

Letter to theological educators in W institutions introducing TWB

Theologians Without Borders: Introducing a New Service Resource in Global Theological Education

To: Presidents and Other Leaders sharing in the global missional task of theological education.

Dear friends

I'm writing to introduce to you ***Theologians Without Borders (TWB)*** and to ask for your help in circulating this survey to your faculty so that TWB can determine the most effective way to offer TWB opportunities and services.

I'm Ian Payne, Executive Director, TWB, a New Zealander who grew up in India. For ten years until 2018 I was Principal at SAIACS, Bangalore, India. Other key TWB players are Dr Stephanie Black, Associate Director of Orientation and Training, and Tony Plews, LeaDev Langham, an Overseas Council affiliate in New Zealand. TWB works with key partners in global evangelical theological education. Dr Riad Kassis says, "As ICETE International Director and on behalf of Dr Ralph Enlow, ICETE Chair, we warmly welcome the establishment of Theologians Without Borders and look forward for more collaboration between ICETE and TWB in the near future." Marvin Oxenham warmly welcomes TWB and his support is why he is kindly sending you this email on our behalf.

You'll know there is *a resource imbalance* in global theological education (TE). The West has material resources and many more PhDs. But it is the Majority World (MW) church that is growing in leaps and bounds. Many Western (W) scholar-teachers want to help and are willing to visit to teach in the MW. When these visits work well, they are amazingly productive for both the visitor and the students, helping grow more strategic leaders right where they are needed most. And your institution benefits too; by growing the global exposure of your faculty team you enrich them and help meet accreditation standards. But all too often these teaching visits—using W-style courses without culturally relevant approaches and applications—only reinforce the problem. Theologians Without Borders will foster more culturally-sensitive cooperation and better mutual partnerships. TWB wants to *help*. Our Vision is

to see global integration of theological education based on equity and mutuality in collaborative partnerships between churches, institutions and ministries across every global region.

TWB is just beginning, but I know you'll be excited about the four things we're doing:

(1) Helping more W scholars teach in MW institutions more effectively and with more cultural relevance.

TWB will **vet** scholars and then **match** them to teaching-visit opportunities in the MW—we're aiming at MDiv level or higher, not grassroots training initially. We are building up a database of approved scholars (in a broad range of TE disciplines—not just theology!) and opportunities. If you want to be a TWB-approved scholar and be matched to particular teaching-visit opportunities, then you'll be able to apply soon.

We know that so much good can come from these visits. We've experienced it. Imagine the impact on you, your students and the team you haven't met yet.

(2) Encouraging W institutions to invite MW scholars to teach:

TWB encourages more W institutions to invite more MW theologians to teach short-term, without trying to recruit them to the W. These will be credible voices from where the global church is at its most vibrant while allowing MW scholars to remain engaged at their home institutions.

(3) Brokering fairer TE global partnerships:

To encourage equitable ('level playing field') relationships between MW and Western institutions, rather than the MW continuing to succumb to 'colonial' relationships that favor W interests. This would be an advocacy function on their behalf, helping you negotiate MOU's which reflect true mutuality of partnership.

(4) Enhancing MW regional cross-pollination:

TWB will facilitate inter-regional relationships between MW institutions. As funds allow, we will fund the travel costs of MW theologians travelling to other Majority World institutions to teach short term.

We are currently building a website (www.theologianswithoutborders.org) that will be the platform to communicate with TWB and register your interest in Associate Scholar teaching-visit opportunities. It will be launched mid-2019. You are welcome to communicate by email to twb.director@gmail.com for clarifications, questions and urgent requests.

As part of our due diligence in building the business model for TWB for our governance board meeting on 1 March 2019, I'm asking if you will help with some market research. We need your help in accurately gauging the scale and shape of the response of W scholars and W TE institutions towards TWB services.

You can help us by responding in one of two ways. We need your reply by 14 February.

i) Complete the online survey. Put this link into your internet browser and press return:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TWB02>.

Or scan this QR code to go to the online survey:



ii) Complete the brief survey within your email, and hit reply.

Fill in the questions in the table below and return this by email directly to twb.director@gmail.com.

Mark the cell (with an "X") corresponding to the response that best fits with you and your institution.

Thank you so much for your time.

Every blessing

Ian Payne

Executive Director

Theologians Without Borders

Office use	Theologians Without Borders Return this survey to twb.director@gmail.com by 14 February 2019 OR go to https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TWB02 .	Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	I believe there is a significant need that TWB will seek to address						
Think about TWB vetting possible W scholars and matching them to MW teaching-visit opportunities (Function 1):							
2	I would be very interested in finding out more about how I could use my theological training to visit and teach in a MW theological educational institution						
3	Being approved as an Associate Scholar by TWB would be valuable because (check the options that are appropriate):	<input type="checkbox"/> I'd be background-checked as suitable <input type="checkbox"/> I'd get help in orientation to cross-cultural teaching <input type="checkbox"/> I'd have assurance the seminary I'd be visiting is strategically valuable <input type="checkbox"/> I'd be enriched by the interaction with MW students <input type="checkbox"/> I'd be credentialed by TWB (no official or legal status with other organisations) <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable to me <input type="checkbox"/> Other; please specify:					
4	TWB envisages a one-off checking and vetting service (application) fee of \$X charged to the W scholar, plus \$1/4X fee charged to the MW institution to which the scholar is matched. This seems like an equitable arrangement to me.						
5	With becoming a TWB Associate Scholar, I would be prepared to pay a one-off TWB application fee, but NOT MORE THAN US \$...						
Think about TWB encouraging W institutions to invite MW scholars (Function 2):							
6	I believe my institution would be very interested in benefitting from TWB in this way						
7	Feel free to add a comment on TWB:						
8	I would like to keep up to date with news of TWB and find out more about the TWB Associate Scholar program. Here's my name and email address. <small>(TWB will only use this information for TWB purposes, keeping it safe and confidential.)</small>						

Appendix:

Additional Voices about TWB:

Dr Emmanuel Bellon, Scholar Leaders, believes 'TWB has a potential to contribute to the next wave of theological education globally.'

Dr Elie Haddad, President, Arab Baptist Theological Seminary, Lebanon, says of TWB, 'I am very excited about this initiative. Any area of collaboration will only serve to strengthen and empower both parties.'