



**Stanford | SEED**  
Stanford Institute for Innovation  
in Developing Economies

## **SEED Volunteer Business Coach Job Description**

### **OVERVIEW**

The [Stanford Institute for Innovation in Developing Economies](#) (SEED) aims to stimulate the creation of economic opportunities through innovation, entrepreneurship, and the growth of businesses that create jobs and change the lives of people who live in poverty around the world. SEED bridges a critical gap in global efforts to address prosperity around the world by focusing on the private sector as the engine for sustainable growth.

Leveraging Stanford's resources and culture of innovation and entrepreneurship, SEED's ambitious goals are driven by regional innovation centers whose purpose is to stimulate economic opportunities – including job creation – through SEED's unique Transformation Programs. Designed and taught by Stanford faculty, Transformation Programs offer practical management training, networking opportunities, and, most uniquely, hands-on coaching to established firms with high-growth potential. Currently located in Accra, Ghana, SEED plans to launch additional regional innovation centers in strategic geographies around the world. The centers will serve as focus points of direct engagements, harnessing faculty research, student programs, and business coaching and advising to help high-potential companies overcome critical barriers to entrepreneurship and business growth. The centers will also stimulate the networks of the larger economic ecosystem that is vital for innovation and entrepreneurship.

A critical aspect of SEED's operational strategy involves the recruitment and deployment of Volunteer Business Coaches to SEED's regional countries of operations, in this case with a base in Ghana, which serves as the regional headquarters of SEED in West Africa. SEED Volunteer Business Coaches spend up to one year in Africa coaching Transformation Program company leaders. Working side-by-side with the leadership of a select number of small and medium high-potential companies, coaches will help to set ambitious goals and implement strategies that will transform the companies into industry leaders and job creators.

SEED's Volunteer Business Coaches are individuals who have demonstrated a passion and drive for building and managing successful high growth companies. They have accomplished extraordinary things and are looking for the next big opportunity to make an impact in the world. While it can be challenging, the job



of a Volunteer Business Coach is highly rewarding and is a critical element of SEED's strategy to stimulate the creation of economic opportunities.

## **ROLE OF A SEED VOLUNTEER BUSINESS COACH**

The role of a Volunteer Business Coach at SEED is to challenge, stretch, support, celebrate, and ultimately guide local companies toward transformation and exponential growth.

Volunteer Business Coaches will work closely with the leadership of a select number of small and medium-sized companies with high social impact potential in Africa to achieve rapid growth and market leadership in their regions. Applying a hands-on role, coaches will “walk with” the leadership in developing and implementing strategies that will lead to a successful transformation and associated creation of jobs. SEED Volunteer Business Coaches exercise a great deal of creativity in carrying out their mission.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

The ideal candidate should have the following qualifications:

- **At least 10 years of professional business experience, including several years of hands-on general management in senior level positions.**
  - Demonstrated success in managing companies, or significant operational divisions, that had aggressive goals.
  - Experience related to business building in fast growth companies or entrepreneurial environments.
  - Successful track record of conceiving and executing strategy to grow businesses rapidly or to create new products and services that underlie new businesses.
  - Demonstrated track record for innovation.
- **High level of adaptability and demonstration of having thrived in new contexts.**
  - Flexibility.
  - Open-minded and wanting to continue to grow and learn.
  - High level of cultural sensitivity and empathy.
  - Self-starter and entrepreneurial spirit.
  - Resourcefulness in the face of adversity and ambiguity.
  - Willingness to roll up the sleeves and do what it takes.



- Ability to lead companies toward transformational change without having direct control over resources.
- Sense of adventure.
  
- **Be team-oriented. A collaborative leader.**
  
- **Demonstrated belief in SEED mission.**

Though not required, the following backgrounds are highly valued:

- Demonstrated success working with multiple companies of multiple sizes, including small, medium, and large-scale enterprises.
- Experience working or living in a developing economy. Individuals from the African continent are also encouraged to apply.

#### **SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The specific responsibilities of the Volunteer Business Coach include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Build positive working relationships with the leadership of a select number of small and medium high-potential companies that will be assigned to each Volunteer Business Coach as part of a portfolio.**
  - Acquire deep understanding of clients' operations, products, services, customers, market position, constraints, and other critical factors, and use this information to diagnose company needs as well as barriers to transformation and growth.
  - Work closely with the leadership of assigned portfolio companies to help them develop a Transformation Plan, taking advantage of SEED tools, templates, training materials, and other resources. Identify the best prospects for profitable growth.
  - Collaborate and “walk with” the leadership of portfolio companies to achieve transformational growth.
  - Work with leadership teams to achieve the mindset shifts that allow them to develop and commit to ambitious goals.
  - Encourage and facilitate the institution of positive business ethics.



- Support companies in challenging times as they pursue opportunities for growth and improvement despite the difficulties.
- Inspire and motivate companies effectively. Celebrate goal achievements.
- Visit portfolio company sites regularly, as appropriate to the work and likely including travel to other countries in the region.
- Support fellow coaches with functional expertise and moral support, as needed.
- **Collaborate with SEED staff, faculty and fellow coaches to work through challenges and access important resources that can help address companies' needs.**
  - Bring necessary resources to bear to help companies grow exponentially:
    - Draw on Stanford's and SEED's extensive resources and networks, including a database of Volunteer Business Advisors.
    - Tap into personal networks, as well as those at local and international institutions.
    - Develop projects for interns, students, or other post-graduate associates, working closely with SEED staff and company leaders.
  - Working closely with SEED team members, facilitate the analysis and review of companies' progress toward transformation.
  - Contribute to SEED's organizational memory by documenting best practice.

For more information and to apply, please visit:

<https://seed.stanford.edu/volunteers/volunteer-business-coach-africa>