



Request for Proposals: Participation in Prototyping a Standardised Approach for Extended Student Teacher Internships

Responses to clarifications questions

22 January 2026

Notes:

- Questions have been anonymised which may have required minor editing in some cases of the original phrasing.
- For the sake of good governance and transparency all questions and all responses are shared in the public domain.
- Responses are as comprehensive as possible, but in the event that a response may still not be clear enough, we encourage you to make this point in your application.

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1.	<p>I am writing to seek clarity and to raise a concern regarding the language eligibility criteria outlined for the Foundation Phase, specifically the exclusion of Afrikaans.</p> <p>Afrikaans is the home language of more than 10% of South Africa's population and is the medium of instruction in many public schools, particularly in the Western Cape, Northern Cape, and parts of the North West. In several rural areas, including towns such as Sutherland, there is often only one school available, and it is Afrikaans medium. Excluding Afrikaans therefore unintentionally limits participation from entire communities, rather than offering learners or teachers a genuine alternative.</p> <p>This omission also has a disproportionate impact on many coloured learners and educators and, from an equity and access perspective, risks excluding a significant and already marginalised group from benefiting from this initiative. While we fully support the prioritisation and strengthening of South African indigenous languages, we believe that this can be done without excluding Afrikaans, which is also an official South African language and a lived reality for many Foundation Phase learners.</p> <p>From a practical implementation perspective, we would also like to highlight a feasibility concern. We are hoping to partner with North-West University, and even under current conditions it is already challenging to recruit a cohort of 25 eligible students who are in close geographic proximity to one another. The exclusion of Afrikaans further narrows the</p>	9 January 2026	<p>For Funza Lushaka, DBE allocates a limited number for Afrikaans in specific provinces: FS, NC, WC, EC (two districts) hence very few bursaries. Afrikaans speakers will form part of the eligible pool of candidates, commensurate with the language's demographic representation in the specific geographic and socio-economic contexts that form the parameters of the overall prototyping</p>

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	<p>potential pool and creates an additional constraint that may hinder successful implementation, particularly in rural and semi-rural contexts.</p> <p>As a possible compromise, we would like to propose that Afrikaans be included as an eligible language in specific contexts, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - where Afrikaans is the dominant or sole medium of instruction in the local schooling context; - in rural or single-school communities where no alternative language-of-instruction options exist; and/or - where inclusion of Afrikaans enables viable cohort formation without undermining the broader objective of strengthening indigenous African languages. <p>We believe this approach would preserve the spirit and intent of the RFP, while ensuring that the programme remains inclusive, equitable, and practically implementable across diverse South African contexts. Thank you for considering this query. We would welcome further engagement on how the programme can best balance language development priorities with access, equity, and feasibility.</p>		
2.	<p>Proposal Template: Is there a proposal template available, or are consortia expected to create their own format following the guidelines in the 'Format of submission' section on pages 11-12? This is a matter of urgency if there is a template available</p>	14 January 2026	<p>The consortia are expected to maintain their preferred format, structured according to the provided guidelines, but there is no standardised template.</p>

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3.	EWAS costs: is the IP staff time (R138,000 for a project manager per year for two years; R119,000 for a technical officer per year for two years payable to IPs) included in the EWAS total of R30 000 per year per student?		No, this represents the additional remuneration for operational and technical support for the duration of the prototyping which requires extra time from IPs, outside of what would be normal EWAS conditions.
4.	EWAS compliance: will the EWAS requirements be written into the student FUNZA bursary requirements so that the student complies with these requirements?		DBE is being engaged to formalise this, although the details will only be concluded in consultation with successful consortia. Overall, the consortia is responsible for establishing clear protocols to maintain compliance across the cohort.
5.	Common Competency Framework (CCF): Can the CCF tool be shared with potential applicants? The RFP mentions it's "collaboratively developed in alignment with the SACE Professional Teaching Standards" - the CCF is useful and aligned to SACE but not currently in a form that's easily applicable in the classroom. Will there be a mapping done of the CCF to the HITS framework (for example) so the competencies are easily applicable in the classroom as teaching practice and standardised across IPs?		Yes, the CCF is in the public domain and will be a critical part of the prototyping process. The CCF will undergo pre-validation during the initial implementation phases to ensure it is ready for the prototyping process. To support this, a workshop will be conducted for all participants to establish a shared understanding and ensure standardised application across all partnerships. Student teachers will also be supplied with the CCF in card deck format to have a concrete resource available for regular use and consultation.
6.	Student Recruitment: Since we will only have confirmation of successful application by mid March, and DBE is planning to allocate FUNZA students to IPs after the selection of IPs are complete, when is the final date when student allocation/recruitment will be completed?		Placements must be finalised by 31 March 2026 to facilitate an 8 April 2026 start date, allowing student teachers to begin concurrently with the second school term. These timelines will be further unpacked with the DBE during the inception period.
7.	Control Group Management: How should consortia manage control groups ethically and practically? Is the control group more the responsibility of the HEI rather than the IP? Because the IP may have limited capacity to monitor and report on the		Your proposal should clearly outline how the partnership will identify these groups and who will be responsible for overall management of the prototyping control groups on a day-to-day basis. Note that an independent service provider will also be

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	control.		appointed to collect comparative data on both sets of participants. In addition, an ethics approval process is underway to guide the various actors, also IPs and HEIs, in the matter. Key here is that the HEI and IP(s) must work collaboratively to draw on the strengths of each.
8.	Control Group data collection: who will complete the baseline and endline competency assessments on the control group?		An external service provider will also be contracted to conduct the competency assessments. The consortia will be required to collaborate with the service provider in the process, specifically to support the access to students and guide the logistics. The consortia will also be collecting data for both groups.
9.	Control Group selection: I am assuming the control will have the same selection criteria as the treatment group?		The participant criteria are detailed on page 8 of the RfP. Your proposal should clearly outline your selection methodology for both groups, specifically addressing the requirements defined in that section.
10.	Full time control group: I understand we want data on the full time control group for comparison to treatment group but then should the research objective 1 be updated to include distance education programmes AND full time education programmes?		The onus is on the consortia to critically review the RfP, identifying opportunities to add value within their submitted proposals. The full-time programme participants are a second, optional control group to establish potential differences between the ESTI, the ordinary distance ITE programme, and the ordinary full-time contact ITE programme.
11.	Collaboration Agreement Specifics: Beyond confirming that a partnership exists, are there specific elements that must be included in the HEI-IP collaboration agreement for TICZA approval?		The proposal must clearly define the structure of the collaboration and the mechanisms ensuring the project is carried through to completion. Please specify the nature of the commitment and its requirements; note that a formal MOU will

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			also be signed between TICZA and the successful consortia to finalise participation specifics.
12.	Research Permissions Timeline: What is the typical timeline for securing DBE school research permissions and who is responsible to secure this? I would suggest this to be written into the student FUNZA agreement		The DBE has already provided in-principle go ahead for the prototyping research to continue. Each consortium is responsible for adhering to research ethics protocols; these processes must be clearly articulated within the proposal. As noted above, JET will coordinate the overall ethics application, working closely with the DBE and provincial education departments as may be required. Existing MOUs between HEIs/IPs and the DBE/PEDs will be an added benefit.
13.	Unfunded Implementation Costs: Are there anticipated implementation costs beyond the TICZA funding allocation that consortia should budget for independently?		No, but this will depend on the efficiencies within the consortia, and should be tightly managed. The participation of staff in the prototyping has been budgeted for.
14.	Regarding definition and responsibility of competency, I would suggest that the HEI is responsible for subject competency (via subject content knowledge assessments) and the IP is responsible for teaching practice competency (via classroom observations which is a WIL/EWAS activity) - can you please confirm? This needs to be clear as this may be treated/collected differently and require different recommendations at the end of the study.		This is an option. The consortia should clearly define the roles of each partner in relation to all activities throughout the implementation process. However, the HEI remains responsible for the statutory assessments (including of WIL) necessary to graduate the student teacher as a practicing professional.
15.	Also regarding or training of the student teachers after the baseline competency test, to familiarise them on the subject content and the teaching practices - who will be doing that training? Should the HEI train on subject content and the IP on the teaching practice? Should that training time be		The role clarity within the proposed EWAS model will need to be negotiated between the HEIs and IPs.

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	factored into the project timeline?	14 January 2026	
16.	Also there may be different foundation phase curriculums (such as Funda Wande vs Room to read) being used in different provinces as the specific subject content - will the HEI train on that or the company who has designed the curriculum?		The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) is the official curriculum for South African schools. All Quintile 1–3 schools are expected to adhere to this framework from Grade R through Grade 12. Curriculum materials are thus designed with the overarching national curriculum statements in mind. Please note that the Foundation Phase is distinct from Early Childhood Development (ECD).
17.	Would we need to do a joint proposal or should the proposal be in the name of the NPO's only?		As specified in the RfP, proposals must be developed and submitted by a consortium, specifically structured as an NGO-HEI partnership/s. IPs that are not registered as non-profits will not be eligible to participate unless they have a formal arrangement within the consortium to ensure compliance.
18.	Is it possible for an IP that is not registered as non-profits to collaborate with 25 +25 learners under one IP umbrella and another 25+25 under a second IP		The proposal should clearly outline the operational framework of the partnership. As part of the procurement process, the committee will evaluate the compliance and due diligence documentation submitted by each consortium.
19.	Kindly provide further clarity on page 3, bullet point 3 'an option...group'.		To clarify a previous error: the study consists of one treatment group and two distinct control groups. The treatment group includes students enrolled in the ESTI programme. The first mandatory control group comprises 50 students enrolled in distance education programs (not in ESTI), while the second optional control group consists of full-time students who meet the treatment criteria but are not enrolled in the ESTI programme.

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20.	Could TICZA clarify how implementation responsibility for the EWAS components is intended to be divided between the HEI and the Implementing Partner, and whether one partner is expected to act as the primary delivery agent?	14 January	TICZA expects a collaborative partnership in which both the HEI and the NGO participate fully. While TICZA does not intend to over-prescribe the operational specifics of this relationship, the proposal must clearly articulate how the consortium will manage its internal dynamics. This partnership should be formally solidified through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two parties.
21.	Where does the primary contractual relationship lie: will TICZA contract separately with the HEI and IP, or appoint a single lead contracting entity per consortium with internal arrangements managed by the partners?		The intention is for all members of the successful consortium to be signatories to the SLA with JET. The different roles within the consortium will also be specified in the SLA. To clarify: one SLA will be agreed to for each consortia, but with clear accountability lines and approvals for each member of the consortia to be signed off individually.
22.	The TORs specify a per-student EWAS allocation payable to IPs. Could TICZA clarify whether this full allocation is intended to fund EWAS delivery, or does it supplement other student expenses?		The per-student EWAS allocation is meant specifically for the EWAS delivery and must be utilised for this purpose only.
23.	As funding is pooled and managed by the Secretariat, will budget lines be fixed by category, or will consortia have flexibility to reallocate funds within agreed parameters under the SLA?		Budget lines will need to be adhered to. Variations will require pre-approval and will be reported as such to the TICZA steering committee.
24.	How does TICZA propose to manage or account for contamination risks between treatment and control groups drawn from the same institution?		Clear recruitment and selection criteria will be developed collaboratively with the consortium, subject to quality assurance by the Secretariat, the Project Steering Committee, and the Project Research Committee. Robust reporting measures will be implemented to prevent data contamination

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			and ensure the integrity of the study.
25.	To what extent is contextual adaptation of the standardised EWAS model permitted, and how will implementation fidelity be assessed during the prototyping phase?		The EWAS provides an explicit framework for wraparound support which should be adhered to in any adaptation of the model. This should also be clarified in the proposal. Fidelity to the EWAS will be determined on the basis of what is implemented versus what student teachers experience, take away, and report on their own progress. In this sense while the IP may have latitude for contextual adaptation, this comes with the onus to ensure any adaptations meet or exceed the provisions of the standardised model.
26.	Will reporting and financial templates be shared prior to contracting, and what level of reporting intensity should consortia anticipate relative to the scale of funding?		Reporting and financial templates will be provided to the consortium prior to the commencement of work. Reporting will be conducted on a quarterly basis, aligned with the Project Steering Committee meetings, with a comprehensive annual report submitted at the end of each financial year.
27.	Regarding the CCF: Who will be conducting the assessments using the CCF and how will standardisation or moderation of this occur? We note that on page 9, it indicates that the CCF for the the control group would be "Standard as per HEI policy" - please explain this because there is no detail about how the HEIs would put the CCF into practice or what other options there are if they do not use the CCF.	14 January 2024	<p>The consortium will utilise the Common Competency Framework (CCF) to monitor student teacher progress mainly for formative purposes. External competency assessments (using the CCF) will be conducted by an independent service provider. The timing of these assessments will need to be carefully planned, in consultation with all parties, to avoid duplication or clash with HEI assessment periods.</p> <p>Furthermore, senior academics will be engaged to conduct formal assessments of student teacher interns via lesson observations. Detailed instructions on applying the CCF for</p>

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			various assessment and reflection activities will be provided in the accompanying User Guide.
28.	Is this assessment to be based solely on lesson observations or will it include conversations with student teachers? If based solely on lesson plans, we query how STs can be assessed on certain competencies, for example: “1.2. Teachers understand the different challenges that confront learners and their families and consider how these challenges may affect learners’ behaviour and learning.”		Lesson observations are integrated with reflective practice. This may occur through written self-reflections by student teachers, as well as post-observation dialogues with peers, mentor teachers, or project mentors.
29.	How can the CCF be used in its prevalidated form within this overarching research project and simultaneously with the aim to validate the CCF? We acknowledge that this has been addressed within the risk analysis within the prototype concept note but continue to raise concerns about it.		A pilot study involving a smaller cohort will be conducted prior to the full-scale deployment of the prototype to ensure the validity of the CCFs and manage the risk. In the unlikely event that the CCF cannot be validated, or a significant flaw is identified in the CCF, an alternative standardised assessment will be selected in collaboration with the consortia and appointed service providers.
30.	How will the CCF be “used to review and design mentoring guidelines and other instruments” (page 9)?		Beyond its role in assessment which is what the CCF was primarily developed for, the CCF could serve as a versatile resource for designing student teacher development courses. Following a rigorous validation process, focused on usability and construct validity, users will have the autonomy to integrate the framework into their work as they see fit.

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31.	Does this mean that the CCF serves as more than a formal assessment tool and also acts as a formative assessment tool from which programmatic changes must be made?		Yes, see the response above regarding the uses of the CCF.
32.	Who will be responsible for the reviewing and redesigning of mentoring guidelines and other documents?		The consortium is expected to assume this responsibility, and their approach should be explicitly detailed in the proposal. Furthermore, the submitted work will undergo a process of review and refinement in collaboration with the TICZA collective and the successful partners.
33.	Will this only apply to the experiment group or also to the control group(s)?		Yes, see above
34.	Please share the CHE ethics approval of the CCF validation from 2025.		The ethics approval can be viewed here . It can also be emailed if so requested.
35.	In terms of this on page 4, “Each partnership must track and report the student teachers in the treatment group as well as the student teachers in the control group(s) for the duration of the prototyping process, using a standardised reporting template”, who is expected to perform this and what is defined by “track” and “report”? We presume this is the role of the HEI but their remuneration may not cover the extent of the work required.		The consortium will bear full responsibility for tracking and reporting. While we expect a collaborative partnership, we intend to respect the autonomy of the partners and avoid over-prescribing their internal governance or operational arrangements.
36.	As per page 5: “The clarity of the refined aim of the research enables the following: explicit delineation of a standardised model with essential wraparound support (EWAS) to be prototyped”, please clarify if this means that the EWAS document will be used equally by all partnerships. If not, how		All partnerships are required to align with the EWAS framework to ensure the standardization of their respective ESTI models

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	will the prototype enable the delineation of the standardised model, and is this standardised model not also been defined through the EWAS document?		
37.	Pages 5-6 notes the required 100 student teachers per partnership and then states that “EWAS: R30,000 per student per year (2026), R31,350 per student per year (2027) payable to IPs (no direct payments will be made to students)”. We understand that the R30,000 is for the 50 student teachers in the control group only (as per page 9), however, page 6 is currently unclear.		The R30K is for the 50 students in the treatment group
38.	We note the optional addition of “fulltime” (page 6) student teachers as a secondary control group. How are “fulltime” student teachers defined and how do we check that they are completing their degree in a full-time manner? Perhaps this only refers to institutions that offer in-person full-time degrees and not those completed by distance learning.		That is correct; the second control group will consist of student teachers enrolled in full-time programs across online, contact, or blended learning modalities.
39.	How will the “no repeaters” (page 8) policy be implemented? Many student teachers fail modules during their completion of their B.Ed. Please explain the “no repeaters” reference and how this will be implemented.		It is our understanding that student teachers who have repeated a full academic year (or 60% of a previous year’s modules) will not qualify; student teachers who have failed one or two modules will not be prejudiced in their consideration.

End.