



Another milestone reached: Partnership with ISD sealed

By the New Agenda editorial collective

“The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET accredited list on condition that the suggested improvements are implemented by the end of 2023.”

-ASSAf Panel review of New Agenda, 2022

As described in previous issues of *New Agenda*, the original publishers of the journal, the Institute for African Alternatives (IFAA), has taken active steps to ensure that *New Agenda* retains its accreditation with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

These moves follow the recommendations of academics on an expert review panel assembled by the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) after they asserted that *New Agenda* — in the period 2017 to 2019 — did not meet the proper standards for research-led academic publishing.

In one of the most significant moves in the year-long process to transform *New Agenda* to meet the rigorous requirements for accreditation, the partnership between IFAA and the University of the Western Cape’s Institute for Social Development (ISD) was launched. This will provide the journal with an academic home and significantly strengthen its standing as an academic publication.

The two institutes have agreed to collaborate on matters relating to accreditation, the editorial board, peer review processes and monitoring, sharing of databases, and the use of digital platforms to expand the readership and reach of the magazine.

In terms of the agreement, future joint issues of *New Agenda* will be published on UWC Scholar – UWC’s online publishing system managed by Mark Snyders and his team at the university’s Scholarly Communication Unit of the Main library. They provided the *New Agenda* team with training on Open Journal Systems (OJS) — the world’s most widely used journal management and publishing software — and made available to IFAA the use of the university’s journal management and publishing software.

ISD staff members sit on the newly constituted editorial board and nominated scholars from around the world to join as board members. The editorial board held its first meeting in October 2023. >>



Former President Kgalema Motlanthe is escorted by UWC Rector Tyrone Pretorius to the launch celebration

At the launch of the partnership Professor Tyrone Pretorius, the Rector of the University, described the co-hosting of *New Agenda: South African Journal for Social and Economic Policy* – founded in the early 2000s by the late Professor Ben Turok – as one of the major achievements of this alliance.

“Today, it is a platform for incisive examination of governance issues. The hybrid left-leaning journal – which has its academic home here at the ISD – is the vital interface between academic research, policy debates and interventions, and citizen mobilisation by informing and engaging readers to play a constructive role in social, political and economic transformation and development.

“Crucially, it is used by our policymakers to inform their decisions to find solutions to our society’s most profound challenges.”

Another milestone in *New Agenda*’s transition was the inaugural meeting of the new editorial board of the journal, now comprising a range of international scholars. Their names can be found on the opening page of this issue.

The new editorial board and the formal acknowledgement of the role ISD will play as the academic home of *New Agenda* follow other key steps to implement the improvements suggested by the ASSAf panel by the end of 2023. These are the upgrading of peer review processes, the documenting of the workflow in a database to allow for analysis, and the review of guidelines for authors and reviewers. As described in *New Agenda* issue 90, the journal is now making use of Open Journal Systems (OJS).

New Agenda’s call for papers for 2024 is on the website at <https://epubs.ac.za/index.php/newagenda/announcement/view/5>

This includes links to the guidelines for authors and a statement of the citation standards required for academic articles.

We welcome advice and feedback from readers as we re-position *New Agenda* in a new digital publishing environment. Send your comments to production@ifaa.org.za **NA**