



Greetings friends, colleagues, students, and emerging scientists.

As President of the Anatomical Society of Southern Africa (ASSA) I have the singular honour of welcoming all potential delegates and attendees to the XXVIII International Symposium on Morphological Sciences (ISMS) to be held at the Graduate School of Business of the University of Cape Town, Victoria & Alfred Waterfront, Cape Town, Republic of South Africa, from the 5th to the 8th of August, 2023.

I would like to extend my deepest thanks to Prof. Graham Louw and all the members of the local organising committee for taking on the role of organising this upcoming symposium, the theme of which is Vision 2023 & Beyond – Excellence in Research and Education.

Although still a very real concern, the global community has stepped up and positive inroads have been made in the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. This is also true for South Africa – and with the current trends, continued progress will be made leading up to 2023 and the start of the ISMS. Regardless, the organising committee has agreed to have a hybrid form of the symposium (both in-person as well as online). This shows great foresight, as well as empathy for those who cannot – or choose not to – join us in-person. The lessons learned over the past two to three years have proven that online gatherings, symposia and conferences are possible – with the benefit of bringing together colleagues and peers, usually separated by great distances, using an online platform. In addition, I believe that this decision will ensure greater inclusivity for both local and international delegates. This will also be of great benefit to our younger colleagues and students, who may not have the financial resources to commit to an international academic meeting.

So, for those who plan on joining remotely, you will be treated to all the excellent scientific presentations, discussions, keynote addresses over an online platform. The efficient staff at the Graduate School of Business will ensure that you will be able to follow the programme to its completion. To those delegates who plan on making the trip to Cape Town, not only will you have an opportunity to attend and experience all the same academic sessions, but I am sure that you will be treated to the beauty and history of Cape Town. You will be able to experience the natural beauty, culturally significant landmarks, and expansive coastal locations that are all nearby.

I am sure that as Chairperson of the local organising committee, Prof. Graham Louw will be able to provide a more expansive and detailed welcome – as well as thank the many people and institutions that will ensure the smooth running of the XXVIII ISMS meeting. From my

side, and on behalf of ASSA, I wish you the warmest welcome and we look forward to hosting scientists from all over the world to Cape Town in 2023.

Kindest regards and stay safe
Prof. Albert van Schoor
University of Pretoria
President of ASSA