

# Winter School How-To

---

This guide covers the details of hosting a holiday programme:

- Venue
- Budgeting and cash projections; venue, transport, catering
- Partner and sponsorship relations
- Participants: Learner applications & volunteers (including interns), rules
- Marketing: Learners & Volunteers
- Scheduling: How to schedule the event - streaming along interest lines, by grade, etc
- Event preparations: Documents: Indemnity forms, MOUs, register, evaluations (volunteers & learners)
- During the event: Top tips for keeping calm in a crisis
- Follow up: Evaluation, Thank you letters, Blog posts, YouTube videos etc etc

As a general guide for major milestones to ensure that your holiday programme will go well, ensure that you meet the following deadlines for a June/July winter school:

- Funds secured by March and received in the bank by May.
- Venue secured by March (it's best to secure venues the year before) with MoU outlining access to labs, computers, etc.
- Schedule finalised and workshop facilitators secured by mid-May
- Full-time interns to be engaged from May - the last week of programming
- Printing of learning materials, past papers etc. and name tags/ student cards completed a week before holiday programme begins

## Venue

Deciding on and securing a venue is one of the biggest challenges of Winter School. You need to consider:

- number of learners
- distance away from the branch (this affects the transport cost)



- how much the venue will cost (we usually do not pay for this, find a place willing to let you use it for free)
- Does the venue fit your requirements; does it have classroom space? Is it secure so that you can leave equipment there over night? Is there space for learners to have tea and eat lunch?

**Make sure the venue is the first thing secured before you start to plan everything else.**

### **Learners**

To keep attendance high it is best to have a kick-out (those who have <75% attendance) before winter school so that you have the most committed students come to winter school. Learners can be given student cards a few days before the time which would secure them a place for transport to winter school.

Remember to send a letter out to parents/guardians a few weeks before the time to remind them that attendance for their children are compulsory, giving the dates and times, also remember to give a contact number in case of emergencies.

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers are the other key participant. All workshops are sponsored, many companies and organisations have free programmes running as outreach and it is just a case of getting in touch with enough time for them to be available – so start early!

Due to the timing, you may be able to attract some international volunteers who will come for a month or two. Some partners that IkamvaYouth have received volunteers from are; Connect123, AISEC, World Teach

### **Workshops**

The possibilities for workshops are endless. Use your imagination and engage learners and volunteers in the planning. It is also best to get representatives from the various universities and colleges to come and speak to the matrics regarding their options, courses, results needed, bursary applications etc. It is best to get the process rolling then as very soon after winter school ends exams start and it becomes difficult to keep track of them after that.

### **Tutoring**

Morning times are dedicated to tutoring while workshops can happen in the afternoon. Tutors can either be your regular ones, or also include interns and university students. It is



IKAMVAYOUTH

Shared by IkamvaYouth™

best to have at least 2 meetings with them before the start of winter school to have a tutor training session and explain what is happening during the 2 weeks.

During winter school you need to have a quick 5 minute meeting with them in the morning as well as a catch-up at lunch time, these meetings just give everyone a chance to catch-up with what is happening during the day as well as what is to come for the rest of the afternoon so there is no confusion who needs to be where.

## **Donors and supporters**

It's important that all the supporters who make winter school possible get recognition for their vital contributions. Be sure to recognise all the financial and in-kind support that you receive in all your correspondence and marketing about winter school.

## **Scheduling**

The schedule for winter school needs to be finalised a month before the event begins.

If you think about scheduling like a puzzle the whole process becomes a little easier. You need to be flexible in the beginning while planning. Although each winter school is slightly different, most run from 8:30am to 4:30pm, Monday to Friday for 2-3 weeks. During the mornings, learners engage in academic tutoring, examinations and classes for particularly tricky aspects of the curriculum.

It is a fine balancing act where you need to be flexible with during the 2 weeks. Listen to your tutors during morning and lunch time meetings to see whether it's working or not and discuss the next day's subjects so everyone knows what's happening.

After lunch the workshops begin. Given the diverse interests of the learners, it is important to try to offer a range of activities to inspire all learners.

These could include; Science practicals; Computer literacy Training; Career Guidance workshops; Entrepreneurship; Leadership; Creative expression (e.g. art, drama, photography and media) workshops; Financial literacy; Health, Life Skills and VCT; Sports; Environmental sciences; History and social activism.

Types of activities:

- Before winter school starts send out a questionnaire asking students their main interests and what they want to do when they finished school. By grouping learners in interest streams during winter school it helps keep the groups smaller and everyone is doing what they are most interested in which helps the workshop facilitators with concentration and disruptive students.



- Once you have groups (try have equal amount of learners in all groups) you can begin populating the schedule for afternoon sessions.
- It is easiest to begin with workshops you'd like everyone to participate in, for example health workshops, finance workshops, sport activities etc. Once you have booked and blocked these out of the schedule filling in other one or two day workshops becomes easier.
- Try and schedule workshops outside of your venue that are near each other on the same day. This will save on transport money.
- Alternatively, workshops that run outside your venue can also be organised for the third week of their holiday and outside the formal programme time

### Tips

- All photocopying and prep work for tutoring needs to be done a week before the time and ready to go.
- Make sure you have enough stationary, extension chords, paper, a projector
- Ask each workshop what they will need before the time so that it can be set up and ready to go when they arrive. Also make sure to ask what they will need at the venue – a white board (which means they will need pens and board eraser), if they need a projector it will need to be set up before the time
- It also helps to give tutors more responsibility in terms of what needs to go where. For example someone charge of the projector, welcoming workshops people, subject heads responsible for sourcing exam papers/worksheets.
- Good food, on time will make your winter school a far more enjoyable time!
- Get ALL past papers sorted before the start of Winter School/ All of these need to be photocopied and packed out before winter school starts as the first day is very chaotic with other things going on.
- In grade 11 and 12s are having to attend extra classes, so attendance is quite low involving learners from other organisations

### 2 weeks before Winter School:

- **Finalise kickout.** Kickout needs to be finalised and communicated 2 weeks before winter school begins. Interns should ensure that all the latest attendance and other information is uploaded onto a database.
- Group learners.



- Ensure data from school reports is up to date in the database
- Ensure indemnity forms have been received from all learners and volunteers, and that all volunteers have signed the Code of Conduct.
- Handout student cards – colour coding for each group
- Finalise tutors and ensure that everyone knows location, times, logistics. You need a tutors list which includes the days they've committed to, the subjects they tutor, whether or not they're using the transport from the branch, their contact details, and whether or not they've submitted an indemnity form.
- Two tutors or interns who've committed to the entire two week period need to be assigned to each learner group. They're responsible for taking attendance at each session, collecting homework and ensuring that learners arrive at each session at the correct venue, on time. They're the mentors, coaches and first-port-of-call for their group of learners and need to know where each of their learners is at all times.
- Finalising the schedule and make sure that all volunteers/facilitators have been contacted (you can ask interns to do this). Confirm their participation, ensure they have all the information they need (e.g. directions, time period, no. & grade of learners) and find out what resources they require (e.g. size and layout of venue; equipment e.g. projectors / paper / flipcharts / pens; etc.)
- Prepare workshops. In most cases, interns will be responsible for a series of workshops during winter school. In some cases they will come with a specific area of expertise and interest, and should be given flexibility to design their workshops. Ensure that they provide you with a draft outline of their workshops at least a week before the event begins and that they have all the materials needed for their sessions.
- Make sure you have a core group of people involved in organising and heading certain things – for example head subject tutors, head of workshop welcoming, head of IT, sound coordination etc. – they will report to you, make sure that tutors know to report to them first before coming to you
- Sometimes tutors don't turn up, it's best in the first week to have too many tutors rather than too few as numbers do tend to drop in the second week. If you have too few tutors don't panic, the key is to be flexible and rearrange classes accordingly. The key is that there is never a group of students without a tutor.
- The two weeks will be the busiest of the year, by being overly prepared before the time helps you during the events. Inevitably there will be things that go wrong, staying flexible and calm is the top tip to survive it.



## Third Week

Although the winter school is officially only two weeks, in reality it tends to be more of an at-least-3-week affair.

During the third week, the following activities typically take place:

- Grade 12 tutoring

If your grade 12s and/or 11s have had to miss out on any homework sessions / Saturday tutoring / holiday programme activities due to compulsory activities at their schools, it's important to use the third week of the holidays for catch-up. Extra tutoring for these grades typically takes place in the third week at the branches, with a small lunch provided to learners and tutors, budget-dependant.

- Operation Fikelela catch-up

If your branch doesn't have sufficient computers or lab access to have all your learners finish Operation Fikelela by the end of grade 10, then using this third week to cover outstanding modules is helpful.

New grade 11s who weren't able to participate in Operation Fikelela in grade 10 should be prioritised for computer literacy training during the winter school. Any learners who're struggling with computer literacy by the third week of winter school should participate in an Operation Fikelela catch-up classes before they have to go back to school.

- Excursions

Doing the excursions during winter school takes up a lot of the already limited and jam-packed time, and so doing them during the third week of the holiday helps to relieve the pressure a bit. It also allows for excursions that are further afield and even day-trips for hiking etc.

- Preparation for talent show and/or photography exhibition

Traditionally, the Western Cape branches have held a joint talent show and photography exhibition on the last Saturday of the holidays. Read the how-to-guide for steps involved in preparations for this great event.

- Thanking supporters, volunteers, workshop facilitators, venue providers, etc.

- Thank you letters

Following up with thank you letters is key to maintaining good relationships for future workshops and events. These letters need to be sent out within two weeks of the end of winter school.



With the letters it is always a nice idea to have learners write thank you letters during English or computer classes during winter school and send the letters with yours for the workshop facilitators. It is also nice to print a few pictures of their workshops and include those.

- Winter school report

We need to share the news of all the activities and outputs of winter school, whether it's in a newsletter which curates hyperlinks to all the blog posts, or a formal report to a donor that funds a winter school.

- Tutor appreciation party

There also needs to be a tutor appreciation party to say thank you to the tutors for the time they gave, this works well on the day of the talent show and take the tutors out together to lunch. In 2011 the tutors from Nyanga and Makhaza joined together to go to Mzoli's as an example.

