

New Testament Society of Southern Africa (NTSSA)

CONSTITUTION

(Approved 8 June 2022)

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name for this society is *The New Testament Society of Southern Africa*, abbreviated as the *NTSSA* (hereinafter also referred to as “the Society”).

ARTICLE II: VISION

The vision of the NTSSA is to be the scholarly home for those committed to the research and teaching of the New Testament and related writings, primarily in the context of South Africa and the African continent. The values that the Society promotes are:

- academic excellence
- the free flow of information and healthy debate
- tolerance for various viewpoints and approaches
- interdisciplinarity
- equity
- mutual support
- diversity as an asset and
- transparency.

ARTICLE III: PURPOSE

The purpose of the Society is to encourage, develop and support scholarship and research in the field of the New Testament and related disciplines in general, and specifically within the South African context, to stimulate effective teaching, to promote publication in the field, and to offer its members opportunities for mutual support, intellectual growth, and professional development.

ARTICLE IV: OBJECTIVES

1. Research

- Organising at least one conference per year (the annual conference) and promoting this conference as widely as possible.
- Studying specific topics and fields of research in the New Testament and related disciplines by means of subgroups, meeting at least at the annual conference.
- Corresponding and liaising with similar international as well as national organisations, e.g., the “OTSSA” (*Old Testament Society of South Africa*), the “SBL” (*Society of Biblical Literature*), the Patristics Society, and the “TSSA” (*Theological Society of South Africa*).
- Representing and promoting the aims of the Society with the *National Research Foundation of South Africa*, educational institutions and other relevant research bodies to support New Testament scholarship.
- Facilitating cooperation between the different theological faculties and other cognate institutions regarding the study of the New Testament and related disciplines.
- Taking any other lawful actions which serve to further the aims of the Society.

2. Teaching

- Allowing opportunities for members to exhibit and experience the latest research, technology, and teaching/learning strategies.

3. Publication

- Publishing bi-annually the scholarly journal, *Neotestamentica*, focusing on conference proceedings and research results in the form of articles from members and non-members both national and international.

4. Equity

- Striving for sensitivity and inclusivity regarding race, gender and disabilities.
- Providing grants and mentoring programmes to encourage younger scholars, particularly women and underrepresented groups, to present papers at the annual conference.

ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP

Section A. *Membership.* A person becomes a member of the NTSSA by applying online on the Society’s website (www.newtestament.org.za; click on the menu bar icon “Membership,” followed by “Apply”). This application involves creating an account with login details and paying the requisite fee in accordance with the Society’s sliding scale fee structure. Once this website registration is completed, the new member has access to all the content available on the Society’s website, including information on conferences, minutes of meetings, the NTSSA membership list, and current and back issues of the Society’s journal – *Neotestamentica*.

Members are eligible to present papers at the Society’s annual conference and to receive financial assistance from the Scholars’ Development Fund in order to be able to attend conferences and workshops. Members have voting rights when they are present at business meetings, whether in-person or virtual.

Section B. *Membership Fees.* Membership is active for one year (from the date of application), after which the membership has to be renewed online by creating an order on the Society’s website (click on the menu bar icon “Membership,” followed by “Register”). A sliding scale fee structure is in place and members must select the option that applies to them:

NTSSA Membership Fee Sliding Scale Schedule	
<input type="checkbox"/>	R0,00 / \$0,00 – Unfortunately, I cannot contribute.
<input type="checkbox"/>	R30,00 / \$2,00
<input type="checkbox"/>	R75,00 / \$5,00
<input type="checkbox"/>	R150,00 / \$10,00
<input type="checkbox"/>	R220,00 / \$15,00
<input type="checkbox"/>	More than R220,00 / \$15,00 – I want to donate to support the disadvantaged.

Membership fees are used to cover the running costs of the Society, particularly the maintenance of the website, and to support the financially disadvantaged via the Scholars’ Development Fund. The following payment methods are available: EFT/Direct Bank Deposit; PayFast (Secure Credit Card); SnapScan; and PayPal for international members.

Section C. Termination of Membership. In case a member has not renewed his/her membership after one year, the treasurer will send a reminder. Failure to renew one's membership for more than two years will result in deletion of one's online account and cancellation of NTSSA membership and all its rights and privileges as set out in Section A. Membership may be terminated voluntarily in writing to the secretary of the Society.

ARTICLE VI: BUSINESS MEETINGS

As and when required, one or more business meetings, chaired by the chairperson, will be held during the course of the annual conference.

ARTICLE VII: EXECUTIVE

Section A. Election of Office Bearers. The business meeting appoints from its members as executive a chairperson, a secretary, a treasurer, a development officer, and a member responsible for marketing. The editor of *Neotestamentica* is an *ex officio* member of the executive (see Article X, Section F). These persons are elected by ballot. The members of the executive are elected for a term of three years. They are thereafter eligible for re-election, but not for more than two terms in the same office. In the case of a vacancy that arises, the executive co-opts a person for the remainder of the term. Should the vacancy regard the editor of *Neotestamentica*, Article X, Section F applies.

Section B. Duties of Office Bearers.

It is the duty of the *chairperson* to preside at the business meetings of the Society, as well as meetings of the executive, with an ordinary and casting vote. The chairperson liaises with other societies as set out in Article IV.1 and accepts the responsibility to negotiate with the National Research Foundation regarding funding of New Testament research. The chairperson consolidates the programme of the annual conference in collaboration with the secretary to one document.

The *secretary* keeps the membership list up to date, accurately records and files all meetings, sends out notices with regard to the annual conference and other correspondence and keeps the archives of the Society. The secretary compiles an annual report of the membership to the Society's business meeting.

The *treasurer* is responsible for the preparation of the annual budget, the receipt of membership fees, the payment of funds as authorised by the Society's business meeting, and the auditing of the Society's financial statements by reputable auditors to be put before the Society's business meeting.

The *development officer* visits various university and/or seminary departments on invitation to recruit new members and to explain the grants offered by the Society. This officer also compiles a list of doctorates who have completed their studies, to be published on the Society's official website. By networking with supervisors, the development officer identifies candidates to present either short papers or papers in at least one conference slot of the subgroups (see Article VIII Section F).

The *member responsible for marketing* accepts responsibility to maintain the Society's official website and to otherwise publicise the activities of the Society.

The *editor of Neotestamentica* performs his/her duties as is set out in the journal's constitution.

ARTICLE VIII: ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Section A. Conference Venues. The venues, dates of conferences as well as the subgroup responsible are determined two years in advance by the business meeting.

Section B. Conference Organising Committee. The business meeting appoints the local chairperson and secretary at least two years in advance. They are responsible for the arrangements of the next conference.

Section C. Administrative Organisation of the Conferences. The administrative organisation of the conferences is done by the Conference Organising Committee (cf. Article VIII, Section D) in collaboration with the chairperson of the NTSSA.

Section D. The Contents of the Programme of a Conference. The contents of the programme of a conference are arranged by the particular subgroup leaders (as described later) in collaboration with the chairperson. The chairperson consolidates the programme in collaboration with the secretary to one document which forms part of the NTSSA circular which is sent to members at the beginning of the year.

Section E. *Personal Guests and Observers.* Any member may invite guests to the conference, on condition that the host provides registration forms to the guests. The guests will be expected to pay the normal conference registration fees. The conference remains open for all interested parties. Such participants may attend the conference as observers and must personally meet all conference costs, such as registration, board and lodging expenses, meals and refreshments.

Section F. *Recommended Conference Programme.* There are four main papers of 60 minutes each, and a keynote address of 90 minutes. Four (including the keynote address) are determined by the responsible subgroup and one is a paper by a senior member of the NTSSA, or in exceptional cases somebody else, on invitation by the executive. The other subgroups share three sessions of 60 minutes each in parallel. Subgroups need not utilise all slots. One time slot should be set aside for a younger scholar who may be identified by the member for development in collaboration with thesis supervisors. Three parallel sessions are reserved for subgroups. A fourth session is for papers not fitting into the subgroups.

There are four time slots of 40 minutes each for short papers. The maximum of three papers may be read in tandem in each time slot. For short papers, preference is given to scholars who recently completed their doctoral theses.

Section G. *Main Papers.* It is recommended that main papers be circulated beforehand and published on the official website of the NTSSA, to allow maximum time for discussion.

Section H. *Short Papers.* Thirty minutes are allowed for the presentation of a short paper, and 10 minutes for discussion.

Section I. *Deadlines.* Subgroup leaders must submit to the chairperson the items for each time slot for which the subgroup is responsible at the conference at least by 31 January, except if arranged otherwise by the business meeting (one hard copy, as well as the file in electronic format). Each title for a proposed paper must be accompanied with an abstract, the full name of the reader of the paper as well as the proposed chairperson for that session. Abstracts for short papers must also reach the chairperson before 31 January, except if arranged otherwise by the business meeting, for refereeing by the executive.

ARTICLE IX: THE ORGANISATION OF SUBGROUPS

Section A. *Formation of the Subgroups.* The business meeting allows the formation of a new subgroup on the basis of a proposed project, following the NRF format. A subgroup consists of at least ten primary members. A primary member of one subgroup is not allowed to be a primary member of another subgroup. Subgroups are encouraged to include younger scholars, as well as strive for collaboration with scholars from other parts of Africa. Subgroups function for three years, after which the business meeting considers its continuance on the recommendation of the executive.

Section B. *Functioning of Subgroups.* Each subgroup annually elects a chairperson and secretary and reports back on the last business meeting of the conference. These two persons are responsible for the final refereeing of the papers/abstracts offered by the subgroup for the programme of the next conference.

Section C. *Duties of the Subgroup Leaders Responsible for the Conference.* The subgroup leaders of the subgroup that presents the conference make the first phase of the refereeing process for publication of those papers in *Neotestamentica*. The particular subgroup therefore accepts responsibility for contributing worthwhile scholarly material for publication. While the editor of *Neotestamentica* has the final right of determination, papers ought to reach the editor in a form ready for publication (cf. also Article VIII, sections C, D, F, G, H and I for duties regarding the conference programme).

Section D. *Special Projects or Themes.* Members can register special themes or projects with the executive, for which time will be allocated on the annual conference's programme in a similar way as for subgroups. Members should register such themes or projects at a business meeting preceding the annual conference at which such theme or project is intended to be included on the programme. A member cannot register more than one theme or project in a year. A theme or project will be current for two years, unless renewed with the executive.

ARTICLE X: NEOTESTAMENTICA

Section A. *Official Publication of the NTSSA.* *Neotestamentica* is the official publication of the NTSSA. It serves primarily as a showcase of South African scholarship in the field of New

Testament studies.

Section B. *Primary Constituent.* The business meeting of the NTSSA constitutes the primary constituent and carries the final administrative and financial responsibility of *Neotestamentica*. The business meeting however delegates its powers to the editorial board as determined by the regulations of *Neotestamentica*.

Section C. *Neotestamentica Regulations.* The journal possesses its own set of regulations as recommended by the editorial board and approved by the business meeting. The set of regulations determines the composition and statement of duties of the editorial board, the international advisory board and the editor.

Section D. *Financial Matters.* The journal is run on a financially independent basis but is entitled to those components of the NTSSA membership fees which are from time to time allocated by the business meeting for the use of *Neotestamentica*. The financial statements are audited separately from those of the NTSSA. The audited financial statements are to be submitted to the editorial board which in turn submits them to the business meeting for approval.

Section E. *Publication Procedure.* The procedures for publication in the journal are determined by the journal's own set of regulations.

Section F. *Election of Editor.* The editor of *Neotestamentica* is elected by the business meeting of the Society for a period of five years. In the case of a vacancy occurring, the executive appoints a new editor until a new one can be elected at the next business meeting.

ARTICLE XI: REPEAL AND AMENDMENTS

Provided that notice of the proposed changes has been included in the agenda of a meeting, this constitution may be amended or repealed by a two-thirds vote at any legally constituted business meeting.

Chairperson

Secretary