



ANNUAL REPORT 2021



LITERACY
ASSOCIATION
OF SOUTH AFRICA

OUR VISION

LITASA envisions a society in which all individuals are literate and able to reach their full potential.

LITASA creates platforms for individuals and organisations in the literacy community to share and learn together.

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About LITASA

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

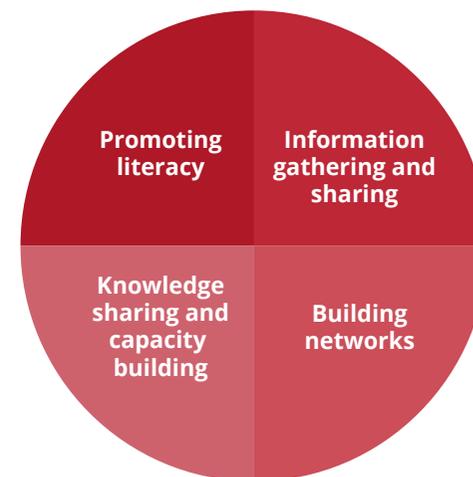
LITASA has been advocating for literacy and helping to build the networks and capacity of the literacy sector in South Africa for 17 years. Established as the Reading Association of South Africa (RASA) in 2004, we shifted to our new identity as LITASA in 2017. LITASA operates at a national level and also has four branches that work at the local level. Branches are located in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng provinces. LITASA is a registered Non-Profit Organisation (034-281-NPO) and Public Benefit Organisation (PBO number 930064648).

SECTOR CONVENING

LITASA has succeeded in bringing together and empowering a wide range of individuals and organisations working in the field of literacy, including teachers, researchers, coaches, government officials, publishers, NGO and civil society organisations, and students. LITASA's role in the South African literacy sector, that of an umbrella body, is unique. LITASA is dedicated to addressing the literacy crisis in South Africa through our four core functions: promoting literacy, information gathering and sharing, building networks, and knowledge sharing and capacity building.

AFFILIATIONS

LITASA is affiliated to the International Literacy Association (ILA). We function independently from the ILA but enjoy the benefit of the ILA's support and recognition as a key organisation in bringing together literacy stakeholders in South Africa. LITASA also is a member of the International Development Committee (Africa), which is the regional committee for all ILA affiliates in Africa.



LITASA creates platforms for those working in literacy to share and learn together.

Chairperson's Report

As we look back at 2021, we at LITASA use this opportunity to take stock of the great challenges and glimmers of opportunity that characterised the year. There was much hope at the start of 2021 that the COVID-19 pandemic would come to an end. This hope proved to be premature as the pandemic dragged on into its second year. But adjustment to new ways of life had become routine and many of us were surprised by our resilience and adaptability. The devastating long-term effects of the pandemic became increasingly clear, particularly the economic and mental health challenges. Significant learning losses amongst learners became evident, in addition to existing backlogs, and it was clear that an urgent response was necessary within the education sector. Many individuals and organisations within the literacy community stepped up to play their part and it was these responses that offered a sense of hope.

The uncertainties that characterised the global pandemic led LITASA to offer our first ever hybrid conference. This experience was a learning curve for us where we, as with many of you, tried new ways of doing familiar tasks and tested possibilities not thought possible before. This process led to some innovations that we are interested to pursue in the future. The conference theme proved to be pertinent too, as the need to connect homes, schools and communities was more needed than ever before. Our branches continued their work of connecting with local communities throughout the year. They did this through community engagement and various activities centred around reading and writing. LITASA also joined the KZN Reading Coalition. Engaging sessions were shared in 2021 with a variety of organisations working in the province.

In 2021, the editorial board of LITASA's scholarly journal underwent review. We are fortunate to have attracted a range of well-established academics and researchers from across Africa, parts of Asia, and North America, to provide insight and direction for the journal.

LITASA's internal operations saw several significant developments in 2021. We contracted the services of a communications consulting company who compiled a communications strategy for the association and helped us to strengthen LITASA's communications with members and the general public. This is in line with our core functions of promoting literacy and of gathering and sharing information relevant to the literacy community. As POPIA came into force, team members were trained to ensure compliance with acceptable practices.

LITASA financial systems were also modernised and a new payment system was instituted. Significant development of fundraising processes took place and we are hoping these will bear fruit in the coming year, as the effects of the pandemic continue to place strain on budgets across the world. Finally, we thanked Katharine Eve as she completed her term as National Treasurer. Many thanks to her for the commitment she displayed towards the role and her support of the administration team.

It is our hope that you find paging through this annual report an uplifting and inspirational exercise. Your contribution to our work, and our support of your work, is what drives LITASA into the future. Together, we are able to achieve so much. As always, many thanks to the LITASA team for their passion and commitment.

Catherine Langsford
National Chairperson

Our Team

LITASA's work is done by passionate individuals working in a voluntary capacity. We are immensely grateful to this group of people who give of their time to promote literacy throughout South Africa.

NATIONAL OFFICE

National Chairperson	Catherine Langsford
National Treasurer	Katharine Eve
Operations Coordinator	Sandra Langsford
Communications	Surefire Communications

EASTERN CAPE

Chairperson	Tracy Probert	Vice Chairperson	Nadeema Musthan
Treasurer	Cathy Gush		
Secretary	Asja Strydom		

Non-portfolio committee members	Amahle Nokeva, Eileen Scheckle
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GAUTENG

Chairperson	Bernice Badal
Secretary	Themba Dlamini
Vice Secretary	Nomhle Ngwenya

Non-portfolio committee members	Mia le Roux, Salome Geertsema
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Our Team

KWAZULU-NATAL

Chairperson Rizana Hoosen
Treasurer Deb Avery
Secretary Rogini Gounden

Vice Chairperson Nanako Pooe
Vice Treasurer Saajidah Hassen
Vice Secretary Jenny Gray

Non-portfolio committee members Ntombi Mbatha

WESTERN CAPE

Chairperson Jess Blom
Treasurer Katharine Eve
Secretary Sharleen Haupt

Vice Chairperson Thando Mkhoyi
Vice Treasurer Lauren Southgate

Non-portfolio committee members Janet Condy, Shelley Aronstam, Dorothy Dyer

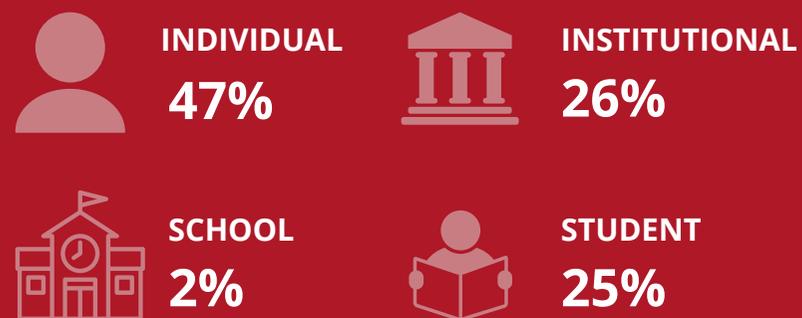
NORTH WEST HUB

Star Pholose
Rendani Emmanuel Nemusimbori

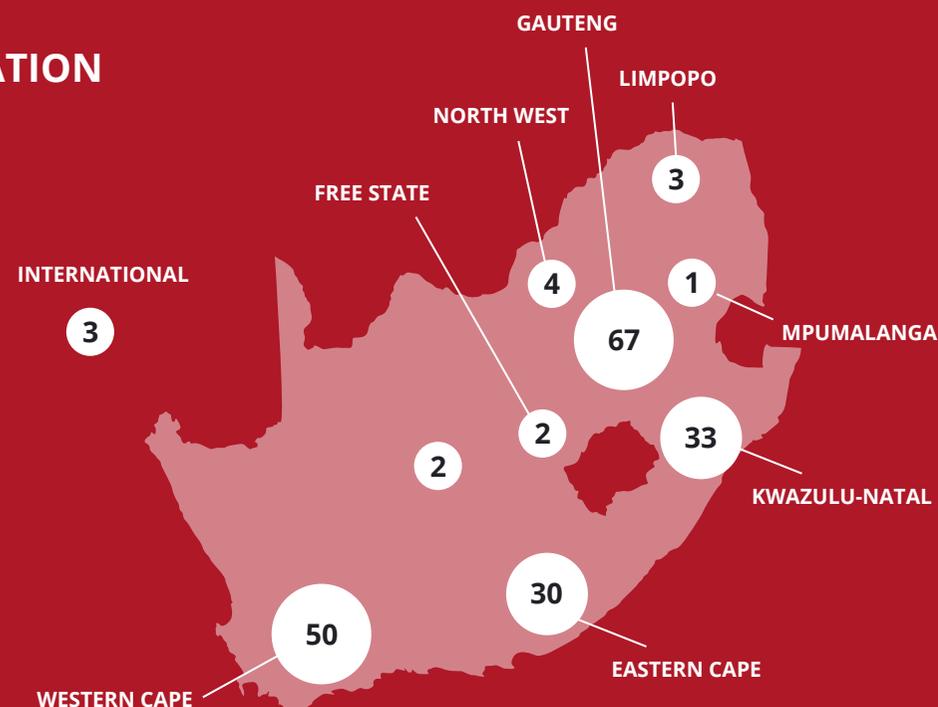
Membership

The Association's members come from a range of locations across South Africa and they are part of the literacy community at various levels.

MEMBERSHIP TYPE



BY LOCATION



Membership includes:

- Free workshops
- News about the literacy community in South Africa, including job opportunities
- Access to the members' area on our website
- Discounted registration fees at the annual national conference
- Resources to help with members' literacy activities, support in setting up libraries, introducing reading clubs and improving literacy teaching
- Networking opportunities with a wide range of literacy professionals.

Programmes

LITASA's work is carried out at a national level and at local level by LITASA's four branches.

Our programmes include:

- branch projects
- annual conference
- updates through our communication channels
- scholarly journal (*Reading & Writing*)
- online community of practice
- advocacy and outreach
- awards

The following section outlines the programmatic work done in each of these areas during 2021.

Eastern Cape

Read to Me Read Aloud Competition

The Eastern Cape branch ran a competition in February to celebrate World Read Aloud Day. Children, parents and teachers were asked to share with us a video of them reading aloud. The winners were Thwala Bulelwa and a group of teachers from Despatch Preparatory School. Our runners-up were Amahle and Anele Ngidi, Meecha Daniels and Heather Baartman. All received book vouchers.

Slogan Writing Competition

In commemoration of Youth Day and to celebrate the launch of the Eastern Cape Youth Division, the Eastern Cape branch ran a slogan writing competition in June to help develop a slogan for the youth division. Entries were welcomed in English, Afrikaans, isiXhosa and KhoiKhoi. We received eight entries in English and KhoiKhoi.



Teachers' Book Club

The branch hosted their first teachers book club on 6 February via Zoom. The book club was launched as one of our many initiatives that bring teachers from near and far together over a shared love of reading.

Masithethe: Literacy vir almal podcast

The branch released the second episode of the Masithethe: Literacy vir almal podcast in April. In this episode, entitled 'Literacy is the revolution', Eastern Cape teachers and committee members of LITASA talk about language, literacy and how they are making a difference in their schools and communities.

Book Donation

The Despatch Reading Club, which is supported by EC LITASA, had a surplus of books which they donated to a street kids outreach programme in September.

AGM

The branch held their first virtual AGM on 27 February. Guest speakers were Ray Schoene and Alexis Salaman from Youth Potential South Africa. Ray and Alexis shared with us the work they do with the children in the rural areas of the Gamtoos Valley. They reminded us about the importance of building relationships and connecting people and children to books. It was a very inspiring and productive morning.

BRANCH REPORTS

Gauteng

AGM

The branch AGM, held on 18 February, was a virtual meeting that was well attended. We had a fair mix of academics, teachers and postgraduate students as attendees. Two speakers presented after the AGM. Dr Sibusiso Clifford Ndlangamandla gave a presentation entitled *Challenging English-only in Higher Education: Norms and Trans-languaging in online multilingualism*, and Casey Eslick's presentation was entitled *The importance of phonological awareness and speech perception in noise skills to improve English second language learners' classroom participation*.



Reading Day

LITASA Gauteng, along with students and staff from the University of Pretoria's Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology, held a reading day at Confidence College. It was a wonderful day during which students facilitated the reading of story books. The children were encouraged to dress up as story characters, and students did the same. Books were donated to keep the reading going long into the future. Many thanks to the World Literacy Foundation, Sun Books and Tobias for sponsoring the event..

KwaZulu-Natal

Mother Tongue Day

This day, 21 February, was celebrated by reading stories and poems from diverse cultures. The branch embarked on a book drive to collect and distribute books to needy schools. A primary school in Sweetwaters, Pietermaritzburg received 50 books from the LITASA KZN Book Drive.

World Book Day

Pinetown Senior celebrated on 22 April with characters dressing up to depict diverse cultures and destinations in the world. Kalay David from Pietermaritzburg provided an attractive visual text and read aloud the story. Clarendon Primary learners also dressed up to represent different characters from their favourite stories. Learners had fun guessing which character their peers represented. Educators on the staff at Howick Prep and Clarendon Primary also joined the learners in their fashionable attire to celebrate the day.

Women's Day

Women's Day was celebrated in August in Pietermaritzburg. LITASA KZN handed out recipe books to women who share a passion for taking care of children after school. They received posters with powerful words that appreciate the value of women in the world.

AGM

A successful AGM was held on 27 February. Poet and writer Sbu Vilakazi was the guest speaker at the AGM. He read out extracts of his poetry from his book *Who Shall Stand*.

Youth Day Community Outreach

Julie Dawson, a retired librarian, chose 50 books from Hospice in Pietermaritzburg on Youth Day in June. By purchasing these secondhand books, LITASA supports a needy establishment that does a wonderful job of serving terminally ill patients. 50 books were donated to Grade 8 and 9 learners at a secondary school in Pietermaritzburg in July to commemorate Mandela Day.

Paper Trail Literary Journal

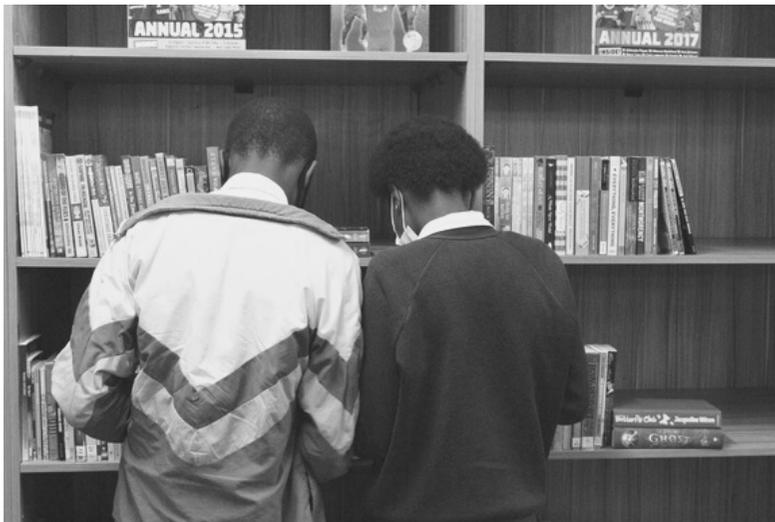
Ekta Somera launched her *Paper Trail Literary Journal* on 31 October to inspire the next generation to explore their passion for writing. This journal provides a powerful platform for learners to express themselves in creative writing, poetry and art. Grade 4 learners at Clarendon Primary were inspired to decorate and be creative as they listened to tantalizing verses from Ekta's wonderful collection. Learners were proud of their crafts as they embraced Ekta's vision, celebrating the art inside each of us.



BRANCH REPORTS

AGM

The branch hosted a virtual AGM on 24 February. As part of the AGM, an online session on 'Creating Literacy Cultures at Home' was held. The keynote speaker was Haroon Mohamed, Chief Director Curriculum Management and Teacher Development at WCED. He spoke about the Western Cape @Home Learning Forum. Xolisa Guzula, Lecturer in Language and Literacy Studies (UCT) and member of the Bua-lit Language and Literacy Collective, spoke about the 'Supporting Learning at Home' guide for caregivers that was developed by the C-19 People's Coalition. Mikhulu Trust also launched their new wordless book called A growing up day. The online event was a success with around 50 people from various sectors (non-profit organisations, tertiary institutions, schools, government, etc.) attending and interacting on the topic of creating literacy cultures at home.



Western Cape

Online Course on Writing Academic Essays

The Western Cape Branch partnered with FunDza Literacy Trust in October to develop an online course on Writing Academic Essays. The course is aimed at university students from across the country who want to enhance their academic writing essay skills. The course breaks down the structure of academic essays so users can see how they are put together. It also provides useful tools and tips on how to write an essay effectively.

Book Distribution

Our Western Cape branch partnered with the Langa ECD Forum to distribute books in October. The books were handed over to principals in the area.



Annual Conference



Connecting the dots: Literacy and home, school, community, the world

3 - 4 September

Garden Court Marine Parade, Durban | Online

It became clear during 2020, especially due to the Covid-19 pandemic, that South African education is not the sole preserve of the educational institution – be it early childhood development, basic education or tertiary institutions – education is the responsibility of the entire global village. Education involves all sectors of society and all sectors are interconnected – home, community, educational institutions and, via the use of technology, the world. If just one sector is neglected or left out, the education of our children and young adults is not fully met. Literacy is a foundational component of education and an integral part of everyday life in society. Therefore, the potential of literacy to connect the various sectors of society is powerful but equally beset with challenges. At the conference, we explored the ways in which literacy connects and links these various together.

The keynote speakers, Prof Melina Porto, Prof Shafika Isaacs, Dr Ben Piper and Ms Kulula Manona, helped us to connect the dots between the various sectors involved in literacy both in the international and local context. Prof Porto's research based in Argentina looked at critical literacies and intercultural citizenship education in the language classroom. Dr Ben Piper, based in Kenya, gave us an overview of the large scale education projects that he supports across sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and Asia. On the local front, we had a searing and vital address from Prof Shafika Isaacs on the quality, equity and social justice dimensions of digital learning. Equally stimulating was the address from Ms Kulula Manona, who is the Chief Director for Learning at the Department of Basic Education, on her vision of the role of government in mobilising society to take part in the attainment of quality outcomes in reading.

To complement these outstanding speakers, a panel discussion, chaired by Gail Campbell (Zenex Foundation) ran a discussion drawing from a wide-range of eminent panellists involved in a range of different sectors of literacy. They conversed on the potential for collaboration in the literacy space and identified the potential challenges to collaboration. The need for deliberate and meaningful collaboration was highlighted as an essential element in moving forward with literacy in South Africa post the learning losses that Covid-19 unleashed on our education system.

In other sessions, delegates were able to engage with new research and workshops that ranged from early childhood literacy to literacy for tertiary students who are struggling with academic texts. A particularly exciting addition to the 2021 conference was the addition of short Snapshot sessions in which presentations were given by teachers, NGOs and community organisations that shared their best practice and lesson learnt based on what is happening in classrooms and in community projects around the country.

The conference, drawing from both international, national and local experience, enabled delegates to not only see the scope of literacy work being done but also to join the dots between this work. Delegates were left with a sense of hope that there is a potential for future collaboration in the literacy field and, in fact, some of these collaborations were actually birthed at the conference itself.



Annual Conference

LITASA 2021 IN NUMBERS

231

Number of delegates

8

Number of exhibitors

69

Number of presentations

*In person: 93
Online: 138*

DELEGATE DEMOGRAPHICS



25%

Academic or researcher



25%

NGO representative



8%

ECD specialist



8%

Student (postgraduate)



8%

Teacher (primary school)



6%

Materials developer



3%

Trainer or coach



3%

Consultant



3%

Passionate individual



3%

Funding org representative



3%

M+E specialist



3%

Librarian



3%

Government official



The speakers were top notch and I will watch the presentations I missed online. Education has been severely impacted by COVID and we need to work together and innovate to address learning losses.

I learnt that there are a lot of people on the same page about literacy in South Africa, and we need more opportunities to interact, network and collaborate.



Communications

GROWTH DURING 2021



Website

9147 page views
3231 unique visitors

Newsletter open rate

~ 50%



From
1968
to
2597
followers



From
533
to
771
followers



From
508
to
862
followers



From
38
to
66
subscribers

>> @LiteracyAssocSA

LITASA continues to achieve our mandate of promoting literacy through various communication channels, primarily our website and social media accounts.

WEBSITE

LITASA's website aims to be a rich resource for anyone interested in literacy in South Africa. It caters to a wide range of stakeholders. The website provides news and information on LITASA's activities at national and provincial level. The website is accessible at www.litasa.org.za.

SOCIAL MEDIA

LITASA has accounts on several social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and YouTube. These accounts were used to update our members and the general public on our news and events as well as important literacy issues.

We need to start as a sector and as communities to start thinking about literacy as a social justice issue.

Nangamso Mtsatse
CEO, FundaWande



Journal

2021 NUMBERS >>

SUBMISSIONS



38

manuscripts submitted

12

manuscripts accepted

10

articles published

READERSHIP



25 856

website visitors

55 254

total pageviews

7 980

abstracts viewed

6 028

PDFs downloaded

Reading & Writing is LITASA's open access, peer-reviewed inter-disciplinary and inter-professional scholarly journal, which explores how literacy is defined, enacted, and promoted in a range of institutional, sociocultural, and disciplinary contexts, particularly within Africa and other developing countries.

Reading & Writing publishes original articles that provoke debate, explore issues, and posit solutions about literacy interventions, practices, and education. It focusses on and relates to transnational and translocal literacies associated with immigrants and mobile people in African settings.

The journal offers the breadth of outlook to promote interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary approaches that can stretch and invigorate our sense of what concepts and approaches are productive in the field of literacy education.

The journal is accredited by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and is listed on the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO) and SCOPUS indexing services.

Reading & Writing is hosted by AOSIS and can be found online at rw.org.za or via LITASA's website. Updates on the journal can be found by following @RW_Journal on Twitter.

Online Community of Practice

LITASA's Online CoP continued in 2021 as part of LITASA's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its devastating impact on education.

The CoP offers support and professional development content in bite-size chunks and reaches teachers and other interested individuals where they are, on platforms they use regularly. Topics such as supporting early literacy, text complexity and storytelling are discussed.

It was decided to close the CoP at the end of 2021, as the need for it had shifted due to coordinated systemic responses to the pandemic.

GROWTH DURING 2021 >>



From
431
to
2866
members



From
47
to
50
members



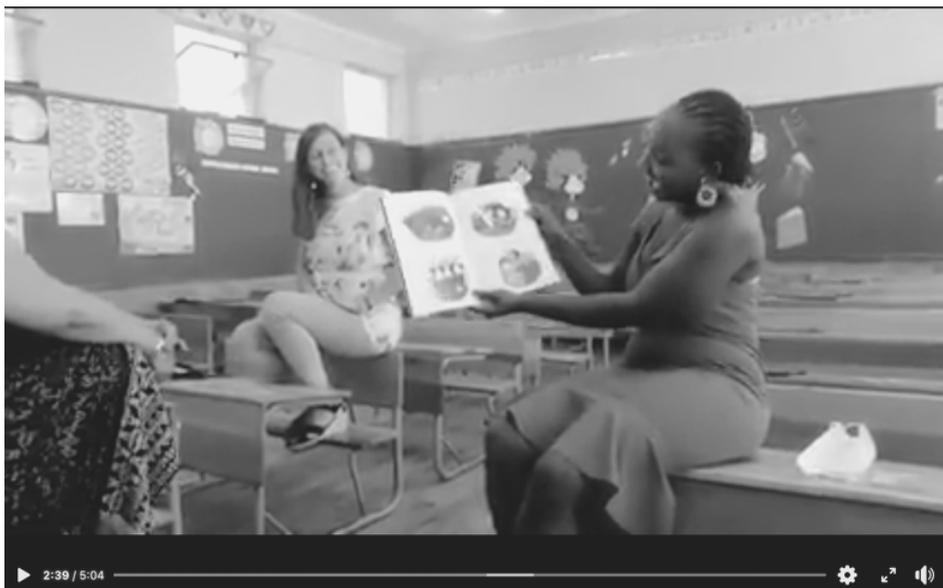
From
16
to
25
members

Advocacy & Outreach

WORLD READ ALOUD DAY

In celebration of World Read Aloud Day, friends in North West distributed 150 English storybooks and 70 Tswana readers. We celebrated the day with 40 children and donated the books to them to take home.

In KZN, teachers and community members from Durban and Pietermaritzburg presented videos demonstrating the value of read alouds.



Advocacy & Outreach

INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY

For a second year, LITASA partnered with Book Dash to celebrate International Literacy Day at various locations across the country.

On behalf of the National office, our friends in North West donated Setswana books to two schools, who celebrated International Literacy Day combined with Heritage Day. At the event, learners recited indigenous poems, songs, drama and dialogues in their home languages.

Our Eastern Cape branch distributed books donated by Book Dash to a number of ECD centres and primary schools in Mdantsane, Gqeberha and Kariega.

Our Western Cape branch celebrated International Literacy Day in partnership with Kulani Public Library in Khayelitsha. Branch Vice Chairperson, Thanduxolo Mkoyi, read and told stories to the young children at the library.



Nadeema Musthan, Eastern Cape Vice Chairperson, represented LITASA in two radio interviews by Impulse Africa Radio and Madibaz for International Literacy Day.



LITASA KZN celebrated International Literacy Day by donating books to needy schools in the province. The day was also celebrated at various schools. Learners studied the life of famous author Roald Dahl and responded by writing chapter summaries, character descriptions and dialogue. They also acted out plays on *The Twits*. Learners at another school did extensive reading of African myths and legends. Other schools did group story writing amongst Grade 3 learners and displayed a poster highlighting the importance of the Drop Everything and Read campaign.

Awards



BEST FIRST-TIME PRESENTER AWARD

This award is intended to acknowledge the courage and professional development of individuals who have never presented at any conference ever before.

Awarded to

SIMBAYI YAFELE

Previous winners

2019 | Patricia Ndlovu

2018 | Lydia Whitacre



BEST STUDENT PRESENTATION AWARD

This is awarded to a current or recently graduated student who gives a presentation at the annual conference which emanated from a Masters or Doctoral research study.

Awarded to

CLAIRE BIESMAN-SIMONS

Previous winners

2019 | Mikaela Daries

2018 | Rockie Sibanda, Jessamy Kromhout

Awards



SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO LITERACY AWARD

This is awarded to the individual or organisation who has moved literacy research or practice forward considerably.

Awarded to

FUNDZA LITERACY TRUST

Previous winners

2020 | Gcina Mhlophe
2019 | Prof Lilli Pretorius
2018 | Prof Hilary Janks



BEST RESEARCH ARTICLE AWARD

This is awarded to the article, published in LITASA's journal *Reading & Writing* between January and December of the previous year, which made a contribution to the field and displayed exemplary adherence to the hallmarks of scholarly publications.

Awarded to

**MARYNA DE LANGE, CHRISTINE WINBERG
AND HANLIE DIPPENAAR**

Previous winners

2020 | Lieke Stoffelsma
2019 | Sibhekinkosi Anna Nkomo
Caroline Pade-Khene (special edition)



"Stomp!"
"Not so high, I will fall!"



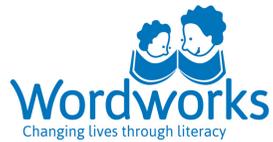
"Step real"
"fall down."
"There!"

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ISBN 978 0 521 87622 3

Written by
Gigi Soutwood
Illustrated by
Lesley Rogers
Cambridge
Mig Aircraft

THANKS TO OUR Partners

CONFERENCE EXHIBITORS



DONORS



Financial Report

For the financial year ending 31 December 2021

BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS

Current assets

Inventories	R2 912
Bank balances	R471 541
Cash on hand	R3 550
Total assets	R478 003

EQUITY

Capital and reserves

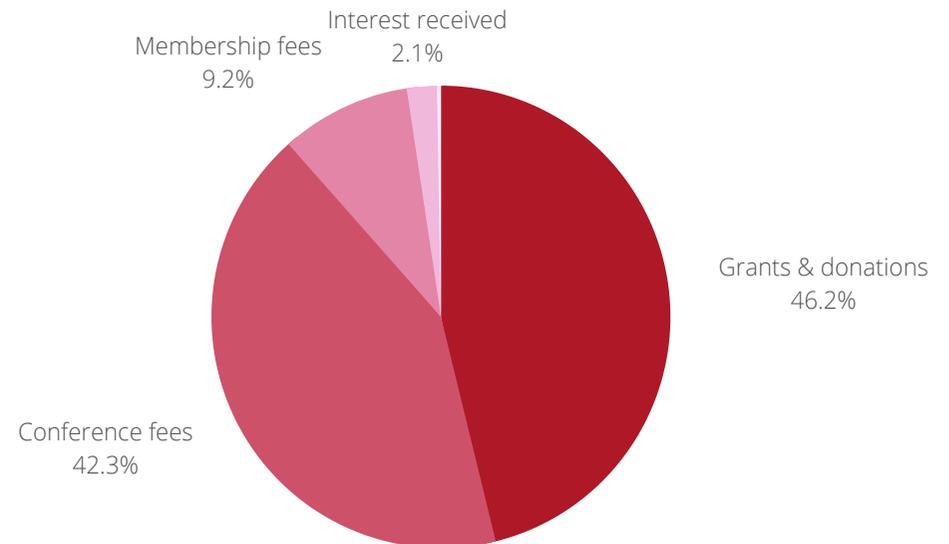
Accumulated reserves	R478 003
Total equity	R478 003

REVENUE

Sales (merchandise)	R2 400
Cost of sales	R1 679
GROSS SURPLUS	R721

INCOME

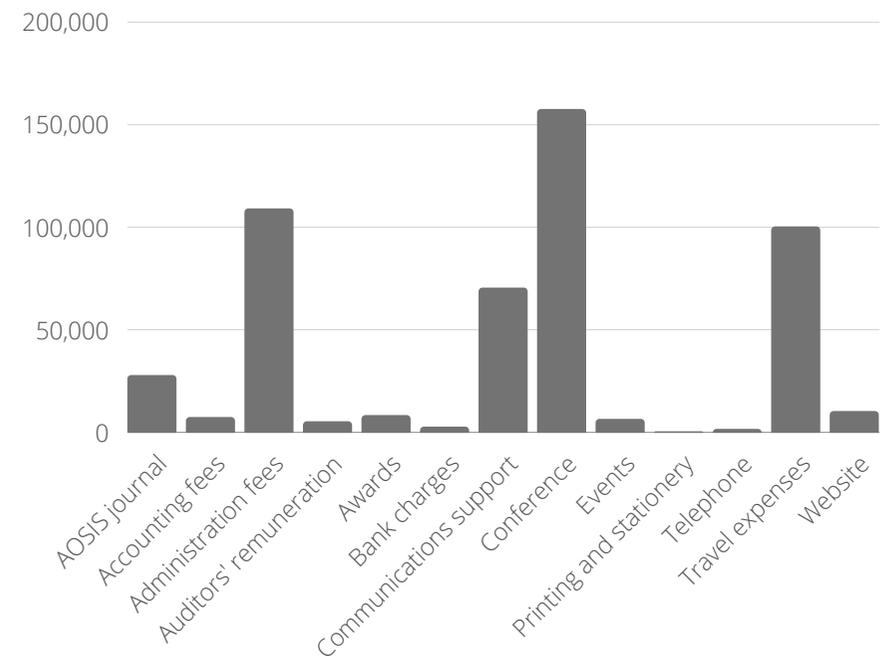
Grants & donations	R250 000
Conference fees	R228 950
Membership fees	R49 710
Interest received	R11 457
Other income	R1 500
TOTAL	R541 617



Financial Report

EXPENDITURE

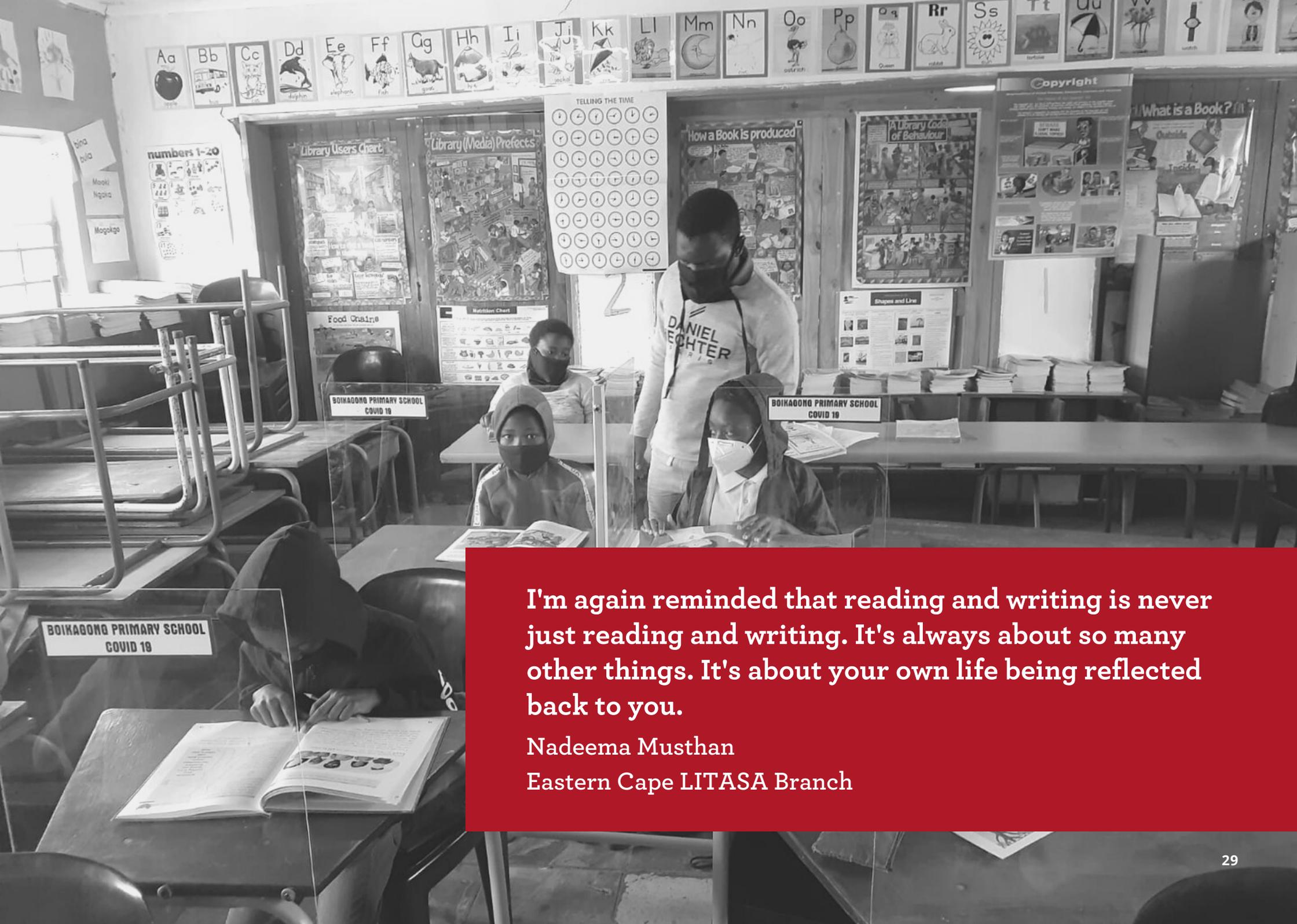
AOSIS journal	R27 987
Accounting fees	R7 568
Administration fees	R109 045
Auditors' remuneration	R5 503
Awards	R8 514
Bank charges	R2 900
Communications support	R70 525
Conference	R157 397
Events	R6 674
Printing and stationery	R630
Telephone	R1 799
Travel expenses	R100 294
Website	R10 479
TOTAL	R509 315





Dr Mia Oosthuizen
Children's Book Specialist

**Reading in your first language
removes most barriers associated with
learning, comprehension,
and literacy in general.**



I'm again reminded that reading and writing is never just reading and writing. It's always about so many other things. It's about your own life being reflected back to you.

**Nadeema Musthan
Eastern Cape LITASA Branch**



www.litasa.org.za

[@LiteracyAssocSA](https://www.instagram.com/LiteracyAssocSA)