

NATIONAL AGM

October 2023

CHAIRPERSON REPORT

It is with great pleasure and gratitude that I present this Chairman's report on behalf of the South African Association for the Conference Industry (SAACI). This report marks the culmination of my dedicated tenure as outgoing Chair, during which time I have had the privilege of working with an outstanding team at National Office and Robust Board.

Overview of SAACI's Achievements:

- 1. Strategic Planning and Growth:** Over the past 5 years, SAACI has continued to expand its reach and influence within the business events industry. We have successfully executed our strategic plan, which included goals such as re-establishing membership value, being more representative as a board, establishing the youth council, enhancing educational programs, and fostering greater collaboration with industry stakeholders.
- 2. Membership Growth:** our organisation has experienced a significant increase in membership in the outlying regions as business tourism focus has grown, in line with the government's strategic plans. This in turn has demonstrated the growing recognition of SAACI as a valuable contributor within the Business Events industry.
- 3. Educational Initiatives:** SAACI has remained committed to providing high-quality education and training opportunities. We have introduced new programs and collaborative workshops, which have received enthusiastic participation and accolades from our members. This will continue to take shape and with the industry designations in the capable hands of CEPA we are confident that we have made very positive strides in professionalising our industry and its people.
- 4. Advocacy and Collaboration:** We have strengthened our relationships with key industry players, government bodies, and international organisations. SAACI has played an active role in advocating for our industry's interests and ensuring its sustainability.

Highlights of tenure as chair:

- 1. Visionary Leadership:** This boards visionary leadership and strategic acumen have been instrumental in driving SAACI's growth and success, the ability to unite and inspire our diverse membership has been truly noteworthy.
- 2. Engagement and Inclusivity:** We have consistently worked to promote a culture of inclusivity and engagement within SAACI, making every member feel valued and heard. With the establishment of the Youth Council, I believe this has been critical in fostering a sense of belonging and pride amongst our community.

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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4. **Pandemic Response:** The COVID-19 pandemic presented unprecedented challenges for our industry. Our swift and decisive actions, including the adaptation of virtual events, the Proof of Concept event and the provision of support to members, ensured that SAACI remained resilient during these challenging times. WE are better prepared for what the future may bring us.

Thank You and Acknowledgments:

I want to express our heartfelt gratitude for the exceptional people I have had the opportunity to work with who showed their dedication during some difficult times in the last few years. Everyone's tireless efforts have not only elevated SAACI but have also contributed to the advancement of the entire business events industry in South Africa. I thank the members for entrusting me to lead this board and represent your association over the past few years.

Incoming Leadership:

I would like to extend my warm congratulations to Jacques, Geetha and Alex on assuming your new roles within SAACI's leadership. Your dedication and commitment to our industry have not gone unnoticed, and I have full confidence that you will lead our association to new heights.

SAACI has a rich history of promoting excellence in the business events industry throughout Southern Africa. As they embark on this journey, I'd like to offer some words of encouragement and support:

1. **Embrace the Legacy:** SAACI has a strong legacy of promoting professionalism, knowledge-sharing, and collaboration. Building upon this legacy will be instrumental in furthering our mission.
2. **Transparency and Inclusivity:** Ensure that SAACI remains an inclusive and transparent organisation. Encourage open dialogue and engagement with our members, partners, and stakeholders.
3. **Education and Development:** Continue to prioritize education and professional development within our membership. This is key to fostering growth and ensuring the sustainability of our industry.

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4. Global Engagement: Continue to explore opportunities for international collaboration and partnerships. In an interconnected world, we see our reach can extend beyond borders.
5. Advocacy: Advocate for the conference and events industry, emphasising its economic and societal impact. Highlight the value of our work to governments, businesses, and the community at large.
6. Innovation: Encourage innovation in all aspects of our association's operations, from event planning to membership engagement.
7. Sustainability: Consider the environmental and social impacts of our industry. Explore ways to make our events more sustainable and socially responsible.

As a member, I stand ready to support you in achieving SAACI's goals. Together, you can make a lasting impact on our industry and the communities SAACI serves.

I have every confidence that under your capable leadership, SAACI will continue to be a beacon of excellence and innovation in the business events industry.

Wishing you all the best as you take on this important role. Your journey will undoubtedly be challenging at times, but the rewards of serving SAACI and our industry, I can confirm, are immeasurable.

Thank you

Kim Roberts
SAACI Chairperson (Past)

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