

17 May 2023

Dear Conference Delegate

Welcome to this 2023 AAA Conference and AGM, the fourth of the Association for Academic Administrators at Emperors Palace and Convention Centre.

After the 2022 conference at the ICC in East London, where we still had to apply the Covid-19 protocols with masks on and sanitising of hands, we are very glad to welcome you back to a “new normal” conference.

We must assume that the AAA is just growing from strength to strength, as in 2022 there were 237 delegates and speakers, whereas this year we have pre-registered a record of 340 delegates and speakers. The previous highest number was in 2019 at the St George Hotel with 300 delegates. The result was that the conference got fully booked in terms of the max capacity 2 weeks before the closing date and registrations received after the seats were all taken up, more than 40 registrations were put on a waiting list, in case of any cancellations received. Unfortunately, not many of these on the waiting list could in the end be placed. The Board never anticipated this tremendous interest in this conference, which means for next year’s conference we will have to find a venue that can accommodate at least 400 delegates.

This year we also received a record number of submissions to present a paper. We received 7 submissions but could only accommodate 3 of these in the program. A sincere thanks to our members who submitted, and we hope that in future we will be able to accommodate all the presentations in our program.

The theme for this year, i.e., “*Best Practices in the automation & digitization of academic administration driven by the need to reduce face-to-face student services on campuses*”, seems to have created a lot of interest from various other functions related to academic administration. We are looking forward to sharing best practices with many other institutions in this regard over the next two days.

With 340 delegates registered for the conference representing 20 public universities from South Africa, 1 from Botswana, 1 private HEI, and 2 public TVET Colleges, our expectations were well exceeded. With the exception however the disappointing number of TVET colleges that registered.

Delegates will find all the conference documentation and the constitution and the rules and regulations published on the conference webpage at <https://assocacadadmin.co.za/conferences/2023-conference-agm/conference/>

If you have a problem with your accommodation, please take it up directly with the hotel’s staff. We are not responsible for that part of the conference.

You are also more than welcome to engage with us, the members of the elected Board of Directors, to address any concerns, make contributions or proposals on the format and organisation of future conferences.

We trust that you will leave from here on Friday afternoon, feeling rejuvenated and that you again had the opportunity to take something useful back to your institution to contribute to a more effective and efficient administration of your institution, and that you also made some new friends.

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