

Dare to dream big



After two years of uncertainty, 2022 seems to be developing into something that feels more normal. Perhaps some of this normality is just us adapting to the unpredictability and the curveballs we've been given, but either way, we are daring to dream big this year. For the SAIMM, the past two years meant many changes to the status quo. With the year now in full swing, I thought it would be worthwhile to reflect on the changes and the challenges the Institute faced, and overcame, as well as the plans and projects that emanated from the hard work done by the SAIMM collective.

One of the major changes relates to the SAIMM premises in Marshalltown. For many years, we've associated the SAIMM with the offices located in the Minerals Council building, which not only hosted the staff, but also the SAIMM's rare books library, IT infrastructure, and meeting rooms. The remote working environment forced upon us by the pandemic accelerated the Minerals Council's decision to downscale their office and the SAIMM was informed that the building will be sold soon. Over the past few months, Sam Moolla and her team worked tirelessly to clear out the Marshalltown offices, downsize office furniture, and fully shift the SAIMM infrastructure to the 'cloud'. All staff members, including the Journal team, are now able to work remotely. The Institute is currently operating fully as a virtual office. The team is now meeting face-to-face on a rotational basis, with several company members graciously opening their meeting rooms to allow the team to meet and collaborate.

Even before the pandemic, the SAIMM identified the need to be able to meet virtually and opted to implement the use of Zoom to supplement committee and Council meetings. During the lockdown, this decision allowed us to rapidly deliver virtual content, primarily as webinars, and later online conferences, workshops, training courses, and schools. We've also in recent years upgraded the membership management system and all membership is now managed via the MYMEMBERSHIP platform. Members can now update their information, preferences, and pay their fees via the membership portal, eliminating the need for manually managed databases. In addition, a member-only content library is available to all members. The library is continuously growing, allowing members to view valuable content online at their leisure. These are just some of the highlights related to the positioning of the Institute to continue to be member-centric and ensuring our systems are optimized.

The flagship plans for 2022 build on the sturdy foundations laid over the past two years. In 2022, we are rebuilding, but also starting new projects and initiatives that will strengthen the Institute and thus the value to members. One of my biggest dreams is to bring back in-person events. Therefore, a key activity is to rebuild the technical events programme towards this end. A flagship event this year will be the PGM Conference. The Platinum Conference has been a feature of our technical programme since 2004, and the 8th instalment was originally planned for 2020. Without belabouring the point, we all know what happened.

I had the privilege to be involved in several of the first seven events, either as a participant, presenter, peer reviewer, or part of the organizing committee. The Platinum Conference organizing committee always tried hard to identify a topical theme for each conference in the series. The list of themes, by year, therefore, is a wonderful overview of the best of times and the worst of times for the PGM industry.

- 2004 – Platinum, Adding Value
- 2006 – Platinum Surges Ahead

President's Corner *(Continued)*

- 2008 – Platinum in Transformation
- 2010 – Platinum in Transition: Boom or Bust
- 2012 – Platinum, a Catalyst for Change
- 2014 – Platinum, a Metal for the Future
- 2017 – Platinum, a Changing Industry
- 2022 – Enabling a Cleaner World

With the long gap since 2017, the 2022 event will be of great interest to all, with many changes to reflect upon, and as PGMs again surged ahead in 2021 the 8th event is sure to deliver a full programme. The Conference will be held at Sun City from 2-3 November 2022.

Another flagship project for 2022 is the launch of a dedicated ESG-focused committee. The committee was formally constituted in January 2022 and aim to actively seek opportunities for the SAIMM to develop and implement ESG capacity for our membership. The newly formed ESG-S Committee (Environment, Social, Governance and Sustainability) is daring to dream big and will be sharing their plans and projects over the next few months with membership under the leadership of Professor Mike Solomon as the first appointed Chair, ably assisted by Professor Gordon Smith who played an integral role in defining the frame of reference for this initiative.

The Young Professionals Council (YPC) continues to inspire in 2022. On 25 February they will be launching a YPC Northwest Branch. The YPC and the various branches are synergistically working together to revitalize the activities of the SAIMM in more remote areas to maximize the value for our members, especially to support young professionals in the early part of their careers. As we integrate the YPC and Branch activities, more members can participate and network across Southern Africa.

Other plans for 2022 include optimizing our marketing campaigns and streamlining our mailers to members. Our virtual content will be streamlined as well, with webinars to be hosted on Wednesdays aiming to create an established format and build a brand for SAIMM webinars (#webinarwednesday).

There are many more activities and initiatives, some new, some renewed, and the few highlights I've touched on aim only to showcase some of the plans for 2022. If you are keen to get involved in any of the committees or projects mentioned herein or are interested in organizing a technical event of your own, please contact Sam Moolla the SAIMM Manager (sam@saimm.co.za).

Let's dare to dream big in 2022.

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