

CONSTITUTION OF THE SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

1. **NAME:** The name of the Society shall be the Shakespeare Society of Southern Africa, abbreviated as SSOSA.

2. **AIMS:** The aims of the society shall be

- (a) To encourage and stimulate the appreciation of William Shakespeare's works, particularly in Southern Africa.
- (b) To enrich the study of Shakespeare in schools, technikons, training colleges and universities.
- (c) To stimulate interest in Shakespeare among the general public by means of productions, readings, lectures, courses, seminars and conferences.
- (d) To establish an information centre covering research, publications, translations, and performances of Shakespeare's works.
- (e) To publish and distribute appropriate literature on Shakespeare.
- (f) To establish and maintain liaison with other organisations with similar aims.
- (g) To provide travel assistance to Shakespeare scholars, producers, and performers.
- (h) To keep members informed about the activities of the Society.

3. **MEMBERSHIP:**

- (a) The Society may appoint a Patron-in-Chief.
- (b) The Society may, from time to time, appoint as Patrons eminent people who subscribe to the aims of the Society.
- (c) The Society may grant honorary membership to such people as it sees fit.
- (d) The Society shall be open to all people who subscribe to its aims and who pay membership fees.
- (e) Membership shall also be open to corporate bodies such as academic, theatrical, literary or business organisations, at a fee to be agreed on by the General Congress.
- (f) The Society reserves the right to withhold membership from any individual or corporate body when it feels such membership to be prejudicial to the Society's aims.

4. **GENERAL CONGRESS:**

- (a) A General Congress of the Society shall be held at least once every three years at a place decided upon by the previous General Congress.
- (b) Members in good standing shall have the right of attending, speaking, and voting at the General Congress.
- (c) A corporate body in good standing may send a delegate to the General Congress.
- (d) The General Congress shall be presided over by the President. It shall elect the incoming Executive Committee.
- (e) Twenty members in good standing shall constitute a quorum at the General Congress. In the absence of a quorum within thirty minutes of the time fixed for the meeting of the General Congress, it shall stand adjourned to such time as the President shall decide. At such adjourned meeting, the members present shall be deemed to be a quorum.
- (f) The General Congress in session shall be regarded as the supreme body of the Society on all matters of policy.

5. **GENERAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:**

- (a) The General Executive Committee shall comprise a President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer and not more than four additional members elected by the General Congress; provided however, that the General Executive Committee shall have the right to co-opt members for their specialised knowledge, or to replace those members who are no longer available to serve on it.
- (b) The duties of the General Executive Committee shall be to run the day-to-day business of the Society, including its financial affairs. The General Executive Committee's interpretation of the rules of the Society shall be binding on all members.
- (c) The treasurer shall keep proper books of accounts, and make payments necessary for the conduct of the business of the Society. He/she shall submit financial statements to the General Executive Committee on an annual basis.
- (d) The secretary shall keep proper Minute Books in which shall be recorded the business conducted at meetings of the General Executive Committee and the General Congress.
- (e) A minimum of four members of the General Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum. Where it is not possible for the General Executive Committee to gather, a minimum of three members, in addition to the President and Secretary, contacted either in person or by telephone, shall constitute a quorum.
- (f) The meetings of the General Executive Committee shall take place at least once a year. Whenever possible the meetings of the General Executive Committee should coincide with a congress or conference of scholars in a related field.

6. **BRANCHES:**

- (a) A minimum of five members in good standing may establish local branches, such branches to be governed by the aims and provisions of this constitution.
- (b) Executive committees of such branches shall be elected by the local branch membership.
- (c) Such local executive committees shall comprise a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and not more than four additional members; provided, however, that said committees shall have the right to co-opt members for their specialised knowledge, or to replace those members who are no longer available to serve on them.
- (d) The duties of the local executive committees shall be to run the day-to-day business of the branch, including its financial affairs, in accordance with the aims and provisions of this constitution.
- (e) Subject to financial constraints, branches of more than twenty members shall have the right to appoint a member of their executive committee or a proxy to the General Executive Committee. Representatives of small branches may be co-opted at the discretion of the General Executive Committee.
- (f) Branches must submit annual reports, detailing membership, activities and finance, to the General Executive Committee.
- (g) Subscriptions to the journal Shakespeare in Southern Africa are to be optional and independent of membership of the Society. The Journal subscription for members will be fixed by the General Executive Committee at its annual meeting. The GEC will also fix the membership fee for those members who do not belong to a branch.
- (h) Branches will charge branch membership fees as decided by the branch membership at the branch AGM. The amount would depend upon the extent of the branch's activities.
- (i) Branches will be required to pay a nominal annual affiliation fee to the Society, as decided at the annual meeting of the General Executive Committee. All members, whether or not they are members of a branch, will receive an annual copy of the Society's Newsletter and Occasional Papers and Reviews.

7. **RULES:**

- (a) Every member shall receive a copy of the constitution and any amendments.
- (b) Changes to the constitution of the Society shall only be made by at least a two-thirds majority of members present at the General Congress.

8. **DISSOLUTION:**

If for any reason the Society ceases to exist, its assets, if any, shall be distributed to an educational institution, at the discretion of the General Executive Committee.

9. **LIABILITY:**

No member of the Society shall be liable for the acts, receipts, neglects, omissions or defaults of any member of the Society, in the pursuit of the activities of the Society.