THE EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE
ASHESI

Exemplar Track Mentorship Program

Overview

African universities will need to speedily improve the quality of higher-ed for the increasing youthful population, and our work is to build the capacity of educational institutions to advance the best form of education to these students. By 2030 we will, through partnerships and affiliations, raise 20 exemplary higher education institutions on the continent to directly transform over 2 million students and graduates for the labor market. Graduates who are ethical leaders, entrepreneurial-minded, who create jobs, transform industries, and lead economies.

The mentorship program is a highly engaging and customized management support for institutions committed to reviewing and implementing high-impact structures in their institutional systems. It is designed to enable existing institutions with proven efficient systems to share their framework and blueprint of success with peers on the continent who seek to raise the quality of their outcomes. All institutions commit to building and maintaining student-centeredness in a system that produces highly employable and entrepreneurial graduates. Enrolment is for whole institutions or departments and covers program or curriculum development, faculty and administrative staff, academic and student services systems.

Why This Program?

Exemplary higher education is student-centered, innovative, and continually relevant to the development needs of the continent. *Exemplar* institutions are uncompromising in reaching for excellence in the systems that improve their student outcomes. The mentorship program will develop more institutions into *exemplars* for the continent. The Education Collaborative identifies the partnerships and raises the resources needed to implement and sustain the change it would take to achieve excellence. Mentee institutions ensure strategic alignment and dedicate resources for the sustainability of the change implemented.

The program is designed to reflect the following:
1. **Build shared ownership:** The deliberate, collaborative mentorship pairings build shared ownership of the transformation process at the regional and continent level.
2. **Foster trust, community, and partnership**: The peer-to-peer approach fosters a sense of trust, community, and partnership among higher-ed institutions and stakeholders for the overall growth of higher education.

3. **Tailored solutions**: The one-on-one design ensures context-relevant and customized approaches for each institution enrolled.
4. **Shared innovation**: Engaging multiple institutions in the process means speedier transformation and growth in the overall higher-ed system.

Institutions enrolled in the mentorship program commit to a 3-year transformation plan facilitated by the Education Collaborative and lead by peer *Exemplar* partner institutions. Focus areas for change include executive leadership development, strategy planning, and implementation, and academic and non-academic student services development. Institutions also build systems for sustainability throughout the process, including structures to facilitate mobilization of resources and long-term strategic planning.

Key Collaborators for Change

The Mentor:
Exemplar Partners: Exemplar institutions in the sub-regional hubs on the continent provide mentorship for enrolled institutions based on their areas of proven experience and expertise. Towards the transformation agenda, they work closely with mentee institutions to build lasting systems to become exemplars themselves. Multiple mentors work with enrolled mentees over the three years. Each mentee institution has one primary assigned mentor.

The Mentee:
Exemplar-track Institutions: These are the beneficiary institutions of the mentorship program. To be eligible, an institution needs to be accredited in an African country, have clear leadership and mission, and commit to our shared values of collaboration, ethics and leadership, entrepreneurship, and citizenship. Participants in mentorship work through a plan to drive the targeted change at their institution. Mentees are responsible for ensuring the implementation and sustainability of the transformation processes started in the organization.

Enrollment Process
The application process is as follows:

Stage	Process	Outputs
	Phase 1: Application and institution profile	
1	Institutions complete application form on Education Collaborative website	Application form
2	Introductory meetings with Education Collaborative	Memo: Initial determination of fit
3	Situational review and scorecard completed by Education Collaborative	Report: Situational analysis

4	Education Collaborative Committee review and approval	Report: Finalized for enrollment
Phase 2: Enrollment and 3-year goal setting		
5	Institution introductory meeting with Education Collaborative Committee	N/A
6	Discuss and develop the institution's 3-year target transformation goals	• Initial mentorship goal document
7	Sign mentorship agreement	Mentee contract
Phase 3: Mentor assignment, and impact measurement framework development		
8	• Institution is assigned a primary mentor to refine strategic goals, develop theory of change, key performance indicators (including qualitative and quantitative outcomes and milestone), targets, and timelines for each year • Baseline measurement completed • Partner institution develops schedule and proposes potential consultants, and mentors for first year • Activate mentorship relationship	• Mentor TOR and contract • Impact framework (including theory of change and project outcomes) • Baseline report • Mentorship plan and schedule for year 1
10	New mentee institution announced • Institutional Profile videos and interviews • Engagement in Annual Convening • Enrollment in communities of practice	• Profile video • Profile article on institution
Additional: Ongoing and final measurements		
9	• Periodic articles and reflections on project progress and success or learnings on Education Collaborative's LMS or community of practice. • Mentors share consolidated mentee progress reports • Interim reviews • Annual measurements • End line assessment and final impact review	• Entries on LMS or COP • Mentee progress reports • Assessment / review reports

Structural Pillars of the Mentorship Program

Funding

The Education Collaborative raises and manages the funding to support the development of the mentorship program. All specific financial arrangements are made separately for each project, program, or activity with related goals and targets. The terms and necessary budget for each project, program, or activity developed under Exemplar Track Mentorship Program will be discussed and agreed upon in writing before initiating the project, program, or activity. Mentee institutions get access to up to $100,000 per year for targeted transformation goals developed in partnership with the Education Collaborative and their mentor institution.

Exemplar partner (Mentor) institution manages and reports on the overall budget assigned for each institution it mentors. The mentor submits reports and budget requests to the Education Collaborative in consolidated mentee reports. The mentee institution is the beneficiary of funding and is responsible for budgeting, tracking, and reporting funds per project to the mentor institution. The mentee is also responsible for dedicating additional resources needed to ensure the sustainability of funded projects or initiatives and reporting where this is impossible to achieve.

Mentorship

Unique to the mentorship program design is the priority given to context-relevant support, collaborative mentoring, and sustainability. Also, the institution receiving the support commits to documenting and sharing learnings on the Education Collaborative LMS and in communities of practice.

The mentorship provided during the program is tailored and institution-specific, and mentors are assigned based on expertise and need alignment, location, and institution's context and profile. One primary mentor is assigned per institution and assists the institution to identify additional mentorship and consultation support across the network as needed.

The mentee gets access to the pool of resources and funding to engage in conferences, workshops, and training both regionally and continent-wide. And programs, capacity building, and structural development across:
- Strategy, policy design, and executive coaching.
- Curriculum design, faculty training, and development.
- Administrative and managerial work process design and review, including job shadowing and training.
- Contributing to the virtual hub repository of the network including Learning Management System, online and in-person convenings.
- Developing frameworks for impact measurement and benchmarking.

In the near term, institutions in the Education Collaborative commit to building our capacity to achieve a system that supports:
1. Ethics and leadership development in students
2. Employability and relevant career readiness in students
3. An active entrepreneurship ecosystem
4. An inclusive and diverse campus
5. Systems accountability and sustainability for transformation

Institutional Commitment

Institutional commitment to the mentorship program is key and begins from the application process and continues throughout the mentorship. The institution commits to consistent communication

and updates as agreed throughout the program. The maximum commitment time of three years is not adjustable and updates to tactics and strategies may be done within the period, given that changes will result in the overall impact target set at the beginning of the program.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Impact Measurement

The Education Collaborative views impact to be along a 4-level spectrum, namely, Direct service, scaled direct service, systems change, and framework change. The mentorship program design achieves the first two levels of impact. The program is deemed successful when the mentee institution also becomes a mentor and scales-up the services received by supporting peers in same areas during or at the end of the three years.

Direct Service (Internal development)
- Engaged institution focuses on themselves. The institution identifies areas not maximized for impact and works on the structures, processes, and culture needed to improve and maximize student outcomes.
- The institution sets up to expand impact beyond own campus.
- The institution's academic, non-academic, leadership, and management structures are optimized to provide the best possible student outcomes for students.

Scaled Direct Service (Reach external to peers)
- The institution engages an efficient structure and process to share key models and learnings with peers in its region. Impacts others beyond its internal campus and stakeholders.
- Engaged as a mentor and supports peers, either at the unit level or the institutional level, through sharing learning. The institution identifies key partnerships in the community, industry, regulators, and funders and explores networks to maximize the outcome of partnerships.

The impact tracking and measurement for the mentorship program begins with the establishment of a baseline and ends with an end line assessment. Enrolled mentors will propose their strategic mentorship goals in Phase 2 before the mentorship / mentee contract agreement is signed. Mentee is assigned a mentor to finalize strategic goals, develop theory of change and outcome targets and timelines. The theory of change will be aligned with the Mentorship Program's Theory of Change developed by the Education Collaborative. This will ensure alignment with the five transformational goals and impact spectrum.

A baseline assessment will be conducted by the Education Collaborative to document baseline data to track and compare progress of the mentee towards achieving the outcome and impact targets over the 3 years. Annual assessments will also be conducted to ascertain progress towards outcome targets. The annual reports will produce recommendations aimed at supporting the mentee institution and their primary mentor to achieve the impact targets by the end of the three years.

Baseline and annual measurements are conducted by the Education Collaborative. Interim progress tracking and impact is per goal or project and will be tracked according to established timelines.

Interim progress tracking and impact is per goal or project and will follow the goal or project timelines. Interim progress and outcome reports will be reviewed by the assigned mentor institution per milestone and reported to the Education Collaborative in consolidated mentee institution reports. The mentee institution will either receive excellence reviews or be required to submit a performance improvement plan if not achieving the set targets for each goal area or period. Targets and timelines for interim reviews and measurements are conducted in three key areas:

1. The mentorship relationship and administrative processes
2. The operationalized system or structure (this would include budget and resource use)
3. The outcomes and impacts of the system or structure along with pre-set goals
4. The sustainability measures built into its design and implementation
5. Documenting and sharing of learning with peers (communities of practice, convenings, or virtual hub)

The Education Collaborative reserves the right to terminate the mentorship program for any institution missing impact targets and goals or not meeting enrollment requirements noted below. Termination during the program could be before, during, or after implementing an improvement plan where goals were missed.

What we look for in a mentee institution
- This institution is recognized as a registered entity and is accredited or in the process of acquiring accreditation from statutory bodies and will remain committed to conforming to all statutory and regulatory requirements as stipulated in the country of operation.
- The institution has an active institutional leadership team and maintains a positive public reputation and image on average.
- The institution is set to grow, and access to dedicated mentorship and resource support from peer institutions in Africa will significantly support sustainable growth and improved outcomes?

Application Process
To enroll in this mentorship program, institutions would have to download and complete the application on the Education Collaborative Website and email along with the required documents to the Director of the Education Collaborative, Rose Dodd (rdodd@ashesi.edu.gh).

Access application