

Constitution of the Association of African Planning Schools



Ratified by AAPS Chair Professor Babatunde Agbola and Co-Chair Professor Vanessa Watson, with approval of AAPS member schools attending the third AAPS all-schools meeting.

At: UN-Habitat Campus, Gigiri, Nairobi

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Preamble

The Association of African Planning Schools (AAPS) is a peer-to-peer network of schools, departments or programmes located at institutions of higher education on the African continent, offering degrees in city/urban and/or regional/rural planning. Membership is drawn primarily, but not exclusively, from institutions in Anglophone Africa and is also open to planning schools on the continent which are members of other planning school associations, such as APERAU (Association for the Development of Planning Education and Research) which has membership in Francophone Africa.

Article A. Name of Organization

The name of the organization shall be the Association of African Planning Schools, hereinafter referred to as AAPS.

Article B. Mission

AAPS was founded in 1999 with the purpose of improving the quality and visibility of planning pedagogy, research and practice in Africa, and promoting planning education advocating ethical, sustainable, multicultural, gender-sensitive, and participatory planning practice.

Article C. Purpose

The purpose of AAPS is to support, promote and assist in the improvement of city/urban and/or regional/rural planning education and research at institutions of higher education on the continent of Africa.

Article D. Objectives

AAPS specifically seeks to promote:

- **Curriculum review and revision**, to produce planning programmes that are contextually relevant and engaged with the needs of local communities.
- **Collaborative and comparative research** that emphasises the particular dynamics of local urban contexts.
- **Shared comprehensive understanding** of the challenges facing planners in Africa.
- **Regional collaboration** in progressive, pro-poor urban policy and planning responses.
- **Resource sharing**, capacity building and skills transfer.
- **Liaison with professional planning institutes/associations** on issues relating to curriculum development.

AAPS and its members raise funds to undertake projects to take forward this mission; organizes meetings and workshops; circulates information; maintains a website, an electronic mailing list and social media pages; engages with organizations and networks with similar objectives (through memoranda of understanding and/or affiliations), and makes public statements on planning matters that are in keeping with the purposes stated above.

Article E. Membership

Section 1. Eligibility. Schools, departments or programmes that award degrees in city/urban and/or regional/rural planning, sometimes combined with environmental planning, located at institutions of higher education.

Section 2. Active Membership. Membership is conferred once the planning school completes a brief information form containing details of the school (nature of degrees offered, contact details, numbers of staff, students, etc.) and returns this to the AAPS Secretariat and Steering Committee Chair, who will then make this information available through the AAPS website. Active membership is maintained by responding to annual requests by the Secretariat or Chair to confirm and update these details.

Section 3. Privileges. Members benefit from the circulation of information, from linkage to organizations with which AAPS is affiliated, and (where funds are available) from invitations and support to attend meetings and workshops. Members also benefit from the AAPS database of planning schools, associated information and access to teaching and research resources on the AAPS website.

Article F. Officers.

A maximum of seven elected individuals make up the Steering Committee of AAPS. A Chair is elected by the Steering Committee.

Section 1. Duties of Office

1.1 **Chair.** The duties of the Chair are to:

- Give leadership to the organization.
- Approach donor bodies for funds for AAPS projects, or give advice to member schools undertaking such actions.

- Recruit schools to become members of AAPS.
- Ensure that membership information is updated annually and maintained in an accessible form.
- Initiate links and relationships with cognate organizations.
- Ensure that the functions of AAPS regarding circulation of information are maintained.
- Initiate processes of Steering Committee and officer election.
- Make public statements reflecting AAPS standpoint on matters relating to planning and planning education in Africa, with the consent of the Steering Committee.
- Represent AAPS at international forums and relevant meetings as necessary.
- Be prepared to fulfil the duties of Co-Chair for a term, following the completion of their term as Chair, if willing and requested by the Steering Committee.
- Notify the incoming Chair of their availability and willingness to serve as Co-Chair for an additional term at least one month prior to the conduction of Steering Committee elections.

1.2 **Co-Chair.** The duty of the Co-Chair is to:

- Provide support and assistance to the Chair when requested.

1.3 **Steering Committee.** The duties of Steering Committee members (including the Co-Chair) are to:

- Respond to requests for guidance and assistance from the Chair.
- Assist in supporting the Chair with his/her tasks identified above.

1.4 **Secretariat.** The duties of the Secretariat are to:

- Provide administrative and logistical support and assistance to the Chair and Steering Committee members.
- Inform the Chair, Steering Committee and general AAPS members of relevant events, activities and opportunities relating to planning education and research.
- Service the everyday needs of AAPS, such as maintaining the website and database of member schools.
- Carry out or assist in the administration and execution of funded projects.

Section 2. Eligibility for Election to Office

- Steering Committee members, including Chair and Co-Chair, may be of any nationality, but they should reside permanently in any country or region in Africa, and should be employed full-time by an AAPS member institution.
- Nominations of individuals to the Steering Committee should be made on the basis of their known commitment to the goals of AAPS.
- The Chair and Co-Chair should be recognized planning academics, located in member schools, who have shown commitment to the work of AAPS and are prepared to undertake the duties of Chair and Co-Chair.

Section 3. Elections

Steering Committee elections will be held every two years, within three months of an all-school AAPS meeting.¹

The rules and process of electing a Steering Committee will be as follows:

- An electoral officer (not standing for office) will be nominated to manage the process.
- The incoming Steering Committee Chair will oversee the process, and is automatically an elected Committee member. If the incumbent Chair agrees to remain a Committee member as Co-Chair, they are also elected by default.
- All AAPS member schools will be invited to nominate members to the Steering Committee (one nomination will be permitted per school) over a period of two weeks.
- The maximum total number of Committee members is seven. If the incoming Chair and Co-Chair have indicated their willingness to serve in these roles on the Committee, five persons may be elected or re-elected to the Steering Committee. If either or both are unable to serve, six or seven persons can be elected or re-elected.
- At least half of all member schools should provide nominations in order for the election process to be valid.
- Each nominee must accept the nomination in writing.
- If five or less representatives are nominated, all will be deemed members of the Steering Committee. These Committee members may co-opt an additional voting member (in accordance with the process and principles outlined in Article F, Section 6 below) to ensure that the Committee is comprised of an odd-number of individuals.
- If more than the requisite number of Committee members are nominated (i.e. if the total number of nominees, plus automatically elected office bearers, equals more than seven persons), AAPS member schools will choose between the nominees through an election process. One balloted vote, constituted of a number of nominations corresponding to the requisite number of new Committee members, will be allowed from each member school, and the election will be conducted over a period of two weeks.

The process of electing an incoming Steering Committee Chair will immediately follow the Steering Committee election, and will be governed as follows:

- The electoral officer will continue to manage the process.
- The Steering Committee will elect an incoming Chair, with each Committee member allowed one vote.
- Steering Committee members may not vote for themselves.

¹ The first elections were held in November 2010 (hence future elections will be held in October/November 2012, 2014, 2016 and every two years thereafter). In 2012 elections will be held to elect a new steering

- The Steering Committee member receiving the greatest number of votes will be designated the incoming Chair.
- The nominee for incoming Chair must accept the nomination in writing, with the explicit understanding that they will assume the position of Chair after a period of two years as a serving member of the Steering Committee.
- If the Steering Committee member receiving the greatest number of votes is unwilling or unable to accept the nomination as incoming Chair, then the nomination will pass to the member receiving the next highest number of votes, and so on until a nominee accepts the position.
- If no such agreement is secured from the list of nominees, the process of nomination will be repeated until a willing and able nominee is found.
- In cases where two or more nominees receive an equal number of votes, and accept their nominations, the position of incoming Chair will be decided by a final election, whereby each AAPS member school may vote for a single nominee. The nominee receiving the greatest number of votes in this election will be designated incoming Chair.
- If the number of votes remains tied following the deciding election vote, both or all will be designated incoming Chair, and the position of Chair will rotate between both or all in alphabetical order (based on the family name of the nominee) such that each serves for an equal period of time within a two-year term.

Section 4. Terms of Office

- Elected Steering Committee members will serve for a term of two years.
- All members of the Steering Committee may be re-nominated and re-elected (in accordance with the process described in Article F, Section 3).

Section 5. Designation of the Position of Co-Chair

- The Steering Committee may request the outgoing Chair to fulfil the functions of Co-Chair for one term.
- If the outgoing Chair is unwilling or unavailable to act as Co-Chair, they should inform the incoming Chair at least one month prior to the conduction of Steering Committee elections.
- If the outgoing Chair is unwilling or unavailable to act as Co-Chair, they will not automatically remain a member of the Steering Committee, and the incoming Chair (as elected through the process described in Article F, Section 3 above) will act as Co-Chair.

Section 6. Co-opting of New Members to the Steering Committee

- The Steering Committee may co-opt additional non-voting members for special tasks.
- The Steering Committee may co-opt additional voting members to increase the number of its members and to replace resigned members as required.

- A Committee member wishing to nominate a co-opted member should submit the nomination in writing to the Chair, with written support for the nomination from an additional Committee member.
- The nominee should satisfy the criteria of eligibility for election to office, as stipulated in Article F, Section 2 above.
- The nominee will be designated a Committee member if a majority of Steering Committee members agree to the nomination. The Chair will have the casting vote if the decision is split.

Section 7. Resignation and Replacement of Office Bearers

- If a member of the Steering Committee can no longer fulfil their duties and obligations, and wishes to resign, they should submit a written letter of resignation to the Steering Committee Chair at least two months prior to their intended date of resignation.
- The Chair will have the power to accept the resignation, if the reasons provided are deemed valid in line with the expectations of the duties of office bearers outlined in Article F, Section 1 above.
- In the event of the Steering Committee Chair wishing to resign, the Chair should submit a written letter of resignation to the Co-Chair at least two months prior to their intended date of resignation. The Co-Chair will have the power to accept this resignation, and will fulfil the position of Steering Committee Chair for the remainder of the Chair's term.
- Following the acceptance of a Steering Committee member's resignation, the remaining Committee will replace the resigned member through one of two methods:
 - By allowing general nominations from member schools through a process managed by a nominated electoral officer (as described in Article F, Section 3 above).
 - By co-opting a new member through the process described in Article F, Section 6 above.

Section 8. Secretariat Function and Appointment

8.1 AAPS funds

AAPS member schools are encouraged to raise funding for AAPS projects, and AAPS endorsement of such a project requires majority support of the Steering Committee (see Article I below). A condition of endorsement is that some funding is set aside to support Secretariat staff to serve the network as a whole. In this case the proposed job description and qualifications of the appointee(s) should be approved by the majority of the Steering Committee.

If external or internal funding is not available to support the functioning of a full-time Secretariat, individuals located at any African member school may carry out the duties of the Secretariat on a voluntary basis, if approved by majority decision or requested by the Steering Committee.

8.2 Location

When funding is available, the Secretariat may be located at a designated custodian institution (see Article I below).² If funding is not available, Secretariat tasks may be split between different people and locations.

Article G. Meetings. Funds permitting, AAPS will hold an all-schools meeting every two years. Should funds not be available, AAPS business will be conducted electronically.

Article H. Affiliations

AAPS may affiliate to, or draw up Memoranda of Understanding with, other like-minded organizations and networks with majority agreement from the Steering Committee. These organizations and networks should be undertaking work that has goals that align with the mission statement of AAPS. They can be regional or global organizations or networks.³

AAPS may also send representatives to meetings of organizations that have goals similar to those of AAPS.

Article I. Funds and Custodians

- At the time of signing, AAPS neither holds funds nor collects membership fees.
- AAPS member schools acting alone, or in collaboration, can undertake efforts to raise funds through their institution(s) to support and implement AAPS projects
- The Steering Committee can agree to endorse such applications for funding, made on behalf of AAPS, if a majority of the Committee agrees that the project supports and furthers AAPS objectives. Such projects must aim to benefit the AAPS network as a whole.
- The Steering Committee can also approve such an institution's appointment of administrative and professional staff to implement projects, provided such conditions are agreeable to both the host institution and a majority of the AAPS Steering Committee.
- AAPS as an organization does not take responsibility for the financing, administration or the production of deliverables for such projects.
- A custodian institution should satisfy the following criteria:

² From 2008 until the date of signing, the AAPS Secretariat has been located at the African Centre for Cities (ACC) at the University of Cape Town (South Africa). The ACC had secured funding grants from the Rockefeller Foundation (running from 2008 to 2011, and 2011 to 2013 respectively) to pursue project work on behalf of AAPS. Secretariat staff were employed by the ACC.

³ As of the date of signing, AAPS has affiliations with the following bodies:

- Global Planning Education Association Network (GPEAN), signed 2001
- Slum Dwellers International (SDI), signed 2010
- Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO), signed 2011
- Negotiation with Street-Net (affiliated to WIEGO) is underway
- AAPS has further collaborated with agencies related to UN-Habitat, including the Habitat Professionals Forum

- It should be a reputable African higher education institution that teaches urban and regional planning (or its local equivalent) and conducts high-level research on African urban and regional issues.
- It should have demonstrated potential to secure funding for the activities of AAPS.
- It should have the capacity to maintain and develop the ongoing activities of AAPS, as well as to audit and report on funds to donor bodies.


Should AAPS wish to change its operational funding structure (e.g. shift to a funding model based on the collection of membership fees), the Constitution should be amended in accordance with Article J below.

Article J. Amendments

Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed by a two-thirds vote of the Steering Committee, or by the written request of one-third of the member schools. Proposed amendments are to be forwarded to each of the member schools. Member schools are required to consider the amendment within three months and respond in writing. Approval of two-thirds of the member schools is required to enact an amendment.

Article K. Bylaws

The AAPS Steering Committee may draw up bylaws for the organization from time to time as the needs arise.



Professor Babatunde Agbola
AAPS Steering Committee Chair



Professor Vanessa Watson
AAPS Steering Committee Co-Chair