



TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE NSTF/proSET COMMITTEE

1. Introduction

1.1 What is proSET? proSET stands for 'Professionals in Science, Engineering and Technology', and is the National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF) membership sector for professional bodies and learned societies. proSET is not a separate legal entity. It is governed by the [Memorandum of Incorporation \(MOI\) of the NSTF](#). See Addendum A for relevant extracts.

1.2 What does proSET do?

- Promotes cooperation among professional organisations in science, engineering and technology (SET) and STEM education (STEM = science, technology, engineering and mathematics)
- Strives for improved STEM education
- Promotes the image of all SET practitioners

1.3 Members of proSET

- Members of proSET are simultaneously members of NSTF.
- The members are listed on the NSTF website, both in the list of all NSTF members, and separately as the proSET sector: [proSET members](#).
- Procedures for recruiting and managing the proSET members are the same as for other NSTF members. They are required to pay annual membership fees under the proSET sector, as determined annually by the NSTF Executive Committee (Exco): [Membership Fees – NSTF](#).

1.4 History of proSET

proSET was previously known as SETAG (Scientific, Engineering, Technological Societies and Allied Professions Group of South Africa). SETAG resulted from a merger between the memberships of NSTF and the AS&TS (Associated Scientific and Technical Societies of South Africa) in 2003. SETAG was active from 2003 to 2010, during which time it was renamed as proSET. The proSET sector of the NSTF was revived in 2012 and a new proSET Committee was elected, after a dormant period of about two years. During 2011, the NSTF worked with the former AS&TS Trustees/ Directors to transfer the AS&TS Trust funds to the NSTF. (Previously the funds had been dormant for many years.) This money is ring fenced for proSET use for

projects consistent with the NSTF's and the old AS&TS Trust's mandates. (Both these mandates are very similar).

1.5 Project funds

Decision making: The proSET Committee is the sub-committee of the NSTF Exco that decides how the inherited funds will be managed and used.

Management: The proSET fund is managed by the NSTF Secretariat and audited yearly as part of NSTF finances.

1.6 Publicity and news of proSET and its members

- The NSTF website has a dedicated section for proSET matters: [Professional Bodies \(proSET\) – NSTF](#)
- proSET News is included in the monthly NSTF newsletter (e.g. [26NSTF_eNews-May.pdf](#)) distributed to some 20,000 subscribers and the news section is hosted on the NSTF website: [proSET News – NSTF](#).
- Publicity on the proSET sector is generated by the NSTF, and it is promoted at exhibitions where NSTF participates, e.g. [Science Forum South Africa, 24-28 November 2025 – NSTF](#).
- proSET maintains a [Members Booklet](#), of all organisations that are, or have been, members of proSET. This is a useful tool, that maps South African professional bodies in the SET landscape. It is printed and used at exhibitions, for education or to hand out to stakeholders.

2. The proSET Committee

2.1 The Committee meets at least three times a year.

2.2 Composition of the proSET Committee:

2.2.1 Although historically the committee has had an equal number of representatives of scientists and engineers, the proSET Committee should be representative of the broad variety of proSET member organisations, including:

- **scientific** professional organisations or learned societies of various disciplines
- **engineering** professional organisations of various engineering branches
- **STEM education** professionals, with a focus on high school and tertiary education (STEM = science, technology, education and mathematics)
- **Information technology (IT)** professionals

2.2.2 The proSET Committee has 6 seats for representatives of organisations: 2 scientific, 2 engineering, 1 STEM education, and 1 for IT. The proSET Committee may include representatives of the registration and quality assurance Councils, e.g. SACNASP and ECSA.

2.2.3 Alternates. All the main committee members will have alternate representatives appointed to the committee, to stand in, in case the main members are not available.

2.2.4 STEMulator. In addition, the STEMulator project will have a main and alternate member on the Committee. The STEMulator representative/s are on the Committee in an *ex officio* capacity.

2.2.5 Total members: Therefore, there shall be 7 main members, and 7 alternates, all of whom may attend any Committee meeting. Where voting is done, each of the 6 organisational main reps/seats will have only one vote each.

2.2.6 NSTF's participation: Besides the STEMulator representatives, the NSTF should be represented, by Management, e.g. by the NSTF Executive Director, and NSTF staff should attend the meetings to render secretarial services.

2.2.7 Co-option: The Committee may co-opt additional members, but must attempt to balance the numbers representing scientists, engineers, IT and STEM education.

2.3 Quorum:

A quorum for any meeting will be representatives of 4 different member organisations.

2.4 Chairing:

- The proSET Committee will appoint two co-chairpersons from among their number, excluding *ex officio* members, representing two different divisions of the proSET membership out of the possible four: scientists, engineers, IT professionals or STEM education professionals.
- The two co-chairs will both have an alternate to stand in for them if necessary.

3. The proSET GENERAL MEETING

- **When and where:** The proSET General Meeting (GM) is held once a year, to update members on the activities carried out by the proSET Committee on behalf of the membership, as well as other business as set out on the agenda. The GM is held at such a time and place as the proSET Committee may determine, preferably at roughly the same time of year (September). The GM is usually conducted online.
- **Notice:** The Secretariat shall give at least one month's notice, in writing, of such a GM to each proSET member organisation through their official NSTF/proSET representatives.
- **Business of the GM:** At each GM a co-chairperson of proSET Committee shall review the activities of proSET and refer to any other matters which the chair may consider to be relevant to the occasion. The Committee shall submit a report of income and expenditure for the past financial year, which will be circulated to members at least one week prior to the meeting.
- **Attendees of the GM:** Each proSET member organisation shall be represented at GMs of proSET by the main representative of such member or, in the absence of such representative, the alternate representative of such member, duly appointed in terms of the NSTF Memorandum of Incorporation.
- **Participation and voting:** The representatives of any member shall be entitled to take part in the discussions at all meetings of proSET and NSTF. If the main representative of the member is present at any meeting, the alternate representative of that member may also be present and may take part in the discussions, but shall not vote at the meeting on behalf of the member concerned (only if the main member is absent).
- **Chairing of the GM:** One of the two co-Chairpersons of proSET shall take the chair at all GMs. If neither co-Chair is present at any meeting, the representatives of members present and entitled to

vote shall elect one of those representatives to be chairperson of that meeting. The chairperson of a meeting shall be responsible for the conduct of the meeting.

- **Quorum:** 40% of the members shall form a quorum for any GM of proSET. If, within thirty minutes from the time appointed for the meeting, a quorum is not present in person or by proxy, the meeting shall be adjourned.
- **Adjournment:** The maximum period allowable for an adjournment of a GM is two months from the date of the adjourned meeting or part-meeting. The notice of such meeting shall be given to members in writing.
- **Resolutions:** For a resolution to be adopted at a proSET GM, or by written or electronic vote, it must be supported by more than 50% of the votes. In the case of a written or electronic voting process, votes must be submitted within a maximum of one month of the resolution's being sent to member representatives. A declaration by the chairperson of a meeting of the result of a vote shall be conclusive.

3.1 Election of the proSET Committee

3.1.1 The members of the proSET Committee are elected by the proSET member organisations at a General Meeting.

3.1.2 Criteria: individuals are eligible to serve on the proSET Committee if:

- The individual representatives are paid-up members in good standing of any current proSET member organisation
- The proSET organisations of which the individuals are members are paid-up members of NSTF and in good standing
- The individuals are nominated and seconded at the proSET GM, by any individual reps of their own organisations

3.1.3 Nominations should be called for at least one month before a GM.

3.1.4 If more than one candidate is nominated per position, voting will be conducted at the GM. In the event that the outcome is indecisive or tied, the proSET Committee will make a determination.

4. Participation on the NSTF Executive Committee (Exco)

- The proSET Committee is a Sub-Committee of the NSTF Exco.
- The proSET membership sector has two seats on the NSTF Exco (where other sectors have one seat only). Both co-chairpersons of the proSET Committee fill those seats on Exco (with their alternates as back-up) and are responsible for reporting to Exco on behalf of proSET. (in accordance with 13.3 of the NSTF MOI: "The proSET Sector of voting members of the Forum, through its Committee, shall appoint, by notice in writing lodged with the Secretariat, two members and two alternate members to the Exco.")

ADDENDUM A

Extracts of the NSTF Memorandum of Incorporation (MOI) relevant to proSET:

5.2) Any institution, organisation or juristic body which wishes to become a voting member of the Forum shall lodge with the Secretariat of the Forum referred to in clause 17 ("the Secretariat") a written application to the Executive Committee for admission as such and, for the purposes of the application, the applicant shall provide the Executive Committee with its full name and registered address and such other further information as the Executive Committee may require. The application shall be considered at the next ordinary meeting of the Executive Committee or, if the Chairman so directs, at a special meeting of the Executive Committee convened for that purpose and the Executive Committee shall then decide whether or not the applicant shall be admitted and the terms and conditions upon which it shall be admitted. The decision of the Executive Committee shall not be subject to review.

5.3) After the meeting of the Executive Committee at which such application is considered, the applicant shall be notified, in writing, by the Secretariat whether or not the applicant has been admitted and of the applicable terms and conditions of membership.

5.4) There shall be different Sectors of voting members of the Forum, which Sectors shall be established in accordance with criteria approved (and amended) by the plenary meeting, as set out in clause 10 ("the plenary meeting") from time to time [now called the AGM]. The Executive Committee shall allocate every voting member to one of such Sector. In making such allocation the Executive Committee shall be guided, but not bound, by the voting member's principal interest in science and technology. The Executive Committee may at any time re-allocate a voting member to any Sector.

6.) MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS AND OTHER FEES AND PAYMENTS

6.1) The subscriptions payable for each financial year by each voting member and any levy payable by the members shall, from time to time, be determined by the Executive Committee, after taking into account all relevant factors and balancing the retention of members and affordability of fees against the need to maintain the financial sustainability of the Forum.

6.2) Annual subscriptions will be invoiced as at 1 April each year, and are payable within 3 months' of date of invoice.

8). REPRESENTATIVES OF MEMBERS

8.1) Within two weeks of admission to membership of the Forum, each member shall appoint, by notice in writing lodged with the Secretariat, a representative and an alternate representative. Such notice shall contain the full names, occupations and addresses and other contact details of the representatives concerned. An alternate representative of a member, while acting in the place of the representative of that member, shall exercise all the duties, powers and functions of such representative.

8.2) A member may withdraw the appointment of any representative or alternate representative, by notice in writing lodged with the Secretariat, and if the appointment of any representative or alternate representative is so withdrawn, or if any representative or alternate representative ceases for any other reason to be such, the member concerned shall appoint, within two weeks thereafter and in the manner prescribed, another in his/her place.

8.3) Any representative or alternate representative of a member shall cease to be such: if they resign; or if their appointment is withdrawn by the member by whom they were appointed; or if the member by whom they were appointed, ceases to be a member of the Forum.

13).COMPOSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (INCLUDING THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS)

13.1)There shall be an Executive Committee of the Forum which shall perform the function of a Board of directors under the Act, all such functions imposed on it under this memorandum, as well as such functions as may be requested of it or delegated to it by the Forum in plenary meeting.

13.2)Because of practical considerations, the members of the Executive Committee shall nominate those of their number who shall be registered as directors in terms of the Act. Those selected to be directors shall form part of the Executive Committee, and shall execute their duties alongside those Executive Committee members who are not directors. Executive Committee members who are not registered as directors are 'prescribed officers' in terms of the Act and bear the same responsibilities towards the Forum as do those who are registered as directors.

13.3)Each Sector of voting members of the Forum, shall appoint, by notice in writing lodged with the Secretariat, one member and one alternate member to the Executive Committee. The Sector shall appoint these persons to the Executive Committee either by vote of the representatives of the voting members of that Sector, or, where the Sector is a government department, or where there is only one member in that Sector, by appointment following internal process of that department or member.

13.4)An alternate member of the Executive Committee, while acting in the place of the member, shall exercise all the duties, powers and functions of such member. Each Sector of voting members of the Forum may withdraw the appointment of its member or alternate member of the Executive Committee, by notice in writing lodged with the Secretariat, and if the appointment of the member or alternate member is so withdrawn, or if the member or alternate member ceases for any other reason to be such, the Sector of members concerned shall appoint within two weeks thereafter another in his place.

13.5)The members of the Executive Committee appointed in terms of 13.3 shall be entitled to co-opt, upon such terms and conditions as they may determine, one or more representatives of any voting member of the Forum as members of, or alternate members of, the Executive Committee. The maximum number of persons to be so co-opted, shall, from time to time, be determined by the Forum in plenary meeting.

13.6)The Executive Committee may at any time, to such extent and for such purposes as it may decide, co-opt the services of an expert. Such person may attend, by invitation, any meeting of the Executive Committee and may take part in discussion, but may not vote.