

Dear Journal Editors

In addition to the emails we regularly share via the [NSEF mailing list](#), we also like to look back from time to time to reflect on progress made in all areas of the ASSAf Scholarly Publishing Programme. The [Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal](#) (PER/PELJ) was part of the [ASSAf Open Journal Systems pilot project](#) and in this communiqué [Prof Christa Rautenbach](#), editor of the journal shares their experiences. This [editorial team](#) fully embraced the OJS technology and [they have](#) become expert users within only one year of using the software. The University of KwaZulu-Natal has invited ASSAf to present a training session during the upcoming week on using, managing and publishing high quality Open Access journals. [View the list](#) of SA institutions currently hosting journals using OJS.

We hope you will enjoy reading the items contributed to this newsletter, and any feedback is most welcome!

Kind regards

Susan Veldsman

Director: ASSAf Scholarly Publishing Programme



Contribution by Prof Christa Rautenbach

Milestones of the Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal / Potchefstroomse Elektroniese Regs tydskrif – from 1998 to date

The Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal/Potchefstroomse Elektroniese Regsblad (PER/PELJ) has been published by the Faculty of Law of the North-West University. The journal publishes contributions relevant to constitutionalism and legal development globally and has been regarded as a pioneer in peer-reviewed, open access, online publishing in South Africa since 1998.

From the outset *PER* was focused on maintaining high editorial standards and producing material for legal scholars. Double-blind peer review practices are maintained for all original articles. The most widely cited contribution to *PER* (on *Ubuntu* by Justice Yvonne Mokgoro) appeared in the first volume. Papers delivered by prominent scholars and judges (referred to as *orationes*) are often published in *PER*.

Since 2003, *PER/PELJ* has taken its place among a range of renowned internationally accredited journals, currently listed and indexed *inter alia* by IBSS, SciELO SA, DOAJ, SSRN, AJOL, Boloka, HeinOnline, and more recently Scopus.

In 2016, *PER/PELJ* migrated to an online journal system (OJS) hosted at <http://journals.assaf.org.za/per/index>. Contributions accepted for publication are now

published continuously as soon as the finally edited version becomes available. In 2016 the following publications ensued: 35 articles, four notes, 14 case notes, one oratio and one book review. 16 articles and 5 book reviews have been published thus far in 2017, whilst 73 contributions are in review and 13 others are being edited.

PERs visibility on the WWW has grown tremendously over the last few years. The SSRN database reveals that PER had 21,144 downloads to date – see https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/JelJour_Results.cfm?form_name=journalBrowse&journal_id=1544065. Google Scholar Profile indicates 1338 citations on 30 April 2017.



The Washington & Lee Law School Ranking System (accessible at <http://lawlib.wlu.edu/LJ/>) for the period 2008-2015 reveals that PER ranks fourth out of sixteen South African law journals with an impact factor of 0.01, which is phenomenal considering that it is an open access, online journal. The results for 2016 are still outstanding.

Rank	Journal	Combined 08-15	Impact 08-15	Journals 08-15
1	Acta Juridica	100	0.04	21
1	African Human Rights Law Journal	100	0.02	29
3	South African Journal on Human Rights	80	0.02	25
4	Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal [online]	60	0.01	19
4	The South African Law Journal	60	0.01	18
4	Stellenbosch Law Review	60	0.02	16
7	South African Yearbook of International Law	40	0.01	11
8	Journal of South African Law	20	0	9
9	Comparative and International Law Journal of Southern Africa	0	0	4
9	Fundamina: A Journal of Legal History	0	0	3
9	Journal for Juridical Science	0	0	4
9	Pretoria Student Law Review (2007-)	0	0	0
9	Responsa Meridiana	0	0	0
9	South African Journal of Bioethics and Law (2008-)[online]	0	0	2
9	South African Journal of Criminal Justice	0	0	3
9	South African Mercantile Law Journal	0	0	2

16 Journals

PER has been accessed 499 129 times [via SciELO SA](#) and features in the top 10 used titles on SciELO SA – see below under the SciELO SA heading.

The editorial team consists of: Proff Christa Rautenbach (editor-in-chief), Klaus Beiter, Wian Erlank, Anel du Plessis, Sarel du Toit, Dr Anel Gildenhuys and Dr Oliver Fuo (associate editors). The team is assisted by very capable language, copy and layout editors, and recently obtained the assistance of an intern to assist with web related tasks. He is

currently busy with the tedious task of uploading all previous editions of PER onto the OJS platform. The editorial board is made up of renowned South African and international legal scholars.

One of the challenges facing a publication with such a high publication rate is finding willing and capable reviewers. Therefore, the journal is very grateful to its loyal reviewers and we acknowledge the important role they have played in the tremendous growth of the journal since its establishment in 1998.



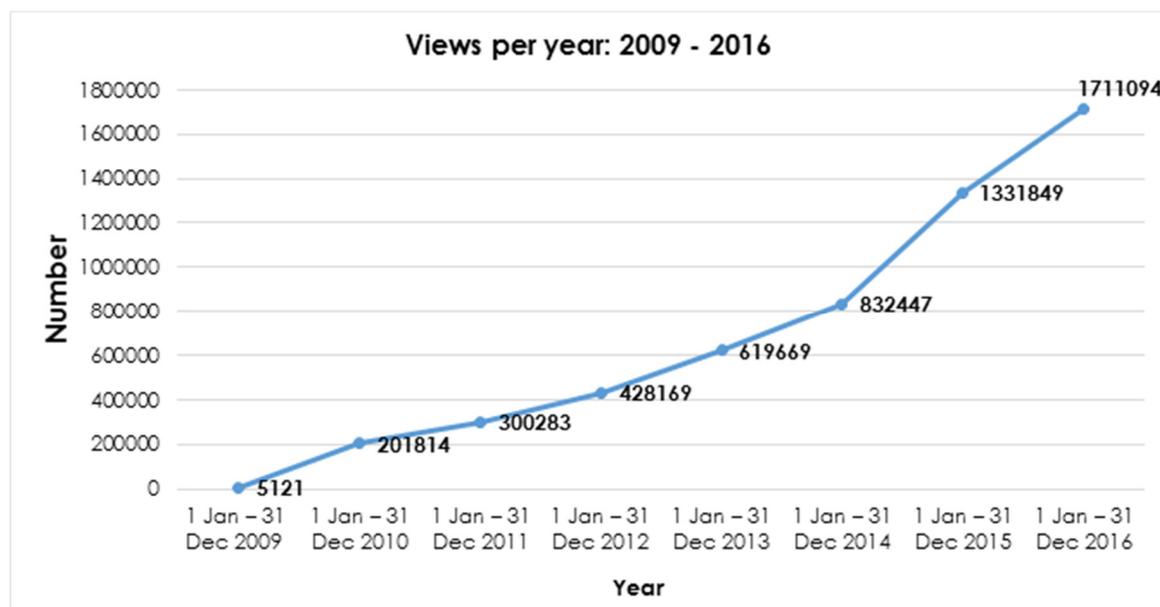
Contribution by Louise van Heerden

SciELO SA Quality Criteria

The bi-annual assessment of the SciELO SA collection by the SciELO Network took place at the end of March. The purpose of the assessment was to check that the collection adheres to all their stringent criteria, including checking whether all the journals are current / publishing according to the publication frequency they indicate on their web pages. A score of **89%** was awarded to the collection – the highest score to date.

Collection Views

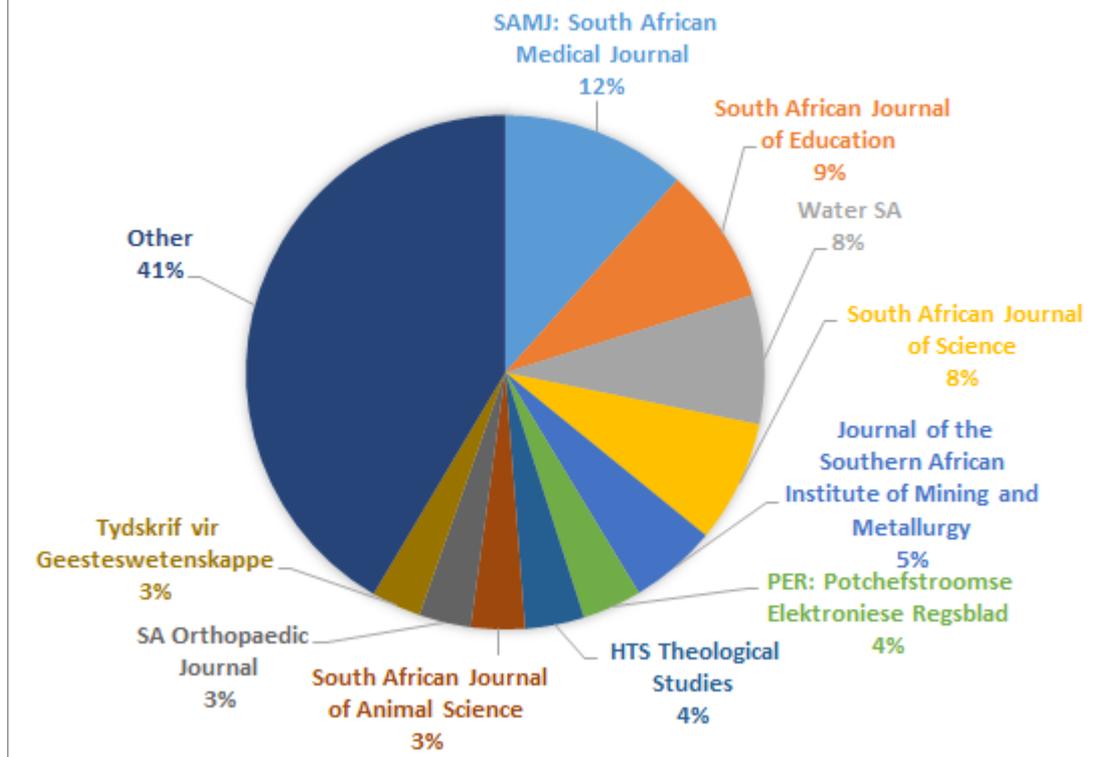
Since its inception in 2009 more than 6 million documents have been viewed via the SciELO SA website.



Journal Views

The top ten viewed journal titles from January 2009 to April 2017 were as follows:

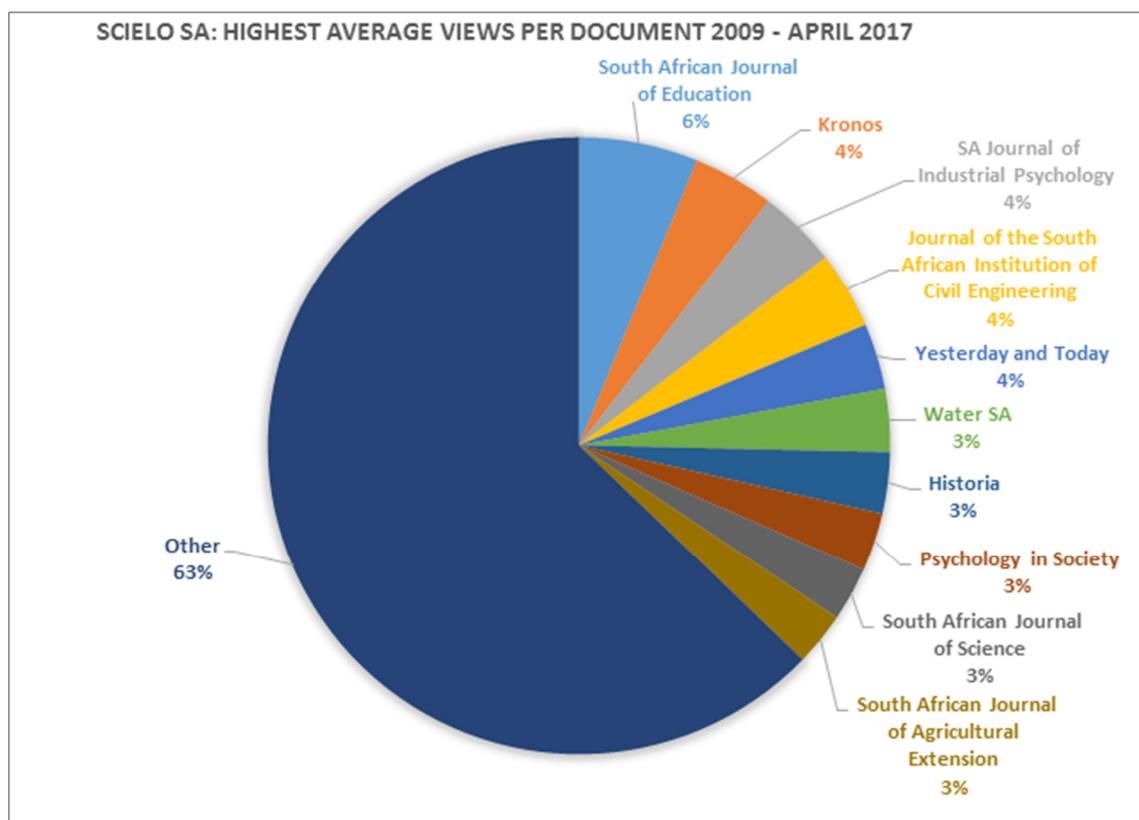
SCIELO SA: TOP TEN VIEWED TITLES 2009 - APRIL 2017



Document Views

Top 10 average document views: When the total articles accessed is contextualised in terms of the amount of articles the journals have in the SciELO SA collection, then the order changes.

Calculation examples: South African Journal of Education has 422 documents in the SciELO SA collection. These documents have been viewed a total of 1 362 158 times. The average is 3228. The next highest is Kronos with 121 documents in the collection that have been viewed a total of 267 729 times. The average is 2213. Journals are welcome to contact Louise van Heerden (louise@assaf.org.za) for more details.



Summary of Views

The *South African Journal of Education*, *Water SA* and the *South African Journal of Science* feature in both pie charts.

Discipline-grouped Peer Review of South African Scholarly Journals

Contribution by Desré Stead

Peer Review Panel members have sent their input and comments on the Version 1 draft reports of each journal in the following disciplinary groups: **Humanities II: Visual and Performing Arts group** (10 journals), **Communications, Information Science and Knowledge Systems group** (14 journals), and **Architecture and Engineering group** (15 journals).

A panel meeting of the Architecture and Engineering disciplinary group took place on the 29th March 2017 in Johannesburg. The primary purpose of the meeting was for panel members to reach consensus decisions on each journal in respect of making recommendations for DHET accreditation and SciELO SA inclusion and to offer suggestions for improvement. The meeting was very productive and there is a clear way forward with this particular journal review. The panel is currently working on the Version 2 draft report.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, there has been a delay in setting up the Peer Review Panels for the following discipline groups: **Education; Maths and Science; Politics, History and Philosophy.**

Data Policy for your Journal

More and more there is a push towards making the underlying data, associated with a journal article, publicly available. Whether your journal requires data to be openly accessible or not, it is always good to be transparent and have a policy on issues concerning the journal governance. View the following data policy as an example: [Hydrology and Earth System Sciences](#)

DHET Accreditation

All applications for DHET Accreditation are due by 15 June each year.

Web page: [DHET List](#)

Criteria: [Click here](#) (apply by 15 June each year)

Application form: Email Ntuli.W@dhet.gov.za

Contact person: Ntuli.W@dhet.gov.za

Personalia

The ASSAf Scholarly Publishing Program would like to welcome two new staff members – please click on the links provided to meet them! We are very grateful for the two additions to our team!

[Sbonga Dlamini](#) has been appointed as part of the NRF Internship Program, and was recently awarded an Honours degree in Information Science at the University of Zululand. [Nozuko \(Zukie\) Hlwatika](#) worked at ASSAf as a NRF Intern during the past year. Thereafter she was appointed as Programme Administrator for the [African Open Science Platform project](#).

We are also looking forward to welcoming Mmaphuthi Mashiachidi back to work on 14 June 2017.

Congratulations to Mmaphuthi with the new addition to the family, and we wish you, your family and your new baby girl much happiness, health and grace.
