PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA STRATEGIC PLAN (2019-2022)

1. BACKGROUND

Since its inception in 1994, the Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA) has always worked towards a set of strategic objectives aligned to its vision, mission and core values. The Society has also been guided by numerous strategic plans, the first being a 3-year plan in 2001. The Strategic Plan (2009-2013) was reviewed in 2011 and the Society's core vision, mission and values were further refined. Despite the activities, performance indicators and time frames outlined, this strategic plan was never operationalised. At an internal workshop for PsySSA leadership in 2013, the PsySSA Strategic Plan (2014-2018) was conceptualised. It, in essence, was a reiteration of the previous strategic- and operational plans, but incorporating a more realistic assessment of what was feasible, together with the priorities for the Society. The operationalisation of that plan commenced in earnest in 2014 with an emphasis on 'working towards a discipline and Society that is much more relevant and responsive to the concerns and priorities of South Africa, Africa and the world'.

The strategic plan of 2014-2018 comprised of six key strategic drivers, namely: Membership; Growth and Sustainability; Effectiveness and Efficiency; Good Governance; Stakeholder Engagement and Relationship Management; and Global Footprint. In addition, and to better inform operationalisation, strategic objectives were identified for each key strategic driver. Related activities (programmes and projects) were vast and it soon became necessary to articulate annual priorities to enable a phased approach to the plan's implementation. It was deemed important to report against the operationalisation plan at meetings of the Executive and Council, and a tracking tool was developed to support this. Progress was also reported on at Annual General Meetings (AGMs) of the Society, with inclusion of a related section in all Annual Reports from 2014 onwards.

A review of the PsySSA Strategic Plan (2014-2018), due in 2017, aimed at informing the strategic plan that was to follow. For several reasons, the timeframe for this review was not met. Accordingly, in July 2018 and at the request of the PsySSA President, a one and half day brainstorming workshop was held in Johannesburg with PsySSA leaders. As the then strategic plan was to conclude in September 2018, it was envisaged that a strategic planning process take place. However, in the lead up to the meeting, the Presidency identified some short-term matters that, unless dealt with timeously, could hinder a future strategic planning process and thus needed to take precedence. See Appendix 1 for an overview of the immediate/short-term matters identified.

Consequently, the meeting was structured as a leadership-brainstorming workshop, conceived of as an inward-looking intervention, the purpose of which was:

- To deal with immediate, pressing matters to pave the way for the development of a new strategy.
- To consolidate internal priorities, so as to ground the emergence of the new strategy.
- To begin identifying mid-term strategic priorities to bridge from the current to the future strategic plan.
- To reach agreement on the next steps for the planning of a new strategy for the short- or medium-term.

At the leadership-brainstorming meeting, the following bridging/interim strategic priorities were identified, to lead-up to a fully-fledged and new strategic plan as follows:

- 1. Revision of Role, Identity and Unity of Purpose
- 2. Develop African-Centered Identity and Leadership
- 3. Transformation/Decolonisation/Redress
- 4. Public Psychology
- 5. Membership Engaged, Engaging Members
- 6. Strategic Relationships and Alliances

Endorsed by Council, it was agreed that these bridging/interim priorities would lay the foundation for the strategic planning process to then follow. It was also decided that the Strategic Plan (2014-2018) would continue, with the mid-term priorities bridging the period until a new strategic plan was in place. On 25-27 January 2019 a strategic planning processes was undertaken, constituted as a Council meeting. Participants included Council members, key staff, some Past Presidents (those not currently on Council), and a number of emerging Society leaders (see Appendix 2 for the list of participants). The plan outlined in this document is the outcome of that meeting and inclusive of refinements based on Council's subsequent feedback. It is PsySSA's draft strategic plan for the period 2019-2022 and will be subject to further consultation and revision before finalisation (see section 7 for next steps).

2. PURPOSE AND IDENTITY

In line with its founding Constitution, the Society continues to recognise the historical silences in Psychology and recommits itself to transformation and redress both in the Society and beyond. This includes building an organisation that unapologetically confronts racism, both internally and externally, in a manner that reflects a fidelity to the foundational elements of its Constitution - namely the pursuit of a Psychology that is political in nature, and a Society that reflects values of anti-racism, non-discrimination and gender equality, among others.

2.1 Vision

PsySSA aspires to advance South African Psychology as a science and profession of global stature and to promote psychological praxis as relevant, proactive and responsive to social needs and well-being. This includes transforming and redressing South African Psychology to serve the needs and interests of all South Africa's people.

2.2 Mission

The mission of PsySSA is to actively represent and promote the collective interests of members and to develop Psychology nationally and internationally as a means of enhancing well-being.

2.3 Purpose

As a professional association, the Society's core purpose is to:

- Promote the common interests of the members of the Society as practitioners of, or who are involved in, the field of Psychology.
- Be responsive to strategic, democratically identified needs and priorities, thus serving as a primary resource for all psychology professionals.
- Grow the visibility and influence of Psychology and PsySSA in contributing to human rights, health and well-being.
- Champion the recognition, relevance and application of Psychology to a wider audience.
- Be a continental leader and global partner in promoting and advancing the discipline to address individual, societal and global challenges.

The Society advocates for Psychology as a vital science and an essential and relevant field of practice. PsySSA negotiates with relevant bodies to inform tariff increases, as well as to advocate for and represent the common interests of psychology professionals. The Society also liaises with local, national,

regional and international structures to facilitate professional development and the exchange of ideas that underpin the discipline. PsySSA is nationally accredited to provide training and continuing professional development (CPD) according to the changing needs of psychology professionals, and as mandated by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA). PsySSA is also a recognised accreditor of Psychology-related CPD training.

2.4 Core values

PsySSA commits to its vision through a mission that is grounded in the following core values:

- *Excellence:* To maintain and encourage the highest standards of professional and scientific competence to ensure national and international best practice.
- Integrity and ethics: To act with integrity, communicate respectfully, accept responsibility for our words and actions, and requiring ethical, professional behaviour by all persons associated with PsySSA.
- *People-centredness:* To care about the interests and needs of our members, strive to empower and build the capacity of our members to realise their full potential, and support lifelong learning.
- Human rights and social justice orientation: To advance human rights and social justice, informed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and aligned to the South African Constitution; and to reconcile historically opposed groups. To ensure that members, Council, the Executive and staff are treated with dignity, equity and fairness.
- Social relevance and responsiveness: To encourage a multiplicity of opinions and seek ways to incorporate the voices and experiences of all communities and avenues of Psychology in service of the public good.
- Democratic, transparent and accountable governance: To conduct activities in a democratic, accountable and transparent manner; and to strive for efficiency and effectiveness in the management of PsySSA.
- Non partisan and civil society based: To ensure that the Society remains an organ of civil society without any overt or covert loyalty to any political party.

2.5 Institutional identity

• Recognising that Psychology is both a science and a profession, PsySSA straddles both these dimensions. PsySSA is cognisant of the dynamic interrelationship between the profession and the science of Psychology in that the profession is science-informed and the science is practice-informed. Consequently, PsySSA's central functions relate to the needs, interests and realities of both a learned society and that of a professional

association relevant to the South African context.

- The Society, therefore, is a scientific professional association, rather than a classic learned society or a union, and seeks to draw together a diverse field of science and practice.
- With the public good at its centre, PsySSA promotes and advances the profession and its members around a set of common objectives.
- As both a scientific and practitioner-focused entity, the Society is a hybrid that works with and across the academic discipline and the profession, and is responsive to the multiple players in a diverse field and grounded by its strategic purpose and direction.

3. STRATEGIC DRIVERS

The plan is structured around five strategic drivers that direct the Society's key functions and activities. These are detailed in the grid below.

3.1 AFRICAN-CENTERED IDENTITY, LEADERSHIP & TRANSFORMATION		
Aims	Objectives	Modalities
 Rooting PsySSA in Africa and concerned with African theory and research in a global context where such knowledge is frequently subordinated and/or appropriated. Growing African-centered leadership in Psychology in response to Africa being dominantly positioned as site of application rather than for production of theory and practice. Developing an organisational structure for Psychology that reconciles historically 	 To claim and restore an African-identified Psychology by nurturing and advancing the production of psychological theory and practice that is from and for Africa, and for the world. To grow African-centered leadership in Psychology. To bring a psychological lens to bear on public debates on transformation and decolonisation (and their link to the discipline). To transform the field of Psychology by 	 Advocate for an African-centered Psychology (both in science and in the profession), and define and support this through: Policy engagement. Public education, discourse and debates. Showcasing research, science, and teaching and learning on African-centered approaches. Creating spaces for engagement on transformation.

opposed groups, gives voice to excluded users of psychological knowledge and skills, and ensures transparent and accountable governance of the Society to serve its membership.

- Addressing the global unevenness of psychological theory and application by ensuring that an African-centered Psychology is relatable to a population, to its members, and to a professional practice.
- Attending to the historical silences in South African psychology that are a product of race and racism, and of continued patterns and systems of exclusion.
- Generating a psychological science and practice that is relevant to the South African context, compelled by social justice, and in the service of the majority of South Africans.

** 'African' is broadly defined, is not determined solely by a race or geographical location, and embodies an ontological and epistemological location. taking positions against legacies of racism and racialisation (and other injustices) both within and outside of the Society to the benefit of (South) Africa and beyond.

- Speak out about, and act against, discrimination and exclusion in the science and the profession on the basis of race and other grounds.
- Enhance academic scholarship and its influence on psychological thought and practice, and inform curriculum and policy development.
- Build diversity competence.
- Grow the cohort of black African
 Psychology leaders in PsySSA and in the field more broadly.
- Develop definitional terms, from within a Psychology paradigm, to give meaning to notions of 'African-centered' and 'decolonisation' and 'transformation'.
- Liaise with training institutions to develop non-racist research methodologies and a progressive research agenda for postapartheid South Africa.
- Address racially skewed patterns within the Society and its structures.

South African psychology to serve the needs and interests of all South Africa's people.racism, along with other forms of oppression, in Psychology as a whole.racism the public oppression, in Psychology as a whole.Ensuring the psychosocial relevance of the science and the profession to contribute to social well-being and to be a public service to public needs.To build the profile, influence and identity of Psychology and PsySSA in the public domain.Public mediuGiving meaning to the moral and ethical imperative of Psychology to act in the interests of social justice.To be a central authority and repository on psychosocial and mental health matters in the public domain.Platfor commi organi.Psychology proactively engaging with issues of public interest and in the public good.To identify and respond to critical social issues that impact the psychological health and well-being of communities.A scho curricu orientedPromoting an ethical and critical orientation to social issues, informed by psychological knowledge and science.To translate impactful research into policies and practices, and to bridge the gap between the science and theMedia	
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resources. being.	olarship of engagement and culum development for communit ted citizen Psychology that is socia ant. a advocacy and awareness raising s of psychological health and well-

Aims	Objectives	Modalities
 Viewing membership as central to the 	 To retain current membership and 	 Provide membership benefits and

Society's growth, influence and impact.

- Encouraging active membership and catering for the common interests of practitioners and of the academy.
- Representing common positions whilst holding the diversities that exist in Psychology.
- Contributing to an enabling environment for psychology professionals and Psychology.
- Being responsive to, and in service of, the common interests of members in a manner that is aligned to the Society's strategic focus.
- Offering entry points for members to become active in the work of the Society in support of their professional needs and interests.

increase their active participation in structures and activities.

- To recruit new members, particularly those who have been historically marginalised from the Society.
- To act as a support and resource for members and their structures.
- To monitor and engage with the legislative/regulatory environment and other policy/societal developments impacting Psychology and psychology professionals.
- To promote the recognition and relevance of psychological science and practice and related contributions.
- To engage with professional bodies and other groups, to protect and advance members' common interests.

services (including free CPD activities, free ethical advice, corporate partnerships, incentives, etc.).

- Ongoing and purposive communication with, and feedback from, members.
- Mentorship, leadership training and the strengthening of structures.
- Build Branch and divisional leadership mandated to act in alignment with the Society's strategic priorities.
- Internal data gathering on membership (profile, needs, priorities, trends etc.).
- Address the discrepancy between the number of black Africans who attend Congress and those who are PsySSA members.

3.4 STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

Aims		Objectives	Modalities
•	Building support for collective action in	To enhance the profile and relevance of	 Stakeholder engagement with key
	the interest of the profession and those it	Psychology (both as a science and a	structures and organisations.
	serves.	practice).	 Strategic alliances with relevant
•	Defending rights violations that affect	To influence education and training	government and parastatal structures and
	psychological health and well-being and	standards in and about Psychology.	entities.

 the profession. Extending the reach and influence of Psychology in society. Leveraging the support of other stakeholders to advance the strategic objectives. 	 To support an enabling environment for psychological theory and praxis. To promote knowledge production and the development of psychological science. To develop the value proposition for key stakeholders and structures to want to partner with PsySSA. 	 Strategic alliances with non- governmental- and community-based organisations, especially those with a focus on psychological health and well- being.
3.5 NATIONAL, CONTINENTAL AND GLOBAL FO	OOTPRINT	
Aims	Objectives	Modalities
 Advancing the footprint of PsySSA and of Psychology at national, continental and global levels. Growing the role, voice and influence of African-centered Psychology and South African psychology professionals. Shaping the science and the profession at a national, continental and global level. 	 To position PsySSA as a leading scientific professional association, nationally, continentally and globally. To generate a greater continental presence and consolidate PsySSA's growth in this arena. To expand national, continental and global partnerships that promote and support Psychology and psychology professionals in (South) Africa. 	 Existing and initiating further joint programmes and agreements (e.g. MOUs, internship and externship programmes). Lead and facilitate the Pan-African Psychology Union (PAPU). Funded projects at Branch and divisional level that are supported by continental and global stakeholders. Strategic alliances with international associations.

4. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE AND RESPONSIVENESS

To keep the pulse on PsySSA's relevance and responsiveness, specific mechanisms and areas of activity are prioritised. These cut across the five strategic drivers and are:

- 1. **Rapid response mechanism:** To establish a rapid response structure to drive PsySSA's engagements on unanticipated socio-political developments relevant to the Society's strategic objectives. The Past Presidents' Forum is to play a central role here.
- 2. **Special projects:** To set up special projects focused on pressing social issues, operationalised through mandated task teams consisting of Standing Committee-, Branch- and divisional executive committee members.
- 3. Archiving best practice: To formally archive PsySSA's rich history and practice, which can also inform the Society's longer-term strategies.
- 4. **Modelling the hybrid:** To grow the model of practice in respect of how the Society works with, and bridges, both the profession (practice) and the academic discipline (science) and how this is conceptualised and tactically operationalised.
- 5. **Evidence base:** To strengthen evidence-based planning through the collection of rigorous data on PsySSA's internal context (e.g. membership profile, needs/interests) to inform future strategic discussions.
- 6. **Branches and Divisions:** At present Divisions are largely premised on disciplinary categories (e.g. clinical, educational). Consideration is to be given to reconstituting Divisions based on interests and areas of application (e.g. private practice). Branches, in particular, have a role to play in building cohesion as they are designed to bring members together across Divisions/scopes of practice.

5. LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

PsySSA is governed by a democratically elected Council that is supported by an Executive Director and an administrative Head Office. Council is comprised of an Executive Committee – consisting of the Presidency, and Chairs of Divisions, Branches and Standing Committees. The PsySSA Past Presidents' Forum is an advisory structure to support the PsySSA Executive and Presidency as required. As a voluntary association, PsySSA is reliant on the involvement of its membership to drive Society activities. Accountability mechanisms, lines of authority, and related protocols, set the terms of engagement for that involvement. The following areas of action will strengthen PsySSA leadership systems, processes and structures towards enhanced participation of the membership in the life of the Society:

Clear protocols will support the decentralisation of activities and enable structures to 'own' the work at different levels, and to drive that work in accordance with such protocols. While PsySSA's strategic objectives will be led by the Executive Committee, their delivery will take a project management approach. To this end, project teams will be constituted based on people's strengths and interests, each playing a defined role, and inclusive of relevant Standing Committee and divisional executive members. The workflow between Divisions and project-, or task teams, will be clearly defined and communicated.

Process of internal accountability will be enhanced through the formal orientation of all Society leaders to PsySSA's vision, mission, common purpose and strategic goals. Formal report backs to Council on the strengths and difficulties of Divisions and Branches will also facilitate accountability. A formal induction for new Council members will assist them in understanding the larger dynamics at play in the Society which are distinct from Branch and divisional interest. There will be a more rigorous approach to communicating strategic priorities to all structures.

Role definition and clarification for all leadership levels and structures will be prioritised. Chairs and representatives are to be aligned to the strategic drivers and oriented to internal protocols. The standing and status of leadership roles will be raised. Role definitions, including oversight and reporting lines across all structures, will be clearly defined and communicated. A rigorous induction programme for new leaders on the Executive Committee and in Council will be put in place. Regular meetings of the Presidency will be reinstated. The shared role, identity and purpose of the Society will be actively nurtured amongst the leadership.

Succession planning will be prioritised in the Head Office and Presidency. Consideration will be given to extending the terms of office bearers together with clear exit strategies. This will include the formal induction of new Council members and the management of leadership transitions.

Mentoring and institutional memory building will include highlighting best operational practices across all structures. Formal mentoring processes will be set up, and senior students (from the Student Division) will sit on Standing Committees, Branch- and divisional executive committees and be mentored.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

Communications with both internal and external constituencies and stakeholders is central to PsySSA's strategy. The following will enhance the communication efforts of the Society:

- Offer recognitions of service to the Society.
- Package messages for target groups (i.e. adapt modes of communication that are fit for purpose and audience).
- Strengthen the interface between PsySSA leadership and membership through targeted communications.
- Set up online feedback mechanisms for Branches, Divisions, other structures and members to capture priority issues and concerns, and to streamline and improve internal communication and responsiveness (by then directing issues through the right channels).
- Share models of information exchange (as forms of good practice) across Divisions and Branches.
- Office staff to drive divisional and Branch communication beyond being an administrative function.
- Promote cross-divisional and Branch communications to share expertise.
- Produce strategic- and work plans for each Division and Branch aligned with that of the Society.
- Executive members to actively support Divisions and Branches and intervene where required.
- Reactivate regular Standing Committee meetings.
- Reinstate regular Presidential meetings.
- Consult the Past Presidents' Forum regularly for support.
- Ensure dedicated representation on key government structures, supported by mandates in respect of what that representation requires.

- Place PsySSA representatives on medical aid boards and other key external platforms, such as the National Health Insurance task force.
- Elevate the visibility of interns and community service psychologists.
- Formalise the forum that brings together Chairs of Departments of Psychology at the various universities to support curriculum development and promote the value and relevance of membership.
- Increase PsySSA's involvement in CPD and ethics training nationally.
- Establish an annual meeting calendar for all structures.
- Maximise the use of social media as a key form of external communication and to appeal to a younger generation of psychology professionals and students.
- Increase engagement with the media through more regular press releases on key social issues.

APPENDIX 1: SHORT-TERM ISSUES IDENTIFIED AT THE LEADERSHIP BRAINSTORMING SESSION (JULY 2018)

Pressing internal issues affecting the Society included:

- Leadership challenges and the need for role clarification and the growth of a new generation of Society leaders fit for the future trajectory.
- To function beyond crisis mode and operate in a less reactive and more directed manner, and to ameliorate an over-dependency on a small number of leaders.
- To shift away from the avoidance of confrontation amongst the leadership on some of the pressing challenges, and the need for frankness and critique to ensure more responsiveness to the context and to change.
- To proactively deal with internal transformation issues, and resistances to these, from within the profession.
- The need for role definition in respect of the precise areas of work of the Presidency and the Executive, including time commitments and the principles that underpin such roles and functions.
- To develop procedural terms of engagement that enable the prioritisation of issues, that channel communications, and that assist the Society with not getting side-tracked from that with which it should be centrally concerned.

Overarching challenges facing the Society were identified as:

- Unity of purpose defining the role of the Society into the future and what this means for staffing and structures.
- Cultivating leadership and an organisational culture that fits the context addressing the implications of this for structures, operations, staffing and modes of engagement.
- Active commitment to principles of transformation/decolonisation and redress, grounded in PsySSA's founding principles.
- Building the pipeline of new leaders and putting in place appropriate structures, new leadership, and institutional transformation.
- Growing an ethic of giving directing members towards public service.
- Relationship building enhancing the Society's strategic and transformative alliances.
- Relieving pressure points the urgent and all-consuming Society for Educational Psychology of South Africa (SEPSA) matter, and other crisis points, require specific handling in order to move forward less reactively.
- Addressing the developmental lag (i.e. not timeously dealing with emerging challenges and growing in accordance with those).

APPENDIX 2: PARTICIPANTS AT THE STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP (JANUARY 2019)

Participants

Dr Helen Dunbar-Krige, President Prof Garth Stevens, President-Elect Prof Tholene Sodi, Past-President Dr Ewald Crause, Treasurer Prof Mercy Tshilidzi Mashamba, Additional Member Dr Boitumelo Diale, Additional Member Dr Diana Soares de Sousa, Additional Member and Chair of the Division for Registered Counsellors and Psychometrics Ms Anne Kramers-Olen, Additional Member Mr Umesh Bawa, Additional Member Dr Elizabetha Matthews, Chair of the Division for Educational Psychology of South Africa Mr Daniel den Hollander, Chair of the Psychology in Public Service Division Mr Hennie Nel, Chair of the Student Division Ms Vicky Malefo, Chair of the Association for Counselling Psychology Mr Kempie van Rooyen, Chair of Trauma and Violence Division Prof Saths Cooper, Chair of the Ethics Standing Committee Prof Kobus Maree, Chair of the Publications Standing Committee Mr Suntosh Pillay, Chair of the Equity and Transformation Standing Committee Prof Kopano Ratele, Chair of the Nominations Standing Committee Prof Juan Nel, Chair of the Continuing Education Standing Committee and PsySSA Past President Prof Debra Kaminer, Chair of the Science of Psychology Standing Committee Dr Ian Opperman, Chair of the Tariffs Standing Committee Prof Anthony Pillay, Editor of the South Africa Journal of Psychology Ms Fatima Seedat, PsySSA Executive Director Mr Tshepiso Teffo, PsySSA Office Manager Dr Kgamadi Kometsi, Senior Lecturer, Department of Psychology, University of Johannesburg Dr Yogan Pillay, Deputy Director-General for Communicable and Non-communicable Disease, Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation in the National

Department of Health

Apologies

Prof Ronelle Carolissen, Chair of the Community and Social Division Ms Lynne Hendricks, Chair of the Division for Research and Methodology Dr Peace Kiguwa, Chair of the Sexuality and Gender Division Dr Karl Swain, Chair of the South African Society for Clinical Psychology Prof Rashid Ahmed, Chair of the Western Cape Branch Dr Nishola Rawatlal, Chair of the Gauteng Branch Prof Sumaya Laher, Chair of the Psychological Testing and Assessment Standing Committee Prof David Maree, Chair of the Awards Standing Committee and PsySSA Past President Prof Norman Duncan, PsySSA Past President Dr Louise Olivier, Chair of the Private Practice Standing Committee and PsySSA Past-President Dr Ann D Watts, Chair of the International Relations and PsySSA Past-President

Facilitator

Prof Melanie Judge, Executive Member of the Sexuality and Gender Division