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## SPONSORSHIP PROPOSAL:

# HIGH-IMPACT YOUTH LITERACY INITIATIVE

### PROPOSAL SUMMARY

From as little as **R45** per child we can make an **instant** and **lasting impact** on the ability of learners (in the Foundational Phase) from under-resourced communities in South Africa to **learn** and **think** by helping them to **read**. We achieve this by inspiring them to read and giving them **access** to the **quality** and **quantity** of **books** that they need for their **literacy** development.

**READ TO RISE** is a registered non-profit organisation, founded in 2013, with the aim of making a significant impact in improving youth literacy in South Africa. As our name suggests, we believe that every child needs to be able to **read** in order to **rise** in their educational and personal development. We are an official partner of the national Department of Basic Education who have endorsed our programmes.

The problem we face in our under-resourced communities is that our learners are not reading enough. Children in Grades 1-4 should be reading 40-50 books per year. In schools in our disadvantaged communities, children are reading only 1-2 books per year. Two troubling realities contribute to this low level of reading:

#### 1. Children do not have access to books

90% of schools do not have adequately stocked libraries with relevant books. In addition, most children have *never owned* a book and there are *no books* in their homes.

#### 2. Children are not motivated to read

Most children are distracted by television and electronic gadgets, viewing reading as tedious and something to be done at school only. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that most parents do not read to their children or read for their own pleasure.



Our programmes are designed to systemically address the two above-mentioned troubling realities:

## 1. Interactive Classroom Programme

We deliver our programmes in the classrooms of the schools we serve. Our programme is designed using our pioneering **book-and-engagement model** in which we do not just drop books off at schools, rather we deliver an interactive session in the classroom that is designed around the book. Each classroom programme involves:

- An interactive lesson which includes the use of posters and props
- Reading to the learners
- A quiz about the book that was read
- Distribution of books to learners – they each get new books to own
- Class reading session where all learners read together and receive real-time reading support and guidance
- Singing of a song

The programme creates excitement about reading and the messages of the lesson, book and song are aimed at inspiring and motivating the learners who often face socioeconomic difficulties at home. This programme also ensures that each child gets books to keep as their own and take home – this contributes greatly to their love of reading.



## 2. Mini-libraries



We place a mini-library of **50 new books** in each classroom. These are not textbooks nor are they random, unwanted leftover books; these are new age-appropriate books that encourage reading for pleasure. All books are covered in a library-grade plastic. The mini-library contains a mix of languages as requested by the teacher. Books are placed in a customised bookshelf in the classroom and their use is managed by the class teacher via a reading tracker poster. At the end of the year, the learners who have read the most books are rewarded with a prize and certificate.

**READ TO RISE** currently offers its Interactive Classroom Programmes to Grade 2 and 3 learners (Grade 3 and 4 in communities where English is the second language) and Mini-Library Programme to Grade 2 classes (Grade 3 in communities where English is the second language). Over the next few years, we hope to offer our programmes to all grades in the Foundation Phase.

**READ TO RISE** follows a *community-centric* model whereby we seek to embed our programmes in the communities that we serve. This approach ensures sustainability and buy-in. We recruit our staff from the communities that we serve, we engage community volunteers to read in classrooms and to cover books and we engage local NGOs, parents and businesses. We work closely with school principals and teachers, and make long-term commitments to them – this is the only way that we can have real impact. The bookshelves for our mini-libraries are manufactured by an NGO in one of our communities that employs disabled residents, so we are also creating job opportunities in our communities.

To date, **READ TO RISE** has conducted our programme in **800 classes at 80 primary schools** in South Africa. A total of over **50,000** new books have been given out to under-resourced schools.

- We have reached 40,000 children (each of whom have received their own copy of OAKY AND THE SUN and / or OAKY THE HAPPY TREE)
- We have also placed a mini-library (each with 50 new story books) in 231 classrooms

We believe that through our work that we are making an impact on a child's literacy:

- Children *are inspired to read and their literacy is improved*, through our classroom visits, the regular engagement and the books that we give to them to take home
- Children *read more books* as they have access to our books in the mini-libraries

While we cannot currently accurately measure how much the learners' literacy has improved, we are able to monitor how many books each learner is reading from our mini-libraries. As a condition of participating in our programmes, each teacher is given a roster where they capture how many books have been read by each child. We collect this information from teachers during planned visits when we also replenish any books that may have been damaged or gone missing. We believe that children in our communities only read on average 2 books (for pleasure) per year. From our data collected last year, the learners at the schools that we worked with read on average 7 books during the year.

## OUR BENEFICIARIES

### Mitchells Plain, Cape Town

We focus on serving Grade 2 and 3s in **Mitchells Plain**. Mitchells Plain has a population of 310,000 with a racial breakdown of 91% Coloured, 7% Black and 2% Other (Asian and White), although many of the schools serve residents from neighbouring Khayelitsha so the school demographics show a much higher Black percentage. The 3 dominant home languages are English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa. The gender mix is roughly equally split.

**Why Mitchells Plain?** It is a disadvantaged community given its oppressive history and current socio-economic burdens, namely high unemployment (>50%), low income (average monthly income <R2,000), high levels of violent crime and drug abuse. In terms of education, 74% of adults have not completed high school and while high school pass rates are good, this ignores the extremely high dropout rate and the low quality passes attained leading to very low university attendance. We have existing working relationships with the district education department and many school principals which greatly facilitates our work.

**Why Grade 2 and 3s?** We have selected these grades since this is the key preparation years for the government's national assessments for literacy and numeracy which takes place in Grade 3.

Mitchells Plain has **45** primary schools with roughly **190** Grade 2 classes and **190** Grade 3 classes serving **14,760** children.

## OUR GOAL FOR 2017

We will continue to work with the 45 primary schools in Mitchells Plain and conduct **two classroom programmes each for the Grade 2 and 3 classes** in 2017 – hence **each Grade 2/3 learner in Mitchells Plain will receive 2 new books** during the year.

Therefore, we hope to conduct **760 classroom sessions** and give out a total of **29,520 new books** and need to raise a target of **R1,328,400.00**.

## DONOR INVESTMENT OPTIONS

There are flexible options for structuring your investment based on number of schools or children you want to support and depending on whether you want to support the mini-library or book ownership programme, or both. We are able to structure a programme to meet the level and type of support you desire. The table below lays out the options and the associated investments. These amounts include all costs of:

- Books and Bookshelves
- Volunteer support (travel, refreshments, training)
- In-classroom materials (posters, props)
- Programme delivery and logistics

Any combination of programme or number of schools or learners can be selected. There are on average 40 learners per class and 4 classes per school in Mitchells Plain.

Amounts in R	Schools	0.25	1	5
	Classrooms	1	4	22
	Children	40	174	870
<b>Mini-Library Programme</b> <i>(1 x mini-library per classroom at R3,200 per mini-library)<sup>1</sup></i>		<b>R3,200</b>	<b>R12,800</b>	<b>70,400</b>
<b>Book Ownership Programme</b> <i>(1 x book per child at R45 per book)</i>		<b>R1,800</b>	<b>R7,200</b>	<b>39,600</b>
<b>Book Ownership &amp; Mini-Library Programmes</b>		<b>R5,000</b>	<b>R20,000</b>	<b>R110,000</b>

Example 1: To sponsor a book for 10 learners, the amount is R450.

Example 2: To provide mini-libraries to 2 classes and serve 80 children. This will cost R6,400.

Donors can also sponsor a single mini-library at a cost of R3,200 or any number of books at R45 each.

## BENEFITS TO SPONSORS

We could offer our sponsors numerous potential branding opportunities including:

**Bookshelf branding** – we could include a donor’s name or logo on the mini-library bookshelves if this programme was supported.

**Book branding** – we could place a sticker with the donor’s name on the books we distribute under the book ownership programme if this programme was supported.

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<sup>1</sup> These mini-libraries will last for 3+ years, so will serve at least 3 times the number of children shown

**Volunteer branding** – we could have our volunteers wear sponsor-branded T-shirts or include a donor’s logo on our **READ TO RISE** T-shirts (T-shirts at sponsor’s cost).

**Staff volunteering** – we would gladly include donor staff among our volunteer readers – this makes for an excellent team-building or staff-volunteering event.

**Media** – we could mention a donor’s support in our media including our website, newsletter and media interviews, where appropriate.

**Tax Benefit** – we are a registered public benefits organisation (PBO) and can issue a PBO certificate to donors.

## OUR SOCIAL IMPACT

Our programmes aim to significantly lift the youth literacy of an entire community of 14,760 Grade 2 and 3s. This investment will have sustained rippling effects through the Mitchells Plain school system as these children progress. As we do this repeatedly in this community, and spread to other communities nationwide, we will systematically contribute to increasing literacy and learning ability by increasing access to the required quantity of appropriate quality educational books.

We impact the entire education ecosystem:

**Children** – are excited about reading and have access to the books they need

**Parents/Families** – are encouraged by the increased reading by their children and themselves will have access to books to help with their reading.

**Teachers/Principals** – are motivated by our visits and interest in the classes; they now have the reading materials which their children need; they will see a steady increase in the reading ability of their children

*“We would like to salute READ TO RISE for their exciting initiative to make quality books available to young readers which in turn will encourage them to read. Our children thoroughly enjoyed reading the books.” – Principal, Mandalay Primary*

**Volunteers** – volunteers drawn from the community have an opportunity to invest in their community which builds social capital; volunteers drawn from outside the community have an opportunity to invest in and inspire those less fortunate and to gain valuable lessons.

**Employment** – we provide full-time employment for 6 people and offer volunteer opportunities for 50+ people.

**Disability support** – supporting the employment of 90 disabled people by procuring our bookshelves from an NGO that employs disabled local residents

## WHO WE ARE

**READ TO RISE**, a registered non-profit, was founded in September 2013 with the aim of making a significant impact in improving youth literacy in South Africa by increasing access to the required quantity of appropriate quality educational books. As our name suggests, we believe that every child needs to be able to **read** in order to rise in their personal development and contribution to society. We are an official partner to the Department of Basic Education.



### **Athol Williams** – Co-Founder & *Executive Director*

Athol co-founded **READ TO RISE** and oversees its strategic direction and fundraising. He is a business strategist and social entrepreneur who has extensive experience in education development having founded *Taurus School Solutions* (an education consultancy) in 2011 and led numerous educational development projects in South Africa. His work in education development was recognised by the South African Institute for Advancement with the *2012 Inyathelo Award in Education*. He has served on the boards of over 20 companies and NGOs, and held executive positions in finance, consulting and mining. He holds degrees from Harvard, MIT, LBS and Wits University.



### **Taryn Lock** – Co-Founder & *Programme Director*

Taryn co-founded **READ TO RISE** and oversees all business admin and operations. She has worked as a strategy analyst in financial services and as a management consultant across numerous industries. Taryn holds an Honours degree in Pure Mathematics from Wits University and she was named as one of the 2014 Mail & Guardian's Top 200 Young South Africans.



### **Roscoe Williams** – *Programme Manager (Cape Town)*

Roscoe joined **READ TO RISE** in 2013 after gaining deep educational development experience at *Taurus School Solutions*. Roscoe leads our school visits, ensuring that all logistics goes smoothly and that volunteers and books arrive at the right classroom. He was named LeadSA's Cape Town Hero for September 2015.



### **Steve Tsakiris** – *Programme Director (Johannesburg)*

Steve is a public speaker, writer and workshop facilitator who teaches various modalities, including Sound Therapy, as tools for Personal Development. He lives in Johannesburg and passionately believes that children's education is the key to a brighter future.



### **Kim Ward** – *Non-Executive Director*

Kim is a Grade 6 teacher at Mandalay Primary School in Mitchells Plain. She has a BA Degree in Industrial Psychology, as well as a post graduate certificate in Education. She loves working with children and is passionate about education.



### **Sibongile Magwaza** – *Non-Executive Director*

Sibongile was born and bred in KwaZulu Natal and is a senior tutor in the Division of Languages, Literacies and Literatures at the Wits School of Education. She teaches isiZulu language and is very passionate about children's poetry.