



ASISA Academy Newsflash – February 2021

At the end of February we bid farewell to the 36 interns who had participated in the 2020/21 ASISA Academy [Independent Financial Advisor \(IFA\) Internship](#). I will forever remember this group of interns for excelling during a period of unprecedented uncertainty and disruption as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Fresh from university, this group had just joined their host practices when the country went into hard lockdown at the end of March last year.

Adapting to the workplace is a big challenge for most graduates and having to connect remotely with a team you hardly know is challenging. Equally, trying to integrate a new intern into an existing team is not easy for the IFA practices. Nevertheless, these 36 interns and their host practices persevered and found creative ways to make it work while the ASISA Academy and its mentors provided ongoing support to interns. At the time of writing 81% of the interns had already commenced full-time employment with their host practices, while a further 8% had managed to secure employment in the savings and investment industry. Approximately 70% of this group of interns passed their RE5 exams.

The ASISA Academy team is extremely proud of this group of young budding professionals and we believe that they have what it takes to achieve great things in a world where traits such as tenacity and resilience are non-negotiable.

We would like to share with you some of the fantastic feedback received from the host practices:

"We would just like to say that we have had an amazing experience with Mmatshupo this year, she really is an exceptional intern and we are thrilled that she is joining our team as a permanent employee at the end of her internship."

"I am happy to report that both Thembelihle and Petronella have both accepted full time positions to continue working at Integral Wealth Management. We are thrilled that they chose to continue their working career with us and are excited for them to continue growing and enhancing their skills both in the professional workspace and in their personal lives. What a ride it has been!"

"Cliff is now fully integrated into the business in his new Paraplanning role. He has accepted our offer and will start as a full time employee officially on Monday. Thank you for your work in connecting us with Cliff. We look forward to engage again in the new year."

"She is doing exceptionally well and has adapted to our environment and culture effortlessly. It is a true pleasure to have her on our team. We have seen her grow in leaps and bounds and still so much more to uncover."

Welcoming our 2021 IFA interns

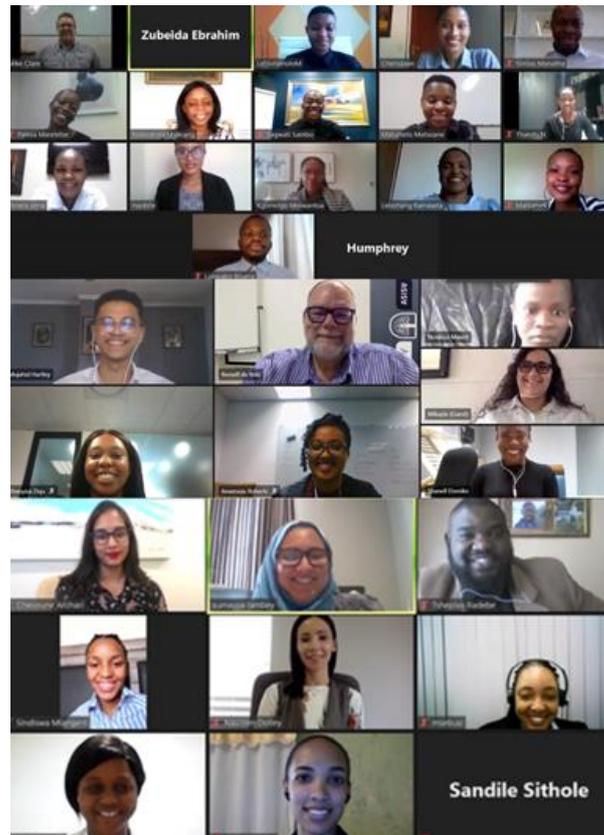
The sixth ASISA Academy [IFA Internship Programme](#) kicked off in February with 29 graduates participating in online work readiness courses being delivered over 15 mornings until 5 March 2021. We are proud of the strong female representation on this group – 23 interns are female and 6 are male.

Traditionally, the incoming IFA interns would have attended a two-week face-to-face work readiness course before joining their host practices in Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Durban, East London, Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth (now Gqeberha). This year, for the first time, the work readiness courses had to be delivered in a virtual format due to the ongoing Covid-19 risks. This presented a number of challenges, since very few of our interns have the resources that would enable them to attend online classes over 15 mornings. We are therefore extremely grateful to our host practices for agreeing to bring the interns into their respective workplaces earlier than planned and for setting them up so that they could participate in the work readiness workshops every morning.

Despite having had to start their internship journey in a virtual format there was much excitement amongst the interns and we could sense how eager these young graduates were to start building their careers. We even had tears flowing in one of the sessions, when one of the Johannesburg-based interns shared that she had not believed that this opportunity was real until the course started. She graduated in 2019 and was losing hope after a year of not being able to find employment.

On 8 March 2021, the interns will begin their 12-month internships, which will introduce them to a career in financial planning. Intensive mentoring of each intern by ASISA Academy mentors takes place throughout the programme.

The IFA Internship, funded by a number of ASISA members, was launched in 2016 with the aim of helping young black graduates interested in pursuing a career in financial planning with the opportunity to intern with established IFA practices for 12 months.



2021 IFA Interns and Programme Champions

Retirement Fund Trustee Education

In partnership with the ASISA Foundation, we deliver a range of engaging online [Retirement Fund Trustee Education \(RFTE\)](#) workshops on a fully-funded basis to South African Trustees and Principal Officers. The ASISA Academy is a [BATSETA Approved CPD Provider](#), which means that participation in a workshop enables delegates to earn CPD points.

The following workshops were presented in February:

- A half-day workshop on [Trustee Governance and Ethics](#) was presented to 69 Institute of Retirement Funds Africa (IRFA) delegates. The IRFA has booked monthly RFTE workshops for the remainder of 2021.
- A half-day workshop on [Responsible Investing](#) was requested by Organised Labour for a group of labour-nominated trustees and shop stewards. Organisations represented included the South African Typographical Union (SATU), Democratic Nursing Organisation of South Africa (DENOSA), Public Servants Association (PSA) representatives from the Gauteng Provincial Government and the Office of the Premier.
- A half-day workshop on [Investment Fundamentals Part 1](#) was presented to the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Pension Fund.

Other courses presented in February

- A bespoke Investments Overview workshop over 4 mornings for Digiata, a financial services software development company. While not an ASISA member, Digiata is one of our most valued clients. The company recognises the importance of ensuring that its employees develop a deep understanding of the savings and investment industry and is therefore making use of our learning opportunities on a regular basis.
- A bespoke online workshop on Investment Management was presented for the audit teams of the Office of the Auditor-General. This is the fourth workshop presented to the Auditor-General's Office since 2020.
- A number of delegates from ASISA member companies attended an [Investment Sprint](#) focused on the Fundamentals of Equities Portfolio Management.

Upcoming learning opportunities

- We still have space on the Investment Performance Overview [Sprint](#) scheduled for Monday, 15 March 2021. This Sprint will focus on performance measurement, performance attribution and the Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS).
- The next RFTE Investment Fundamentals workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, 23 March 2021. For more information and to book please click [here](#).

Learn with us in 2021

Since the start of 2021, some 220 delegates have already participated in our many [learning opportunities](#). Please visit our [website](#) for more information and like our [Facebook page](#) for regular updates. We also invite you to interact with us on [LinkedIn](#).

Please feel free to [contact us](#) to discuss how we can support your learning requirements. As always, we welcome suggestions and proposals.

Best wishes
Alicia Davids
ASISA Academy CEO