Global Schools Forum - Membership Agreement

This Membership Agreement consists of two parts:

Part A: Outline of Commitment
Part B: Terms and Conditions of Membership

Please read both sections carefully and sign where indicated.

A. Outline of Commitment

About GSF

Global Schools Forum is the only international membership network for organisations that run or support non-state schools providing high quality education to low- and middle-income students in the Global South.

GSF is a thriving global community, connecting school networks, intermediary organisations, funders and other stakeholders across the world, to collaborate, share promising practices and solve key challenges in order to enhance the quality of education provided to children. This is delivered through a mix of formal convening - in annual and regional meetings; online training series and directed communities of practice – and facilitating informal connections based on member need.

Currently, GSF’s 57 members run or support 17,000 schools in 45 countries, providing a quality education to 2.3 million children. Our members’ commitment to collaboration and positive engagement will contribute globally to a more equitable educational system.

Our Commitment To Our Members

1 What we offer

GSF is dedicated to supporting and representing non-state education providers serving low- and middle-income children, in order to strengthen their role in the education system globally and maximise the number of children accessing high-quality education.

We do this through:

- **Knowledge-Sharing and Collaboration:** we have assembled a top-class global network of organisations passionate about improving education for the poorest children. Through a variety of curated events and individual connections, we create a rich environment for building meaningful relationships and finding solutions to challenges. We also share best-practice information and expertise on relevant topics like child protection, curriculum, pedagogy, and school management. **By joining GSF, we are committed to connecting you into this network and enabling your organisation to access all that the community has to offer.**

- **Policy & Advocacy:** As the only membership organisation supporting the non-state education sector at an international level, we want to ensure that the policy and regulatory environment continues to allow our members to do their excellent work. We are committed to being a voice for the non-state sector within global discussions and with global stakeholders, reflecting the diverse perspectives of our members and the heterogeneity of the sector. **As you join GSF, we are**
committed to advocate on behalf of the non-state sector to enable your work to continue and thrive. This could also include supporting you in local policy advocacy efforts.

- **Data & evidence:** Building a strong non-state education sector, protected in policy spaces, requires strengthening data and evidence about the sector. We are currently building our work in this area and are committed to being active in producing and sharing thought leadership; supporting generation of data and research from our members and their approaches, and commissioning in depth research on the sector more broadly. **As part of our community, you will have opportunities to contribute your own data to our efforts, as well as potential access to funding to test and evaluate your work.**

We are dedicated to constantly improving our offer to our members. We continuously develop and refine our services based on emerging member needs and feedback.

2 **How we act - our values**

Our community is shaped by our values. At GSF, we commit to upholding these values and creating a culture that is in line with them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>We are transparent and inclusive</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Our membership criteria are clear and simple; cost is not a barrier for entry</td>
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<tr>
<td>We share information to support the efforts of operators, intermediaries and partnering governments</td>
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<td>Our words and actions are characterised by integrity</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>We are urgent and outcomes-oriented</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Our actions reflect the urgency and importance of our members’ efforts to put children first.</td>
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<td>We provide a high-quality and relevant member offer.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>We operate with kindness and humility</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>We understand that people with different experiences and contexts can challenge and strengthen our notions of what is possible</td>
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<tr>
<td>We seek out feedback and look for best practices to continuously improve the quality of our work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>We know there are many different solutions to the challenge we’re trying to solve, and we seek counsel and best practices to improve the quality of our work.</td>
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**Your Commitment to Our Community**

1 **Commitment to diversity and inclusion**

GSF recognises that our membership represent an incredible diversity of staff and students in terms of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, socioeconomic status and sexual orientation. As an organisation, we appreciate the different ideas, perspectives and values this diversity brings, recognising that it makes us stronger in service of our shared mission. We value each and every member and their contributions equally.

We want GSF to be a community in which all of our members are welcomed, included, respected, valued, and enabled to fully participate. We expect our members to understand GSF’s commitment to diversity and inclusion, and to commit to operating in line with this within the GSF community.

In addition, GSF members are expected to adopt the highest standards of fairness and integrity and no member shall act in a manner detrimental to the interests of students, school communities, the wider public, other members or GSF.
2 Commitment to participation

GSF is a community of like-minded members that are interested in discussing, sharing and collaborating to strengthen schools, school networks, and the non-state sector more broadly.

Our network is at its most dynamic and thriving when its members are engaged and willing to collaborate for the mutual benefit of the sector. GSF therefore expects that its members will:

- Participate and contribute in discussions, events and forums
- Bring their knowledge and expertise to GSF and actively share best practice with other members
- Disseminate information and learnings within their schools and networks to maximise impact
- Be ambassadors of GSF and invite others to join
- Make recommendations to improve existing services or suggest new ones
B. Terms & Conditions of Membership

Membership is voluntary and GSF is not a governing body for schools or a regulator of member organisations. Membership is organisational not individual. While GSF recognises the autonomy of schools and school networks, members that join GSF undertake to comply with the conditions and requirements set out below.

1. New membership

Membership is open to pre-primary, primary and secondary schools and school networks in low- and middle-income countries serving children from low-income backgrounds and to intermediary organisations working with schools like these. Requests for membership are reviewed by the GSF team for eligibility based on the information provided in the membership form, gained from the due diligence phone call and references.

If concerns are raised that the behaviour of the applicant is detrimental to their schools (or portfolio of schools) staff, students, the system more widely or any other issue that raises concerns for the Board, then further information may be required during the application process. Please note; membership is at the discretion of the GSF leadership.

Once membership has been approved, members have access to the full range of products and services offered by GSF and will be invited to login to the online collaboration platform.

2. Membership renewal

GSF membership is automatically renewed annually, until members request to cancel it.

Implementation of a Child Protection Policy within the first year and completion of the GSF Annual Census are both conditions of GSF membership. If these conditions are not met, membership will not be continued.

3. Membership cancellation

If a member requests to cancel their membership, this takes immediate effect from the date the cancellation request is received in writing by the GSF team, and all member benefits and rights cease at that time.

GSF reserves the right to cancel membership at any time for reasons that contravene this agreement. In cases such as these, a review process will be undertaken prior to cancellation and the member will be informed of this.

4. Annual fees

GSF intends to be partially self-sustainable through the annual collection of membership fees. GSF is planning to introduce membership fees from September 2021. Member fees will be tiered based on self-reported operating budget and paid annually. New members receive free membership for the first year, requiring payment in subsequent years. Members will be provided clear guidance on the fee structure at least six months prior to the introduction of the annual fee payment and have the opportunity to decide to continue with GSF at that time.

5. Privacy and Information

All information shared with GSF will be held according to our Privacy Notice and the sharing guidelines detailed below.

GSF is committed to protecting the personal data of its members. GSF does not provide member specific data to external partners unless prior written permission is granted by the member, except for general information that is already disclosed and available in the public domain (such as organisation logo, name of CEO/Founder, countries of operation, total schools in network/portfolio, number of students in network/portfolio, hyperlink to member’s website).

5.1. Membership form
All members complete a membership application form. Members agree that basic information such as organisation logo, name of CEO/Founder, countries of operation, total schools in network/portfolio, number of students in network/portfolio, and a link to the member’s website, can be shared on the GSF website.

5.2. Annual Census

Members are expected to complete the GSF annual census by March/April each year so GSF can collate, analyse and share the data anonymously on the GSF website and with the sector.

GSF reserves the right to share fully anonymised data collected through the Annual Census. Please see GSF’s Privacy Notice for more information.

5.3. Documentation and policies

5.3.1. Child Protection Policy

GSF has a Child Protection policy, which details its commitment to ensuring the safety and protection of all children. In addition, GSF requires all members to commit to having the right structures and processes in place to ensure the safety and protection of all children directly or indirectly in their care.

In signing this agreement below, you will also be asked to confirm that you have an active child protection policy for your organisation.

5.3.2. Admissions Policy

If a member has selective admissions to any of their schools, they will also be required to share their admissions policy as part of the membership application process.

5.3.3. Other

Other documentation may be requested if there are concerns raised about members.

5.4. Information to non-members

Members will ensure that products, information and documents received from GSF members or via the GSF Collaboration Platform are not directly or indirectly disclosed or shared with non-member organisations without the written permission of the person or organisation who shared, delivered or provided them.

5.5. Communication

GSF seeks to communicate transparently and regularly with members, enabling them to maximise their membership experience and actively engage in the GSF community. Communication will comply with the latest Data Protection and GDPR requirements and will be for the legitimate purposes of the membership.

6. School registration and licensing

GSF is fundamentally committed to working alongside government. It is the expectation that members comply with relevant national and local school registration systems. Members that are running schools are required to be registered and licensed to operate their schools in their country(ies) of operation. Members that are Intermediary Organisations are expected to know which portfolio schools are registered to operate and be supporting the remainder to register where possible. Membership can be granted in cases where compliance with licensing requirements and positive engagement with government are demonstrated even if licenses are not yet in place. If concerns are raised about members’ compliance with government regulations, GSF will use discretion to inform their decision-making processes.

7. Advertising

Members will ensure that advertising, articles, speeches, notices, or any forms of publication are governed by professional ethics.

8. Governance and management

The GSF Board retains the leadership and decision-making responsibility. GSF is managed by a small team, headed by the Executive Director and reporting to the Board; the GSF team will submit Progress Reports to the GSF Board, at triannual Board meetings.
8.1. The Board currently comprises one representative from each of GSF’s funders: Ark, IDP Foundation, Imaginable Futures, UBS Optimus and Vitol Foundation. This governance structure will be revised in 2020 to incorporate wider representation from external representatives. Members will be advised of governance changes and may be invited to join the Board as member representatives. These terms and conditions will be updated at the time of change.

9. Liability

GSF does not take responsibility for the actions of members or any of its affiliates, directors, officers, employees or agents (the "Operators"). GSF shall not be liable for any claim, demand, action, liability, damages, cost, loss or expense arising from any actions of the Operators (including, without limitation, legal fees, costs and expenses). Membership of GSF is not necessarily an endorsement of an organisation.

GSF has zero tolerance for corruption, discrimination, and mistreatment of staff and students. If GSF is notified of such activities, or other behaviours and situations that raise concerns, in member organisations the GSF Board would take immediate recourse. If any behaviour or action of a GSF member brings GSF into disrepute, the GSF Board will take the necessary steps to protect the reputation and work of GSF.

10. GSF representation

GSF is not a trade association, and does not represent individual members. Member organisations cannot refer to GSF in the event of a conflict with other members, and the expectation is that the GSF name would not be used beyond what can be reasonably expected.

11. Updates to this document

GSF will regularly review this document and update it as the organisation grows and develops.
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY CONFIRMATION

Please read and initial the statement below to confirm that it applies to your organisation:

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<tr>
<th>Confirmation</th>
<th>Initials</th>
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<tr>
<td>We (the member) have Child Protection policies and procedures in place that are appropriate for the context in which our organisation operates.</td>
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CONFIRMATION OF MEMBERSHIP

In signing this agreement, we confirm that we wish to become members of GSF. In line with GSF’s vision and mission, we will play our part in ensuring all children, regardless of their background, are able to access quality education.

We have read and understand the Outline of Commitment and agree to uphold, within the community, the expectations of members outlined there:

- We understand GSF’s commitment to diversity and inclusion, and we will operate in line with this within the GSF community.
- We commit to participating in the GSF community; contributing, sharing and learning together with other GSF members to strengthen the non-state education sector through our membership of GSF.

We have read and agree to the Terms & Conditions stated above and confirm that we will disclose to GSF any major Child Protection issues that occur during our period of membership.

Name of Organisation applying for membership: ________________________________

Name(s) of Individual Appointees (Typically members of the Senior Management Team):

1. ________________________________
2. ________________________________
3. ________________________________