



The SAIMM Young Professionals' Council (SAIMM-YPC)

The SAIMM recognizes the value that young professionals can contribute towards the Institute. On 12 September 2014, the Career Guidance and Education (CGE) committee held a workshop with the primary objective of convening an interim council of young professionals to:

- > Establish and entrench a Youth Council to represent the interests of SAIMM members 35 years of age and younger
- > Set up the rules for the functioning of the Youth Council (similar to the SAIMM Council, but subordinate)
- > Draft suitable terms of reference for the Youth Council for approval
- > Prepare an election process for members to serve on the Youth Council.

In this regard, the interim council and the CGE committee have been exceedingly successful. The establishment of the Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy Young Professionals' Council (SAIMM-YPC) and the rules for the functioning of the SAIMM-YPC, 'By-law 1 – Young Professionals' Council', have been approved by Council (16 January 2015). The election process for the 2015/2016 Young Professionals' Council commenced in March and will conclude in July prior to ratification at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in August.

The SAIMM-YPC has been involved in activities that were previously organized by the CGE committee. The SAIMM-YPC participated in the 'Engineering Focus Week' at Sci-Bono from 4 to 8 May, holding informative and inspirational talks to students from several high schools interested in engineering as a career. The SAIMM-YPC has also joined the organizing committee of the Young Professionals' Conference to be held from 21 to 22 October. A Career Day, to equip final-year students about to start their professional careers with information on what to expect in the first five years of employment, is also being organized. Participation in these activities has been an important process in the transfer of know-how from the CGE committee to the SAIMM-YPC.

Going forward the SAIMM-YPC has identified three focus areas to be involved in – Education, Career Guidance and Enterprise (see table). These focus areas have been designated due to the challenges faced by young professionals such as:

- > Shortage of funding for education
- > Limited opportunities for practical training and vacation work
- > Unemployment and depressing career prospects
- > Obstacles to entry and participation in entrepreneurial activities in the minerals sector

The SAIMM-YPC focus will be to engage with the mining industry to assist in finding support for young professionals in mining and metallurgy.

SAIMM-YPC focus areas	
Focus Area	Mission
Education	Represent the interests of pre-graduates in basic and higher education on matters of career guidance, academic development and life skills
Career Guidance	Represent the interests of primarily post-graduates in mining and metallurgy on matters of training, professional development and life skills
Enterprise	Undertake industrious initiatives of some scope, complication and risk to serve the interests of young professionals

Overcoming challenges such as getting time off work and travelling long distances to attend meetings, the members of the interim council have shown remarkable commitment, energy, and eagerness to provide active leadership and bring about a positive influence in the mining industry. Their efforts and that of the CGE committee in ensuring sustained long-term success of the younger members of the Institute and ensuring that the SAIMM-YPC becomes an integral part of the Institute is acknowledged.

T. Mmola
Chairman: Young Professionals' Council (SAIMM)