

CHAPTER FOUR

Methodological Considerations in NATHEP

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Introduction

In this chapter, we focus on the overarching methodology used in NATHEP over its life cycle. As evident from our initial comments above, the philosophical orientation of a project is critical to its methodology. When a project is conceptualised, one needs to be very clear about intention and outcome, as well as the gaps the project is addressing and how. According to scholars, all projects are created for a reason and to address a need. The NATHEP comprised many interrelated components that hinged around the project's goals and purpose. How well the project ultimately addresses that need defines the project's success or failure (Watt et al., 2014). The residential programmes over the three years were conceptualised on two levels; namely, the practical implementation level and the scholarly reflective level. At the practical level, the project lead conceptualised the draft programme, which was shared with the SC for their input and feedback. At the scholarly level, each staff developer (also project participant) needed to incorporate the input and feedback into their models of induction for their universities. Here, we discuss the approach and architecture of the project i.e. how it was conceptualised and created and how the methods are intentionally designed to align with the project aims and goals for internal coherence.

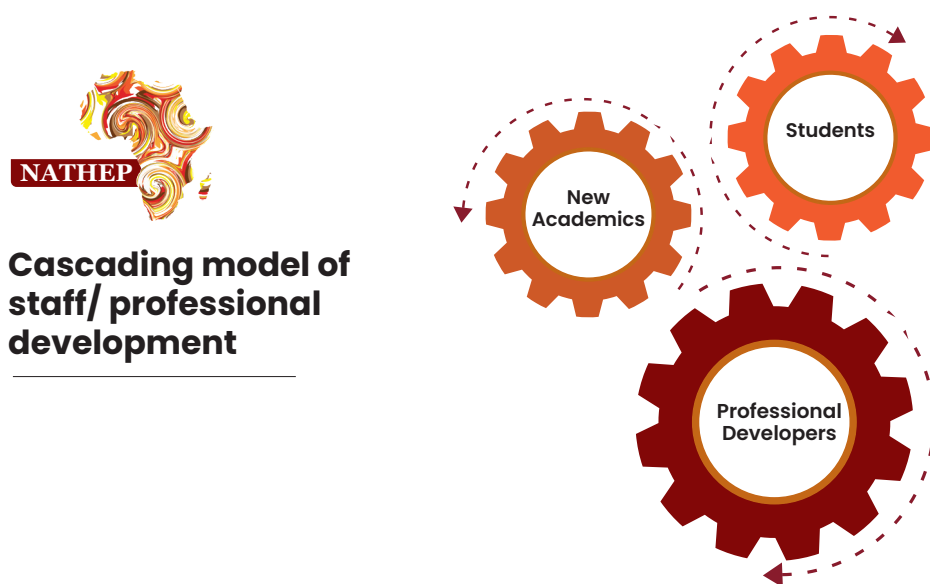
As discussed earlier, the approach to staff development in NATHEP draws on critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970) and critical professional development (Kohli et al., 2015) (see Chapter 2). This approach is designed to orientate staff developers to new and critical understandings of induction, transitions and newness in the context of a transformative HE in South Africa. Context is a key lever for change and ensures that generic interventions that address superficial problems are avoided. Criticality and reflexivity enable participants to engage creatively but with an acute awareness of how context at some universities can enable or constrain advancement and change. Rather than becoming a victim to forces that seem insurmountable, exercising one's agency as a staff developer or new academic is crucial in how one mediates teaching and learning challenges. While this approach can likely be seen as meritocratic in that it can mask systemic inequities, it is also liberating in that agents can exercise control over their fields of practice, albeit in differentiated ways.

The cascade model of staff development in NATHEP

The underlying staff development framework (discussed below) draws attention to

the fact that we were a staff development project working with project participants who were staff developers as well. It was therefore important for us as the project facilitators to model current and robust pedagogies that could be used by our participants in their institutional induction programmes with their new academics, who in turn could use these pedagogies in their classrooms with students.

Before discussing the key elements of the methodological components to the project, some discussion is needed about the underlying framework used in the approach to staff development in NATHEP, namely, the cascade model (Hayes, 2014). Borrowed from industry, the cascade model was adapted as a layered approach in NATHEP known as the “cascading model of staff development”. This term was coined by the project to demonstrate the many levels of influence staff development interventions can have with different groupings.



Cascading model of staff/professional development

Figure 5 Cascading model of staff/ professional development

This also highlights the value of staff development programmes being conceptualised, designed and implemented as ways of enhancing teaching and learning. This requires well-considered, theorised, contextual and relevant offerings to increase the status and gravitas of pedagogy rather than technical programmes that anyone can convene.

As per the NATHEP project proposal to DHET, one of the strategic aims of this intervention was to benefit many stakeholders at different levels, simultaneously. The one-to-one consultancy model of staff development is no longer cost effective or efficient in the current climate of financial fragility in the university system. While

efficiency is important, NATHEP asserts that this cannot be achieved at the expense of criticality and reflexivity. The main principle in NATHEP's cascade model was to distribute the affordances of the input to enable participants to customise and imbue their programmes with contextual relevance. This cannot be achieved if everyone is "trained" to replicate the same practice, irrespective of context. The cascade model of staff development as adopted by NATHEP therefore cannot be conflated or equated with the train-the-trainer model (Bennett, 2019) of staff development, based on dissemination and compliance.

Cascading or training?

The cascade model (Martin, 2023; Wedell, 2005) is borrowed from industry and refers to 'training' that is able to reach many through a few. It involves the delivery of training through layers of trainers until it reaches the final target group. This model is used in different forms of business, corporate and industry training and even in strategic planning sessions. According to Martin (2023), when strategic choices must be decided on, the cascade model assists in prioritising the most important decisions from less onerous ones. The cascade allows for efficiency and proficiency in that expert input can be disseminated by a few to many.

While the idea of cascading input from facilitators to project participants through interactive engagement was an innovative and productive one, its link to the discourse of "training" was troublesome. "Training" as a form of staff development is counterproductive to the outcomes of the critical professional approach for NATHEP participants, namely, to encourage agency rather than complacency. "Training" implies a passive recipient who has little choice or recourse to stray too far from what is "provided" (Scace, 2015) to order to uphold the unwritten notion of beneficence from the "service" provider. The word "training" does not resonate well with the goals of NATHEP as we did not want to encourage a transmissive model that was not experiential, diffused and reflective (Hayes, 2014). NATHEP encouraged a model that was diffused and open to interpretation and adaptation. Although presented by the SC, all project participants were free to adjust and temper the input given to suit their contexts. When training suggests that something is mandatory and imposed (Scace, 2015), it reduces agency. NATHEP's conceptualisation of staff development, which draws on a social realist approach (Archer, 2000), is concerned with how new academics respond to their structural and cultural contexts at their universities, to bring about change.

Hayes (2014) identified five criteria that connect well with NATHEP's staff development aim and assist in mitigating the ill effects of designing and delivering training models. The first criteria points to the need for development opportunities to engage with the beliefs and perceptions of participants. Given that beliefs are exceptionally difficult to change (Murphy & Mason, 2006) participants are afforded

the opportunity to restructure beliefs that may be deeply held, thus enabling them to be more receptive to the information they are exposed to. Rather than imposing procedures in a top-down manner, as is often the case in training models, the second criterion provides opportunities for participants to design, revise and possess ownership of systems that are part of the development. This principle ensures that systems and procedures resonate with participants, thereby contributing to their effectiveness. While development opportunities often include resources, the third principle proposes that resources in themselves are not enough. According to Hayes (2014) participants experience increased benefits when they are encouraged and given opportunity to express their opinions to identify resources that could be used to meet specific needs. This results in better familiarisation and engagement with resources. The fourth principle relates to inviting participants to not only identify resources that may be beneficial but to additionally invite them to contribute to their development. Resources developed by participants with the support of facilitators often provide alignment with what participants need, have clear aims and are appropriate to their development levels. The final principle indicates that support needs to be provided for the problem solving and evaluation skills of participants where difficult questions need to be asked and challenges must be identified and solved, thus facilitating critical thinking around issues presented by the development opportunity. In using the cascade model and not the “train the trainer” model in NATHEP, we were keen for the learnings to have a ripple effect in a bidirectional way even though the project curriculum was provided and facilitated by the project.

Training or engagement?

In NATHEP, the word “engagement” has been used as a proxy to signal the thoughtful, agential and reflexive options available to project participants. As NATHEP was a staff development project aimed at enhancing capacity of academics as university teachers, engagement took place during the various stages of the project, mainly during residential retreats, in the form of staff development sessions.



Figure 6 NATHEP SC (SC) preparation meeting

The input engaged with, to create customised and relevant induction programmes for participants' universities, was facilitated through pedagogical methods. This means the facilitators engaged with various pedagogical strategies to facilitate learning and expansion while simultaneously modelling pedagogies for critical practice. In fact, the SC published a paper on pedagogies for critical agency (Ganas et. al, 2021) based on the engagements in NATHEP, to highlight the importance of considered approaches to teaching, facilitation and interaction and exchange. This will be discussed shortly.

NATHEP's cascade model of staff development

Stakeholders

The key ingredient in using the cascade model for staff development is to identify the key role players or stakeholders so that you can design the intervention accordingly, to address the needs of each cohort. The main partners or stakeholders in NATHEP included the SC of staff developers who were project facilitators; the two project participants who were staff developers themselves from each of the 10 universities; new academics at the 10 participating universities who would benefit from more theorised and considered induction programmes that supported them in their roles as university teachers; and ultimately the student, who benefits from university teachers who can think deeply and meaningfully about what it means to facilitate university teaching and learning in our current context. To understand role players in this way is to ensure that each group in the cascade understands their overall commitment to the project in the stipulated timeframe and shares responsibility for the successful achievement of project outcomes. Matching outcomes with project deliverables is key to the progress and success of the project and this ensures "buy-in" from all parties concerned. To this end, memoranda of understanding were signed between NATHEP and each university partner. In these documents, DVCs declared support for participants' involvement (SC and project participants) over the project life cycle and participants accepted responsibility for their participation.

Levels of cascade

The second aspect is to plan and design the different levels of cascade in the project, to understand the different audiences and to facilitate the correct pitch and purpose for each group. Appropriate levels of complexity and difference must be accounted for across all groups, and gaps need to be filled or bridged. In NATHEP, there are five levels of cascade where five to six facilitators engaged with 20 project participants simultaneously to share knowledge, practices and insights.

- Level 1:** Peer development among SC facilitators to understand the task at hand.
- Level 2:** Facilitate the themed discussion with project participants.
- Level 3:** Participants apply the input received and customise for use in induction programmes with their new academics at their universities.
- Level 4:** New academics learning from and facilitating teaching and learning in meaningful and relevant ways in their classrooms.
- Level 5:** Students and their ongoing success.

Input at the top tier is disseminated and shared with the layers beneath. As each level engages with the input, they are free to adapt and contextualise the resources and input shared, as long as these changes align with the broad goals of the project. As stated already, the logic behind the cascade model was to ensure the success of the ultimate beneficiary in higher education, namely, the student. While levels one to three above are directly linked to involvement in NATHEP, levels four and five are intended consequences of the project and its intervention through the other levels.

Time

The cascade model also works temporally, and the different time stamps of the project track the key milestones and achievements with a focus on time on task. As discussed in Chapter 1, NATHEP unfolded in three phases, which ran chronologically in tandem with each calendar year. This approach coincides with Archer's M/M approach (see Chapter 3) which is congruent (Archer, 1995) with the three distinct temporal phases (see figure 7) identified for NATHEP. While in reality these phases overlap and intertwine, the distinct time frames enabled the project to activate the theory based on a "before" (preexisting social forms), a "during" (the process of transformation itself) and an "after" (the transformed, since social structures are only relatively enduring) of the social realist framework.

PROJECT CYCLE - 3-YEAR LIFE CYCLE (2018-2020)

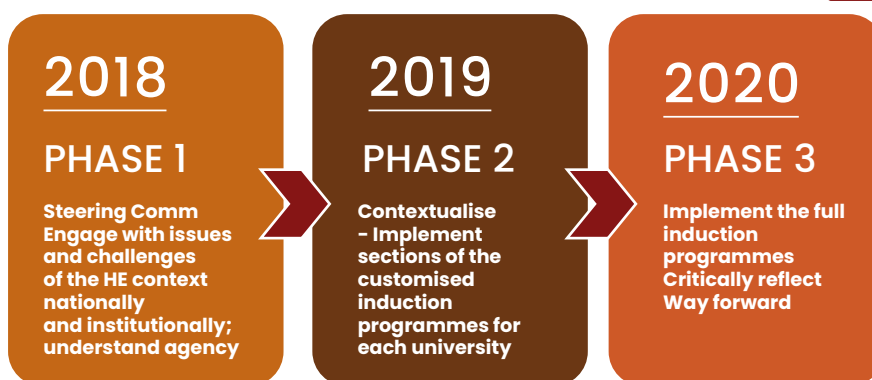


Figure 7 Phases of the three-year NATHEP cycle

Project themes

Each phase had a thematic focus, discussed in detail in Chapter 1 and linked to the project deliverables, which had to be reported on to our funders. In Phase 1/Year 1, the thematic focus was orientation (approach) and conceptualisation (theorisation); in Phase 2/Year 2, contextualisation and customisation; and in Phase 3/Year 3, implementation and critical reflection. Using these overarching themes to guide the project’s design and deliverables, various events and engagements were facilitated by the SC facilitators with the project participants using the relevant theme. All the engagements were aligned with the project goals and adhered to the scholarly/reflective underpinnings that guided each practical/implementation phase.

Methodological highlights in each phase

NATHEP Year 1/Phase 1 2018 (project launch): orientation and conceptualisation

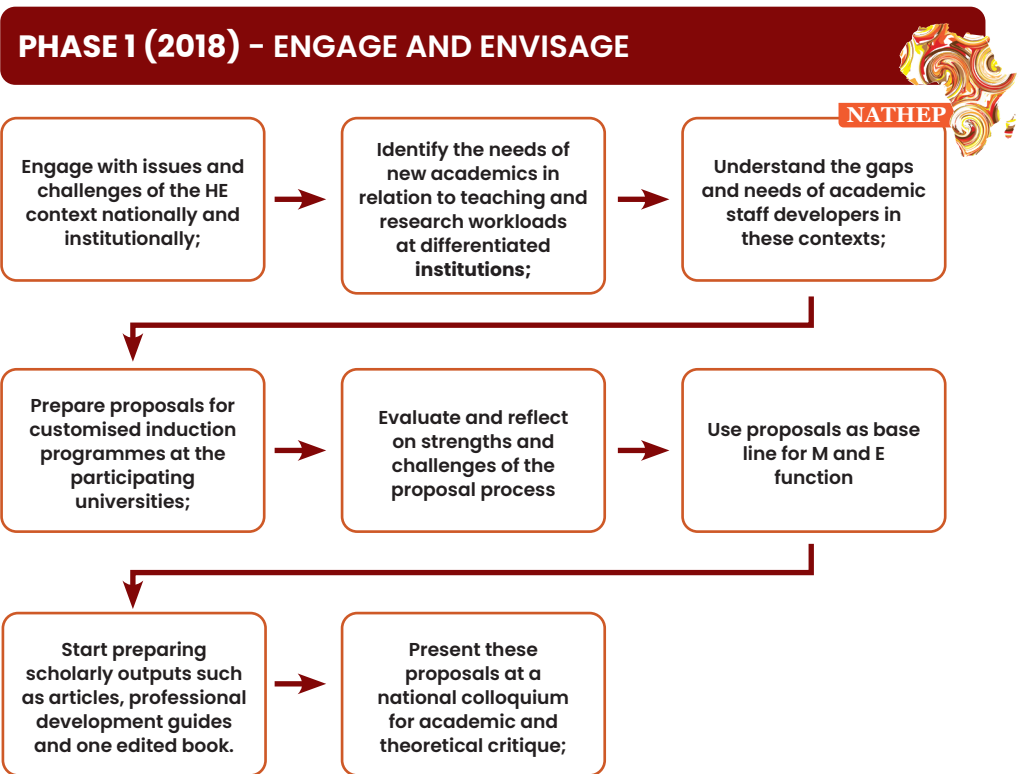


Figure 8 NATHEP Phase 1 Methodological Highlights

In this first phase of the project, it was important for both the SC and participants to be orientated well to the different levels and stages of the project to ensure we were setting realistic targets for achievements of the deliverables. We were acutely aware that we were beholden to DHET as the funder. We also knew that ultimately these were public funds, which we had to ensure we spent meaningfully as per our project plan. Given how we came into the project, there was a need to be clear about these technical but necessary details even though as staff developers, we are not used to working in this way. The first circle of influence was the SC, who needed to share the responsibility of the project with the project lead. Planning meetings were thus more critical in the first phase, to ensure a shared understanding of goals and commitments. In the interest of time and cost, planning meetings were scheduled as “bookends” to the residential retreat. The pre-residential meetings were geared towards programme implementation and distribution of workload while the post-residential meetings focused on debriefing and reflexive deliberations to acknowledge achievements against the project plan and to shape the next workshop.



Figure 9 SC engagement during debrief session (August 2018)

At times and when needed, the SC availed themselves for additional planning meetings to keep track of programme objectives, milestones and achievements outside of the full project meetings. During these SC meetings, the project team learnt together and stretched each other to be creative and scholarly in their deliberations. This first level of the cascade was hugely important to the peer-to-peer learning in staff development where each of us, among equals, could critique each other and support each other to new professional standards in a safe and trusted space. The level of trust at this level is also important for the SC to function as a joint container for the substantive content of the project.

Residential workshops

The residential workshops took place over two to three days, three times a year. The target audience of these residential workshops was the participating staff developers from each university, who were wholly focused on creating customised induction programmes where these did not exist and for others to strengthen the programmes, if already in existence. Most residential workshops paid a lot of attention to context and focused on issues and challenges in HE nationally and institutionally to explore the needs of new academics in relation to teaching at differentiated institutions. These engagements further aimed to unpack the gaps and needs of the academic staff developers (ASDs) in these contexts.

In Phase 1, as part of the theme of orientation (approach) and conceptualisation (theorisation), the first residential workshops addressed the organising framework and theoretical underpinnings of NATHEP. This was essential to provide a framework of theoretical tools to be used in workshops and other project engagements. The words “theory”, “theoretical” and “theorise” are constantly used in scholarly and academic work. For instance, Arbend (2008) notes that it is a common understanding that empirical research needs to be driven or informed by “theory”. Collins and Stockton (2018) articulate the vital role played by theory in scholarly work as that which provides a guide that links the abstract and concrete towards ultimately achieving relevant and research application-oriented practice. The theoretical level that NATHEP drew on as a project was very much part of the methodological considerations for the residential workshops. We were keen to advance the idea that staff development is based on theory/scholarly underpinnings and therefore should not be dismissed as intuitive or pedestrian work that anyone can do.

As discussed already, the organising and meta-theoretical frame guiding both NATHEP’s methodology, pedagogy and research outputs, draws on critical realism (Bhaskar, 1990) and social realism (Archer, 2000). This has been discussed in detail in Chapter 3 in relation to this project’s goals. This also informs the theoretical basis and methodology for the residential workshops as well as related research outputs such as this book.

Bhaskar’s seven scalar of being

In Phase 1, we engaged in an in-depth consideration of Bhaskar’s seven scalar of being (Bhaskar, 1975, 1979, 2014) to make links with how induction practice can be contextualised. Here participants could see first-hand how theory can inform the knowledge, frameworks and tools used in professional development. As written about elsewhere, “NATHEP explored a spectrum of contextual influences, from the self to cosmology, to unpack how these influence how academic staff developers conceive of their roles in induction programmes and how new academics

understand their roles as they transition into HE" (Ganas, 2021, p.17). The seven scalar of being also makes possible a "laminated analysis" (Vanharanta et al., 2022) where each NATHEP-facilitated engagement with participants was designed according to each level of the seven scalar being model. Facilitators used specific methods and foci drawn from all seven levels of ontology and explored the importance of different layers of context – the self, the departmental and faculty contexts, institutional differentiation, the regional and national HE contexts and global issues in academic development – in influencing thinking about staff development.

The seven scalar being system is thus used in the project as a critical heuristic to synthesise the methodology, analysis and explanations in relation to the goals of the project and the people. It is also used as a theoretical framework to guide the scholarly level. In showing how the seven scalar being related to staff development and induction practice as a laminated system (discussed in detail in Chapter 3), we explored how induction programmes could use the seven different levels, such as the psychological, biographical, micro-level, meso-level, macro-level, mega-level, and the planetary or cosmological level, to design relevant and appropriate pedagogies and other interventions to link with each level. In this way, we showed how theory and practice are linked and how these can be supported to enrich induction programmes. Discussions relating to Bhaskar's theory were centred around how new academics could be supported in departments and faculties to exercise their agency. While theoretical underpinnings were the focus of the first residential workshop, other sessions were composed of broader discussions of key global issues in higher education, contextual challenges and opportunities in the sector. We also wanted to illustrate that relationships between individuals are mediated by agency and the context within which they exist. Relational agency is crucial to how staff developers work with new academics to mediate their contextual conditions. It is also a form of collective agency that professional development programmes need to embrace, given the interrelated nature of the university and HE as a structural and cultural social system.

Models of induction

In line with the aims of NATHEP, to enable new academics to critically engage with contextual challenges and opportunities in the sector for the promotion of socially just pedagogy, curriculum development and assessment practice, the second residential workshop (held in October 2018), explored with participants the development of models of induction practice relevant for the South African context. Institutions of higher education vary in their models of inducting new academics into their institution. For instance, Sutherland (2019) notes that some institutions follow human resource and/or organisational development models of induction when inducting new academics. While these models aim to introduce new academics to their new environments, structures, and processes at the university,

they often do not equip new academics to gain better understanding about the nature of effective teaching and learning (Mathieson, 2011). The SC led this charge by describing and discussing the induction models in practice at their universities.

Pecha Kucha

As part of the proceedings, group discussions were held in which participants, the academic staff developers, shared induction practice using examples from their own university contexts. Participants were guided to reflect on induction practice through theoretical lenses such as the NATHEP CRITicAl Framework and Bhaskar's theory (Bhaskar, 1975, 1979). In one session, for example, participants were invited to critique induction models and case studies based on Bhaskar seven scalar of being methodology. This session further incorporated an opportunity for academic developers to reflect on elements of the self by interrogating aspects such as who they are and their positionality. It was important to surface how each participant's context, such as being an academic developer in a specific university located at a specific geographic region, positioned them to be an agent of change within those contexts.

Participants were encouraged to experiment with different presentation methods such as the Pecha Kucha format, which is a creative alternative presentation style to Power Point. PechaKucha or Pecha Kucha is a Japanese presentation style in which 20 slides are shown for 20 seconds each (6 minutes and 40 seconds in total). The format keeps presentations concise and fast-paced. In this way, we were sharing possibilities with participants that could be realised in their own induction workshops.



Figure 10 Pecha Kucha presentations of institutional induction programmes

Critical dialogue

Phase 1 closed at the end of 2018, with plans and preparations for facilitating a critical dialogue at the 2018 Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of Southern Africa (HELTASA) conference at Nelson Mandela University. Participation in HELTASA enabled the SC and ASDs to share their learnings, thus contributing to academic citizenship (Pfeifer, 2016). The University of Miami of Ohio (2010) defines academic service as “applying one’s knowledge, skills, and expertise as an educator, a member of a discipline or profession, or a participant in an institution to benefit students, the institution, the discipline or profession, and the community in a manner consistent with the missions of the university and the campus” (Pfeifer, 2016, p. 239). The goals of the project were perceived as having implications not only for participants’ programmes at their respective universities, but for everyone’s understanding of professional development as a social practice in the current context. Given NATHEP’s social justice agenda, the opportunity to share their journeys, and knowledge was valued as examples of academic citizenship. This was the first time that NATHEP was introduced to a national conference space, with the SC leading a dialogue entitled “Confronting common-sense induction practices as professional developers”. The presenters were Jo-Anne Vorster, Nalini Chitanand, Kasturi Behari-Leak, Rieta Ganas, Mabokang Monnapula-Mapesela, Joe Makua and Noluthando Toni. In this critical dialogue, the SC reflected on how the SC had begun to conceptualise and facilitate the initial phase of the project. As a team of NATHEP facilitators, the SC recognised that diverse entry points into HE and academic development influence practice in diverse and unequal ways.

NATHEP Year 2/Phase 2 2019: contextualisation and customisation

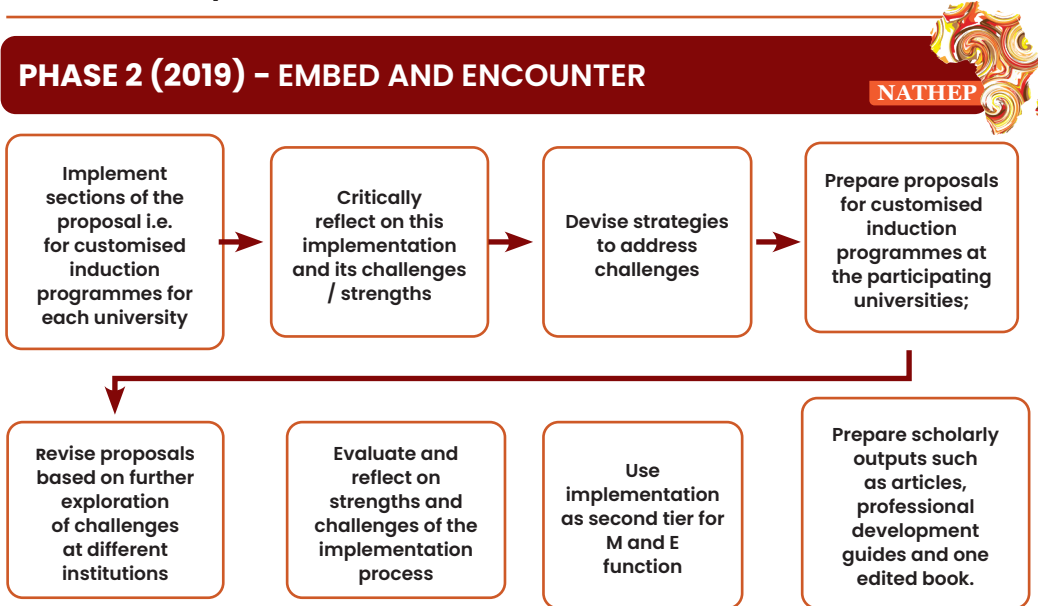


Figure 11 NATHEP Phase 2 Methodological Highlights

In Year 2/Phase 2 in 2019, the focus was on designing induction programmes that reflected the needs and realities of various contexts. In other words, participants who had been exposed to various theories and models of induction as well as plenary discussions on the HE context, had to now design programmes for their own institutions by applying their learnings from 2018 to their practice by creating bespoke and customised induction programmes for their universities. SC members were attached to two university partners as their mentors and worked closely with them to shape these new programmes. As noted by Shulman (2004), while it is important for professionals to integrate learnings with practice, this process is not a simple linear exercise of merely taking learnt knowledge and applying it to the field. This further distinguishes the “training model” from NATHEP engagements. Shulman and Wilson (2004, p.534) argue that the process of judgment intervenes between knowledge and application by creating “bridges between universal terms of theory and the gritty particularities of situated practice”.

Given this, the start of Phase 2 in 2019 commenced with academic developers engaging in a critical reflection on what a new induction programme would look like in the context of their universities; what it would mean to implement the induction; as well as what a critical and objective evaluation would entail. Such an evaluation meant devising strategies that would address the identified potential challenges while maximising the strength of the implementation plan (Neumann et al., 2018). To guide deliberations, we drew on specific university contexts to achieve the breadth and depth required in the design of new programmes.



Figure 12 Engagement during critical reflection workshop (April 2019)

A renewed focus on pedagogy

Pedagogical encounters were the focus of the April 2019 residential gathering, where a series of brainstorming sessions on several pedagogies were undertaken.

Many scholars have written about the plethora of pedagogies that have emerged in response to challenges of specific contexts (McInerney, 2009; Farren, 2016; Gadsden, 2008; Bannerji, 2020). Notably, many academics are familiar with Mbembe's pedagogy of presence, Freire's pedagogy of hope (1970) or a pedagogy of care. As NATHEP, we identified four pedagogies which emerged from the project that seemed most fitting for induction practices, and which could also address the challenges evident in the complex, diverse context that is the HE classroom. We matched these pedagogies with four corresponding modalities also used in research, namely the epistemological (knowing), ontological (being), methodological (doing), and axiological (valuing) (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) to provide a scholarly focus, often not considered when working with pedagogy (seen as practical application mainly). The set of pedagogies chosen for work on NATHEP included the pedagogy of engagement (methodological/doing), the pedagogy of knowledge generation (epistemological/knowing), the pedagogy of being and becoming (ontological/being) and the pedagogy of transformation and decolonisation (axiological/valuing), which enabled robust engagement at various levels. Although all the pedagogical approaches are intertwined in reality, we separated them out to identify the detail required for contextualisation.

The NATHEP facilitation team was keen for participants to identify the links between pedagogical purpose and social responsiveness. Hinchliffe (2018) differentiates between pedagogy and education by defining education as "learning for its own sake" whereas pedagogy is mostly learning that is directed toward social goals. Parini (2005) states that teaching is not only about achieving certain objectives, but it is a task for the teacher to acclimatise their learners to the nature of a contextual reality by rigorously introducing them to certain topics while sensitising them to what it means to be a socially responsible citizen. The axiological aspect of NATHEP was high on the agenda when unpacking the different pedagogies.

Each of the pedagogical approaches with their corresponding modalities was shared by the SC to expand participants' repertoires on using pedagogies for developing critical agency when inducting new academics into the academy. These were modelled using various collaborative methods to encourage participants to use these pedagogies in their design. This exercise enabled the university partners to constructively reflect on their own institutional practices and generate new ideas for contextually relevant induction programmes aligned to their institutional realities.

The SC wrote about the four pedagogies above in a paper entitled "Pedagogies for critical agency: Portals to alternative futures" in 2021 (Ganas et al., 2021). These pedagogies, in the context of academic staff developers and new academics induction transitioning into higher education, explored the interplay between academic staff, institutional development, and contextual influences in shaping

professional learning processes. What follows is a synopsis of each to pedagogy to capture their essence:

The pedagogy of being and becoming (PoBB)

The pedagogy of being and becoming explored what it means to recognise the full humanity of people who have a right to express their ontological density as thinking, feeling and doing individuals in a collective, irrespective of race, gender, ability and religion. This pedagogy looked at how intersectionality manifests across structures to complicate the relational aspects of what it means to be a new academic in SA higher education today. With its transformative and decolonial underpinnings, NATHEP recognises and acknowledges the self and who the self becomes through the process of engagement with pedagogical encounters. By focusing on a PoBB, it is important to evoke the whole person into the pedagogical encounter. The teacher and student should be in a relational interaction that recognises positionality, lived experiences and dispositions. Being and becoming are not mutually exclusive but entangled and occur intra-actionally (Barad, 2007).



Figure 13 SC at Inaugural NATHEP Workshop

Pedagogy for knowledge generation (PoKG)

A consideration of the pedagogy for knowledge generation seeks to understand epistemological access in relation to personal and contextual relevance while acknowledging the three essential elements of epistemology: the knower, the known and the process of knowing (Sprague et al., 2016). Collectively this triad allows for an analysis of the ways in which power relations shape who is believed and why (Collins, 2000). This pedagogy engaged NATHEP participants around how opportunities have to be created in induction programmes, especially in the context of Africa, to recentre the knowledge of the other, to reassert marginalised voices and to legitimate their visibility and authenticity as knowledge producers (Gadsden, 2008).

Pedagogies of engagement (PoE)

Discussions centred on pedagogies of engagement were used to explore the spectrum of approaches used to create interactive learning contexts where all can find a sense of belonging and assert their voice (McInerney, 2009). What it means to “engage” pedagogically is relative to who is being engaged and who is facilitating the engagement. Engagement then is at the behest of the person in power in that space, namely the teacher. Educators use a variety of social constructivist strategies and interventions to engage their students (Edgerton, 2001), namely active and cooperative learning, learning communities, service learning, cooperative education, inquiry and problem-based learning, and team projects (Smith et al., 2005). These pedagogical tools are used differently in disciplinary contexts to achieve different objectives. In NATHEP, the SC have found that until “engagement” is critical, conscious, and socially aware, it can do very little to disrupt the power relations in pedagogical spaces based on race, class, gender, ethnicity, language and age. Power imbalances often keep people trapped in hierarchies of power and servitude, socialising them into reproducing the status quo (Freire, 1996).



Figure 14 SC during Pedagogies of Engagement (PoE) workshop

Pedagogy of transformation and decolonisation (PoTD)

The pedagogy for decolonisation/transformation on the other hand, extended the transformation narrative to the realms of delinking (Mignolo, 2007) from traditional practices which reproduce the status quo. Decolonial pedagogies work from the premise that context matters in education. Here context refers to the legacy of colonial education, which continues to shape ways of thinking, acting and being as the victims of colonialism. This challenges academics to constantly examine ideological bias inherent in colonial education, which renders education incapable of facilitating liberation and shared democracy (de Sousa Santos, 2007). At the centre of decolonial pedagogies is a concern with ways in which the colonial education system is structured so as to reproduce unequal relations of power and perpetual subjection of the colonial subject.

World Café sessions

The WorldCafé format, well known as a participatory facilitation method (Brown, 2010) was used in NATHEP engagements as an example of the pedagogy of engagement. It consisted of knowledge-sharing round tables as part of a participatory action research (PAR) and participatory learning and action (PLA) approach for learning about and engaging with communities. PLA techniques, according to Chambers (2006), enable people to share, enhance and analyse their knowledge of life and to plan, act, monitor, evaluate and reflect. PLA techniques refocus attention on criticality and positionality by allowing participants to understand causal relations both experientially and conceptually (Bozalek & Biersteker, 2010).

In a World Café setting, participants presented their induction programmes with a focus on pedagogical strategies that enabled maximum exercise of agency for new academics in their contexts.



Figure 15 Participants engagement during World Café exercise

These plenaries offered comments and feedback that identified dominant, competing, and marginalised discourses in teaching and learning at the different institutions; and structures that enabled or constrained new academics' practices; as well as the effects of agency on the new academic. During the workshop, each participant discussed their induction role at their home university, showcasing their induction programme and unpacking programme aspects by analysing, *inter alia*, whether and/or how the programme created conditions for agency (Mathieson, 2011); whether the programme content facilitated notions of belonging by enabling new academics to feel like they were part of the bigger system (Billot & King, 2017); and whether the programme featured and represented the true life histories, experiences and narratives of new academics (English, 2021). During this phase, proposals for customised and contextually relevant induction programmes at participating universities were prepared and further enhanced for presentation at the 2019 HELTASA at Rhodes University, a national conference for academic and theoretical critique.

Site visits

In this phase, while workshops were focused on social interaction among SC and project teams to critically reflect on piloting the induction programmes and working with feedback on the implementation, site visits were planned to each university by SC members. Each SC member was assigned as a mentor to two universities each, to see the new induction programmes "in action" and to offer feedback, *in situ*, on how various aspects of context played out in the new and customised induction programmes designed at NATHEP. Site visits were important for the project to make contact in person with the partner university and each visit was used as an opportunity to meet with the teaching and learning centre director as well as the DVC for Teaching and Learning. Given the timing of the site visits, midway through NATHEP, it was also a good temperature check to see how the input at the residential workshops was manifesting in real contexts of practice. NATHEP participants being visited welcomed the intervention and were grateful for the feedback provided, to develop their programmes further.

Site visits were included in Phase 3 instead of the initially envisaged Workshop 4 (2019). The SC decided to replace the residential workshop (which would have been held in August) with a site visit to each university (during July, August and September). The SC hoped to engage with the NATHEP participants in their actual context of practice, during their induction programme. This enabled the SC to offer more feedback, perspectives and insights regarding the further strengthening of the model.

While our SC member was on site, they met with the respective DVC for Teaching and Learning and/or the Director of the Teaching and Learning Centre or any

other appropriate academic development/staff development role player at the university to discuss progress and implementation of the newly created induction programme further.

We thanked each university for their involvement, and we were hugely appreciative of universities’ contribution to NATHEP. Through collaboratively building a theorised understanding of induction across the sector, we hope that the greatest benefit is to each university through the customised induction programme developed.

Reflective visualisation

At a writing retreat in July 2019, academic developers were invited to participate in a task where they visually depicted their journey of life up until the point where they had entered NATHEP. As an extension of PLA techniques, the visualisation tasks are part of the signature pedagogy of staff development to promote reflexive agency. Often these techniques involve the use of open-ended, flexible, visual learning methods, which include visioning, mapping, mood lines, one-way and two-way matrices, impact diagrams, problem and objective trees, community maps, body maps, and rivers of life, among others (Pretty, Guijt, Scoones & Thompson, 1995). The reason for this activity was for each participant to reflect on how much they had grown and accomplished (or not) while on NATHEP. Govaerts et al. (2010) describe reflective visualisation activities as techniques that promote deep thinking about a specific topic, event or idea. The potential of visualisation activities to amplify cognitive processes for producing self-reflective and expressive data have been established in several studies (Choe et al., 2017; Aseniero et al., 2020; Stentoft & Sørensen, 2019). This task assigned to academic developers could be depicted through the use of any metaphor or form. Through this task, ASDs noted the major highlights and lowlights; and saw themselves in terms of their positionality within their own institutions and within NATHEP.



Figure 16
Participants responses to Reflective Visualisation exercise

Creative writing for case studies

The writing tasks that followed enabled each participating university representative to reflect on their newly developed induction case study through a series of interrogative questions such as: how new academics were inducted into the institution; whether the induction took place in the form of an orientation programme; and among others, who had the responsibility of planning the academic induction, and so on. This form of creative writing served as tool for recollection and discovery. Participants had to critically reflect on their ability to carve a pathway ahead, given the challenges or opportunities at their university, to design and create relevant induction programmes. Used as a discovery tool, agency was maximised with a wide canvas for futures thinking, with agential freedom to create anew. Other aspects of the new academics' induction that were explored through creative writing were its aims; aspects of the academics' professional life that the programme focused on; who the facilitators and presenters at the programme were; as well as the extent to which the academic development centre of the university was involved in the programme. This task was designed to promote deep thinking on the part of academic developers around current induction practice at their institutions.

NATHEP Colloquium

The NATHEP Colloquium took place on 6 and 7 November 2019 at the Birchwood Conference Centre in Johannesburg. The guest of honour was Mandisa Cakwe from the DHET, who was invited as a respondent to the various scholarly presentations offered by the university partners.

The colloquium programme featured topics that spoke to the journeys of developing and reconstructing theory-based induction interventions that academic developers had undertaken as part of the NATHEP project. Presentations included topics such as “Conceptualising a theoretically underpinned needs-based induction programme for new academics at the University of Venda”; “The MUT academic



Figure 17 NATHEP Collaborative Conversations Colloquium Poster

induction programme: A roadmap of a worthwhile journey”; “Moving academics from the periphery to the centre of teaching and learning”; “Continuing our journey, alongside those who are beginning theirs”; “Comfortable spaces and creative expression: Capturing the courage of professional identity reconstruction”; “Turning the tides: NATHEP’s influence in reimagining UL new staff induction”, “The greatest induction that never was” and “Reflections on the University of Fort Hare induction programme”.



Figure 18 NATHEP Team during the Collaborative Conversations Colloquium

The work done in preparation for the colloquium became the basis for the case studies that institutions have written, with their mentors, for this book. The collection of case studies speaks richly to how NATHEP influenced thinking and doing in institutional contexts to create new induction programmes that are contextually relevant.



Figure 19: The late Sithembiso Ngubane presenting at the NATHEP Collaborative Colloquium

The engagement at the colloquium was interesting for presenters, as they were discomfited by how their existing and new programmes were received and critiqued by the panel of respondents. This was a huge growth moment for all as it was evident that power differentials in the room, manifested in race or class, and other intersectional markers, meant that staff development practices were seen by some as closely related to their sense of self and academic worth. This was a catalyst for entire project, as after this moment, participants moved more deeply into their contexts and the debilitating aspects that prevented them from realising their own aspirations and professional vision for their work.



Figure 20 Participants and SC at the NATHEP Collaborative Colloquium

Pedagogical encounters: HELTASA conference workshop

Based on the work done earlier in the year on the four pedagogies, the SC facilitated a pedagogical encounter at the 2019 HELTASA conference through a workshop for national and international academic staff developers and academics. Drawing on practitioners' lived experiences, the conference workshop explored dominant assumptions about the selection and use of pedagogies within various academic contexts. Given that the way we select contextually relevant pedagogies has a direct and inseparable link with who we are as practitioners and more importantly with our level of comfort with our own sense of being, delegates were invited to explore how different pedagogies can enhance, disrupt and challenge knowledge, being and doing. Through active participation and experiential approaches various pedagogical approaches were modelled and a collaborative learning, teaching,

and dialogic space was fostered among diverse conference delegates who were able to generate innovative, responsive, relevant, and transformative strategies aligned to the goals and imperatives of higher education.

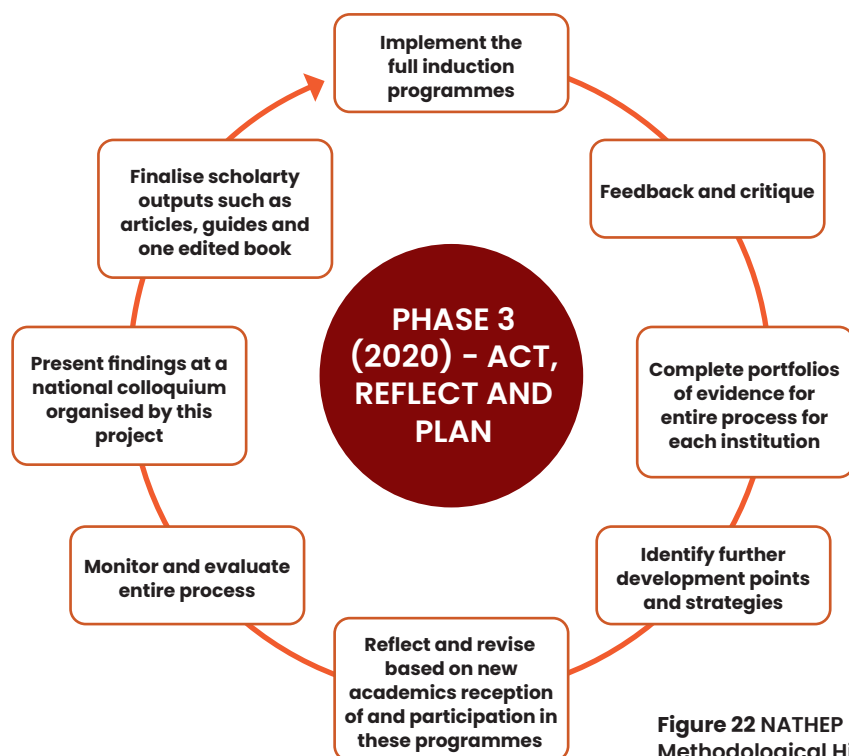


Figure 21 SC facilitating pedagogical encounter at HELTASA 2019

NATHEP Year 3/Phase 3 2020: online migration during COVID-19

When the third phase of NATHEP began in 2020, participants and their mentors (from the SC) continued to work in earnest on their programmes, preparing them for full implementation with their new academics in 2020. Little did we know that the ensuing pandemic would throw the whole world off course, let alone NATHEP. In 2020, we had aimed to achieve several project milestones. Among these were the rollout of induction programmes at the 10 participating universities as well as critical reflection on their reception by new academics and other stakeholders. We had even hoped to conclude the interactive project components. When the global pandemic hit with unprecedented consequences, the project had to change course. Like many universities, the NATHEP project engagements were rerouted to online platforms to facilitate social distancing. Watermeyer et al. (2020) noted that the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic had caused the closure of many residential campuses around the world, leading to the pivot and migration of all learning, teaching, and assessment to online platforms.

After the hard government lockdown in March 2020, NATHEP too had to revert to remote workshops and meetings with project partners and the SC. The project was challenged by COVID-19 in many ways. The social distancing protocols and lockdown meant that we could not continue with the planned NATHEP curriculum, goals and deliverables; all of which were premised on face-to-face pedagogical



**Figure 22 NATHEP Phase 3
Methodological Highlights**

and social interactions between facilitators and participants. Although minor tweaking was needed to pivot the original induction programmes to an online mode, this caused severe delays in the progress of the project as universities were reeling from the crisis. Here again, we take note of the cascade model in action, only this time precipitated by forces external to the project. As NATHEP moved to online engagements to continue with the project, our project participants were pivoting online with their own new academics at their universities, who were in turn moving to online teaching with their students.

We had to re-conceptualise the theorisation and creation of induction programmes with our university partners for online induction. We decided to adjust the induction programmes to be prepared for future induction of new academics, online. The challenge here was for these online induction programmes to be equally contextualised, legitimate, relevant, and responsive, in the time of COVID-19, despite change in platform and mode. We were also concerned that the goals and central tenets of NATHEP; its aims and deliverables; and its espoused theory would be sacrificed in the haste to pivot online. The consequences of COVID-19 had serious impact on the project and its curriculum, pedagogy, deliverables and participants. The important opportunity of course that the pandemic moment offered was

to consider how our participants would be future ready to face any crisis and continue with their work in a sustainable way, whether in face-to-face, online or remote mode. The crisis gave us a chance to test the ability of the NATHEP induction programme to make the shift but still keep the focus. This phase and year were no doubt a difficult year for most people but problematic for NATHEP, as maintaining momentum in a physical and social-distanced way had its own challenges. Keeping the motivation up for all to complete their induction programmes was not easy. We decided that key elements of the NATHEP in person workshops would be maintained in online mode: investing time in a “check-in” session to offer a space for mental health; keeping the community alive and connected and the relational protected; and offering assistance to participants in exploring strategies for online teaching and facilitation in this new mode of engagement in their own contexts. All of these aspects are crucial for criticality and authentic HE practices that embody and value deep change and the sustainability of ourselves, others, and our social and environmental systems.

To circumvent the delay caused by the pandemic and given that we had to cancel our planned in-person workshops, NATHEP decided to focus on the scholarly level of the project, which could be undertaken more easily in remote ways. This included online meetings and workshops to discuss and prepare for pre-agreed outputs such as a special issue for the South African Journal of Higher Education (SAJHE), the submission of a conference paper for HELTASA, an online symposium planned for the end of 2020 and a two-day online writing retreat that was to take place in October 2020. It was also used to focus on case studies, which each university had to compile on their contextually relevant induction programmes, including the pivot to online teaching. We wanted the case studies to be an accurate reflection of the induction programme journey at the specific university, from the start of NATHEP until completion. This approach would enable us all to reflect on the gains and losses of both modes, both in their own practices, but also for new academics who have to be inducted to HE in an online mode.

The unforeseen Year 4: 2021

Year 3/Phase 3 moved unexpectedly into an unforeseen Year 4 in 2021. Permission for an extension was granted by the DHET. The year 2021 kicked off with a planning meeting in which the SC organised upcoming events including attendance at the International Consortium of Educational Developers (ICED) hosted in the following year (2022) in Denmark. Later that year, the online writing retreat event included warmup tasks; a goal-setting session to help ADs think about what they wanted to achieve from this retreat; and sessions designed for participants write on their own towards the achievement of their writing goals. The 10 universities spent the year implementing their new induction programmes and by the end of 2021, most participating universities succeeded in implementing all or parts of

their newly designed induction programmes. They were in a suitable position to reflect on action (Schon, 1983; Brookfield, 2017) or enrich their case studies based on what they had done before NATHEP, what had changed during NATHEP and how these changes had been received in each context after NATHEP. The case studies also engaged in reflection for action (Thompson & Thompson, 2008) to consider what could be improved and enhanced as an ongoing process of refinement and advancement, relative to context. Chapters five to 11 reflect the rich collection of case studies from each of the participating universities to share the journey of their customised and contextualised induction programmes for new academics.

Reflective phase of NATHEP:

2022–23

In 2022 and 2023, the contact part of the NATHEP plan had been completed and NATHEP moved into its reflective phase of scholarly documentation and theorisation of institutional cases. This was part of the reflective methodology of NATHEP but also a signature pedagogy (Shulman, 2004) of academic staff development. At the start of the year, NATHEP offered all project participants Personal Development Programme (PDP) Sessions focused on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, facilitated by an external training company. These sessions helped participants to reflect critically on their biases, blind spots and assumptions about themselves, their peers and

NATHEP

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI)

A Personal Development Programme (PDP)

Two Workshops

1 AN INTRODUCTION TO DEI
 22 March 2022, 13h30 - 17h30 (in person)
 Focusing on:

- Deepening our understanding of the importance of engaging with DEI
- Exploring the complex range of thoughts and feelings related to DEI (both our own and others')
- Reflecting on where we are currently in our DEI journeys
- Strengthening the muscle to engage constructively with DEI

2 UNDERSTANDING UNCONSCIOUS BIAS
 Date TBD (4-hour online workshop)
 Focusing on:

- Better understanding what Unconscious Bias is and how it shows up
- Exploring the experiences and impact of Unconscious Bias
- Exploring ideas for interrupting and overcoming Unconscious Bias

.....

Additional modules available through our public online DEI Personal Development Programme:

- Contributing to Constructive and Safe Spaces for Engaging with DEI
- Understanding Diversity
- Understanding Equity
- Understanding Inclusion and Exclusion
- Understanding Microaggressions
- Understanding Rank, Power and Privilege
- Developing Essential Skills for Courageous Conversations
- Engaging in Courageous Conversations

for further information email
 samstern@mweb.co.za or zedxaba@ndizale.co.za

Brought to you by ndizale
 NDIIZALE MEDIATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION CONSULTANCY

Journeys to Remember
 Reflect, Reconnect and Rediscover

Figure 23 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Workshop Programme

the staff they worked with. This first step in the reflective phase was a necessary intervention before participants commenced with their case study writing.

Pleased that the DHET had granted a generous extension to complete this phase, NATHEP focused on reflective writing workshops to provide writing development and enhancements for project participants. A writing consultant was enlisted and the workshops she ran were extremely beneficial to all. Each case study forms the evidence-based data of the project, study and book. The focus of the project in the two years that followed the pandemic were aimed at finalising scholarly outputs such as the completion of the case study write-ups, the writing of journal articles and the production of the planned book.

Case studies

NATHEP adjusted its programme in 2022-23 to set in motion the writing up of case studies pertaining to each of the newly developed or reconstructed inductions. Central to the focus of case studies were how the induction was developed, methodologies used in grounding the induction and how participating in NATHEP workshops and other engagements contributed to the pedagogies for customised and contextual induction programmes.

We chose case studies as a research design as this is an appropriate option for a university-based intervention where the context of the university matters equally to the content/curriculum being developed, as well as the new academics and students in this context. Case studies are also extremely useful for explanatory projects (Yin, 2003) such as the “how” and “why” of the research and project. In addition, case studies are in alignment with a critical and social realist theoretical framing as case studies and unstructured or semi-structured in-depth interviews are acceptable and appropriate within the paradigm (Danermark et al., 2002). A study of a “case” would be especially effective to observe the interplay between layers (Bygstad & Munkvold, 2011) such as social (academics) and systems (university context). Answering the “why” questions involve developing causal explanations, and these cases are thus appropriately referred to as “causal case studies” (Yin, 2003). Each university worked with an SC member as a mentor and coauthored the different reflections in the case studies. Each case study was also read by a writing specialist and participants had to include revisions before the final submission date, which was late 2022.

In 2023, the NATHEP book project commenced, during which the SC along with project participants worked on final revised submissions planned to collate their learnings, experiences, and entire journeys on the project into the present book. This planning involved a series of meetings wherein the structure of the book, the

chapter distribution, allocation of authors and co-authors, timelines, deadlines and prospective publication dates were discussed. These planning sessions were preceded by the authorship of case studies by academic developers who had participated in NATHEP. Once case studies were authored, writing mentors read the cases, and provided feedback to the authors, which enabled their refinement until finalisation.

Conclusion

This chapter explicated the cascading model of staff development as a layered approach used in NATHEP to respond to new academics' needs in a complex higher education landscape. This approach, implemented during residential workshops, World Café sessions, and critical dialogues, highlights the value of staff development programmes being conceptualised, designed and implemented as ways of enhancing teaching and learning through considered, theorised, contextual and relevant offerings to increase the status of pedagogy in higher education. It also demonstrated the many levels of influence staff development interventions can have when participants are enabled to customise and imbue their programmes within their own contexts.

**NATHEP
launches in
August 2018
with twenty
university
participants -
a community
of support and
collaboration.**

