

The SEED Newsfeed

The Monthly Newsletter of George Mason University's
Secondary Education (SEED) Program

September
2023



A Message from Dr. Zenkov

Dr. Kristien Zenkov, SEED Coordinator



Welcome and welcome back, SEED folks! We've missed you over these summer months. Okay, we've all mostly been in contact for much of the past ten weeks or so—via classes, advising meetings, some cool clinical work, etc.—so we likely haven't had many chances to miss each other 😊. And we've also been in touch with the whole host of new SEED students via interviews, in-take meetings with Dr. Porter (the SEED Advisor), and orientations.

As we've started the new year, I've chatted with students in my new English Methods I course, so many of my colleagues, and the SEED alumni who are better connected to our program perhaps than ever before. One idea—and a wish—that keeps running through my mind as I engage in these interactions is one of my favorite “Zenkovianisms”:

“Teacher” and “student” are merely roles we play, and some of us don't take on even those roles by choice. At the end of the day, they are merely capacities in which we serve: they are not who we are. In our classrooms—in schools or at the university—the roles we can't avoid and the reality we should always remember are that we are just human beings sharing a space.

For me, that means that I try to operate with kindness and an awareness of the gratitude I have for the people—the SEED folks—in our circles. For our SEED students, this “human beings sharing a space” orientation means that you are cared for and supported by a literal forest (yeah, I can't resist those nature references—we are the “seed” program after all 😊) of folks. Mathilde is in the SEED office always at the ready with answers to your questions. Andrew plays point for those general advising issues. Lisa and Amanda will take care of every clinical experience need you have. Mary is there for content area reviews, and Jennifer for licensure affairs. And then, of course, you have Erin, Theresa, Lynda, Kaya, and me (aka Dr. Peters-Burton, Dr. Wills, Dr. Kaya, Dr. Herrera, and Dr. Zenkov) as your lead subject area advisors and faculty.

Please look to us and count on us, SEED students and alumni—and welcome and welcome back, again.

“If we expect kids to be losers they will be losers; if we expect them to be winners they will be winners. They rise, or fall, to the level of the expectations of those around them. Especially their parents and their teachers.”

-Jaime Escalante, Secondary Teacher

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Upcoming Events

-Events are subject to change or cancellation-

National Hispanic-Latino Heritage Month (Sept. 15- Oct. 15)

The SEED Program recognizes that GMU stands on the traditional territory of the Kinwaw Paskestikweya or Piscataway Conoy and Dogue/Doeg Peoples

**September 6,
2023**

Adult and Pediatric
CPR, AED and First
Aid

GMU has partnered with Mason Recreation to offer the American Red Cross CPR course. This course will include the hands-on component needed for Virginia Licensure. Upon completion, certifications are valid for two years
Cost: \$80
Time: 10am – 2pm
[Required registration link](#)

**September 10,
2023**

Adult and Pediatric
CPR, AED and First
Aid

GMU has partnered with Mason Recreation to offer the American Red Cross CPR course. This course will include the hands-on component needed for Virginia Licensure. Upon completion, certifications are valid for two years
Cost: \$80
Time: 10am – 2pm
[Required registration link](#)

**September 15,
2023**

Spring 2024 Traditional
Internship Application
Deadline

Students interested in applying for a Traditional Internship must submit all materials online on or before Friday, September 15. The application can be accessed here: <https://cehd.gmu.edu/internship-application/>

**September 23,
2023**

Fall Alumni Social

All Secondary, Elementary, Literacy, and Health & Physical Education Alumni are invited to attend the second Alumni Social. Please join us to reconnect with former classmates, professors and staff over food and drinks!
Location: Ornerly Beer Company
3950 University Dr. #106 Fairfax, VA 22030
RSVP: [Please RSVP here by September 15](#)

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September 30, 2023 Fall (December) 2023 Graduation Application

All students planning on Graduating in December of 2023 should submit a Graduation Application by September 30th, 2023. For details, see <https://registrar.gmu.edu/students/graduation/>

October 7, 2023

Adult and Pediatric CPR, AED and First Aid

GMU has partnered with Mason Recreation to offer the American Red Cross CPR course. This course will include the hands-on component needed for Virginia Licensure. Upon completion, certifications are valid for two years

- Cost: \$80
- Time: 10am – 2pm
- [Required registration link](#)

October 18, 2023

Adult and Pediatric CPR, AED and First Aid

GMU has partnered with Mason Recreation to offer the American Red Cross CPR course. This course will include the hands-on component needed for Virginia Licensure. Upon completion, certifications are valid for two years

- Cost: \$80
- Time: 10am – 2pm
- [Required registration link](#)

November 19, 2023

Adult and Pediatric CPR, AED and First Aid

GMU has partnered with Mason Recreation to offer the American Red Cross CPR course. This course will include the hands-on component needed for Virginia Licensure. Upon completion, certifications are valid for two years

- Cost: \$80
- Time: 10am – 2pm
- [Required registration link](#)

Welcome, and Welcome Back!

SEED Faculty and Staff are so excited to begin the 2023 – 2024 school year!



Dr. Kristien Zenkov (SEED Program Coordinator) welcomes students back to SEED.



Ms. Lisa Green (SEED Clinical Coordinator) welcomes students to the Fall Internship Orientation

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New Mason Students!

If you are a new SEED Student and also new to George Mason University, take a minute to learn about all the resources for first year students.



Check out the [George Mason New Student and Family Programs](#) page to learn more about everything George Mason has to offer for you and your family.

Be sure to check out the [Mason Orientation Page](#) to learn more about [First Year Student Resources](#)



[Check out the New Student Guide](#)



[GMU Office of Military Services](#)



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SEED Faculty Spotlight

Take a minute to meet some of the wonderful staff and faculty members who support the SEED Program.

Rory Dippold, PhD



What is your role in the SEED Program?

I have mainly taught the Foundations of Secondary Education course (SEED 522) and the Human Development and Learning course (SEED 540), but have also taught SEED 567 and 675. I have served as a Clinical Coach for 4 students.

Why did you want to pursue a career in education? I was not an education major in my undergraduate studies, but really enjoyed working with young adults throughout my college experiences. While I have a strong desire to inspire, influence and impact students, I soon realized that I learn so much from them and it fosters my interest to be a lifelong learner.

Professional/Research interests?

Project-based learning, self-regulation learning, history and social studies education, International Baccalaureate Programme, teacher efficacy.

Where do you work when you are not supporting the SEED Program?

I am the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) Coordinator in Falls Church City Public Schools. I split my time between the middle and high school.

What do you like to do in your free time? I like to go to the pool, lake or ocean whenever possible with my two kids, wife and dog. I am avid college football and basketball fan.

Anything else you would like us to know about you? I like to run and exercise. I have run four marathons to raise money for various organizations early in my teaching career and now mostly run after my two children – ages 2 and 4.

Meghan Mascelli, PhD



Content area/specialization: I am passionate about mentoring, teacher induction, and professional development. My prior focus was in Secondary English, but over the last several years I have shifted to interdisciplinary practices and pedagogical development.

What is your role in the SEED Program? Normally in the SEED program I teach Seminar, Research, and serve as a Clinical Coach, but I honestly never really know. Since 2020, each semester is like a new adventure!

Why did you want to pursue a career in education? Since I was a kid, I have always loved helping others and also supporting them in discovering and developing their strengths. Teaching felt like such a natural fit.

Professional/Research interests? I am incredibly passionate about teacher support, induction, and development. Post-pandemic and with my own children in school, I feel like the person on the corner with the "End of the World is Near!" sign; shouting about how we are in big trouble, but no one is listening. I can't imagine a more important area to devote time, effort, and energy to than teacher support and development.

Where do you work when you are not supporting the SEED Program? My "Big Girl" job is with Fairfax County Public Schools as an Education Specialist in the Office of Professional Learning, specifically, the Great Beginnings program. I lead a great deal of professional learning for the county, and I train coaches and lead mentors in supporting their mentees and school-based induction teams. In my "free time" I teach fitness classes through *OneLife* and I am an *OrangeTheory* coach.

What do you like to do in your free time? A fun fact about me is that I absolutely hate free time. Right now, I have two small kids (Mabel, 8, Felix, 5), an emotionally needy cat, a new dog, and 5 jobs (that's a real number).

Anything else you would like us to know about you? I'm a big believer in meeting people where they are. I wouldn't say it's a hidden talent, but something I work toward in all areas of life. I hope that by meeting people where they are, they will be more willing to meet me where I am too.

State Licensure Exam Preparation

Individuals seeking a Virginia State Teaching License will need to pass the Virginia Communication and Literacy Skills Exam (VCLA) as well as a Praxis II exam in their content area. Read the following section to get some tips on how to succeed on these two exams.



Tip 1: Take practice tests for both exams as soon as possible to see how you do. The earlier you can start this process, the easier it will be to finish the program.

Tip 2: After taking practice tests, identify the specific areas where you need to study.

Tip 3: If you would like some additional help with general test-taking strategies, you are encouraged to make an appointment with **Learning Services** here at GMU (<https://learningservices.gmu.edu>). You can also email them at lsstaff@gmu.edu

Tip 4: if you would like some additional help with general writing skills, or the VCLA specifically, you are encouraged to bring a writing sample to: **The Writing Center** here at GMU (<https://writingcenter.gmu.edu>). If you have already taken the VCLA, bring a writing sample (both the summary and composition) to the writing center, and ask to meet with someone once a week to work on this skill.

Tip 5: As soon as you feel ready, take the exams! The sooner you pass the exams the easier it will be to plan your courses.



Scan the QR Code above to access some **FREE Resources** to prepare for the VCLA and Praxis II exams!
You can also use the following link: <https://education.gmu.edu/office-of-teacher-preparation/testing-resources-support/>

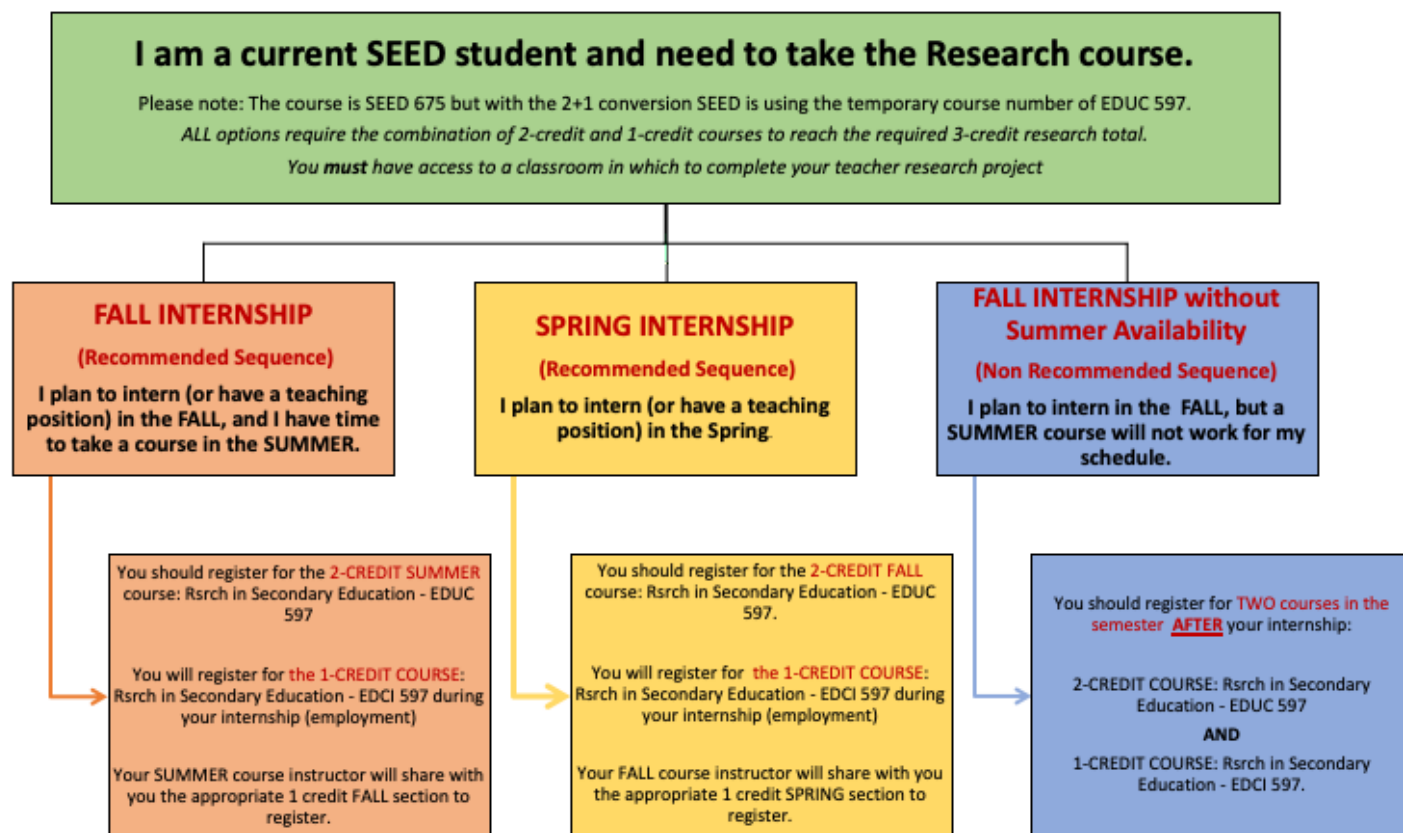
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SEED Research Sequence

***** All SEED students pursuing a M.Ed. need to take research.*****

SEED Students pursuing a M.Ed. need 3 credits in the research course. These 3 credits may be divided between semesters depending on your individual needs. Review the options below to decide which course of action is best for you in consultation with your faculty advisor. All course enrollments must be pre-approved by Dr. Zenkov (kzenkov@gmu.edu)

Note: SEED is in the process of converting the research course and internship seminar into one merged class. Please talk to Dr. Porter or your subject area advisor for more information.



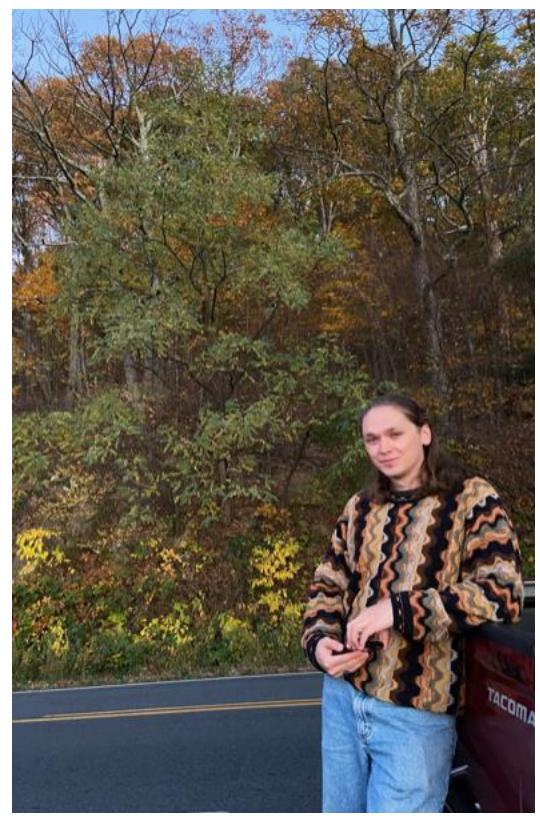
All course enrollments must be pre-approved by Dr. Zenkov (kzenkov@gmu.edu)

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SEED Student Spotlight

We are so proud of all our wonderful students! Take a minute to meet some promising future secondary teachers.

Alex Tudan



Expected Grad date: December 2024

Content Area: Social Studies

Personal Background: Originally from Memphis Tennessee, I have lived in Fairfax since I was 6. In my free time I play hockey and love to hike and listen to indie, punk, and metal music. I love the outdoors and have been to more national parks than I can count!

Education Background: Attended High School at James Madison in Vienna. Graduated from Christopher Newport with a major in political science and minor in history.

Interesting Fact: I had an internship with the National Park Service in 2021 where I got paid to hike.

Why did you choose The SEED Program: I value my education very much and want to pass that on to young people. Growing up in the area, many of my own teachers were graduates of the SEED program and spoke very highly of it. While I have only been here for two weeks, I already feel a good connection with the community of students and professors alike.

Zainab Bhatti



Expected Graduation date: Spring 2025

Content area specialization: Social Studies

Personal Background: Born and raised in America, I am also a Punjabi Pakistani. Since childhood, connection to my culture has been integral to my identity. Frequent visits to Pakistan, being able to stand within glimmering and hand-painted Mughal palaces, driving across the lush green rice fields of Punjab, or standing beside a path a part of the Silk Road, have been experiences driving my passion of becoming a social studies teacher.

Education Background: As a Northern Virginia native, I grew up and attended school in Loudoun County. I'm also a BAM student, and this fall semester is my last undergraduate year, having majored in Integrative Studies with a concentration

in Social Science for Education. I'm currently an English tutor with Empowered Learning Center and a substitute for LCPS!

Interesting fact about you that others might not know: Need recommendations of cafes in the NOVA area? Look no further! When not at school or work, I am on the hunt for good coffee and an aesthetic place to study. My favorite place in the area is 29th Parallel (Vienna) for a sunlit, natural vibe and a delicious latte.

Highlight of your time in the SEED Program: A highlight of my time in the program has been for the past year, coming in for classes on Tuesdays from 4-10PM (the timing is not the highlight, unfortunately), and being able to work with peers and professors who are passionate about social studies and in general, teaching. The environment of collaboration, the individuality and enlightenment each of us brings to the table, and the overarching goal of learning the skills and tools of providing an enriching environment for students, makes me proud to be a part of the SEED program.

BAM Student News

BAM (Bachelors to Accelerated Masters) Students are a group of students looking to fast-track their way through the SEED Program. This section is devoted to them.

Attention BAM STUDENTS!!!

If you're graduating with a bachelor's degree this December, please take note of the following deadlines:

- **August 28:** Fill out the BAM transition form and sign it. (It's a policy that you must sign it by the add deadline this fall which is Aug. 28th).
- **Before September 15:** Obtain your Undergraduate Advisor's approval and signature.
- **September 15:** Submit the signed form to your Graduate Advisor and cc Mathilde Speier (mspeier@gmu.edu).
- **September 30:** Apply for bachelor's degree graduation.



Next steps in the process:

- After your Graduate Advisor has signed off on your BAM Transition Form, our SAA Office will forward it to the Office of Graduate Admissions.
- You will then receive a new admissions letter in your graduate admissions self-service portal, where you initially applied for the BAM program.
- In the weeks following your form submission, please check your email for a message from the admissions office offering you full admission to the MEd program.
- To complete your admission, you'll need to confirm your enrollment through the portal.

SEED Internship News

The Internship experience is the capstone of the SEED Program. While working with Mentor Teachers (MTs) and Clinical Coaches (CCs), SEED Interns gradually transition to providing instruction full-time during their 15-week practicum. The SEED Internship is offered each Fall semester and each Spring semester. The SEED Internship does not occur in summer terms.

Internship Calendar for September 2023

Week 2
Aug. 28 – Sept. 1

- **Submit Reflection on Planning**
- **Begin to engage with students**

Week 3
Sept. 4 – Sept. 8

- **Submit lesson plan #1**
- **Schedule pre-observation meeting with CC**

Week 4
Sept. 11 – Sept. 15

- **Upload CC Observation #1 with response to questions to reflect on**
- **Discuss lesson plan for MT Observation with MT**

Week 5
Sept. 18 – Sept. 22

- **Upload MT Observation #1 with response to questions to reflect on**

Week 6
Sept. 25 – Sept. 29

- **Submit lesson plan #2**
- **Schedule pre-observation meeting with CC**



If you have questions about the SEED Internship, please email Lisa Green (lgreen@gmu.edu) who is the Coordinator of Clinical Experiences for the SEED Program

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SEED Partner Schools

George Mason University is proud to partner with several area secondary schools that host our teacher candidates for clinical experiences across our SEED courses. The Mason Partner School Network is comprised of high schools and middle schools in Fairfax County Public Schools, Prince William County Public Schools, Loudoun County Public Schools, Manassas City Public Schools, Alexandria City Public Schools, and Falls Church City Public Schools. Our current partners include the following schools:

[Alexandria City High School / Hammond Middle School \(ACPS\)](#)

[Lake Braddock Secondary School \(FCPS\)](#)

[Chantilly High School / Rocky Run Middle School \(FCPS\)](#)

[Robinson Secondary School \(FCPS\)](#)

[Marshall High School / Kilmer Middle School \(FCPS\)](#)

[West Potomac High School / Sandburg Middle School \(FCPS\)](#)

[Osborn Park High School / Saunders Middle School \(PWCS\)](#)

[John Champe High School / Mercer Middle School \(LCPS\)](#)

[Dominion High School / Seneca Ridge Middle School \(LCPS\)](#)

[Meridian High School / Mary Ellen Henderson Middle School \(FCCPS\)](#)

[Osborn High School / Metz Middle School \(MCPS\)](#)

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Subject Area Advising

Each student in the SEED Program is assigned a Subject Area Advisor based on their content area. Please use the information below to identify your Subject Area Advisor.

English



Kristien Zenkov, Ph.D

Phone: (703) 993-5413
Fax: (703) 993-5300
Email: kzenkov@gmu.edu

Math



Theresa Wills, PhD

Phone: (703) 993-6215
Fax: (703) 993-3643
Email: twills@gmu.edu

Science



Erin Peters-Burton, PhD

Phone: (703) 993-9695
Fax: (703) 993-2013
Email: epeters1@gmu.edu

Social Studies



Lynda Herrera, EdD

Email: lherrer8@gmu.edu

Computer Science



Erdogan Kaya, PhD

Phone: (703) 993 1033
Email: ekaya3@gmu.edu

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Got a question? We've got you covered.

Navigating the SEED Program in a timely manner
General Student support
Professionalism Guidance
Time Management
Liaison to Learning Services
Academic Resources
Assistive Technology

Ask Me About:



Dr. Andrew Porter

**SEED Advisor/
Student Success
Coach**

Course Selection
Choice of Electives
Licensure Requirements
CPR
Praxis
VCLA
Professional Resource
Post-Graduation Support
Long Term Course Mapping
Schedule Mapping

Ask Me About:



**Depends on
Content Area**

Faculty Advisor

**I am a Mason
Student and I
Have a Question!**



Lisa Green

**Clinical
Experience
Coordinator**

Ask Me About:
Clinical Experience Placement
Internship Placement
Internship Application



Mathilde Speier

Office Manager

Ask Me About:
Anything regarding forms, permissions, and administrative matters
Registration errors/ overrides
(Late) Graduation Applications
Graduation questions
Waivers/ Course Substitutions
Elective Approvals
Degree Works errors
BAM Questions and BAM Transition Forms
Re-Enrollment Applications
Admissions
Announcements
Campus and University Information
Schedules and Course Updates
Grade Appeals

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SEED Program FAQ

Question	Answer	Contact
<i>Where can I find information about obtaining my teaching license?</i>	You can find information about licensure at this CEHD link: Licensure Application Instructions Licensure Application Instructions School of Education	Ms. Jennifer Urban Licensure Coordinator, Jurban6@gmu.edu Office: Thompson Hall 2307 Phone: (703) 993-2094 Fax: (703) 993-9712
<i>I am looking for help with some written work. Where can I get help?</i>	You can find help at The Writing Center.	The Writing Center (gmu.edu)
<i>I cannot register for my class.</i>	Contact Ms. Mathilde Speier	mspeier@gmu.edu
<i>My electives are not showing in my degree audit.</i>	Contact Ms. Mathilde Speier	mspeier@gmu.edu
<i>What is my graduation status?</i>	Contact Ms. Mathilde Speier	mspeier@gmu.edu
<i>I forgot to apply for graduation.</i>	Contact Ms. Mathilde Speier	mspeier@gmu.edu

Did you find these helpful? Have more questions? Check out the SEED “Frequently Asked Questions” (FAQ) document: [SEED FAQ Directory Glossary May 2022.docx](#)

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