



*Applying scientific thinking
in the service of society*

Academy of Science of South Africa

IBSE/TWOS Workshop

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11 May 2010

ASSAf History

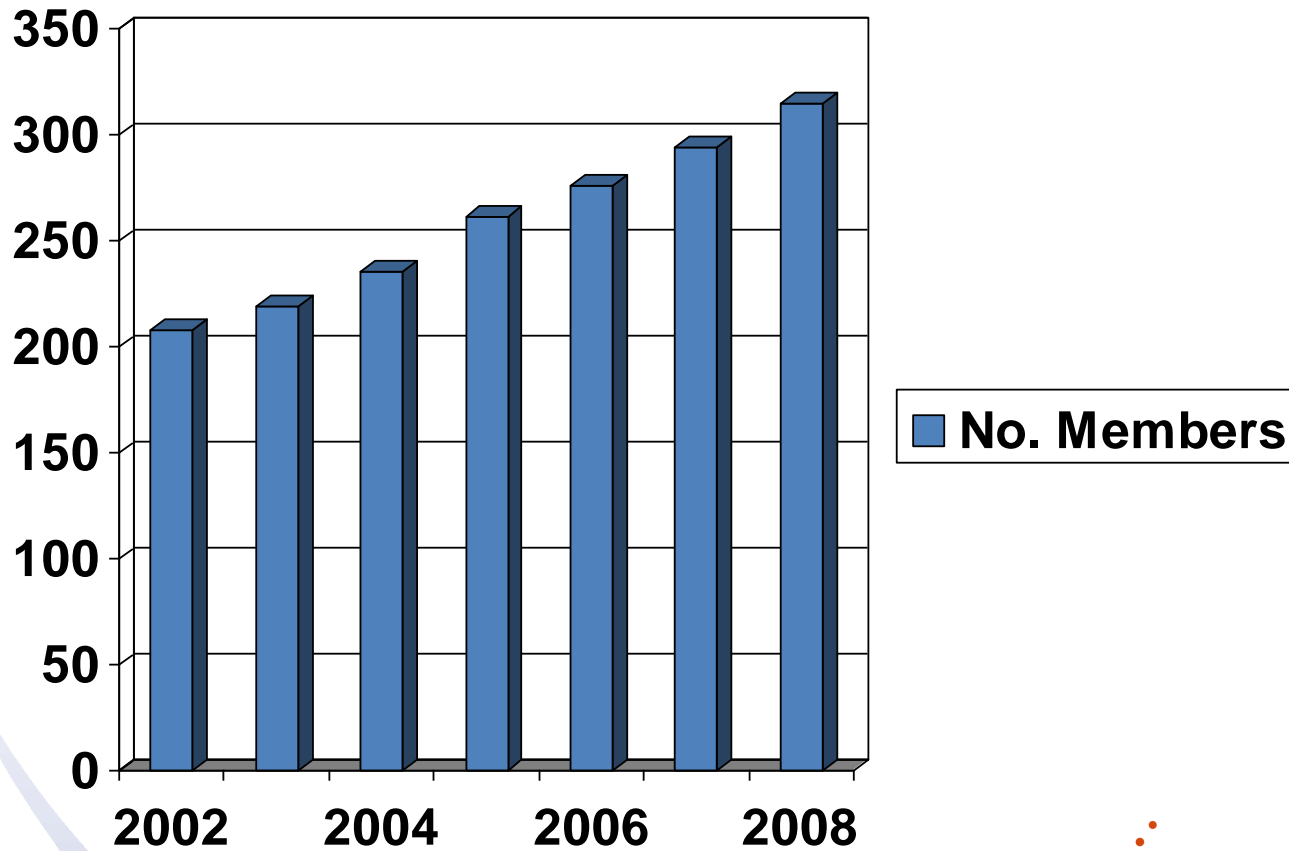
- ❑ **The Academy of Science of South Africa was inaugurated in May 1996 with Nelson Mandela as the patron of the launch**
- ❑ **Formed in response to the need for an academy of science congruent with the dawn of democracy in SA**
- ❑ **Academy of Science Act, Act No. 67 of 2001 came into operation in May 2002**
- ❑ **ASSAf is thus the official national Academy of Science of South Africa**

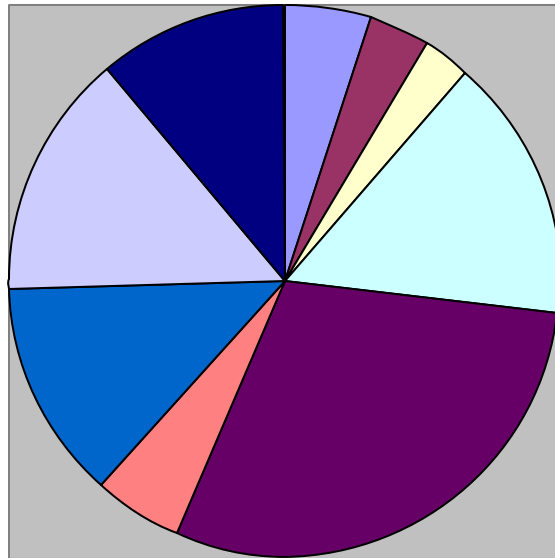
Mandate

The mandate of the Academy encompasses **all fields of scientific enquiry** and its Membership includes the **full diversity** of South Africa's **distinguished scientists**

Vision

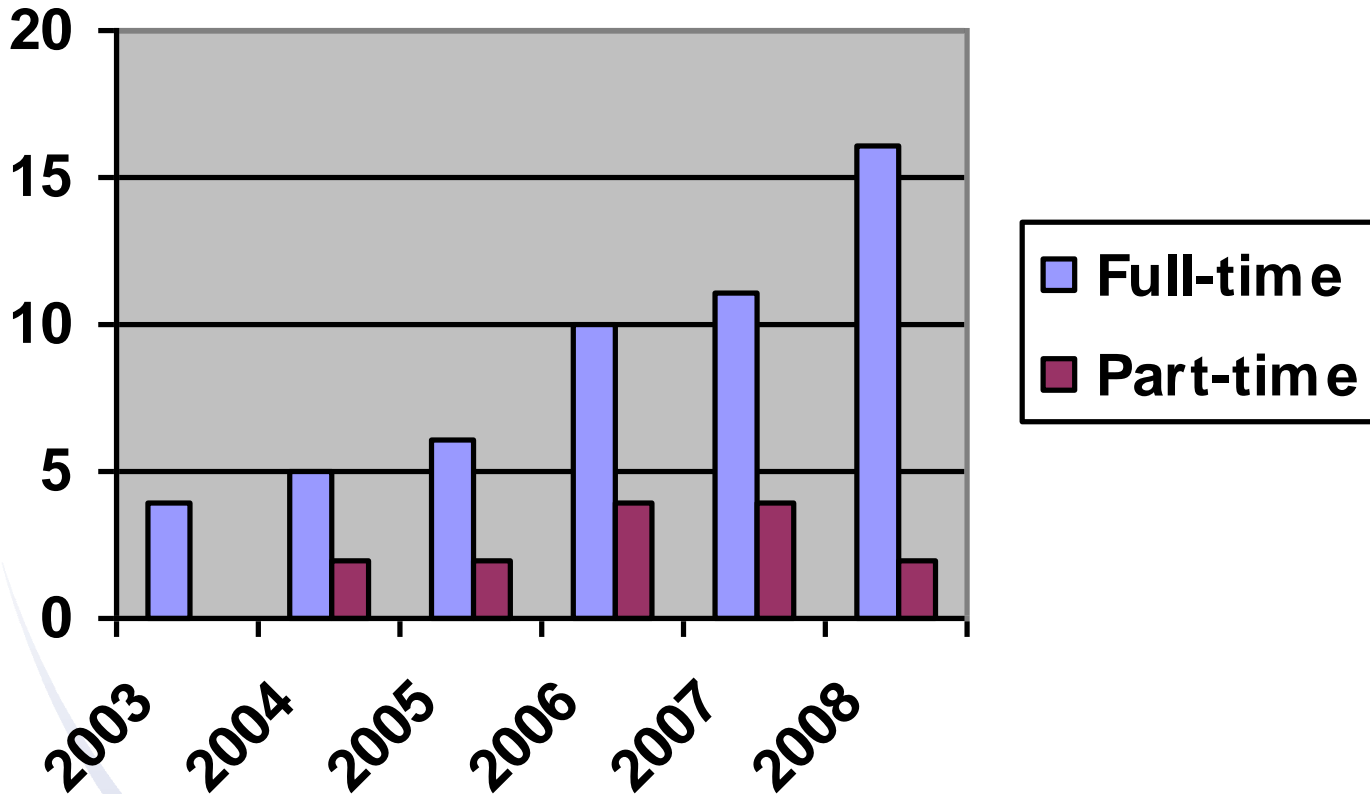
To be the **apex organization for science and scholarship** in South Africa, internationally respected and connected, its membership simultaneously the aspiration of the country's **most active scholars** in all fields of scientific enquiry, and the collective resource for the professionally-managed generation of **evidence-based solutions** to national problems





- Earth Sc
- Economic
- Education
- Humanities
- Life/Agric & Health Sc
- Mathematics
- Physical Sc
- Social Sc
- Engin & Tech

STAFFING STATISTICS



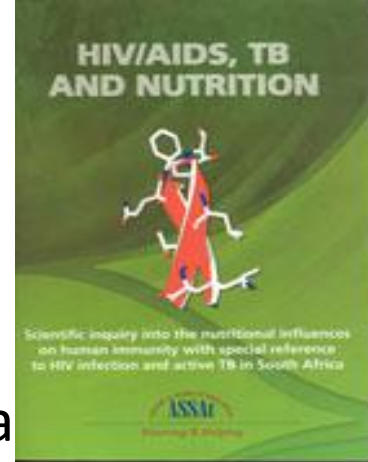
Evidence-based Studies of ASSAf

- Two types of studies:
- **Consensus studies:**
 - Reflect the deliberations of a carefully selected Study Panel and lead to a set of strong policy recommendations based on consensus.
- **Forum studies:**
 - Type of convening activity of ASSAf;
 - Provide a means for invited experts to gather to discuss issues, make presentations, and exchange views on topics in a broad field through serial forums;
 - Deliberations do not aim to make recommendations based on consensus but by pooling expertise it is possible to translate the knowledge into practical recommendations

ASSAf Studies

Health & Related Sciences

- HIV/AIDS, TB & Nutrition
- Clinical Research and Related Training in South Africa
- The Emerging Threat of Multidrug-Resistant Tuberculosis: Global and Local Challenges and Solutions
- Envisioning a Strategy to Prepare for the Long-term Burden of HIV/AIDS
- GMOs in African Agriculture: Challenges and opportunities
- Improving Maternal, Newborn and Child Health in Africa
- **Improved Nutritional Assessment in South Africa**
- **Biosafety**



ASSAf Studies

Education and Humanities

- Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education
- PhD Study: Enhancing the Production of Postgraduates in South Africa
- The State of Humanities in South Africa

ASSAf Studies

Environment, Water & Energy

- Low Carbon Cities
- The State of Water in South Africa
- Improving Energy Access in Sub-Saharan Africa

Scholarly Publishing Programme

- Aimed at implementation of 10 recommendations of 2006 consensus report on *“A Strategic Approach to Research Publishing in SA”*
- Discipline-grouped peer review of SA scholarly journals
 - Reviews of journals in two pilot groups (Social Sciences, Agriculture) underway
 - Call for panelists for review of next four journal groups been issued
 - Journals in each group been identified
- Completed consensus study on *“A Strategic Approach to Scholarly Publishing in Books in SA’*
 - Report published
 - In process of presenting to stakeholders, including Minister of S&T

Scholarly Publishing Programme

- Development of online course in scientific writing
- Host National Scholarly Editors' Forum (NSEF) on an annual basis
- Editors' incentives – report to Shuttleworth Foundation complete
- Implementation of SciELO-type national platform for open access publication of scholarly journals in SA
 - Went live in July 2009
 - Currently 7 SA journals on OA platform. Aiming for ~200 journals
 - Hired three new staff in September 2009
 - Staff underwent training in Brazil in October
 - SciELO –SA now hosted on ASSAf server

Communication and Publications

- Developed and implemented ASSAf's new brand
- 4 quarterly newsletters "Science in Society" published
- Undertook audit of stakeholder data base for distribution of ASSAf publications
- Revamped ASSAf website
- Introduced media monitoring service to track media coverage of ASSAf activities

South African Journal of Science

- New model of Editor-in-Chief and 10 Associate Editors (disciplinary areas) fully implemented in January 2009
- Editorial Board is fully functioning
- SAJS is now published timeously (6 issues p.a.)
- Regular media releases with each issue
- SAJS was pilot journal in Open Access platform – SciELO SA
- SAJS now fully accessible online



Quest Magazine

- 4 issues of Quest published in 2009.
- Print run 25 000
- Distributed free to ~ 4 500 public high schools & ~ 1 500 public libraries
- Readership survey distributed to determine reader profile
- Distributed free at national science events
- Subscriptions increased
- Audited distribution data base – ongoing activity
- Interactive website for Quest



National Activities

- Awarded two Science-for-Society Gold Medals
- Awarded ASSAF/TWAS Prize for Young Scientists
- Awarded two Sydney Brenner Fellowships
- Hosted lectures in cooperation with Royal Society and Akademie
- Acted as secretariat for Committee of Heads of Organisations for Research and Technology (COHORT)

International Activities

- Continued partnership with US NAS through ASADI
- Attended G8 + 5 science academies meeting in Rome in March 2009
- Actively participate in TWAS activities and hosted 11th general conference
- Established TWAS and TWOWS National Chapters
- Vice-president of NASAC and active collaborator on IAP-funded projects and Development of Science Academies in SADC region
- ASSAf President elected member of IAC

International Activities

- Engaged in discussions to assist in the establishment of a South African Chapter of WAYS
- Participated in meeting of International Human Rights Network of Academics and Scholarly Societies
- Strengthened bilateral agreements with Russia and Uganda through joint activities
- Co-hosted with IOM of workshop on “Envisioning a Strategy to Prepare for the Long-term Burden of HIV/AIDS” in April 2010
- co-hosted with IOM of workshops on “MDR-TB” in March 2010

Thank you!

Website: www.assa.org.za