



GTI Intern Handbook

Programme Guide

Welcome...

To Think Pacific's GTI (Fiji)

Bula and welcome to your Think Pacific Global Team Internship! We are thrilled you are here.

Our GTI is an evolution of 15 years of sustainable development programs in the Fiji Islands. Our hope is that this program will allow you to develop your skills, create new connections and make a contribution.

Through partnerships with large Fijian ministries and smaller NGOs, our mission for this program is that we can make small but consistent contributions towards helping Fijian bodies implement the Fiji National Development Plan and inspire its youth to achieve transformational change by 2037.

As a team, we are committed to doing everything we can to make sure that your experience and impact is the best that it possibly can be. Please do not hesitate to reach out for your mentors for support or offer support to your fellow interns. After all, we are all here to achieve the same outcome.

This document is the ultimate guide to your internship journey over the coming weeks. It is filled with tips, advice, templates and a step-by-step plan to help you fulfil your potential and set you up for success.

Enjoy your internship. We look forward to working alongside you and seeing what you can create!

Vinaka,
Lavenia & the TP Team

Code of Conduct

Our code of conduct sets out the standard of behaviour that we expect from all Think Pacific participants on any project, which must be maintained while in the Think Pacific House Premises. It has been created to enable you to achieve the most out of your time in Fiji in a safe manner. It also ensures that the communities we work with are treated with respect and consideration. By undertaking our programme you will be representing not only Think Pacific, but also your country of origin throughout the entire time you are in Fiji. Any breach of this code of conduct may result in your programme being terminated without compensation.

You must:

- Listen to and follow the advice and requests of the Think Pacific team, including your mentors, house matrons and caretakers. Persistent misdemeanours shall be deemed misconduct.
- Demonstrate a commitment and interest in the project aims and development initiatives being undertaken. A repeated failure to attend a project may be deemed misconduct.
- Abstain from the consumption of alcohol during your Think Pacific internship placement engagement. This is for the experience of all interns and your safety during the programme. Disregarding this will result in disciplinary action.
- Understand that Think Pacific has a zero tolerance policy towards the possession and use of illegal substances. If you are found in the possession of, or under the influence of such substances you will have your programme terminated immediately and removed from the programme and house setting.
- You are not permitted to enter into perceived inappropriate acts of affection or to enter sexual relations with any person within a Think Pacific project setting. When receiving guidance from the mentors on inappropriate acts of affection, you must cease any such activities, otherwise this may be deemed gross misconduct and you may be removed from the programme.
- Never allow any person to enter or spend the night at any programme accommodation.
- Understand that Think Pacific has a zero tolerance towards stealing and any persons found to be thieving will face serious disciplinary procedures.
- Treat all people with dignity and respect. Specifically, you will never make comments of a derisory, sexist or racist nature to anyone during your time in Fiji.
- Respect local attitudes, cultures and beliefs at all times.
- Never engage in political demonstrations or illegal activities.

- Never take time out of your project in order to undertake personal in-country travel unless you have obtained the express permission from your mentor team.

Disciplinary Procedure...

Think Pacific's disciplinary procedure is as follows..

1. Upon the first incident of unacceptable behaviour or a breach of the Code of Conduct, the mentor shall warn you **verbally** that your behaviour is unacceptable and shall explain to you the reasons for this unacceptability.
2. If such behaviour or breach continues, the mentor shall provide you with a **written warning** stating that any recurrence may result in you being required to leave the project and if appropriate, leave Fiji, without reimbursement of your programme fee.
3. Upon a subsequent repeat of the unacceptable behaviour or upon a serious breach, the mentor may, at their sole discretion, require that you **leave the programme** and if appropriate, Fiji, without reimbursement of your programme fee.

In the event that the Disciplinary Procedure is invoked and you are required to leave your programme then you agree to do so without causing fuss, disturbance or aggravation and at the time specified by the mentor.

If at any stage you feel that this procedure is being applied unfairly or without cause, you should raise this directly with the mentor and, if you feel the matter has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you may raise a complaint in accordance with our complaints procedure.

Standards & Expectations...

What We Expect from Our Interns

As an organisation, we expect our volunteers, interns and any staff members to live by the TP values. Why? Because we believe that doing this will ensure we stay on course to achieve excellence.

To hold each other accountable, we would like you (and all other interns) to agree to the below standards and expectations:

I completely agree to:

- Bring a huge curiosity to learn before implementation.
- Act in a way that supports the goals of the Remote Internship program partners in Fiji.
- Act like the responsible and successful student I am.
- Accept feedback to improve and make changes.
- Only aim to add value to the partner organisation I am working on behalf of.
- Prioritise needs of the Fijian organisations ahead of your own personal development, you shall achieve your growth through dedication to your contribution.
- Take responsibility for your role.
- Take the opportunity to show initiative.
- Believe that there is always a way and you're expected to believe in yourself and take initiative.
- Use the structure and systems that are there to help you and please follow advice.
- Bring a positive attitude to solving problems.
- Champion and support fellow interns.
- Apply the Think Pacific values to my interactions within the program.

1. An Introduction to Think Pacific

Think Pacific has become an organisation with wide reaching aims and a wide variety of deliverables. Although you are taking part on a GTI programme, we believe that it is important that you understand our organisational background and the wider aims and initiative that every one of our initiatives serve in Fiji.

1.1 Introduction

Think Pacific is both a UK based social enterprise, registered Fijian Charity and now has a new delivering body in Bali, Indonesia. We deliver international projects which directly support the aims of our partners, and in Fiji towards Fiji's National Development through international participation. These serve both as an impactful initiative in itself but also as a funding initiative.

We were born out of local ideas and ambition within Fiji. Our visionaries included The National Health Advisor for Fiji, Mr Manasa Seniyasi who is now Trustee of Think Pacific Foundation, Chiefs of Fiji's Lomaiviti Province, including Ratu Komai and Ratu Jolame and Mr Waliki Satakala, former Provincial Officer facilitating the Towards a Healthy Fiji Islands Initiative and former Trustee of Think Pacific foundation.

1.1.1 The Government Policy & Strategy Directing Our Projects in Fiji

Fiji's National Development Plan is a 20-year strategy which provides the forward-looking vision for "Transforming Fiji" towards an even more progressive, vibrant and inclusive society. It outlines a framework that encompasses strategic policy manoeuvres, new approaches to development and the aspirations of all Fijians.

The Plan consists of two prongs or approaches, which are designated as "Inclusive Socio-economic Development" and 'Transformational Strategic Thrusts'. These prongs are mutually inclusive and reinforcing.

The NDP is the outcome of a nationwide consultation process and reflects the aspirations of the Fijian people, and their Government's commitment to deliver on these goals. The NDP is aligned with global commitments including The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (The UN SDGs) and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Fiji's national development plan and vision significantly drives and guides our project aims and initiatives at Think Pacific, from the community preparations, to delivery to our monitoring and evaluation phases, which aim to support post project delivery and outcomes in the youth and wider community.

1.1.2 Our Purpose

To provide the funding, planning and logistical support to assist communities, provincial councils, local partners and other stakeholders to achieve specific development aims. The aims are guided by the holistic development concepts of the National Wellness Centre (Ministry of Health Fiji) and the Towards a Healthy Fiji islands Initiative, which focus upon holistic development across 7 target areas: Physical, Mental, Social, Financial, Spiritual, Environment and Policy. Through internship programmes Think Pacific is able to support and promote the core policy of Government partners and other stakeholders.

1.1.3 Our Core Principles

1. To make a positive contribution to the immediate needs and holistic development targets, and improve local resources and infrastructure, in rural Fijian communities through financial support from Think Pacific and hands-on assistance from international students and skilled local professionals.
2. To support a locally directed and sustainable model of development aimed at increasing local empowerment and providing long term solutions to development issues via skills sharing, community specific support, critical analysis and long term financial assistance by Think Pacific.
3. To invest in Fiji's youth; increasing opportunities for future generations by facilitating access to improved infrastructure, education, training and support.
4. To enable international students to experience and appreciate remote areas of the South Pacific Islands in a safe and responsible manner.
5. To promote Fijian culture, customs and traditional skills and encourage understanding and respectful behaviour from tourists.
6. To create a multiracial, international programme which values the sharing of ideas, experiences and differences.
7. To enable interns to challenge themselves and develop initiative, teamwork and leadership skills through remote living and cultural interaction.

1.1.4 What do we mean by 'interning'?

Constantly learning, self-analysis with a critical eye, maintaining a level of flexibility and remaining ever vigilant in regards to organisational conduct cannot be understated in the interest of having the capacity for genuine, sustainable support and wider ethics. We believe the models we use throughout our

programmes offer genuine opportunity to effectively and ethically work towards our aims in supporting our partners and development in Fiji.

As someone who is joining a program, we think it's incredibly important that you fully understand this model so that you can fully understand your place on the project, wider delivery aims that you are contributing towards and your role in delivery components during the program.

Concepts like 'saviourism' are linked to these charitable models as often the message for these individuals is that they are joining a project to make a large, personal impact. They are sold images of suffering and hardship with the narrative that the project they are joining will alleviate this.

This is not a sound model for using international, and largely what would be categorised as unskilled, labour and plausibly does more damage to those that are being described to be helped than good. This is not how we view your participation. No intern project will ever change the world, that's not the point.

However, we believe that there is an effective approach to utilising international participants in small-scale projects that provides benefits for the organisations the projects support and the development of those participants involved... a win-win. These projects will allow you to play a part in initiatives that make a small and real contribution to wider aims and objectives. They simply support the capacity growth of local organisations and provide them with a consultative service to provide a variety of ideas, suggestions and reflections. You do have a part in this, and some ideas may stick more than others, but you must approach the project with humility and understand the privilege that it is to collaborate with and learn from experts in the sector in Fiji.

1.1.5 Where does impact come from?

External participation boosting internal opportunity

Think Pacific does not need to exist, but we aim to act as a surplus of support. When you are joining a Think Pacific program, you are funding the capacity growth of our partners through support via the Foundation whilst also contributing in a small scale to the completion of tasks set by organisations who may not have the current capacity to complete those tasks as quickly as this programme helps facilitate.

You are essentially providing resources and your own time and perspective that can be re-distributed to support a uniquely Fijian approach to development. This is a unique learning opportunity for you that does not replace opportunities for local engagement, it actually has a place in creating them; boosting local employment opportunities in the long run and boosting the stability, sustainable growth and capacity of our Fijian partners.

You won't change the world on a TP project (or any intern programme). But with us, you will be able to make a real contribution.

You join a project for a short period of time, but with Think Pacific your impact is part of a long-term plan, which achieves sustainable charity initiatives. In other words, you become a chess piece in a much bigger game of chess! Our projects are hugely inspiring and rewarding for communities and Fijian youth in Fiji and continue to achieve empowering and sustainable results. To progress our impact further, we're looking for individuals who really want to learn about Fiji, embrace a new way of life and test themselves in unfamiliar settings. If you come to Fiji with this mindset and a positive 'can do' attitude, we promise, you'll work on genuinely sound initiatives, which are making a real contribution at a local level – A programme that breeds global understanding, fosters youth development and is demanding but carefully designed to match to your skill level. We also know the project is a real challenge, but that living at the heart of a Fijian village is just about the biggest, most reflective and most memorable life lesson you can have.

2. Your GTI Programme

Now you know a little bit about the big picture, this section explores the specifics of your programme, the GTI (Global Team Internship). This is a new delivery platform for us and one that we and our partners are very excited about. We expect a lot to come from these programmes so read below to find out how.

2.1 What?

2.1.1 What is the GTI

The GTI, or 'Global Team Internship,' is a programme where international students and young individuals live in Suva, Fiji, and act in a consultation style role to local partners organisations in Fiji, proposing responses to requested tasks that are proposed. The style of group work and the engagements with partners mimics that of a Think Tank, where varied and alternate perspectives are valued in a cross-cultural context.

2.1.2 Who are the Partner Organisations

The whole GTI is focused on supporting our network of Partners in Fiji whilst providing students exposure to the industry and an opportunity for work experience in an entirely new cultural and socio environment.

We have a broad network of innovative social enterprises, charitable organisations and government ministries who are inspiring real change and forward thinking approaches in Fiji. Our partners cover diverse fields, from women's rights to micro-entrepreneurship to environmental protection. These are the organisations that will invite you to learn about their operations, their organisational wins and their organisational challenges. We approach select organisations ahead of any project taking place, asking if they would be interested in joining the initiative and hearing proposals and receiving support from a consultative group of international interns. If they accept, they will then send across tasks that they would like interns to contribute towards.

We are privileged to work alongside and support over 70 amazing Fijian ministries, Charities, Businesses and NSOs. Within the GTI programme, interns will hear from our partners who engage with the topics they will be reflecting upon, offering true and honest contextual information from organisations in each sector.

2.1.3 What are the Action Projects?

Each week, interns will be set an Action Project – a specific challenge proposed by the organisation. The intern group's role in your team is to find, what you think to be, a suitable solution. Often 'big picture', always interesting and challenging.

Project questions often focus upon research, development and solving some of the more complex issues within the sector or the organisation's operations, the charity sector. Your responses provide a support of resources within organisations that may be underfunded, under staffed, and will relish the opportunity to consider an 'outside eye perspective.' The organisation does need to implement every idea, but the responses offer food for thought and often work that if appropriate, immediately implementable, or informing larger movements in the organisation's delivery.

You'll need to work collaboratively, consider cultural differences and learn quickly. Creative and critical thinking are the secret ingredients to producing the most effective outcomes. Each week culminates in you presenting your concepts to the partner for feedback and review.

When working on the Action Projects with your group, you are free to utilise the house as a workspace, local coffee shops or a range of vibrant 'co-working' spaces which give you the opportunity to immerse yourself into a professional environment that reflects the new hybrid nature of employment. Whilst in these spaces, you will have the opportunity to network, enjoy refreshments and feel what it's like to work in the Pacific.

2.1.4 Who are Your Mentors?

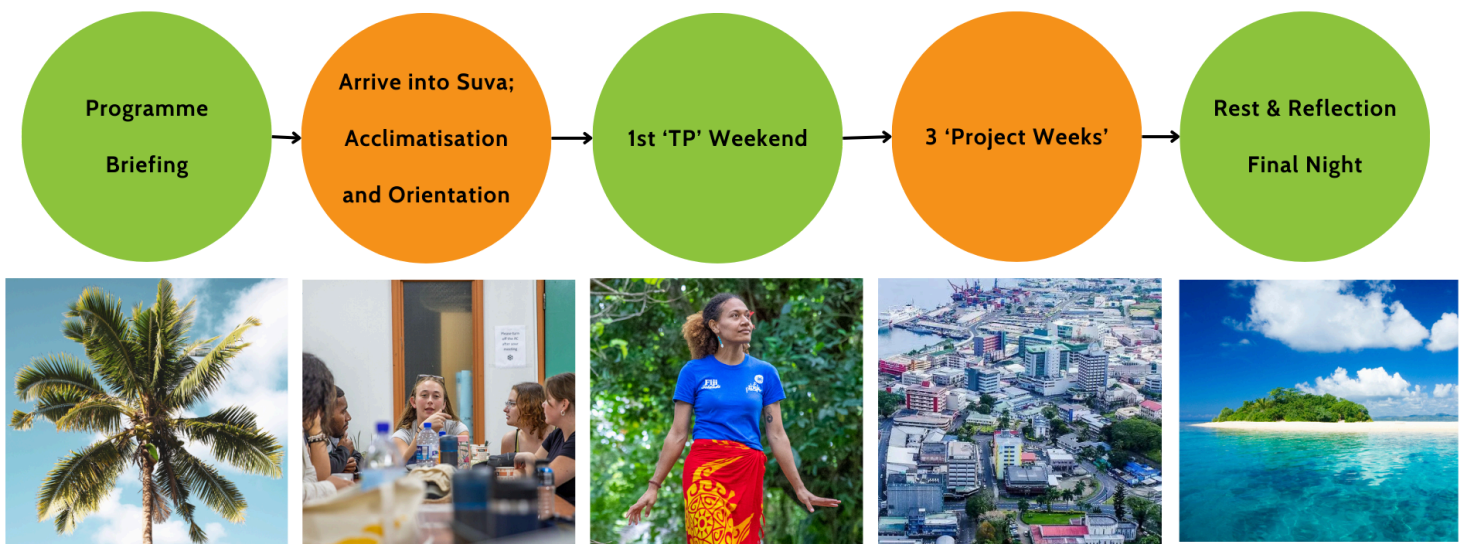
Your mentors guide every aspect of your programme's delivery and will be present with you every day of your GTI programme. They will be able to offer contextual support when you are designing your action project responses.

In addition, they are present to facilitate all of the logistics of the programme, from transport to all communications. They are also your connection to wider levels of management in the TP Office and oversee all health and wellbeing on the programme.

If you have any questions at all, about absolutely anything, your mentors are your go to.

2.1.5 Programme Journey

On the official start date of the programme, you will depart for your briefing resort where you will stay for 2 nights, acclimatising to Fiji and learning about every aspect of the programme you are about to undertake. Then it's off to Suva to set up in your accommodation, start the work



2.1.6 Your Average GTI Week

Although sometimes GTI itineraries may be bespoke based on different circumstances, partner availability or requests, oftentimes your programme follows a clear and standard structure.

Each week begins with a site visit to learn about that week's partner organisation's background, vision, goals and challenges. This helps inform intern responses to ensure the action project proposals are as effective as and well informed as they can be. The intern's task then is to work within a small group of 3-5 to tackle the brief and present back the 'action project' and ideas at the end of the week.

For the partner organisations, this is an opportunity to gain unique international insights from creative thinking students, to prototype new concepts, begin new projects that have been limited by staff resources or gain fresh perspectives.

Here's a look at the average week to paint a picture of how it is put together for you:

- **Monday** – Organisation Visit & Action Project Brief
- **Tuesday** – Group Work
- **Wednesday** – Partner Q&A + Field Trip or Excursion
- **Thursday** – Group Work
- **Friday** – Group Presentations to Partner and Stakeholders
- **Saturday** – Included Team Activity
- **Sunday** – Free day to explore Suva

2.1.7 Programme Structure (Daily)

Daily Briefings: These briefings are your chance to hear about the day ahead, and receive key updates, advice and communications from your mentor team. This is to ensure messages are clear across the entire team for the plan and intentions of the day. You may wish to ask questions, touch base with your fellow team members on your plans for the project delivery for the day, or raise something in the meeting once the mentors have shared their updates. Some tips to maximise your involvement in these meetings;

- It is crucial that the briefing starts on time, and with purpose. Therefore, it is important that you are on time, and set the tone for the rest of the day! Bring the energy and enthusiasm, and understand that your energy and engagement in the meeting can affect the team around you.
- If you have questions, or if something is unclear, note it down, and raise it once the discussion points have been delivered to avoid disrupting the updates, and to allow mentors to communicate effectively. They may answer your question as they deliver their point.

NB: You will often finish the meeting and head into the first project activities of the day, so make sure you have all you need and you're ready for action when arriving for the morning briefing.

Daily Debriefs: Debriefs happen daily with the team to reflect on the day and acts as a bookmark for communication as you head into the afternoon period and free time. It is vital for de-briefs to be concise, efficient and honest in reflections. Our mentor team will lead on constructive reflection and feedback on the day, including challenges and resolutions, and also successes and highlights. However, it is important you have the space and opportunity to share your reflections also. Here are some tips;

- Pre-Debrief Discussion – Always make notes and reflections on your day shortly before the meet, give yourself time to reflect before sharing.
- Be sincere in acknowledging aspects that may not have worked well, but always provide constructive solutions to that challenge if you can

- Note key 'wins' and highlights for team / interns to encourage and motivate. It's important to remain positive, and not feel beaten by the day.

NB: Debriefs are for reflections and insights into our day as a team to ensure that we take the time to look forward, and acknowledge challenges, and how we can improve moving forward. It should not be a rant or discussion that brings down the team or inappropriately focuses on individuals. Support and encourage your team at all times!

2.1.8 Our Expectation of You

You may have guessed by now that we are very keen to encourage a learning mindset! This is exactly what we ask of you when joining a Think Pacific project; to be curious, open minded and come with the expectation to challenge your own perspectives and learn about people and about yourself.

During your program, you are never coming to Fiji to 'teach,' you are not enlisted to necessarily share your expertise with a local organisation in Fiji, you are instead becoming a part of the collaborative process that is a Think Pacific programme. As an international individual, you are a perfect opportunity for Fijian organisations to stimulate discussions on wider humanitarian topics, using you to bring your own perspective.

This provides the setting for a healthy cultural exchange, an open learning environment for all involved. Simultaneously, you will be witnessing Sustainable Development in action in a Fijian context

2.2 How?

2.2.1 Where the Action Project Comes From

Prior to any GTI starting, partners looking to participate in the initiative are sent a questionnaire which prompts them to assess the most suitable tasks for interns to complete. These tasks are based on current need, current and real challenges for the organisations and are then processed in Action Projects, including the attachment of any relevant resources for the APs completion and intended outcomes.

2.2.2 Your Internship Group

Before arriving in Fiji, you have undergone an interview and application process where we learn about your interests and skills, what you want to develop etc. This helps inform which set groups you may be placed in each week to respond to allocated Action Projects.

Interns work in groups to propose responses to Action Projects and these groups change each week. This allows variety in experience and skills, utilising different strengths in groups and also challenges individuals and encourages soft skills in the professional growth space in all interns.

Changing Groups

We encourage all interns to stick with their group and see the value in diversity and what they can learn from taking on that specific tasks and working with different people. Even if interns feel they want to join another group or complete another Action Project, the benefit of staying often outweighs the reason for their decision. If interns are determined to change groups, they must do this with the mentors, explaining exactly the reasons why they want to change and if valid, this may be arranged in conversation with that group.

The mentors

Each group will be allocated a mentor each week to help oversee the development of their idea and offer contextual context. The mentors will be present for assistance at specific times during the week's itinerary, in addition to your private working time.

2.2.3 Action Project Completion

The route to completion of the Action Project entirely depends on what the task is itself... because of this, groups can choose to approach the Action Projects in any way they feel best fit. However, some things will be certain:

- a) **Workspaces:** Interns can choose an array of locations to work on the Action Projects, including the TP House and Cafes around Suva. Greenhouse Coworking Space will also be booked for two days each week for focused teamwork.
- b) **Presentation:** Every Action Project proposal must include a presentation element. Each Friday, any work that has been completed will be presented to the organisations who set the task and will be assessing its suitability for implementation.
- c) **Implementation:** Partners may be able to provide verbal feedback on the spot during the presentation phase of the AP completion, but it will ultimately be up to them whether or how the AP may be implemented. Sometimes, aspects of an action project spring the biggest

innovations rather than the whole submission. They are idea stimulators for these organisations and will be acknowledged as such!

2.2.4 Living in Suva

A major part of the programme is having the opportunity to live in a foreign city and taste the experience of immersing yourself in another culture. Suva is not a common tourist destination and is very much 'working Fiji.' This means that you are getting a very authentic experience of the 'real' Fiji and encounter the setting where many national organisational bodies operate from, the CBD of the Pacific Islands.

As part of this experience, we encourage you to get out and about and explore. Breakfast and dinner is served in the TP house, but lunches are a chance to get out and explore the city.

We ask that interns explore Suva in groups of at least 2, and are contactable by phone at all times.

Travel Allowance

We grant each intern a \$200 transport allowance for transportation in and around Suva, for project components and free time. This should comfortably last the entire programme with normal use. Taxis are a common means of transport in the city, or if you are feeling adventurous, why not grab a bus card and take the bus?

3. Health

Impact, fun and teamwork are what the GTI is all about and of course are priorities. But the absolute number one priority will always be health on a programme. Fiji is a new environment to you and is a tropical one which presents challenges in regards to health. It is very normal to encounter health challenges when travelling to new countries, and it is important that you are aware of the processes should you ever encounter ill health during the programme.

3.1 Activities

3.1.1 Programme Activities

Under the Think Pacific T&C's for interns and project mentors, the following activities **will not** be arranged or advised by any member of the Think Pacific staff team due to Health & Safety concerns and Liability conditions:

- Horse Riding
- Rock Jumps / Waterfall Jumps
- Jumping off Boats or Trucks
- Travelling at Sea or by River without a Life Jacket

NB: If arranged independently by the intern then no liability is on Think Pacific, we strongly advise against these for your own health and safety.

3.1.2 R&R Activities

If you want to do SkyDiving / adventure activity as an independent excursion during R&R the Project you must check your insurance policy regarding cover for such activities, and if you do not have the necessary cover, our advice is to **not participate** in those excursions.

Project mentors can make bookings via telephone on behalf of interns, but **cannot** at any point be engaged in receiving payment or transferring funds on behalf of the intern.

3.2 Intern Health

As an intern, your mindset is essential in ensuring that any concerns you have regarding your health, physical or mental, are raised immediately to your mentors.

Please note that mentors are there to offer care and support as first responders, it is not their responsibility to 'diagnose' or 'treat,' this would be conducted by a medical professional. Mentors will however facilitate the trip to a medical practice should the need arise.

3.2.1 Intern Healthcare – Common Illnesses

It is important to understand that on projects it is common to see 'smaller' illness or injury related to the conditions and environment. Common health problems or illnesses that you may encounter in Fiji may include:

- **Boils:** At first, the skin turns red in the area of the infection, and a tender lump develops. After four to seven days, the lump starts turning white as pus collects under the skin. **Treatment** – Any infection will require a trip to the hospital. Keep the area clean and covered. Take antibiotics as advised from Health practitioner.
- **Infected Mosquito Bites:** Scratching mosquito bites and breaking the skin on a bite will likely lead to mild/serious infection. Once the skin is broken, infection is quite likely in tropical humid conditions on project. **Avoiding bites** (best solution): , use a lot of insect repellent, wear loose long clothes & covered shoes at night, avoid being outside at night & use mosquito net.
Reducing risk of bites getting infected: Avoid itching! Take oral antihistamines, apply antihistamine cream, if skin is broken - clean with antiseptic and apply plaster to reduce risk of infection.
Treatment – If infected: If swollen, red and hot bite is infected. Keep the area clean and covered, take antihistamines. If bad swelling occurs around the area or you don't see improvement within 48 hours antibiotics may be required.
- **Cuts (including coral cuts):** many cuts can be treated in the community and are covered in your basic first aid training. Effective treatment mitigates the risk of infection.
Treatment: Wash hands thoroughly - Stop bleeding, clean wounds thoroughly, dry the area and cover with a sterile plaster/dressing. Change dressing regularly to keep it clean, avoid getting cut wet to promote faster healing. The dressing can be removed once the wound has closed itself/scabbed over. Be very cautious of open wounds in rural Fiji as they are more prone to infection in these conditions.
Seek medical support if the cut is deep, especially dirty (e.g. coral cuts can become easily infected so may need professional cleaning) or in a sensitive area. In some cases stitches may be required.
- **Diarrhoea & Vomiting: (Gastroenteritis)** Signs include loose bowel motions or vomiting episodes.
Treatment – Sipping fluids consistently. Drink ORS or electrolytes. Eat when you can. A doctor's trip for antibiotics may be necessary and in more serious cases a IV drip may be required.
- **Constipation:** Difficulty in emptying the bowels due to hardened faeces.

Treatment – Drink lots of water. Eat pawpaw and other fruits. Take laxatives where required.

- **Heat Rash:** You can develop heat rash when your pores become blocked and sweat can't escape. The cause of heat rash is often friction on the surface of the skin.

Treatment – Bathe or shower in cold water, and then let skin air dry, rather than using a towel. Avoid using creams or lotions that may block pores further.

- **Dehydration:** Signs include headaches, very dark urine, dry skin, feeling dizzy, rapid heartbeat, rapid breathing, lack of energy & fainting.

Treatment – Sip small amounts of water. Drink ORS or electrolytes. A drip may be required in severe cases.

- **Scabies:** Scabies is not an infection, but an infestation of tiny mites called *Sarcoptes*. Scabies can cause severe itch, and a red rash on skin of infected areas.

Treatment: Creams or lotions (from pharmacy) that can be applied across the entire body to remove and kill mites.

- **Hand, foot and Mouth:** Hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD) is a common viral infection that causes painful red blisters in the mouth and throat, hands and feet. It is easily passed on through coughs, sneezes, faeces and fluid in the blisters. To reduce the risk of spreading hand, foot and mouth disease - avoid contact with people, wash hands often, cough into tissues, do not share towels or cutlery, wash bedding on hot. If advised by a medical profession, it might be best for the individual to isolate to stop the spread.

Treatment: You cannot take medicines to cure HFM but can get cream to reduce itchiness of rashes. It usually gets better on its own in 7 to 10 days. To help symptoms - drink fluids, avoid hot/spicy foods, take painkillers for discomfort.

- **Tonsillitis:** Tonsillitis is inflammation of the tonsils (usually visible) caused by a viral infection or, less commonly, a bacterial infection. Symptoms include sore throat, pain swallowing, coughing, headache, temperature.

Treatment: If tonsillitis is viral symptoms usually pass in 3-4 days make sure to rest plenty, drink plenty of fluids and take painkillers where needed. If it is caused by bacteria antibiotics may be required. Typical signs of a bacterial infection include white pus-filled spots on the tonsils, no cough and swollen or tender lymph glands.

3.2.2 Allergies / Dietary Requirements

If you have allergies, you will have raised this on your pre-departure form and your mentors will be aware and prepared to support you during your project. This will include communicating your dietary requirements to any accommodation provider booked through Think Pacific and your host family in the community.

If you realise there is anything that you have not disclosed in your pre-departure form, please make it your priority to tell your mentors immediately.

3.2.3 Female interns – Menstrual Cycle

The change in environment on project can have effects on your menstrual cycle, see points below for advise and awareness:

- Due to changes in climate, diet and weight, it can be common to have more than one cycle in a month, have a cycle whilst on a pill, or not have one at all. Ensure you keep mentors updated of any usual changes especially if painful or worrying.
- If abnormal changes to periods continue for over 14 days, inform your mentors and they will likely facilitate the seeking of medical advice. i.e. Island Nurse (however most issues resolve themselves when body has acclimatised)
- If your period starts (unusually) while still on the pill, advise to check with pill information or nurse / doctor on whether to continue taking the pill, or come off the pill whilst the cycle is completed.
- If you are on the contraceptive pill and are vomiting/diarrhoea the pill may not be effective, be vigilant of this.
- Make sure to have lots of sanitary supplies (can be bought during shopping day). Buying hygiene or nappy bags to put used sanitary items in is advised.
- Don't flush any sanitary items down village toilets. Put in bags, fire pits or drop toilets. Best to ask Fijian mum on what is best for their home environment.
- With regards to implants and coils, please make your mentors aware of this (in private)

3.2.4 Hospital Visit Timings

As a standard **non-emergency doctor's trips**, where the condition will not benefit from being immediately seen, will be organised in the morning.

Please be vigilant in helping to maintain these standards. Be proactive in communicating any health concern with your mentors at the earliest convenience to assist them with planning and organising the next steps.

Please note, if you specifically request to seek medical advice outside these hours, we will reaffirm why that may be difficult and offer guidance on whether it would be deemed necessary, but if you still wish to go, we will facilitate this.

3.2.5 Communication & the Project Coordinator

Your mentors have a support system that they will communicate with so that our wider management team can support and be aware of any health incident raised.

For your awareness, the points communicated to management regarding updates will consist of the following information:

New Health Update - Info Needed

- Project, Full Name, University if necessary
- Illness/Injury/Diagnosis
- Date symptoms started
- Signs & Symptoms
- Treatment Provided
- Agreed Outcomes/Action Points
- Update By (mentor Name)
- Supporting medical documents (if doctor visit happened) - e.g. medical certificate, prescription sheet, hospital treatment, medical results, receipts
 - Including the name of the medical facility visited.

3.3 intern Health - Processes

3.3.1 Different Health Scenarios & TP Response Protocols

The below process is designed to ensure we are consistent in our care of you. Please be aware these are standard procedures, however there will be circumstances where it may not be possible or appropriate to follow these guidelines. As a team, we remain adaptable when it comes to health support.

Scenario 1: Illness/Injury & well enough to attend project – mentors provide support, reassurance.
E.g. Headache, infected bite, diarrhoea, sickness, cough

Scenario 2: Illness/Injury & unable to attend project (for more than 24 hours) – mentors provide support, reassurance & inform Project Coordinator.
E.g. Tonsillitis, persistent vomiting & diarrhoea, constipation

Scenario 3: Deterioration or 48 Hours of Illness/Injury – Visit local medical facility for a professional opinion (Nurse/Doctor). Project Coordinator is advised prior to you being taken to a medical facility (where possible) with information provided on the illness or injury, time frame etc.
E.g. Tonsillitis, persistent vomiting & diarrhoea, scabies, constipation, skin rashes, infected wounds/bites, deep wounds (stitches needed)

Scenario 4: Emergency or Larger Illness (local medical facilities not sufficient) - For any more larger illnesses, mental health incidents or emergencies, mentors will accompany the you **straight to Suva (where possible & appropriate)**

E.g. Broken bone, mental health breakdown, self harm, vomiting blood

Scenario 5: Emergency (with threat of loss of life) - For any life threatening situations, mentors provide immediate first aid, contact the relevant emergency service for assistance, and get the intern to the recommended emergency facility as quickly as possible.

E.g. Anaphylaxis (no epipen), head injury, rapid blood loss, serious self harm

Due to the rural locations of projects, in an emergency, private transport will likely be organised to get to medical services faster.

NB - In any instance of an intern refusing to see a medical professional, or refusing medical treatment advised, they can be removed from Project immediately under our T&Cs and Duty of Care to our teams.

3.3.2 Seeking Medical Treatment - Process Overview

1. **Non-Emergency illness/injury:** mentor & intern travel to closest village nursing station, medical centre or hospital eg. Sigatoka / Rakiraki / Suva / Nadi
2. **Emergency/Larger illness/injury:** If stable, mentor and intern travel straight to Suva. If unstable/in a lot of pain the mentor and intern travel to the nearest suitable facility. Where possible, contact your PC to identify the most suitable medical facility to support interns. Examples of towns in Viti Levu with hospitals with 24/7 emergency departments - Sigatoka / Rakiraki / Suva / Nadi
3. **ALL Mental Health:** Travel straight to Suva.

3.3.3 Preparing for a Hospital Trip - intern Checklists

intern Checklist:

Make sure to remember to bring the following items if in the instance of heading to a hospital for treatment:

- Passport/ID
- Insurance Details
- Money & Debit Card
- Phone/Phone Charger
- Clothes/Medications/Supplies/Entertainment for 2-3 days (just in case)

3.3.4 Health Logistics - Costs, Transport, Accommodation

Costs

- All other costs associated with a health trip paid by interns e.g. medical costs, prescription costs, food costs, taxis to/ from hospitals, additional accommodation costs.
 - If an intern genuinely does not have sufficient funds available to cover (WP student) and no support from family at home, raise this with your PC who will raise this with our Internships Manager in Suva.
- mentor costs - all costs for mentors associated with the work visit are covered by TP e.g. accommodation, transport to and from community plus meals.

3.3.5 Transport to local hospital

Additional Accommodation

Organisation - Accommodation for any stay outside the village will be organised by our operations team. After options being presented, this will then be communicated back to you and you will make payment on arrival.

Payment -

- For all accommodation booked, this will be organised by our Operations team with payment being made on arrival where appropriate.

4. Living in Suva, in the TP House

One of the most unique aspects of this programme and one that we urge you to maximise as a global experience is getting a taste of living in a foreign city. This section covers advice for your stay in Suva,

relevant information and pointers to help you maximise your time. If you are in any doubt otherwise or want any further tips, always feel free to ask your mentors.

4.1 Day to Day

TP House Staff

There is a small team of Think Pacific staff that will oversee your stay in the house. These staff members will be in the lower level apartment downstairs during their work periods. You may see other Think Pacific staff members come in and out of the downstairs

1. **House Caretakers:** There will be x2 House caretakers on site at all times and work on shifts. The caretakers responsibilities will be to maintain 24hr security of the property and the maintenance of outdoor areas including the pool. You may see them hopping around the garden, trimming hedges and in the security booth operating security cameras and the front gate.
2. **House Matrons:** Despite our choice of job title, the matrons are not strict and scary! They are a fundamental part of your experience living in the property; they oversee the maintenance of indoor areas and facilities of the TP house, overseeing the cleaning of the house. They also oversee the cooking of all meals during your stay. They may be out shopping at times, but they will always be up for a chat if you have any questions about Fiji. The matrons are in regular communication with our Operations team.

NB: All our house staff are first aid trained, but your mentors should always be the first to be approached regarding health on the programme.

Meal times

Breakfast and dinner will be served in the house every day that the team is staying there. Breakfast will be served between 6:45am and 7:45am, dinner will be served at 6:30 pm each day.

Laundry

You are free to use the laundry facilities in the house for clothes, but please ask the house matrons first so they can plan when the machine can be free... they may be planning on washing bedding!

House Conduct and Instructions

Please refer to the [TP House Manual](#) for the specific of house conduct.

4.2 Eating Out in Suva

If eating out for lunch, or if you are heading out on a weekend, please see the below list for some of our recommendations:

Ashyana

Food: Curry House

Price: \$\$\$

Location: Central Suva, on the same road as Holiday Inn and Grand Pacific. Very easy to get a taxi to and from the restaurant.

Grace Kitchen

Food: Korean and Asian Cuisine style restaurant, with western foods. (burgers, pizzas etc)

Price range: from low to high, good for basics and 'comfort' foods

Location: Flagstaff, Damodar City, Tappoo City

Tappoo City

Food: Food court with mainly western food stalls (pizza, chinese, burgers etc)

Price: \$\$

Location: Central Suva

Damodar City:

Food: Food court with numerous food stalls available

Price: \$\$

Location: Grantham Road. (Adjacent to University of South Pacific)

FNPF Center :

Food: The third floor food court has numerous food stalls available

Price: \$\$

Location: Ellery Street

Coffee Noir:

Food: An array of different selection of drinks, baked goods and western-style dishes

Price: \$\$

Location: Victoria Parade (Next to O'Reillys and Top Dog)

Coffee Hub:

Food: High end cafe

Price: \$\$\$

Location: Corner of Joske and Gordon st, Suva. City Center, Suva

Ginger Kitchen:

Food: Excellent place to come to breakfast or lunch. Fijian menu, with local fresh produce.

Price: \$\$

Location: Located at the National Museum, just next to Albert Park.

Rudy's Restaurant:

Food: Authentic and very good Italian Restaurant (not just for Fiji, just very good).

Price: \$\$\$\$

Location: 74 Ragg Ave, Suva. Just next to the 'Fresh Choice' supermarket in Namadi Heights

4.3 Nearby Supermarkets

You are in a location which is close to a range of nearby supermarkets, please see the list below should you want to conduct any shopping.

Extra Supermarket:

Location: Flagstaff Plaza, Flagstaff, Bau St

New World:

Location:

1. Damodar City
2. FNPF Complex

Fresh Choice Supermarket:

Location: 3 Carpenter Street

4.4 Nearby ATMs

Locations:

1. Flagstaff - BSP and WestPac

2. Damodar- BSP and Westpac
3. FNPF Center- BSP
4. Tappoo City- BSP and Westpac
5. Town - ANZ

In most ATMs you will be charged to withdraw money. The cheapest bank to withdraw from an international source of funds is BSP (green ATM) but there are others you can use such as Westpac.

4.5 Local Taxi Numbers

Taxis are a very common way to get around Suva, they will charge you on a 'metre' system based on how far you travel.

TP House Address for Pickup: Lot 36, Nailuva Road

Black Arrow Taxi

Contact: 330 0139

Duavata Taxi

Contact: 338 4007

Bure Taxi

Contact: 3321574

Tiko Kece

Contact: 9067441

Knightriders Taxis

Contact: 9368738

NB: We always advise using these well known and trusted taxi and tour services at all times when needed transportation without your mentor or a staff member. Best practice is to always use these numbers, and avoid flagging taxi's roadside.

4.6 Key Contact Numbers

CWM Hospital

Contact: 331 3444

Ambulance and Police

Contact: 917

Think Pacific Staff

- Operations Manager; Laisa: 00679 7449679 (this is a Fijian number, please try and call or message on whatsapp if needed).
- Internships Manager; Lavenia: 00679 9673

5. Additional Prep

As you are coming to a country that is entirely different from one that you may be used to, you will no doubt encounter challenges which can sometimes be overwhelming in international experiences. In addition, we want to make sure you are well prepared to ensure that you respect the culture whilst

learning about it. Because of this, we have included some extra awareness points in this section to help you prepare for your time in Fiji and on your GTI.

5.1 Mindset

5.1.1 The Learning Mindset

Within this document, you will have the framework you need to contribute to Fiji whilst having a unique personal and professional development experience. This hope is that this document shall provide you with insights into where you need to focus over the coming weeks.

Obviously, in the beginning there will be lots to learn and lots of gaps to fill! For most of our interns, learning about our mindset and beliefs around success is all brand new. Something important to note is that overwhelm is looking at too much information at once, without structure. This guide is designed, (if you use it consistently) to resolve that for you.

If you find yourself getting overwhelmed, it's NOT because there's too much to do, or too much to learn or research. It's because you haven't organised yourself within the framework, you're looking at lots of information without structure, and you're not applying how to prioritise.

Overwhelm is an inside job. It's not caused by events. Two people with the exact same event respond differently based on their mindset. What 'overwhelms' one person, isn't even a bother to someone else. So, it's not the event that determines how we feel. It's our thinking and our actions.

So, let's get into the key elements of getting your internship started.

Self-leadership

With so much autonomy involved within the program, the quality of your self-leadership is imperative to your success. Afterall, it has been said that "the quality of your thoughts dictate the quality of your actions." These two elements of leadership can provide really useful indicators for your own development and achievements as a remote intern.

SELF-leadership | SELF-MANAGEMENT

Step 1 = SELF-LEADERSHIP

Examples of this are:

- Proactive about personal and professional development.
- Seeks feedback to improve.

- Supports and champions the goals of others.
- Communicates clearly when needing assistance.
- Demonstrates sound judgement when making decisions.
- Reliable, professional, team player.
- Seeks new challenges and welcomes opportunities to improve, grow and contribute.
- Handles new challenges, changes and adapts easily.
- Understands impact on others of their behaviour = self-awareness.
- Sticks to commitments.
- Welcomes collaboration and ideas from others.
- Brings innovation and ideas.

“Above the Line Thinking”

Here’s a cool model that we love at Think Pacific. We use this model in the UK office, in the Fiji office and within our team mentor training program. The model is pretty simple - your thinking is either above or below the line. For example:



If your thinking is above the line, you take full responsibility for your day & everything you do. You are accountable for what happens and what doesn’t happen.

Below the line thinking means you’ll blame someone or something else if things don’t go your way. You allow external variables to impact how you feel.

Above the line is: That’s down to me, or, I’m responsible for that, or, I will try to figure that out myself first.

We believe that a key to success is getting above the line all the time, and not just when things are going well.

STEP TWO: SELF-MANAGEMENT

Examples of this:

- Knows own goals and stays on track with achieving them.
- Stays on goals regardless of distractions.
- Prioritises daily, weekly tasks consistently.
- Able to utilise existing structure and systems effectively.
- Demonstrates initiative often and finds a way to get the job done without having to be told what to do.
- Doesn't panic, controls emotions to achieve best possible outcomes

5.2 Fiji Preparation and Awareness

5.2.1 Climate

Fiji has a South Sea tropical climate and is very warm all year, with temperatures averaging 28 degrees Celsius.

Fiji's 'wet season' or 'summer' is from November to April. This time of year receives the heaviest rainfall but also the hottest temperatures. The official 'dry season' or 'Fijian winter' is from May to October, when there is usually less rainfall, lower humidity and slightly milder temperatures. Typically, weather does vary somewhat depending on where you are in Fiji but you can almost guarantee, within the village, it will be hot and sticky.

Whichever time of year you are visiting Fiji, always prepare for high temperatures and pack high factor sun cream. It is also essential to prepare for tropical rain showers and ensure to pack a lightweight but good quality rain coat and some suitable footwear for muddy conditions. See below for our top tips.

Top Tips:

- Ensure you have a high factor sun cream
- Try, when possible, to stay out of the midday sun
- Pack a raincoat
- Pack suitable footwear for muddy conditions
- Pack at least x1 hoodie or jumper for cooler evenings

5.2.2 Standard Fijian Language (Phrase Book)

Although it is not necessary to learn Fijian to take part in the projects, we encourage all interns to learn as much as possible! The gesture of learning a few phrases and using them will say much more than you can actually say... Here are a few key phrases that you can begin practising:

Pronunciation (reading Fijian)

a- æ (Gap)	t- ch (Child)
e- e (Elephant)	c- th (Feather)
i- i: (Free)	ai- aɪ (Bite)
o- ɒ (Hot)	au- aʊ (House)
u- u: (Hoop)	ei- eɪ (Bait)
g- ng (Hang)	eu- eu: (Eh-oo)
q- ng (Anger)	oi- ɔɪ (Boy)
b- mb (Bamboo)	ou- ʊ (Toe)
d- nd (Hand)	iu- i:u: (Ee-oo)

The stress of the word generally comes on the second to last syllable in Fijian.

The Basics

Bula – Hello
Moce – Goodbye
Vinaka – Thank you
Vosoti au – I’m sorry
Tilou – Excuse me
E sega ni macala – I don’t understand
O kila na vosa vakavalagi – Do you speak English
Io – Yes
Sega – No
Sota tale – See you later

Kana – Eat
Gunu – Drink
Dabe – Sit down
Au via kana – I’m hungry
Mai – Come here
Au sa mamau – I am full up
E vica na kaloko? – What is the time?
Vinaka na kakana – Thank you for the food
Au sa lako lai moce – I’m going to sleep now
Sota tale ena mataka – See you in the morning
Yadra – Good morning
Cava na vakaviti ni... – What is the Fijian for...

In the House

Greetings

O cei na yacamu? – What is your name?
Na yacaqu o... – My name is...
O yabaki vica? – How old are you?
Au yabaki... – I am... years old
O iko mai vei? – Where are you from?
O au mai... – I am from...
Tokani – Friend
Au taleitaka na... – I like...
Vakacava tiko? – How are you doing?
O tiko eke? – Do you live here?

In the Village

Cava na yacana qo? – What is this called?
Au rawa ni veitaba? – Can I take a photo?
Au sega ni kila – I don't know
Dina – True
E kosakosa – It's noisy
Vale – House
Vuvale – Family
kakana – Food
Mai ti – Come in for some tea
Na draki – The weather

Travel

Rawa ni o kauti au i... – Can you take me to...
E voleka? – Is it close?
Ya vica na kena I sau qo – How much does this cost?
I lavo – Money
E rawa niu taubale kina? – Is it possible to walk there?
Vosa mada vakamalua – Please could you speak more slowly
I vei na – Where is the...?
Au via lako lesu tale mai – I'd like a return ticket
Wawa – Wait
Au vaqara – I am looking for...

5.2.3 Fijian Etiquette and Cultural Behaviour

When you are in the village, we are expecting you to hold the highest standards when it comes to upholding and respecting local traditions and behaviour. We will train you on this in detail during your briefing, however, here is a little head start and reference point for your time on the programme. These rural standards often inform many of the cultural norms in urban areas too, it's a good idea to try and be aware of them and learn them!

In the Households

- Always take off your footwear (including flip flops) before entering any house, community hall or church.
- Immediately sit on the floor as soon as you enter any household, Fijian society works on physical levels and if you are openly standing taller than anyone you are placing yourself higher in the household hierarchy. The rule of thumb is to be 'at the level' of anyone else in the room.
- Fijians consider it offensive to walk in front of a person seated on the floor, if you do need to pass someone who is seated please try to pass behind them physically stooping low and repeatedly say "tulou" (excuse me) softly (remember, it's all about levels!).
- Fijians regard the head as sacred so try not to touch another person's head, especially children.
- If taking an item from a shelf above someone's head, first ask if it is ok to reach over their head and get it, stand up and grab the item, then immediately sit back down on the floor cross legged and 'cobo' three times (a clap with cupped hands). This shows respect as you stood higher than somebody and reached above their head. (If you get this one right, you'll really impress!).

Around the Village

- Always dress modestly in the village. For women, this means shoulders and knees should be covered at all times in the village, including when swimming in the creeks or sea, and when walking on the beach.
- Politeness is central to Fijian society. Never rush past someone without saying hello. Even if you do not know them say "bula" (hello) or "yadra" (good morning). You do not need to do this in large towns, but you should in any village and rural location.
- You should remove your hat or cap when walking through the village, and objects such as backpacks, handbags, towels and cameras etc should be carried in your hands rather than over the shoulder (particularly when walking past the chief's house).
- It is considered rude to be unnecessarily loud in a Fijian village so please try to refrain from whistling or shouting unless it is an appropriate setting to do so.
- Try to avoid walking on the village green, these are traditionally sacred places so best to stick to paths!
- It is extremely rare to see any public display of affection between men and women in Fijian society – holding hands, kissing or cuddling or even publicly talking 1-on-1 with somebody of the opposite sex for a long period of time. This would cause immense embarrassment for local people so we ask all interns to be very mindful of this.

In a kava session

- Sitting with your legs stretched out in front of you or with your knees up during kava ceremonies, meetings or when eating dinner is viewed as disrespectful. Whilst drinking kava, ask permission to stretch your legs and never point them at anyone or at the tanoa (kava bowl). When drinking grog, men will sit cross-legged, whilst women will generally sit with their feet to the side.
- If offered kava (yaqona), cobo once (clap with cupped hands), take the bowl, say bula, and drink it all in one gulp. Then hand the bowl back to the same person and clap three times.
- Make sure never to sit 'above the bowl' with the elders, sit with everyone else behind the mixer.
- Try not to turn your back to the elders or the wooden bowl used for mixing (tanoa).

Mealtime

- Meals are eaten while sitting cross-legged on the floor.
- Eat with your hands, using a spoon provided for more liquid based foods!
- In a communal meal with plenty of food on offer 'buffet style' in the middle of the mat, try to take what is in front of you rather than reaching across to plates further away from you.
- When sharing a meal, please remember to wait until grace has been said before eating.
- Once you are finished eating, wash your hands in the bowl provided and dry with the towel next to it.
- If you are finished, physically move yourself away from the table and sit somewhere else in the room, this will allow anyone else who is waiting to eat to jump right in and get eating!.
- As you move away from the meal, say 'vinaka na kakana' (thank you for the food) to those who prepared it

Dress Code

Although many of these cultural codes may not apply to Suva, it is such a unique privilege to be welcomed into a traditional community of Fiji. With this privilege we take on the great responsibility to uphold customs and culture, which Fijian people are so proud of. During your time in the village, both men and women must dress very modestly as we show the highest level of cultural sensitivity. For this reason we have a strict dress code for all projects..

Why Upholding Fijian Dress Code Is So Important...

Dressing modestly is such an important aspect of traditional village life and integral to local culture and beliefs. Our dress code is integral to our project aims and a crucially important part of your experience.

Wearing western clothing could result in local people feeling uncomfortable or embarrassed. In order to show our respect, we ask you to at all times within the village adhere to local dress and show the utmost cultural sensitivity to local people.

Being The Highest Standard Of Visitor To Fiji.

Respect local cultural beliefs and customs

Be proud that, with Think Pacific, we uphold the highest standards of cultural sensitivity

Ensure that local people never feel uncomfortable or embarrassed

Gain huge respect from within the community

Be remembered as a humble and culturally sensitive visitor to Fiji

Dress Code Basics

✗ No revealing clothing, such as low cut, transparent or see through clothing.

✗ No vest tops

✗ No short length shorts (shorts should cover the knee)

✗ Women should not wear trousers (including ¾ length trousers)

✗ No skirts and shorts above the knee!

✗ Don't wear caps, hats or other items on your head within the village. The the head is considered sacred

Although not entirely relevant to urban areas of Fiji, we still ask that you dress modestly when in Suva as the standards are still slightly more conservative than what you may be used to at home.

5. Top Tips for Maximising your Time

As we want you to maximise your time on the programme, we have collated our experience in delivering international programmes to offer you some advice from tried and tested experiences over the years. Please read through and learn about small things you can do to make sure you get the most out of your international experience and your GTI programme.

5.1 Cultural Immersion

5.1.1 Do what the Fijian's do

Observe, Learn and be flexible. Cultures differ, and they might be different from what you're used to. Being open-minded and flexible is essential when working with people from different backgrounds. Be willing to adapt and adjust to their customs and ways of doing things. Avoid imposing your own beliefs or practices onto those around you, instead, strive to learn from them. If you find yourself feeling unsure of what to do at a meal time, during a traditional ceremony or even in a game of rugby. Stop, observe and do as Fijians do!

5.1.2 Build Relationships

Creating strong relationships is essential when working with tight groups, and is a key part of building a strong connection to a new culture. Take time to get to know the people you're serving, listen to their needs, and understand their concerns, ask them about themselves and open up and share with them too. This will help build trust and respect, and enable you to tailor your workshops to meet their specific needs, help you feel at 'home' and lastly make lasting friendships and family ties to your Fijian link.

5.1.3 Stay positive

Interning internationally can be challenging, and this is no different in Fiji. But maintaining a positive attitude can make a big difference. Focus on the positive impact you are making and the connections you are building and also be mindful that your attitude and energy can impact others both positively and negatively. In times when you are challenged and struggle to move forward, remember that often challenging times reap the biggest rewards, and will ultimately maximise your experience and development in your time in Fiji.

5.1.4 Have Fun

Lastly, remember that interning is a fulfilling experience, and you should enjoy the process. Be open to new experiences and enjoy learning from the community you serve. Your positive attitude and enthusiasm will make a difference in the lives of those you serve.

5.1.5 Take care of yourself

This sort of programme can be emotionally and physically demanding, so it's important to take care of yourself. Make sure you get enough rest, eat well, and stay hydrated. Take time to relax and explore your

surroundings. Utilise the Think Pacific mentors for support. Their job is to support, guide and help you to experience a unique and memorable experience. However big or small it may feel, our mentors will be prepared to help you and are ready to listen.

5.2 For your role as an Intern

5.2.1 Embrace the Challenge

Interning in Fiji and working can be a life-changing experience, and it is important to embrace the experience fully, especially the challenges. Be open to learning, be humble, and get involved in all aspects of the Action Project process. Even if you have never been a part of a team like this before, you will have the support of our mentors.

5.2.2 Patience

When working on a task that is set by a Fijian organisation, it is important to understand that you don't have all the answers, and we cannot ever expect this. They will often involve a lot of research and learning about subjects and context that you have never encountered before. These challenges, and this positive approach will ultimately lead to a better learning experience, and will add to your sense of achievement as you overcome all the challenges you face along the way.

5.2.3 Good quality work > Finishing fast!

Ensure that in all you do, you do not rush the process, but rather take your time to do things well. We do not get extra points or rewards for finishing early. However, we do have a better and more sustainable impact to a completed AP if we take our time and execute the plan smoothly!

5.2.4 Collaborate

When working in a team like this, involve everyone in the planning and delivery of your workshops, including your mentors. They can provide valuable insight into cultural norms, and can also help you tailor your approach to better meet the needs and interests of the organisation and the country you will be working in.

5.2.5 Use culturally appropriate materials and examples

Ensure that the materials and examples you use and create in your Action Projects are culturally appropriate and relevant to Fiji. This will help make your proposal more engaging and relatable and implementable. Speak with your TP mentors if you're unsure.

5.2.6 Foster an inclusive environment

Encourage participation from all of the team and foster an inclusive environment that values and respects diversity. This will help create a safe and supportive space for all to express themselves and learn from one another.

5.2.7 Seek feedback and reflect on your approach

Throughout your work, seek feedback from those you are working with and reflect on your approach to ensure that it is culturally appropriate, effective and works towards the AP brief. This will help you improve your work and better meet the needs and interests of the organisation.

5.3 Throughout your experience and time with Think Pacific

5.4.1 Do not fear coming out of your comfort zone

Leaving your comfort zone can be uncomfortable and a vulnerable place, but it's often necessary if you want to grow and achieve new things in life. Here are some pieces of advice that may help you overcome your fear of leaving your comfort zone:

Start small: Begin by taking small steps outside of your comfort zone. For example, if you're someone who typically stays in on weekends, a little introverted and not someone who puts their hand up to lead or go first; try pushing yourself out there, and take the small jumps to resist these traits by attending kava sessions, getting up first to hop hop or leading a workshop session. Small steps add up, and lead to big wins.

Embrace failure: It's normal to experience some failures when you're trying new things, so don't let that stop you from taking risks. Instead, embrace failure as an opportunity to learn and grow, and reflect with your mentors and team to identify ways to improve on a project/in the village, and then apply these learnings to the next day. This could be called 'adopting a learning mindset' where failure, and mistakes are part of the journey, and only enrich and empower our performance, impact and experience overall.

Visualise success: Imagine yourself succeeding in the new situation or endeavour. Visualising success can help build your confidence and reduce anxiety. This can be applied to group work, challenging activities or even overcoming a fear (public speaking or overcoming language barriers).

Surround yourself with supportive people: Having a supportive network can make it easier to step outside of your comfort zone. Talk to your mentors and team. Your mentors are your 'Fiji experts' and have often fantastic experiences, knowledge and advice that you can tap into to support you as you challenge yourself personally and professionally.

Keep an open mind: Be open to new experiences and perspectives. This will help you be more receptive to change and adapt more easily to village and project life. Try not to project views and experiences from home, your culture, or other intern experiences on your cultural and personal experiences on project. Instead, try to see it for the uniquely Fijian experience it is. If you experience challenges in this area, speak with your mentors or Personal project planner (PPP mentor) for support and discussions to help you digest and understand cultural differences & challenges.

Remember, leaving your comfort zone can be a challenging process, but it can also be incredibly rewarding. By taking the first step, you can discover new possibilities and unlock your full potential.