

The logo for LIASA, featuring the letters 'LIASA' in a bold, teal, sans-serif font. A small yellow sun-like icon is positioned above the 'i'. The logo is set against a white background with a yellow swoosh on the left and a green swoosh on the right.

**Library and Information  
Association of South Africa**

# **Strategic Directions** **2010 – 2014**

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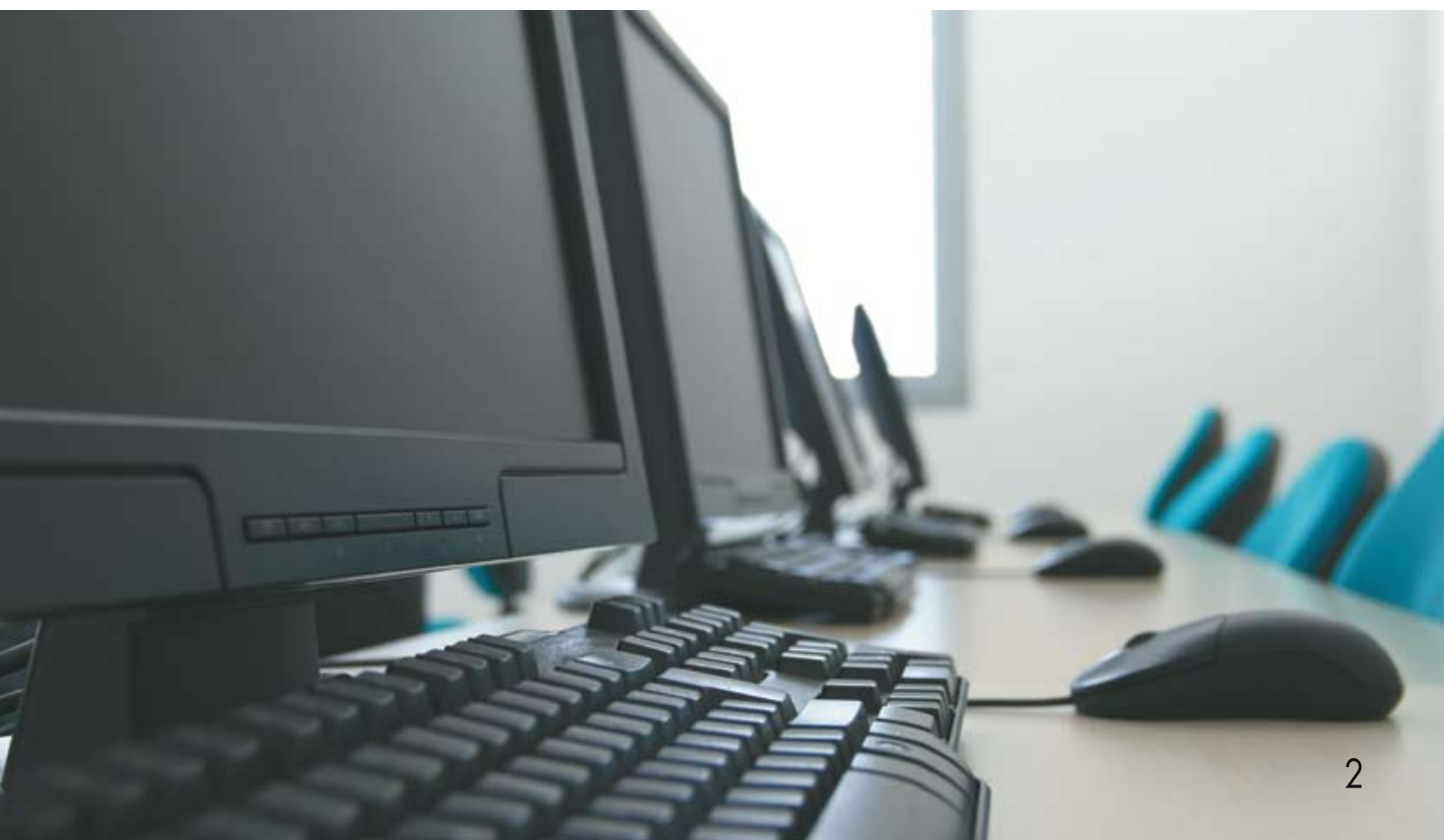
South Africa's transition to a democracy has brought with it its own set of challenges including that of access to information, an essential pillar in upholding a democracy. In this transitional period, South Africa is reliant on every possible institution to contribute to the growth of its fledgling democracy. The growth and sustainability of a democracy is dependent upon equitable access to information and knowledge which is the core business of the library and information sector. The **Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA)**, representing the interests of the library and information sector, is one of those institutions that must be recognized as a significant contributor to the growth and development of South Africa.

Professional associations and societies are influential organisations representing the voice of the professional community in addressing issues relating to their welfare, status, working conditions, physical facilities, education and training including research and development activities. The core purposes of associations have always been to serve the needs and to protect the interests of the communities that they serve. However, LIASA, in developing Strategic Directions 2010 – 2014 sought a unique blend representing member needs and interests and a broadening of its purpose to serve the overall development needs of the nation. This includes growing

emphasis on an organization that is committed to the development agenda of the country and to bringing to life fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

Further, influencing the development of Strategic Directions are changing international LIS paradigms and policies and practices of international organizations such as the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), UNESCO and the United Nations. UNESCO maintains that it is a scandal and blight on humanity that such a large proportion of the world's population does not have access to literacy, a critical tool for learning and social practice. Addressing of the Millennium Development Goals is significant for the developing world. Bringing to the fore these national and international imperatives, was critical in the development of Strategic Directions 2010 – 2014.

LIASA has consciously and deliberately expanded its mission and vision, aligning it to the development agenda of the country and policies and practices of international institutions propagating development. The Executive Committee had conducted intensive SWOT and PENST analyses which fed into the development of Strategic Directions 2010 – 2014, and the new mission and vision.



# Overview of LIASA

**LIASA** has been recognised, in the international arena, as an association that has noteworthy influence on librarianship in nations across sub-Saharan Africa. It has an extremely progressive constitution which makes provision for all person's interested in the LIS discipline to become members. It has a national cohort of office bearers who are elected for two-year terms. There are ten Branches in the LIASA structure covering all nine provinces. The branches and interest group structure enhance the vibrancy and dynamism of the organisation through this decentralisation. Each branch has officers and interest group conveners. Currently, there are ten interest groups:

- LIASA Acquisitions Interest Group (LACIG)
- LIASA Special Libraries Interest Group (LiSLIG)
- Higher Education Interest Group (HELIG)
- Interlending Interest Group (ILLIG)
- Interest Group for Bibliographic Standards (IGBIS)
- Information and Communication Technology Interest Group (ICTLIG)
- Public and Community Libraries Interest Group (PACLIG)
- Research, Education and Training Interest Group (RETIG)
- School Libraries and Youth Services Interest Group (SLYSIG)
- Support Staff Interest Group (SSIG)

These interest groups are subordinate to the main LIASA structure and governance practices, including its Constitution. Interest group meetings are held at the LIASA Conference annually. Some of the interest groups hold pre-conference sessions for training and skills development. This degree of autonomy for interest groups and branches has set-off a new sense of vibrancy and commitment to the profession. Significant to any 21st century association is the com-

mitment to training and development and a vibrant website. LIASA has an excellent Continuing Education and Professional Development (CEPD) programme. Its website is said to be excellent. The site is clearly and aesthetically designed and populated with both current and archived information. It has a good contemporary communication tool that is available globally. Importantly, especially given current infrastructure development in sub-Saharan Africa, this is not the only effective communication that LIASA has developed. It has two different publications as a means to communicate management decisions, share ideas between branches as well as communicate issues relating to career advancement and development. The two publications are:

- *South African Journal of Libraries and Information Science* (SAJLIS)
- *LIASA-In-Touch* (LIT)

These publications range in scope and format from a scholarly peer-reviewed journal (SAJLIS), to a magazine which includes advertising of new library products and current organisational topics to add value to the communication process. The journal and magazine each have a circulation of about 2 000 and readership in South Africa of about 5 000. The conversion of the peer-reviewed journal to open access in 2012 will increase visibility of this publication and will share South African LIS practices with international audiences. LIASA has grown substantially since its inception in 1997. The current Executive and Representative Committees are keen to bring this Association, representing a significant sector for the growth and development of the country, closer to the development agenda of the country. It is the view of these Committees that information and knowledge is a critical commodity for the growth and development of South Africa. Therefore, the new strategic directions must add value to the growth and development of the country.



# Strategic Directions 2010-2014

Strategic Directions 2010–2014 is deemed to be dynamic and living and, must be visited continuously for evaluation and revision to ensure relevance and strict alignment with the mission and vision of the organization. By the same token, the mission and vision need to be revisited periodically to ensure that it is on the same development trajectory as the country and the LIS profession in general.

## OUR VISION

**Dynamic association of excellence for LIS**

## OUR MISSION

**The association driving LIS for the growth and development of South Africa**

## OUR CORE VALUES

Providing leadership excellence to the profession, country, membership and international partners  
Engaging in the highest ethical practice  
Ensuring professional conduct  
Acknowledging and appreciating a diverse country and membership  
Securing and assuring freedom of access to information as enshrined in the SA Constitution  
Committing to the development and growth of South Africa through excellence in librarianship

## Strategic Directions

Over and above that which is stated above, LIASA has developed the current strategic directions building on past and present successes of the organisation. It has deliberately discharged all negative history to build a positive future for an organisation that is more engaging, relevant and South African. There are six strategic themes guiding the strategic direction of LIASA for the next four years – extending over the term of office of the President and President-Elect.

	Strategic direction themes
<b>Theme 1:</b>	Leadership provides innovative, efficient, effective and relevant leadership that will drive LIS in South Africa
<b>Theme 2:</b>	Membership and sector engagement recruit and retain a membership that is committed to the growth and development of themselves and the nation
<b>Theme 3:</b>	Advocacy increase visibility, leverage resources and maximise influence with cognate bodies and government
<b>Theme 4:</b>	Marketing and communication exploit the channels of communication to promote the LIASA brand and support library issues and improved visibility of the LIS sector
<b>Theme 5:</b>	Good governance explores and adopts good governance structures and strategies for financial growth and accountability
<b>Theme 6:</b>	Training and development invigorate the sector through dynamic and vibrant continuing education and, training and development programmes

# Strategic Actions

Complementing Strategic Directions 2010 – 2014 is the development of an action plans document that provides greater details on the implementation of the strategic actions listed below.

## Theme 1: Leadership

Providing innovative, effective, efficient and relevant leadership:

- Excellent management of relations with stakeholders including library schools on the future of LIS schools, curriculum, accreditation and such
- Strengthen relationships with existing stakeholders such as Department of Arts and Culture, sponsors, exhibitors, vendors and funders, and donors
- Develop and mentor a new cadre of leaders through workshops and training, and development programmes
- Identify, recruit and develop potential leaders
- Develop strategies for the deployment of members on national and international bodies
- Pursue with greater vigour the acquisition of statutory status
- Develop strategies to take the Transformation Charter forward
- Continuously scan the national legislative environment for interventions by the professional body

## Theme 2: Membership and sector engagement

- Develop strategies for membership recruitment
- Develop strategies for membership retention
- Engage with other LIS agencies such as the Provincial Library Services, Specialised LIS member associations and museums, and archives
- Engage with LIS employers on matters such as staff active participation in the profession, staff training and development, and contribution to the growth and development of the country

## Theme 3: Advocacy

Engage in activities that will increase visibility of the LIS profession, leverage resources including funding and maximise influence with cognate bodies and government:

- Continuously engage with the relevant government ministries for the promotion

of the Association and the significance of information and knowledge for the growth and development of the country

- Develop an advocacy toolkit
- Engage with various political parties at regional, provincial and national level
- Scan, collaborate and engage the changing political landscape

## Theme 4: Marketing and communication

Exploit contemporary channels of communication for the promotion of the LIASA brand and its commitment to addressing library issues and improve visibility of the LIS sector:

- Develop strategies for the extensive promotion of LIASA as a brand
- Design, develop and implement a marketing plan
- Strengthen existing and explore new communication channels
- Maximise the use of cutting edge technology for marketing and communication purposes
- Scan and engage the media landscape

## Theme 5: Good governance

Explore and adopt good governance structures and strategies for organisational stability, accountability and financial growth:

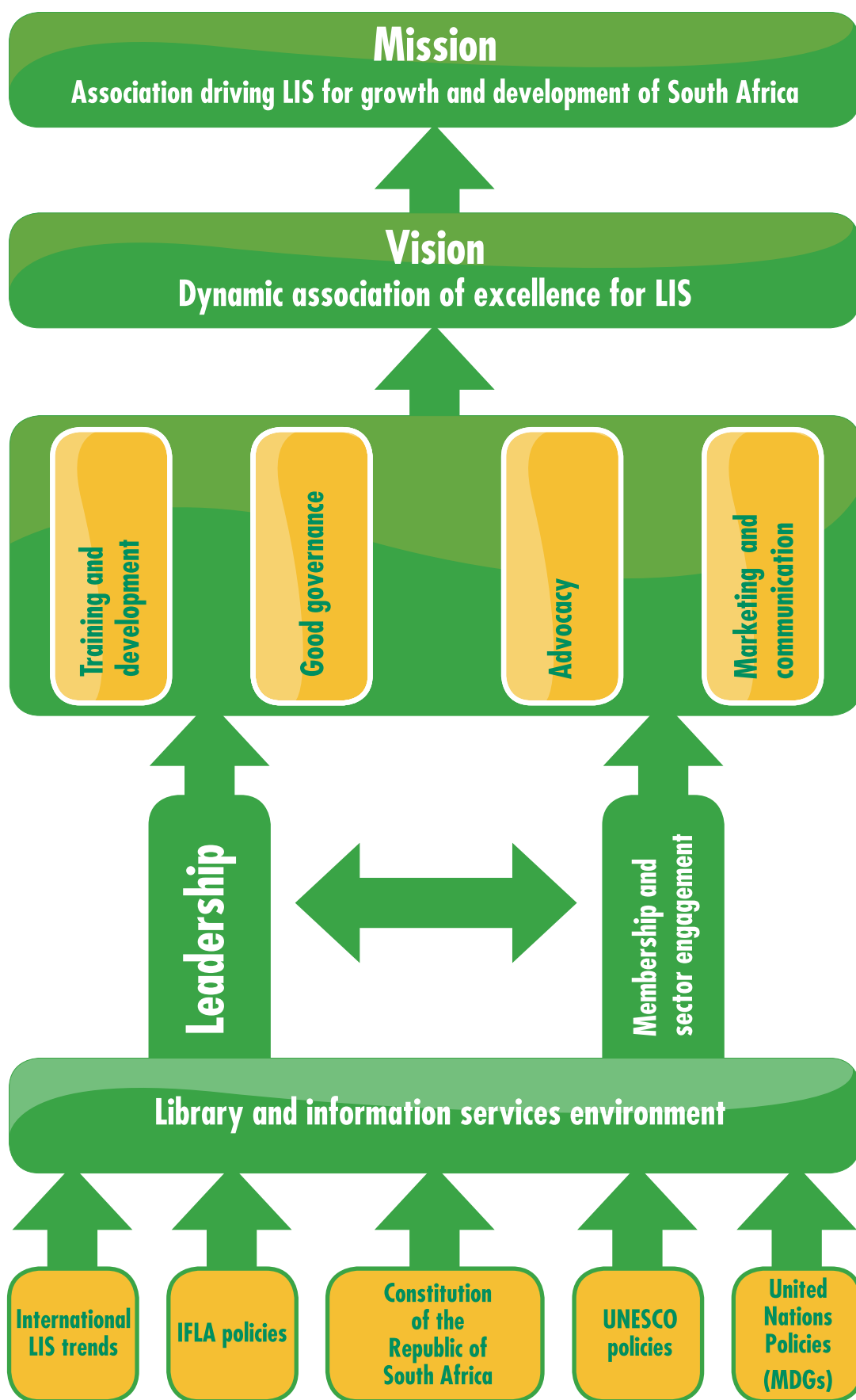
- Continuously visit structures, guidelines, procedures and policies and review such if and when necessary
- Develop strategies for financial stability through the establishment of competent income generating streams
- Explore investment opportunities
- Demonstrate and inculcate a culture of accountability within LIASA and the profession in general

## Theme 6: Training and development

Invigorate the sector through dynamic and vibrant continuing education and training, and development programmes:

- Engage the ETDP SETA with regard to accreditation status
- Design, develop and implement a training and development plan such as the New Generation Librarian Scholarship Programmes
- Continue with Professional Development and Workplace Learning

# Library and Information Services Environment



Sustainability **Leadership**  
**SERVICE QUALITY**  
**Information Science**  
**LEARNING**  
**Education**  
**International Recognition**  
**EXCELLENCE**  
**e-learning** Growth  
Research Literacy Development  
**TRAINING**  
**Access**  
**Transformation** PROFESSIONAL  
**Academic**  
**Good Governance**  
**PUBLIC LIBRARY** innovative  
**Communication** ETHICAL  
**STRATEGIC THINKING**