

# The NASCEE Notebook

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FROM NON-PROFITS IN EDUCATION



Professors Barney Pityana and John Volmink at the 2019 NASCEE Conference

With the words of Professor Pityana, from the NASCEE 2019 Conference, ringing in our ears we embarked on the journey to a new future. One in which *“education enables a radical reconstruction of the future”*, where schools are *“centres located within the struggles of society and the community itself, serving as instruments for growth and development in order to achieve their best.”*

As conference delegates, you gave us the prodigious mandate of building an association focused on *“building a high-quality equitable education system for all South Africans”* – we thank you for your confidence and commitment that together as non-profit organisations in South Africa we will rise to meet the challenge.

We promised to update you as we go. Whilst our silence in the last few weeks makes it seem like we have gone underground or been overwhelmed by all that needs to be done, we are pleased to report NASCEE is firmly on its way to building the structures, networks, contacts and context you asked for.

We remain steadfast in our commitment to you, our constituency, and are forging ahead in line with the mandate and trust to the new NASCEE Board.

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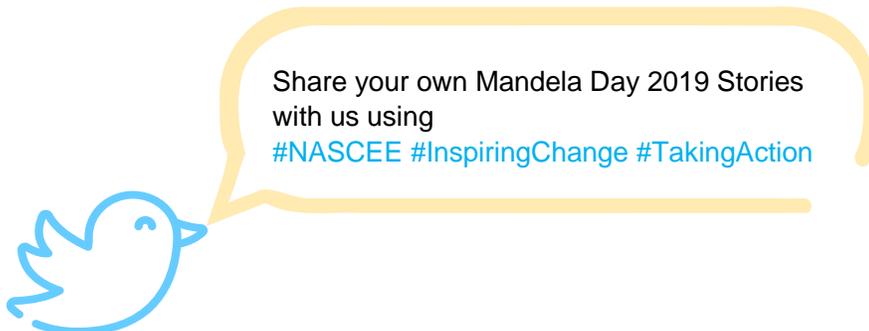
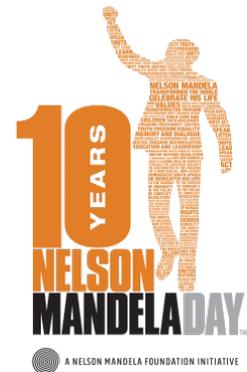
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## A NEW CHAPTER

The hope and anticipation for the future envisaged at the 2019 NASCEE Conference was palpable. Our prospective members gave us the green light to build something tangible – an association for them – which they can interact with and which can build capacity and accountability in the sector. We are now a registered NPO (NPO registration nr: 231-678), and there is still much to unpack and understand as we move towards a functioning association that delivers on its promises.

In this newsletter, we share the “behind the scene” debates, challenges and agreements that the NASCEE Board has manoeuvred through in the past two and a half months.

The NASCEE Board met for the first time, since being elected, on the 18 July 2019, Mandela Day. A befitting ethos of *Taking Action and Inspiring Change* provided a great backdrop to the spirit of camaraderie amongst the new Board members. As they shared their reasons for wanting to be part of such a necessary “voice of NPOs” it became clear that giving time to a voluntary entity such as NASCEE, comes with sacrifices of personal and one’s own organisation’s time. However, giving back to our communities and sharing our skills for the greater good, also enhances our skills and experiences in the process.



As a voluntary association with the desire to make a real sustainable difference, NASCEE’s financial sustainability and self-governance are the key topics of discussion.

We embrace good governance as our ability to measure, reflect and learn - making a commitment to continuous improvement. Striving to ethically and effectively deliver on the expectations we created.

Our immediate priorities are to answer:

- What will it cost in terms of time, fees, energy and effort? and
- What will members get from NASCEE in terms of value, benefits and transformation?

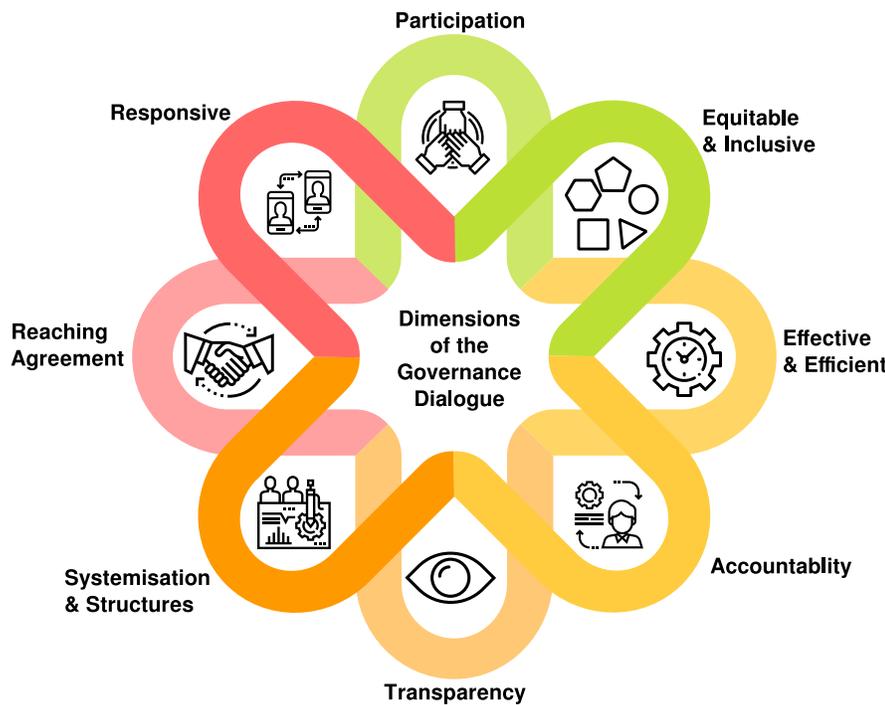
We address these questions in this newsletter directly.

We are critically aware that we managed to sell the dream of NASCEE but we have **not yet recruited members**. Developing effective answers to these questions will make sure that we can bring practical value to you.

# THE GOVERNANCE DIALOGUE

In the last few months we have had the opportunity to consider how we want NASCEE to be run and interact with its members. There is a need for NASCEE to be an independent body free from obligation to donors, making NASCEE dependent on its members for financial support and sustainability. This requires that NASCEE members remain united and that they act in a coordinated manner. At the same time, NASCEE needs to find a way of supporting its members and creating opportunities to make a contribution to education in South Africa. This means within the board and within the membership it critical for us to resolve key governance questions and develop a sensible governance framework.

Adopting the position that if we share information as we go – it will be possible for us to engage with you in an ongoing governance dialogue. This will involve building trust through transparency and building common ground as a platform for effective collaboration.



To advance the continued development of the governance debate, the development of the appropriate protocols and processes the Board has formed a Governance Working Group.

Beyond reflecting on how well it is meeting its purpose, the team is engaged in finding ways for NASCEE to evaluate its:

**Leadership** – the people and processes that inspire and help others to commit and pursue the organisation’s vision, aims and values. How do we enable them to contribute without threatening the independence and integrity of NASCEE?

**Integrity** – how does NASCEE maintain its integrity while at the same time working through and for its membership? This

means maintaining the *consistency* across our actions, values, methods, measures, principles, expectations, and outcomes – even though most of our representatives wear multiple hats. We want to make it possible to interact with our stakeholders *honestly*, safeguarding the *truthfulness* and *accuracy* of what we do and communicate.

**Accountability** – the scope and number of non-profit organisations working in education mean that balancing the demands of encouraging participation, offering equitable and inclusive representation and advocacy, and maintaining control through its systems and structures require transparency and accountability in the way consensus or agreement is built. It is about enabling NASCEE and its stakeholders to evaluate how the work gets done, how NASCEE makes its decisions, manage the risks, delegate responsibilities and balance the demands on its resources.

**Effectiveness and efficiency** – NASCEE will work for its constituent members by leveraging the skills and expertise of its constituency. This means learning (evaluating and improving) how we best leverage the available resources by using the appropriate balance of skills, experience, backgrounds and knowledge to make informed decisions.

**Responsiveness** – to its stakeholders by supporting diversity, empowerment, transformation and tolerance of a variety of perspectives, experiences and skills

**Openness and accountability** – which is an evaluation of our ability to win, retain and honour the trust placed in us by our members. It is a continued commitment to building genuine, transparent communication structures that celebrates successes and demonstrates a willingness to learn from mistakes with the aim to gain your confidence and earn legitimacy

We look forward to sharing more of the Governance Working Group’s thinking, outputs and processes with you as we proceed.



## SIX-MONTH TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

As you all know, to get NASCEE launched from a Steering Committee to a fully-fledged entity, with an adopted constitution and an elected Board, required vision and commitment. JET Education Services provided that by stepping into the leadership role and supporting the initiative with relevant resources and infrastructure. The good news is that JET will continue to do so, having offered this support for a further six months until December 2019. This was proposed and approved at the first NASCEE Board meeting held on 18 July 2019.

Thank you, once again, to JET for carrying the NASCEE flag.

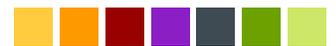
This brings a sense of continuity to a newly formed entity and provides the much-needed time to strategise on how NASCEE is to be developed in the coming years, its key focus areas and immediate deliverables. It also enables, Dr. Rooksana Rajab to remain as the Project Manager during the transition phase. Our back-office wonder person, Boitumelo (Tumi, for short) will continue to scan your inputs, e-mails and general requests. She also assists in her quiet way in organising all our meetings.

In order to give effect to the transitional arrangements with transparency, a Governance Working Group was established as already mentioned.

The members of this group are Ms Gail Campbell (Zenex Foundation), Giles Gillet (New Leaders) and Sylvester Moepya (Seriti Institute). Financial support, reporting lines, and the role of JET in the transition period have been discussed and clarified.

It was decided that a Treasurer will be appointed from amongst Board members in early September and that a NASCEE Bank account be opened soon after.

Acknowledgement goes to the Governance Working Group for their time and contribution!



## FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Financial considerations, sustainability and the need to remain independent are key aspects of any start-up entity, especially for an association such as this one. It, therefore, becomes prudent that the association is a

representative body of its members. However, in order to serve its members, the association requires funds, human capital and general office facilities. There is so much change that we want to see happen and we are all impatient to get going, but we need to remain realistic by building the foundation of sustainability and independence that will gain traction and allow us to achieve our goals, one step at a time.

The need to register members and decide on a membership fee structure is one of the most necessary discussions that took place in the last months. We reviewed our monthly costs, based on a target of 200 registered members in year one. After much consideration, we decided on membership fees per organisation on a sliding scale as follows:

NPO Revenue per annum	Fees per annum
Over R 5 million	R 8 000.00
Between R 1m and R 5m	R 4 000.00
Under R 1 million	R 1000.00

Any prospective members, who really cannot afford these fees, will have the opportunity to have the fees waived for up to two years.

The application to have the fees waived will be reviewed, by the NASCEE Board, and the resultant decision will be communicated to the applicants within one month of receipt. Wherever possible, external funding will be sought to provide additional support.

While seeking financial sustainability, so that we can ensure we serve our members interests on an ongoing basis and in the most appropriate forums, we must also demonstrate the value that you will receive in becoming a part of NASCEE. We expand on the benefits of being a NASCEE member in the next section.

The registration process will open shortly and you can do this via our website [www.nascee.org.za](http://www.nascee.org.za).

We trust that we have done our best to make the fee structure affordable to all prospective members.

However, should you have any further suggestions/ recommendation, please send these through to [info@nascee.org.za](mailto:info@nascee.org.za), by latest 15 September 2019. We truly appreciate your feedback and look forward to publishing the final membership fee structure on our website after considering your feedback

## BENEFITS OF A NASCEE MEMBER

### “How will NASCEE change or contribute to a non-profit organisation working in the education sector?”

By joining NASCEE your organisation will benefit from:

#### 1. Increased visibility

NASCEE will help you boost your visibility by showcasing your organisation on the NASCEE website. NASCEE has already increased its ability to foster links between government, funders and non-profit organizations. This means having your details appear on our website will help boost your visibility to key stakeholders.

In addition, it will give you the ability to build your credibility – by association and participation in NASCEE

initiatives.

2. **Sponsored events**

In the next year, you will have access to at least two events – one will be regional/ provincial and the second is the Annual Conference. Members will be eligible to sponsored extras and a membership discounted rate.

3. **Members only communiqués and programmes**

Currently, our newsletters are being distributed widely as part of our advocacy so that we reach as many stakeholders as possible. This enables us to showcase progress in building NASCEE as the representative voice of the non-profit sector in education, increasing the support, visibility and contacts we can offer to you.

However, additional members only communiqués and programmes are in development. These will leverage success stories and best practice to connect you with other stakeholders in the education ecosystem. This will help you to increase your effectiveness and advance your projects.

4. **Exclusive mentorship support**

We are building our shared network steadily and carefully! We want to simplify your search for and facilitate contact to education leaders willing to provide support and mentor non-profit organisations. We will help you weather both general organisational development challenges and learn from other practitioners who understand the specifics of the South African context.

5. **Access to a supportive network of non-profits working in education**

NASCEE will connect you to other similar NPOs from our central database. We will use our database of 2500 non-profit organisations to connect you to others in your region, sharing a development interest or speciality. This will assist you in providing you with breakthrough perspectives, helping you find solutions to the challenges you are experiencing.

6. Access to a **Brokering Platform**

Enabling you to collaborate with other education and community development professionals in your local area, within a specific educational interest or to achieve a particular outcome.

7. **International links**

Prof Melanie Ehren, whom many of you had the pleasure of being introduced to during our inaugural NASCEE conference, has now been officially appointed as our NASCEE International Advisor until August 2021. Her role will be to update us on international trends in education and training. We know that non-profit organisations such as yourselves, make a valuable contribution to social change and we want that to be recognised globally. This will be a great opportunity to be part of an international community.

8. Finally, you gain the **credibility, support and professional influence** of being part of coordinated advocacy efforts. By coordinating the information, understanding and activities of our members in the education landscape, the non-profit sector in education can act more coherently. In turn, this will strengthen your voice as you unite with others to achieve a common goal. This will enable further engagement with government at all levels – national, provincial and local levels.

We have made a great start at creating the channels needed for coherent and effective advocacy. We look forward to your voice joining the many other non-profit organisations that want to see a better education for all in South Africa.

Keep checking [www.nascee.org.za](http://www.nascee.org.za) as the sign-up page will launch soon.

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## WHAT IS NEXT?

NASCEE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES JULY 2019 TO JUNE 2021

WATCH THIS SPACE!!!

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## WAITING TO HEAR FROM YOU

As always, we cannot wait to hear from you. Here are just some of the questions occupying us at the moment

1. How do we help the new members to be heard?
2. How do we make sure we don't revisit old topics - without new information, as new people join the conversation?
3. How do we help people who have been part of the conversation appreciate new perspectives and approaches?

You are also welcome to send us your ideas, questions, or topics that you would like us to explore.

Have your say, by emailing us on [info@nascee.org.za](mailto:info@nascee.org.za) .

Remember: Keep checking our website for updates – there is lots to come [www.nascee.org.za](http://www.nascee.org.za)

