



ASISA Academy Newsflash – May 2021

Best known for inventing the telephone, Alexander Graham Bell is also credited for the popular expression: *“When one door closes, another opens.”* Interestingly, his original quote was actually longer and went as follows: *“When one door closes another door opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us.”*

When the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic last year closed our doors to face-to-face learning, there was a brief period of shock and disbelief, as well as regret. But the ASISA Academy team was also quick to recognise that a new door of opportunity had presented itself and within a matter of weeks much of our offering had been transformed into engaging online workshops.

A year ago, in May 2020, we were therefore able to resume the [Retirement Fund Trustee Education \(RFTE\) Programme](#) in an exciting online format. At the time we had no idea how popular this approach would be and that we would be able to reach more trustees than ever before.

Our most recent attendance statistics show that in the first five months of this year we reached 442 delegates via our RFTE public and single fund workshops, which already surpasses the total number of 428 delegates reached in 2020.

Our most popular RFTE workshop is the [Death Benefits](#) workshop, which provides trustees and principal officers with an overview of employee death benefits within the context of retirement funds. With all entities having to comply with the Protection of Personal Information (POPI) Act by 1 July 2021, our new [POPI Act for Trustees](#) workshop has also seen a steady uptake.

Our workshops are fully-funded for South African trustees and principal officers through our partnership with the ASISA Foundation. The ASISA Academy is a [Batseta Approved CPD Provider](#), which means that participation in a workshop enables delegates to earn CPD points.

We invite you to read the [RFTE Review and Feedback Report for 2020](#), which includes some great feedback from delegates who attended the workshops.

Welcome to the team, Douglas Davids

Douglas Davids joined the ASISA Academy as a trustee educator in May. Douglas is a seasoned investment professional with more than 25 years of experience, of which the last 12 years have been focused on environmental, social and governance (ESG) investing.

Douglas made his debut at the end of May, when he co-presented the [Responsible Investing](#) workshop with Adrian Bertrand. He will also be presenting our [Responsible Investing Sprint](#) workshops.



Douglas Davids, ASISA Academy Trustee Educator and Investment Sprints Presenter

The RFTE Responsible Investing workshop was attended by Bruce Cameron, an award-winning journalist, columnist for Fin24, author of several books on retirement, and also a retirement fund trustee. He sent us the following feedback:

"It was exceptional. I have attended so many industry conferences on the issue and most are just glossy marketing proposals and not how to judge the real issues."

And then there were 35 IFA interns

With the motto of "giving up is not an option", we managed to create internship opportunities in 2021 for two groups of young black graduates interested in pursuing a career in financial planning. This brings to 35 the number of graduates participating in our sixth ASISA Academy [Independent Financial Advisor \(IFA\) Internship](#).

The first group of 29 graduates embarked on their internships at the beginning of March having successfully completed the online work readiness course in February. The second group started interning with their host IFA practices in May.

The graduates will be interning until the end of February 2022 with established IFA practices in Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Durban, East London, Johannesburg and Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth). Intensive mentoring of each intern by the Academy takes place throughout the programme.



Tshepiso Radebe, intern at Client Care Lifestyle Financial Planning

Tshepiso Radebe, who holds a B.Com in Financial Planning from Nelson Mandela University, started interning with Client Care Lifestyle Financial Planning in Gqeberha in March 2021. He recently posted the following comment on his LinkedIn profile, which sums up in a really special way what this IFA Internship means to young graduates like Tshepiso:

“Every day I step into that office, I remember where I come from and how far I've come. I am humbled and truly blessed.”

Women in Finance

The [Women in Finance Network](#) sponsored five ladies currently participating in the ASISA Academy IFA Internship to attend the online networking event in May, which was themed "Bringing the Human back to the Workplace". In addition, a sixth IFA intern was sponsored to attend the event by her host practice, Veritas.



Top row from the left: Nonkosi Maseti (intern at RF Advice), Palesa Mareletse (intern at Ascent Wealth Management) Khanyisa Ziqu (intern at STK Advisory Connect)
Bottom row from the left: Shanell Domike (intern at Veritas), Lehlohonolo Mashifane (intern at Gradidge Mahura), Sindiswa Mlangeni (intern at Afrocentric)

Feedback from some of the ladies who attended the event:

"It was such a good learning experience for me. To hear from all those women who have achieved so much in their respective fields, and to see them in solidarity. The experience inspired me to do more, most importantly, to be grateful for the platform given to me and make the best out of it. Having a career in finance is like signing up for lifelong learning because it never ends."

"I learnt that there are more women in finance than I thought. Seeing so many black women in the webinar really inspired me and made me realise that I'm more than capable to be a financial advisor or a business developer."

"The finance industry is very intimidating. You are surrounded by extremely smart people and that can make you feel really small and insignificant, but the advice provided by Celiwe and the other ladies was inspiring and really motivated me to want to give nothing but my best, to focus on myself and have a clear distinctive vision of where I want to be."

We would like to acknowledge Lehlohonolo Mashifane, currently interning at Gradidge Mahura Investments and Cherozaan Jefftha, interning at Olemera Financial Services on passing their RE5 exams. Cherozaan obtained her RE5 certificate after completing her degree in B.Comm Finance. This is one of the requirements for the IFA Internship, and interns are required to have written their exams by October. These exams test candidates' knowledge of the Financial Advisory and Intermediary Services (FAIS) Act and the Financial Intelligence Centre Act (FICA).



From the left Lehlohonolo Mashifane and Cherozaan Jefftha

The following courses were presented in May

The [Equity Analyst Short Course](#) was presented to delegates from a number of different financial services companies.

The following [Retirement Fund Trustee Education \(RFTE\)](#) workshops were presented:

- Fund Annual Financial Statement Analysis
- Investment Fundamentals
- Investment Policy Statement Formulation and Assessment
- Death Benefits
- Infrastructure investing
- POPIA for Trustees
- Responsible Investing

Upcoming courses

- There are two more opportunities this year to participate in our popular Online UCT Collective Investment Schemes (CIS) Short Courses, scheduled for August and October. For more information on how to enrol, please [click here](#).
- There are limited spaces left on the Online UCT Life Insurance Claims Assessors Short Course that is scheduled to run in July -November 2021. For more information on how to enrol, please [click here](#).
- The following online public RFTE workshops take place in June. Click on the workshop name below to enrol:
 - [Infrastructure Investing](#) - 18 June 2021
 - [Trustee Governance & Ethics](#) - 21 June 2021
 - [Private Equity](#) - 29 June 2021
 - [POPIA](#) - 30 June 2021

Learn with us in 2021

The ASISA Academy is recognised as a Level 1 B-BBEE contributor, with more than 75% of the Academy's beneficiaries being black South Africans. This means that employers can claim 135% of their skills development spend with the ASISA Academy. Please feel free to [contact us](#) to discuss how we can support your skills development requirements for 2021.

Please visit our [website](#) for more information on our many learning opportunities and like our [Facebook page](#) for regular updates. We also invite you to interact with us on [LinkedIn](#).

Best wishes
Alicia Davids

ASISA Academy CEO