

RAPDASA 2019–2020 Chairman’s Report

RAPDASA Management Committee:

Executive Committee:

Chair: André F van der Merwe
Treasurer: Pauline Bullock
Past chairman: Marius Vermeulen
Secretary: Rynette Coetzer

Members:

Willie du Preez
Malika Khodja
Kobus van der Walt - Editor
Devon Hagedorn-Hansen
Adam Imdaadulah
Malan van Tonder
Jean-Pierre Serfontein
Tsepo Dube

The focus of the Rapid Product Development Association of South Africa has emerged from product development into manufacturing. Additive manufacturing has become the household name of this emerging intervention. The disruption affects the whole supply chain, traditional thinking of manufacturing and consequently company culture. Out-of-the-box thinking can now be realised. We capitalise on the innovation opportunities.

Industry involvement now extends beyond AM product suppliers and several industry case studies on applications were demonstrated.

Commercialization through scale-up is the primary focus of several initiatives and is already supported through several funding mechanisms. The Collaborative Program in Additive Manufacturing (CPAM) provides funding for research, whilst the High-End infrastructure Fund funds equipment - both from Department of Science and Innovation.

Membership:

RAPDASA membership is automatically obtained by attending the yearly conference. However, the management committee had several requests from industry for interim membership. Going forward, the membership structure has to be addressed to provide more value to all stakeholders.

Governance:

RAPDASA management currently serves the function of management and governance. Considering the growth and the maturity of the association, good governance needs to be reconsidered. The appointment of a management team is recommended. The management team would be

responsible for day-to-day management of the association's affairs that often include various administrative functions.

A part-time secretary has already been appointed. It is recommended that a Chief Operating Officer be appointed, responsible for continuation from year to year. The elected management committee would drive new initiatives and projects. Once established as a long-term programme, the management team would take over responsibility for continuation.

Association:

- Partnered with PtSA to share industry members
- Membered with Brand SA
- Membered with National Science Technology Forum (NSTF)
- Supporting South African Technology Network (SATN)

Initiatives:

- The Dimitrov Scholarship Fund was initiated to support students to attend the conference. Several donations to the fund were received, and the first student was supported to attend the 2019 conference.
- Junior Design Competition for school children – initiative by Petra Rees of Why Toyz.
- RAPDASA supports Adriana Marais going to Mars – a full knowledge-support commitment has been made to support innovation of products and processes to support the sustainability of the mission.
- Woman in 3D printing.
- Corporate membership with CIRP* - to be completed.
- I AM Africa.
- RAPDASA to become a registered corporate member of CIRP.

Annual Conference:

The annual conference in 2020 is the first held in hybrid fashion due to the international COVID pandemic restricting travel. The conference is a success, considering the newly developed format. Delegates adapted and adopted the new format and contributed wholeheartedly to the success of the conference. It is noted that the lockdown restriction has hampered research progress on many projects.

A total of 72 delegates attended the conference in venues and 68 online. A total of 22 students participated this year. There were 30 peer-reviewed papers presented and 23 extended abstracts, of which 5 papers were accepted for publication in the special edition of the SAJIE journal.

Three simultaneous ZOOM sessions were used to host the three parallel sessions. Sponsor sessions and exhibitor sessions were integrated into the main schedule, which gave the industry stakeholders direct international exposure as an active part of the proceedings.

Programme committee:

It was decided to initiate a permanent programme committee that would serve over years and not report to the annual changing conference chairman. The purpose is to provide continuation to the peer-review process. The 2019 conference programme committee therefore continued into 2020 and RAPDASA community wishes to thank appointed editor Dr. Kobus van der Walt for his work managing the peer-review process.

The members and the chairman of the programme committee (editor) would be elected in an agreed procedure. The chairman of the programme committee is automatically a member of the management committee.

Membership structure:

It is strongly recommended that the newly elected chairperson and management committee form a structure of membership similar to CIRP.

Closure and acknowledgement:

The chairman wishes to thank the management team for their commitment through the year. Also, the passion and dedication of the conference organising committee. A very special thanks to Rynette Coetzer, secretary of RAPDASA, and Pauline Bullock, the treasurer.