



29 April 2023

Proposal: Advisory Committee for Transformation and Strategy of the South African Mathematical Society

Acknowledging that the inequalities of opportunity, as well as the international academic boycott of apartheid South Africa, had negatively impacted the development of mathematics in South Africa, there is a need for an immersive transformative work within the South African Mathematical Society. The broad framework of such work is in fact well summarised by the aims of SAMS (as listed in the Mission Statement of SAMS):

1. Stimulate and encourage the pursuit of high-quality research at the frontiers of the discipline.
2. Promote Mathematics as a profession, through close and active cooperation with disciplines that utilize the efficacy and power of mathematical techniques and forging closer links with Business and Industry.
3. Identify, stimulate, and nurture students with the mathematical ability to realize their full potential, irrespective of their social, economic, and cultural background.
4. Encourage and provide opportunities to members of all groups, especially those from under-represented communities, in the various facets of Mathematics.
5. Encourage the maintenance of sound syllabuses, teaching methodologies, and assessment standards in mathematical education, and the cooperation in these areas with organizations and professional societies with similar interests.
6. Explore the contributions that Mathematics can make in addressing societal needs and promoting a strong economy that will contribute to an improved quality of life for all South Africans.
7. Promote an appreciation and public understanding of Mathematics, its impact, and its applications in everyday life.
8. Establish links and promote cooperation between itself and similar societies in Southern Africa, the rest of the continent, and throughout the world.

To help SAMS with identifying a strategy for such immersive transformative work, I propose the creation, within SAMS, of ACTS: the Advisory Committee for Transformation and Strategy.

The composition of members of ACTS will be proposed by the President of SAMS to the Council of SAMS and will be approved by the Council of SAMS. Generally, members of ACTS will comprise of:

- Senior mathematicians or retired mathematicians, who have had a substantial contribution to the advancement of mathematics in South Africa.
- Balanced representation of various disciplines across pure mathematics and applied mathematics.
- A balanced demographic representation.
- Heads of SAMS Divisions and other relevant stakeholders.
- The President of the South African Mathematical Society.

ACTS will regularly formulate its advisory input towards achieving the aims of SAMS to the members of SAMS, via SAMS Notices. Execution of some of the actions proposed by ACTS will follow a process determined by the President of SAMS in consultation with and approval of the Council of SAMS.

I am grateful to Loyiso Nongxa for his input in developing this proposal.



Zurab Janelidze

President of the South African Mathematical Society

APPROVED by the SAMS Council on 25 May 2023