



**SOUTH AFRICAN RESEARCH ASSOCIATION
FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**



OUR CONSTITUTION



Promoting a Share Vision for ECE Research, Training and Development

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1. OUR ASSOCIATION

1.1 Name

Our association's name is the **South African Research Association for Early Childhood Education**, referred to as SARAECE or the Association.

1.2 Mission

SARAECE is a dynamic research association committed to advancing Early Childhood Education (ECE) in South Africa for children from birth to nine years. Our mission is to promote excellence in ECE through research, research capacity development, teacher education, and the overall development of the ECE sector.

SARAECE recognises the unique contextual realities of ECE in South Africa and adopts a trans-disciplinary and multi-sectoral approach to address research, policy, and practice needs.

We aim to advance the field of early childhood research by embracing innovative ideas while preserving and promoting the rich tradition of African early childhood thought.

1.3 Principal Aims

The principal aims of SARAECE are to:

- 1.3.1 Provide a platform in South Africa for the development, production and dissemination of research in ECE.
- 1.3.2 Facilitate cooperation and collaboration among researchers and relevant stakeholders in South Africa working with, for, and on behalf of young children.
- 1.3.3 Promote collaboration between research, practice, and policy to prioritise evidence-informed practices and practice-informed evidence in shaping decisions within ECE in South Africa.
- 1.3.4 Offer support, interaction, and mentorship for individuals engaged in ECE.

- 1.3.5 Contribute to the professionalisation of the ECE workforce in South Africa, offering training, resources, and networking opportunities to enhance the quality of early childhood services.
- 1.3.6 Advocate for policies and practices that support the holistic development and well-being of young children in South Africa, addressing their educational, health, and socio-emotional needs.
- 1.3.7 Raise the visibility and status of African research.

1.4 Achieving the Aims

The aims of SARAECE will be achieved through the following activities:

- 1.4.1 Hosting conferences, seminars, webinars, workshops, and training sessions to foster knowledge exchange and capacity building.
- 1.4.2 Maintaining partnerships with the South African Journal of Childhood Education (SAJCE) as a primary avenue, while remaining open to other channels, for disseminating research findings.
- 1.4.3 Utilising diverse communication channels to disseminate information and insights effectively, ensuring a broad global reach.
- 1.4.4 Curating a comprehensive database of relevant ECE research outputs, policies, and resource materials.
- 1.4.5 Engaging in key strategic activities to drive the development of research, policy, and practice in ECE.
- 1.4.6 Fostering networks of researchers and stakeholders at regional, national, and international levels to promote improved communication, cooperation, and collaboration.
- 1.4.7 Establishing partnerships with national and international research associations in ECE.
- 1.4.8 Enhancing research and publication skills through mentorship initiatives.
- 1.4.9 Leading and advocating for projects that align with the association's mission through various media platforms.



2. OUR MEMBERS

2.1 Becoming a Member

Membership is open to any institution or individual interested in promoting ECE through research and aligning with the Association's objectives. Information on membership procedures, application forms, categories, and fees is readily available on the SARAECE website.

www.saraece.org.sa

2.2 Membership Category

Membership categories encompass the following:

- 2.2.1 Individuals interested in ECE research.
- 2.2.2 Educational institutions dedicated to ECE (e.g., Higher Education Institutions, Government Organisations, Non-Profit or Non-Governmental Organisations).
- 2.2.3 Educators actively involved in ECE.
- 2.2.4 Students pursuing under- or post-graduate studies in ECE.

2.3 Membership Fees

The Executive Committee (EXCO) is responsible for proposing membership fees, a process involving:

- 2.3.1 Approval by a majority vote at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- 2.3.2 Varying fees depending on the membership of category.
- 2.3.3 Potential annual increase.

2.4 Membership Benefits

Benefits of membership for all in good standing include:

- 2.4.1 Participation in SARAECE Annual General Meetings (AGM) with voting rights.
- 2.4.2 Access to the Association's website and complimentary receipt of all SARAECE communications and publications.
- 2.4.3 Opportunities for skill enhancement and professional development through active engagement in SARAECE activities and events.
- 2.4.4 Sharing of and access to a network of institutional information.

2.5 Membership Termination

Membership shall be terminated for non-payment of fees. Exceptional circumstances may warrant refusal or revocation of membership, subject to a majority decision by the Executive Committee (EXCO).

3. OUR FRAMEWORK

3.1 Governance and Organisational Structure

Organisational structure and governance within SARAECE are facilitated by various bodies and committees, each with defined roles and responsibilities. These include Office Bearers (OB), the Executive Committee (EXCO), the Committee (C), and various types of Ad-Hoc Committees.

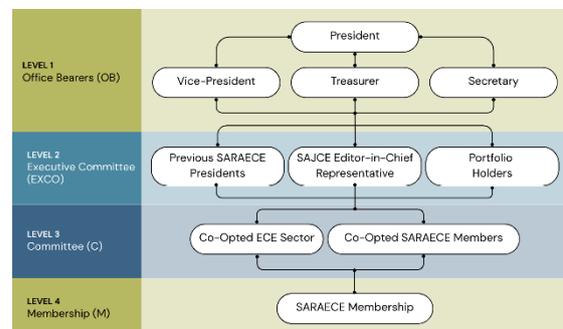


Figure 1: SARAECE Organogram

3.2 Definitions

- 3.2.1 Annual General Meeting (AGM): The main gathering (event) of SARAECE



The amended constitution was approved and accepted as a binding document by the members of the South African Research Association for Early Childhood Education (SARAECE). This approval followed a review by the Executive Committee (EXCO) on August 20, 2024, and was formally ratified during a general meeting held online by the Office Bearers on [insert date], 2024.

- members to discuss and decide on important matters, such as constitution amendments, officer elections, and financial reports.
- 3.2.2 Office Bearers (OB): Individuals holding key positions of authority and responsibility within SARAEECE, typically including roles such as President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- 3.2.3 Executive Committee (EXCO): A governing body responsible for making high-level decisions and overseeing the overall management and direction of SARAEECE's activities. The EXCO can also include those with a historical understanding of the organisation's mission, previous initiatives, and long-term goals.
- 3.2.4 The Committee (C): A committee with broad authority and ongoing responsibilities within SARAEECE.
- 3.2.5 President (P): Oversees the observance of the constitution, chairs the AGM and EXCO meetings, signs meeting minutes, ensures execution of SARAEECE's aims, and represents SARAEECE publicly.
- 3.2.6 Vice-President (VP): Supports the President and assumes the President's duties when necessary, as delegated by the EXCO.
- 3.2.7 Treasurer (T): Supervises SARAEECE's financial affairs, prepares financial reports, and fulfils other financial duties as required by the AGM or EXCO.
- 3.2.8 Secretary (S): In collaboration with administrative support, oversees SARAEECE's correspondence, prepares meeting notices and agendas, maintains the asset inventory, records meeting minutes, and performs other duties assigned by the EXCO.
- 3.2.9 Head of Portfolio (HP): An individual appointed to oversee a specialised area of responsibility within SARAEECE. This role ensures focused attention and effective management of specific functions, aligning with the organisation's goals and objectives.
- 3.2.10 Partnership (Partn): This refers to a collaborative relationship between two or more entities (organisations, individuals, etc.) to achieve mutual goals or objectives. Partnerships involve shared responsibilities, resources, and efforts towards a common purpose.

- 3.2.11 Patrons (Patr): Patrons are individuals or entities who support or sponsor an organisation, often financially or through other means. They may contribute to SARAEECE's activities or initiatives but typically do not engage in a formal partnership where responsibilities and resources are shared.

3.3 Governance and Leadership Structure

In managing organisational leadership and structure:

- 3.3.1 The Committee is elected by its membership, while OB are determined by SARAEECE's Committee, with other positions and portfolios decided by the EXCO.
- 3.3.2 Notice of the nomination process is provided by the current EXCO. Members are encouraged to submit written or electronic nominations before the election date.
- 3.3.3 EXCO members are elected during a subsequent EXCO meeting and confirmed by eligible, paid-up members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- 3.3.4 Committee members serve a three-year term and may seek re-election for consecutive terms.
- 3.3.5 In the event that a committee member resigns from their position, a written notification must be submitted to the OB. The Committee will then appoint a replacement to serve for the remainder of the term (up to the conclusion of the three-year period).
- 3.3.6 A Committee member may be removed from their position at any time upon a majority decision by the Committee, upon demonstrating good cause.

3.4 Composition of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Decision-Making Process

In the governance structure of SARAEECE:

- 3.4.1 The AGM serves as the highest decision-making body of SARAEECE. It receives annual reports of the Association, providing an overview of SARAEECE's activities and achievements, including discussions on financial statements and budget as necessary.



- 3.4.2 The AGM has the authority to propose and approve amendments to the Constitution and conducts elections for Committee members as outlined herein.
- 3.4.3 The AGM convenes at least once within a 12-month period, with the timing and venue determined by the EXCO. Provisions are made for extraordinary AGMs to address urgent matters that may arise between scheduled meetings, ensuring the agility and responsiveness of SARAECE's governance structure.
- 3.4.4 Meetings may occur during SARAECE conferences or online if no conference is scheduled. Adequate notice of the AGM, including the date, time, and venue (or online platform), shall be provided well in advance to all SARAECE members to ensure member participation.
- 3.4.5 Members unable to attend the AGM in person may nominate another member in good standing as their proxy, empowering them to represent their interests and cast votes on their behalf.
- 3.4.6 The AGM can be conducted either face-to-face or online, providing flexibility for member participation. Provisions are included to ensure the security and confidentiality of online meetings, safeguarding member information and upholding the integrity of SARAECE's governance processes.

3.5 Composition of the EXCO and Decision-Making Process

The Executive Committee (EXCO) of SARAECE plays a vital role in guiding the organisation's governance and decision-making processes.

- 3.5.1 The EXCO is composed of Office Bearers (OB), including the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer, along with a representative from the South African Journal for Childhood Education (SAJCE) and additional local and international members as required. This diverse composition ensures oversight of essential functions crucial to SARAECE's governance and operations.
- 3.5.2 The composition of the EXCO is determined by the Office Bearers, led by the incumbent President. Upon completing their three-year term, the

outgoing President continues to serve an additional term on the EXCO, ensuring continuity and leadership stability.

- 3.5.3 Office Bearers are appointed to guide governance and decision-making processes. These include the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer, each contributing specialised expertise to support SARAECE's strategic objectives.
- 3.5.4 Decision-making within the EXCO follows a consensus-based approach, fostering collective input and agreement on matters impacting SARAECE's governance and operations. The President facilitates discussions, ensuring all committee members have an opportunity to contribute effectively.
- 3.5.5 The EXCO convenes meetings as needed, with meeting logistics and agendas finalised by the President and circulated in advance to promote efficient decision-making. In urgent situations, emergency or special meetings may be convened upon agreement of two-thirds of EXCO members.
- 3.5.6 Detailed minutes of EXCO meetings are recorded, circulated for member review, and presented at the subsequent Annual General Meeting (AGM) to uphold transparency and accountability in SARAECE's governance practices.

3.6 Composition of Committees and Decision-Making Process

The term committees here suggests a group of individuals who come together to deliberate, advise, or manage aspects related to SARAECE's governance and specialised portfolios. It conveys a sense of collective decision-making and advisory roles within the organisation.

The Committee (C):

- 3.6.1 Consists of elected and suggested members.
- 3.6.2 Includes representatives from various sectors within ECE.
- 3.6.3 Membership tenure typically spans a specified term, ensuring continuity and diverse perspectives.

The Head of Portfolio (HP):



- 3.6.4 Comprise individuals with expertise in specific areas relevant to SARAECE's activities.
- 3.6.5 Membership may vary based on project requirements and organisational needs.
- 3.6.6 Selected through a nomination process or invitation by the EXCO.
- 3.6.7 May include both internal and external stakeholders, fostering collaboration and diversity of thought.
- 3.6.8 Terms of service align with the duration of the committee's mandate or the project's timeline.
- 3.6.9 Responsibilities may range from providing subject matter expertise to executing specific tasks outlined by the President or the EXCO.

4. OUR COLLABORATORS

4.1 Partnership

Partnerships at SARAECE refer to collaborative relationships between various entities, including individuals, teams, or institutions, to achieve mutual goals or objectives. These partnerships involve shared responsibilities, resources, and efforts directed towards a common purpose. Each partnership is formalised through a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA), which details roles, responsibilities, objectives, intellectual property rights, confidentiality, data sharing, communication protocols, dispute resolution, duration, termination conditions, and signatures from authorised representatives. Partnerships must be proposed by the Committee and endorsed by the AGM to ensure alignment with SARAECE's strategic objectives.

4.2 Roles of Partners

- 4.2.1 Partnerships comprise organisations or individuals with expertise relevant to SARAECE's strategic initiatives in ECE.
- 4.2.2 Affiliations are flexible and tailored to specific project needs and strategic objectives.
- 4.2.3 Partners are identified through a vetting process that may include nominations or invitations by the Committee, ensuring alignment with SARAECE's mission.
- 4.2.4 Partnerships may involve a diverse mix of internal and external stakeholders, promoting collaborative efforts and diverse perspectives.
- 4.2.5 Partnership agreements are structured to align with project timelines or strategic goals set by SARAECE, ensuring clarity and mutual commitment.

- 4.2.6 Responsibilities of partners encompass contributing specialised knowledge and resources, and implementing initiatives outlined by SARAECE leadership to support effective project execution.

4.3 Patronship

Patronship at SARAECE involves appointing one or more distinguished individuals with expertise in Early Childhood Education (ECE) and a commitment to SARAECE's mission. Patrons play a vital role in advancing SARAECE's objectives and fostering its growth and influence. The nomination of patrons is proposed by the Executive Committee (EXCO) and endorsed by the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of members. A formal proposal outlining the roles and responsibilities of a patron is presented, followed by a formal letter of agreement to specify expectations, roles, terms of service, and termination procedures.

4.4 Roles of Patrons

- 4.4.1 Patrons contribute to enhancing the credibility and reputation of SARAECE within the broader community by lending their esteemed reputation and endorsing the Association's work.
- 4.4.2 Patrons actively advocate for SARAECE's mission, objectives, and accomplishments, both within the ECE community and to external stakeholders, thereby raising awareness and promoting its public profile.
- 4.4.3 Drawing on their extensive expertise in early childhood education and research, patrons offer valuable guidance, insights, and advice to



- SARAECE on matters pertaining to its strategic direction, programs, and initiatives.
- 4.4.4 As with liaisons between SARAECE and other organisations, agencies, and the public, patrons facilitate collaboration, networking, and partnership opportunities, fostering

- synergies and cooperation to advance common goals in the field of ECE.
- 4.4.5 Patrons assist SARAECE in identifying funding opportunities and preparing funding applications to support its initiatives, thereby contributing to the sustainability and growth of the SARAECE

5. OUR MEETING GOVERNANCE

5.1 Frequency of Committee Meetings

Committee meetings shall occur quarterly, with additional ad-hoc meetings scheduled before SARAECE events. Emergency or special meetings may be convened by mutual agreement.

5.2 Notice of Meetings

The President, with support from the Secretary and EXCO shall confirm meeting dates and compile agendas. Agendas must be distributed to all committee members at least two weeks before the meeting. Members wishing to include items in the agenda should submit them to the President and/or Secretary at least one week before the meeting. Meetings shall begin with the formal approval of previous meeting minutes and conclude with an opportunity for members to raise other business items. Meeting minutes shall be circulated for final comments no later than two weeks before the subsequent meeting.

5.3 Quorum

Quorums for Committee meetings require the presence of at least 20% of serving committee members. AGMs require at least 20% of all current members in good standing, either in person or represented by proxy. In cases where a member cannot attend, they may vote via proxy. Decisions made in the absence of a quorum will be circulated electronically, with a specified deadline for responses. In cases of non-response, a positive acknowledgment will be assumed by default. Please be aware that this clause is included in the disclaimer of the corresponding email.

5.4 Decision-Making Process

Minutes shall be recorded at meetings, and decisions shall be made by a majority vote. In the event of a tie vote with an equal number of supporting and opposing votes, the President shall possess the right to cast a second or casting vote.

6. OUR FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE

6.1 Sources of Income

SARAECE derives its income from various sources, including:

- 6.1.1 Membership Dues: Annual fees paid by SARAECE members, which contribute to the association's operational costs and activities.
- 6.1.2 Conference Fees: Revenue generated from SARAECE conferences, including

registration fees, exhibitor fees, and sponsorship contributions.

- 6.1.3 Grants and Donations: Financial support obtained from grants, sponsorships, and donations from government agencies, non-profit organisations, corporations, and individuals.
- 6.1.4 Publication Sales: Income generated from the sale of SARAECE publications, including journals, books, and research reports.



6.1.5 Miscellaneous Income: Revenue from other sources, such as advertising, consultancy services, and partnerships with educational institutions and businesses.

6.2 Bank Accounts Management Process

The responsibility for bank accounts rests with the President or the President's nominees, such as the Treasurer, acting on behalf of the Committee members and in accordance with their directives. All financial transactions require joint signatures from at least two designated EXCO members.

6.3 Reporting and Authorisation Procedures

Financial reports, including statements of income and expenditure, balance sheets, and cash flow statements, shall be prepared by the Treasurer on an annual basis. Any expenditure or financial transaction exceeding a predetermined threshold, as set forth in SARAECE's financial policies, must be approved by the EXCO before execution. This ensures that significant financial decisions are made with careful consideration and oversight.

6.4 Financial Management Responsibilities

The President and Treasurer, in collaboration with the EXCO, shall ensure SARAECE's compliance with typical financial requirements imposed on charitable organisations in South Africa. This includes:

- 6.4.1 Maintaining appropriate accounting records.
- 6.4.2 Preparing an annual financial statement for SARAECE.
- 6.4.3 Arranging for the auditing or independent examination of SARAECE's financial statements.
- 6.4.4 Preparing an annual report for presentation to the Committee and members.
- 6.4.5 Developing and implementing financial policies and procedures.

6.4.6 Preparation of annual budgets outlining projected income, expenses, and allocations for various activities and initiatives.

6.4.7 Implementation of internal controls and procedures to safeguard SARAECE's assets, prevent fraud or mismanagement, and ensure the accuracy and reliability of financial information.

6.4.8 Maintenance of reserve funds to mitigate financial risks, cover unexpected expenses, and support long-term sustainability and growth.

6.5 Additional Expenses

SARAECE has the authority to appoint suitably qualified individuals, such as a webmaster or administrator, to assist in the Association's administration. Discretionary payments, including honorariums, may be made when applicable.

6.6 Conflict of Interest

SARAECE upholds strict conflict of interest policies to maintain the integrity and impartiality of its operations. Committee members are prohibited from engaging in activities that may create a conflict between their personal interests and their responsibilities to SARAECE. As a fundamental principle, SARAECE Committee members should avoid situations where personal interests conflict with their responsibilities.

Specific guidelines include:

- 6.6.1 Committee members shall not receive any form of benefit from SARAECE.
- 6.6.2 Committee members shall not hold a financial interest in supplying goods or services to SARAECE.
- 6.6.3 Committee members shall not acquire or possess any interest in SARAECE's property unless in their capacity as a Committee member.
- 6.6.4 Exceptions to this principle may include the discretionary reimbursement of reasonable costs, such as travel and subsistence expenses incurred while attending meetings.

7. OUR AMENDMENT AUTHORITY



7.1 Constitutional Amendments and Ratification Process

This Constitution may be amended by the EXCO, in consultation with the SARAECE Committee, and must be ratified by a majority vote of SARAECE members.

- 7.1.1 Proposed amendments must aim to advance the Association's future goals and may not contradict its principal aims or jeopardise its continued existence.
- 7.1.2 Written notice of proposed amendments must be provided to all concerned parties, including the Committee and members of the Association, in advance.
- 7.1.3 Ratification voting may occur either during the SARAECE Annual General Meeting (AGM) attended by members or through online voting.
- 7.1.4 The Constitution will be made readily accessible on the SARAECE website to ensure transparency and accessibility to all members.
- 7.1.5 Crisis Clause: In the event of any unexpected disruption (natural disaster, pandemic, etc.), the Constitution is subject to immediate amendment by the EXCO.

7.2 Power of Amendment and Dissolution

Amendments to the Constitution ensure the adaptability and relevance of SARAECE's governing framework. This Constitution may be amended by the Executive Committee (EXCO), in consultation with the SARAECE Committee, and must be ratified by a majority vote of SARAECE members. They can be proposed through various channels and require thorough consideration before implementation.

In the event that the Committee members of SARAECE determine that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Association, SARAECE aims to ensure transparency, accountability, and responsible stewardship of its assets. To achieve this, clear conditions and procedures for dissolution will be established, and the following conditions and process shall apply.

7.3 Dissolution Procedure and Asset Distribution

- 7.3.1 The decision to dissolve SARAECE must be made by a majority vote of the Committee members after careful consideration of the Association's circumstances and future viability.
- 7.3.2 The Committee shall ensure the proper disposition of all assets held by or on behalf of SARAECE. This includes the identification, evaluation, and liquidation of assets, ensuring that they are converted into monetary value.
- 7.3.3 Prior to any distribution of assets, all legitimate debts and liabilities of SARAECE must be settled. This process ensures that creditors are paid and financial obligations are met in accordance with legal and contractual requirements.
- 7.3.4 After settling all debts and liabilities, any remaining assets shall be distributed in accordance with the following priorities:
 - 7.3.4.1 Donation or Transfer: Assets shall be donated or transferred to a charitable institution or institutions with objectives similar to those of SARAECE. Efforts shall be made to identify suitable recipients aligned with the Association's mission and values.
 - 7.3.4.2 Alternative Charitable Purpose: In the event that a suitable charitable recipient cannot be identified, the Committee shall allocate the remaining assets for another charitable purpose. This allocation shall be determined based on the principles of maximising public benefit and alignment with SARAECE's mission and values.
- 7.3.5 The dissolution process shall be documented thoroughly, including records of asset evaluation, debt settlement, and asset distribution. The Committee shall ensure compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements governing the dissolution of nonprofit organisations.

7.4 Constitutional Amendment Process

Amendments to the Constitution ensure the adaptability and relevance of SARAECE's governing framework. They can be proposed through various channels and require thorough consideration before implementation.



- 7.4.1 Proposed amendments shall be circulated to all members at least 30 days before the Annual General Meeting (AGM), where they shall be discussed and voted upon. A two-thirds majority vote of members present and eligible to vote is required for the adoption of amendments.
- 7.4.2 Any amendment to this Constitution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption, unless otherwise specified in the amendment.

