

SOUTH AFRICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN GRADUATES

CONSTITUTION - SEPTEMBER 1989

**AMENDED - SEPTEMBER 1991, OCTOBER 1996, FEBRUARY 1999, JANUARY 2000,
FEBRUARY 2001, FEBRUARY 2002, JUNE 2003, MAY 2004, MAY 2005, MAY 2010,
APRIL 2015**

ARTICLE I : NAME

1. The name of the Association, which is a member association of Graduate Women International (GWI) (formerly the International Federation of University Women (IFUW)), shall be the South African Association of Women Graduates.
2. The shortened name of the organisation will be SAAWG (hereinafter referred to as the Association).

The Association shall :

- Exist in its own right, separately from its members
- Continue to exist even when its membership changes and there are different office bearers
- Be able to own property and other possessions
- Be able to sue and be sued in its own name.

ARTICLE II : AIMS/AREA

AIMS

1. To promote understanding and friendship among all graduate women in South Africa, and, through membership of Graduate Women International (GWI), among graduate women throughout the world, irrespective of race, nationality, religion or political opinions.
2. To represent graduate women in South Africa and to act on their behalf.
3. To encourage the application of their knowledge and skills to the solving of problems that arise at all levels of public life, whether local, national, regional or world-wide, and, where appropriate, through the Graduate Women International.
4. To further the development of education and its dissemination among all people in Southern Africa, and for this purpose to provide scholarships and bursaries for women students at tertiary level.
5. To promote co-operation between the Association and other appropriate national, provincial or local organisations.

IDENTITY AND FOCUS

1. The uniqueness of the South African Association of Women Graduates lies in its existence as an inter-disciplinary association of women graduates. It is, therefore, a women's organization with a very specific membership qualification.
2. The focus of the South African Association of Women Graduates should be the ongoing education of women.

AREA

The area in which the business of the Association shall be carried on and in which contributions will be collected shall be the Republic of South Africa and elsewhere.

ARTICLE III : MEMBERSHIP

1. The South African Association of Women Graduates shall consist of:
 - (a) Ordinary Members
 - (b) Independent Members of SAAWG
 - (c) Student Members
 - (d) Associate Members
 - (e) Honorary Members
 - (f) Honorary Life Members
2. Qualification of Members:
 - (a) Ordinary Members shall have studied at a university or institution of comparable academic standing and have been awarded a degree or equivalent diploma, licence or certificate recognised by GWI or women engaged in research work of post-graduate standard.
 - (b) Independent Members of SAAWG. An Ordinary Member who resides more than 65 km from the nearest branch may become an Independent Member of SAAWG by paying a subscription to the National Honorary Treasurer, to be determined from time to time at an Annual General Meeting.
 - (c) Student Members shall be registered undergraduate students.
 - (d) Honorary Members may be women without a university degree, but must have notably advanced the higher education of women or their general interests, or distinguished themselves by outstanding intellectual achievement.
 - (e) Honorary Life Members shall be members of at least 25 years' standing who have given outstanding service to the Association.

Branches may nominate candidates for Honorary Life Membership. Written notice of such nomination shall reach the National Honorary Secretary not less than one month before the Annual General Meeting, and shall be accompanied by a citation of the qualifications of the candidate. Nominations may be forwarded to the National Honorary Secretary by hand, by registered post, by facsimile or by e-mail. The citation shall be circulated to branches not less than one month before the Annual General Meeting.

Election of Honorary Life Members shall be by ballot at an Annual General Meeting and shall require a two-thirds majority of the effective voting strength of the meeting.
3. Members from other national federations and associations (NFAs) shall be entitled on payment of a subscription, if thought desirable, to attend meetings and social gatherings and to enjoy such privileges as may be offered to them by the branch or branches to which they may be transferred. Such temporary visiting members shall have no voting rights unless the National Executive Committee shall decide otherwise.
4. Behaviour of Members
 - (a) Should any member behave in a manner considered detrimental to the interest of the Association or branch, the relevant Executive Committee shall give such a member an opportunity to state her case.

- (b) Should this matter not be satisfactorily resolved, the relevant Executive Committee shall have the power to demand her resignation, failing receipt of which within twenty-one days, the said member shall be expelled.
- (c) Such member shall, however, have the right to appeal to a National Special General Meeting of members provided such appeal is made in writing to the National Secretary within twenty-one days of date of despatch of notice of expulsion.
- (d) The National Secretary shall give 14 days notice to all members with voting powers that a Special Meeting is being held for this specific purpose. The meeting shall be held within 21 days of receipt of appeal and none but voting members (or their designated representatives) and the Appellant shall be present.

ARTICLE IV : ADMINISTRATION

A. Headquarters

1. The management of the affairs of the Association shall be vested in a National Executive Committee which shall take on the power and authority as conferred by the constitution and from the members to achieve the aims of the Association, including raising funds or to invite and receive contributions.
2. The National Executive Committee shall consist of :
 - (a) a President
 - (b) a Vice-President
 - (c) an Honorary Secretary;
 - (d) an Honorary Treasurer;
 - (e) three or four other members, from whom the National Executive may appoint an Assistant Honorary Secretary and/or an Assistant Honorary Treasurer.
3. Each branch of the Association shall in turn and following an alphabetical roster provide the National Executive Committee for a period of three years at a time.
4.
 - (a) A branch shall be notified during the second year of a triennium that it is due to assume responsibility for providing the National Executive Committee for the next triennium.
 - (b) At the Annual General Meeting one year before the change of National Executive Committee, the branch due to assume responsibility shall formally accept it or ask for a postponement of three years, in which case the branch next on the roster shall be called.
 - (c) A branch may take up national office only once it has been operating in good order for a minimum of two years. This would include regular submission of the branch Annual General Meeting minutes and financial accounts.
5. The President-elect shall be nominated by the branch about to provide the National Executive Committee, and notice of the nomination, together with a curriculum vitae, shall be circulated to branches at least six months before the final Annual General Meeting of the triennium. Election shall require the endorsement of at least two-thirds majority of the branches. If a branch fails to reply within five weeks, it shall be deemed to approve. All other members of the National Executive Committee shall likewise be nominated by the branch about to provide the National Executive Committee and their names shall be stated in the Agenda of the Annual General Meeting at which their appointment shall be approved.

6. The National Executive Committee shall be empowered to fill any vacancy occurring during its term of office on the National Executive Committee or on any committee appointed by it.
7. The National Executive Committee shall have power to appoint special committees from members of the Association and to delegate such powers as may be deemed advisable to such committees. The President and Honorary Secretary shall be ex-officio members of all such committees, which shall consist of at least three members. If special expert opinion is required, the National Executive Committee is empowered to co-opt a suitable non-member of the Association to any such special committee.
8. A member of the National Executive Committee shall be appointed as Co-ordinator of International Relations (CIR), to promote the aims of GWI, to stimulate interest in international relations, to cooperate with other national federations and associations and to act as liaison between GWI and the SAAWG.
9. The National Executive Committee shall appoint a membership correspondent who shall be responsible for liaison with the Membership Committee of GWI. Her recommendations shall be made through the National Executive Committee, which shall receive copies of all correspondence. Her term of office shall terminate with that of the National Executive Committee appointing her, and she may be re-appointed by the incoming National Executive Committee at its discretion.
10. The President of the Association shall represent it at Council meetings of GWI, or, if she is unable to attend, the National Executive Committee may appoint an alternate.
11. A quorum at meetings of the National Executive Committee shall consist of four members and the Committee shall meet at least six times a year.
12. The National Executive Committee shall establish a permanent group of issues-related co-ordinating advisors to assist the National Executive Committee with regular reports, current information and requests for response. These advisors need not reside in the region of the National Executive Committee. Branches and individual members shall be invited by the National Executive Committee to nominate suitable candidates.
13. The National Executive Committee shall have the power to increase its membership and to make ad hoc appointments to the Committee, as and when the need arises.
14. The National Executive Committee shall maintain constant postal addresses from which mail will be redirected timeously.
15. The President of the National Executive Committee shall act as the chairperson at executive meetings and at the Annual General Meeting and at Special General Meetings. If the President cannot attend the meeting, then the Vice President will officiate.

B. Branches

1. A branch of the Association shall consist of not less than twelve effective members, or such lesser numbers as may be approved by the National Executive Committee. This may be a town branch, or a regional branch, meeting in various places in its area.
2. Branches shall be bound by the constitution of the Association, and a branch of twelve or more members shall draw up by-laws for the conduct of their own affairs; such by-laws and any amendments to them proposed from time to time, shall be sent to the National Executive Committee for approval before final acceptance at a branch annual general meeting.
3. (a) Each branch shall keep the National Executive Committee informed of the names, addresses, qualifications and dates of joining of its members.
(b) The names and addresses of branch office-bearers shall be communicated by the Honorary Secretary of the branch to the National Honorary Secretary immediately after each Annual General Meeting of the branch.
(c) Annual Financial Accounts shall be provided to the National Executive Committee immediately after each Annual General Meeting of the branch.

C. Other

1. Only Ordinary, Life and Honorary Life members may be office bearers of a branch or of the National Executive Committee.
2. Introductions to other GWI bodies may be issued only by the National Honorary Secretary.
3. The appointment of the Editor and the Editorial Board of the Journal shall be determined by resolution at an Annual General Meeting.
4. Finance content for publication on the website must be approved by the National Executive Committee.

ARTICLE V : MEETINGS

A. Annual General Meeting

- (a) The Annual General Meeting of the Association shall be held at a time and place to be decided by the National Executive Committee.
- (b) The National Honorary Secretary shall present a report on the activities of the National Executive Committee for the year.
- (c) The National Honorary Treasurer shall submit an audited financial statement.
- (d) Each branch shall send an annual report of its activities to the National Honorary Secretary at least two weeks before the Annual General Meeting.
- (e) Changes to the constitution and other resolutions shall be addressed.
- (f) Minutes of the meeting shall be recorded and kept.

B. Special General Meeting

- (a) A Special General Meeting may be called at the discretion of the National Executive Committee.
- (b) A Special General Meeting must be called on receipt of a requisition signed by at least twenty effective members representing all branches. A statement of the business to be discussed must accompany the request. No other business shall be discussed at the meeting.

C. Postal Vote

- (a) The National Executive Committee may, at its discretion, take a Postal Vote of branches and Independent Members of SAAWG. A Postal Vote returned by a branch shall be effective only if it represents a two-thirds majority decision of those present at a properly convened meeting of the branch.
- (b) "Postal Vote" means votes sent by registered post, by facsimile or by e-mail.

ARTICLE VI : NOTICE AND AGENDA OF MEETINGS

1. The National Executive Committee shall draw up the agenda for the Annual General Meeting, or for a Special General Meeting of the Association.
2. The notice for the Annual General Meeting shall be sent to the Honorary Secretaries of branches and to Independent Members of SAAWG at least two months before the date of the meeting and the agenda at least four weeks before the meeting.
3. The notice and agenda of a Special General Meeting shall be sent to branches and Independent Members of SAAWG at least three weeks before the date of that meeting.
4. The notice and agenda of a Special General Meeting called to consider dissolution shall be sent to branches and Independent Members of SAAWG four months before the date of that meeting.

ARTICLE VII : RESOLUTIONS

1. Resolutions for the Annual General Meeting may be submitted by the National Executive Committee, branches or by individual members.
2. All resolutions, other than late resolutions, must be in the hands of the National Honorary Secretary at least three months before the Annual General Meeting and must be circulated to branches and Independent Members of SAAWG at least two months before the Annual General Meeting.
3. Late resolutions shall be accepted for discussion provided a two-thirds majority of those present at the Annual General Meeting vote in favour of discussing such resolutions.
4. Amendments to the Constitution and resolutions on finance may not be accepted as late resolutions.
5. Amendments to the Constitution and resolutions on finance must be adopted by a two-thirds majority of the effective voting strength of those present.

ARTICLE VIII : VOTING

1. The voting at an Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting of the Association shall be on the following basis:
 - (a) The President and the Vice-President of the Association, the National Honorary Secretary and the National Honorary Treasurer shall each have one vote.

- (b) Each branch shall have five (5) votes, plus one additional vote for each unit of 25 effective members and one further vote if its residual effective members number 12 or more. This voting strength shall be exercised by the leader of the branch delegation or her proxy.
 - (c) A branch of 12 or more effective members but less than 25 effective members, shall nevertheless have one additional vote.
 - (d) The Scholarship and Bursaries Secretariat shall have three (3) votes, to be shared among the Fellowship Secretariat, the Student Aid Administrator and the Hansi Pollak Secretariat.
 - (e) The Editor of the Journal shall have one (1) vote.
 - (f) Each Independent Member of SAAWG present shall have one vote, to a maximum of three votes for every twelve such members. One additional vote for each unit of 25 effective members shall apply.
 - (g) The Chairperson shall have a casting vote.
2. Effective members shall be those for whom dues have been received by the National Honorary Treasurer before the end of the financial year of the Association which immediately precedes the Annual General Meeting.
 3. Honorary Members and Associate Members shall have no vote.
 4. Voting shall be by show of hands, unless otherwise decided by the Chairperson.

ARTICLE IX : FINANCE

1. The Association shall contribute to the funds of Graduate Women International in accordance with the rules of that body.
2. Branch Honorary Treasurers shall pay to the National Honorary Treasurer such annual dues for each member as are determined by resolution from time to time at Annual General Meetings.
3. The financial year of the Association shall date from 1 January to 31 December.
4. The accounts of the Association shall be audited at the end of each financial year.
5. The Association is empowered to accept bequests, donations and gifts, and to apply them for educational or such other purposes necessary for the running of the Association, and generally for the furtherance of its aims; and may also invest them or place them to the credit of special funds in the name of the Association, on an interest-bearing basis within the Republic of South Africa.
6. The financial transactions of the Association shall be conducted by means of a banking account and through other financial institutions, as deemed appropriate.
7. The President and the National Honorary Treasurer and two other members of the National Executive Committee shall conduct financial operations as authorised by the National Executive Committee under the signatures of any two of them.
8. Branches shall advise the National Executive Committee of any companies or organisations which they are to approach or have approached for donations or sponsorships beyond a monetary value of R5 000,00. The written advice shall be given to the National Executive Committee not later than sixty days after the said approach has been made.

ARTICLE X : REPRESENTATION

1. The National Executive Committee may make representations on behalf of the Association to the Government and other statutory bodies in accordance with agreed policy, and shall inform branches thereof at the earliest opportunity.
2. A branch shall not have direct approach to Cabinet Ministers, Parliamentary Committees or Provincial Parliaments , unless specially authorised by the National Executive Committee.
3. A branch shall be entitled to make representations on behalf of the Association to local councils and shall inform the National Executive Committee thereof within one month of making such representations.

ARTICLE XI : APPLICATION OF FUNDS

1. The income from such funds as the Isie Smuts and Bertha Stoneman Awards, established for the purposes of making grants from income to suitably qualified women, and for other similar funds that may be established, may be distributed to such suitably qualified women.
2. Travel Fund, established to assist suitably qualified individual members with travel, may be distributed only to individual members of SAAWG.
3. A member of the Association may claim money from the Association only for authorised expenses that she has paid on behalf of the Association.
4. All other income of the Association shall not be distributed to members but shall be applied entirely for the furtherance of its aims.
5. Members or Office bearers of the Association do not have rights over assets belonging to the Association.

ARTICLE XII : DISSOLUTION

1. The Association may be dissolved at a Special General Meeting called for the purpose according to the provisions of Articles V and VI.
2. A majority of three-quarters of the total effective membership voting of the Association shall be required to carry the resolution to dissolve.
3. The assets of branches and of the Association shall be determined as follows:
 - (a) A balance sheet shall be drawn up by each branch Honorary Treasurer, audited, presented to the branch at a meeting specially called for that purpose. Upon agreement it should be sent to the National Honorary Treasurer not less than one month before the meeting at which dissolution is to be voted on.
 - (b) A balance sheet shall be drawn up by the National Honorary Treasurer after the receipt of the branch balance sheets, audited and presented at the meeting.
4. If upon the dissolution of the Association there remain any assets whatever after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, such assets shall not be paid to, or distributed among, its members but shall be given to such other organisation(s) (preferably having similar objects) which is/are authorised to collect contributions in terms of the Nonprofit Organisations Act 1997 (Act 71 of 1997), as may be decided either by the members at the Special General Meeting at which it was decided to dissolve the Association or, in default of such decision, by the Director of Nonprofit Organisations (Directorate for Nonprofit Organisations).