

# ARTIFACT 5

Bridging Worlds Through Immersive Technology  
An Abridged Proposal for a Dissertation in Practice

*Doctor of Education in Interprofessional Leadership and Educational Technology*  
*Kent State University · 2027*

## Problem of Practice

Higher education institutions in East Africa continue to face deep structural barriers that limit their participation in the global academic ecosystem. Two stand out: limited digital infrastructure and weak cross-institutional coordination (Moshtari & Safarpour, 2023). The result is an access gap — Rwandan, Kenyan, and Ugandan learners rarely encounter the depth, range, and quality of educational experience available to their peers in the Global North.

Holographic immersive learning technology offers a meaningful response. It projects instructors as live, three-dimensional presences across borders, creating a sense of shared classroom space that approaches in-person instruction without the cost or exclusion of travel. Yet no study has examined how this technology can be strategically deployed in East African higher education, or what kinds of partnership models make its use sustainable.

## Purpose

This study examines how holographic immersive learning can be designed and deployed to advance equitable cross-institutional partnerships between North American universities and higher education institutions in Rwanda, Kenya, and Uganda.

## Research Questions

**Central Question.** How can holographic immersive learning technologies advance equitable partnerships between North American and East African universities?

**Sub-question 1.** What policy and institutional conditions enable these partnerships to take root and last?

**Sub-question 2.** How do administrators, policymakers, and learners across Rwanda, Kenya, and Uganda perceive the value and limits of this technology?

**Sub-question 3.** Which partnership models prove most effective in designing and sustaining holographic learning programs?

## **Theoretical Framework**

The study draws on three bodies of thought. Knight's (2004) framework defines what equitable internationalization should accomplish. Kaptein's (2019) moral entrepreneurship model frames leadership as the work of identifying gaps and creating new norms. Perry, Zambo, and Crow's (2020) improvement science approach grounds the inquiry in the practitioner-scholar tradition of the Dissertation in Practice.

## **Methodology**

A mixed-methods design combining qualitative interviews and surveys with university administrators, policymakers, and professional learners across Rwanda, Kenya, and Uganda. Sites include the University of Rwanda, the University of Nairobi, and Makerere University, alongside a North American partner institution. Findings will inform both institutional partnership practice and the operational design of RIVANY Inc., where this work is being applied in real time.

## **Significance**

This research generates new knowledge at the intersection of educational technology, international higher education, and East African development — three fields that rarely meet. More importantly, it contributes a practical, evidence-based framework for partnerships that have until now been built largely on goodwill and improvisation. The dissertation is dedicated to my late father, who built everything he had from nothing, and still believed that education was the most valuable thing he could ever invest in — for his children and the many others he supported through school. It is offered in service of the East African learners whose horizons it is meant to widen, and grounded in my faith in the Almighty God, in Jesus Christ my Saviour, and in the intercession of Our Lady Mary — who has carried me through every chapter of this work.

## **Selected References**

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- Knight, J. (2004). Internationalization remodeled: Definition, approaches, and rationales. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 8(1), 5–31.
- Moshtari, M., & Safarpour, A. (2023). Challenges and strategies for the internationalization of higher education in low-income East African countries. *Higher Education*.
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