



ASSA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

DATE	4 October 2022	TME	18:30 – 19:24	VENUE	Via Jitsi
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ATTENDANCE

Council	Role
Dr Daniel Cunnama	President (Chair)
Chris Stewart	Vice President
Lerika Cross	Secretary
Amith Rajpal	Chair - Durban Centre
Derek Duckitt	Chair – Hermanus Centre
Dr Christian Hettlage	Chair – Cape Centre, Web Master

Appointees

Angus Burns	Observing Director
Auke Slotegraaf	SGAS Editor
Bruce Dickson	Cosmology Director
Dave Blane	Double & Variable Star and Photometry & Spectroscopy Director (Acting)
Dr Sally MacFarlane	Communications Director

Apologies (a) and Absentees

Dr Pierre de Villiers (a)	Vice President
Adv AJ Nel (a)	Treasurer
Case Rijdsdijk (a)	Council Member, Chair – Garden Route Centre
Dr Ian Glass (a)	Council Member
Chris de Coning	ASSA Archiving, Historical Director
Johan Smit	Chair - Pretoria Centre
John Gill	Web Manager
Allen Versfeld	Citizen Science
Dr Claire Flanagan (a)	Convenor of Scholarships
Eddy Nijeboer	Membership Secretary
Kos Coronaios	Outreach, Media Liaison
Martin Heigan (a)	Imaging Director
Tim Cooper (a)	Comet, Asteroid, Meteor (CAM) Director
Carmel Ives	Chair - Johannesburg Centre
Thinus van der Merwe	Chair - Bloemfontein Centre

Jitsi meeting link: <https://meet.jit.si/ASSAMeet>

No meeting recording as Jitsi interface changed

	Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
1	Welcome Apology	D Cunnama opened the 1 st ASSA Council meeting for 2022/23, welcoming Council members. Apologies received before & after meeting are noted in Attendance list.
2	Previous Minutes & Matters arising	Minutes of meeting 12 July 2022 (attached) and the AGM (available at https://assa.saa.ac.za/about/council-and-officers/agm-reports/) were accepted. Note: Actions arising from previous minutes are in italics. Current actions are underlined.
3	ASSA Comms	3. Communication <u>C Hettlage</u> undertook to follow up with SAAO IT about generic email addresses (attached) on ASSA website which requires to linking to corresponding personal addresses; changes are in red. 3.2 Communication with Entities such as DSI, Astronomical Societies / Affiliations Highlights from Council’s discussion on formalising relationships with external Entities:

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	<p>Daniel informed that key figures of the Department of Science Innovation (“DSI”) and African Astronomical Society (“AfAS”) will be contributing at the upcoming Centenary Symposium, thus strengthening relationships with ASSA, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Takalani Nemaungani, Director Global Projects / Chief Director, Astronomy portfolio, DSI. · Charles Takalana: AfAS, Head of Secretariat. <p>Daniel advised the DSI is willing to work with ASSA on projects and funding would be possible but amounts still to be confirm, could be ~R100k to R200k.</p> <p>Daniel’s proposal to offer free ASSA membership to relevant government entities, professional astronomers, was accepted. Outstanding detail to be unpacked in the session to be scheduled for item 4.1.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Chris Stewart’s proposal was accepted for ASSA to create a separate category for entities, i.e., “Associate”. One such membership has already been created, i.e. Botswana Astronomical Society (“BAS”) with the Secretary as the member in the Country Membership database. Free membership was offered to the Society but no Sky Guide due to cross border delivery. 2) If individual members of such entities would like to join as ASSA, they would need to provide their Affiliation membership in support of their application for Country membership. Will a Sky Guide be offered to individuals? How many free Sky Guides can ASSA afford? Maybe only committee members of such entities will be eligible? 3) Mutual benefits to the entities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Communication channels can be set up to share main events with each other · Cooperation in hosting Star Parties · Mutual advertising in publications · Offer Sky Guides for sale at entities such as Planetaria in South Africa 4) List of entities, key contacts, and proposed invitation to be drafted (<u>D Cunnama, S MacFarlane</u>). Entities noted thus far: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DSI: Takalani Nemaungani - AfAS: Charles Takalana. Niruj Mohan Ramanujam of AfAS already contacted ASSA when he set up a Whatsapp for all Astronomical Societies in Africa. The people he linked to the group is Lerika and Sally. - IAU: the IAU General Assembly is scheduled to held Cape Town, August 2024 https://astronomy2024.org/ - Planetarium Associations <p>3.3 Dark Sky</p> <p>Daniel provided an update further to the call he sent out 12 September for projects in support of the DSI Astro Tourism Strategy Plan and the input he finalised on behalf of ASSA input to the DSI on 16 September. He advised that a further meeting will be held next week and that the final plan is due to be presented to government in January following which funding will be known.</p> <p>Departments of Science and Innovation and Department of Tourism are currently involved, and <u>Daniel</u> undertook to inform that the scope of ASSA’s projects also falls within the scope of Department of Environmental Affairs.</p> <p>Funding from government is likely to be dependent on ASSA being registered as a PBO.</p> <p>3.4 2018 ASSA Symposium Presentation <i>(15 Feb) Auke appealed for help with 26 videos recorded at 2018 ASSA Symposium to edit into YouTube, place on ASSA YouTube Channel.</i></p> <p>Lerika offered to approach Alison and Amith Rajpal on progress.</p>

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		<p>3.5 ASSA Cloud repository <i>((7 Mar) Council agreed to explore options for a suitable cloud-based repository which will hold ASSA historical information which Chris de Coning has been collecting for over 20 years (9 May) FSC approved the purchase of a Google One 2TB cloud storage at R 1599 pa (30 May) AJ confirmed purchase of Google One 2TB (7 July) Chris de C informed storage only allows 5 people to share, have admin rights. <u>Chris de C</u> to provide explanatory document to get implementation off the ground.</i></p> <p><u>Lerika</u> to follow-up with <u>Chris de Coning</u></p> <p>3.6 ASSA Special Project – Global Meteor Network Project <i>(7 Mar) Council fully supported proposal for ASSA participation in the global Meteor ASPIRE project within the scope of CAM Section. A Working Group will be established. (9 May) Tim is awaiting feedback on funding proposal He will fund couple of GMN cameras to first set up nucleus for the project. (7 Jul) “funding through Infobip not successful, funder changed focus. Second source identified, so project remains on course, but timeline pushed back. For South Africa I’m ready to roll out project and set up Working Group as soon as clarity on positive outcome and access to funding.”</i></p> <p>Awaiting further update from Tim in due course.</p>
4	Publi-cations	<p>4. ASSA Publications</p> <p>4.1 SGAS Auke shared sneak preview of Sky Guide 2023 which includes a new cover with a name change to Sky Guide Southern Africa An astronomical handbook and removal of Tables. He noted the challenge remains on catering for newcomers to astronomy as well as the advanced.</p> <p>It was agreed to schedule a meeting (which includes at least Daniel, Auke, AJ, Chris S, Sally) before end Nov, to progress actions arising from previous minutes and at the meeting.</p> <p>a) <u>Negotiation with Struik and ASSA Struik Agreement</u> _ <u>AJ</u> to share new addendum to ASSA / Struik agreement which will note decrease in royalties. Any additional changes to consider for discussion with Struik.</p> <p>b) <u>Increase circulation of Sky Guide</u> Create marketing content to place on market the visible platforms of the booklet and the digital version of SGAS 2023. Include aspects to draw newcomers and advanced. Also to include reference to the Tables on the ASSA website supplementing the new Sky Guide and agree who will provide and maintain such tables and where to place these.</p> <p>c) <u>Digital version of Sky Guide</u> Unpack the benefit to ASSA of digital sales other than meeting ASSA members’ requests. Online channels selling Epub format (R130) is advertised by PenguinRandomHouse on https://www.penguinrandomhouse.co.za/book/sky-guide-africa-south-2022/9781775847649, such as Amazon Kindle, etc. Epub versions have been provided to a Country Member who requested it because of distribution issue of the booklet. ASSA does not receive discount on the Epub version. AJ advised: “ASSA relies on the discount to supplement income and keep the print flow above 2000 units so as to qualify for royalties on overall bookstore sales”.</p> <p>d) <u>Payment of royalties</u> to MNASSA Editorial Board.</p> <p>4.2 MNASSA No update available.</p> <p>4.3 Southern Skies Angus advised he is collecting info for the next edition.</p>

	Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
5	Scholarships	<p>5. Scholarships http://assa.saao.ac.za/about/scholarships/ <i>Permanent item: The ASSA and Cooke Scholarships for 2022 is R25 000 each.</i></p> <p>The 2023 Scholarships to be confirmed and advertised around November 2022. <u>AJ</u> to clarify funding available for 2023 Scholarships.</p>
6	Membership	<p>6. Membership 6.1 Country and Honorary Membership <i>13 Honorary Membership (max 15)</i> <i>(7 Jul) Country membership 2023 joining fee R50, annual renewal R100 which includes copy of Sky Guide. ASSA will contribute max R20 for distribution of the Sky Guide where applicable.</i></p> <p>On 26 September Country membership was 60 which includes one “Associate” membership for Botswana Astronomical Society.</p>
7	Governance	<p>7. Governance 7.1 Register ASSA for tax under a VDP (Voluntary Disclosure Program) Application <i>(9 May) Meeting refreshed its decision for ASSA to register for tax under a VDP and as a Public Benefit Organisation (PBO).</i> <i>(7 Jul) Before CTFS can assist ASSA with registration for tax under a VDP and as a Public Benefit Organisation (PBO), they require:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Signed Constitution change: The draft on record dated 2020 09 21 was in principle approved by 9 May meeting, to be ratified at the AGM and signed. (C Stewart, AJ Nel)</i> 2) <i>Signed off Financials 2020 and 2021</i> <p>Further to the approval at the AGM of the changes to the Constitution (attached), the updated version needs to be signed and annotated with its approval at the 2022 AGM (C Stewart, AJ Nel)</p> <p>Signed Financials and finalised Constitution to be forwarded to CTFS with a request on process towards PBO registration, which now need to proceed, and to provide a quotation and aspects on how ASSA can help further with the process. <u>L Cross</u> to start communication with CTFS and include the Financial Sub Committee in copy.</p> <p>7.2. AGM 2021/22 Monday 22 August All documents and presentations are available on the website https://assa.saao.ac.za/about/council-and-officers/agm-reports/ and Awards Honoraria and Certificates handed over/posted. Daniel proposed and it was accepted that this item be closed.</p>
8	Financial	<p>8. Financial Matters 8.1 Financials Financials for 2020, 2021, 2022 were signed and are available on ASSA AGM documents page.</p> <p>8.2 Budget <i>(9 May) Max allocation for Centenary activities and any other allocation, R20k.</i> <u>AJ</u> to provide clarity on the 2022/23 budget available until June 2023.</p>
10	ASSA Centenary	<p>10. ASSA Centenary, Friday 1 July 2022 ASSA Centenary Symposium 15 October to be held at the SAAO and virtual The draft programme is available at https://symposium2022.assa.saao.ac.za/programme/ Daniel noted that he and Christian will meet to wrap up any outstanding item</p>
12	General	<p>12. General items Angus reported a very successful Astro Evening was held at St Dominics (Natal) with Celestron as commercial supporter and ~ 700 people attended. He plans further events of this nature and will inform in due course.</p>
13	Closure	D Cunnama thanked attendees for their contribution and closed the meeting 19:25

	Agenda	Discussions / Decisions / Actions (in bold)
		2022/23 Council meetings will be scheduled from January 2023 Discussion session to progress actions arising will be scheduled before end November Centre monthly meetings: Hermanus Centre: 3rd Monday. Cape Centre and Jhb Centres: 2nd Wednesday. Durban Centre: 2nd Wednesday. Pretoria Centre: 4th Wednesday.

Minutes Approved: _____ Date: _____

Attachments in support of minutes:

In support of Item 2: ASSA Minutes 220712 v5

In support of Item 3: Contacts on ASSA website 220921

In support of item 7.1: 2020-09-21 ASSA Constitution SARS Amendments (Draft 1)

APPROVAL OF PBO

Section 30 of the Income Tax Act No. 58 of 1962 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
- **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.

Checklist (in support of Governance item 7)

- 1 Feb Scholarship application deadline
 - 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 AGM
 - AGM 1st Wed Aug. 21 business days before 1st 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