of press releases. 5) The scope can cover both a push and a pull approach. 6) The scope can include publications, general links on website to external trusted resources, formal support of the education system in some form. 7) (Input received after the meeting: Postings on https://assa.saao.ac.za/communications/ and https://assa.saao.ac.za/outreach/ to be considered)

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	<p>C Rijdsdijk offered his help in support of this area, noting his long experience in the field of Astronomy education having been instrumental in having Astronomy introduced in the curriculum in 1996 and written a publication in support in 2000.</p> <p>Action arising: The scope and role must first be agreed. (<u>Council</u>) To assist the process, <u>L Cross</u> to draft a discussion document.</p> <p>(Note “Astronomy Education” on the site https://www.africanastronomicalsociety.org/)</p> <p>3.6 Letter for your neighbourhood <i>(8 June) From Oleg Toumilovitch to ASSA-Discussion on 30 March 2020: The idea is to compile a 1-A4 page document, formally undersigned by ASSA, which would highlight an importance of keeping outside lighting of houses to the minimum and importance of correct installation of lighting devices. (13 July) <u>Douglas Bullis and Allen Versfeld</u> kindly volunteered to start a draft. Council agreed that this item be included in the scope of the previous item.</i></p>
4	<p>4. ASSA Publications</p> <p>4.1 SGAS 2021 <i>(16 Nov) <u>AJ</u> to send put a notice to all advising the eta for delivery. Chris de Coning reminded that he needs 3 copies for the archives (<u>AJN</u>) Further to RandomHouse being made aware that 2020 edition of the Sky Guide was distributed instead of 2021, the correct booklets were received late December by ASSA. Several queries from Country and Hon Members were received by ASSA asking the whereabouts of their Sky Guides.</i></p> <p><i>At the FSC meeting held 11 Feb, <u>AJ Nel</u> agreed to send out another email to all Country and Hon Members informing of the delay and advising when and how their booklets were mailed.</i></p> <p>4.2 MNASSA <i>Case Rijdsdijk noted that he and Dr Glass are discussing the future of MNASSA. He noted the content of MNASSA should include “Everything we do”.</i></p> <p>4.3 Nightfall <i>Note item 3.5 2) (Added after the meeting: “Nightfall articles turn up on a Google search originate from <u>ISSUU.COM</u> web page, not from the ASSA's link to that page.” (<u>C Stewart, D Bullis, L Cross</u> to discuss in the first instance)</i></p> <p>4.4 Other Astronomy related publications <i>The FSC at their meeting 11 Feb discussed ASSA potentially supporting further Astronomy related publications. Struik has expressed interest in the publication of astronomy material developed by ASSA members. <u>Authors</u> of appropriate material could discuss with Struik if they are interested and revert to Council with a recommendation regarding potential ASSA endorsement / financial support.</i></p> <p><i>Proposals agreed at the meeting to be further discussed by the FSC and then tabled with Council for consideration and sign off:</i></p>

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	<p>1) ASSA to develop parameters for involvement in publications authored by ASSA Members;</p> <p>2) Governance needs to be established; to be separate from the Editorial Committee which manages the publications produced by ASSA and include at least Treasurer and President.</p> <p>4.4.1 "Explore Beyond the Universe" Case Rijdsdijk recapped the background in that he published the book "Explore Beyond the Universe" as a resource book first printed in 2000 and reprinted several times. Pearson declined to up-date it and handed copyright to Case who decided to rewrite the book as "Our Place in the Universe"; a resource book for educators and other facilitators, not restricted to the CAPS curriculum, but targeting a wider range of facilitators or amateurs. <u>Case</u> wants to publish the book and he will be in touch with Struik. He will also consider formalising request to ASSA to place publication on the website as ebook.</p>
5	<p>5. Scholarships <i>Permanent item: R20 000 per scholarship in 2020 for ASSA Scholarship and Cooke Scholarship. Scholarships for 2021 is suspended.</i> The item minuted under 8.2 was recapped.</p>
6	<p>6. ASSA Membership 6.1 Country Membership 2020 Country Membership 2021 AJ Nel provided an update on current membership, ~ 8 or 9 new members.</p> <p>6.2 Honorary Membership ASSA has 12 Hon Members. This is confirmed on the website http://assa.saa.ac.za/about/awards/honorary-members/ Auke noted that the list is also in the SGAS 2020 (please check if same in 2021 issue). It was noted and confirmed current number of Hon Members should not exceed 15.</p>
7	<p>7 Governance 7.1 Register ASSA for tax under a VDP (Voluntary ...) Application <i>(27 Nov 19) Proposal by CTF Services (below the agenda) was accepted: "bold highlighted portions seem to be missing from the constitution". <u>AJ Nel</u> undertook to compile a draft update to the Constitution and if approved ratified at the next AGM. (21 Sep) <u>AJ Nel</u> confirmed that the draft amendments to the Constitution was sent to <u>CTFS</u> for sign off before presenting to Council and finalising the document. <u>AJ Nel</u> informed the process is being run in parallel with finalising the 2020 financials.</i></p> <p>7.2 AGM wrap up <i>(28 Sep) Overbeek Medal Awards: Ian Glass kindly initiated process with Pagliari for 3 additional medals and boxes and to have 2 medals engraved for: 2020 Magda Streicher, 2021 Clyde Foster. The 3rd medal will be kept at SAAO.</i> Ian Glass confirmed receipt of the medals and kindly provided photos (attached) of the medals which were shared with Magda and Clyde. The FSC at their meeting on 11 Feb proposed that the handover of medals to Magda and Clyde proceed, considering that the AGM is likely to be held virtually. Council agreed that: 1) The AGM be held virtually; 2) Handover of medals be arranged in Gauteng. <u>ASSA Pretoria Centre</u> is willing to host a small celebratory session;</p>

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	<p>3) <u>Chris Stewart</u> to be the custodian of the medals until the handover;</p> <p>4) Arrangements to commence to get the Medals from SAAO. <u>Ian Glass and AJ Nel</u> noted that transport of rare metals need to be via special courier and be properly insured. (<u>AJ Nel</u> offered to get 3 quotes).</p> <p>7.3 Succession planning The FSC at the meeting 11 Feb discussed options of reaching out to potential candidates willing to serve as Council members from the next AGM.</p> <p>The FSC also proposed that as it was not possible to appoint a designated Incoming Vice President at the 2020 AGM, that Chris Stewart remains as ASSA President for another year. No objection was received from members at the meeting to this proposal. Council thus agreed to the proposal and the motion was carried: Chris Stewart will remain as ASSA President until the AGM in 2022.</p> <p>7.4 Review upcoming items in Checklist Council was asked to note the upcoming deadlines: 31 Mar: Closing date for nominations for: Honorary Members and Awards. 15 April: Deadline for Secretary to send to President and Vice President list of nominations. 30 April: Deadline for agreement with Struik of the printing schedule for next SGAS.</p>
8	<p>Financial</p> <p>8 Financial Matters</p> <p>8.1 2020 Financials Draft financials were received from <u>CTFS</u>; queries are being progressed by <u>AJ Nel</u>; the process is likely to be finalised within the next 2 weeks. Thereafter the financials will be reviewed /audited and signed off by the <u>Independent Compiler, Peter Carlisle</u> whose Auditing business is independent of the normal bookkeeping and tax work done by CTF services for the ASSA.</p> <p>8.2 ASSA Investments Further to recent communications on ASSA Discussion, AJ Nel recapped the history of the 2021 Scholarships having been suspended: At the time when it was discussed at the FSC and tabled at Council in mid-2019, the ASSA Glazier Fund Investment (a 2-year-old investment which hold funds for both Scholarships) lost funds, and it was agreed to preserve funds.</p> <p>At the FSC meeting held 11 Feb, AJ Nel advised higher than anticipated growth achieved by the Glazier Fund and proposed that R40 000 is drawn from the fund which could be deployed for bursaries in 2022. The FSC agreed this proposal to be presented to Council. Council was asked if there were any objections to this proposal. No objections were received, and thus the motion was carried to withdraw R40 000 from the ASSA Glazier Fund.</p> <p>8.3 Budget items 2020/21 At the FSC meeting of 11 Feb, AJ Nel confirmed R30 000 is available for the rest of the year for worthy causes for deliberation. This was noted by Council.</p>
9	<p>ASSET</p> <p>9 ASSET No new information to report.</p>

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10	Royal Obs 200th anniversary	<p>10. ASSA Centenary, Friday 1 July 2022</p> <p>Further to the alert from Chris de Coning a notification of ASSA Centenary (refer to the attached summary) was sent to all on 31 Jan and ideas requested for commemoration/celebration. Ideas thus far received:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Whatever happened to the Glass Plates in SA's observatories (Doug Bullis) 2) New Landlords of Jhb Observatory to be included in planning (refer Short History Note) 3) Shared activity/ies by all Centres <p><u>L Cross</u> to start a document of suggestions.</p>
11	IAU 2024	<p>11. IAU 2024</p> <p><i>Permanent note: All input for the event be forwarded to Case Rijdsdijk for onward communication to the Organising Committee. https://astronomy2024capetown.org/</i></p>
12	General	<p>12. General items</p> <p>12.1 2018 ASSA Symposium Presentation</p> <p>Auke appealed to the meeting for help with the videos he recorded at the 2018 ASSA Symposium, 26 presentations, as he has not had time to process these. Ideally, these should be edited into YouTube and then placed on the ASSA YouTube Channel. <u>Alison Coulter</u> offered her assistance (as a video editor by trade) and the meeting was grateful and delighted! Auke noted that other videos recorded - such as the one by Babara Cunow which has been watched 27 000 times - can also go to the ASSA Channel. It is assumed that <u>Allen Versfeld</u> is the owner of the channel.</p> <p>12.2 Loss of the Night project</p> <p>Marius Reitz noted this nice project in the Skype chat: https://actionproject.eu/citizen-science-pilots/loss-of-the-night/ <u>L Cross</u> to share with Centre Chairs, Allen Versfeld (as Citizen Science Director), ASSA_Discussion.</p>
14	Closure	<p>C Stewart thanked attendees for their contribution and the meeting closed at 7.20pm.</p> <p>Next meetings proposed :</p> <p>17 May, 19 July at 6pm - 7pm. And the AGM on 4 August.</p> <p>The Financial Sub Committee (FSC) will meet the week before the monthly meetings.</p>

Minutes Approved: _____ Date: _____

Attachments in support of minutes:

In support of item 3.1 : ASSA Communication 21 02 12

In support of item 7.2 : Overbeek Medal Magda Streicher 2020, Overbeek Medal Clyde Foster 2021, Overbeek Medal Front

In support of item 10 : A Short History of ASSA

In support of item 7.1

23.3.3 APPROVAL OF PBO

Section 30 which gives the Commissioner the right to approve a public benefit organisation for the purposes of the Act provides that the Commissioner will approve such an organisation if

- it complies with such conditions as the Minister may prescribe
- it has submitted to the Commissioner a copy of its constitution, will or other written instrument under which it has been established in terms of which it is:
 - required to have at least three unconnected persons to accept fiduciary responsibility

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- **prohibited from directly or indirectly distributing any funds to any person (otherwise than in the course of any public benefit activity) and is required to utilise its funds solely for the objects for which it has been established**
- required on dissolution to transfer its assets to a section 30(3)(b)(iii) organisation (see below). In the case of a branch or agency of an association incorporated and tax exempt in another country, it can also distribute the assets of the organisation to any other person provided that those assets were acquired from a source outside the Republic
- **is prohibited from receiving any donation which is revocable at the instance of the donor**
- **required to submit to the Commissioner any amendments to its constitution**

- the Commissioner is satisfied that it is not knowingly party to a tax-avoidance scheme
- **it has not paid remuneration to any employee, office bearer, or member which is excessive**
- it complies with reporting requirements determined by the Commissioner

Note that a PBO no longer has to be registered in terms of the Non-Profit Organisations Act (Act 71 of 1997) to qualify for tax exemption, but, the Director of Non-Profit Organisations as defined in that Act can request the Commissioner to withdraw the approval of any PBO if it has been convicted of any offence under the Act.

END

Checklist (covered under Governance item 7)

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| 1 Feb | Scholarship application dead line |
| 31 Mar | Closing date for nominations for: Honorary Members and Awards |
| 15 April | Deadline for Secretary to send to President and Vice President list of nominations |
| 30 April | Deadline for agreement with Struik of the printing schedule for next SGAS |
| 1 June | Call for nominations for Council; Annual review of website |
| 1 June | New Country Membership fees to be agreed by Council |
| 30 Jun | Closing date for nominations for Council, receipt of Section reports, receipt of report from Scholarships Convenor, submission of items for placing on the Agenda of the AGM, Financial year end; Council to review appointment and roles of all Council Appointees including the Section Directors; |
| 1 Jul | Submission of annual updated ASSA membership form, Country Members: Subs renewal |
| 31 Jul | Closing date for ballot for Council nominations: Centre AGMs to be concluded before the AGM; |
| AGM | 1 st Wed Aug. 21 business days before 1 st Wed in Aug: Deadline for members to receive notice |
| 1 Oct | Appointment/Negotiations with SGAS Editor for next edition. Open negotiations with Struik |
- Annual refresh of the Communications document after the AGM
- END**