

*Applying scientific thinking  
in the service of society*



# Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) Annual Performance Plan 2023/24



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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



# PART A: OUR MANDATE



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# CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE

ASSAf is the official national science Academy of South Africa established in the **ASSAf Act, No 67 of 2001**. Once funding and other resources were secured, ASSAf became fully operational in 2006.

**The mandate of the Academy is to:**

- **Promote** and **inspire** outstanding achievements in all fields of scientific enquiry and to grant recognition for excellence
- Proactively, or upon request, undertake studies on matters of public interest to provide **evidence-based scientific advice** to government and other stakeholders



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# ASSAf VISION

To be the apex organisation for science and scholarship in South Africa

- **internationally** respected and connected
- membership of the country's most **active scholars** in all fields of scientific enquiry
- collective resource for the professionally-managed generation of **evidence-based solutions** to national problems



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# UPDATES ON INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

## Transformation Strategy:

ASSAf's Transformation Strategy has been finalised with the input and endorsement of the ASSAf Council.

All ASSAf activities take cognizance of the **POPI Act** which came into effect since 1 July 2021.

## COVID-19:

- The hybrid model of working from home/office premises is in place.
- Shift to conducting some activities in person following the national lifting of COVID-19 pandemic protocols.

# UPDATES ON INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

## Structural change in Secretariat:

**Previously:** Apportioned across four programmes; Science Advisory Programme, Scholarly Publishing Programme, and the Liaison Programme with support from the Governance and Administration Programme.

**Currently:** Science Advisory Programme and Liaison Programme combined under Science Advisory Programme and Strategic Partnerships with one Manager.

# PART B: OUR STRATEGIC FOCUS



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# ASSAf GOALS



Recognition and reward of excellence

Promotion of innovation and scholarly activity

Promotion of effective, evidence-based scientific advice

Promotion of public interest in and awareness of science and science education

Promotion of national, regional and international linkages



# SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS



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# ASSAf COUNCIL

**President**  
Prof Jonathan Jansen

**Vice-Presidents**  
Prof Stephanie Burton  
Prof Sabiha Essack

**General Secretary**  
Prof Sabiha  
Essack

**Treasurer**  
Prof Eugene Cloete

**Council Members**  
Prof Mary Scholes  
Prof Refilwe Nancy Phaswana-  
Mafuya  
Prof Wim De Villiers  
Prof Evance Kalula  
Prof Julian May  
Prof Irvy (Igle) Gledhill  
Prof Christian Pirk  
Prof Stella Nkomo

**NACI representative:**  
Prof Tawana Kupe

**Council Advisor**  
Prof Thokozani Majazi  
Prof Letlhokwa George Mpedi



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# PERFORMANCE ENVIRONMENT



**Increasing Membership engagement**

**Becoming more focused on objective and trustworthy evidence-based research addressing national and global priorities using the unique status of the Academy**

**Harnessing advocacy strategies on behalf of scientists and raising the profile of science in policymaking**

**Creating an enabling working environment**

# INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

## Global challenges such as conflict, inequality, and global change

- In 2022 disastrous extremes of drought in Gqeberha and surroundings were experienced, as well as devastating floods in Durban. We have a paramount task to rapidly provide solutions to such global and localised challenges in order to secure the future; this is a societal mandate to us as STI practitioners and the Academy.
- With effect from November 2021, ASSAf's travel policy was updated to allow travel following national recommendations for travel.

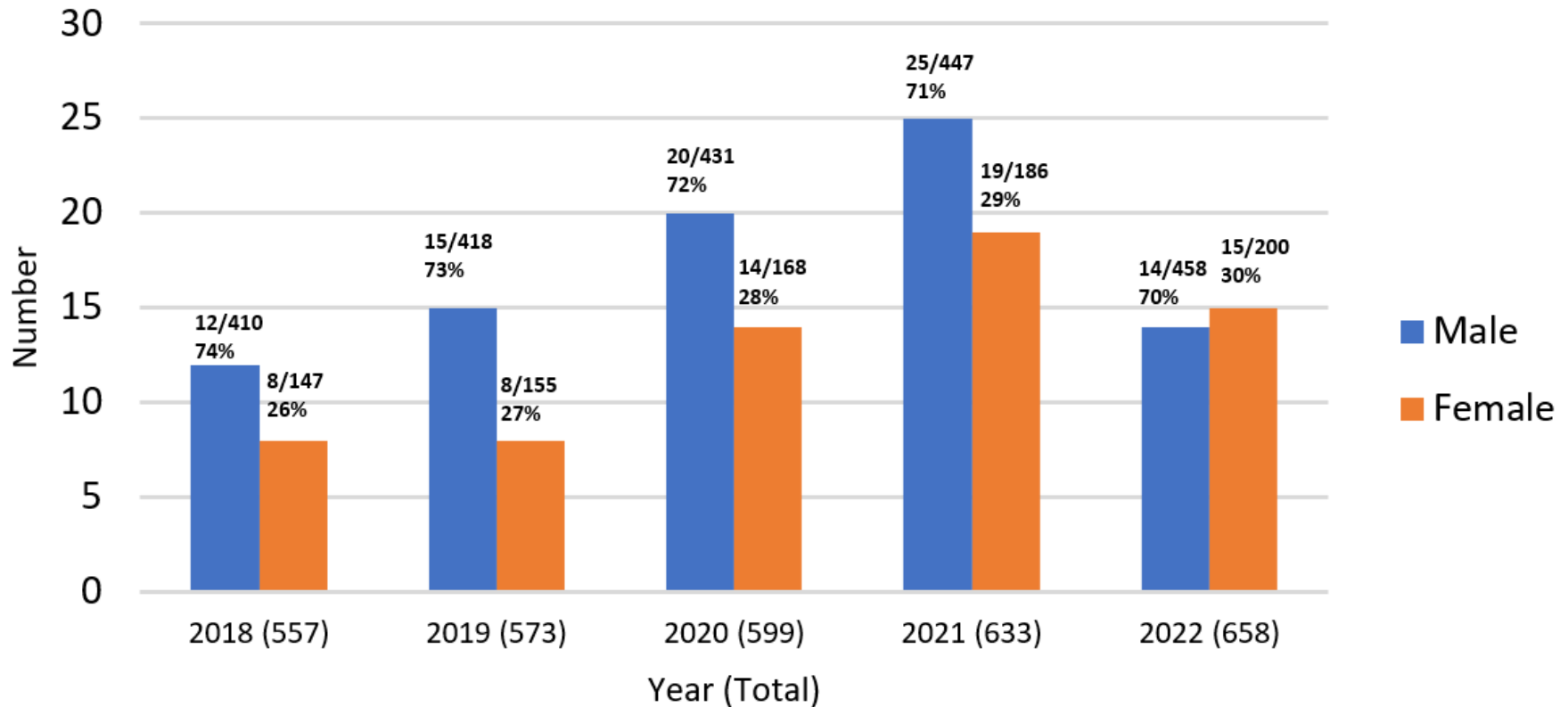


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# NEW MEMBERSHIP BY GENDER IN THE PAST 5 YEARS

## (Total Membership: 658)



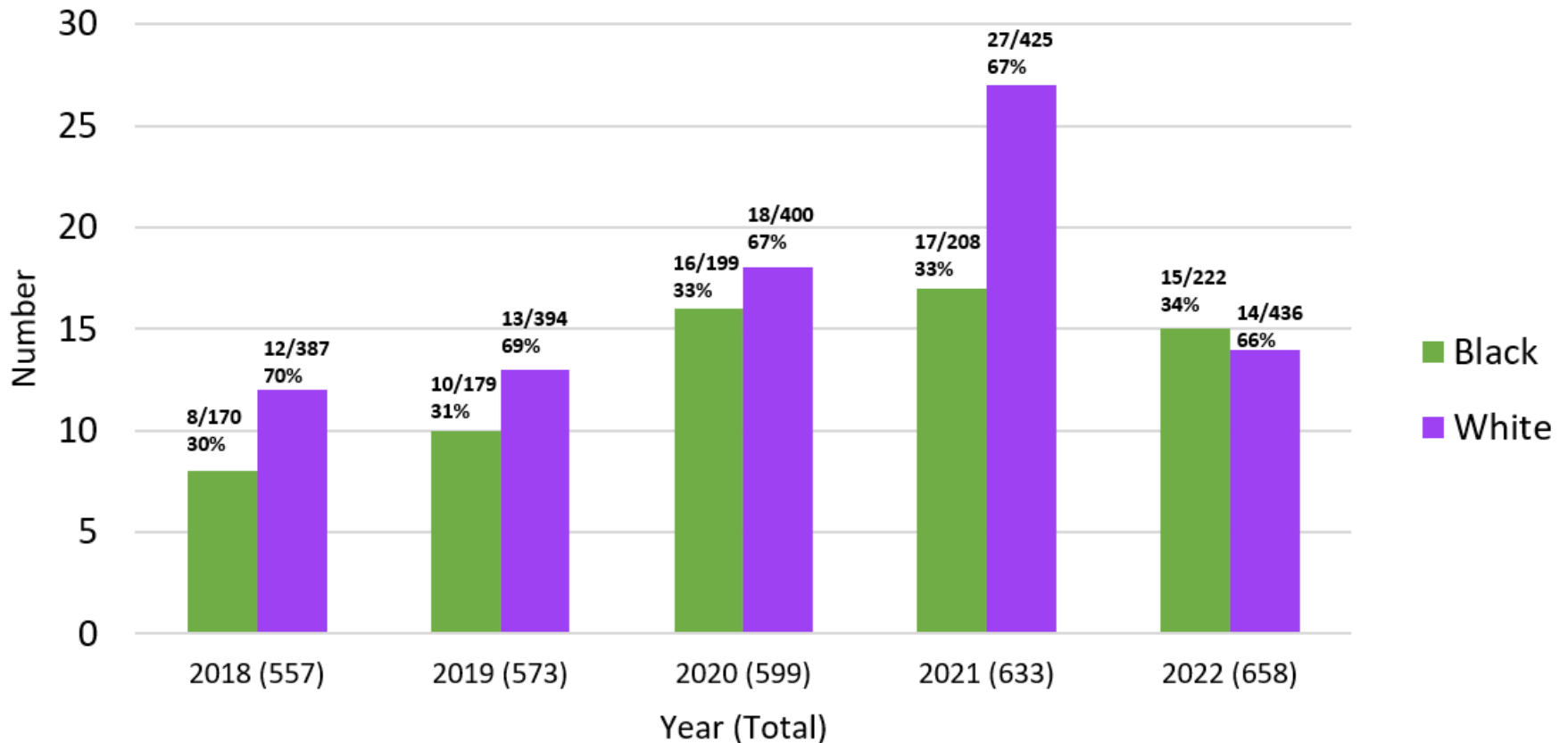
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# NEW MEMBERSHIP BY RACE IN THE PAST 5 YEARS

(Total Membership: 658)

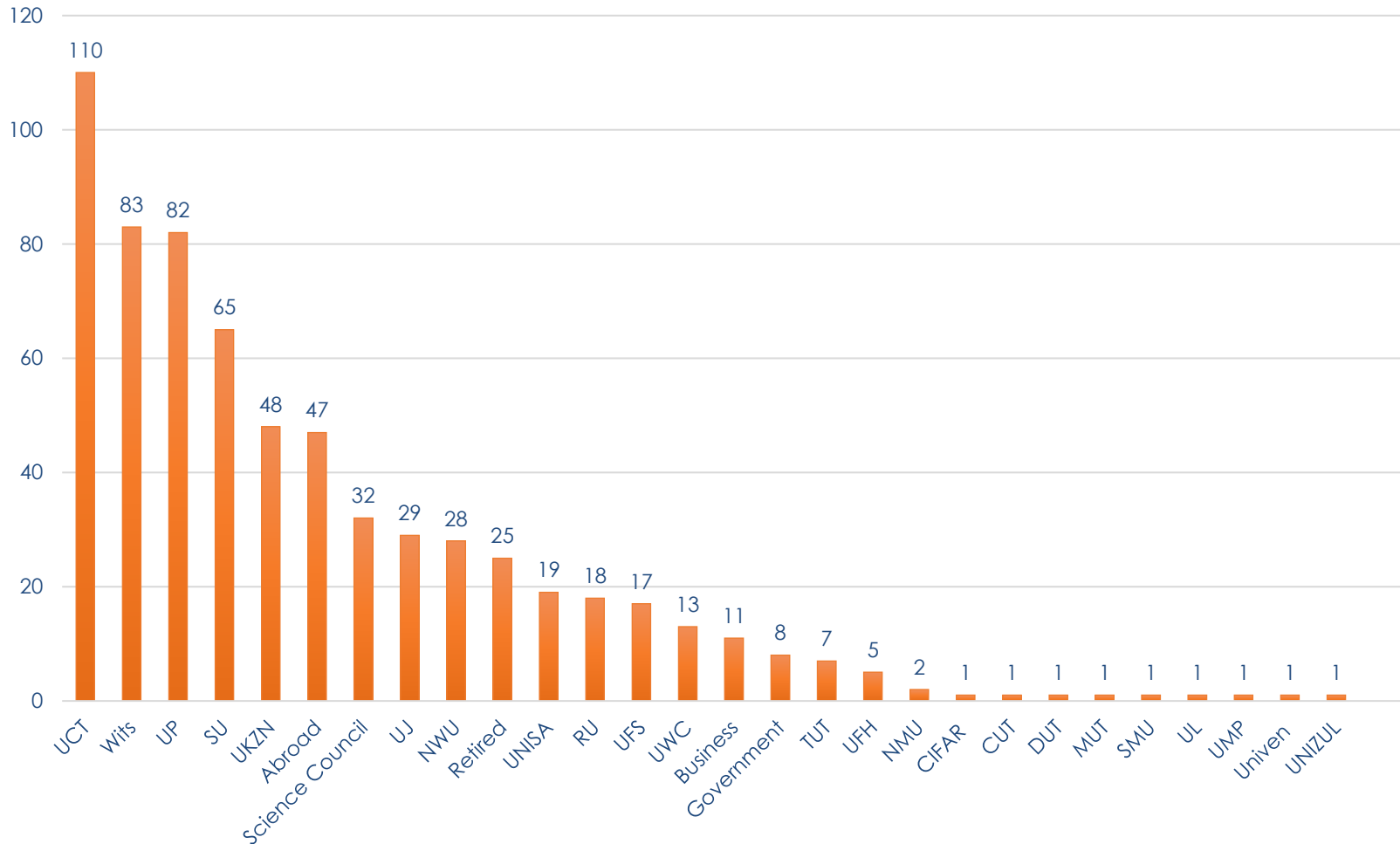


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# ASSAf MEMBERSHIP BY INSTITUTION



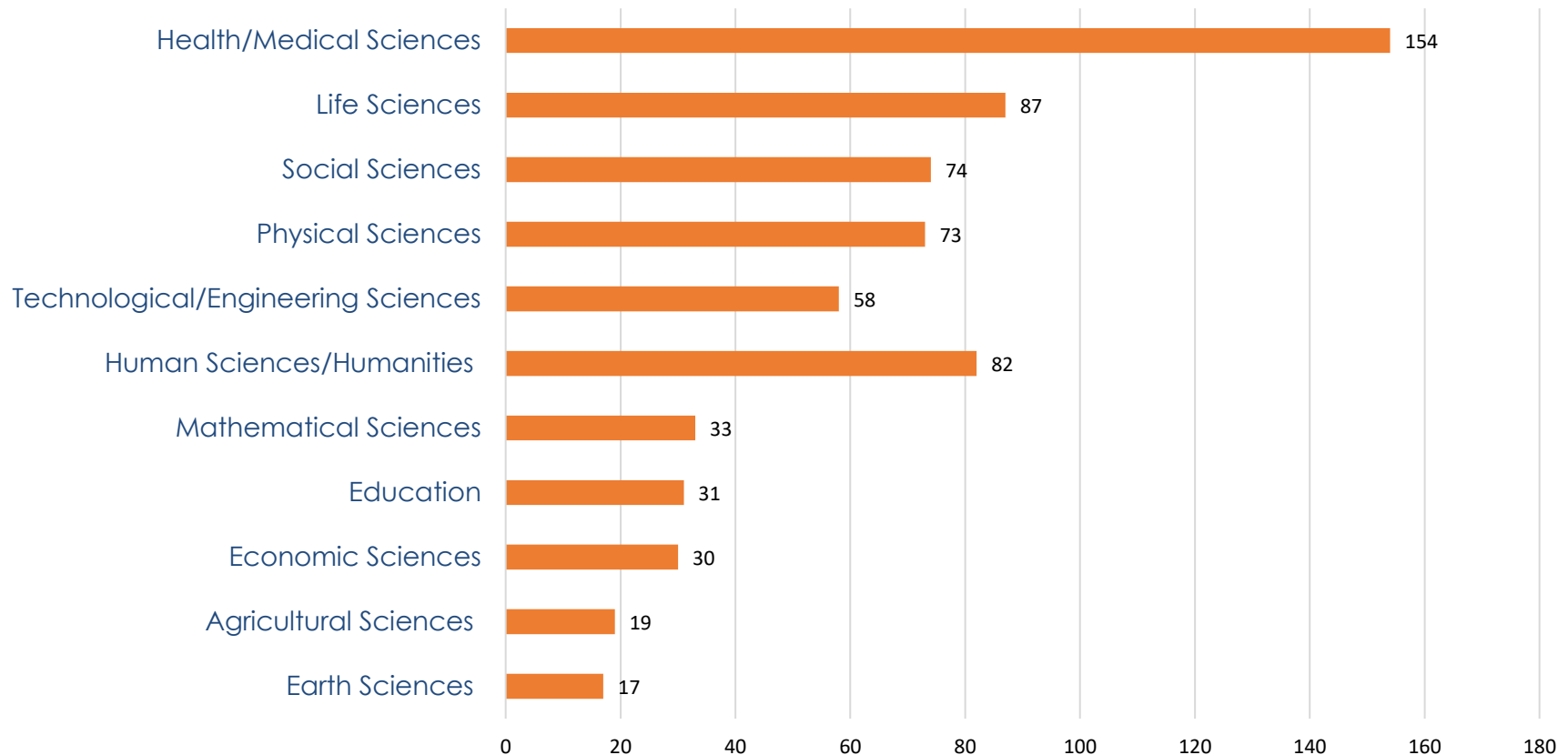
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# ASSAf MEMBERSHIP BY DISCIPLINE

ASSAf Membership by Disciplines: 658 members, 11 Disciplines represented



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# OUTCOMES, OBJECTIVES, IMPACT

Outcome	Envisaged Output	Impact
<b>Programme: Science Advisory Programme</b>		
<b>Independent, authoritative, and influential scientific advice</b>	Produce effective evidence-based multidisciplinary science studies to inform policy and practice for the betterment of society	Greater agility with respect to response to societal challenges. Support for DSI outcomes 1-6. Support for MTSF Priority 1.
<b>Programme: Scholarly Publishing Programme</b>		
<b>Mobilising knowledge</b>	Strengthen interaction and access to ASSAf knowledge resources	Improved ability for research users to access and exploit research. Support for DSI outcome 3,4,5, & 6. Promoting on MTSF Priority 3.
<b>Programme: Liaison Programme</b>		
<b>Facilitating partnerships</b>	Strengthen national, regional and international partnerships and create new ones	New opportunities are created. Promotion of outcomes 1-6 of the DSI and MTSF Priorities 2,3 & 7.
<b>All Programmes</b>		
<b>Science engagement</b>	Promotion of public interest and awareness of science, science education and the value of science in growing the knowledge economy	Increased engagements with the public, members of parliament, industry, policymakers and wider audiences. Promote outcomes 1-6 of the DSI and Priorities 1-7 of the MTSF.
<b>Scholarship support</b>	To promote human capital development investment focusing on women scientists and young scientists	Services are provided that support the development of women and young scientists. Supports DSI outcomes 1 & 3 and MTSF Priority 3.
<b>Supporting transformation</b>	Ensuring organisational and membership transformation with respect to inclusion across gender, race, disciplines, and institutions	The numbers of women, and black scientists have increased. Promoting DSI outcomes 1, 2, & 6 and MTSF Priority 7.

# PUBLICATION OUTPUT

Publication Output						Total
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	
Consensus Studies and Reports	7	3	3	3	2	18
Proceedings and other Reports	4	10	11	3	6	34
Policymakers' Booklets	-	1	1	-	-	2
Statements	2	2	3	6	2	15
Books	-	-	-	1	-	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>70</b>



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# OPERATIONAL PLAN: PRIORITIES



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# TRANSFORMATION

ASSAf's Outcome (6) Supporting transformation, DSI Outcomes 1, 2 & 6 MTSF Priorities 7

- ASSAf recognises that transformation builds a South Africa that is just and equitable.
- ASSAf finalised its Transformation Strategy and it was presented to DSI at the end of 2022 and sent to the Minister and DG: DSI for noting in January 2023.
- ASSAf will continue to strive for a Membership that reflects the country's demographics. Achieving an equitable Membership is not only a social imperative but will allow us to harness the rich diversity of ideas and perspectives of our country's people.
- ASSAf also recognises the important role women play in science and will strive to attract women to become Members of ASSAf.



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# TRANSFORMATION

ASSAf's Outcome (6) Supporting transformation, DSI Outcome 1, 2 & 6 MTSF Priorities 7



# IMPACT OF SCIENCE

To evaluate inequalities in various contexts through engagement with the scientific community via webinars on:



SDGs – how close are we in achieving the goals?



Open science and data access – who benefits and at what cost?



Climate change and the effects on society



The STI policy landscape – how realistic are the policies when evaluated together?

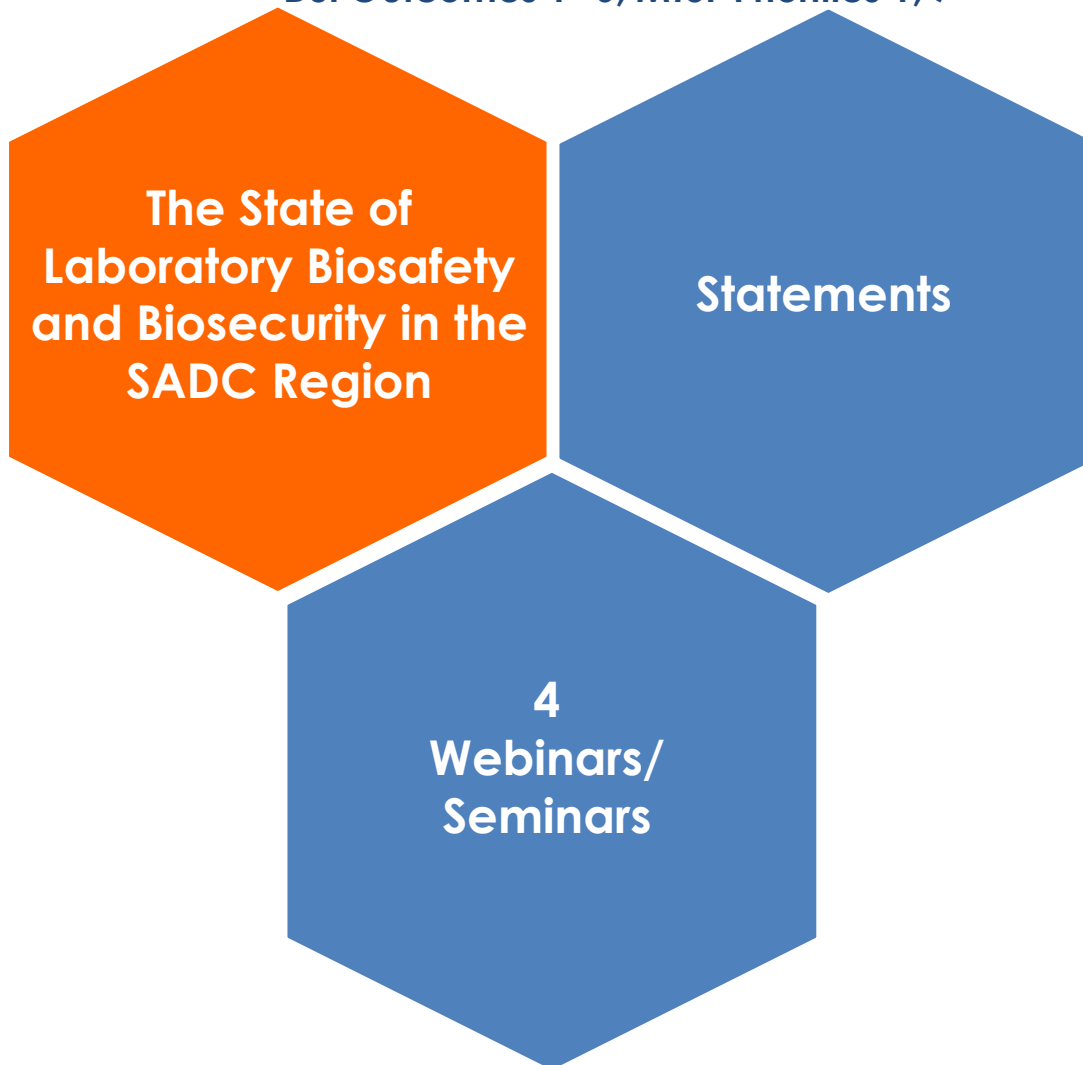
# HEALTH AND RELATED MATTERS

ASSAf's Outcome (1) Independent, authoritative, and influential scientific advice.  
DSI Outcomes 1- 6, MTSF Priorities 1, 7



# BIOSAFETY AND BIOSECURITY

ASSAf's Outcome (1) Independent, authoritative, and influential scientific advice.  
DSI Outcomes 1- 6, MTSF Priorities 1, 7





# ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY

ASSAf's Outcome (1) Independent, authoritative, and influential scientific advice.  
DSI Outcomes 1- 6, MTSF Priorities 1, 7



# JUST TRANSITION IN SOUTH AFRICA

ASSAf's Outcome (1) Independent, authoritative, and influential scientific advice.  
DSI Outcomes 1- 6, MTSF Priorities 1, 7

## Forum on the Just Transition in South Africa

- An inter-academy workshop on Just Transitions in Africa is planned.
- The Steering Committee of the ASSAf Forum on the Just Transition seeks to advance understanding on how African countries are responding to the concept of Just Transition.



# STEMI EDUCATION

ASSAf's Outcome (1) Independent, authoritative, and influential scientific advice.  
DSI Outcomes 1- 6, MTSF Priorities 1, 7

- A Programme Officer has been appointed to oversee ASSAf's Humanities and STEMI activities.
- ASSAf has initiated the process to establish a new STEMI Standing Committee. The nomination process for Council consideration and approval have been initiated.
- ASSAf will host a series of webinars to discuss various topics related to STEMI education.



# SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

ASSAf's Outcome (1) Independent, authoritative, and influential scientific advice.  
DSI Outcomes 1- 6, MTSF Priorities 1, 7

- Establishment of a **Social Sciences and Humanities Standing Committee**, a rebranding of the original Humanities Standing Committee to include the Social Sciences.
- **Webinars:** Four webinars (one per quarter).
- **Public Lectures:** ASSAf Annual Humanities Lecture.
- **Meetings:**
  - Co-host the 14<sup>th</sup> Biennial Meeting of The International Human Rights Network of Academies and Scholarly Societies (IHRN).
  - Engage the San Community in Kimberley to discuss co-creation of projects as well as storage and secondary use of samples and data.



# ASSAf SPECIAL PUBLIC LECTURES

ASSAf Outcome (2) Science Engagement & Outcome (4) Facilitating partnerships.  
Outcomes 1-6 of the DSI and MTSF Priorities 1 - 7.

ASSAf hosts public lectures to encourage participation of targeted stakeholders to promote its activities.

- **Presidential Roundtable** hosted by the President and features topical issues to engage non-specialist audiences in science.
- **Science-Business Leadership** in partnership with the business sector to explore opportunities to promote private-public partnerships and is also hosted by the ASSAf President.
- **Distinguished Visiting Scholar (DVS)** partnering with a local university on a topic in a discipline identified by Council on a rotational basis in accordance with the guidelines.
- **In Conversation with Series** which is hosted in conversational style by the ASSAf EO and profiles interesting topics of research



# STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS: NATIONAL

ASSAf Outcome (4 & 6) Facilitating partnerships. Outcomes 1-6 of the DSI and MTSF Priorities 5 & 7.



## **South African Young Academy of Science (SAYAS)**

ASSAf will continue in its role of hosting SAYAS and providing the secretariat and financial support to promote their activities.



## **Innovation for Inclusive Development (IID) seminar series**

In collaboration with the DSI, ASSAf hosts workshops covering specific topics mutually decided to promote knowledge creation to inform policy. The current contract which has been extended to 30 June 2022, plans to expand the scope of work.



## **District Development Model (DDM)**

ASSAf assists the DSI in supporting the participating entities with secretariat support to ensure engagement on how the various entities are progressing in advancing the DDM. The Committee meets quarterly



## **South Africa Local Government Association (SALGA)**

ASSAf continued to be committed to a bilateral partnership in building cohesion on the shared values and Local Government Research Agenda.

# STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS: NATIONAL

ASSAf Outcome (4) Facilitating partnerships. Outcomes 1-6 of the DSI and MTSF Priorities 5 & 7.

## Committee of Heads of Research and Technology (COHORT)

ASSAf will continue to provide secretariat support to assist the **COHORT** Executive and the Committee in achieving their objectives. At least three meetings of the EXCO and two meetings of the full Committee are envisaged.

## National Disaster Management Advisory Forum (NDMAF)

Member of the NDMAF that is facilitated by the National Disaster Management Centre under the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA).

## National Policy Data Observatory (NPDO)

ASSAf is part of the NPDO and engages with the Committee on issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development 2022 (IYBSSD 2022)

DSI engaged ASSAf's EO to represent the southern African region by serving as the node coordinator for IYBSSD 2022 activities in the region.

# STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS: AFRICAN

ASSAf Outcome (4) Facilitating partnerships. Outcomes 1-6 of the DSI and MTSF Priorities 2, 3 & 7.



## TWAS SAREP

ASSAf hosts and provides support for TWAS SAREP by ensuring that Fellows and Affiliates selected from the continent play a role in contributing to policy development. TWAS SAREP promotes science diplomacy on the African continent.



## The Network of African Science Academies (NASAC)

NASAC is a network of African Academies of Sciences and ASSAf is a founder Member. ASSAf is represented in the NASAC Executive, participates in various NASAC activities.



## Southern African Development Community (SADC)

ASSAf has been working with the SADC Science Desk established by the DSI since 2014. Currently, there are only three countries (Namibia, Seychelles, and Comoros) where science academies need to be established.



## African Embassy Lecture

A way to facilitate and enhance African scholarship through lectures and seminars with African Embassies in SA; this is a strategic vehicle to connect with academies in the continent and scholars.



# STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS: INTERNATIONAL

ASSAf Outcome (4) Facilitating partnerships. Outcomes 1-6 of the DSI and MTSF Priorities 2, 3 & 7.

## InterAcademy Partnership (IAP)

ASSAf is a member of the IAP and engages with ASSAf Members and Council to endorse IAP Statements of global importance. ASSAf has Members who contribute to IAP Working Groups and serve on the Exco, ensuring continued engagement.

## BRICS Academies Network

The BRICS Academies was established as a network in 2018. The draft strategic document developed during 2020/21 awaits endorsement by all Academies in the network. ASSAf will host the BRICS Academies meeting in 2023.

## Science 20 (S20)

The science academies of the G20 states, referred to as the Science 20 (S20), have met since 2017 in Germany. ASSAf is a member of the S20 and has ensured that South African scientists are part of the Working Groups that develop and endorse Statements. ASSAf is the only African member of the S20.

## South African Academia in Diaspora

ASSAf plans to host a webinar that showcases South African scholars who are based outside the borders of the country. This activity highlights STI internationalisation and additionally facilitates collaborations.

# SCHOLARLY PUBLISHING

ASSAf's Outcome (3) Knowledge Mobilisation and Outcome (2) Science engagement and supports DSI outcomes 3,4, 5 & 6 and MTSF Priority 3.

*South African Journal of Science (SAJS)*

*Quest Magazine*

*Khulisa Journals*

*Scientific Electronic Library Online – South Africa (SciELO SA)*

*Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa (CSPiSA)*

*Legends of South African Science III*

*Peer Reviews of Scholarly Journals*

*African Scientists Directory (ASD)*

*ASSAf Open Science Portal*

# SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION

ASSAf Outcome (2) in the ASSAf five-year SP  
All the DSI outcomes and MTSF Priorities.

**Studies (Consensus, Peer Review, Proceedings)**

**Workshops/Symposiums/Conferences/Lectures**

**Thematic activities**

**ASSAf e-Newsletter**

**Website and Social Media**

**Media Releases**

**Statements**

# INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

- ASSAf's second Institutional Review for the period **2015 to 2020** has been finalised.
- The synthesis report provides an oversight on the performance of ASSAf in terms of its **mandate and its strategic objectives**.
- Views on possible gaps not addressed by the Academy in terms of the **ASSAf Act within the National System of Innovation** (NSI), are highlighted and recommendations are made regarding the future strategic direction and operational execution of the ASSAf mandate.



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# PART C: MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE



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# ANNUAL TARGETS

Output Indicators	Annual Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Outcome 1: Independent, authoritative and influential scientific advice</b>					
<b>Indicator: Disseminated publications of consensus studies, reports and statements</b>					
1. Number of consensus studies	2				2
2. Number of proceedings reports, policy-makers booklets and statements	8	2	2	2	2
<b>Outcome 2: Science engagement</b>					
<b>Indicator: Public interest and awareness of science and the value of evidence-based research</b>					
3. Number of special public lectures	5	1	1	2	1
4. Number of webinars, workshops/conferences	12	3	3	3	3
5. Number of newsletters	4	1	1	1	1
6. Number of media releases	20	5	5	5	5
<b>Outcome 3: Mobilising knowledge</b>					
<b>Indicator: Strengthened interaction and access to ASSAf knowledge resources</b>					
7. Number of SAJS publications	6	1	2	1	2
8. Number of <i>Quest</i> publications	4	1	1	1	1
9. Institutional repository and website	8	2	2	2	2
10. Number of new journal titles on SciELO platform	2				2



# ANNUAL TARGETS

Output Indicators	Annual Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Outcome 4: Facilitating partnerships</b>					
<b>Indicator: Strengthened and newly created national, Pan-African and international partnerships</b>					
11. Number of strategic partnerships	4	1	1	1	1
<b>Outcome 5: Scholarship support</b>					
<b>Indicator: Developed capacity and capacity amongst young scientists and women scientists and acknowledging scholarship</b>					
12. Number of activities supported with other African Academies	4	1	1	1	1
13. Number of young scientist activities supported	4	1	1	1	1
14. Number of <u>ASSAf</u> Gold Medals awarded	1			1	
15. Number of Biennial Humanities Book Award presented	0				0
<b>Outcome 6: Supporting transformation</b>					
<b>Indicator: <u>Organisational and Membership</u> transformation with respect to inclusion across gender, race, disciplines and institutions</b>					
16. Proportion of black Members	Growth by 2% of total pa			2%	
17. Proportion of women	Growth by 2% of			2%	

# RISK AND MITIGATION

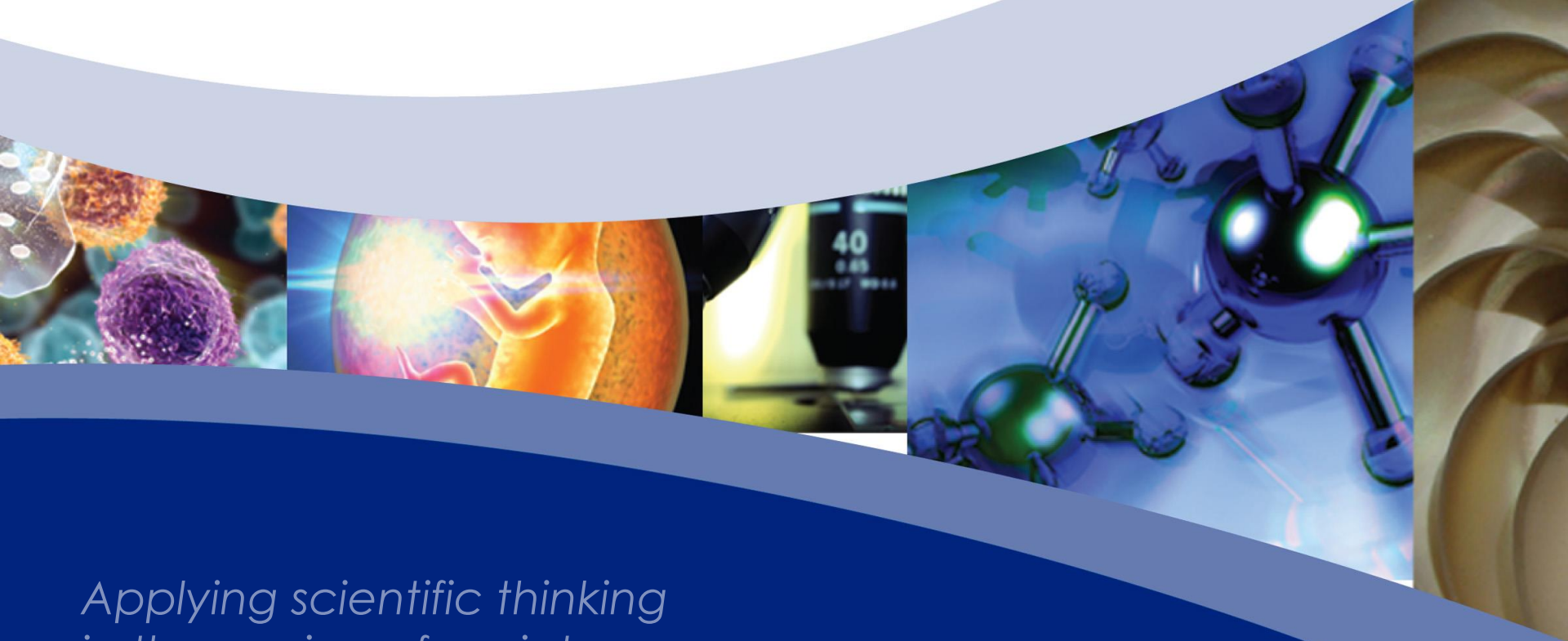
Key Risk	Risk Mitigation
Human Capital	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implementation of alternative remuneration package incentives in response to no salary increase in compliance with NT guidelines.</li> <li>2. Promotion of suitable employees where possible.</li> <li>3. Recognition of roles and responsibilities where required.</li> <li>4. Implementation of employee wellbeing program and regular communication on any wellbeing matters.</li> <li>5. Promotion of physical, emotional, social, and financial wellbeing.</li> <li>6. Continuation of hybrid operational model which seems to be working effectively for <u>ASSAf</u>.</li> </ol>
Funding	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enforce adherence to budgets.</li> <li>2. Continue with a hybrid operational model the effect of which has resulted in huge cost savings across the board.</li> <li>3. The upward adjustment in <u>ASSAf's</u> baseline has relieved the historical financial pressure on budgeting and planning.</li> <li>4. Enforcement of financial and supply chain management systems that fosters adherence to the established policies and procedures as well as applicable compliance framework.</li> <li>5. Deletion of the clause on compliance with the PFMA from the <u>ASSAf</u> Act has provided some relief in some respects.</li> </ol>
Information and technology management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure that <u>ASSAf</u> periodically receives reports on:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The performance of daily back-ups and its success</li> <li>b) Whether back-ups are tested on a periodic basis to confirm its ability to successfully restore</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Regular upgrading of the security on websites</li> <li>3. Regular upgrading of software on existing <u>programmes</u> i.e., Sage Evolution, Sage People and Windows</li> <li>4. Regular changing of security software on servers and laptops to deter malicious and other unwanted activities</li> <li>5. Regular installation of Sophos to monitor software upgrade status of laptops.</li> </ol>



# FINANCIALS

ACADEMY OF SCIENCE OF SOUTH AFRICA				
SUMMARY OF PROJECTED RESOURCE ALLOCATION - 2022/23 TO 2025/26				
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	Approved Projected resource allocation	Projected resource allocation	Projected resource allocation	Projected resource allocation
	R	R	R	R
<b>Revenue from non-exchange transactions - Government funding</b>	<b>35 839 000</b>	<b>35 970 000</b>	<b>37 496 000</b>	<b>36 873 000</b>
DSI - Baseline	33 839 000	33 970 000	35 496 000	36 873 000
DSI - International Cooperation and Intra-Academy in Africa	2 000 000	2 000 000	2 000 000	-
<b>Revenue from non-exchange transactions - International funding</b>	<b>732 830</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
International Development Research Centre (IDRC)	732 830	-	-	-
<b>Revenue from exchange transactions</b>	<b>1 651 000</b>	<b>1 604 000</b>	<b>1 608 000</b>	<b>1 735 000</b>
Interest Received	1 200 000	1 200 000	1 200 000	1 300 000
Membership Fees	111 000	114 000	118 000	85 000
Cohort Secretarial Services	40 000	40 000	40 000	-
Income From Publications - Quest/Advertising	300 000	250 000	250 000	350 000
<b>Total projected revenue</b>	<b>38 222 830</b>	<b>37 574 000</b>	<b>39 104 000</b>	<b>38 608 000</b>
<b>Total projected expenditure</b>	<b>38 222 830</b>	<b>37 574 000</b>	<b>39 104 000</b>	<b>38 608 000</b>
Governance & Administration Programme	12 807 502	12 937 396	13 030 551	12 108 000
Liaison Programme	9 164 180	8 434 920	9 034 919	9 400 000
Science Advisory Programme	4 762 645	4 764 430	5 364 430	5 400 000
Scholarly Publishing Programme	11 488 503	11 437 255	11 674 100	11 700 000
	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

# THANK YOU



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