

THE PROPOSED DRAFT CONSTITUTION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SOUTH AFRICAN WRITERS ORGANISATION

1. NAME

The name of the organisation will be determined at the conference by the delegates.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the organisation will be to:

- 2.1 Serve as an association representing South African writers;
- 2.2 Promote writing in the languages of South Africa;
- 2.3 Promote reading in the languages of South Africa;
- 2.4 Promote the preservation and publication of oral and written literature in the languages of South Africa;
- 2.5. Promote performances and readings of literature in the languages of South Africa;
- 2.6 Promote the translation of literary works in the languages of South Africa;
- 2.7 Provide training opportunities for emerging writers and literary translators;
- 2.8 Promote critical discourse on oral and written literature from South Africa and elsewhere;
- 2.9 Protect the rights, including intellectual property rights, the right to freedom of expression and creativity of all writers;
- 2.10 Facilitate exchange and interaction among South African writers as well as with writers from other parts of Africa and the world;
- 2.11 Facilitate interaction, exchange and collaboration between writers across the different media and with artists in other disciplines;
- 2.12 Liaise and cooperate with local, national, regional and international bodies involved in the funding, promotion, distribution and development of writing and literature;
- 2.13 Advocate and contribute to national policies aimed at making literature in the languages of South Africa accessible to the public; and

- 2.14 Do whatever is deemed necessary and take appropriate action to promote oral and written literature in the languages of South Africa.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1 Membership will be open to all writers: established, emergent and aspirant, living and working in South Africa and to writers born in South Africa and living in other parts of the world. The following categories of membership are provided for:

- 3.1.1 **Full Members:** individual writers;

- 3.1.2 **Affiliated Members:** writers' organisations and other bodies involved in the promotion of literature.

- 3.2 Membership shall be recommended by the Provincial Executives, where these exist, and the National Executive subject to ratification by the Annual General Meeting.

- 3.3 Membership shall cease as recommended by Provincial Executives, where these exist, and the National Executive subject to ratification by the Annual General Meeting.

4. MEMBERSHIP FEES

- 4.1 The National Executive shall determine membership fees periodically subject to approval by two-thirds of the Full Members at an Annual General Meeting.

- 4.2 At least 60% of all membership fees paid shall be allocated to the Provincial Branches where members reside.

- 4.3 The National Executive shall determine cases where membership fees may be waived.

5. OBSERVER STATUS

Observer status shall be granted by the National Executive at national meetings of the organisation. At provincial level this shall be granted by the Provincial Executives.

6. NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

The affairs of the organisation shall be administered by a National Executive consisting of not fewer than 9 and not more than 11 members elected, with due regard to demographic diversity, to represent:

- 6.1 The nine provinces of the Republic of South Africa
- 6.2 The eleven official languages of South Africa
- 6.3 The following portfolios:
 - 6.3.1 Chair
 - 6.3.2 Deputy Chair
 - 6.3.3 Secretariat
 - 6.3.4 Treasury and Fund-raising
 - 6.3.5 Media and Publicity
 - 6.3.6 Translation
 - 6.3.7 Publishing
 - 6.3.8 Women's Writing
 - 6.3.9 Children's Writing
 - 6.3.10 Workshops, Festivals, Events & International Exchange
 - 6.3.11 Rights and legal matters.
- 6.4 The members of the National Executive shall be elected at the Annual General meeting, and shall hold office for a period of two years.
- 6.5 Election of National Executive members shall be conducted by means of written nominations and secondments including brief curricula vitae and motivations for the relevant portfolios.
- 6.6 The Executive shall devise and propose policies and programmes of the organisation subject to ratification by the Full Members.
- 6.7 The Executive shall deal with routine or urgent matters between meetings.

7. VOTING

- 7.1 Voting for National Executive positions shall be done by secret ballot. The form of voting on other matters shall be decided by the meeting.
- 7.2 Only Full Members or their proxies shall have the right to vote.

8. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- 8.1 A Management Committee consisting of the Chair, 3 other National Executive Members and the Administrator shall be established.
- 8.2 The Management Committee shall implement and manage the programmes and policies of the Executive and association.

9. MEETINGS

- 9.1 Meetings shall be called by the Secretariat in consultation with the Chair and the Executive.
- 9.2 **Annual General Meetings:** Finances and other considerations permitting shall rotate between provinces.
- 9.3 **Special Meetings:** Shall be called by the Secretariat in consultation with the Chairperson and the Executive or by any 20 members.
- 9.4 Notices of all meetings shall reach members at least 14 days prior to any meeting.

10. LEGAL MATTERS

- 10.1 The organisation shall be a voluntary association not for gain, registered with the Department of Social Welfare, with perpetual succession accountable to its members.
- 10.2 The organisation shall be capable of acquiring and holding property in its own name.
- 10.3 No individual members shall be held liable for debts, engagements or other liabilities of the organisation.

11. FINANCIAL MATTERS

- 11.1 The financial year shall run from the end of February of one year to the end of February of the next.
- 11.2 The funds shall be administered by a Treasurer.
- 11.3 All funds shall be made payable to the organisation
- 11.4 All payments made shall be signed by the Treasurer and the Administrator of the organisation.
- 11.5 The finances of the organisation shall be subject to annual independent audits.
- 11.6 In the event of the organisation being dissolved, all assets shall be donated to an organisation whose aims, in the opinion of the Executive, conform most closely to those of the organisation.

12. LANGUAGE

- 12.1 The organisation shall uphold the principle of multilingualism and encourage the use of the languages of South Africa at its meetings and gatherings.

12.2 Minutes and other documents will, as far is practicable, be in the language requested by the members of the organisation.

13. ADMINISTRATION

13.1 The Executive shall appoint a salaried Administration company to manage the office for organisation.

13.2 The executive shall determine the terms of employment of the administration company.

14. PROVINCIAL BRANCHES

14.1 Provincial Branches, financial and other resources permitting, shall be established.

14.2 All Provincial Branches shall have a Provincial Executive consisting of no fewer than 3 and not more than 5 members elected at an Annual General Meeting of the Province to serve a two or three-year term and represent, with due regard to demographic diversity, the following portfolios:

14.2.1 Chair

14.2.2 Secretariat

14.2.3 Treasury and Fund-raising

14.2.4 Workshops, Festivals and Events

14.2.5 Media and Publicity

14.3 All Provincial Members shall be members of the organisation subject to the procedure set out in 3.2 above.

14.4 All Provincial Branches shall be subject to the provisions of this constitution.

15. LOCAL GROUPS

15.1 Local Groups shall be established where requested by members.

15.2 Local Groups shall consist of a minimum of 4 paid-up members in a province.

15.3 Local groups shall be organised by a voluntary coordinator approved by the Local Group members.

15.4 Local Groups shall be subject to the provisions of this constitution.

16. PATRONS

- 16.1 Distinguished writers and persons who have contributed to the development of South African literatures may be appointed Patrons of the organisation.
- 16.2. Patrons may be nominated and seconded by members of the organisation;
- 13.3 Patrons shall be appointed by consensus at Annual General Meetings of the organisation.

17. AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

- 17.1 Proposed amendments to the Constitution shall be made by a Full Member and submitted in writing to the Secretariat, at least sixty days prior to the meeting at which it shall be tabled.
- 17.2 Amendments shall be carried by two-thirds of the voting members present at an Annual General Meeting, provided that no fewer than 20 Full Members are present.