

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS — WEBSITE REDESIGN

Zenex Foundation

Website Redesign 2026

A fully evidence-informed redesign of the Zenex Foundation website — architecture, UX, development, performance measurement, and ongoing support. Delivered by November 2026.

SUBMITTED BY

Veritech Digital (Pty) Ltd

REGISTRATION

2026/459072/07

BBBEE STATUS

Level 1 EME — 100% Black-Owned

DATE

June 2026

CONTACT

info@veritechdigital.co.za

WEBSITE

veritechdigital.co.za

INTRODUCTION

A proposal built on your own evidence

Dear Mr Cele and the Zenex Foundation team,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a proposal for the redesign of the Zenex Foundation website. We have studied the Request for Proposals carefully, alongside the independent UX Research and Audit report and the Strategy 2030 summary, and we are confident that we are well-placed to deliver a website that reflects the quality and depth of Zenex's work in the education sector.

What struck us most in reviewing the materials is that the core problem is already well-diagnosed. The UX audit is thorough and precise: strong subject-matter content held back by weak information architecture, limited filtering, inconsistent navigation, and a Knowledge Hub that makes discovery harder than it should be. The brief is not to reimagine Zenex — it is to build a digital environment that finally does justice to the evidence and thought leadership Zenex already produces.

That is exactly the kind of problem we are built for — and it is the kind of work we find most meaningful. We have spent our careers building digital infrastructure for organisations whose work matters: foundations, NGOs, institutions that generate knowledge and need it to reach the right people. This project sits squarely in that space, and we approached this proposal with genuine investment in getting it right.

Our proposal outlines a six-phase approach that addresses each finding in the UX audit directly, delivers a fully redesigned WordPress site with a rebuilt Knowledge Hub, implements performance measurement so Zenex can track the reach of its knowledge outputs, and remediates the critical security gaps we identified on the current site during our pre-submission review.

We are committed to delivering a fully revised website by the end of November 2026, within the approved budget, and are available for a presentation to the Zenex team at any stage of the shortlisting process.

This proposal is submitted in accordance with the RFP deadline of **25 June 2026**. We have noted the shortlisting and presentation timeline — should Veritech Digital be invited to present, we are fully prepared and available on **10 July 2026** and look forward to walking the Zenex team through our thinking in person.

Ashlin Sami

Founder & Lead Developer

Veritech Digital (Pty) Ltd

info@veritechdigital.co.za | veritechdigital.co.za

INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT

What we found before writing this proposal

Before preparing this proposal, Veritech Digital conducted an independent pre-submission assessment of the current Zenex Foundation website using our proprietary CRO Intelligence Platform. The findings below represent a cross-reference of the independent UX Research & Audit commissioned by Zenex, our own technical scan, and a UX performance audit based on observable site behaviour. The result is a complete picture of where the site stands today — and exactly what needs to change.

Summary finding

Our assessment identified that the current site treats all four audience segments identically, buries its most-visited content behind an unusable Knowledge Hub, and gives first-time visitors no compelling reason to engage beyond a single scroll. These findings are consistent with — and extend beyond — the independent UX audit commissioned by Zenex. The one confirmed technical metric is an **F security rating** on securityheaders.com, verified independently on 10 June 2026.

CONFIRMED BY BOTH THE UX AUDIT & OUR ASSESSMENT

Knowledge Hub — flat, unfiltered list

HIGH

100+ publications with no faceted search, no filters, no metadata. The most-visited section is simultaneously the top exit page — a clear value-delivery failure.

UX Audit + Veritech CRO Intelligence Platform

No audience segmentation or pathways

HIGH

Homepage treats researchers, educators, government officials, and donors identically. Each audience has a different job to do — a government official wants policy-relevant evidence; a donor wants impact proof; a researcher wants data access. One generic hero serves none of them well.

UX Audit + Veritech CRO Intelligence Platform

Missing metadata on publications

HIGH

Publications show only title and year. No author, topic, file type, summary, or audience tag — users cannot assess relevance without clicking through.

UX Audit + Veritech CRO Intelligence Platform

No back-to-results navigation

HIGH

Users arrive on publication detail pages with no clear path back to filtered results. Violates Nielsen's User Control & Freedom heuristic — confirmed dead end.

UX Audit + Veritech CRO Intelligence Platform

Mobile experience not optimised

HIGH

A significant proportion of traffic arrives on mobile. A flat list of 100+ publications is functionally unusable on a mobile viewport. No evidence of mobile-first design — a large share of mobile sessions are likely wasted as a result.

UX Audit + Veritech CRO Intelligence Platform

F security rating — all 6 headers missing

HIGH

Strict-Transport-Security, Content-Security-Policy, X-Frame-Options, X-Content-Type-Options, Referrer-Policy, Permissions-Policy — all absent. Critical trust issue for institutional audiences.

Technical scan + Veritech CRO Intelligence Platform

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS FROM OUR PRE-SUBMISSION ASSESSMENT

Zero lead capture on all exit pages

NEW

HIGH

Knowledge Hub, Research, and Publications — all top exit pages — have no lead capture mechanism. High-intent visitors leave without any way for Zenex to re-engage them.

Veritech CRO Intelligence Platform

No primary CTA guiding visitor action

NEW

HIGH

No dominant call to action on the homepage. First-time visitors have no guided next step — exploration leads to the Knowledge Hub dead end or an exit. Without a clear primary CTA, visitors default to exploration through a weak navigation structure.

Veritech CRO Intelligence Platform

No trust signals for institutional audiences

NEW

HIGH

No NPO registration number, no partner logos, no impact statistics, no board credibility markers above the fold. Government officials and donors operate in high-trust environments — this gap is mission-critical.

Veritech CRO Intelligence Platform

No social proof or citation signals

NEW

MEDIUM

No testimonials from government partners, no citation counts, no media mentions. For policy-maker and donor audiences, peer endorsement is the primary trust driver.

Veritech CRO Intelligence Platform

Site reads as static archive

NEW

MEDIUM

No "Latest research," no dates on publications, no upcoming events. Researchers have no reason to subscribe or return. Recency signals are a core driver of repeat visits.

Veritech CRO Intelligence Platform

Generic contact architecture

NEW

MEDIUM

A single generic contact form serves four distinct audience types with different needs. Generic forms convert at 1–3%; audience-specific forms convert at 3–8%.

Veritech CRO Intelligence Platform

Every finding above is addressed in this proposal. The six additional findings from our pre-submission assessment have been incorporated into the UX design and development phases — including audience segmentation on the homepage hero, a trust bar, inline lead capture on the Knowledge Hub, a "Latest from Zenex" section, audience-specific CTAs, and segmented contact forms. The security headers will be remediated as part of the WordPress development phase. Our approach does not just respond to the brief — it responds to the full picture of what the site actually needs.

WHO WE ARE

Veritech Digital

Veritech Digital is a Johannesburg-based digital agency specialising in web development, UX design, and performance measurement. We work with purpose-driven organisations — foundations, NGOs, and institutions — that need their digital presence to match the quality of their work. We build websites that don't just look credible; they make content discoverable, audiences engaged, and impact measurable.

We are a lean, senior-led team. Every project is owned and delivered by the same specialists from discovery to launch — no account managers in the middle, no handoffs to juniors. What you see in this proposal is exactly who builds your site.

OUR TEAM

AS

Ashlin Sami

Founder & Lead — Web Development, UX & Strategy

Ashlin leads all web development, UX design, information architecture, and project delivery at Veritech Digital. With a Bachelor of Information Technology in Business Information Systems and over a decade of experience across agency and freelance environments, Ashlin brings full-stack capability to every engagement — from discovery and wireframing through to WordPress development, security implementation, and CMS training.

- WordPress
- UX & IA
- UI Design
- PHP
- Cloudflare
- Security
- Accessibility
- Project Management

TM

Tumelo Mabena

Data Specialist — GA4 & Performance Measurement

Tumelo leads all analytics implementation and performance measurement at Veritech Digital. Specialising in GA4 configuration, event tracking, and data visualisation, Tumelo ensures that every site we build is equipped to generate clean, actionable insight — giving clients a clear view of how their audiences engage with their content.

- GA4
- Event Tracking
- Analytics Dashboards
- Performance Reporting
- Data Visualisation

BBBEE Status: Level 1 EME — 100% Black-Owned

Veritech Digital (Pty) Ltd is a 100% Black-owned Exempt Micro Enterprise, qualifying for Level 1 BBBEE recognition status under the B-BBEE Codes of Good Practice — the highest recognition level, with 135% procurement recognition. A current BBBEE affidavit is available on request.

TRACK RECORD

Relevant experience

Every project below required us to solve a problem similar to one in this brief — complex content architecture, difficult navigation, security remediation, or technical handover to a non-technical team. We don't list these to tick boxes; we list them because the work speaks directly to what Zenex needs.

National Automotive Brand

Full WordPress development engagement including custom post types, complex API integrations, advanced filtering systems, dealer routing logic, and form-based data capture — delivered on a high-traffic national brand site.

Relevant to: *WordPress custom development, complex filtering, content architecture*

Facilities Management Company

WordPress redesign including full security header implementation (achieving A-grade on securityheaders.com), a dynamic blog and news system with category filtering, and a custom routing system across multiple service pages.

Relevant to: *Security implementation, content filtering systems, WordPress development*

Premium Skincare Brand

Managed a comprehensive technical handover of a WordPress site including Cloudflare configuration, hosting infrastructure, DNS management, and full documentation of all technical systems — delivered to a strict timeline.

Relevant to: *WordPress infrastructure, documentation, technical handover & training*

Retail Fashion Brand

UX-led navigation redesign including custom drawer navigation, product detail page restructuring, improved information hierarchy, and URL architecture — improving content discoverability across a large product catalogue.

Relevant to: *UX redesign, navigation architecture, information hierarchy*

Multi-Brand Building Materials Retailer

Multi-brand WordPress development across two sites including complex form systems, CRM integration, conditional routing logic, and a comprehensive developer documentation suite published for the client team.

Relevant to: *Multi-stakeholder delivery, documentation, CMS training materials*

Veritech CRO Intelligence Platform AI (Veritech Digital)

Built and deployed an AI-powered web intelligence platform using Next.js, TypeScript, and the Anthropic API — featuring custom dashboards, data visualisation, PDF report exports, and a user-centred interface designed for non-technical users.

Relevant to: *Technical depth, modern development capability, data-driven UX*

HOW WE WILL DELIVER

Our approach

Our approach is directly informed by the Zenex Website UX Research & Audit and Strategy 2030. Rather than beginning from assumptions, we start from a clear picture of what is working, what is not, and what the redesigned site needs to achieve for Zenex's five core audiences: researchers, educators, donors, policymakers, and government stakeholders — including the Department of Basic Education at national, provincial, and district level. Each audience has a distinct content journey. Government officials need clear policy implications and evidence summaries, not academic abstracts. The redesigned IA will reflect these differences explicitly.

PHASE 01 Discovery & Information Architecture

Weeks 1–3

We will begin with a structured content and technical audit of the existing site, building on the findings of the independent UX report. This includes a full inventory of the Knowledge Hub content, existing taxonomy, metadata coverage, and navigation patterns. A technical scan will also be conducted to identify security and performance issues requiring remediation as part of the build.

Informed by the audit: The current Knowledge Hub uses broad, overlapping category labels and presents items sequentially with only a title and year visible. We will develop a refined taxonomy with multi-tagging support, allowing publications to be correctly cross-referenced across topics, audiences, and content types.

Five user journeys will be mapped — researcher, educator, donor, policymaker, and government official (DBE) — to ensure the IA reflects how each group navigates and discovers content. Government stakeholders will receive a distinct journey prioritising policy summaries, evidence briefs, and direct links to sector-level impact rather than academic abstracts.

On content migration: as a commitment to a successful launch, Veritech Digital will include a full metadata enrichment pass across all existing Knowledge Hub publications as part of this engagement — at no additional cost. This ensures the new filters, search, and taxonomy work at full capacity from day one, not just for newly added content post-launch. Each existing publication will be reviewed and enriched with the new metadata fields: topic tags, audience tags, author, file type, and summary. The scope of this work will be confirmed during the discovery phase once total content volume is established.

- Content & technical audit
- Revised sitemap
- Taxonomy & metadata schema
- 5 user journey maps
- Full metadata enrichment — all existing publications
- Pre-launch content QA

PHASE 02 UX Design & Wireframing

Weeks 4–6

With the IA confirmed, we will produce wireframes for all key pages: homepage, Knowledge Hub landing, publication detail page, About, Funding Approach, and the Grants section. Each wireframe will address the specific navigation and contextual discovery failures identified in both the independent UX audit and our pre-submission site assessment.

Informed by both audits: Users reported getting stuck on publication detail pages with no clear path back to filtered results. Every document page will include persistent breadcrumbs, a back-to-results link, and related content suggestions. The homepage hero will be redesigned with audience segmentation — a clear four-pathway selector for researchers, educators, government officials, and donors — replacing the current generic mission statement that gives first-time visitors no clear entry point. A primary CTA will be established per audience type, and a trust bar (NPO registration, founding year, partner logos, impact statistics) will be positioned below the navigation to address the credibility gap identified for institutional audiences.

A "Latest from Zenex" section will be designed for the homepage — three publication cards showing title, date, topic tag, and abstract — providing the recency and momentum signals currently absent from the site. Audience-specific contact forms will be wireframed for all four audience types, replacing the current generic contact architecture.

- Wireframes — 8 key page types
- Homepage audience segmentation
- Audience-specific CTAs
- Trust bar design
- Latest from Zenex section
- Audience-specific contact forms
- Navigation & breadcrumb patterns
- Interactive Figma prototype
- Stakeholder review session

PHASE 03 UI Design & Design System

Weeks 6–8

We will develop a refined visual design that builds on and preserves the existing Zenex brand — the established orange and purple colour palette, full-width photography, and visual identity remain central to the redesign. What changes is the structure around them: stronger visual hierarchy, consistent component patterns, audience-specific entry points, and clear signposting throughout. A complete component library will be delivered, covering all reusable elements, forming the foundation for both development and long-term content consistency. An interactive Figma prototype of the approved designs will be built before development begins — giving Zenex a fully clickable preview of the site to review and sign off before a single line of code is written.

Informed by the audit: Page-level UI patterns currently vary across the site, increasing cognitive load. A component library will standardise all repeating elements — publication cards, filter panels, CTA buttons, and navigation components — ensuring consistency across every page.

- Full visual design
- Component library
- Responsive layout system
- WCAG 2.1 AA compliance

PHASE 04 WordPress Development

Weeks 8–16

Development will be carried out on the existing WordPress CMS. While the current site uses the Divi page builder, the proposed redesign — particularly the Knowledge Hub with faceted search, custom post types, and rich metadata — requires a custom WordPress theme to deliver the full functionality at the required standard. Divi’s visual builder constraints would prevent proper implementation of the filtering architecture and component system. The custom theme will be built directly from the approved design system, ensuring pixel-accurate implementation of every component, while all existing content remains intact and manageable through WordPress.

Informed by the audit: The Knowledge Hub is currently a flat, unfiltered list. The rebuild will introduce faceted filtering by topic, content type, year, and audience — with a prominent search bar, browse-by-topic tiles on the landing view, and rich metadata (author, file type, reading length, summary) on every publication card. Each publication will display clear, explicit download affordances — labelled “Download PDF” or “Open in browser” — resolving the file behaviour ambiguity flagged in the audit’s Error Prevention findings. Researchers will gain citation export options (formatted references and Zotero-compatible export), addressing the audit’s Flexibility & Efficiency finding directly.

As part of the build, all critical security headers will be implemented and configured — resolving the current gaps in Strict-Transport-Security, Content-Security-Policy, X-Frame-Options, X-Content-Type-Options, Referrer-Policy, and Permissions-Policy. A post-launch security header scan will be included in the handover report.

An inline lead capture block will be implemented on the Knowledge Hub landing page and all publication detail pages — a lightweight two-field form (Name + Email) with the CTA: “Get new research delivered.” This addresses the critical gap identified in our site assessment: all three top exit pages currently have zero lead capture, meaning high-intent visitors — researchers, educators, and government officials — are leaving without any way for Zenex to re-engage them. This is built into the development phase at no additional cost.

SEO & structured data — A research foundation’s publications need to be discoverable beyond the website itself. As part of the build we will implement clean URL structures, optimised page titles and meta descriptions, canonical tags, and XML sitemaps across all Knowledge Hub content. We will also implement schema.org structured data (ScholarlyArticle and Report markup) on all publications — making Zenex’s research more likely to appear in Google rich results and to be cited by AI research tools such as ChatGPT, Perplexity, and Gemini when policymakers and researchers ask education-related questions. This directly extends Zenex’s thought leadership reach beyond its existing audience.

- Custom WordPress theme
- Knowledge Hub with faceted search
- Browse-by-topic landing tiles
- Rich publication metadata
- Clear download affordances
- Citation export (Zotero-compatible)
- Contextual navigation
- Security header implementation
- SEO — URL structure, meta, canonical
- Schema.org structured data
- Inline lead capture on Knowledge Hub
- Cross-device QA & testing

PHASE 05 Performance Measurement

Weeks 14–16

Our data specialist will conduct a full audit and reconfiguration of the existing GA4 property (already installed on the site) aligned to the new site architecture. For an evidence-led organisation like Zenex, the website should generate the same quality of insight it produces in its research — clean, structured, actionable data about how audiences engage with knowledge outputs.

Why this matters for Zenex: Strategy 2030 positions thought leadership and evidence dissemination as central to Zenex’s mission. GA4 event tracking on Knowledge Hub interactions — document downloads, filter usage, topic engagement, and referral sources — will give the team a clear picture of which content is reaching which audiences.

- GA4 audit & cleanup
- Custom event tracking
- Knowledge Hub interaction tracking
- Analytics dashboard
- Team handover session

PHASE 06 Training, Handover & Ongoing Support

Week 17 — November 2026

Prior to launch, we will deliver a live CMS training session for Zenex’s internal team covering all new templates, the Knowledge Hub content management workflow, taxonomy management, and component usage. A written CMS guide will be provided as a permanent reference document.

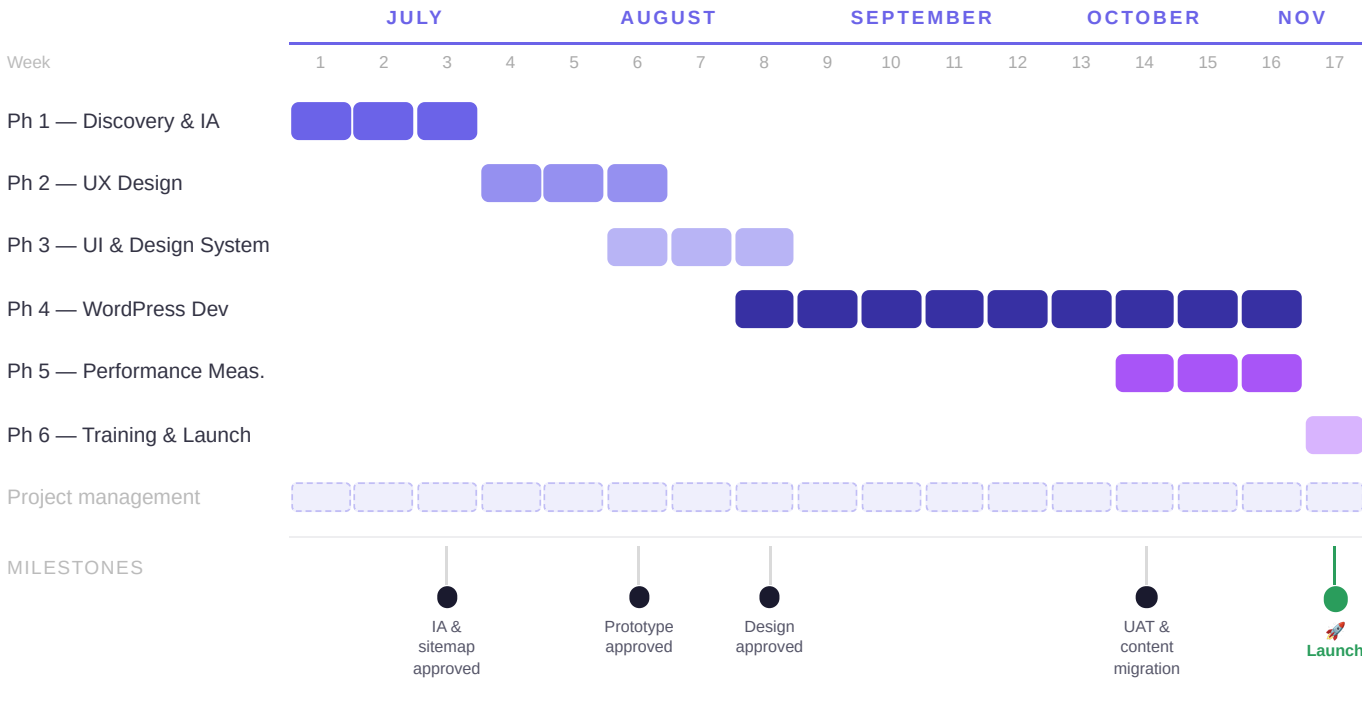
Following launch, an optional monthly retainer is available at **R12,000/month** (10 hours). This covers WordPress core, theme and plugin updates, security monitoring and monthly header scans, Knowledge Hub taxonomy management, minor UX iterations, and a monthly analytics summary report giving the Zenex team clear visibility of content performance and audience engagement each month.

- Live CMS training session
- Written CMS guide
- Maintenance cost structure document
- Optional monthly retainer — R12,000/month

DELIVERY PLAN

Project timeline

The project is scoped for delivery across 17 weeks from appointment (mid-July) to launch (end of November 2026), aligned to Zenex's stated deadline. Key review and approval gates are built into each phase to ensure Zenex's team remains in control of direction throughout.



- █ Discovery & IA █ UX Design █ UI & Design System █ Development █ Performance Measurement █ Training & Launch
- █ Project management ● Approval gate ● Site launch

Approval gates — Three formal review points are built into the schedule: (1) IA and sitemap sign-off at end of Week 3, before wireframing begins; (2) Figma prototype approval at end of Week 6, before visual design begins; (3) design system approval at end of Week 8, before development begins. User Acceptance Testing and content migration run in parallel during Weeks 14–16, with launch readiness confirmed before the end of November 2026. Should discovery and approvals proceed efficiently, we anticipate the possibility of an earlier launch — though we commit to the November 2026 deadline as our confirmed delivery date.

ZENEX FOUNDATION

[Home](#)
[About us](#)
[Our strategy](#)
[Knowledge Hub](#)
[News](#)

Contact us

NPO Reg. No. 000-000-NPO
Est. 1995
R1.6 billion invested in education
Partner: Dept. of Basic Education

SOUTH AFRICA'S EDUCATION EVIDENCE BASE

Stronger evidence. Better outcomes.

Over 3 decades of evidence-led grantmaking in South African primary education.

Hero image — full-width photography retained from current site.
 Brand identity & colour palette preserved.

Explore our research —

I am looking for resources as a:

Researcher

Find reports, data & evaluations

Explore —

Educator

Find teaching resources & briefs

Explore —

Government

Policy evidence & DBE resources

Explore —

Donor

Impact reports & grant outcomes

Explore —

OUR STRATEGY

Strategy 2030

Accelerating evidence-led grant making, partnerships and thought leadership to strengthen language and mathematics outcomes for Grade R to Grade 6.

Strategy image

View 2030 Strategy —

30 Years of Impact View all stories —

Photo

Photo

30

Giles Gillet

NASCEE

Dr. Andile Dube

Impact story

Latest from Zenex View all publications —

Learning Brief Jun 2025

Building strong foundations in early grade mathematics

Explores evidence-based approaches to Foundation Phase mathematics instruction across Zenex-funded programmes...

Research Report Mar 2025

Working article: A vocabulary journey with Foundation Phase teachers

Documents insights from teachers engaged in structured vocabulary development programmes in the Northern Cape...

Evaluation Jan 2025

Building capacity in education evaluation and research: The Zenex LEAD Programme

Evaluates outcomes of the LEAD capacity-building programme for education evaluators and M&E practitioners in South Africa...

Get in touch with Zenex

Have a question, collaboration idea, or funding interest? Tell us who you are and we'll connect you with the right person.

- Researchers — data access & collaboration
- Educators — programmes & resources
- Government / DBE — policy partnerships
- Donors & funders — investment opportunities

I am a

Researcher
▼

Name
Email

Message

How can we help you?

Send message —

ZENEX FOUNDATION

Independent grantmaker strengthening language and mathematics education in South Africa since 1995.

USEFUL LINKS

- [About Us](#)
- [Knowledge Hub](#)
- [Our Strategy](#)
- [Calls for Proposals](#)
- [Contact Us](#)
- [FAQ](#)

PHYSICAL ADDRESS

The Zenex Foundation
1st Floor, 18 Glenhove Road
Melrose Estate
Johannesburg

FOLLOW US

f
X
in

NPO Reg. No. 000-000-NPO
© 2025 Zenex Foundation

- 1 Hero image retained

Full-width photography, brand colours (orange & purple) and visual identity preserved — the redesign enhances structure, not the brand
- 2 Trust bar

NPO reg number, founding year, R1.6bn investment figure, key partners — immediately below nav for institutional audiences
- 3 Audience selector

4 tiles below the hero — Researcher, Educator, Government, Donor — each with tailored CTA. Replaces the current generic entry point.
- 4 Strategy 2030 retained

The Strategy 2030 section is preserved in a cleaner two-column layout — copy left, image right, with a clear CTA
- 5 Latest from Zenex

Evolution of the existing Blog Posts section — now shows Knowledge Hub publications with dates, not just news articles
- 6 Brand identity preserved

All wireframe layouts will be applied within Zenex's existing orange and purple colour system during Phase 3 visual design
- 7 Audience-specific contact

4 purpose-built contact pathways replacing the current generic form — each with relevant description and routing to the right person at Zenex
- 8 Redesigned footer

Retains Useful Links, Physical Address and Follow Us from the current site — cleaned up structure with brand tagline and NPO registration visible

Veritech Digital (Pty) Ltd — 2026/459072/07

9

Knowledge Hub — Landing view

Mid-fidelity wireframe showing proposed layout, content hierarchy, and interaction patterns. Greyscale only — no colour, typography, or imagery applied at this stage. Visual design direction is confirmed during Phase 3 in collaboration with the Zenex team.

ZENEX FOUNDATION

Home
About us ▾
Our strategy ▾
Knowledge Hub
News ▾

Contact us

Home > Knowledge Hub

Knowledge Hub

Browse 140+ research reports, evaluations, policy briefs and knowledge products from Zenex Foundation

Search

Active filters:
Reducing Learning Backlogs ×
Research Report ×
Researchers ×
Clear all filters

BROWSE BY TOPIC

Reducing Learning Backlogs

14 items

Initial Teacher Education

7 items

Grant-making

6 items

Monitoring & Evaluation

6 items

Curriculum Delivery

12 items

Filters Clear all

CONTENT TYPE ▲

- Research Report 38
- Learning Brief 24
- Evaluation 18
- Policy Brief 12
- Working Article 8

AUDIENCE ▲

- Researchers 68
- Educators 54
- Government / DBE 40
- Donors 28

PHASE ▼

3 options — expand to filter

YEAR ▼

4 date ranges — expand to filter

Export results

Save citations for this filter set

Zotero
CSV

Showing 1–4 of 14 results for "Reducing Learning Backlogs" Sort: Most recent ▾

Reducing Learning Backlogs
Most recent

Research Report
Researchers

Early grade reading outcomes in multilingual classrooms: A longitudinal study across six provinces

Presents findings from a three-year study examining reading outcomes in Foundation Phase classrooms where instruction occurs in a home language other than English or Afrikaans...

Dr. N. Mthembu · 2023 · PDF · 2.4 MB · ~18 min read

[Cite this publication](#)
Download PDF

Reducing Learning Backlogs
Learning Brief

Educators

ICTs in early-grade mathematics education in South Africa: A learning brief

Explores the role of digital tools in supporting early-grade mathematics learning, drawing on evidence from Zenex-funded programmes across five provinces...

Zenex Research Team · 2023 · PDF · 1.2 MB · ~10 min read

[Cite this publication](#)
Download PDF

Reducing Learning Backlogs
Policy Brief

Government / DBE

Perspectives on learning backlogs in South African schooling

Summarises evidence on the scale and nature of learning backlogs in South African primary schools, with policy recommendations for the Department of Basic Education...

Zenex Research Team · 2022 · PDF · 0.8 MB · ~7 min read

[Cite this publication](#)
Download PDF

Reducing Learning Backlogs
Research Report

Researchers

The role of language in the teaching and learning of early-grade mathematics

Examines how language of instruction shapes mathematics learning outcomes in Foundation Phase, with specific reference to multilingual classroom contexts in South Africa...

Prof. S. Dlamini · 2023 · PDF · 3.1 MB · ~22 min read

[Cite this publication](#)
Download PDF

Get new Zenex research delivered to your inbox

Join researchers and educators who receive new publications as they are released

Notify me →

ZENEX FOUNDATION

USEFUL LINKS
PHYSICAL ADDRESS
FOLLOW US

1 Active filter strip
Selected filters shown as dismissible pills above results — resolves the "no way back" issue in the current site

2 Persistent search bar
Full-width, descriptive placeholder — primary findability fix, above the fold at all times

3 Browse-by-topic tiles
Zenex's 5 actual categories as visual entry points with item counts — replaces current coloured accordion bars

4 Collapsible filter panel
Only top 2 filter groups open by default — Phase and Year collapsed to reduce cognitive load

5 Rich publication cards
Real Zenex titles, author, year, file size, reading time, content type, audience tag, cite link, explicit Download PDF CTA

6 Inline lead capture
Dashed-border block below results — captures high-intent visitors before they exit the page

Veritech Digital (Pty) Ltd — 2020/459072/07

10

Publication detail — page view

ZENEX FOUNDATION

[Home](#) [About us](#) [Our strategy](#) [Knowledge Hub](#) [News](#) [Contact us](#)

Home > Knowledge Hub > Reducing Learning Backlogs > Publication detail ← Back to results (14)

Reducing Learning Backlogs
Research Report
Researchers

Early grade reading outcomes in multilingual classrooms: A longitudinal study across six provinces

Dr. N. Mthembu · Published 2023 · PDF - 2.4 MB · ~18 min read · Zenex Foundation, 2023

ABSTRACT

This report presents findings from a three-year longitudinal study examining reading outcomes in Foundation Phase classrooms where instruction occurs in a home language other than English or Afrikaans. The study tracked learner progress across Grades 1–3 in 48 schools across six provinces, analysing the relationship between language of instruction, teacher practice, and literacy outcomes.

Key findings include evidence that structured literacy approaches in home language instruction significantly improve Grade 3 reading comprehension scores when teachers receive adequate professional development support. The report includes implications for policy and practice, with specific recommendations for the Department of Basic Education.

Download PDF (2.4 MB)

Cite this publication

Export to Zotero

Share ↗

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

The role of language in teaching and learning of early-grade mathematics
2023 · Learning Brief · Reducing Learning Backlogs

Perspectives on learning backlogs in South African schooling
2022 · Policy Brief · Government / DBE

Landscape analysis of the role of language in early grade mathematics teaching and learning
2023 · Research Report · Reducing Learning Backlogs

Your feedback on this publication
Help Zenex improve future research

Did you find this report useful?

Yes
 No

I am a

Select your role...

Comments (optional)

What did you find most valuable?

Submit feedback

PUBLICATION INFO

AUTHOR
Dr. N. Mthembu

PUBLISHER
Zenex Foundation

YEAR
2023

FORMAT
PDF - 2.4 MB - 48 pages

TOPIC
Reducing Learning Backlogs

AUDIENCE
Researchers, Educators

LANGUAGE
English

PHASE
Foundation Phase

CITE THIS PUBLICATION

APA

Harvard

Chicago

Mthembu, N. (2023). Early grade reading outcomes in multilingual classrooms: A longitudinal study across six provinces. Zenex Foundation.

Copy citation

ZENEX FOUNDATION
Independent grantmaker strengthening language and mathematics education in South Africa since 1995.

USEFUL LINKS
[About Us](#)
[Knowledge Hub](#)
[Our Strategy](#)
[Calls for Proposals](#)
[Contact Us](#)
[FAQ](#)

PHYSICAL ADDRESS
 The Zenex Foundation
 1st Floor, 18 Glenhove Road
 Melrose Estate
 Johannesburg

FOLLOW US

f

X

in

NPO Reg. No. 000-000-NPO
© 2025 Zenex Foundation

1 Back to results link
Persistent "... Back to results (14)" — resolves the #1 audit finding: users currently stuck with no exit from publication pages

2 Full breadcrumb trail
Home > Knowledge Hub > Category > Publication — users always know where they are and can navigate back at any level

3 Explicit action row
Download PDF (with file size), Cite, Zotero export, Share — resolves file behaviour ambiguity flagged in audit

4 Sidebar metadata panel
Author, publisher, year, format, topic, audience — all metadata surfaced in a structured panel

5 Related publications in sidebar
Moved to sidebar as navigational content — keeps main column focused on reading. Includes "View all in this topic ..." link.

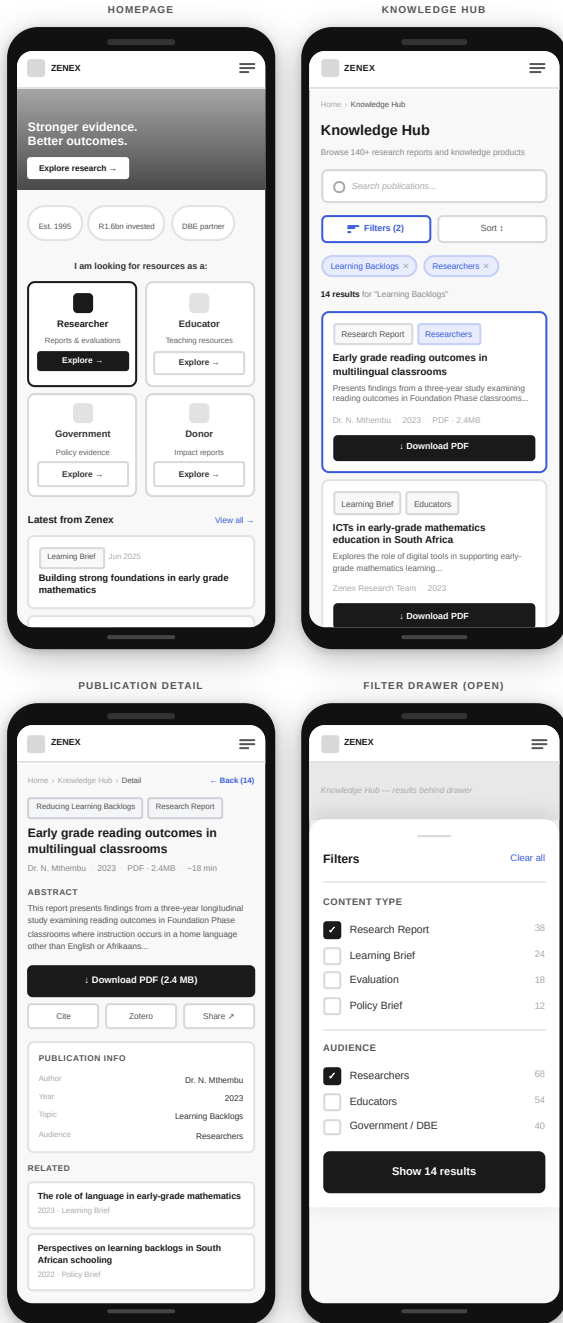
6 Cover image
Publication cover displayed in sidebar — currently absent from detail pages, aids recognition and credibility

7 Feedback form retained & improved
Zenex's existing feedback mechanism is preserved — enhanced with an audience role dropdown so responses are segmented by user type, making the data far more actionable

MOBILE VIEW

Responsive design — Four key mobile screens

All pages are designed mobile-first. The following wireframes show four key mobile screens across a 2x2 layout — giving each screen enough room to show the full mobile experience. Top row: Homepage (entry point) and Knowledge Hub (discovery). Bottom row: Publication detail (destination) and the filter drawer interaction. All at 375px viewport — the most common mobile screen width in South Africa.

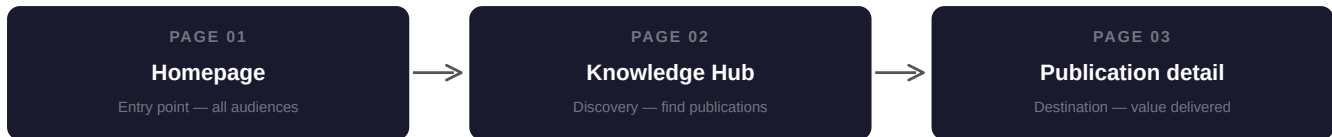


- Hamburger navigation**
Full nav condenses to a hamburger menu on mobile — keeps the header clean on small viewports
- Publication detail on mobile**
Full journey shown — breadcrumb + back link, tags, title, meta, abstract, Download PDF full width, secondary actions (Cite, Zotero, Share), publication info card, related publications
- Single-column cards**
Publication cards stack to full-width single column — all metadata, tags, and download CTA remain fully visible without horizontal scrolling
- Trust bar as scrollable chips**
On mobile the trust bar becomes a horizontal row of compact chips — preserves the credibility signals without wrapping awkwardly
- Audience selector 2x2 grid**
4 audience tiles reflow to a 2x2 grid on mobile — maintains visual hierarchy and remains thumb-friendly on all screen sizes
- Apply button in filter drawer**
"Show 14 results" button confirms selections before closing — prevents accidental filter changes on touch screens
- 2x2 grid layout**
Four screens give each phone frame more width — the full mobile experience is visible without the narrow cramping of a 3-column layout

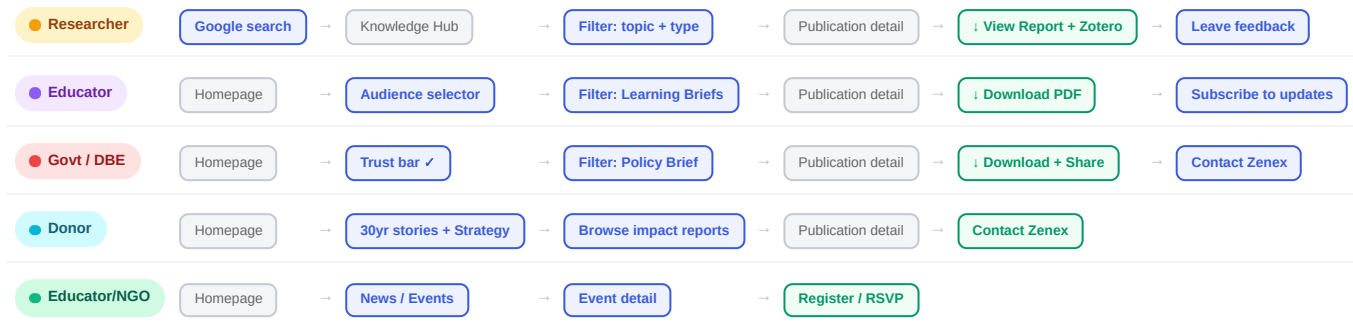
USER JOURNEY MAPPING

How each audience moves through the site

The wireframes on the preceding pages represent three connected points in a single user journey. This map shows how each of Zenex's five key audiences enters the site and reaches the content most relevant to them. Note that researchers frequently enter directly from Google search — bypassing the homepage entirely — which is why the Knowledge Hub must work as a standalone discovery engine, not just a section within the site.



AUDIENCE JOURNEY PATHS



KEY INTERACTION POINTS ACROSS ALL JOURNEYS

<p>Interaction</p> <p>Audience selector</p> <p>Every journey passes through this — the most critical UX decision on the homepage. Replaces the current generic hero entry.</p> <p>Homepage — above the fold</p>	<p>Interaction</p> <p>Faceted filter panel</p> <p>Researchers, educators and government officials narrow 140+ publications to exactly what they need using topic, type, audience and year filters.</p> <p>Knowledge Hub — persistent sidebar</p>	<p>Goal</p> <p>Download PDF + cite</p> <p>Primary conversion goal for 4 of 5 audiences. Explicit button with file size, cite link, and Zotero export on every publication detail page.</p> <p>Publication detail — action row</p>
<p>Goal</p> <p>Back to results</p> <p>Resolves the #1 audit finding, " – Back to results (N)" on every detail page — users never get stuck again.</p> <p>Publication detail — top of page</p>	<p>Trust</p> <p>Trust bar</p> <p>Government and donor audiences require credibility signals before engaging. NPO reg, founding year, R1.6bn and DBE partnership visible immediately.</p> <p>Homepage — below navigation</p>	<p>Interaction</p> <p>Lead capture</p> <p>Inline subscribe block on the Knowledge Hub captures high-intent visitors before they exit after browsing.</p> <p>Knowledge Hub — below results grid</p>
<p>Retained</p> <p>Publication feedback form</p> <p>Zenex's existing feedback mechanism is retained and improved — now includes an audience role dropdown so responses are segmented by user type, making the data actionable for Strategy 2030 evidence goals.</p> <p>Publication detail — below content</p>		

 Key interaction / decision point
 Journey goal / conversion
 Page visited

PRICING

Indicative budget

All work is priced at R1,200 per hour. Project management and management fees are included in the total as required. VAT is excluded.

TOTAL HOURS 268	HOURLY RATE R1,200	PROJECT TOTAL R321,600	UNDER BUDGET R78,400
---------------------------	------------------------------	----------------------------------	--------------------------------

LINE ITEM	HOURS	RATE	AMOUNT
1. DISCOVERY & INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE			
Stakeholder & content audit Review UX report, existing sitemap, content inventory	8	R1,200	R9,600
IA & sitemap development Taxonomy, metadata schema, content structure documentation	16	R1,200	R19,200
User journey mapping 4 key audience journeys: researcher, educator, donor, policymaker	8	R1,200	R9,600
2. UX DESIGN & WIREFRAMING			
Wireframes — key pages Homepage, Knowledge Hub, publication detail, About, Grants	24	R1,200	R28,800
Navigation & breadcrumb design Global nav, contextual nav, back-to-results patterns	8	R1,200	R9,600
Interactive prototype Figma clickthrough for client review & testing	16	R1,200	R19,200
3. UI DESIGN & DESIGN SYSTEM			
Visual design Refined UI aligned to Zenex brand, responsive layouts	24	R1,200	R28,800
Component library Publication cards, filters, search, breadcrumbs, CTAs	16	R1,200	R19,200
4. WORDPRESS DEVELOPMENT			
Theme & template development Custom WordPress theme based on approved design system	40	R1,200	R48,000
Knowledge Hub rebuild Faceted search, filters, metadata display, sorting	32	R1,200	R38,400
Navigation & accessibility implementation Breadcrumbs, contextual nav, WCAG 2.1 AA compliance	16	R1,200	R19,200
Content migration support Template mapping, migration guidance for existing content	8	R1,200	R9,600
QA & cross-device testing Browser/device testing, accessibility checks, performance review	12	R1,200	R14,400
5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT			
GA4 implementation & event tracking Audit, setup, Knowledge Hub interaction tracking, dashboard	16	R1,200	R19,200
6. TRAINING & HANDOVER			
CMS training session Live training for internal staff on templates & Knowledge Hub management	8	R1,200	R9,600
Documentation Written CMS guide, maintenance cost structure document	8	R1,200	R9,600
7. PROJECT MANAGEMENT			
Project management & client comms Scoping, milestone reporting, review cycles, final handover	24	R1,200	R28,800
Project total	268	R1,200	R321,600
20% under the R400,000 approved budget			— R78,400

Optional: post-launch maintenance retainer

R12,000/month (10 hrs at R1,200/hr) — covers WordPress core, theme and plugin updates, security monitoring and header checks, Knowledge Hub taxonomy management, minor UX iterations, and a monthly analytics summary report.

EVALUATION CRITERIA RESPONSE

Why we are the right appointment

The RFP weights four evaluation criteria. Below we map our submission directly against each — so the Zenex evaluation panel can assess our response with full clarity.

<div style="background-color: #e6f2ff; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <div style="background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin-right: 10px;">35%</div> <div> <p>Approach to the task</p> <p>Highest weighted criterion</p> </div> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-submission CRO audit using our own intelligence platform — we identified 6 critical issues before writing a single word of this proposal Three desktop wireframes + four mobile screens built from Zenex's actual content, categories and publication titles — not generic templates Six-phase delivery plan directly mapped to every scope item in Section 4 of the RFP User flow diagram mapping all five audience journeys including the Google search entry point most agencies overlook Interactive Figma prototype built before development begins — confirming design approval before a single line of code is written </div>	<div style="background-color: #e6f2ff; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <div style="background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin-right: 10px;">25%</div> <div> <p>Profile and experience</p> <p>Agency and team credentials</p> </div> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 EME — 100% Black-owned agency. Direct preference alignment with the RFP's BBBEE requirement Proven NGO and purpose-driven organisation experience including Pathway Ministries, a church launched in May 2026 Fischer AI — our own CRO intelligence platform, purpose-built for this category of work Full-stack capability: IA, UX, UI, WordPress development, GA4, SEO, security — no subcontracting, no handoffs Data specialist Tumelo Mabena brings dedicated GA4 and analytics expertise to the engagement </div>
<div style="background-color: #e6f2ff; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <div style="background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin-right: 10px;">20%</div> <div> <p>Organisational capacity</p> <p>Ability to deliver on time</p> </div> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17-week delivery plan from appointment to launch — comfortably within the November 2026 deadline with buffer built in Four formal approval gates built into the timeline — Zenex retains full visibility and sign-off authority at every stage Dedicated team of two for the full engagement — no resource switching, no competing priorities mid-project Post-launch retainer available at R12,000/month — ensuring continuity and ongoing optimisation beyond delivery </div>	<div style="background-color: #e6f2ff; padding: 10px; border-radius: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <div style="background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin-right: 10px;">20%</div> <div> <p>Cost</p> <p>Value for money</p> </div> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> R321,600 total — R78,400 (20%) under the approved R400,000 ceiling R1,200/hour across 268 hours — competitive rate for senior full-stack UX and development capacity Full metadata enrichment for all 140+ publications included at no additional cost — a significant added-value deliverable Security header remediation (F → A rating) included in build — no separate line item, no hidden costs </div>

Veritech Digital came to this proposal as a user of the Zenex site, not just a vendor reading a brief.

We audited the site before the brief asked us to. We built wireframes using your actual publications. We mapped your audiences against their real journeys. That is the level of attention Zenex will receive throughout the engagement.

REFERENCES

Two contactable references

Mr Rishen Narsing
 Pathway Ministries

PHONE 081 553 7426
 EMAIL rishen@pathwaym.co.za

Mr Rajan Govender
 Giantrix IT Solutions

PHONE 082 688 6190
 EMAIL info@giantrix.co.za

Why Veritech Digital

We came to this proposal having already reviewed the independent UX audit, the Strategy 2030 document, and the current state of the website — including a pre-submission technical scan that identified critical security gaps not flagged in the brief. We are not proposing a generic website redesign. We are proposing a targeted, evidence-informed rebuild of a site that already has strong content, but needs the architecture, navigation, and discoverability to match.

You will work directly with the people building the site. The same specialist who scoped the IA will build the Knowledge Hub. The same person who wrote this proposal will manage your project. That continuity, combined with a 100% Black-owned Level 1 BBBEE status and a budget that comes in 20% under the approved ceiling, makes us a strong and responsible choice for Zenex.

CONTACT	EMAIL	WEBSITE	REG. NO.
Ashlin Sami	info@veritechdigital.co.za	veritechdigital.co.za	2026/459072/07