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In this paper, we provide an overview of the factors that need to be considered in developing cost-effective, successful seed technology education and training programmes. While the benefits to the individual of quality programmes are self-evident, the key to maximising the impact of such education and training is in matching relevant training options with carefully selected trainees who are subsequently supported to maintain a hands-on leadership role within the industry. Our own survey data and subsequent anecdotal evidence emphasises the fact that providing the necessary managerial and infrastructural support is critical to the sustained application and transfer of new skills and knowledge. The international education and training effort in seed science and technology has lost much of its impetus since the early 1990s when aid funding declined in this area. We argue that it is timely for ISTA to utilise its combined expertise and take a much more proactive role in lobbying for resources to support effective international programmes.