

NATIONAL AGM

October 2023

CEO'S REPORT

Our Valued Members,

The past year of review is shared with gratitude to our membership who remain committed to driving the continued growth of the business events industry in South Africa. A special word of thanks to our partners and patron members who strategically supported the agreed industry projects this past year.

Due to your continued support of the association, your association SAACI, has:

On Policy and Lobbying:

- SAACI leads the Tourism Business Council and South African Tourism - structured engagement industry teams that seek to align the work of our industry with the South African National Convention Bureau as we seek to increase the number of bids won, a new MICE Strategy for South Africa, increase the supplier base while driving demand for our destination.
- Tourism Green Paper – which seeks to set the future cause of the industry that includes the significant impact the meetings and events sector has on how we will grow arrivals and visitation to our country. A team consisting of academics are busy finalizing our association's input.
- Professionalizing of the MICE Industry – through a project led by the Department of Tourism to consider how a professionalized industry may look for South Africa. A SAACI team has been integrally involved in the project since inception and our inputs with guidance are a work in progress as the complexity of how this goes down is one that requires continued discussion with a view of a clear-step approach to implementation.

Growth of Membership:

- The continued growth of our membership in the past year demonstrates that the green shoots of sustained recovery continue, against a backdrop of a very challenging operating environment.
- To boast growth and support members that have been adversely affected while also growing the SMME new entrant level of our membership base, the association through a partnership with the SANCB will offer some level of support to members who qualify. We will be sharing these criteria with all in the coming months as we close out the current financials and prepare this offering for the coming financial year of 2024/2025.

The Southern Africa Association for the Conference Industry (SAACI) is a Non-Profit Company – Section 21 Reg No 2001/019411/08 PBO No: 930 007 905

Association Hub
158 Jan Smuts Avenue
4th Floor, East Wing
Rosebank, Johannesburg

Executives: Jaques Fouche (Chairperson), Gheeta Payle (Vice Chairperson), Alex Wrottesley (Treasurer),
Kim Roberts (Past Chairperson), Glenton de Kock (Chief Executive Officer)
Directors: Esti Venske (Learning Portfolio), Ansu Colditz (Western Cape),
Melissa Palmer (Eastern Cape)

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- We have also worked on the interim establishment of a branch committee in Limpopo with training done to assist members in Northern Cape.
- We will be introducing more benefits for our members like
 - SAACI Focused Talks, which will be a series of discussions and presentations organised by SAACI to address specific topics and challenges within the conference industry. These talks aim to provide industry professionals with valuable insights, knowledge, and practical solutions related to various aspects of conference planning and management.
 - SAACI Resources and Support: will be offering valuable resources and support to its members. As part of this support, SAACI provides access to HR Consultants, Attorneys, and Wellness Professionals who are available to offer complimentary telephonic or virtual consultations to all members in good standing. These professionals can assist with various issues that members may encounter in these areas. SAACI has negotiated special rates with these suppliers, ensuring that members have access to additional support if needed. This arrangement allows members to benefit from professional expertise at preferential rates, further enhancing the value of their SAACI membership.

SAACI's commitment to providing these resources and support reflects its dedication to assisting members in addressing and resolving challenges related to human resources, legal matters, and wellness.

The Learning and Development:

- The continued work of the learning and development sub-committee has made significant strides by ensuring SAACI puts the needs of the skilled professional at the core of the work the committee works on.
- In the pilot project with MPI in partnership with CPUT, we continue to ensure that the future generation of the industry aligns with international requirements.

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Collaboration:

- Through the continued approach in collaboration with key strategic partners such as the City of Johannesburg as well as the South African National Convention Bureau, the association continues to deliver key projects for the members.
- While our three-year agreement with the City of Johannesburg comes to an end, the platform and support this has provided through the physical presence for qualifying members. The additional support for meetings and events delivered in the City of Johannesburg by SAACI members has also seen growth in the number of activities in the city over the past year.
- With the continued support by the SANCB for our National Congress ensures that we can offer a program and gathering for our members and the meetings and events industry that drives the future of our sector while identifying opportunities for members.

Youth in action:

- The association's Youth Council continues to build the bridge between the classroom and the workplace.
- Youth Focused Panel at WTM earlier this year saw a youth council member, Youth portfolio representative, Senior Lecturer and CEO of a convention centre on the same panel discussing challenges. This shows that we are being recognised and given a platform to discuss these challenges.
- Our Youth – Industry panel discussion held at the Nelson Mandela University a few weeks before the annual association congress provides insight and connectivity between students and member companies with the region of the Eastern Cape.
- Our annual association congress saw more youth members in attendance this year – 7 students from NMU, 2 interns from KZN Convention Bureau and 2 Youth Council Representatives.
- The most recently held Fam Tour by the Western Cape Youth in partnership with WESGRO and CPUT demonstrates the power of how we as an association seek to ensure that the next generation of event professionals is ready for the workplace.

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As we look towards 2024, the association will continue its work towards sustainability both environmentally, our members and the continued financial viability of our association. We are a third of the way there as the foundations have been laid in these past two financial years in these areas.

To our outgoing Chairperson, Mrs. Kim Roberts, your steadfast leadership through the most challenging period of the association is saluted and my thanks to you are one that words can't truly express my personal gratitude. THANK YOU, Madam Chair,

To the incoming SAACI Board officers' bearers, we look forward to the next chapter as we continue to work towards growth and sustainability delivery of memorable meetings and events for All.

Thank You

Glenton de Kock
SAACI CEO

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