



SETTING UP FOR SUCCESS

A Guide to Planning and Implementing
Student Teacher Internship Programmes

The Global Teachers Institute

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BEd: Bachelor of Education

DBE: Department of Basic Education

FL: Future Leader

FLP: Future Leaders Programme

GTI: Global Teachers Institute

HEI: Higher Education Institution

ITE: Initial Teacher Education

MDE: Mpumalanga Department of Education

MoU: Memorandum of Understanding

NPO: Non Profit Organisations

NSFAS: National Student Financial Aid Scheme

PD: Professional Development

PLC: Professional Learning Communities

PPP: Public-Private Partnership

RSC: Regional Schools Coordinator

SACE: South African Council for Educators

SMT: School Management Team

TICZA: Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa

WIL: Work Integrated Learning

SECTION A: PREAMBLE

1. Internships in Initial Teacher Education (ITE)

An internship is a period of learning experience in a workplace, offering meaningful, practical work, related to a student's field of study. Internships have long been used in a range of business and professional sectors to support experiential learning in combination with theoretical studies, and to expose students to workplace practices in their chosen profession.

In Initial Teacher Education (ITE) an internship is the placement of student teachers in schools while they study through a distance education (or blended learning) mode. The student is under the supervision and guidance of an experienced teacher who serves as a mentor and role model. Internship programmes open up the workplace (that is, the classroom and school environment), allowing students to apply theory to practice, and to gain skills and experience in real life situations with real classroom learners. An internship is typically longer than the traditional 6-week period of 'teaching practice' or Work Integrated Learning (WIL) placement during education studies. Ideally the student should be on-site in a school, or in a range of different schools, throughout their studies. The internship aims to 'embed' a student within the culture and life of the school so that they are exposed to all the dynamics of teaching and learning, can observe different teaching practices and can learn from peers and mentor teachers. By the time these students qualify over the four years of their Bachelor of Education they have been supported in an actual school context and have both teaching and 'school' experience as well as theoretical knowledge.

Over the past decade and more, a number of ITE internship programmes have been initiated due to the recognition that (i) over 60% of South Africa's teachers are trained through distance education (mainly through UNISA); and (ii) that, in order to be successful, these students need support in a number of areas that go beyond that offered by traditional distance learning

delivery: most internship programmes therefore offer what is known as ‘wrap around support’ alongside the academic component of the degree. More recently, higher education institutions (HEIs) have become interested in combining online and in-person learning through blended learning and ‘teaching schools’. Government and other stakeholders are seriously considering how extended teacher internships can be used in improving teacher education outcomes.

2. Aim and Scope of this Guide

This Guide offers a high-level framework to help organisations think through the planning and implementation of student teacher internship programmes. Elements of the framework are drawn from lessons learned by the Global Teachers Institute through its work in this area, as its programme has grown and changed at various stages. Features of GTI’s programme are offered as illustrative examples for Framework elements. It needs to be stressed that there are many different models for student teacher internship programmes, and different contexts in which these are implemented. Factors include the nature of the programme beneficiaries, the types of schools and community contexts in which interns are hosted, the funding models (and therefore the scope and nature of programmatic resources) and more. There is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ model; GTI itself, for example, has had to learn to make adaptations required by changing contexts in different parts of the country. This Guide offers generic framing factors to consider, to be adapted as required by users.



SECTION B : SETTING UP AND MAINTAINING THE PROGRAMME

KEY AREAS TO ADDRESS TO ENSURE SUSTAINABLE SUCCESS

Planning and implementing a successful student teacher internship programme takes account of the following.



1. The need for a Theory of Change

A Theory of Change is a planning and monitoring tool that helps you keep sight of the different elements of your programme. It is also a useful tool for describing your programme when you need to communicate with funders and other external stakeholders. The basic building blocks of a Theory of Change are as follows:



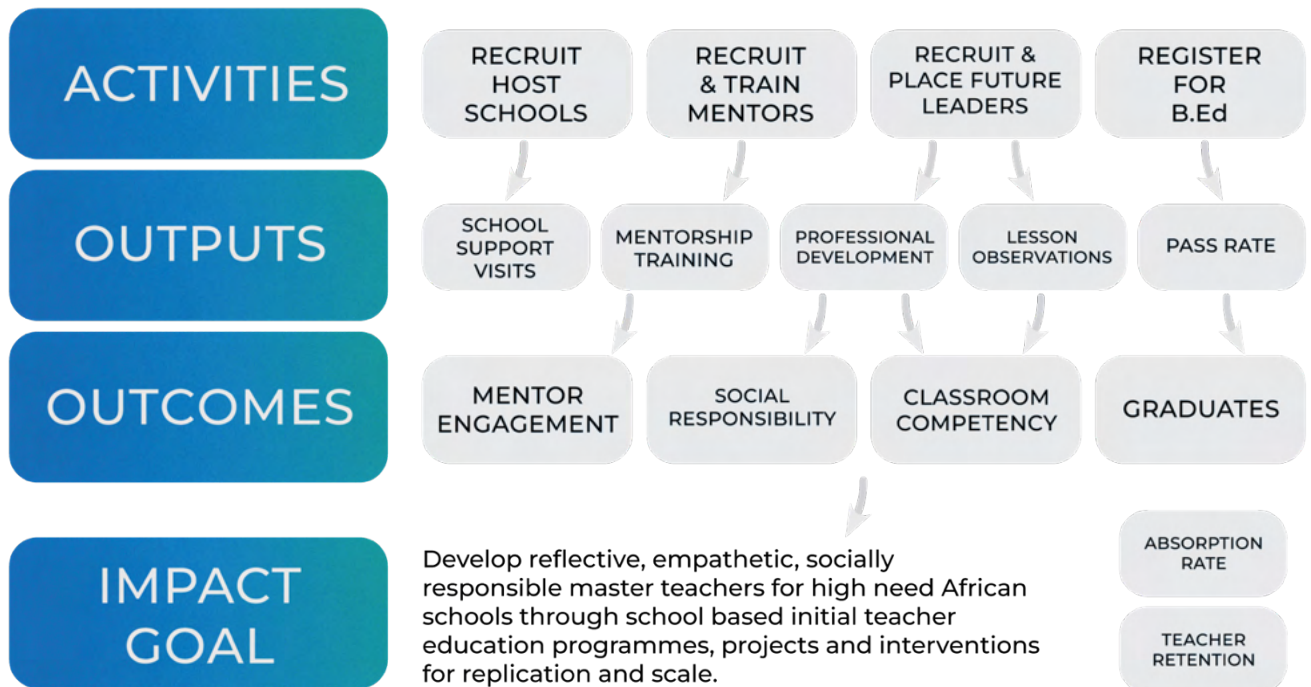
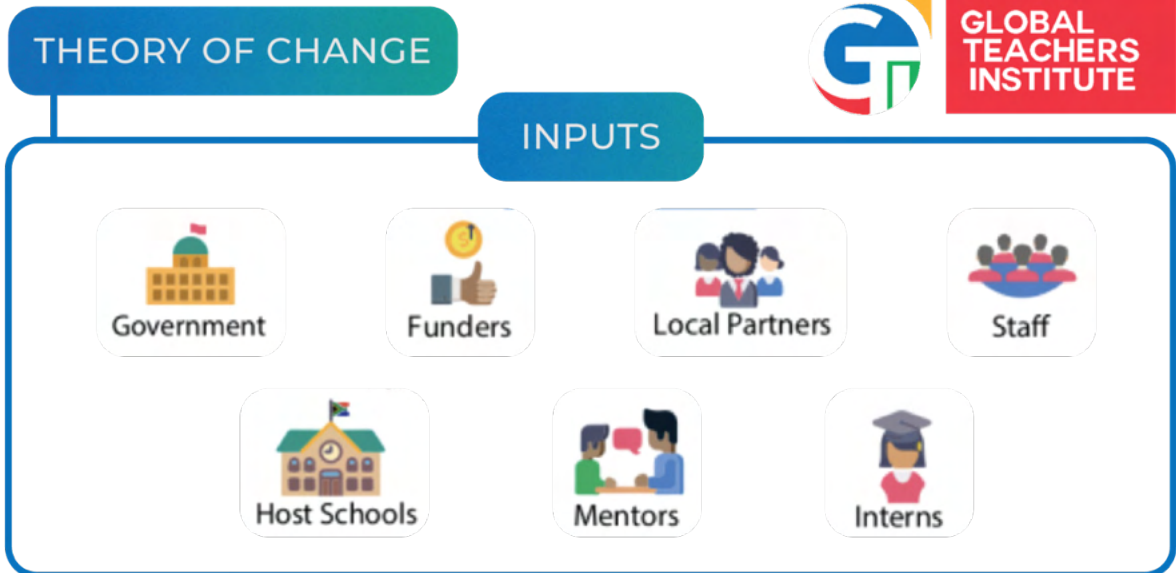
Another useful description is given here:

A theory of change is ... a very powerful learning lens, which makes us ask ourselves and others simple but important questions about what we are doing and why, helping us to explore and make explicit our understanding of how change happens – the pathways, factors and relationships that bring and sustain change in different contexts. We believe it helps us all to discuss, plan for and measure change, enabling us to develop more clarity and effectiveness in our approach and a clear framework for monitoring and evaluation. It can also help us strengthen our organisations, partnerships and communication.

[Comic Relief and Theory of Change, August 2011]



EXAMPLE: GTI's THEORY OF CHANGE



***Absorption Rate** refers to how many graduates have secured regular teaching employment after graduating from the ITE programme.

***Teacher Retention** refers to the longitudinal impact and therefore sustainability of the ITE programme, using a measure such as the number of ITE graduates still teaching 2 to 5 years after they have graduated.

2. Collaboration in an enabling Educational Ecosystem

An ecosystem is a social system of many moving parts, all of which need to work well with each other for the best possible results to occur.

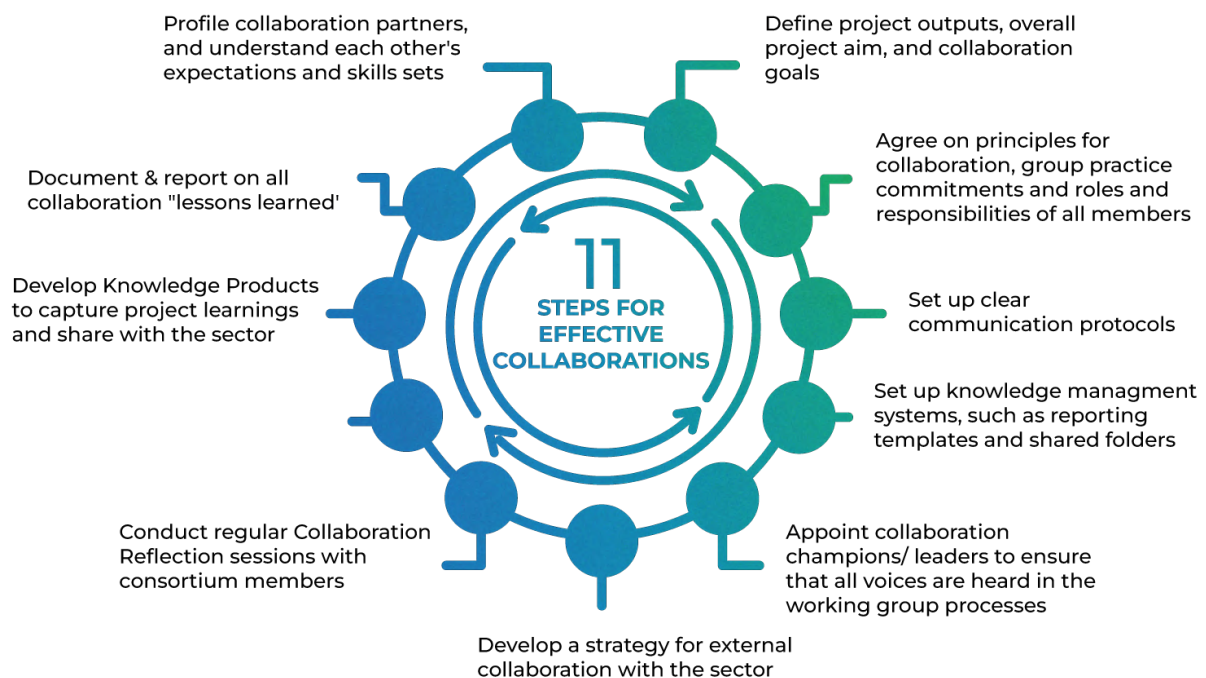
Know and be sensitive to your context:

- Understand the pre-existing environment in which you wish to run your programme. This includes similar past and current initiatives, and relationships and dynamics between private and government educational stakeholders.
- Ensure your programme's curriculum is as aligned as possible to the government's national and provincial educational policies and strategies, as well as with the specific needs of districts where hosting schools reside. This will foster greater goodwill and support from government educational departments, as well as better serve the macro educational development agenda in South Africa. Funza Lushaka bursaries are given out to address specific teacher training needs of the province in question.
- Understand and build relationships with key educational stakeholders in the environment – Non Profit Organizations (NPOs), government and private funders, government educational officials and structures. In particular, you need to engage with the South African Council of Educators (SACE) as the professional body for the registration of teachers and student teachers.

Collaboration and Cooperation:

- **Communication:** Do not underestimate what it takes to build a genuine culture of collaboration and cooperation. It is easy to assume strong understanding and common purpose is in place when in fact it isn't. Effective collaboration takes time, listening, empathy, and regular checking for alignment. So build plenty of time into your planning for regular engagement between partners, especially in the early stages.
- **Ongoing Process:** Potential partners often have different organizational agendas and cultures. These need to be surfaced so that they don't disrupt or derail aspects of the programme at a later stage. So all voices must be heard as part of the ongoing process of managing the rollout of the programme.

The graphic below sets out steps for collaboration that can be adapted for your own programmes:



* Taken from 'Building the PIECCE Collaboration Model', January 2020. Output in the Project for Inclusive Early Childhood Care and Education.

Private Public Partnerships (PPP):

- ITE programmes are intended to develop professional and effective teachers, primarily for the public school sector where the need is greatest. So the structures and officials responsible for delivery of public sector education have to be included and be proactive partners from the very beginning and throughout the programme's process. Public private partnerships (PPPs) are also critical in the sense that (i) these are a key element of government strategy in education; and (ii) they will ensure that your work is not done in isolation, but connects with systemic developments taking place in the teacher education space.
- Where relevant, public funding systems such as National Student Financial Aid scheme (NSFAS) and Funza Lushaka need to be included through Department of Basic Education (DBE) relationships.
- The Department of Basic Education (DBE) should be involved at all levels. For example, with the DBE's involvement it is easier to advocate to potential funders and other educational NPOs to come on board. DBE's influence is considerable and can speed up the onboarding of Provincial Education Departments (PEDs). The onboarding of government (as with any major partner) involves the building of soft but important processes such as respect, trust, understanding and personal working relationships – this takes time and authenticity to achieve.
- The **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** spells out the key goals of the programme and contractual obligations of each implementing partner. This document becomes a guiding point of reference to keep the programme on track as it unfolds and to hold partners accountable for the quality and quantity of their delivery. It also reinforces the collaborative and cooperative culture intended to enable the programme's success. However, a document alone cannot build this culture as it is an ongoing process. Hence the regular checking for alignment between partners.

- Because the public sector in South Africa is so big, public funds are quite stretched, so public funding for teacher development initiatives is limited. Therefore, the private sector (foundations, trusts, companies' CSR budgets) has to be included and be proactive partners from the very beginning and throughout the programme's process.

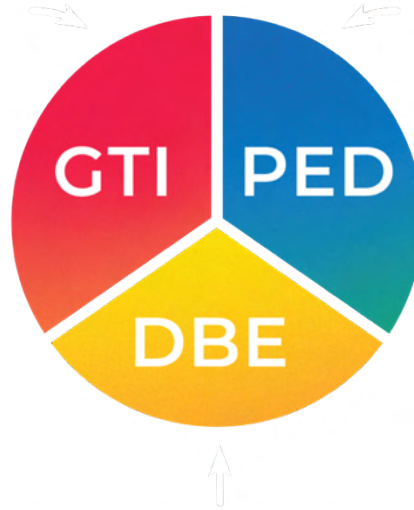


EXAMPLE: GTI's PARTNERSHIPS BUILDING PROCESS IN MPUMALANGA

- For GTI's Mpumalanga pilot, the DBE began the conversation with the Mpumalanga PED. Once the province agreed to being part of the programme, it opened up proposals to education districts, who, once in agreement, approached schools as possible hosts. A letter of intent (a type of proposal) was sent by the implementing organisation to the PED. When this document was accepted and signed off, an MoU was created and signed by all key stakeholders.
- A **Steering Committee** is absolutely essential to ensure all key stakeholders are held accountable for fulfilling their responsibilities. In GTI's programme the Steering Committee comprised GTI, DBE, SACE, UNISA and Mpumalanga Department of Education, meeting once a quarter.

PARTNERSHIP ROLES

- Overall Project Management
- Core Competencies (Professional Development, Team Teaching, Reflective Circles, etc.)
- Orientation of interns, principals & mentors
- Social contexts of interns
- Problem-solving
- Wellness Programme
- Academic Support
- SACE registration
- Undertake M&E
- Recruitment of interns



- Determine District & School participation according to provincial needs
- Introduction to Schools and oversight
- Professional Relationships (District officials, school SGB, teachers, learners, parents & school community)
- Critical Reflection
- Problem-solving
- Co-ordinate the selections
- Convene and Chair Steering Committee

- Funding through Funza Lushaka Bursaries Critical Reflection for broadening the internship programme informed by M&E
- Oversight & overall management (selections & advice)
- Formation of Steering Committee



***Taken from** 'A Report on the Internal Rapid Process Evaluation of the Mpumalanga Future Leaders Programme of the Global Teachers Institute (GTI)', May 2022.

Knowledge Sharing:

- Knowledge sharing happens on multiple levels, within and between ecosystems. The more collaboration and cooperation between ecosystems is required, the greater the need for sharing

and generation of knowledge.

- 'Ecosystem' can refer to just a single school, whereby principals, teachers, mentors and student interns share knowledge about best practices and new practices in relation to pedagogy, academic content and social activism in the community in which the school resides.
- In a hub model, the collective of various schools hosting student interns is a bigger ecosystem that also enables such knowledge-sharing between the schools involved.
- The wider ecosystem includes all of the above, plus the implementing NPO partners, government departments, universities and research institutes, all of which can share knowledge generated from outside the school communities with each other and with the schools.



PRACTICAL TIPS: PRACTICAL TIPS FOR WORKING IN THE ECOSYSTEM

- Be well informed about all relevant policies regarding ITE and the different systemic structures involved.
- Make sure that your students fulfill regulatory requirements such as provisional registration with SACE.

- In your input planning and costing, build in time for relationship building and collaborative processes.
- Join relevant information-sharing initiatives such as communities of practice or other collective structures involved in teacher education and development.
- Build in monitoring and evaluation systems at the beginning of the programme. They can be changed or adapted later but don't start without this.

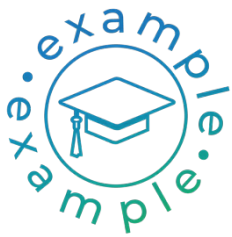
3. Principles and Vision

VISION

As an internship programme implementer you need to set out your vision clearly, and define what you want to achieve through the programme. This vision then needs to be well communicated to all stakeholders, such as other implementing partners, funders, professional standards authorities or government educational departments. This clear vision gives the internship *direction*. The sharing of the vision creates *common purpose*.

A key element of your programme's vision will be your understanding of the features of a 'competent teacher': as your ultimate goal, this will inform the attitudes, skills and behaviours that you aim to develop in your interns. Once you are clear on what you mean by a competent teacher you will be able to refine your own programmatic approach, setting out *how* you would go about achieving this core goal. At the same time, however, your understanding of a 'competent teacher' and your approach to developing such competence needs to align to national official standards and policies.

PRINCIPLES



EXAMPLE: THE GTI MODEL

Responsibility: Proactive stakeholders create value. Competent teachers are strong citizens, their influence going beyond the classroom. (See more under Social *Responsibility*)

Accountability: This gives emphasis to *quality* on every level and gives the programme rigor and integrity, enabling the programme to self-correct effectively and efficiently when it needs to.

Mutualism: Schools hosting student interns should also benefit from the programme. This leads to those schools supporting the continuation of the programme, as well as encouraging other schools and districts to become partners.

Partnerships: These enable a more sustainable, agile, resourceful and resilient approach in terms of operations and good practice, and also help create a more sustainable financial model.

Community: When initiating a student internship programme, it's important to think big and always keep in mind South Africa's national teacher capacitation needs for the greater good of the country. A good ITE school-based programme has to be built on the principle of *catch and release*: interns are not trained in a school just for that particular school's future needs, but for the needs of the wider community, especially in public

sector education. It's therefore important to have an in-depth and broad understanding of what community means and how best to build strong relationships with stakeholders in the community in which the ITE programme is running. GTI understands that working closely with the community and impacting positively on the community is ethically correct, as well as making the programme more sustainable because that community will then support your initiative. GTI's model is about more than just producing competent teachers. (See more under *Social Responsibility*)

Leadership: GTI sees all trainee teachers as future leaders who will play a role as transformers of the education landscape and society in general. They are reflective, empathetic, socially responsible and innovative, serving as role models for the right values and behaviours to their learners and to members of the wider community to which they belong.

Diversity: This speaks further to the need for collaboration, aiming for a wide range of skills and approaches amongst programme stakeholders. The inputs of other partners supplement the implementing organisation's own skills and expertise, thereby ensuring quality and sustainability at every stage of the programme's delivery.



PRACTICAL TIPS: FOR ACTIVATING YOUR VISION AND PRINCIPLES

- Refer to your vision regularly, using it in strategy sessions, team meetings etc. The more you use the vision practically, the more the programme implementing staff will buy into it and make it a key point

of reference for themselves .

- Allow plenty of time to discuss and decide on what you understand by a 'competent teacher'. Make sure all key stakeholders are part of that process, including the school management team in the school(s) that hosts the interns. It might seem obvious what the expression means, but assuming everyone understands it the same way can lead to all sorts of programme complications later on. Reference key documents such as the SACE Teaching Professional Standards in these discussions.
- From the outset make the guiding principles of your programme explicit. To do this, list a few core behaviours for each of the principles you decide are important. In effect, be intentional about creating programme culture. Named behaviours also make it easier to track progress and hold implementing staff and beneficiaries to account.
- Only choose principles that are essential for the programme to succeed. Too long a list of principles becomes unworkable.
- The principles chosen should be the focal point of two professional development sessions: one to help teacher interns internalise them for themselves, and a second session to help teacher interns consider how to use them as part of their teaching practice.

4. Recruitment and Selection of Student Interns

Different programmes and internship models will have different recruitment strategies, depending on their defined target group of students. Well-thought out recruitment and selection strategies are vital, and good profiling and selection tools are needed. Personal commitment is a critical element if students are to grow through the internship process as well as successfully graduate.



EXAMPLE: GTI's PROCESS

Student interns are recruited formally, through adverts on GTI's website, and informally, through host schools announcing the opportunity. Applications are submitted via GTI's cloud-based platform, the Future Leaders Information Portal (FLIP). For a candidate to qualify he/she must meet the following requirements:

- Be committed to GTI's and FLP's mission and philosophy on teaching practice
- Possess a strong desire to develop themselves personally and professionally
- Be committed to social change
- Firmly believe in every child's ability to succeed academically
- Be willing to challenge themselves and others to achieve their full potential
- Be registered or are willing to register for a B. Ed degree at any recognised distance education institution in South Africa

- Have secured or have capacity to secure funding for tuition fees through government or private sources
- Have an Admission Point Score (APS) of at least 26 at matric level.

The FLIP system sorts the quality of the applicants into three categories, ranging from:

- Green: applicants meet all criteria and studies meet provincial or district-identified needs.
- Yellow: applicants meet all criteria but there are a few outstanding items which need to be addressed in order to progress to green.
- Red: applicants do not meet criteria, or are not located in regions or near host schools in which GTI works. These are automatically declined.

Any applicant who fulfills the green level requirements will be asked to:

1. Complete a written assignment allowing the selection committee to gauge their writing skills, and their reflective and resilience abilities and attitudes.
2. Complete a literacy and numeracy assessment.
3. The applicant may or may not be invited to an interview with the selection committee depending on the results of their written assignment and the literacy and numeracy assessment.

5. Relationships with Host Schools

Selection of host schools: The success of the internship programme depends on the careful selection of host schools where interns can thrive. The process is led by the PED provincial department of education following the DBE's National Policy on Whole School Evaluation.



EXAMPLE:

In the case of this project, District Chief Education Specialists (DCES) and GTI's Regional Schools Coordinators (RSCs) worked together to identify functional schools, supported by DBE and the Mpumalanga-based NGO and college, Penreach.

Selection of Mentors: The school-based mentor is generally chosen by the principal of the host school, but the organisation running the programme must be very involved in the selection process.



EXAMPLE:

In the case GTI has developed a 'Mentor Selection Process' document which helps the principal of each hosting school determine which teachers could potentially be mentors. The principal considers the attitude and character, professional competence and experience, communication skills, and the interpersonal skills of the mentor. GTI uses the following

criteria:

- Willingness to be a mentor
- At least two years successful teaching experience
- Registration with SACE.

If the mentor teacher has been a mentor before, past positive experience with a GTI intern/or other student teachers is also requirement.

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU): It is important to have a formalised agreement with each host school. This will give all parties contractual clarity. An MOU with a host school should cover the following:

- Roles and responsibilities of all parties - including the agreed commitments of donors, teacher interns, mentors and the host school, and the leading implementing organisation
- Policies and procedure regarding internship programme
- Legal obligations of parties
- Mentorship programme
- Relationship issues related to all parties.



PRACTICAL TIPS: FOR HOST SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS

- Allow sufficient time to engage and get to know the culture and key staff members of a possible host school when recruiting. Proper time spent upfront can save time and possible challenges (such as culture

and purpose misfit) later on.

- Be inclusive in the way you engage host schools in the recruitment and programme set-up phases, so that they understand and feel they are co-creators of the programme's success. Building strong relationships with key members of the host school staff is very important.
- Don't rely solely on the MOU for mutual understanding.
- Do regular updates and check-ins with the School Management Team (SMT) member responsible for oversight of the programme in the school. This creates a channel for mutual feedback which allows for adjustments and corrections to be made without too much time passing by.
- Ensure the host school's calendar of commitments and events is aligned to the programme's calendar of expectations of teacher interns and teachers. This will help to avoid clashes. This will help the school to be more organised and address some government schools' tendency at times to be passive partners in programmes.
- Try and formalise some of the benefits that schools may reap from hosting interns, such as access to new trends and information from your organisation or from the student interns themselves. For example, in the GTI programme we have found student IT skills are far greater than teachers' IT skills. So there has been bottom-up as well as top-down development. The relationship between the two parties is called a mentern relationship.

6. Programme Elements

Internship programmes may be structured around a number of different programmatic elements. In general, internship programmes need to be framed by a number of guiding criteria, including:

- The academic curriculum for the phase and subject specialisations, whether this is for a B Ed or a PGCE student.
- The SACE Professional Teaching Standards, which serve as guidelines to professional development in terms of attitudes and behaviours as well as competencies.
- The programme's own vision and mission statements and profile of a competent teacher.

GTI's framework suggests some common elements of a good practice internship programme.



EXAMPLE: GTI's PROGRAMME ELEMENTS

Co-Teaching in a school: Student interns are in the host school Monday to Thursday every week of the term, working closely with a mentor, as an observer, a teaching assistant or lead teacher, depending on which year of the programme they are in. This gives them plenty of opportunity to implement and practise the pedagogical and content knowledge they acquire in their academic coursework.

Academic study: Student interns (referred to as Future Leaders in the GTI programme) study for a B. Ed through a distance learning institution. Each day of their four-day placement in school per week, they spend two hours on their academic studies. Their choice of academic subjects is partially determined by teacher shortages in specific subjects at national or provincial levels.

Social Responsibility Projects: GTI firmly believes that for student interns to become effective teachers and leaders, they need to develop an awareness of social justice issues in South Africa and be able to contribute to social justice in some way. In practice this means that they each initiate or join a project within their community: examples include supplying sanitary pads to school girls, addressing food security with a veggie garden, or running a Gender Based Violence awareness campaign.

This presents them with the opportunity to solve real problems for real people. Students typically have to spend a minimum of 24 hours per year on their project. These projects affect the school system, as experienced teachers learn from the interns and as the interns also pass on the knowledge gained from the projects to their learners. Becoming more socially aware means that teachers and interns become more relevant, attuned to the concerns of their learners in relation to issues such as poverty or stereotyping around gender and sexual orientations.

Mentoring: Mentorship is a non-negotiable element of all student internship programmes. Some programmes support their students with external mentors as well as the teacher-mentors working in the school. Mentors can fulfil many roles, ranging from psychosocial support to academic support. The primary mentor will generally be the school-based mentor in charge of the intern, whose role is to model good practice and guide the student through the work experience elements of the internship.

GTI has found this function to be crucial to the final overall level of competence of the student intern teacher. Mentors serve as both instructional coaches and personal life mentors. Mentors give interns regular one-on-one attention, including time to reflect on their professional development with an experienced practitioner. They meet for at least 30 minutes each week to plan lessons and reflect on their performance. This relationship also helps student interns to feel that they belong and are cared for by the school they are part of during the programme. GTI considers factors such as the following:

- *Matching mentors with mentees:* There needs to be a good personality fit, so that both parties work well together without possible competition or resentment between the two.
- *Mutual benefit:* Student interns are also given the opportunity to learn how the South African School Administration and Management System (SASAMS) works. With this knowledge, they assist their mentors to analyse the results that are recorded so that their subsequent lessons can be more data-driven and serve the learners better.
- *Standards:* Mentors also need to be held to account at times, to ensure they meet the expected quota of meetings with their intern and observations of their teaching.



PRACTICAL TIPS: FOR MENTORSHIP

- Make a member of the host school's SMT directly responsible for the teachers who choose to mentor a teacher intern. This helps with clear accountability and ensures that there is some oversight of mentoring when the implementing partners are not on site.
- Train mentors in mentoring skills, subject-specific academic content and pedagogical skills. Mentoring requires a different set of skills from teaching.
- In the early stages of working in host schools, demonstrate to mentors what good mentoring looks like. Role-modelling is key.
- Constant contact through training workshops and reflection sessions is essential. There are two main focus points in the GTI programme:
 1. Supporting mentors throughout their mentorship journey by participating in various mentoring engagements, such as one-on-one mentor support sessions, school reflection forums, and lesson observations.
 2. Providing mentors with SACE-endorsed mentor training workshops to equip them with the skills and teaching techniques required to be effective mentors.
- This role is very different to the teacher role they are used to playing. If your organisation has the resources, try and relieve mentors from some of the administrative commitments required in the role.

- Rigorous monitoring of mentor’s engagements with their mentee regarding co-teaching goes to the core of any quality internship model. There are countless bad stories of interns being used by mentors purely to mark the mentor’s assessment papers or do their administrative work, with the result that the intern gets little or no real teaching practice. Mentors must keep a detailed record of all their engagements with their mentee, both in and outside the classroom. Giving mentors a clear reporting template will help with this.
- Give mentors a ‘cheat sheet’ initially, setting out role components such as advising on academic work and pedagogical development, and helping address or referring to personal issues.

Professional Development: On Fridays interns spend time on academic studies, instructional practice training (with a GTI-customised curriculum) and reflection circles. This they do with their Regional Schools Coordinator.

<h2>The GTI Professional Development Curriculum</h2>	
Reflection Circles	For one hour each week on a Friday morning student interns have a safe space to share and learn from each other regarding the more personal side of their lives, such as self-esteem, family and financial matters, or challenges with teachers in their school. GTI recognises that developing strong teachers requires regularly engaging student interns at a heart level so that their Emotional Intelligence as far as possible matches their Intellectual development. This ensures they have good coping skills, as well as being able to connect well with fellow teachers and the learners in their class.

<p>Instructional Practice</p>	<p>For one and half hours each week on a Friday morning student interns develop a deeper understanding of effective pedagogical techniques, suitable for the age group they are working with. This is also a time for them to collectively reflect on their classroom teaching experiences and better understand their successes and challenges.</p>
<p>Academic Support</p>	<p>Friday afternoons are a time for them to ask for assistance from their RSC or peers who may be registered for the same courses. It's also time for student interns to complete their academic coursework and assignments, and for RSCs to monitor interns' academic progress. Students are expected to complete their academic coursework within four years of starting full-time study. If a student fails one module, he or she will be placed on Academic Assistance. If a student fails two modules, he/she is placed on Academic Probation. If a student fails more than two modules, he or she will be called for an Academic Hearing. Independent Counseling and Advisory Services (ICAS), is employed to provide a comprehensive range of preventative care and counseling services to the interns to ensure that they do not "break" when faced with life crises such as death, sicknesses, learning difficulties and other related challenges.</p>
<p>Social Responsibility Feedback</p>	<p>During Friday sessions student interns are also expected to share feedback on the social responsibility project that they have either initiated or joined.</p>



PRACTICAL TIPS: FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Ensure Professional Development sessions are well planned and prepared for by the implementing staff responsible, so that teacher interns get maximum value out of the sessions.
- The person running professional development should have a digital folder or file per student, in order to document academic

modules for each intern per term, their academic results and any social or academic challenges they have faced up to that point.

- Document each student's psychosocial progress, in case they need to be referred to mental healthcare professionals at any point or in case the student starts to struggle with completing the programme and a diagnosis needs to be made. Such information needs to be treated sensitively as it is confidential.
- Be willing to visit (or invite to a meeting) the family of a teacher intern to understand their home context better, if that context is having a negative impact on the intern's progress in the programme.
- Create regular knowledge-sharing meetings between key implementing partners (school mentor, distance learning institute, intern coordinator etc.) so that a full and accurate picture of interns' status and progress is built up.
- Explain to teacher interns that the quantity of their attendance and quality of their engagement at professional development sessions contributes significantly to how the lead implementing partner can advocate for them when it comes to helping place them in a job after the programme. Their performance in these sessions in earlier years will supplement their Portfolio of Evidence in their last year.
- Discuss examples of previous successful and/or innovative social responsibility projects, and bring in alumni to share these with interns. This will help to motivate them and give them a sense of what is possible.

- Document the progress of their social responsibility project, for the sake of research, knowledge sharing with future interns and for the sake of holding teacher interns accountable.

7. Processes and Procedures

Coordinating Teacher Interns:

In any teacher internship model, it is vital to have highly motivated and organised people who coordinate and support teacher interns, liaise closely with host schools and generally oversee the smooth implementation of the programme at ground level. Such a role has many parts to it and so when recruiting people for the role be mindful of how competent they are in the following areas: people skills, administrative skills, conflict management, problem-solving, pedagogical knowledge and teaching experience.



EXAMPLE: GTI's REGIONAL SCHOOLS COORDINATOR (RSC)

- An RSC is responsible for a collective of schools in one geographical area that GTI calls a hub. In a hub the RSC can support up to 18 student interns.
- The RSC receives direction from the GTI person who has oversight for all ITE programmes nationally. The RSC also reports to that person,

keeping them in touch with developments on a weekly and monthly basis. This communication process is essential for monitoring and evaluation and so ensuring quality control.

- The RSC liaises with and supports all student interns in each of the schools in the area/province for which they are responsible. This support involves:
 - Instructional Practice training and pedagogical development. This includes regular observation and evaluation of interns teaching.
 - Psychosocial support for interns' general maturing process and for helping interns with various practical and personal challenges. This happens through informal engagements as well as through weekly Reflection Circles.
 - Liaising with Mentors and schools' management teams, to ensure continual alignment with the school, and to check that the school context is a good environment for the interns.



PRACTICAL TIPS: FOR INTERN COORDINATORS

- Give the intern coordinators sufficient emotional and mental support. They can easily be over-exposed to a lot of challenging

behaviour and psychosocial dynamics from the teacher interns. They fulfill a semi-mentoring and semi-coaching role, among their other roles, so they need to debrief quite regularly.

- Coordinators should have emotional intelligence training periodically, to equip them as well as possible to do their job.
- Coordinators should connect a few times a year with the distance learning institute where teacher interns are studying, to ensure they have a true and accurate picture of each teacher interns' progress and academic challenges.

Graduate Placement Procedure:

For many programmes, a key result area or success indicator is that that graduates are successfully employed within a specific timeframe.



EXAMPLE: GTI'S POST INTERNSHIP EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

GTI's key result area is that interns should find employment within twelve months of graduating. GTI assists by identifying possible graduates in February of the year they are set to graduate. All potential graduating interns receive support throughout the year to compile a Portfolio of Evidence that includes:

- Samples of the assessments, grading memos and rubrics that they have developed
- Samples of lesson plans
- Two written reports from their mentors
- Four individual written self-reflections
- Last three lesson observations from the RSC
- Last two lesson observations from the mentors
- Social Responsibility Project report
- The Future Leader's teaching and learning philosophy.
- Updated CV
- Recommendation letters written by the mentor and principal.

Apart from this Portfolio of Evidence, RSCs also engage with district officials on a regular basis to discuss the absorption of interns into the district's schools.



PRACTICAL TIPS: FOR SUPPORTING GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

- Remind teacher interns from the beginning and throughout the programme that, although the lead implementing partner will do what they can to help, ultimately the interns are themselves responsible for finding a teaching job after graduation. Implementing organisations need to avoid creating a dependency or entitlement culture.
- Teacher interns should be clear that although their host school may be a Model C or private school, the purpose of the programme they are in is to capacitate the part of the public sector education system that is most lacking quality teachers, namely township primary and secondary schools.
- If teacher interns are placed in Model C or private schools, create opportunities for them to work in a township school, so they have had experience of all levels before graduating and looking for permanent positions.
- Teacher interns should be briefed on how to look for a teaching job before their last year in the programme, so that they can build up resourcefulness, resilience and awareness of the challenges they will face when looking for teaching jobs.

- District and provincial relationships can be leveraged to help implementers, and therefore graduates, to understand how to apply where skills are needed.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

This involves evaluations of student interns' progress at different stages of the programme, including *baseline assessments*, *mid-programme* and *post-programme* assessments.

This part of the programme implementation is crucial to:

- Understanding programme impact
- Understanding how best to improve the programme going forward
- Ensuring the rigor and credibility of reporting back to funders.

Implementers should commission organisations to run an External Evaluation of the programme at key stages to ensure the programme's rigor and credibility.



EXAMPLE: GTI's M&E PROCESSES

Observation of Student Interns

Intern Teachers are observed twice a term and given critical feedback by both the Regional Schools Coordinator(RSC) and the mentor. They then

have to incorporate this feedback into their next lesson. RSC and mentor compare their evaluations to check for levels of discrepancy and alignment.

Alumni Tracking and Engagement

This process is important to ensure that GTI knows how its graduates are doing and where they are, and to continue to provide them with support whenever necessary. The tracking of alumni takes place through the Annual Tracer Study that enables GTI to know the absorption and retention rates of the graduates. The engagement with the alumni occurs through various mechanisms, including participating in the annual Axis Education Summit.



PRACTICAL TIPS: FOR M&E

- Budget for someone in your team to be dedicated to this function, which tracks *outputs and goal achievements*. Funders increasingly want to see and feel the sustainable impact of their donations.
- Ensure that any assessment templates or monitoring questionnaires used with interns are qualitative as well as quantitative. The notion of a 'Competent teacher' – a generic goal of teacher internship programmes – is a qualitative term.
- Capture teacher interns' stories on film and paper where possible. Story-telling is a very personal and compelling methodology for

communicating to current and possible future funders the richness of the learning experience that teacher internship models can produce.

- Include as many different stakeholders in your M&E, especially mentors and the host schools' management. If they are fulfilling their roles well they will create an enabling environment which will have a direct impact on the quality of the programme's outputs.
- Your M&E milestones should also evaluate the degree of collaboration of other implementing partners and the quality of their delivery. The MOU will help to guide you regarding such partners' responsibilities and roles. This should also apply to all operational and support roles within the lead implementing partners' ranks.
- Ensure your M&E results are used very intentionally when considering how to improve the programme year by year. It is easy to unconsciously divorce M&E from such considerations.
- Use individual interviews as well as focus groups to counterbalance the limitation of purely written feedback or evaluations.
- Use an efficient data collection system to capture and store **collection of confidential data from mentors, teacher interns etc.**

8. Financial Model

Financial models will vary across different organisations. Here are some points to consider in both the planning and implementation phases.

- **Student tuition and stipends costs:** In the GTI model up until now these have been covered by NSFAS and the Funza Lushaka bursary scheme.
- **The need for agility:** Government schemes such as NSFAS and Funza are not always administered efficiently, so this requires responsive back-up plans on the part of the organisation leading the programme implementation.
- **Leveraging relationships:** In the GTI financial model every student intern receives a monthly stipend, which is a big cost as intern numbers increase. Due to gradual and solid relationship building with DBE, this stipend is now being covered by the DBE. This means much less fundraising now needs to be done through private funding: trusts, foundations and corporates' CSR.
- **Innovation and creativity:** These are essential skills for keeping cost per head down as low as possible. For example, GTI's travel costs for RSCs to regularly visit geographically distanced hosting schools which were high. With careful thought a more cost-effective 'rural model' has been created. Now geographical proximity is a key factor in selecting host schools.
- **Funder involvement:** When a funder attends strategic meetings, and builds relationships with other key stakeholders and sees for themselves how their money is being spent and to what effect, they become more engaged, and potentially more willing to offer

financial support beyond the initial commitment.

- **Financial sustainability:** Plan ahead and look to future financial sustainability. This requires constant re-thinking and agility.



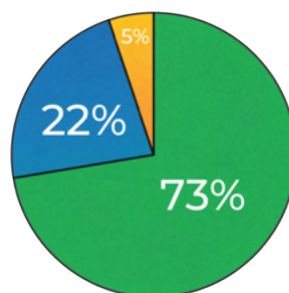
EXAMPLE: GTI'S EXPERIENCE

The government currently covers fees, laptops, and a stipend, though the disbursement of these funds can be irregular. This irregularity necessitates GTI providing stipends to ensure students can afford essentials. If FUNZA stipends are reliably disbursed early in the year, GTI can significantly reduce its stipend contributions, thus lowering its costs. Discussions in the GTI-Mpumalanga steering committee explored the possibility of GTI managing these funds directly, which would aid in more effective budgeting for our students. The committee has also agreed that a meeting be held between the DBE, UNISA and GTI to discuss the timeous disbursement of the bursaries by UNISA to GTI students.

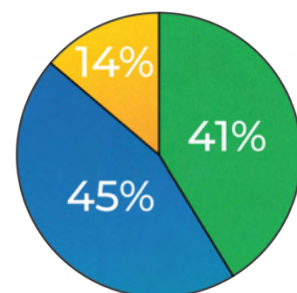
PATHWAY TO INCREASE PUBLIC FUNDING OF FLP



2024 - 2025



2026-2027



TARGET

LEGEND:

PRIVATE FUNDING e.g. MAITRI

DBE FUNZA LUSHAKA BURSARY

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG



PRACTICAL TIPS: FOR FINANCIAL MODELS

- Ensure you secure a range of different funders from both the public and private sector. This helps to stabilise your income in case one type of funder happens to pull out. Include organisations with a particular focus on educational matters, as these have insight into the education developmental landscape and can bring in an advisory and advocacy component. This can encourage others to donate, as well create oversight on best financial practice.
- Seek out funding from organisations working in the geographical area in which your programme runs. You can appeal more easily to their sense of community.
- Ensure absolute clarity regarding what part(s) of your programme's budget are covered by a particular funder. This will enable more efficient and effective financial reporting and accountability.
- Seek in-kind donations wherever possible to supplement financial donations. Some organisations are more willing to give in-kind (for example, re-purposing of old laptops from companies looking to upgrade).
- Use digital communication and online platforms such as GoogleMeet/WhatsApp Video/Zoom for meetings and mentoring/coaching. This strategy can significantly reduce travel costs and travel time (also a cost), especially when beneficiaries live in

remote areas.

- Give funders regular financial reports. This keeps them interested and up to date with developments and builds the programme's governance credibility.

CONCLUSION

While these guidelines are drawn from the experience of a specific programme run by GTI, we hope that the lessons learned and shared here will be of use to implementers of internships working across the country in a range of contexts. Through the wrap-around support provided by internship programmes, this approach helps thoroughly prepare our student teachers to become competent, confident and empathetic professionals.

