



All systems go for...

SASTA Congress 2021

A year and a bit later and the COVID-19 pandemic continues its stranglehold on the global and local stage. Over the last year, as has been the case throughout history, the remarkable resilience of the human spirit has become evident. Governments, companies, organisations and individuals have all reinvented themselves and found ways to overcome the impact of the pandemic. Part of this has been a proliferation of on-line tools and systems to facilitate communication and connection without the need for face-to-face interaction.



Sumita Ramgareeb, SASTA Congress Organising Committee Chairperson, outlines plans for this year's congress.

First ever virtual SASTA Congress: 17 - 19 August 2021



SASTA, assisted by our conference organising company, Turners, has thoroughly investigated the options and software platforms available to allow us to run a virtual 2021 SASTA congress. This has been a fascinating process and we are delighted to have determined that a virtual on-line event is not only possible but serves all our needs and even provides some opportunities not available at face-to-face events.

For many of our SASTA delegates, this may be your first experience at a virtual congress, and we fully understand that there may be some concerns. Not to worry, you will be guided and helped at each turn as you explore the virtual world of conferences. Turners Conferences, in partnership with the

Hubilo virtual conference developers, will assist SASTA delegates at every step. Please see our guide below to your 2021 Congress journey.

SASTA would dearly have loved to hold an in-person Congress this year but with the third wave and the slow roll out of vaccines in our country, the Council voted on the safer option of a Virtual Congress. We sincerely hope that you and your families stay safe and we look forward to seeing you on the virtual stage.

Five steps for making the most of Congress 2021!

Step 1: Registration

Register online [here](#). Alternatively, go to the SASTA website and follow the links for 2021 SASTA Congress, or click on the email link that will be sent to all SASTA members. The cost of attending congress is R 575 for members and R1 150 for non-members (both including VAT).

Step 2: Look out

Information on the keynote address and the programme will be emailed to all SASTA members.

Step 3: The link

A week prior to congress, you will be emailed your special link to the 2021 virtual SASTA Congress. On the day of congress, click on the link and you will be directed to the congress reception hall.

If you have any concerns about connectivity and your internet strength, technicians will be on hand to guide you for the duration of congress. You may also send any questions or concerns to Turners prior to congress, so we can help you resolve these.

During congress week, if you miss a presentation, you can watch the recording later in the day. All presentations will be available to registered delegates during the course of congress and while the virtual platform is live. You will not be able to access the presentations when the congress ends and the platform is closed. There will, however, be the usual publication of SASTA Congress Proceedings with papers being available on the SASTA website.

Step 4: Watch presentations and ask questions

If you have any questions while watching the presentation, send these to the moderator or session chair and these will be asked on your behalf. Alas, you will not be able to ask the question live.

Step 5: Network

The life blood of any conference is the opportunity to reconnect with old friends and colleagues over that cup of coffee or glass of wine. It also provides the ideal space and time for many members of the Sugar Industry to connect.

Although the virtual experience will be different from the regular face-to-face encounter, you can make use of the lounge, SASTA café or meeting room to connect.

You will also have the option to meet or chat live with the various exhibitors. SASTA is immensely grateful for the dedication and support of our exhibitors and sponsors over the years. We thus acknowledge all the exhibitors and sponsors who have embraced this opportunity of a virtual event and joined SASTA on this journey.

