

Zenex Foundation

South Africa

The Zenex Foundation is an independent education grant-maker established in 1995 to improve teaching and learning outcomes in language and mathematics in South Africa. This strategic focus is driven by evidence of a proven relationship between language proficiency and success in mathematics as critical for overall learner achievement. The Foundation's experience and expertise reinforce its mission to "strengthen and influence the education system through evidence-based grant-making, partnerships and thought leadership."



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Zenex Foundation's endowment has enabled it to operate for 30 years as of 2025. In its strategy, Zenex adopts a three-pronged approach to designing projects that involves careful consideration of projects' scale and scope, testing new ideas with the intention for systemic uptake and to ensure their sustainability.

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The Zenex Foundation instills transformative practices through all aspects of its work, prioritizing selecting diverse, local partners and expanding its pool of implementers and evaluators to include black South African experts through capacity building initiatives.

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Key to Zenex's Strategy is its position as a thought leader to maximize influence, whereby Zenex contributes to knowledge building in the sector by sharing findings from research and evaluations to inform policy, practice, and thinking in niche areas.

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Zenex values collaboration with local and international entities, evidenced by its prioritization of (1) networking for knowledge-sharing, (2) facilitating bridging the divide between theory and practice, and (3) establishing structured funding partnerships.

Zenex's Impact

The Foundation's entire budget is committed to the fields of language and mathematics in basic education. To date, it has disbursed over R1.5 billion in the South African education sector, the impact of which continues to be evaluated through extensive research, monitoring and evaluation to ensure that every investment drives the advancement of education.

Zenex draws on evidence-based learnings in its partnerships in large-scale, multistakeholder initiatives that can be replicated and scaled up to bring about sustainable education change.

Zenex's SLOW Journey

The Zenex Foundation's strategic thrusts respond to the education context in alignment with national education priorities. Over 3 decades, the Zenex strategy has incorporated promoting access and equity to address historical inequities hindering access to schooling; to improving education quality through school leadership, teacher and learner support programs, developing quality resources that reflect the South African environment, and commissioning research to inform learning.

Zenex Foundation has been a member of the SLOW Philanthropy network since 2023!

Click [here](#) to visit Zenex Foundation's website!

