

Governance

Stewardship

The Association is governed by a Board of Management comprising 10 elected members, an Immediate Chairperson and two co-opted members. The composition, powers and functions of the Board are guided by DSA Constitution.

The Board of Management is elected at every alternate Annual General Meeting and elected members are eligible to hold office for a two-year term. Members of the outgoing Board of Management are eligible for re-election subject to their term limits.

Members elected to the Board of Management vote amongst themselves to fill the appointments

within the Board of Management. Only Board members who have served at least one (1) term on the Board previously shall hold office positions, unless insufficient Board members have met this requirement to fill all office positions, in which case all elected Board members can hold office.

At least 50% of the Board of Management shall comprise parents and/or siblings of a child with Down syndrome, unless the number of such parents and/or siblings running for election to the Board of Management in any election year is fewer than half of the total number of Board members for that election year.

Board Evaluation

Board evaluations are typically conducted during each board term with the objective of assessing how effective the roles and responsibilities of the Board are fulfilled within the following domains:

Board Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition, diversity, and stewardship of Board and Committees • Constitution • Frequency of meetings • Board Processes • Succession Planning 	Board's Role in Governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfilment of DSA's Vision and Mission through strategic direction and good governance • Monitoring of policies, strategy implementation and systems • Provide oversight of DSA's programs, services and objectives and support to Management Staff
Dynamics & Functioning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Agenda • Annual Budget and Calendar of Events • Cohesiveness and quality of participation in Board meetings • Information Availability • Interactions and Communication with Executive Director and Senior Management Staff • Training and Development 	Financial Reporting, Process, Internal Controls, Risk Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrity and robustness of financial and other controls • Grant Compliance and Management • Conduct of fundraising activities and Donor Management • DSA's Guidelines and Policies

The last Board Evaluation exercise was conducted over a period of 11 weeks from 6 April to 21 June 2021 by an external independent consultant - Usha Menon Consultancy and Nonprofit Innovation.

The consultancy enabled the Board to have a clear understanding of its core competencies as well as its weaknesses so that it can focus on its strategy for resilience, adaptability, and success in the future. The next Board Evaluation will be conducted in FY2023.

Succession Planning for the Board and Senior Management

DSA's approach to succession planning is designed to ensure that the Association is able to harness the skills and talents of all its Board members and its senior management employees. This is also to ensure that the Association can retain and attract skilled and dedicated voluntary Board members and senior management employees, who share the Association's vision, mission and values, to harness their talents and provide ongoing development opportunities for them to meet current and future objectives of DSA.

The Nomination Committee is entrusted to assist the Board in this endeavour, including the board's re-nomination and re-appointment process.

Internal Control & Financial Management

Internal Control Systems

DSA has standard operating procedures for procurement and appropriate delegation system of financial approving authority limits for expenditure.

Budget Planning

The Finance Committee evaluates budgets on a year-to-date basis to ensure that expenses and incoming funds are prudently projected and managed. Audited financial statements are made available on DSA's website to provide full disclosure for the benefit of all our stakeholders.

Tender Process

Tender process guidelines are in place to guide DSA in getting the best Goods and Services at the right time and value for money. The selection process is fair and transparent following ethical business practices.

Reserves, Restricted Funds, Purpose and Plan for Utilisation of Restricted Funds

Reserves are maintained to provide working capital and enable DSA to develop over the longer term. Designated Funds and Restricted Funds are donations or grants received that are set aside for specific projects and expenses, in accordance with donors' wish(es) or stipulated by the government ministries and grant-makers. As a general rule of thumb, the Association aims to have two years of operational expenditure kept as reserves. The reserve levels will be reviewed on a yearly basis by the Board.

DSA has disclosed its restricted funds and purpose and plan for utilisation of Restricted Funds in the

Audited Financial Statements, Note 14 to Note 28. Please refer to the audited Financial Statements, page 77 to 81, for more information.

Grant Compliance and Management

The aim of DSA's Grant Compliance and Management is to ensure that grant funds are used for the purpose(s), over the specified timeframe (if any), and in the manner prescribed and promulgated by the Grantmaker.

Policy governing loans made to related and external parties

DSA does not offer loans to any related and external parties.

Investment Policy

Investment decisions are made and recommended by the Finance Committee and endorsed by the Board of Management.

DSA's funds are currently invested in treasury bills and fixed deposits in financial institutions. These investments are made with the primary objective of capital preservation through a low-risk approach to generate the highest possible and sustainable financial return within an acceptable level of risk for the Association, while investing within the parameters established by DSA's investment guidelines. The portfolios are closely monitored and periodic reviews are conducted by the Finance Committee.

Conflict of Interest Management

Conflict of Interest

DSA has a conflict of interest policy and operating procedures in place to avoid or manage situations of any actual or perceived conflicts of interest. All Board members and staff including vendors providing goods and services are required to comply with the Association's conflict of interest policy.

DSA has documented procedures for Board members, staff, and vendors to declare actual or potential conflict of interests on a regular and need-to basis. Board members also abstain and do not participate in decision-making on matters where a conflict of interest may arise.

Whistleblowing Policy

DSA has a whistleblowing policy to provide a channel for the reporting of actual or suspected wrong doings committed by the Association's board members, volunteers and staff for procedural investigation and corrective action. Assurance is also given that the Whistle-blower will be protected from reprisals for whistleblowing made in good faith.

Anti-Money Laundering & Counter Terrorism Financing Policy

DSA is committed to conducting its activities and operations lawfully and ethically to the highest standards possible and its specific guidelines include:

- Ensuring that the practices of DSA are in line and in compliance with the Corruption, Drug Trafficking and Other Serious Crimes (Confiscation of Benefits) Act and the Terrorism (Suppression of Financing) Act.
- Protecting the integrity of DSA and its stakeholders from potential abuse or exploitation related to money laundering and terrorism financing activities.
- Providing examples of good practices that DSA can adopt to mitigate its risk exposure to money laundering and terrorism financing activities.

- Providing guidance on what DSA should do if any of its Board members, Committee members, key executives, employees, and volunteers discover any suspicious transactions relating to money laundering and terrorism financial activities.

Donor Management and Corporate Partnerships

DSA has specific guidelines on the following:

- Processing of Donations
- Fundraising events organised by external parties
- Donation Box deployment and accountability
- Donor Data Management including collection, maintenance of donor database, management of and donor's confidentiality.
- Merchandise Inventory & Consignment Guidelines

Conduct of Fundraising Activities

DSA has developed guidelines for fundraising and the conduct of fundraising events. Every year, where possible, DSA holds its signature fundraising events which include the World Down Syndrome Day and Mystique Charity Gala Dinner.

The following fundraising activities were conducted in the financial year:

Fundraising Activities	Receipts	Expenses	Purpose	Fundraising Efficiency Ratio*
World Down Syndrome Day (Hybrid) (17 Jan 2022 - 31 Mar 2022)	\$147,849	\$9,182	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raised awareness for Down syndrome • Raised funds to support Adult Education Services 	6.21%
Platter of Joy (9 May 2022 - 17 Jul 2022)	\$46,566	\$4,644	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raised awareness for Down syndrome • Raised funds to support Enrichment Programs 	9.97%
Mystique Charity Gala Dinner (1 Jul 2022 - 31 Oct 2022)	\$300,151	\$68,396	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raised funds to support Adult Education Services 	22.79%

*Computation of Fundraising Efficiency Ratio stipulated by the Charity Council:

$$\frac{(\text{Direct Fundraising Expenses} + \text{Sponsorship in cash}) \times 100\%}{(\text{Receipts} + \text{Sponsorship in cash})} = \leq 30\%$$

DSA did not engage the service of commercial fund-raiser in the financial year.

Volunteer Management Guidelines

DSA has established a Volunteer Management Policy with the following documented procedures:

- Identify and recruit suitable volunteers to support DSA's services, activities, and projects.
- Ensure adequate volunteer resources to meet the objectives of DSA's services, activities, and projects.
- Develop, review, and administer forms and records to document volunteer activities.
- Ensure the screening process for potential volunteers adheres to DSA's volunteer recruitment policy.
- Provide orientation and training of volunteers to increase their understanding of DSA, the services, and roles, and for them to be successful in their positions.

HR Policy

DSA has adopted the following principles as a good practice while setting remuneration of staff:

- DSA offers fair pay to attract and retain appropriately qualified staff to lead, manage, support, and deliver the Association's aims.
- The Association's ability to pay, including:
 - The benefit for the Association that such a position will bring.
 - The cost to the Association of incurring remuneration levels.
 - The appropriateness of the remuneration in the context of the Association and its beneficiaries' needs.
- Information on remuneration policies and practices namely the latest salary guidelines for the social service that could help guide a decision on whether a sum or remuneration is fair.

Workplace Anti-Harassment

DSA is committed to creating and maintaining a workplace environment which fosters mutual respect, integrity, and professional conduct. In keeping with this commitment, the Association established this Policy and a set of reporting/ investigation procedures for all employees relating to the issue of workplace harassment. The Association does not condone harassment in the workplace and will make every reasonable effort to prevent and eliminate conduct which falls within the scope of this Policy.

Personal Data Protection

DSA's Personal Data Protection Policy sets out the basis upon which DSA may collect, use, disclose or otherwise process personal data in accordance with the Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA). This Policy applies to personal data in DSA's possession or under our control, including personal data in the possession of organisations which we have engaged to collect, use, disclose or process personal data for our purposes under two main provisions:

- Data Protection
- Do Not Call Registry (DNC Registry)

Public Image

The Association publishes information relating to its programs, services, events, and activities through various platforms that include its website, social media, newsletters, marketing brochures and other collaterals.

DSA has established guidelines stipulated in its corporate communication policies on how such mediums of communications are to be used and how stakeholders are to be engaged.

Governance Evaluation Checklist

S/N	Code guideline	Code ID	Response
Board Governance			
1	Induction and orientation are provided to incoming governing board members upon joining the Board.	1.1.2	Complied
	Are there governing board members holding staff¹ appointments? (skip items 2 and 3 if "No")		No
2	Staff does not chair the Board and does not comprise more than one third of the Board.	1.1.3	NA
3	There are written job descriptions for the staff's executive functions and operational duties, which are distinct from the staff's Board role.	1.1.5	NA
4	The Treasurer of the charity (or any person holding an equivalent position in the charity, e.g. Finance Committee Chairman or a governing board member responsible for overseeing the finances of the charity) can only serve a maximum of 4 consecutive years. If the charity has not appointed any governing board member to oversee its finances, it will be presumed that the Chairman oversees the finances of the charity.	1.1.7	Complied
5	All governing board members must submit themselves for re-nomination and re-appointment, at least once every 3 years.	1.1.8	Complied
6	The Board conducts self-evaluation to assess its performance and effectiveness once during its term or every 3 years, whichever is shorter.	1.1.12	Complied
	Is there any governing board member who has served for more than 10 consecutive years? (skip item 7 if "No")		No
7	The charity discloses in its annual report the reasons for retaining the governing board member who has served for more than 10 consecutive years.	1.1.13	NA
8	There are documented terms of reference for the Board and each of its committees.	1.2.1	Complied
Conflict of Interest			
9	There are documented procedures for governing board members and staff to declare actual or potential conflicts of interest to the Board at the earliest opportunity.	2.1	Complied
10	Governing board members do not vote or participate in decision making on matters where they have a conflict of interest.	2.4	Complied
Strategic Planning			
11	The Board periodically reviews and approves the strategic plan for the charity to ensure that the charity's activities are in line with the charity's objectives.	3.2.2	Complied

Human Resource and Volunteer² Management			
12	The Board approves documented human resource policies for staff.	5.1	Complied
13	There is a documented Code of Conduct for governing board members, staff and volunteers (where applicable) which is approved by the Board.	5.3	Complied
14	There are processes for regular supervision, appraisal and professional development of staff.	5.5	Complied
	Are there volunteers serving in the charity? (skip item 15 if "No")		Yes
15	There are volunteer management policies in place for volunteers.	5.7	Complied
Financial Management and Internal Controls			
16	There is a documented policy to seek the Board's approval for any loans, donations, grants or financial assistance provided by the charity which are not part of the charity's core charitable programmes.	6.1.1	Complied
17	The Board ensures that internal controls for financial matters in key areas are in place with documented procedures.	6.1.2	Complied
18	The Board ensures that reviews on the charity's internal controls, processes, key programmes and events are regularly conducted.	6.1.3	Complied
19	The Board ensures that there is a process to identify, and regularly monitor and review the charity's key risks.	6.1.4	Complied
20	The Board approves an annual budget for the charity's plans and regularly monitors the charity's expenditure.	6.2.1	Complied
	Does the charity invest its reserves (e.g. in fixed deposits)? (skip item 21 if "No")		Yes
21	The charity has a documented investment policy approved by the Board.	6.4.3	Complied
Fundraising Practices			
	Did the charity receive cash donations (solicited or unsolicited) during the financial year? (skip item 22 if "No")		Yes
22	All collections received (solicited or unsolicited) are properly accounted for and promptly deposited by the charity.	7.2.2	Complied
	Did the charity receive donations in kind during the financial year? (skip item 23 if "No")		Yes
23	All donations in kind received are properly recorded and accounted for by the charity.	7.2.3	Complied
Disclosure and Transparency			
24	The charity discloses in its annual report — (a) the number of Board meetings in the financial year; and (b) the attendance of every governing board member at those meetings.	8.2	Complied
	Are governing board members remunerated for their services to the Board? (skip items 25 and 26 if "No")		No
25	No governing board member is involved in setting his own remuneration.	2.2	NA
26	The charity discloses the exact remuneration and benefits received by each governing board member in its annual report. <u>OR</u> The charity discloses that no governing board member is remunerated.	8.3	NA
	Does the charity employ paid staff? (skip items 27, 28 and 29 if "No")		Yes

27	No staff is involved in setting his own remuneration.	2.2	Complied
28	<p>The charity discloses in its annual report —</p> <p>(a) the total annual remuneration for each of its 3 highest paid staff who each has received remuneration (including remuneration received from the charity's subsidiaries) exceeding \$100,000 during the financial year; and</p> <p>(b) whether any of the 3 highest paid staff also serves as a governing board member of the charity.</p> <p>The information relating to the remuneration of the staff must be presented in bands of \$100,000.</p> <p><u>OR</u></p> <p>The charity discloses that none of its paid staff receives more than \$100,000 each in annual remuneration.</p>	8.4	Complied
29	<p>The charity discloses the number of paid staff who satisfies all of the following criteria:</p> <p>(a) the staff is a close member of the family³ belonging to the Executive Head⁴ or a governing board member of the charity;</p> <p>(b) the staff has received remuneration exceeding \$50,000 during the financial year.</p> <p>The information relating to the remuneration of the staff must be presented in bands of \$100,000.</p> <p><u>OR</u></p> <p>The charity discloses that there is no paid staff, being a close member of the family belonging to the Executive Head or a governing board member of the charity, who has received remuneration exceeding \$50,000 during the financial year.</p>	8.5	Complied
Public Image			
30	The charity has a documented communication policy on the release of information about the charity and its activities across all media platforms.	9.2	Complied

1. Staff: Paid or unpaid individuals who are involved in the day-to-day operations of the charity, e.g. an Executive Director or administrative personnel.

2. Volunteer: A person who willingly serves the charity without expectation of any remuneration.

3 Close member of the family: A family member belonging to the Executive Head or a governing board member of a charity —

(a) who may be expected to influence the Executive Head's or governing board member's (as the case may be) dealings with the charity; or

(b) who may be influenced by the Executive Head or governing board member (as the case may be) in the family member's dealings with the charity.

A close member of the family may include the following:

(a) the child or spouse of the Executive Head or governing board member;

(b) the stepchild of the Executive Head or governing board member;

(c) the dependant of the Executive Head or governing board member.

(d) the dependant of the Executive Head's or governing board member's spouse.

4 Executive Head: The most senior staff member in charge of the charity's staff.