



ACADEMY OF SCIENCE OF SOUTH AFRICA (ASSAf)

## ANNUAL NATIONAL SCHOLARLY EDITORS' FORUM (NSEF)

The Future of Scholarly Publishing in South Africa

10 & 11 November 2021



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**ANNUAL NATIONAL SCHOLARLY EDITORS' FORUM (NSEF)**  
**The Future of Scholarly Publishing in South Africa**

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## DAY 1

### SESSION 1 (Facilitator: Prof Keyan Tomaselli, Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa (CSPiSA) Chairperson)

#### Welcome

Prof Tomaselli welcomed everyone to the meeting, which was the first since 2018. He congratulated ASSAf's Scholarly Publication Programme (SPP) headed by Ms Susan Veldsman for the extraordinary work undertaken on behalf of CSPiSA and the NSEF and in the organisation of this meeting.

Attendance of NSEF meetings has soared over the years and the more recent meetings have been research-based, consultative, explorative, diverse, engaging and shaping of public policy. The previous CSPiSA Chairpersons, Prof Robin Crewe and Prof Wieland Gevers, widened the editorial horizons in the topics of NSEF agendas and undertook huge research projects on publishing that provided highly informative studies hosted by ASSAf. The regular assessment of journals is unique anywhere in the world and the *South African Journal of Science* (SAJS) has become a multi-disciplinary forum where authors can debate a variety of issues. The National Scholarly Publishers' Book Forum (NSBPF) generated reports on pressing matters during 2021 and the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO) SA showcases 84 journals to the world.

One of the highlights of recent NSEF meetings was the regular reports by the Centre for Research on Evaluation, Science and Technology's (CREST's) Prof Johann Mouton. CREST's database, constructed on contract from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), was a world-first, and as an oversight of publishing in South Africa (SA), it is instructive and enlightening, particularly in its exposure of lurking predators and the continued manipulation of the DHET incentive system. DHET has responded with evermore rules and regulations in equal measure to the rising frustration. Journal editors needed to inform their respective universities about the impact of serial opportunism on the national purse.

#### Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 November 2018

The minutes of the previous meeting were taken as read and delegates were requested to direct any queries to the SPP via email. Prof Tomaselli moved to approve the minutes, inviting delegates to raise any objections in this regard. The minutes were approved as a good reflection of the meeting and without objection or correction.

#### Matters arising from the previous minutes

##### 1. Report on SAJS Associate Editor Mentees Succession Planning (Prof Leslie Swartz)

The need for early researchers to gain experience by working with an experienced Associate Editor was identified and the mentorship programme commenced in 2018. Two mentorships are offered each year and feedback is given on the programme. Entrance criteria include a PhD and publication record, but applicants are not required to have editorial experience. The programme is relatively unstructured, and mentors and mentees negotiate how the mentorship process will be followed. A certificate of completion is awarded to the mentees

at the end of the programme. The SAJS has ten Associate Editors who have quite wide powers in terms of inviting peer reviewers and making decisions in respect of reviews. They fulfil a function that would be fulfilled by an Editor-in-Chief in smaller journals, and they advise the SAJS Editor-in-Chief. The mentees partner with the Associate Editors in their respective fields and learn the skills of their particular approach and their disciplinary area.

Mentors are expected to develop a good working relationship with their mentees; to provide structured guidance and information; to support and advise the mentees technologically and editorially, and to transfer disciplinary and other knowledge, particularly knowledge about publishing. Mentors are also expected to provide a window into how a journal works by sharing decisions, reviews, and conversations, and where there are difficulties, to raise matters of mutual concern with the intention of enabling a less experienced scholar with editorial capacity building. Similarly, the mentees are expected to develop a good relationship with their mentors, to define their own goals and expectations of the mentorship, and to work as closely as possible with their respective mentors to learn about editing and the responsibilities of Associate Editors.

The SAJS editorial team depends on the mentees to expand its network of reviewers; to introduce the journal to colleagues; and to gain experience of working in a community of practice. Mentees have opportunities to learn about sub-fields, the latest research in their fields, and quality writing. Mentees are required to act as a second Associate Editor in at least five submissions in collaboration with the mentor; to invite and guest-edit at least one research or review paper; to act as an assessor for submissions to the front section of the journal; to write and submit a contribution for the front section; to attend webinars and workshops, and any other editorial work agreed on with their mentors. Mentees are essentially part of the editorial team advising on policies and procedures, attending Associate Editor meetings, and participating in the NSEF.

To date, the feedback from mentors as well as mentees on their experiences of the programme has been overwhelmingly positive. In addition to the mentorship programme, further interventions offered by the SAJS team to help early researchers gain editorial experience are workshops on writing skills; the editorial process; as well as training in peer review skills.

## **2. Progress Report on Scholarly Publishing Programme (SPP) activities (Ms Susan Veldsman)**

The main factors that have impacted the SPP's work since the last NSEF meeting are:

- The appointment of a new Executive Officer of ASSAf, Prof Himla Soodyall, who has been supportive of the work done under the SPP and has broadened its remit.
- The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, brought certain challenges, particularly in terms of ensuring ASSAf's relevance to and in the National System of Innovation (NSI).

The SPP is governed by CSPiSA, and new members of the committee were appointed in 2021. Other pillars of the SPP are the NSBPF, which produced the booklet titled *Best Practice for Peer Review of Scholarly Books*, the NSEF, and the South African Journal Database - an extensive database of all SA published journals.

Projects and some of the related activities that are part of the SPP include:

- Humanities Book Prize and Humanities Annual Lectur
- Code of Conduct for Research relevant to the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA)
- A booklet providing a broad overview of the pandemic for SA learners, teachers and public, *COVID-19: The Disease, the Responses and an Uncertain Future*,
- Journal peer reviews. The current 12-year cycle of reviews is nearing conclusion.
- SciELO SA, which has continued to grow in terms of the number of articles and journal issues added, as well as views. The platform remains an automatically accredited index as per the DHET's research output policy and feeds into the search portal of the Web of Science.
- Khulisa Journals, which is the SPP's attempt to provide server space at a very low cost to journals that are struggling, without interfering in their editorial practices.
- Alignment of all SPP platforms to POPIA.
- SAJS awards relating to discussion series, annual outstanding articles, and outstanding reviewers.
- The addition of LinkedIn to the social media suite used by the SAJS.
- The SAJS was evaluated as part of the ASSAf journal peer review process, and its impact factor has increased steadily over the years.
- The SAJS participated in several workshops and hosted a number of webinars.
- Much effort has been made to ensure that SciELO SA journals are Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) compliant. ASSAf is a member of the DOAJ group and serves on the journal evaluation panels.
- Quest Magazine received exposure through the launch of its marketing video at National Science Week, as well as its new website that accommodates the online version of the magazine. Hardcopies of the magazine were distributed through the Science Centres and selected schools.
- ASSAf Research Repository, which has broadened its records to include all ASSAf's publications, webinars, statements, etc.
- African Scientists Directory, which seeks to connect scientists, enhance collaboration, and stimulate dialogue.
- Open Access Week webinars hosted, that were well-attended.
- Continuous Professional Development (CPD) certificates, issued in cooperation with the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP)
- Webinars on various aspects of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) hosted by ASSAf as part of National Science Week.
- ASSAf's participation in international bodies, such as:
  - InterAcademy Partnership (IAP) Working Group for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Open Science Recommendation
  - Research Organisation Registry (ROR)
  - DOAJ
  - IAP Predatory Journals Working Group
  - Crossref
  - SciELO Brazil.

### **3. Report on completed Journal Peer Review Panels (Dr John Butler-Adam and Prof Tilman Dederig)**

#### Peer Review of Journals in the disciplines of History, Philosophy and Politics (Prof Dederig, Panel Chairperson)

The report was published by ASSAf in May 2021. The panel comprised eight scholars from various disciplines in the humanities, and evaluated eight History journals, five journals located in multidisciplinary fields and International Studies, four Philosophical journals, three journals in Political Sciences and five in Security and Policing. The review included aspects related to the editorial and business practices of the journals, as well as their bibliometric processes.

Some of the key points emanating from the reviewers' report and the panel's consensus reviews were:

- Not all editorial boards have yet sufficiently succeeded in terms of racial diversity and gender parity.
- Efforts to attract high quality contributions from a broader range of national and international institutions and scholars are not always clearly reflected in the published outputs.
- Some journals were advised to reconsider the scholarly niche they try to occupy in order to avoid overlap with similar journals.
- In some cases, reviewers argued that the scope and focus of journals could benefit from a more current and fresher approach to concepts and themes in order to stay relevant.
- In some cases, there were long turnaround times and delays in the publication of articles.
- In the interest of the career development of the next generation of scholars, reviewers recommended that editors should be encouraged to accommodate quality papers from young and emerging scholars without compromising a healthy balance with contribution from more senior scholars.

As an overall result of the reviewing process, two out of the 25 journals evaluated were recommended for removal from the DHET list, one was conditionally accepted for the DHET list, four were invited to join SciELO SA and six were not endorsed for inclusion in SciELO SA, nine were invited to participate provided that they implement an Open Access (OA) model, and six were already on the SciELO SA.

The panel experienced constraints to their work that influenced the scope of the reviewing process, such as:

- As rigorous and extensive as the review was, it had to rely on the limited time window through which the panel had to look into the workings of a journal.
- The repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic slowed down the process and the panel tried to navigate challenges in the process and organisation of the review.
- Some of the journals were undergoing a period of transition by establishing new editorial boards or conceptualising new identities and new directions or by probing shifts in scholarly emphasis. Some editors signalled that they were aware of issues raised by the panel and were already involved in addressing the issues. However, as the panel was committed to the framework of the review it could not deviate from the 2015 - 2017

timeframe. Thus, any amendments made to the scope and concept of the journal could

not be factored into the final consensus review and the published report.

- Feedback from some journal editors indicated that some of the panel's comments and recommendations had already been addressed.

On behalf of the panel, Prof Dederling expressed gratitude to Ms Mashiachidi and Ms Veldsman for the very efficient assistance provided during the review process.

#### Peer review of Education Journals (Dr John Butler-Adam, Panel Chairperson)

The panel reviewed 17 SA-based journals that form a small part of the approximately 300 journals in South Africa. Although Education seems to be a single rather than a group of disciplines under the broad heading of Humanities, of the 17, eight were specialist journals and the remaining nine were more general. The work was undertaken by the six expert panel members and 53 expert scholars involved in the review process, with the support of SPP staff.

Observations about the context of Education journals and the Education discipline and research in general were:

- Both the (public) school and post-school education systems in SA and many other countries face challenges that offer rich opportunities for researchers in the field to publish their findings across a wide range of sub-disciplines within Education. Both face challenges related to underfunding, ongoing turbulence and violence, and the realities of high drop-out and low success rates.
- Some of the journals also experience the challenge of low esteem for research in Education that is prevalent in academia.

The outcome of the review was that of the 17 journals, three journals were recommended for removal from the DHET list and four were conditionally accepted. Five journals were already on the SciELO SA platform and three more were recommended for inclusion for SciELO, and three were invited to join the platform subject to the implementation of an OA model. Six were not recommended for inclusion on the platform.

The following observations were made with respect to the work of the panel:

- The appointment of Editors-in-Chief and the duration of their terms of office were problematic as many were appointed without the position having been advertised and/or have indefinite terms of office. Some were appointed in-house by universities that published the journals.
- The adherence to the need for greater institutional diversity relating to Editors-in-Chief and Editorial Advisory Boards was not up to standard.
- In a few cases, there were only small groups of academics working in the fields covered by the journals and there was a constant challenge to find scholars to undertake senior editorial work.
- In rare instances, editors continued to publish excessively in their own journals, which is not in line with best practice.
- A surprising number of journals did not make their editorial policies public on their websites. This made it very difficult for scholars wishing to submit material to those journals to know what the policy bases were under which they would be operating. On the other hand, a number of the journals reviewed were commended on their comprehensive and publicly stated editorial policies.

- The comment of a review panel in a different disciplinary area that “There seems to be a dialectical/contentious relationship between the desire for greater international visibility and participation in international conversations, and a focus on a useful niche for the journal” applied equally to the Education journals.
- Common concerns were:
  - An absence of additional or enriching materials such as editorials, commentaries, book reviews, and news items.
  - The considerable variation in the quality of published articles in the journals.
  - The need to develop and strengthen ways of encouraging and supporting young scholars and novice researchers to read local journals and publish in them.
  - The mandates of the nine general journals revealed a consistent common core. (It should be noted that even though many of ASSAf's review panels have recommended mergers between journals that cover the same ground, this had not occurred in terms of the Education journals.)
  - The review revealed a variety of page and/or article charges ranging from zero to over R3000 per article. The panel felt that the issue should be considered by the NSEF.

Dr Butler-Adam expressed sincere gratitude to the panel members and to Ms Mashiachidi and Ms Veldsman for the tremendous support provided to the panel during the review process.

## Q&A

Robin Crewe explained that an overlap of subject material between journals occurred in a number of disciplines other than Education and that ASSAf had been suggesting a rationalisation of such journals for some time as this would increase the viability and impact of a rationalised number of journals in the future. With regard to the barrier to entry for new journals, he pointed out that journals (including those established outside of SA) have to establish a track record in order to be recognised by the DHET. Many journals had no impact factor (as they are not included in the Web of Science) and therefore there was a barrier to authors for publishing in them. If the editors believed that their journal had a niche and was likely to be successful in the future, there was no reason why they should not take steps to develop a track record.

Susan Veldsman indicated that although editors were not barred from publishing in their own journals, research integrity and ethics required editors to refrain from such practices and a clear policy must be in place to indicate the process should an editor wish to publish in his/her journal. The [ASSAf Code of Best Practice](#) for journal Editors provides details in this regard.

Keyan Tomaselli added that these criteria would differ from journal to journal particularly in the context of OA publishing where editors used available space to publish excessively in their own journals. As shown in the CREST studies, such practices seemed to become a cash mill through the DHET incentive for a particular editor or set of authors. Over publication by editors in their own journals needed to be monitored. He suggested that this issue should continue to be on the NSEF's agenda. He also mentioned that editors help shape disciplines by facilitating particular kinds of debates through the journal pages.

Ada Ordor commented that exceptions could be specified to preserve publishing ethics, but abuse of publishing ethics by an editor was problematic. She suggested that placing a blanket ban on editors publishing in their own journals would be problematic and that the

issue should be discussed and carefully worded in a way that would not hinder other related research initiatives. Flexibility within appropriate guidelines should be the principle.

Elizabeth Henning pointed out some of the problems that arose if the editor was at the institution where the journal was based, and the editorship moved to another institution.

Robin Crewe indicated that the institution and the editorial board should play a role in the appointment of the editor (and in governance matters) and attempt to ensure that the editor will manage and foster the development of the journal adequately. A particular institutional affiliation would not necessarily be definitive if this was the case.

Neil Eccles inquired whether the highly subsidised ASSAf publication management software platform could be a mechanism whereby some of the article processing fees could be reduced to help broaden the scope of 'low publication fee' journals to be OA and to waive page fees, and thereby construct a 'social good' space.

Keyan Tomaselli mentioned that the issue of article processing fees was on the global agenda, particularly as the move from subscription based 'reader pays' through libraries to 'author pays' through OA has seen a dramatic increase in fees sparking a major debate internationally. The journal earned DHET incentive for the university and the money was dispensed through different mechanisms. The university would have to be approached to pay the page charges or article processing fees either directly - if the money was retained institutionally - or authors could pay it from their DHET incentive funds that went into their respective research accounts. In this way there would always be funding available to pay for article processing charges.

Susan Veldsman indicated that ASSAf advocated for article processing charges to be carried by the relevant universities given that they and not the individual researchers were the recipients of DHET incentive funds. ASSAf also suggested that the DHET incentive funds should be top-sliced for allocation to journal Editors. It would be critical for the National System of Innovation (NSI) to ensure that such a fund would be governed by a clear policy and used to support journals of high quality and standards.

Keyan Tomaselli referred journal Editors to ASSAf's report, *Twelve Years Later: Second ASSAf Report on Research Publishing in and from South Africa*, which was an important study to help understand the context of the past and moving into the future. The SAJS had been debating many of the issues raised in this report and many of ASSAf's other reports that were published on its website.

## **SESSION 2 (Facilitator: Prof Irvy Gledhill)**

### **Definition of a SA Journal (Prof Robin Crewe)**

When the review of South African journals was undertaken for the first time it was based on analysing those journals already on the DHET list. ASSAf organised various disciplinary specialists to undertake the review of journals that requested to be added to the DHET list, on an ad hoc basis in order to advise the DHET about whether a journal should be added to the list or not and the various criteria related to that. The applications from new journals on an ad hoc basis resulted in interesting questions about whether some of the journals that applied for accreditation to the DHET SA list were actually SA journals or whether they were journals that

were simply trying to acquire subsidies for their authors. These issues raised the question of "What is a SA journal?".

The DHET policy document states that it maintains a list of SA journals that meet the criteria set out in the policy. The policy does not define a SA journal, but general principles for the recognition of a SA journal have been established, namely:

- The process for the establishment of the journal must have taken place in SA and when a journal applies for the recognition it needs to explain this process and its rationale in order to explain why it should be considered for inclusion in the SA list. (The idea that the DHET list would be temporary did not come to fruition and the DHET chose to maintain the list in order to keep track of the quality of locally produced publications.)
- The name of the journal could be decided by the owners and editorial board and would reflect the content of the journal and the needs of the discipline for which it was being established.
- The journal should be initiated by a SA institution (a university, scholarly society, or a similar sort of institution) that would initiate the journal. The initiation would be via a group of SA-based scholars and the intellectual ownership should be retained by the initiators in SA.
- The participation of SA scholars as authors of the material in the journals should represent at least 40% of the research articles published in a two-year period. (This is to ensure that the intellectual project that the journal supports has significant SA participation as well as leadership.)
- The focus of the journal should be on scholarly work that emanates from SA.
- The Editor of the journal should preferably be based in SA and the Editorial Board should have a significant representation from SA. International representation, although desirable, should not be at the expense of SA representation.

The panels established to review applications from new journals for inclusion on the SA list need to use these principles as a guide in the assessment of whether the journals can reasonably be defined as SA journals. A journal established by an international organisation, or an organisation located outside of SA would not qualify for consideration for inclusion on the SA list. Similarly, and the permanent residence of a journal Editor in SA, a journal published by an SA publisher and with a SA address does not make the journal a SA journal unless it fulfils the general principles.

## Q&A

Kate Huddleston asked whether the SA journals that moved to SciELO SA and were removed from the DHET list would be placed back on the list.

Susan Veldsman and Robin Crewe explained that the initial idea was that the DHET list would disappear as the journals moved on to other accredited indexes. Only the journals that did not appear in any accredited index should be on the DHET list. However, this was not the case, and the list was highly problematic as no consistent rule was being applied. They confirmed that SA journals that were moved from the DHET list to SciELO SA were still accredited. The DHET needed to provide policy clarity as to whether it wanted to maintain the SA list or not because the lack of clarity created confusion for authors, editors, and research officers. The DHET list could be viewed as a 'waiting room' for new journals. As they developed a track record and status in the field, being on the list provided an opportunity for

authors to earn a subsidy while the journal moved towards listing in some of the other indices. The recognition of the SA journals is relevant in this process.

Mathabo Khau inquired whether once a journal has been moved from the DHET list to any other index, the editors still needed to produce 75% compliance to authors to get the DHET subsidy.

Susan Veldsman explained that local and international indexes clearly state their respective sets of requirements that journals in their index were expected to follow in order to remain in the indexes and there was consensus between all the indexes in terms of editorial integrity and ethics.

Robin Crewe added that it would be extremely difficult for DHET to track the compliance of journals in those indexes. Once a SA journal was in one of the indices, it was recognised, and the subsidy followed unless evidence of malpractice emerged.

Pierre de Villiers mentioned that there was confusion about the calculation used by the DHET to define the 25:75% and whether the ratio was based on a head count or a fractional count.

Susan Veldsman indicated that the SPP was concerned about the application of the rule and agreed that the matter required clarification from the DHET. The DHET's policy would have to be reviewed once the national quality framework was in place.

With regard to the principle that required the editor to be based in SA being viewed as very restrictive, Robin Crewe explained that it was reasonable to expect the editor to be based in SA during the initiation phase, but the scholars and editors could be more mobile as the journal became established.

Ina Smith mentioned that it was important that an editor residing in a country outside SA continued to be affiliated with the owner institution of the relevant journal.

Susan Veldsman added that the general principles for what constituted a SA journal became applicable at the point when a new journal applied for accreditation and to assist the peer review panels to establish whether a journal was a SA journal. She concurred with Carol Bertram's suggestion that the situation with regard to the 25% DHET rule for journals that were indexed by Scopus and SciELO needed to be clarified, especially for the university research offices, adding that the matter required a conversation with the DHET.

Robin Crewe suggested that the SPP should consider providing a short document that explained the intricacies to help research offices with the process.

Susan Veldsman pointed out that the evaluation of ad hoc journals that applied for accreditation would take place during the week of 15 November 2021. The process that the panel would follow was expected to bring interesting aspects to the fore and highlight the issues of concern.

## Interpretation of the ASSAf Code of Best Practice for Journal Editors (Prof Elizabeth Henning, Editor: South African Journal of Early Childhood Education)

Elizabeth Henning interpreted the ASSAf Code of Best Practice from the perspective of her experience as a journal editor, reviewer, author, and reader of journals in general. Her view was that the policy is clear, concise, workable, and written in accessible English, and could not be improved on, but the editorial and production governance process was problematic when it came to putting it into practice. The time and energy spent, and the expertise needed to deal with governance were not clear to everybody and there was no consensus in this regard.

Currently, the *South African Journal of Early Childhood Education* has a huge reviewer pool, but once reviewers were used twice in the year new reviewers have to be found. This was very time-consuming and required a lot of discernment. A reviewer pool is the most valuable investment that a journal can have, but also the most difficult one because the reviewers have to be respected. Managing the turnaround time in corresponding with reviewers can be challenging. Governance at all levels does not seem to take account of the effort that goes into this process and employers do not pay enough attention to how much time it takes to do this work. Editorial work is not necessarily included in one's job description as an academic and it appears that more attention is being paid to research ethics than publication ethics. It is crucial for editors to be assured of institutional backup.

The *South African Journal of Early Childhood Education* started in 1997 as a 'home industry'. After some time, the journal moved to a university server and to print with OA, which was a difficult and expensive process and after some time, the journal moved to an OA publisher, which required payment of handling and page fees. It was fortunate for the journal that the University of Johannesburg provided a reserve fund to assist authors who struggle to pay page fees. The *South African Journal of Early Childhood Education* used to call itself a developmental journal whose primary aim was to develop new authors, reviewers and so on. This effort, which has also been undertaken by ASSAf and SAJS, should be a model for all journals.

Elizabeth Henning highlighted several aspects and pointed out areas in the Code of Best Practice that were of concern to her and suggested that some areas required clarification and/or interrogation.

### Q&A

Elizabeth Henning agreed with the comment that reviewers required four weeks to review a paper and their time and other commitments needed to be respected. She tried to accommodate reviewers' time limitations by changing the deadlines set by the publisher whenever possible. A system was used to recognise the time spent by reviewers in order to incorporate this aspect into a key result area evaluation or assessment. All aspects of a journal should be considered, not just the quality and number of published articles per annum. With regard to the earlier discussion about the 25/75% and the incurred issue, she mentioned that most of problem could be resolved by online rolling publications only having one issue per volume.

Carol Bertram was interested to know how many SA universities took journal editorship into account in the workload of academics.

Mathabo Khau suggested that universities and faculties should be obliged to recognise the workload of editors as part of their academic workload and that the editors should be acknowledged for the extra work they do. The matter had been raised many times with university management but was not yet resolved.

Elizabeth Henning indicated that the matter was about university management as well as the security of the journal and suggested that editors should keep a systematic record of the tasks addressed and the time spent in relation to the journal as proof of what the work entailed. The editorship was not an honorary position but a work position.

Louise van Heerden mentioned that it had been found that continuous publication worked well, especially with regard to affiliations, and that authors did not have to wait so long for their articles to be published.

Leslie Swartz commented that editors were well exercised about the invisibility of what they did. Similarly, reviewers were difficult to find because of their invisibility. Although editing, reviewing, and working with students were part of what academics did to keep the work going, all these activities were seen as extra workload because they were not easily countable. He suggested that a joint publication or statement was needed that stated some of the issues such as the struggles with the invisibility of editing work and the difficulty to get people to review on time, as these were crucial issues for the maintenance and transformation of the Academy.

Neil Eccles pointed out that sometimes the work that was created was related to bureaucratic structures that were put in place under the rubric of quality and to protect against a lot of the maleficence associated with journals, publishing, and subsidy. Those control mechanisms became particularly burdensome.

Ina Smith pointed out that reviewers could also earn CPD points based on review work done for journals and that there are tools to monitor, report and record reviewer activities.

Susan Veldsman warned editors that predatory practices were beginning to arise around authorship and encouraged them to read ASSAf's report, *Twelve Years Later: Second ASSAf Report on Research Publishing in and from South Africa*, which discussed authorship extensively.

The participants were in agreement that time spent on running a journal was not recognised as part of the academic workload, but cut deeply and broadly into editors' teaching and research load, and that more lobbying was required around this important issue that should be addressed with management structures at universities across the country. Several of the delegates supported the idea of an advocacy group around these issues and publishing a statement on the matter.

Susan Veldsman indicated that ASSAf was prepared to draft a statement on behalf of the NSEF stating some of the issues and struggles faced by editors of journals in SA.

### SESSION 3 (Facilitator: Prof Phillip de Jager, CSPiSA Member)

#### Unpacking the Question of Whether or not Research Can be Fun (Discussants: Prof Keyan Tomaselli, Prof Caroline Ncube and Prof Warren Maroun)

##### **Prof Keyan Tomaselli**

Keyan Tomaselli is the Editor of the self-funded journal, *Critical Arts*. The DHET funding that he receives has largely sustained the journal's administrative office for decades by subsidising most of the authors published. *Critical Arts* arose before DHET's system was instituted. The demise of the well-designed popular culture magazine, *Speak*, in 1979 coincided with the planning stages of *Critical Arts* and the latter was offered the defunct *Speak* subscription list. Most of the *Speak* subscribers indicated loyalty to a cause by renewing their subscriptions prior to the publication of the first number. The first issue of *Critical Arts* in 1980 attracted immediate global attention. The second number attracted articles by well-known and respected authors.

The young editorial board and authors shared the foolhardy and common desire to change the world, or at least SA, and found the experience to be exhilarating. Intellectual dissidence found a space and the authors reshaped the disciplines allied with the journal.

As an editor fostering critique, Keyan Tomaselli's work once impeded his promotion as it attracted State attention and largely exhausted the editorial team. However, the journal was a key factor in Keyan Tomaselli being headhunted by various institutions over the years, where promotion was a welcome by-product but not the objective.

Nowadays, universities seriously undervalue the backroom work by editors who are the conduit for DHET's R2.5 billion annually. It is unclear whether the crucial work they will be doing will pay off in similar extra-ordinary ways. This juncture exists between the impressive front presented by the commercially published journals and the fragility of the human infrastructure on which they depend. The professional support that editors receive from their multi-national publishers is often vitiated by the lack of recognition and support for their own institutions. For many journals, partnering with corporate publishers is the only way to secure long-term sustainability. Hustling for resources is one of the tasks of an editor and comes with its own contradictions and considerations in balancing commercial and scholarly interests. The central problem, as exemplified by the DHET reward criteria, is that editing is not recognised necessarily amongst the billable units of academic output. On the contrary, an editor's costs subtract from the time available for generating measurable units of performance. The DHET-approved peer-reviewed article is the local gold standard, the basic unit of currency. The labour that supports journals, editors, referees, and editorial boards tends to be institutionally muted and the populous response is that editors often deny entry to emerging scholars – editors being the supposed inheritors of closed networks claimed to narrowly dispense academic largess. Yet, as one American editor suggests, 'Editorial work often feels not so much princely as proletarian'.

Keyan Tomaselli suggested that the fun in being an editor is in the action, in making a difference, and in facilitating successive generations of scholars who in the *Critical Arts* pages would become international thought leaders. The epistemological troublemakers of today are the sage editors and institutional capacity builders of tomorrow. This is what is required in order to set up a journal. Commitment will drive it through, or it could fail.

As with the experience with the cottage industry process that characterised the inaugurations of both the Australian journal, *Continuum*, and *Critical Arts*, at the core of their respective successes was the daily, nightly, joyful, and serious physical effort and a genuine delight in bringing published media and cultural exchanges to those who happened to care. The prodigies who will replace current editors do care and can continue the breath-taking experience of riding the editorial rollercoaster into the choppy future. The environment has become much more regulated and commercialised, and almost over-provided with journals.

Editors need to explain to their managers and administrators that publishing does not just happen. There is an entire enterprise that underpins the production of every single number. Book editors get rewarded for their editorial work while journal editors and the journals themselves get nothing unless the institutions where they are located have some mechanism in order to support the journals that are the transfer mechanisms for the DHET's R2.5 billion annually.

### **Prof Caroline Ncube**

Caroline Ncube co-edits the South African Intellectual Property Law Journal (IPLJ) together with Associate Professor Lee-Ann Tong. They do this work because they are enthusiastic about the field and because there was a need for a platform in the country that provided space for Intellectual Property Law scholarship in a stand-alone journal. Caroline Ncube enjoys the editorial work as she engages with a topic that is of interest to her and makes a difference in the everyday lives of people as well as provides a community of fellow travellers on the same academic paths. Most of her time is spent on research, writing, and editing the journal.

The answer to the questions about whether research can and should be fun is that they are intrinsically interwoven and should go together, and that it is not necessary to take a serious or joyless approach to one's work. With respect to the concept of fun and finding the fun in the work, researchers and editors are personally motivated, curious, and eager to contribute and to learn. Most editors do the work voluntarily and are unacknowledged and unrewarded by their employers. Journal editors are also researchers and readers of journals. Their priorities are to ensure that journal issues are delivered by the due dates and their planning and scheduling are feasible so that these targets are met. Their intention is that the research that is published is nuanced and content specific so that it makes a contribution to knowledge and solving challenges. The published articles must have relevance to the challenges faced by the country and possibly the rest of the continent and developing world. Being engaged in rewarding and enjoyable work should be fun for journal editors without detracting from its seriousness and the contribution that it makes to society.

Although researchers often publish to show what they are good at, they should also consider what they are good for and their benefit to research and scholarship. The co-editors of the IPLJ make of point of ensuring that research that is published is of benefit to the field in some way. Most editors' energy is directed towards being productive and meeting targets. This requires them to be committed to excellence, to plan and to focus their effort, but this work needs to be enjoyable and rewarding.

Delegates were invited to respond to the following questions in an online interactive survey that was run during Prof Ncube's presentation:

- Can and should research be fun?
- What is most rewarding and enjoyable about the work of editors (in three words)?

**Prof Warren Maroun**

Warren Maroun's view was that whether or not research is fun often depended on the outcome of the review process. Researchers can receive an acceptance letter or a letter of complaint about the research being under-theorised or under-methodised, which would necessitate lengthy revisions to the paper. These scenarios link to the role played by editors in the research process.

The fun aspect also hinges on whether research is conducted for purposes of promotion or job security, which can be the death of creative, innovative, enquiring, and ultimately fun research. In the United Kingdom (UK) and Australia, for example, there is a culture of meeting specific research targets and publishing in specific high-quality journals, introducing an exceptionally high and narrow standard decided on by a collection of business school deans. This institutional culture turns research into a numbers game, is one of the most significant impediments to an enjoyable and creative research experience, and is incredibly difficult to overcome. Thankfully, not all universities have this culture. An environment that encourages researchers to disseminate knowledge makes it easier to find fun in being a researcher.

Research provides an opportunity to engage in areas of inquiry where others have feared to go and ties into the idea of dissidence. Academia is one of the very few professions that remunerate dissidence. Academics have the licence to explore creative ways of thinking about things and to voice ideas with colleagues and should capitalise on these features in research to turn what can be a somewhat mundane job into something more interesting. Receiving a rejection letter or a 25-page commentary from an annoying reviewer or being obliged to do research to meet certain targets is the downside of being in academia.

In addition to creating an environment where dissidents and radicals can publish, journal editing is also about creating an environment where theoretical and methodological eclecticism are allowed. In some cases, journals and reviewers assign a type of strange quasi-religious value to certain theoretical frameworks and methods. There is probably a time and place for this, but it is also necessary to enable creativity and create an environment where people can explore different methods and theoretical frameworks. Academia should never become myopic and prescribe methods and theories. Prof Maroun chose to become part of the solution by being involved in editing journals, serving as an editor and reviewer.

Warren Maroun was increasingly concerned from an accounting, finance, business research space, that some of the work has become over-theorised. Researchers can become so bogged down in contorted theoretical evaluation that they forget about the reader who is not another academic. Readers should also be practitioners who engage with the research and need to make sure that papers that affect their lives and make a valid contribution to the way they conduct their activities are written.

Warren Maroun's involvement in journal editing was also to try and allow for practical contributions in addition to theoretical contributions. In his view, there is an over-concern about theories and methods in an accounting and finance space and the broader audience has been forgotten. He views himself as a compassionate editor in the sense that he operates under the assumption that a paper should be accepted for publication unless there are reasons to believe otherwise, as opposed to the converse. By cultivating a constructive review process, authors do not feel that there is bias against them, and an editor can help make a valid contribution to research and research as a fulfilling career.

## Q&A

Ada Ordor's work as an editor was done with a team of postgraduate researchers. Different people assume different roles and a small research community was created by way of a writing circle, periodic actual or virtual meet-ups, parallel creative writing fora, experimenting with new media such as free animation apps were some of the ways they tried to secure and sustain interest among postgraduate researchers. The team managed the fora and shared various editing roles. The interaction was key and generating new ideas was imperative.

Kobus Eloff mentioned that editors were in a position to bring young researchers in contact with specialists, and in doing so made the work of an editor worthwhile.

Neil Eccles commented that one of the most enjoyable aspects of journal editing was sending and receiving acceptance letters. Another exciting aspect of being an editor of a SA journal was that it created a space in which SA stories could be told in their context providing an antidote for the western centred sense of what is global and relevant.

Gerhardus van den Heever liked to idea of an editor as an activist, adding that the editor was also an active creator of a discipline. As the editor of the *Journal of Religion and Theology*, which was about the transdisciplinary study of discourse between religious and theological studies, he has exposure to writing that was not in his field that broadened his vision to widely divergent fields.

Irvy Gledhill mentioned that while it was easy to send an acceptance letter, sending a review requiring revision should be a courteous encouragement to improve.

Caroline Ncube mentioned that editors should make a point of enjoying their work while they labour unacknowledged and unpaid but incorporate calls for acknowledgement and remuneration in their work.

## Wrap-Up and Closure

Keyan Tomaselli proposed that (with the relevant approval) a list of SA journal editors should be circulated to delegates so that the NSEF's interactive discussions can be sustained, and bilateral relations set up. He commented on the encouraging engagement and remarkable collegial interactivity between participants at this meeting and requested that the notes from the chat be included as appendices to the minutes of this meeting for record purposes. The NSEF could be developed as a kind of (inclusive) collaboration of partnerships between editors. It was necessary to work on the relationship between editors, reviewers, and authors and to educate authors about the cost, the effort, the time, and the *pro bono* commitment made by everyone involved in the publication process.

**DAY 2****SESSION 4 (Facilitator: Prof Leslie Swartz, CSPiSA Member)****Welcome**

Prof Swartz welcomed everyone to the second day of the NSEF meeting.

**Combatting Predatory Academic Journals and Conferences (Prof Asfawossen Asrat, Prof Stefan Eriksson, Ms Susan Veldsman)**

Editors were reminded that ASSAf had done its own studies on the predatory phenomena in SA specifically. Its latest study, *Twelve Years Later: Second ASSAf Report on Research Publishing in and from South Africa*, looked at all the bibliometric analyses relating to the publication of SA research and the standards of journals, and came across the fact that SA researchers were also embarking in predatory activities. Although the percentage of cases over a ten-year period was low, the fact that there is engagement in unethical practices was a grave concern. Developing countries were often blamed for having the most predatory activities, but this has not been confirmed. The extent to which this phenomenon occurs in the rest of the world is also not clear, and interestingly, not much has been published on predatory conferences. The DHET's Research Output Policy also accredits conferences and gives subsidies to universities for participation and publishing conference proceedings. It would be interesting to observe whether or not the predatory behaviour relating to conferences has changed or evolved over time.

The IAP study started two years ago and is funded by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation. Its main thrust is to investigate the predatory problem broadly and consider the consequences for research if predatory practices continued unabated.

Common features and indicators of predatory journals and conferences are:

- Articles and abstracts are solicited from researchers through practices that exploit the pressure of researchers to publish and present their work
- Rapid pay-to-publish/present models without peer review, fake editorial or conference board's falsely listing respected scientists, fraudulent impact factors or metrics, and journal and conference titles that are deceptively similar to legitimate ones.
- As genuinely fraudulent practices evolve, it becomes more difficult to distinguish between low-quality unethical and questionable practices.

A global landmark survey of predatory academic practice was undertaken in order to gauge the impact of such practice. Around 1872 researchers from 112 countries representing all major geographic regions of the world and all disciplines participated in the survey and the responses provided a rich dataset for analysis. Over half the respondents were Academy Members. Data collected from the survey highlighted the need for systematic and institutional change in respect of perverse incentives for predatory practice and improvements to publishing practice.

Over 80% of respondents perceived that predatory practices were a serious problem or on the rise in their country of work and over 90% were of the view that predatory practices needed to be combatted in order to preserve the integrity of research and public trust in it

and to ensure that research informing policy is rigorous. Nearly one-quarter of the respondents had either published in a predatory journal, participated in a predatory conference, or did not know if they had been party to either of these. Reasons for their involvement in predatory practices were given as lack of awareness, to advance their careers, because it is cheaper, faster, and easier, and pressure from their peers. Respondents felt strongly that efforts have to be made to combat perverse predatory practices and the majority were concerned about these practices fuelling misinformation in public policy and infiltrating and undermining the research enterprise as a whole. Other interesting results of the survey were that predatory journals and conferences may have infiltrated a wider demographic of researchers than previously thought, and while researchers at all career stages were affected, those in low- and middle-income countries and certain disciplines were more vulnerable to the trappings of predatory practices. At least 14% of respondents admitted to having used a predatory journal or conference, although many had done so unknowingly. This equated to around 1.2 million researchers of the 8.8 million around the world using billions of dollars in research costs who could have used predatory outlets. Respondents highlighted markers of a predatory journal that focus on a flood of invitations to publish a paper, often in a subject outside the targeted researchers' areas of expertise, unusual combinations of words in the names of the journals or conferences and invitations that are unfocussed and used flattering language.

Although there is a range of resources already available online to help researchers identify and avoid predatory journals and conferences, these resources are limited in defining the practice. The project team defined predatory practices as those that prioritise self-interest at the expense of scholarship and produced a tool that provided a spectrum with markers to help distinguish between fraudulent, deceptive, low-quality, and quality journals and another such spectrum for conferences.

Draft sets of recommendations were developed for all the stakeholders including publishers, libraries, and indexing services. The publishing industry was the driver of much of the systemic, exclusivity and bias, and they and those promoting alternate publishing models had a vital role to play in transforming scientific publishing and in defining fairer, more inclusive models for publishing.

NSEF participants were invited to share their insights and comments on the draft recommendations with the project team. The draft report is available at <https://www.interacademies.org/event/predatory-academic-practices-regional-perspectives-and-learning-2>.

## Q&A

Tilman Dederig mentioned that the predatory research and publication's function and the struggle against them can only be successful if all levels of academic culture and administration and management were involved. A heightened awareness had to be generated by continuing discussions and campaigns, especially but not only directed at emerging researchers.

Kirstin Krauss mentioned that the *Electronic Journal for Information Systems in Developing Countries* had started using Fidelior to help flag questionable citations/titles used in submitted manuscripts. The entire 2017 list of publications was scanned and over 90 flags were identified.

Fidelior combines a variety of tools and looks at the spectrum. The editor or review board ought to delve into the flagged areas to see how the author used them and assess the impact. The tool also flagged writing style issues. The Fidelior report highlighted quality writing in a way that helped interpret the possibility of questionable science.

Stefan Eriksson added that a few of those who made plagiarism tools were planning to flag references to predatory journals. This was an important way to combat predatory practices.

Kobus Eloff suggested that this excellent presentation would be very valuable to students, and it would be helpful if the spectrum tool provided a cut-off at the point where the journal or conference could be regarded as predatory.

Susan Veldsman mentioned that the 12-year journal peer review process had come to an end recently and that she was busy with a study to analyse the typical recommendations made by peer reviewers to the journals and to identify trends. Some of the journals were of very low quality and did not adhere to international standards. The spectrum approach would help to raise concerns that 'very low quality' journals were at risk of moving to 'deceptive' on the spectrum. Editors needed to make sure that their journals can be distinguished from those that were 'low quality'.

Asfawossen Asrat acknowledged the contributions in the chat, noting that the set of recommendations comprised specific recommendations for stakeholders and could be found in the draft report. Addressing the root cause of predatory practices was what made this study different from other work that had been done on this topic. One of the major root causes identified in the study was the institutional setting of the academic environment, which was addressed in detail in the report.

Kirstin Krauss mentioned that pressure to publish was an important root cause for predatory practices and had become a culture in academia. Instead of students being taught about the importance of curiosity and integrity in science, they are taught to publish or perish. It was necessary to take a value-based approach to the engagement with emerging researchers.

Neil Eccles remarked that the entire publication game was predatory and warranted some scrutiny beyond the predatory space. Supposedly reputable publishers were actually only in it for money. Editors tried to sustain an academic spirit or culture but operated within the context of multi-national corporations that were the dominating publishers.

Leslie Swartz thanked the presenters for having stimulated a debate that went far beyond telling editors what not to do and so on, but led to interesting and important discussions about issues that required deep and sustained engagement.

### **Publication Integrity and a Proposed Publications Quality Framework (Prof Johann Mouton and Mr Chief Mabizela)**

Mr Mabizela presented the background to the work done to eradicate unethical practices relating to research outputs in general in the SA system before it was concluded that a Publications Quality Framework needed to be developed. Although the DHET has a particular interest in ensuring that the system produced quality research and publications, the eradication of unethical practices in research outputs is everybody's responsibility, not only

that of the DHET. Every level of the value chain, from the production of knowledge to its publication and reuse, has to be confronted in an effort to eradicate unethical practices.

The DHET's Research Outputs Policy of 2003 was revised in 2015. Its purpose is "to encourage research productivity by rewarding quality research output at public higher education institutions. The policy is not intended to measure all output, but to enhance productivity by recognising the major types of research output produced by higher education institutions and further use appropriate proxies to determine the quality of such output." One of the proxies is the peer review, which is covered extensively in the policy.

The basic principles as outlined in the policy address scholarly publishing as the focus of the subsidy, the distribution of research subsidy to public higher education institutions in SA, support and encouragement of scholarship, punitive measures against institutions that compromise the integrity of scholarship or research, and the establishment of institutional research integrity committees to ensure institutional compliance with respect to aspects such as the conduct of researchers.

One of the major recommendations of *The Quality of South Africa's Research Publications Study Report, 2019* (available on the DHET website) concerned the need for ongoing research and analysis of SA scholarly publishing in order to maintain the requisite levels of vigilance and ensure that the public investment in the subsidy systems meets the highest standards of research quality and integrity. The DHET partnered with CREST and others towards the implementation of this recommendation. A research working group has been set up and a proposal developed for a multi-year project with various components and elements.

There are quality checks at each step of the scholarly publication process. The DHET's responsibility to quality check is post-publication for the purpose of subsidising the institutions for research publications they produce. The DHET invested R16 billion in scholarly publications between 2012 and 2019. This substantial investment reinforces the importance of quality and integrity in conducting research.

Questions about questionable publication practices are not easy to answer, but there are more ambivalent ethical issues in publication practices that require consideration. From a research ethics point of view, the question is about the ethical principles or norms that can be used in making a judgment about whether these behaviours are unethical. In the case of predatory publishing, it is often argued that academics who do this consistently are complicit in violating good editorial practice. In the case of excessive publication by an editor or members of the editorial board, it is argued that 'peer review' may be compromised especially if there is insufficient transparency about journal review processes. In the case of the senior academic insisting on co-authorship in all or most cases with junior faculty or students, it is argued that good practice in terms of the rules of authorship may be violated.

Questions about issues such as the principles at work in the case of an author who ends up publishing multiple papers in the same issue of a journal are important because if questionable practices are allowed to continue unabated and unchecked, there is a risk that the public's trust in science (premised on science pursuing truth with integrity) will be eroded. When there is growing evidence that the core principles of peer review are being compromised and deliberately undermined through unethical behaviour, it would not be

surprising if the public trust in science diminishes, especially when such unethical behaviour feeds off a system funded with taxpayers money. It is the responsibility of scientists and the science system to protect the integrity of what they do.

Unacceptable, questionable, and unethical (even fraudulent) publication practices are categorised as violations of the DHET's Research Outputs Policy guidelines. After DHET has done its due diligence with regard the submissions for subsidy, the submissions are shared with CREST. Various kinds of checks are run on the data and CREST provides advice to the DHET that it may or may not accept. Examples of questionable and fraudulent publication practices and their respective illustrative cases that were identified as part of the ongoing work at CREST include:

- Continued publication in predatory journals: The case of the *Journal of Academy of Entrepreneurship* was used to illustrate this practice. In the 2020 submissions that are currently being reviewed by the DHET for subsidy, it was found that 81 submissions were still being submitted to a list of predatory journals that DHET had circulated to universities in 2018 indicating that it would withhold subsidy for publication in those and other journals that are found to be predatory.
- Excessive publication in a single volume (or issue) of a journal: The case relating to the *Journal of Disability and Human Development* was used to illustrate this practice. Fifteen articles were submitted by the same two authors in one journal issue that is only accessible as an e-book that has to be paid for. The same two authors have submitted claims for similar submissions in a number of other journals as well. This practice was discussed at the previous NSEF meeting and CREST and DHET agreed that the relevant policy guideline needed to be made clearer. This rule has to be enforced because it most likely violates an existing rule of the DHET publication policy and because this practice may reflect the intentions of academics to publish papers that represent the smallest publishing units (otherwise known as 'salami slicing').
- Submission of excessive conference contributions that do not meet the policy criteria: The case of a "conference held in Zimbabwe in December 2020" was used to illustrate the practice. Forty-eight submissions were made for subsidy for papers presented at the conference and 40 of these submissions were authored by academics from one university. The link to the proceedings provides a list of "740 papers" but no information is provided about evidence of peer-review or names of reviewers and the organising or scientific committee.
- Claiming subsidy for a book publication when it is in fact a Master's or doctoral thesis: The case of a 2014 thesis submitted as a book in 2020 (with the identical text as the thesis) was used to illustrate the practice.
- New forms of excessive behaviour: The case used to illustrate this practice concerned the *European Journal of Economics, Law, and Social Science*. CREST received an inquiry from a university research office about a possible predatory journal and payment of page fees to staff who published excessively in one issue of this journal, which generated a deeper investigation and revelations about a host of problems. Although this is not a SA journal it currently appears on the DOAJ list and hence in theory qualifies for subsidy.

The above examples of unacceptable, questionable, and unethical publication practices show that these practices by SA academics continue to take place and even proliferate. Earlier forms of blatant gaming of the system continue (especially in conference proceedings) whilst new forms are emerging. It is important to emphasise that it is not CREST's view that the unethical behaviours that have been identified and continue to be discovered

are representative of the majority of SA academics. Even if these practices represent only 2 or 3% of the population of academics, they do substantial harm both in terms of monetary consequences and, more importantly, in terms of the public trust in the system.

The seriousness of these practices has been recognised by the DHET and two complementary initiatives have been initiated:

- The development of a Publications Quality Framework (PQF), which has been built around the various steps in the process for submission and approval of claims for publication subsidy, and challenges and interventions relating to each of the steps have been identified.
- The development of a national collaborative programme under the auspices of the University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP) and in partnership with the universities and other role players to implement the PQF. This proposed programme will support the ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and analysis of the funding system to ensure optimal and early interventions to strengthen the integrity of publication practices across the system. The collaborative programme will be organised into four main work streams or activities led by different institutions, namely:
  - Activity 1: The establishment of a more timely alert and support system to assist universities to identify cases of questionable publishing behaviour before submitting for publication subsidies (National Research Foundation (NRF))
  - Activity 2: Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the quality and integrity of all submissions to the DHET (CREST/ASSAf)
  - Activity 3: The development and implementation of capacity building interventions around good practice in scholarly publishing (Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association (SARIMA))
  - Activity 4: Support for ongoing research and analysis of SA scholarly publishing practices (CREST).

## Q&A

Uwalomwa Uwuigbe remarked that SA has taken the lead with regard to scholarly publication and combatting predatory practices, and other African countries should copy its example. Most of the international outlets were fraudulent in nature and sought out journals noting the fact that Africans were in a rush to publish for promotion purposes, thereby reducing quality assurance. Institutions needed to remove the fraudulent journals and target high-ranked journals. Institutions had a role to play in the publication process but if journals passed through normal research processes and quality assurance processes, it would be possible to get the best out of the system.

Chief Mabizela pointed out that institutions needed to look at their internal policies and how they incentivised research. This area was not regulated by the DHET. The problem was that the extent of an increase in unethical practices alongside the pressure on academics to publish could oblige the government to take steps to regulate how the institutions formulated their internal policies.

Hein Viljoen asked whether subsidising outputs was the best way to fund research and how other countries subsidised research.

Johann Mouton responded that there were two main approaches to how governments

across the globe funded research at universities. One was a block grant to universities through some or other body, which may or may not include funding for research that was based on a formula for the number of students and staff and so on. In SA, the DHET funded universities through a block grant that was based on several factors and was commensurate with the size of the institution. The other approach was competitive grant funding that usually went through a national funding agency. Proposals for funding were reviewed. The DHET subsidy funding system was unique in that it funded publications after they have been accepted based on a set of rules. If the universities abided by the rules they would qualify for the subsidy. In the UK, university departments submit a portfolio of their research output for review by independent panels every five or six years. Scores of individual departments were aggregated to the university and the universities were ranked in terms of their scores. Block grants were given on this basis. This system was very costly, and performance based. The huge cost benefit of the DHET system was that it paid out R5 billion per year and was managed by a group of less than ten people within the department because they trusted the journals and the universities to do their jobs. Some have suggested that the whole DHET system should be scrapped because of unethical behaviours, but this raised a question of what the alternatives would be. The NRF was based on competitive funding and has a budget that was less than half of the DHET's ring-fenced fund. Prof Mouton was of the view that it would be hugely dramatic to the university system in this country if the current DHET subsidy system was scrapped on the basis of a small percentage of people who violated the rules.

Carol Bertram pointed out that although the behaviours of academics were under discussion, the reasons for the behaviours and what is actually happening in universities, particularly Historically Black Universities and merged institutions, was not being addressed. Everybody in the system was under huge pressure to create publication units and academics were finding any possible way to do so. There was insufficient mentoring of those many emerging researchers and large numbers of senior researchers were exiting the system. Mentoring is not seen as a subsidisable product because it is a process. Things that were measurable were valued while things that cannot be measured were no longer valued. A system that incentivised and monetised academic activities would always have unintended consequences.

Johann Mouton indicated that publish or perish and other issues were real and universal. The situation was that most SA (and overseas) universities had a huge emphasis on performance indicators and in some cases, these were taken to the extreme. There was a culture at universities that not only encouraged academics to publish but commanded them to publish because publications were linked to the performance appraisal system. On top of this, some universities paid the subsidy money of around R60 000 per paper directly to the author. A few years ago, CREST did a study on emerging scholars for the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI). Most of the 3000 respondents indicated that output was their biggest motivation in academia. Even emerging scholars are inculcated into this performance culture. Prof Mouton suggested that universities needed to rethink their performance appraisal system and introduce different strategies to incentivise early career academics versus established scientists.

Ada Ordor believed that insufficient weighting was allocated to a demonstrated use of quality research in the preparation of teaching materials and there needed to be a re-weighting of promotion requirements. There was an overwhelming emphasis is on one's own published work while there are many new ways of demonstrating proper engagement with

high-quality research and effective ways of communicating with students, but these are not weighted at all.

Uwalomwa Uwuigbe suggested that academics ought to be allowed to choose to focus on either teaching or research in order to avoid bringing excessive pressure on the system. Cluster research should be encouraged as a means to improve the quality of publications. Emerging researchers should work in collaboration with their supervisors and produce at least one quality paper. This would bring solution-based research outputs that were good for the university and the country. It was important to develop strategies to solve the problems as they are encountered in order to promote and improve quality in the system.

Chief Mabizela responded as follows to some of the comments in the chat:

- Contrary to some of the comments made, the DHET policy does promote collaboration. The policy stated that if there was collaboration with an academic outside of the system (whether in SA or elsewhere in the world) the subsidy will only go to the SA institution. This required a simple decision by the institutions about how to get their policies to recognise the collaborations. Relegating the problem to the DHET meant that it would respond by developing a policy that applied across the system and this would not be helpful for the higher education system.
- It should not be a case of publish or perish. The DHET has indicated that universities needed to conduct some kind of research and did not necessarily have to be research focussed. From a policy perspective, the DHET was trying to promote that the universities engaged in research, but this did not mean that teaching should be neglected. Internal policies must promote teaching and incentivise academics who were excellent in teaching. There should be no differentiation between research focussed and teaching focussed universities.
- The DHET trusted international indexes and had recognised a few and engaged with them.
- The issue of gatekeeping was often given by academics (especially young academics) as one of the reasons why they fell for predatory publishing. This matter had to be addressed by the system in its entirety.

Johann Mouton explained that one of the reasons why all systems of ranking universities and rating scientists gave research a more prominent weight than teaching was because it was easier to quantify research outputs because there were more metrics to measure output, citation, and impact and so on. Some universities chose the easy way and used a research appraisal system where the only criteria were the quantitative metrics and not much was required in terms of self-evaluation of the other components, which invariably skewed the performance measurement. If the huge issue of growing unethical practices among SA academics was to be addressed, then it would be necessary to understand all the actors in the whole chain of production and publication of a manuscript. The plan was that the proposed collaborative programme would be implemented from 1 April 2022 and would be driven by the DHET in conjunction with CREST, ASSAf, and SARIMA, with the representation of every university through the research offices. It was anticipated that one of the outcomes of this endeavour would be that universities rethink their performance appraisal systems to include more qualitative questions.

## SESSION 5 (Facilitator: Ms Susan Veldsman, ASSAf)

### Negotiating Publisher Agreements that Facilitate a Transition to Open Access for South Africa (Ms Ellen Tise and Mr Glenn Turan, South African National Library and Information Consortium (SANLiC))

The scholarly publishing sector has been undergoing a number of major changes in recent years, specifically with regard to the move towards OA. Many institutions signed the Berlin Declaration on OA of 2003 and efforts to address the unsustainable cost of providing access to institutions' research outputs were further accelerated by the OA 2020 movement, with more active participation by SANLiC.

SANLiC's publishing data analysis project emerged from its involvement in the National Site Licensing and OA Project and was also the result of networking with other library consortia and engagement with the OA 2020 movement. Once the OA 2020 concept of transformative agreements was embraced by the Vice-Chancellors of SA universities, the idea of a data analysis project was envisaged as one of the steps in the journey towards OA in SA. Other initiatives in this regard include the development of a statement on OA that takes into account the SA context and a set of principles for a transformational transition to OA in SA benchmarking with other countries to provide a clear strategy that will guide negotiations. These agreements must promote accessibility to local research which is crucial for accumulating and developing a corpus of local knowledge for the growth and development of society.

The project sought to address the problem that SA researchers publish behind the paywall at the expense of the country's open science objectives. Added to this, the costs of reading subscriptions were becoming unsustainable and as more researchers began publishing in OA there was the additional cost of publishing fees or article processing charges. The burning question was about whether SA would be better or worse off if all journals were to become OA. Research output data analysis was useful to inform OA strategy, determine viability of specific transformative agreements, improve on preparation for negotiations and determine desired negotiation outcomes, and assist with stakeholder communications.

The status quo means that subscription fees are paid to read closed and hybrid journals. Outside of libraries, research offices usually fund open access publishing in hybrid journal through the mechanism of article publishing charges (APCs) thereby adding to the subscription costs. Transformative agreements usually cover reading services (in closed and hybrid journals) behind the paywall as well as open access publishing services for articles published in hybrid journals. In certain cases, they also include gold OA publishing services and the administration of the publishing without having to pay an APC. The latter is premised on the work done by OA 2020 and its study that determined that the 2 million or so articles produced per year cost the system about €7.6 billion annually. Given that the average APC per article was €2 000, the equivalent in full open access would cost only €4 billion. This meant that there was more than enough money in the system to repurpose the reading funding to pay for publishing.

SANLiC negotiates for subscription agreements that cover hybrid and closed journals that are behind the paywall. However, when researchers publish OA, they would normally pay an article processing charge in fully gold OA journals and hybrid journals that are behind the

paywall but they would not pay for bronze OA when publishers decide at their whim to make specific closed articles free to read. A study conducted by Delta Think showed how this is impacted on the international scene (at an article level). The number of articles in fully closed journals has been diminishing quite significantly and fully closed journals have become hybrid giving researchers the opportunity to publish OA. Although the majority of articles in hybrid journals remain closed, increased numbers of researchers have chosen to publish OA and to pay an article-processing charge in hybrid journals, and fully OA publishing in gold OA journals were also on the increase. Information from publishers about their share of the revenue from reading fees and publishing fees as compared to the share of open and closed articles clearly indicated that a system of paying to publish should be more affordable for the research system than a system of paying to read and paying to publish (the status quo).

Data for SA from 2014 to 2019 taken from the Web of Science, adding reading costs and publishing costs (APC 2020 figures), showed that whilst closed publishing in SA was growing at a slow rate, its share of the total publishing has declined significantly. The real growth was happening in gold OA publishing and OA publishing in hybrid journals had declined. It was concerning that the costs of publishing OA for the SA research system were doubling every three to five years. This was not sustainable. Most of the closed articles were published with the largest five publishers ('Big Five'). At the same time, these five publishers account for 80% of the reading fees, making them the obvious point of focus for repurposing reading costs in order to finance publishing costs. The least disruptive path to transition from closed to OA publishing, would require engaging in successful transformative agreements and achieving a savings at the end of the transition. If the top eleven publishing deals, which account for 93% of the SANLiC journal spend (paying to read), transition to OA publishing, it would be more affordable to pay to publish than to pay to read. Conclusions drawn from the data analysis are that most of the current OA publishing is outside of SANLiC agreements; OA is definitely on the increase across the world, yet much of SA research remains behind paywalls and is therefore unsustainable; open science objectives will not be achieved unless there is engagement in transformative agreements and the costs of publishing OA for South Africa are doubling every three to five years. These conclusions led SANLiC to begin engaging in transformative agreements.

Fifteen negotiation principles for a transformational transition to OA in SA have been identified, namely:

- Inclusivity and social justice must be core. Publishers must have an equity, diversity and inclusion plan that addresses the challenges of researchers in the global south.
- The agreement would be a single one for reading and publishing services combined.
- Read access will not be compromised for our researchers, including perpetual access and post-termination access.
- Researchers can publish full and immediate OA in their venue of choice
- All publications must be under an open license, preferably the Creative Commons Attribution license.
- Publishers will provide tools/mechanisms that facilitate an immediate deposit into institutional repositories.
- Publishers will ensure the long-term digital preservation and accessibility of their content through participation in trusted digital archives.
- No cap on the number of full and immediate OA articles.
- Transparency for licensing deals - no non-disclosure clauses. Public money requires

transparency of agreement terms and costs. The initial term (duration of the agreement) will be three years.

- Renewal pricing must include all sites, campuses, and locations at no extra cost.
- Interlibrary Loan and Document Delivery to be permitted.
- The agreement must reduce and constrain costs.
- Existing non-subscribers may join during the term of this agreement.
- Aid compliance with funder mandates.
- OA content must be discoverable, and agreements must support improvements in service and workflow for authors and administrators.

In terms of the negotiation priority plan based on the above principles, agreements are prioritised based on their potential for transformational traction. A three-year initial term is recommended for each agreement. SANLiC has already signed three agreements, which were initiated in 2021 and include both reading and publishing services. Negotiations towards further agreements with publishers have been initiated and it was likely that more than one would be concluded for 2022. After the initial round of discussions, assessments will be conducted during each of the consequent phases of negotiation to ensure that all key considerations are being addressed including financial and administrative aspects. The assessments will be used to formulate an OA model that will be fit for purpose for SA based on inclusivity, equity and social justice principles as stated in the SANLiC Statement on OA and that can be used for future agreements.

## Q&A

Faiz Gierdien asked SANLiC to comment on the Global North, Global South as analytical tools to 'see through' the OA discourse.

Glenn Truran explained that the question of whether a paying to publish fee made the Global South worse off or better off was probably the biggest comment or criticism around transitioning to OA because of the lack of funds in the Global South. The Global South would be in a better position if the paying to read charges could be eliminated and repurposed to paying to publish. South America was often cited as a great example of publishing OA without involving the traditional Global North publishers, but the fact that South America spent huge sums of money on paying to read for the journals that came from the Global North had been forgotten. To determine the real cost, it was necessary to combine the cost of reading and the cost of publishing and divide that by the number of articles that were published in a particular venue. Many publishers have waived publishing fees to SA authors. SA was in a position to influence the world to think about using something like the purchasing power index to promote the idea of different institutional publishing fees. There was a strong case to have a different fee for the Global South and the Global North.

Robin Crewe asked about the extent to which SANLiC will be able to achieve its negotiating principles that had the support of the scholarly community.

Ellen Tise indicated that the negotiating principles would be achievable to a large extent. Based on preliminary discussions with publishers, much work still needed to be done in this regard. The situation would be assessed after the first round of discussions and there would have to be re-grouping and re-strategising. The broader scholarly communication sector as well as other partners such as ASSAf and the national OA project would be involved. The set

of principles had been presented to the principals of the National Site Licensing and Open Access Project (NSLOAP) and had been shared in various sessions with the scholarly community and will soon be discussed with the Vice-Chancellors. SANLiC was taking every opportunity to share the information as widely as possible.

Irvy Gledhill asked how sensitive the study was in terms of future-proofing the rising number of publications and the purchasing power in SA, and how the plan could be future-proofed given the tension between the two drivers.

With regard to future-proofing the negotiation plan, Ellen Tise commented that those countries that already had a large percentage of signed agreements in OA had cautioned about the need to avoid 'replacing one evil with another' by going the same route as subscriptions in terms of price increases. This was a global issue and had to be addressed globally.

Glenn Truran pointed out that:

- SANLiC's agreement with SAGE was a three-year agreement with uncapped publishing and at an increase of 3% per annum which is a bit above average in terms of the inflationary increase that normally happened on a reading deal. For almost the same price normally paid for reading only, the SAGE agreement provided for unlimited and unfettered ability of any SA researcher to publish with SAGE, should their articles be accepted. On submission of their work, researchers will be informed that they have the right to publish OA, as the default, but some might choose not to publish OA.
- It was important to note that this was a transitional arrangement and after a certain number of years, the funding for paying to publish will diminish and dry up. This meant that each journal would have to stand on its own reputation in terms of quality-related services as well as cost. In the past, there was only one place to go to purchase a service of reading because everybody handed their copyright over to the publishers. The new system provided a much greater choice and therefore greater level of competitiveness in the system that will hopefully continue to drive costs downward for paying to publish.
- The negotiating principles were chosen by tapping into systems that had consulted researchers across the world and SANLiC was confident that they addressed the needs of researchers. In terms of the extent to which they were being achieved through negotiations, there seemed to be a problem with two of the principles, namely the cap on the number of articles being processed and the cost. Publishers tended not to have a problem with the rest of the principles.

Keyan Tomaselli mentioned that this discussion highlighted how complex publishing was becoming as it transitioned from closed access to OA. An issue that was often raised was that neither universities nor authors really understood the publishing value chain. Funding to cover APCs could come out of the DHET incentive but many authors did not want to consider this because it meant less money for other purposes. It was necessary to educate universities (particularly research offices) and authors as to how the value chain worked, how it was changing, and who was paying. The opportunity costs were hidden and had to be brought to the surface and explained within the new value chain that was beginning to emerge. There will also have to be explanations for how it will benefit the entire global academic system and how it will require investment, not only at the level of securing funds from a university but by investing in own funds with respect to those universities that top-slice a

portion for the authors themselves. Investment and costs occurred at every level. A situation where the journals were absorbing all the costs of publication and the authors claimed that their intellectual labour was theirs alone could not be tolerated because entire production lines were involved in bringing their articles to the readers.

In terms of how successful these endeavours will be in the future, Ellen Tise indicated that considering the global perspective and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the momentum was in SA's favour to have a new scholarly communication system that will address the issues that were highlighted. It was becoming evident that the current system could not continue. SA was in a position to take this step (even though its research output was not that high in terms of the percentage globally) and was encouraged to do so by other countries. The trends in terms of an increase in OA and a decrease in closed publication indicated that the shift was possible to make, and some publishers have already accepted

that this would happen. However, if it became clear that the principles were not achievable, it might be necessary to make alternative options available to researchers.

Glenn Truran was extremely positive about the future uptake of OA in SA. Around 17% of SA's research was funded by Plan S funders who had set a deadline for the funding of APC in hybrid and closed journals. Those publishers that did not accept OA could lose a lot of research, but most publishers have embraced the fact that the future was a model where one paid to publish.

### **POPIA Working Draft Code of Conduct for Research (Ms Eleni Flack-Davison and Prof Michele Ramsay)**

In its support of open science, ASSAf identified the need for a Code of Conduct (CoC) for Research to guide the research community, particularly in the context of data sharing across borders. ASSAf is sufficiently representative of research and researchers in SA to develop this CoC, which is complementary to the Universities South Africa (USAf) CoC and applies to industry and academia. The document was a working draft and required various inputs and further consultation before submission to the Information Regulator (IR) for approval.

POPIA regulates the processing of personal information in SA. Personal information is a sub-right of the right to privacy as found in the Constitution of the Republic of SA. Privacy is not an absolute right and may be subject to justifiable limitations. In terms of the broad application of POPIA, it applies to the processing of personal information by public and private entities domiciled in SA or where information processing (whether automatic or not) takes place within SA. POPIA does not apply to the processing of personal information that has been de-identified or information processed for purely household use.

Carrying out research in a responsible manner requires that the rights of data subjects are respected. They need to be notified by the Responsible Party of the processing of his/her personal information; to know what personal information is being held and to request access, correction, destruction, or deletion of this personal information; to object on reasonable grounds to the processing of his/her personal information including for direct marketing purposes and to submit a complaint to the IR and to institute civil proceedings if aggrieved.

POPIA stipulates eight Conditions for Lawful Processing, which are vital for compliance with

the Act as well as the Code of Conduct. The conditions address the following in detail:

- Accountability
- Processing Limitations
- Purpose Specification
- Further Processing
- Information Quality
- Openness / Transparency
- Security Safeguards
- Data Subject Participation.

Authorisations are required for processing special personal information, such as information relating to religious or philosophical beliefs, race or ethnic origin, and political persuasion. The same conditions and authorisations exist under POPIA for personal information relating to children who are seen as a vulnerable group that needs to be protected. Authorisation for specific consent for the personal information of children to be collected, especially parental consent, needs to be sought and is also enforced by the National Health Act. Section 72 of POPIA provides for data to be transferred internationally under certain conditions of authorisation including consent from the data subject and a written agreement upholding the conditions of POPIA in the transfer. In addition, high risk transfers require prior authorisation from the IR.

POPIA provides for the establishment of an IR, an independent body accountable to Parliament, to regulate privacy and access to information. The IR will also perform functions in terms of the Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000 (PAIA) as well as take over South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) functions. Duties and responsibilities of the IR include the issue of sector specific codes of conduct, such as the CoC for Research, that are to be followed by Responsible Parties when processing information, as well as monitoring and enforcing compliance.

The CoC for Research is intended to provide guidance on the interpretation of POPIA in the application of research and to demonstrate how the research sector will ensure compliance with all conditions for lawful processing. All processing of personal information must have a lawful basis. POPIA compliance does not mean that ethics standards have been met and meeting ethical standards for research does not mean that POPIA compliance has been met. The CoC will alleviate the need for the research sector to apply for prior authorisations. It will come into force once approved by the IR, can be revised, and improved periodically and is legally binding.

The CoC for Research provides guidance on how to be compliant with regard to aspects such as:

- Consent and consent requirements
- Governance of the CoC
- Complaints handling procedure
- POPIA compliance in data management plans
- Practical implications for researchers and Research Ethics Committees (RECs)

The CoC will include supporting guidance documents such as a POPIA Information Sheet and Consent Form, and a Data Management Plan (also available on the ASSAf website) to facilitate the tasks of researchers and RECs, and support compliance, save time and ensure

uniformity and consistency. Once approved, the CoC will assist in the compliance, application, and implementation of POPIA. It will also help achieve practicality in the application of the Act and aims for the integration and streamlining of POPIA and research processes. A collective commitment to the process and acknowledgment of the CoC's fluidity is required.

## Q&A

Neil Eccles commented that in his field there was a huge debate about the validity of granting rights normally attributed to natural persons to juristic persons because of the abuse of power those juristic persons are able to wield. He asked what sort of checks a journal needed to put in place to protect itself from risk, and what kind of rubrics of evaluation an editor would need to add to the scholarly aspects of their journal in order to cover themselves in terms of POPIA.

Eleni Flack-Davison recommended that journals should ask researchers for ethics approval and certificate. This would provide assurance that the necessary processes had been followed and be a huge safeguard for the editors.

Susan Veldsman pointed out that editors had access to quite a lot of personal information and asked about what the risks in this regard would be to the editors

Eleni Flack-Davison suggested that editors should seek written permission from the relevant individuals whose personal information they have access to and be specific about the purpose for seeking their consent.

Leslie Swartz asked how the recruitment of vulnerable populations into a research study should be dealt with, particularly where issues such as literacy could be a deterrent to consent.

Michele Ramsay emphasised the importance of having the ethics oversight on any research. She recommended that when someone was asked to provide their information, they should also be requested to state whether or not they consented to their details being passed on for purposes of research. It was questionable whether it was practical to do this in a rural community. The issue would have to be considered from an ethics point of view in terms of the protection of the participant. Before any research project was taken to field, there would have to be engagement with community representatives or responsible persons in the community about the project to make sure that they were on board with the broad questions in the research. The matter of whether the research was in the public interest also needed to be considered and the way that participants were approached had to be done carefully and responsibly, and they had to be given the choice to refuse.

Eleni Flack-Davison mentioned that the ethics processes were laid out in the ethics application and the data management plan.

Neil Eccles pointed out that reviewers' contact details will become difficult to fund, particularly as institutions increasingly hide these and journals do not publish them.

Michele Ramsay commented that more and more international journals were making the reviewers public on an open platform. Every journal will have its own policies and there will be debates about this. Potential reviewers could be hesitant to review if they knew that their names would be made public, but it was a way of ensuring responsibility from the reviewer's point of view.

Eleni Flack-Davison pointed out that such a situation could be circumvented by a forthright request for personal information stating the intention behind the request. Nuances relating to research and POPIA would have to be dealt with as and when they arise.

Michele Ramsay thanked the editors for helping to protect the way that researchers published their research by making sure that it was done in a responsible manner and continued to protect the interests of participants. Editors had a very important role to play in this regard. While there was reliance on ethics, there was also reliance on common sense and reviewers, and the editors had to make difficult judgement calls. As a researcher, she had great respect and appreciation for the enormous amount of work and care that went into assuring responsible publication of research.

Eleni Flack-Davison encouraged editors to use their common sense and be reasonable about applying POPIA and the CoC, which would provide the necessary support for the practical application of the Act.

### **Wrap-Up and Closure (Prof Himla Soodyall and Prof Keyan Tomaselli)**

Prof Soodyall thanked Ms Flack-Davison and Prof Ramsay for bringing the working draft of the CoC for Research into perspective. She also recognised the two co-chairs Prof Ramsay and Dr Rachel Adams, for the work they had done together with a group of experts, and the ASSAf staff who supported the process to bring the project to this point. The very compact and exhaustive working draft CoC had been put together following a lengthy and transparent process of stakeholder engagement. The brief stall in finalising the process was due to the engagement of a legal expert to help tailor the document in a way that would be more user-friendly for submission to the IR. A lot of what the CoC dealt with was already entrenched in the Ethical Code of Conduct that researchers subscribe to with the emphasis on ensuring that POPIA was brought into context with the added value of protection of personal information. The CoC was a resource in the advancement of scholarly support that the Academy wished to bring to the scientific community.

Prof Tomaselli concluded the meeting by acknowledging the fruitful and active participation and encouraging attendance by the delegates throughout the two-day event, and ASSAf for facilitating the meeting. He directed a special word of thanks to the SPP staff for organising this very successful event, and to the rest of the Academy staff who worked under tremendous pressure but always went the extra mile in serving the community of scholars. This kind of meeting of editors was possibly unique in the world, thanks to a well-staffed and well-funded Academy that managed these kinds of discussions at a national level. As much of the information available through ASSAf failed to reach the grassroots levels, it was up to the individual delegates to communicate what they had learned with the faculty boards and senates of their respective institutions. It was important that the information was popularised

and that the crucial work done by the Academy was made known to every academic and university. The need for more regular contact with and between NSEF participants was emphasised and delegates were invited to send their comments and highlights arising from the event to the SPP.

[Letter from NSEF Chairperson - The key takeaways](#)

## ANNEXURE A: ACRONYMS

APC	Article publishing charge
ASSAf	Academy of Science of South Africa
CoC	Code of Conduct
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CREST	Centre for Research on Evaluation, Science and Technology
CSPISA	Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DOAJ	Directory of Open Access Journals
IAP	InterAcademy Partnership
IPLJ	South African Intellectual Property Law Journal
IR	Information Regulator
NRF	National Research Foundation
NSBPF	National Scholarly Publishers' Book Forum
NSEF	National Scholarly Editors' Forum
NSI	National System of Innovation
OA	Open Access
POPIA	Protection of Personal Information Act
PQF	Publications Quality Framework
REC	Research Ethics Committee
SA	South Africa/African
SAJS	South African Journal of Science
SANLiC	South African National Library and Information Consortium
SARIMA	Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association
SciELO	Scientific Electronic Library Online
SPP	Scholarly Publishing Programme

## ANNEXURE B: ATTENDANCE

NSEF Meeting 10 November 2021			
Name	Surname	Affiliation	Journal Title
Ada	Ordor	University of Cape Town	Journal of Comparative Law in Africa
Alna	Beukes	University of the Free State	Town and Regional Planning
Amanda-Lee	Manicum	Tshwane University of Technology	South African Journal of Science
Andries	Van Aarde	AOSIS	Editor-in-Chief: HTS Theological Studies
Anthony	Pillay	University of KwaZulu-Natal	South African Journal of Psychology
Ashley	Gunter	University of South Africa	South African Geographical Journal
Beauty Namakando	Matongo	National Archives of Namibia	ESARBICA Journal
Bernadine	Benson	University of South Africa	South African Museums Associate Bulletin
Blanche	Pretorius	OTASA	South African Journal of Occupational Therapy
Brenda	van Wyk	The Independent Institute of Education	The Independent Journal of Teaching and Learning
Busisiwe	Alant	University of KwaZulu-Natal	African Journal of Research in Mathematics, Science and Technology Education
Carol	Bertram	University of Kwazulu-Natal	Journal of Education
Caroline	Ncube	University of Cape Town	South African IP Law Journal
Cecilé	Olivier	Central University of Technology	N/A
Chris	Armstrong	University of the Witwatersrand	The African Journal of Information and Communication (AJIC)
Chris	Saunders	University of Cape Town	Bulletin of the National Library of South Africa
Christa	Rautenbach	North-West University	Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal
Clinton	van der Merwe	University of Pretoria	Journal of Geography Education in Africa (JoGEO)
Clinton	Aigbavboa	University of Johannesburg	Journal of Construction Management and Innovation
Conrad	Beyers	University of Pretoria	South African Actuarial Journal
Damien	Tomaselli	University of Johannesburg	Communicare
Damtew	Teferra	University of Kwazulu-Natal	International Journal of African Higher Education
Danielle	Nel-Sanders	University of Johannesburg	Administratio Publica

Demetre	Labadarios	Private	South African Journal of Clinical Nutrition
Denise	Nicholson	Scholarly Horizons/CSPiSA	N/A
Neil	Eccles	University of South Africa	African Journal of Business Ethics
Eleanore	Reinders	Taylor & Francis Group	Multiple
Elizabeth	Henning	University of Johannesburg	South African Journal of Childhood Education
Erika	Janse van Rensburg	Sabinet	N/A
Ernst	Conradie	University of the Western Cape	Scriptura
Estelle	Botha	University of Pretoria	South African Journal of Education
Eureta	Rosenberg	Rhodes	Southern African Journal for Environmental Education
Faaiz	Gierdien	Stellenbosch University	Pythagoras
Fanie	Cronje	SASNES	Journal for Semitics
Felix	Maringe	University of the Witwatersrand	Studies in Education
Floyd	Masemola	ASSAf	N/A
Funmi	Abioye	University of South Africa	N/A
Gerhardus	van den Heever	University of South Africa	Journal of Religion and Theology
Gideon	Els	University of Johannesburg	Vir die Musiekleier/To the Music Director
Godfrey	Harold	Cape Town Baptist Seminary	South African Journal of Theology
Hanlie	Moss	North-West University	South African Journal for Research in Sport, Physical Education and Recreation
Hein	Viljoen	North-West University	Literator
Hester	van Biljon	Occupational Therapy Association of South Africa	South African Journal of Occupational Therapy
Himla	Soodyall	ASSAf	N/A
Hoolo	Nyane	University of Limpopo	Turf Law Journal
Ina	Smith	ASSAf	Khulisa Journals
Irvy (Igle)	Gledhill	CSPiSA	N/A
Jacques	Nel	University of Free State	Management Dynamics
Jemma	Finch	University of KwaZulu-Natal	South African Journal of Science
Jennifer	Fitchett	University of the Witwatersrand	South African Journal of Science
Jerry	Kuye	African Consortium of Public Administration	African Journal of Public Affairs (AJPA)
Johan	Wassermann	University of Pretoria	Yesterday & Today
Johannes	Smit	University of KwaZulu-Natal	Alternation
John	Butler-Adam	National Research Foundation	Proceedings of the STEMI CoP Conferences
John	Molepo	SAAPAM	Journal of Public Administration

Jones	Odei-Mensah	AREF Consult	African Review of Economics and Finance
Julie	Grant	University of Johannesburg	Critical Arts
Kate	Snow	African Journals Online	African Journals Online
Kate	Huddlestone	Stellenbosch University	Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics Plus
Katherine	Malan	University of South Africa	South African Computer Journal
Kelley	Moult	University of Cape Town	South African Crime Quarterly
Kelly	Matthee	SAIMM	JSAIMM
Keyan	Tomaselli	University of Johannesburg/CSPiSA	Critical Arts
Kobus	Eloff	SAAWK	SA Journal of Science and Technology
Koos	Vorster	North-West University	In die Skriflig
Kristiaan	Schreve	Stellenbosch University	R&D Journal (Society of Mechanical Engineers of South Africa)
Laetus	Lategan	Central University of Technology	Journal for New Generation Sciences
Lauren	Dyll	University of KwaZulu-Natal	Critical Arts
Leslie	Swartz	Stellenbosch University	South African Journal of Science
Linda	Fick	ASSAf	South African Journal of Science
Louise	Van Heerden	ASSAf	SciELO SA
Lucienne	Abrahams	University of the Witwatersrand	The African Journal of Information and Communication
Lukwikilu	Mangayi	University of South Africa	Missionalia
Lyzette	Hoffman	University of the Free State	Acta Theologica
Marie	Reyneke	EISA	Journal of African Elections
Marie	Kirsten	GTAC	N/A
Marni	Bonthuys	University of the Western Cape	Tydskrif vir Nederlands en Afrikaans, Suider-Afrikaanse Vereniging vir Neerlandistiek
Marnus	Havenga	Stellenbosch University	Stellenbosch Theological Journal
Mathabo	Khau	Nelson Mandela University	Educational Research for Social Change
Matt	Lotter	University of Johannesburg	Southern African Field Archaeology
Mias	De Klerk	University of Stellenbosch	South African Journal of Business Management
Michelle	Hamer	South African National Biodiversity Institute	Bothalia African Biodiversity & Conservation
Mike	Lambert	South African Sports Medicine Association	South African Journal of Sports Medicine
Mmakwena	Chipu	HSRC	Africa Insight
Mmaphuthi	Mashiachidi	ASSAf	N/A
Mohau	Moja	ASSAf	SciELO SA

Moleboheng	Mohapi	Ditsong National Museum of Natural History	Annals of Ditsong National Museum of Natural History
Mpho	Ngoepe	LIASA	South African Journal of Library and Information Science
Msimelelo	Dingiswayo	ASSAf	SciELO SA
Nadia	Grobler	ASSAf	South African Journal of Science
Naomi	Nkealah	University of the Witwatersrand	Imbizo: International Journal of African Literary and Comparative Studies
Natanya	Meyer	University of Johannesburg	Journal of Contemporary Management
Neil	Eccles	University of South Africa	African Journal of Business Ethics (AJoBE)
Neo	Mashilo	Stellenbosch University	N/A
Ntobeko	Ntusi	University of Cape Town	South African Heart Journal
Olajide	Oloyede	University of the Western Cape	African Sociological Review
Omwoyo Bosire	Onyancha	University of South Africa	African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science
Petra	Dijkhuizen	New Testament Society Southern Africa	Neotestamentica
Phil	van Schalkwyk	North-West University	Literator
Philippa	Van Aardt	Juta Journals	Juta Journals
Phillip	de Jager	University of Cape Town/ CSPiSA	Journal of Accounting in Emerging Economies
Pierre	de Villiers	AOSIS Publishing	Journal of Insulin Resistance
Pule	Dikgwatlhe	University of South Africa	SAIMM
Radley	Henrico	University of the Western Cape	Law, Democracy & Development
Raisa	Nyirongo	University of Cape Town	Journal of Comparative Law in Africa
Robert	Vosloo	Stellenbosch University	Stellenbosch Theological Journal
Robin	Crewe	University of Pretoria	N/A
Rosemary	Gray	English Academy of Southern Africa	English Academy Review
Sambulo	Ndlovu	JGU-Mainz	Nomina Africana Journal of African onomastics
Sandra	Turck	South African National Biodiversity Institute	Bothalia African Biodiversity Conservation
Shannon	Hocor	Stellenbosch University	South African Journal of Criminal Justice; Fundamina
Sheldon	Dudley	Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment	African Journal of Marine Science
Sindiso	Bhebhe		N/A
Stephen	Kruger	University of Johannesburg	Journal of Transport and Supply Chain Management

Sunday	Onagbiye	North-West University	AJPHEs
Sunel	Van Rensburg	SABINET	N/A
Susan	Veldsman	ASSAf	N/A
Tamsyn	Sherwill	Water Research Commission	Water SA
Tanya	Pieterse		N/A
Teresa	Dirsuweit	University of South Africa	Journal of Geography Education in Africa
Teresa	Coutinho	University of Pretoria	South African Journal of Science
Thatayaone	Segaetsho	University of Botswana	ESARBICA
Thulani	Mkhize	University of KwaZulu-Natal	South African Journal of African Languages
Tilman	Dederling	University of South Africa	N/A
Trevor	Hill	University of KwaZulu-Natal	South African Geographical Journal
Tsepo	Majake	ASSAf	QUEST
Verelene	De Koker	South African Institution of Civil Engineering	Journal of the South African Institution of Civil Engineering
Victor	Amadi	Centre for Comparative Law in Africa	Journal of Comparative Law in Africa
Warren	Maroun	University of the Witwatersrand University	Meditari
Wellington	Thwala	University of Johannesburg	Journal of Construction Project Management and Innovation
Wikus	van Zyl	University of Johannesburg	UJ Press
Yakubu	Nagu	University of Cape Town	

<b>NSEF Meeting 11 November 2021</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Surname</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Journal Title</b>
Abel	Ramoelo	University of Pretoria	Koedoe
Ada	Ordor	University of Cape Town	Journal of Comparative Law in Africa
Alna	Beukes	University of the Free State	Town and Regional Planning
Andries	Van Aarde	AOSIS	HTS Theological Studies
Anita	Cloete	Stellenbosch University	Stellenbosch Theological Journal
Asfawossen	Asrat	Botswana International University of Science and Technology	Earth Science Reviews
Ashley	Gunter	University of South Africa	South African Geographical Journal
Bernadine	Benson	University of South Africa	SAMAB
Blanche	Pretorius	OTASA	South African Journal of Occupational Therapy
Brenda	van Wyk	The Independent Institute of Education	The Independent Journal of Teaching and Learning
Busisiwe	Alant	University of KwaZulu-Natal	African Journal of Research in Mathematics, Science and Technology Education
Carol	Bertram	University of KwaZulu-Natal	Journal of Education
Caroline	Ncube	University of Cape Town	SA Intellectual Property Law Journal
Cecilé	Olivier	Central University of Technology	N/A
Chris	Armstrong	University of the Witwatersrand	The African Journal of Information and Communication (AJIC)
Christa	Rautenbach	North-West University	Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal
Clinton	van der Merwe	University of Pretoria	Journal of Geography Education in Africa (JoGEA)
Clinton	Aigbavboa	University of Johannesburg	Journal of Construction Project Management and Innovation
Conrad	Beyers	University of Pretoria	South African Actuarial Journal
Danie	VELDSMAN	University of Pretoria	Verbum et Ecclesia
Danielle	Nel-Sanders	University of Johannesburg	Administratio Publica
Demetre	Labadarios	Private	South African Journal of Clinical Nutrition
Eleni	Flack-Davison	University of the Witwatersrand	N/A
Elizabeth	Henning	University of Johannesburg	South African Journal of Childhood Education
Ellen	Tise	SANLIC	N/A
Erika	Janse van Rensburg	Sabinet	N/A
Ernst	Conradie	University of the Western Cape	Scriptura
Estelle	Botha	University of Pretoria	South African Journal of Education

Faaz	Gierdien	Stellenbosch University	Pythagoras
Fanie	Cronje	SASNES	Journal for Semitics
Funmi	Abioye	University of South Africa	N/A
Gerhardus	van den Heever	University of South Africa	Religion & Theology
Gideon	Els	University of Johannesburg	Vir die Musiekleier/To the Music Director
Glenn	Truran	SANLIC	N/A
Godfrey	Harold	Cape Town Baptist Seminary	The South African Baptist Journal of Theology
Graham	Glover	Rhodes University	South African Law Journal
Hanlie	Moss	North-West University	South African Journal for Research in Sport, Physical Education and Recreation
Hein	Viljoen	North-West University	Literator
Hester	van Biljon	Occupational Therapy Association of South Africa	South African Journal of Occupational Therapy
Himla	Soodyall	ASSAf	N/A
Hoolo	Nyane	University of Limpopo	Turf Law Journal
Ina	Smith	ASSAf	N/A
Irvy (Igle)	Gledhill	ASSAf	N/A
Jacques	Nel	University of the Free State	Management Dynamics
Jennifer	Fitchett	University of the Witwatersrand/	South African Journal of Science
Jerry	Kuye	African Consortium of Public Administration	African Journal of Public Affairs (AJPA)
Johan	Wassermann	University of Pretoria	Yesterday & Today
Johann Mouton	Mouton	Stellenbosch University	CREST
Johannes	Smit	University of KwaZulu-Natal	Alternation
John	Maluleke	Infra Africa Investment Holdings (Pty) Ltd	N/A
John	Butler-Adam	NRF	STEMI CoP Conferences
John	Molepo	SAAPAM	Journal of Public Administration
Jones	Odei-Mensah	AREF Consult	African Review of Economics and Finance
Julie	Grant	University of Johannesburg	Critical Arts
Julieth	Gudo	Centre for Comparative Law in Africa (CCLA)	Journal for Comparative Law in Africa
Kate	Snow	African Journals Online	African Journals Online
Kate	Huddlestone	Stellenbosch University	Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics Plus
Katherine	Malan	University of South Africa	South African Computer Journal
Keyan	Tomaselli	University of Johannesburg/CSPiSA	Critical Arts

Kirstin	Krauss	University of South Africa	Electronic Journal of Information Systems in Developing Countries
Kobus	Eloff	SAAWK	SA Journal of Science and Technology
Kobus	Maree	University of Pretoria	African J of Career Development
Koos	Vorster	North-West University	In die Skriflig
Laetus	Lategan	Central University of Technology	Journal for New Generation Sciences
Lauren	Dyll	University of KwaZulu-Natal	Critical Arts
Leslie	Swartz	Stellenbosch University	South African Journal of Science
Lillian	Artz	University of Cape Town	Acta Criminologica: African Journal of Criminology and Victimology
Linda	Fick	ASSAf	South African Journal of Science
Louise	Van Heerden	ASSAf	SciELO SA
Lucienne	Abrahams	University of the Witwatersrand	The African Journal of Information and Communication
Lyzette	Hoffman	University of the Free State	Acta Theologica
Mahlubi (Chief)	Mabizela	DHET	N/A
Marie	Reyneke	EISA	Journal of African Elections
Marthie	Van Niekerk	SciSTIP, Stellenbosch University	N/A
Martin	Laubscher	University of the Free State	Acta Theologica
Mathabo	KHAU	Nelson Mandela University	Educational Research for Social Change
Matt	Lotter	University of Johannesburg	Southern African Field Archaeology
Michele	Ramsay	University of the Witwatersrand	South African Journal of Science
Mike	Lambert	South African Sports Medicine Association	South African Journal of Sports Medicine
Milan	Carsky	University of KwaZulu-Natal	South African Journal of Chemical Engineering
Mmaphuthi	Mashiachidi	ASSAf	ASSAf
Mohau	Moja	ASSAf	SciELO SA
Mokheseng	Buti	Taylor and Francis	South African Geographical Journal
Mpho	Ngoepe	University of South Africa	Journal of South African Society of Archivists
Msimelelo	Dingiswayo	ASSAf	SciELO SA
Nadia	Grobler	ASSAf	South African Journal of Science
Neil	Eccles	University of South Africa	African Journal of Business Ethics
Neo	Mashilo	Stellenbosch University	N/A
Omwoyo Bosire	Onyancha	University of South Africa	AJLAIS
Petra	Dijkhuizen	New Testament Society Southern Africa	Neotestamentica

Phil	van Schalkwyk	North-West University	Literator
Philippa	Van Aardt	Juta and Company	Juta journals
Phillip	de Jager	University of Cape Town	Journal of Accounting in Emerging Economies
Pierre	de Villiers	AOSIS Publishing	Journal of Insulin Resistance
Radley	Henrico	University of the Western Cape	Law Development & Democracy
Raisa	Nyirongo	University of Cape Town	Journal of Comparative Law in Africa
Robin	Crewe	University of Pretoria	N/A
Sambulo	Ndlovu	Nomina Africana Journal	Nomina Africana Journal
Sandra Turck	Turck	SANBI	N/A
Segomotso	Keakopa	ESA Records Management Consultancy	ESARBICA Journal
Shannon	Hoctor	Stellenbosch University	South African Journal of Criminal Justice; Fundamina
Sheldon	Dudley	Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment	African Journal of Marine Science
Stefan	Eriksson	Uppsala Universiteit	N/A
Sunday	Onagbiye	North-West University	AJPHEs
Sunel	Van Rensburg	SABINET	N/A
Susan	Veldsman	ASSAf	N/A
Tamsyn	Sherwill	Water Research Commission	Water SA
Tanya	Pieterse	University of South Africa	Studia Historia Ecclesiasticae
Thulani	Mkhize	University of KwaZulu-Natal	South African Journal of African Languages
Tilman	Dedering	University of South Africa	N/A
Tracey	Elliott	InterAcademy Partnership (IAP)	N/A
Trevor	Hill	University of KwaZulu-Natal	Transactions of Royal Society
Tsepo	Majake	ASSAf	QUEST
Uwalomwa	Uwuigbe	Juta journals	Juta journals
Verelene	De Koker	South African Institution of Civil Engineering	Journal of the South African Institution of Civil Engineering
Victor	Amadi	Centre for Comparative Law in Africa	Journal of Comparative Law in Africa
Vivienne	Bozalek	University of the Western Cape	Critical Studies in Teaching and Learning
Walter	Ntuli	DHET	N/A
Warren	Johannes	Health SA Gesondheid	HSAG
Wellington	Thwala	University of Johannesburg	Journal of Construction Project Management and Innovation
Wikus	van Zyl	University of Johannesburg Press	Journal for the Study of Religion