1. Background

The mission of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences is to foster the culture of science and innovation in Ethiopia. A culture of science and innovation strives through generation of knowledge and publication of scientific and scholarly works and widely disseminating them. EAS, because of its commitment to popularizing scientific knowledge in Ethiopia and the caliber of its members is well placed to take the lead in the creation and dissemination of knowledge, research and scholarship in Ethiopia. One way of making the Academy such a place is by establishing its own Press where research materials and books are published in a timely and regular manner and with product quality that matches its stature. EAS, therefore, establishes the Ethiopian Academy Press (EAS Press) to advance its mission of becoming a hub of scientific and intellectual activities in Ethiopia.

As a neophyte, the EAS Press will have to figure out, from the very beginning, how to make itself visible in the huge publishing industry around the world. The hard and natural sciences, agricultural and health sciences, and the different branches of technology have already been the secure “turfs” of the older, much bigger university presses in the advanced countries. It will be extremely difficult for the fledgling Press to make its presence felt in any of these fields. Recognizing this hard fact will not, however, prevent it from publishing books and journals in these disciplines. Indeed, it will encourage Ethiopia’s scientific community to submit manuscripts to it. Yet, it will have to make a considered decision on which area(s) to focus as a specialization. Taking into account the country’s comparative advantage - the rich literary heritage of Ethiopia - it will aim at excelling in publishing cultural, historical and philological studies on the Horn of Africa. These branches of knowledge can be defined very broadly to include also the present era thus enabling the Press to engage dynamically in publications on current political and social issues of the region as a whole as well as to bring out memoirs, diaries, and other public and private documents. Side by side with this choice, the Press will strive to become a leading educational publisher that publishes instructional products, which can be used in schools, universities,
homes, libraries and workplaces. This approach will, at the same time, help it to fulfil one of its cardinal missions (popularizing the sciences to the wider public) and, into the bargain, remedy the current serious shortage of high quality educational materials in the country by drawing upon the high-level expertise at its disposal. In short, the choice of niche in the industry will help it gain, as time passes, visibility and renown at least continentally and, even more importantly, a secure share of the domestic book market.

2. Justification

The purpose of setting up an academic press is to further the dissemination of ideas, which in turn produces new advances in scholarship and to serve the needs of readers. EAS Press aims to publish scholarly books, high-quality peer-reviewed journals on science, technological innovations, social sciences, humanities and books on ancient Ethiopian scholarly traditions, memoirs and biographies'autobiographies of prominent traditional and international scientists, scholars, authors and artists and newsletters, reports, lectures, and monographs.

It is imperative that Ethiopia does not miss the 'knowledge revolution' which is essential in continuing the development trajectory the country has embarked on. Governments to a large extent depend on recommendations based on evidence-based research findings to formulate new policies that meet the demands of the time. Enhancing academic research is of paramount importance to the country which is undergoing major social and economic changes and research on various social, economic, anthropological, psychological issues are needed more than ever. It is of prime importance that researches on various developmental aspects of the country are encouraged and policy recommendations are made available to policy makers. Ethiopia has embarked on a development path that is based on science and technology. This requires the fostering of research activities and publication of books that address various aspects of the development process: scientific, technological, economic and social. The more research is done on these issues, the more it is easier for policy makers to formulate evidence-based policies and help to improve the lives of millions.

There is also the need to bring the works of Ethiopian scientists, academics and researchers to the world stage by publishing their works and disseminating them internationally. One of the objectives of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences is to promote, support and recognize excellence in scientific research performed by Ethiopian scientists. Promoting and supporting scientific research requires making research findings available nationally and internationally. There is a growing number of Ethiopian Diaspora research publications and books on various disciplines which could not be published in country for lack of means of distribution, access to international readership and product quality. It is imperative that the EAS Press publishes these works and makes them accessible through national and international markets.
There is an increasing interest in the country in the scholarly traditions and history of the country. This is evidenced by the demand in the market for such publications and shortage of them. Many of the indigenous scholarly works have not been published much less documented. The mission of the Academy is also to advance indigenous knowledge. Publishing such documents will raise the profile of the country, publicizing its history, culture and intellectual tradition.

Making research findings accessible to the public will help them learn about the development process and its impacts. It helps them cope with the growing pains of social change and become active and engaged citizens who understand the value and relevance of development to their day-to-day lives, feel positive about their lives and their communities and their future.

It is well-known that knowledge is one of the key resources in social and economic development and that cultivation of the culture of reading is indispensable to nation building. An informed and enlightened population is a resource to national development. Many studies show that there is a link between poverty and the culture of reading and literacy and economic well-being. Publication of text books (particularly new editions), journals and others and making them accessible through university, colleges, high schools and public libraries, promoting them and encouraging the public to read them helps students, researchers and others to have access to current information and enriches the culture of reading.

EAS is committed to excellence and its high standards will help the Press publish works that have passed academic rigor and excellence and are up to par with international standards. EAS Press is best suited for this role since it takes excellence as one of its core values.

As more books and high quality and relevant research data are locally published, the number of research findings and books published outside of the country will decrease. As quality and distribution of the products (nationally and internationally) increases, more researchers and writers will want to publish their works in the country. Publishing and distributing the works of distinguished researchers and authors internationally will give local talent recognition and will provide more incentive to conduct more research or write more. This will in turn increase the publication of scientific and scholarly works and the dissemination of knowledge.

The existence of an Academic Press committed to knowledge-based activities and publications of works that are highly relevant to existing conditions will augment interest in research activities, increase the number of researches and cultivate the culture of research. The availability of research data further increases enthusiasm in doing research and address the shortage of reference data.
Making the works of Diaspora authors and researchers available in the country will open up the door for researchers and authors to various data and information. This will lessen the shortage of access to works published by the Diaspora.

Books are storehouses of culture and the publication of Ethiopian scholarly traditions and their national and international availability will encourage scholarly interest in Ethiopian traditional knowledge and education system and ensures the revival and continuity of the scholarly tradition and culture.

The proceeds from the sale of publications will be used to keep the Press on a sound financial footing; any excess funds will be spent in compliance with the purposes of the EAS laid down in its Statutes. The Academy can also open up its own bookstore and sell books that it publishes.

It is for the above reasons that the Academy has decided to establish the EAS Press.

3. Vision

To be a center of excellence for scholarly publishing and the dissemination of knowledge.

4. Mission

To inculcate a culture of science through creating an enabling and empowering environment for authors and researchers and building a nation of readers.

5. Objectives

- to advance scientific inquiry and popularize science in Ethiopia through accessible publications and accessible language;
- to produce and disseminate high quality publications to advance the frontiers of knowledge; and
- to contribute to the financial sustainability of EAS.

6. Functions and Responsibilities of the EAS Press

The EAS Press shall among others, have the following functions and responsibilities.

i. To serve as the publishing arm of the Academy;
ii. To receive, solicit and publish manuscripts from individuals, organizations and other sources;
iii. to devise mechanisms for quality assurance in order to maintain high standard publications
iv. To exploit opportunities for publishing scholarly works, culture and historical manuscripts and research works relevant to Ethiopia both within the country and outside the country;
v. To forge partnerships with domestic and international publishers, other academies, higher education establishments and research institutions;
vi. To develop its marketing strategy and build up the required resource base for the efficient distribution of its publications;
vii. To undertake promotional works in order to enhance its domestic and international visibility and the distribution of its publications;
viii. To devise mechanisms for outsourcing some of its activities, whenever the need for so doing arises, by establishing networks of partners and others having stakes in its business;
ix. To perform such other tasks relevant to its objectives as may, from time to, time be assigned to it by the EAS Management Board.

7. Organizational Structure

The Press shall be an autonomous body within the Academy. The EAS Press shall have an Editorial Board, a permanent (in-house) editor, core staff and such other permanent or ad-hoc committees and additional units as necessary to carry out its functions and responsibilities to give it leverage in the future.

The EAS Press shall be governed by the Editorial Board which will be constituted by members to be selected from the six Working Groups of the Academy. The Editorial Board of the Press shall be accountable to the General Assembly of the Academy, and linked through the Executive Director of the Academy who shall be an ex-officio member of the Editorial Board.

The term of office of Editorial Board members, other than the ex-officio ones, shall be three years with a possibility of reappointment for one more term.

8. Publication Policies

The press shall develop an editorial policy which shall be approved by the EAS Board.