



## Edternships Rundown

An “edternship” (or an educator externship<sup>1</sup>) connects educators with business people or other professionals to spark new learning for and build creative relationships between educators, their students and businesses.

### What is an edternship?

Edternships provides a unique “peer-to-peer” professional learning opportunity for educators, connecting the classroom to the workplace. An edternship can range from a day of job-shadowing to a longer project-based fellowship. Educators learn through direct experience about 21C and technical skill requirements, enriching their teaching and bring relevance to student learning.

### What impact can it have?

Edternship programmes have evolved internationally as a significant response to skills shortages, particularly in STEM. Their longevity (up to 34 years) speaks to their impact - as do the many positive evaluations.<sup>2</sup>

Globally, schooling systems, industry groups, individual companies and philanthropists recognise the vital role of educators in schools to ensure that students understand the 21C and technical skills they will need in the workforce and can see ahead to school to work pathways and career options. They recognise that students need authentic learning experiences developed by educators who are up-to-date and knowledgeable about the world of work, and who can facilitate student interaction with industry as part of their learning.

<sup>1</sup> An externship is an experiential learning opportunity, similar to an internship but generally shorter, provided by partnerships between educational institutions and employers to give students short practical experiences.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Quality Evaluation Designs [IISME \(now Ignited\) 2013 Evaluation Report](#).



Educators too are passionate about ensuring that they are up-to-date with how their subjects are evolving, how the world of work is changing, and understanding how their students can take their skills into the workforce. Many teachers want to build relationships with businesses to enable increased authentic learning but don't have the time or opportunity to do so.

For companies, investing in a teacher placement is a low-cost, small-scale investment for a long-term, consistent impact on their future workforce. The direct school-industry relationship, particularly on a regional basis, allows businesses to ensure that students are developing the 21C and technical skills they need, particularly in areas of shortage, through up-to-date curriculum content. They are also an important part of a talent pipeline strategy, with young people understanding the career opportunities and pathways available, supported by knowledgeable educators. Employees benefit from the opportunity to share their skills with the community, and companies gain from teacher expertise and insights about effective ongoing learning, particularly with young people.

Comprehensive evaluations of long-running programmes globally show these objectives being achieved. Some key statistics from the Ignited programme are:

- **Teachers changed their approach: 98%** of teachers experimented with new teaching strategies as a result of their edternship, and the same amount implemented or applied new instructional practices;<sup>3</sup> nearly **20%** found the associated professional development transformational for their teaching and themselves personally<sup>4</sup>
- **Students benefited: 98%** of teachers reported that their edternship had a positive impact on student learning<sup>5</sup>
- **Businesses benefited: 94%** of business partners felt the edternship was worthwhile for their organisation<sup>6</sup>

## What are its key components?

### Who does an edternship?

Edternship programmes can be for classroom teachers only, or extend to principals, careers advisors and other school staff. They can be offered to secondary teachers only, or extend to primary teachers; they can focus on STEM teachers, or all teachers; they can focus on “outstanding teachers” or be available more generally. Some edternship programmes reserve a

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<sup>3</sup> Ignited - One Year Review of 2017 Fellows sourced at <https://www.ignitededucation.org/about/impact/>.

<sup>4</sup> Quality Evaluation Designs IISME [now Ignited]: 2013 Evaluation Report Highlights sourced at [https://www.ignitededucation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/QED\\_Evaluation\\_Highlights.pdf](https://www.ignitededucation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/QED_Evaluation_Highlights.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> See note 3 above.

<sup>6</sup> See note 3 above.

proportion of spaces for teachers from low decile schools. Edternships can be for individual teachers, for two or more teachers from a specific school, or encompass a team of educators from a school - the principal, careers teachers and subject teachers.

## What do edterns do?

Edternship programmes involve the edtern spending time at the partner business's workplace, for as short a time as 1-2 days and as long as 8 weeks, often during school holidays.

All edternships involve an element of job-shadowing, employee interviewing and observation of how businesses do things like problem-solving or teamwork, or how a corporate environment and culture works. Edterns look to see 21C skills in action like creativity, tenacity, communication and critical thinking, as well as, to a greater or lesser extent, specific technical skills related to their subject. Business sponsors are closely involved in supporting the edtern and facilitating their learning.

Where edternships are longer (4 weeks plus), edterns often take on a specific project as part of an employee team. This gives them further skills observation opportunities, builds their own skills, and often delivers considerable value to the business.

Formal edternship programmes assist and deepen the learning and sharing process, from the initial matching of the educators and their businesses, briefing on what to expect and how to prepare for both educators and businesses, and assisting with drawing out observations. This can involve daily debriefs with groups of educators and a specific focus on curriculum linkage and translating learning into lesson and project-planning.

## What happens afterwards?

Many formal edternship programmes place a considerable emphasis on helping educators translate their learnings into classroom outcomes, some with ongoing workshops and feedback/impact learning sessions. Businesses support educators in this by being available to host students at their workplace, coming in to give talks or support student learning, and building an ongoing supportive relationship with the educator and the school. Some edternships form part of broader programmes which facilitate this type of ongoing school-industry connection, including with student work-based learning and industry school visits.

## Who pays for it?

In every edternship programme we have seen, educators are funded to take part in the programme by the business who hosts them or by the industry-government collaboration running the project (such as [Project ENTHUSE](#) in the UK) or directly by government.

Many of the US programmes run in the school holidays and teachers are paid a stipend or an hourly rate for their participation on the programme. In shorter placements in school time, teacher release time is provided to the school, or the teacher's classes are taken by an external provider.

## What are some examples?

Edternship programmes do not appear to exist formally in New Zealand, although teachers and businesses may well have arranged their own informal opportunities. Programmes such as the [Royal Society's Science Teaching Leadership Programme](#) and the [BOMA New Zealand Education Fellows Programme](#) provide outstanding professional learning to very small numbers of teachers utilising business and university relationships, but they are much longer in duration and involve a very intensive level of professional development.

### United States

The US has a long history of edternship programmes, most developed as a response to industry skills shortages (particularly in STEM) on a regional basis. They often form part of broader regional industry-education partnerships focused on building school-to-career pathways, student work-based learning opportunities, teacher professional development and better alignment of school curricula with workforce needs.

#### Ignited

Ignited is the largest and longest-running programme, focused on transforming STEM education and having placed over 3,700 teachers in the SF Bay area since 1985. The [Ignited Summer Fellowship](#), the flagship programme, places teachers on 8-week paid fellowships at local companies (including Google, Oculus and Lockheed Martin) to work with an experienced mentor to complete a meaningful project for their host organisation, and Ignited Coaches train teachers to incorporate learnings into new curriculum content. The newer [STEM Exploration Externships](#) bring teams of five teachers to one organisation for a week. The teacher teams observe how 21C skills are applied in the workplace and participants work together to explore how to incorporate these examples into engaging new curriculum content.

#### LIFT2 (Leadership Initiatives for Teaching Technology)

The [LIFT2](#) programme, now in its 16th year, places teachers in paid 5-8 week externships with companies in STEM fields in New England, taking on authentic projects, shadowing professionals and experiencing the work environment, supported by a business mentor. At the same time, teachers develop a project-based learning curriculum unit to bring back to their classrooms, and demonstrate and document student learning, earning graduate credits.

## Europe

The [STEM Alliance](#) is a European initiative to bring together industry and governments to promote STEM education and careers. The [Teacher Discovery Placement scheme](#) highlights and supports best practice professional development experiences, work placements or internships in business and industry which enable teachers or career counsellors to spend a period of time working with an employer as an optimal way of ensuring student STEM and 21C skills development.

The STEM Alliance's [Teacher Placement Initiatives - Collection of Best Practice](#) booklet highlights 15 initiatives from 10 countries, in Europe and globally. Whilst some go well beyond edternships, they provide an inspiring overview of what is possible, including 6-12 month teacher secondments into companies and pre-service industry internships or placements for beginning teachers. Below is a brief summary of two European edternship focused programmes in Belgium.

### Entre'apprendre

The Entre'apprendre initiative operating in the French-based education system provides 2-4 day placements for teachers in companies, focusing on both technical and 21C skills. Initially focused on secondary school vocational education training, the initiative now extends across sectors, subjects and to primary school. Teachers are supported to plan their edternship and to integrate learnings into their practice.

### Teacher Placement in Industry with Entrepreneurship Education for Pupils

The Flemish Ministry of Education-led programme funds 5 day industry internships for teachers coupled with entrepreneurial replacement activities for their students run by an external provider. Teachers can organise their edternships themselves or ask the Ministry or an education network to assist.

## Explore more

Career Academy Support Network [Teacher Externship Guide](#) (University of Berkeley)

Quality Evaluation Designs [IISME \(now Ignited\) 2013 Evaluation Report](#)

Education Development Centre [Externships and Beyond: Work-Based Learning For Teachers as a Promising Strategy for Increasing the Relevance of Secondary Education](#)

STEM Alliance [Teacher Placement Initiatives - Collection of Best Practices](#)

STEM Alliance [Developing A Successful Teacher Placement Scheme - A Guide for Companies](#)