

## INVITATION TO THE 2017 CONFERENCE

Conference Theme: “#Free Education and our role?”

Co-Hosted by

University of Kwazulu Natal (UKZN) & Mongosothu University of Technology (MUT)

**Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> July – Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2017**  
Southern Sun Elangeni Hotel, Durban

**Dear Colleagues**

FAPSA, since 2001 has always played a pivotal role in determining what the Best Practices would be in assisting Financial Aid Offices and also the Best Processes in assisting NSFAS and Donors alike in the management, administration and allocation of funds within the industry. Over the past few years we have been subjected to numerous changes within the industry, taking into account the student centred model of NSFAS, “Central Application System”, “#FeesMustFall”, system requirements, changes in how we operate within our sector, etc. Change has always been accepted within our sector, as we all believe in changing for the betterment and to improve the way we administer our funding nationally in compliance with the sponsors rules. We as FAPSA have been subjected to numerous changes over the past few years and the ultimate roll out of the new on-line system for all HEI’s and TVET’s. This was a new “animal” that needed all of us to change the way we have to administer funding hence our theme for this year’s conference, **#Free Education and our role?**

At last year’s conference we addressed the challenges we were faced with since #FeesMustFall occurred. In the 2016 academic year, we were allocated R14.5 billion in funding, which included Historic Debt for the academic years 2013 – 2015, in conjunction with KGODISO Loan funding, that assisted students affected by Historic Debt to further and continue their studies. These two categories amounted to R4.5 billion of the 2016 overall annual budget. Despite all the above funding being made available, we were still affected by student protests and witness part two of the **#FeesMustFall** campaign. Universities throughout South Africa were forced to close for weeks and some were closed for months. Students made their voices heard once again and stated that they would not stop until Free Education was made available for all South African students. A Reference Group was established to determine mechanisms and funding formulas that would assist students who form part of the so-called, “Missing Middle” category of funding. The Reference Group concluded its task in October 2016 and a report was delivered to the Minister for further consideration and the role out of the pilot programme for the Missing Middle was introduced for the 2017 academic year.

Over the past few years we have always aligned our conference theme in line with the current challenges or circumstances that we faced within our sector. In 2015 our theme was, “**Financial Aid – Rising above Change in Unity**”, in 2016, our theme for conference was, **#Crossroads: Where to next?** and this year as stated above, it is, “**#Free Education and our role**”. We as FAPSA believe that our theme for this year’s conference clearly indicates that we have come to yet another mile stone that will affect the future of the Financial Aid Offices in line with the demands for Free Education. The conference hopes to enlighten all of us on the way forward.

It is from this premise that FAPSA invites all member institutions and organizations to the 2017 and 16<sup>th</sup> FAPSA Conference.

Early Bird Registration fee of R4,000.00 per delegate **until 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017, thereafter the fee will be R4500.00 per delegate which** includes FAPSA Membership Fee, Gala Dinner, Conference fee, Goody bags, Gifts, Teas & Lunches but **excludes the Monday night Dinner. A Maximum of 250 delegates will be accepted on a First come first payment basis. Institutions must make their own travel and accommodation arrangements.**

A maximum of 5 delegates per University/University of Technology/FET College/Educational NGO and a maximum of 2 delegates per Provincial Department of Education and any other organization is hereby invited.

Institutions/organizations intending to send more than the stipulated maximum number of delegates should contact Alberto Lai Wing at 043 704 7245 or [alai-wing@ufh.ac.za](mailto:alai-wing@ufh.ac.za) before making bookings for additional delegates.

Registration starts @ 18H00 – 20H00 on 02 July 2017, continuing in the following morning at 08h30am to 09h30. The last session of this year's conference will conclude @ 14H00 on 05 July 2017.

This invitation serves as a call to member institutions and partners to start with the preparations for the 2017 Conference and the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting where **You** will begin developing and bringing to life the request made by the former leaders of FAPSA, that of “**Building a better and more focused organisation aimed at better servicing our members, institutions and students**”.

Yours sincerely

**Alberto Lai Wing**  
**FAPSA President**