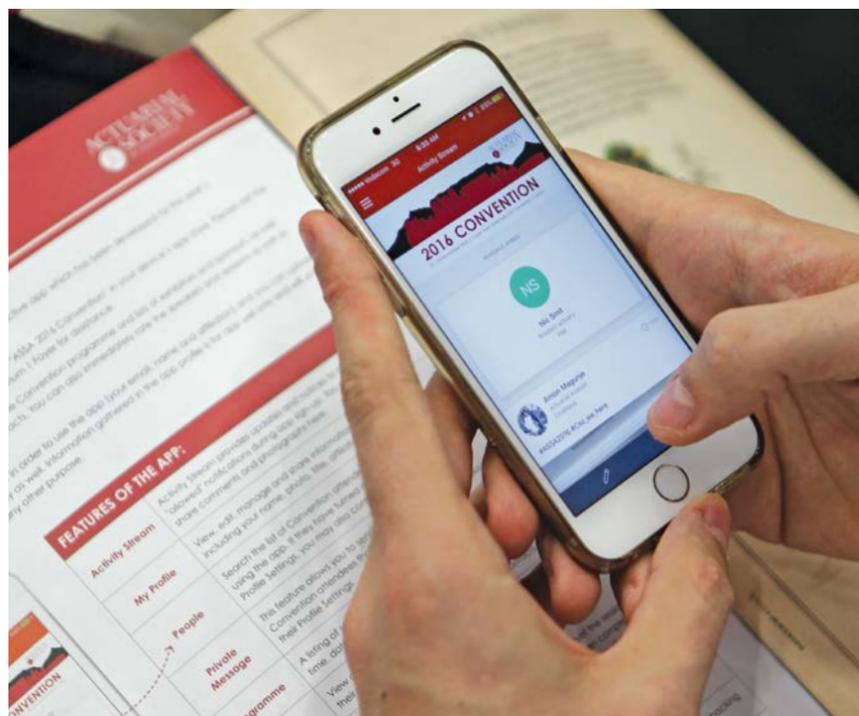


ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE SUCCESS STORY: AFRICAN AGENDA



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Name of Conference: The 2016 Convention of the Actuarial Society of South Africa
Date: 23-24 November 2016
Number of Delegates: 1 529
Number of Days: 2
Client: Actuarial Society of South Africa

About the event:

The 43rd annual convention of the Actuarial Society of South Africa was held in Cape Town at the CTICC in November 2016. The Convention is held in the fourth quarter each year and alternates between Johannesburg and Cape Town. It is an educational and networking event for members of the Actuarial Society and is its flagship event, attracting more than 1 000 delegates since 2011 and

now presenting more than 30 sessions. African Agenda has been working with the Actuarial Society since 2005 and has been contributing to the success of the annual convention since 2007.

Event highlights:

- Closing plenary address by Sizwe Nxasana (formerly of the First Rand Group) on funding for higher education.
- Fintech Spotlight sessions on new apps and programmes that mitigate risk, facilitate loans, leverage social capital or just make life easier.
- African Congress, a pre-convention event, co-costed by the International Actuarial Association and the Actuarial Society of South Africa.

Special requests:

- Create an attractive association hub in the exhibition area to highlight the member services and outreach activities of the Actuarial Society.
- Develop a cocktail and dinner event to satisfy a multi-faceted membership, with varied food and drink offerings, inconspicuous but high-quality entertainment, and a balanced provision of formal and informal seating.
- Elevate the standing of the Green Exhibitor Award, initiated by African Agenda for the Actuarial Society in 2014, with more specific judging criteria, a new panel of judges and a higher-profile award presentation.
- Live stream a moderated session on transformation and facilitate the discussion among in-person and live-streaming participants using sli.do.
- Feedback from delegates: 81% of delegates rated the Convention quality overall as "Good" or "Excellent". 78% of delegates expressed that the quality of the papers and presentations met or exceeded their expectations.

Outcomes/Addition to Knowledge Economy:

Actuaries are involved in the calculation and mitigation of risk. They contribute to the financial services sector as well as social protection and are often employed by banks, insurers and government agencies. They are highly-qualified professionals and must meet rigorous standards as well as ongoing professional development demands.

The 2016 Convention attracted more than 1 500 delegates from 23 countries. Those in attendance included mainly South African qualified actuaries and students but there was notable participation by



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representatives of other related professional organisations; stakeholders from the public sector including Treasury and Finance; African actuaries from affiliated actuarial bodies around the continent; and members of the International Actuarial Association from around the world.

The Convention satisfies members' continuing professional development requirements for their specific practice areas as well as general requirements in ethics and professionalism. The Actuarial Society is moving toward outcomes-based continuing professional development in line with global trends, so the Convention has begun to provide more opportunities for the development of members' non-actuarial skills. Sessions on wider fields have been added to the programme, including data analytics, emerging technologies, climate

change and actuaries in non-traditional roles. Professional matters, ethics and management were also covered within the selection of parallel sessions.

The two-day programme comprised more than 30 sessions, in plenary, parallel and TED-style format. A Call for Papers was issued and invited speakers were identified. The research solicited in the 2016 Call for Papers resulted in 34 presentations and 11 peer-reviewed full papers, published in a hard-copy 400-page papers book. There were also professionalism symposia, fintech spotlight sessions and two external plenary speakers. All abstracts were available on a website and an app, and audio recordings of sessions were made.

To continuously improve its contribution to the knowledge economy,

the Convention Organising Committee has instituted an internal review process for presentations as well a requirement that all first-time presenters undertake presentation training (also offered to experienced presenters).

While the Actuarial Society continually analyses and improves its educational offering, it relies on African Agenda to execute its vision of an engaging and professionally-stimulating Convention. Today the professional conference organiser is more than merely the logistical co-ordinator of an event: the role has evolved into an integral consultative contributor to the long-term development of a professional event and the engagement of a professional body with its members. In this regard, African Agenda has extensive institutional knowledge of the Actuarial Society and the Convention itself and a long and positive working relationship with the Convention role players and stakeholders.

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