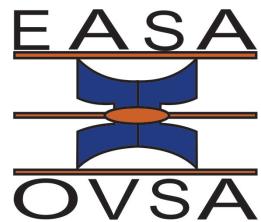




Over the past few years, EASA has succeeded in strengthening its position as education association in South Africa, yet also in establishing networks with international peers who do research in the field. The primary focus remains on providing a safe platform for scholars in Education to present the research they do and receive constructive feedback while building networks for collaborative work in taking Education forward in our country.

As member of the **World Education Research Association (WERA)**, EASA members have been benefiting from international networks and discussions. Prof Ruth Mampane represents EASA on the WERA committee and as in the past, attended two WERA focal meetings during 2019. We also had the privilege of welcoming international WERA council members to the annual EASA conference in Polokwane in January, and could all benefit from the symposium presented by them. Later in the year, three EASA EXCO members were invited to present as part of two WERA symposiums at a conference in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, discussing inclusive education, social justice, equality and career opportunities in South Africa with peers from similar contexts. As member of WERA, one of the primary focus areas for the next few years is for EASA to strengthen its position in the international field of education research by, amongst other things, more actively taking part in WERA conferences in order to showcase the work done by EASA members, build capacity and strengthen international ties with peers. EASA is proud of the fact that one of our members, Prof Liesel Ebersöhn is the WERA secretary-general, in addition to other EASA members being involved in the association.

In reflecting on the **2019 EASA annual conference**, held in Polokwane, high level engagement and in-depth scholarly discussions come to mind. Keynote addresses stimulated dynamic discussions and allowed scholars to share existing research while contemplating new ideas for future endeavours. EASA members also had ample opportunity to network with peers and strengthen existing ties. On behalf of the EASA

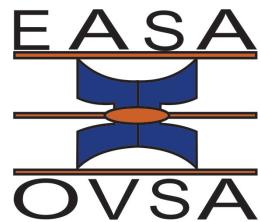


EXCO, we would like to thank Prof Jacob Sefara and his committee at the University of Limpopo, for hosting and arranging a memorable conference. We would also like to thank Ms Petra Lawson, a familiar face at EASA conferences, who acted as conference coordinator for the last time in 2019.

In the same manner, we would like to thank Dr Anthony Mpisi and his team from Sol Plaatje University for hosting the **2020 EASA conference**, supported by Narina Basson and Marian Louw from Event Behella as conference coordinators. Thank you for bringing EASA to one of the landmarks of South Africa and for introducing us to one of the newest universities in South Africa. We believe this Big/Black hole event will form a distinct landmark in EASA's history of almost 62 years. We look forward to lively debates over the next few days, to catching up with old friends and building friendships with new ones, and to honouring the 2020 awardees of EASA medals for their significant contributions in Education research.

Despite the challenge we faced at the beginning of the year with the resignation of Dr Eric Eberlein as 2019 chairperson, the EASA EXCO was able to continue with the work of the association and attend to the aims formulated for the year. Following the Annual General meeting in January, EXCO communicated the EASA members' decision **not to merge with SAERA** and to remain an individual association. It however remains a priority for EXCO to strengthen ties and communication with not only SAERA (as suggested at the 2019 AGM) but also with other international associations that focus on Education research.

In addition to finalising the discussions with SAERA, EXCO integrated the comments of its members into the Constitution following the AGM, in order to **update the Constitution** and ensure that it reflects the nature, focus and priorities of the



association. Following approval of the last suggested changes at this meeting, the Constitution will be finalised and added to the EASA website.

As you are aware, the **EASA website** has been a priority for the past few years, currently under leadership of Prof Elize du Plessis. We invite all members to send ideas and information that may add value to the website as this provides a platform for EASA to showcase the work done by its members and the contributions made to Education research in South Africa. In addition, we encourage all EASA members to more actively engage in the recently established **Special Interest Groups**, as these provide excellent platforms for networking and collaboration.

In terms of the **financial position of EASA** we are happy to report a positive position. We would like to thank Prof Raj Mestry as treasurer, for taking care of the finances in such a competent way, continually building on what has been accomplished over the years.

In the same manner, the **South African Journal of Education** has continued to strengthen its position as leading journal in Education research in Africa. The journal is internationally accredited and increasingly attracts submissions by international authors. As a result, the number of general issues was increased over the past two years, with the number of articles per issue similarly moving up. Based on its positive standing and success, SAJE makes a significant contribution to the financial position of EASA.

In conclusion, please allow us to **thank the 2019 EXCO members** for their contributions and hard work during the year. We would like to specifically thank and honour two seasoned leaders of EXCO, **Prof Eldrie Gouws and Prof Anne-Mari Dicker**, who have dedicated much of their time to take EASA forward over many years. Even though these



two EXCO members indicated the intention to resign from EXCO at the end of 2019, we would like to thank them for agreeing to stay on as additional EXCO members for another year, allowing the remaining members of the committee to learn from them, based on their years of experience and expertise.

We would also like to **welcome Dr Fumane Khanare** who joined EXCO as additional member, as well as **Prof Funke Omidire**, who will take responsibility for International Research Networking (IRN) – a newly established portfolio on the committee, as part of the priority to strengthen EASA's international ties, visibility and acknowledgement of the research conducted by its members. As Prof Omidire is involved in an IRN at WERA, she is in a perfect position to drive this goal. We furthermore welcome **Prof Maximus Sefotho** as EXCO member for 2020 and would like to thank him for taking on the task of arranging the 2021 conference, supported by his Dean, Head of Department and conference committee. Finally, our **best wishes accompany Prof Nyna Amin**, chairperson of 2020, to whom we now hand over the reins.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronél Ferreira".

Ronél Ferreira

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eldrie Gouws."

Eldrie Gouws

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Johnnie Hay".

Johnnie Hay

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**EASA EXCO Chairpersons 2019**

**DATE:** 13 January 2020