From the Chairperson’s desk 2020

Last year was indeed very challenging, with demands made on our lives on all fronts and in all sorts of ways. The pandemic has now reached a stage where we are not only aware of it from media reports and statistics, but it now bears the names and faces of friends and family. We at EASA would therefore like to extend our heartfelt condolences to all those who have lost loved ones during this time. The unsafe circumstances have also resulted in the annual 2021 EASA conference being cancelled. We should, however, remain hopeful and continue to adhere to all the health and safety protocols on campuses, at workplaces, and in our daily lives.

These strange and unusual circumstances have succeeded in moving many out of their comfort zones, encouraging them to re-imagine education in unprecedented ways. It has been no different for EASA. In spite of not having the annual 2021 conference, we have managed to award medals to recipients in the various categories and would like to congratulate the successful nominees.

The EASA website has been upgraded under leadership of Prof Elize du Plessis. We hope that the improvement of this platform will continue to showcase the work done by EASA members and the contributions made to Education research in South Africa.

As far as the financial position of EASA is concerned, we are proud to report that we are in the black. In light of the current pandemic, a special concession was made for EASA members not to pay membership fees for 2021. We would like to thank Prof Raj Mestry as treasurer, for the competent way in which he manages the finances of the association.

By the same token, the South African Journal of Education has continued to maintain its high standing as leading journal in Education research in Africa. The journal is internationally accredited and progressively attracts submissions by international authors. Consequently, the number of general issues was increased in 2020. Based on its positive standing and success, SAJE makes a significant contribution to the financial position of EASA. Thanks to Prof Ronel Ferreira and her team for the tireless work.

In an attempt to support EASA early career academics and postgraduate students, EASA is planning to host a webinar series on various topics, under the leadership of Prof Funke Omidire.

Sadly, Prof Nyna Amin has requested to be relieved from her duties as outgoing chairperson, as she is currently managing some health challenges. We would like to thank her for her dedication and for the sterling work she has rendered, despite being occasionally incapacitated by poor health. Her fresh and critical approach proved invaluable to the association. We wish her well, a speedy recovery, and know that she will continue to make a contribution to Education as a member of the association.

Something to indeed look forward to is the EASA 2022 annual conference that will be hosted by Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) and Two Oceans Graduate Institute (TOGI). The conference will be held at the internationally renowned Spier Wine farm in Stellenbosch. We would like to thank Dr Candice Livingston from CPUT, the conference chairperson, for agreeing to host the conference. She will be supported by her team, as well as Narina Basson and Marian Louw from Event Behella, as conference coordinators. As always we are looking forward to interesting presentations and robust deliberations.

EASA EXCO Chairperson

Tony Mpisi