INQAAHE FUNDING SCHEME

OPERATIONAL MANUAL

INQAAHE: 2017

CONTENTS

Abbreviations

IFS   INQAAHE Funding Scheme

INQAAHE   International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education

MSMC   Membership and Services to the Members Committee of INQAAHE Board

OM   Operational Manual

1   INTRODUCTION

To better serve its members and ensure INQAAHE adds value to the operations and functions of its members, INQAAHE launches a new initiative – INQAAHE Funding Scheme (IFS). The initiative is undertaken in pursuance of INQAAHE Strategic Plan (2013-2017) implementation and in line with the Constitution.

The IFS envisions provision of small grants to INQAAHE members on competitive basis to promote implementation of innovative and enhancement projects aimed at enhancement of quality assurance systems worldwide.

To ensure a transparent allocation of the grants and draw clear accountability lines, the current operational manual (OM) defines requirements set for grants operationalization.

The main objective of the OM is to define the following:

- Objectives of the projects to be funded;

- Windows of funding;

- Main principles for project implementation;

- Main principles and criteria for project proposal selection;

- Procedures for proposal submission, evaluation and approval;

- Procedures for the funding of the approved projects;

- Procedures for approval of project outputs and outcomes.

This OM is the guiding document for the operationalization of the innovation and capacity building grants and specifies its main principles, objectives and functions. The Operational Manual is subject to review on cyclical basis to ensure relevance to the needs.

The budget, windows of funding as well as the priorities for the INQAAHE Funding Schemes is subject to approval by the Board at the beginning of each fiscal year. The outputs and outcomes of the IFS are subject to reporting to the INQAAHE General Assembly for overall feedback and proposals for the follow up allocations.

1.1 THE AIM OF THE INQAAHE FUNDING SCHEME

The aim of the INQAAHE Funding Schemes (IFS) is to promote:

- Research and innovation in tertiary education quality assurance;

- Capacity building of the developing quality assurance systems.

The IFS will be a flexible mechanism, which, through the provision of grants on a competitive basis, would:

- Easily adjust to the priorities set at the policymaking level and would support innovative endeavors;

- Enable INQAAHE members to strengthen their functional and operational capacities;

- Stimulate research and innovation in the sphere of tertiary education quality assurance;

- Expand cooperative ties of INQAAHE and its members.

At the same time, the IFS would provide necessary resources and expertise for planning and effective implementation of new endeavors.

1.2 PRINCIPLES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF IFS FUNDED PROJECTS

The following principles will be applied during the implementation of the IFS grant projects:

i. Inclusion;

ii. Equal opportunity;

iii. Quality;

iv. Professionalism.

2   MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF PROJECTS

The INQAAHE Funding Scheme supports innovative efforts to improve the quality, relevance, and efficiency of INQAAHE members. The projects under the IFS include the following:

- Capacity building;

    o Consultancy,
    o Trainings,
    o Workshops,
    o Internships,
    o Fellowships.

- Research and innovation;

- Scholarships for QAP;

- Other initiatives in line with INQAAHE Strategic Priorities.

The topics for each scheme are set anually and are specified in the calls for proposals.

3   FUNDING WINDOWS

The IFS is sub-divided into funding "windows". These windows provide a framework for setting specific goals, selection criteria, and performance indicators for assessing project impact.

- **Window 1 for INQAAHE strategic initiatives- 20K total available budget for Window 1:** normally, the initiatives that promote quality assurance at the global level as well as promote enhancement and visibility of INQAAHE. The projects within the frames of this window are the ones initiated by the INQAAHE Board members to enhance INQAAHE capacity, promote its visibility and influence.

- **Window 2 for capacity building – 45K total available budget for Window 2:** normally, the projects within this funding window are aimed at development and enhancement of quality assurance systems. These could include, but not be limited to trainings, workshops, consultations, revision of the QA frameworks, fellowships and the like. It also includes promotion of internships between different QA institutions and scholarships for the INQAAHE Quality Assurance Program. A Call for Porposals is to be announced on annual basis to outline the pecualiarities related to the budget and the priority topics.

- **Window 3 for research and innovation – 7.5K total available budget for Window 3:** usually, the proposals would target contribution to the body of knowledge, namely, the projects that explore potentials and opportunities of quality assurance through research and innovation. A Call for Porposals is to be announced on annual basis to outline the pecualiarities related to the budget and the priority topics.

3.1 WINDOW 1: INITIATIVES

Window 1 projects address major issues in quality assurance internationally, in line with the INQAAHE strategic priorities. Window 1 initiatives are open proposals submitted by the INQAAHE Board members for promoting quality assurance at the global level in general and visibility and enhancement of INQAAHE in line with its strategic priorities, in particular. The projects under this window should be inclusive in nature, through involvement of INQAAHE members from both developing and developed systems. Grant amounts would range in between US$ 5,000 and US$ 10,000 per project with duration of up to 2 years. Maximum of 2 projects can be funded per year.

3.2 WINDOW 2: CAPACITY BUILDING

Window 2 projects address major issues related to capacity building of INQAAHE members. They are managed through a call for proposals published on annual basis based on the INQAAHE Board decision.

An INQAAHE member applying for this window can apply for such services as trainings, consultancies related to the revision or development of the national quality assurance frameworks, workshops and seminars, internships, QAP scholarships, and fellowship. The latter one – INQAAHE Felowship - is a new initiative within the frames of IFS Window 2 and is intended for the employees of the EQAAs

and IQAs of HEIs who are also students enrolled in doctoral programs focused on issues in higher education and/quality assurance.

Grant amounts would range in between US$ 5,000 and US$ 7,000, and should be implemented within the specified time span in the proposal.

In case of QAP scholarship, the duration is specified by the program offering institution and the grant amount of total US$ 15,000 is envisioned to cover three successful applicants annually.

The Fellowship initiative is an 18 months fellowship program intended to expose the enrolled doctoral students to a variety of issues related to quality assurance in higher education, along with providing an in-depth opportunity to work with experts in the field who are active participants in implementing the initiatives of the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education.

Goals & Objectives

The goal of the INQAAHE Fellowship is to provide a career-expanding opportunity that will enhance the student's knowledge of quality assurance as it relates to current issues in tertiary education and develop the student' skills to serve as a future leader and change agent in the profession.

- To introduce the fellow to quality assurance systems and to develop an understanding of good practices and accountability within those systems

- To provide practical experiences in quality assurance that will prepare the fellow with the necessary skills to evaluate systems.

- To expand the fellow's professional network as a future leader in the international QA community

Program Overview

During the fellowship, the INQAAHE fellow will complete INQAAHE's quality assurance program (QAP) which will provide an understanding of the importance that quality assurance plays in higher education. The fellow will have opportunities to participate in activities that could include: observing an INQAAHE Board Meeting, attending an INQAAHE conference or forum, and presenting with representatives from INQAAHE at prospective conferences. The INQAAHE Fellow will work closely with at least one INQAAHE Board Member to complete a mutually agreed upon project that supports one of INQAAHE's current strategic initiatives.

Although there is no stipend, INQAAHE will cover the costs associated with traveling to and attending any Board approved meetings/conferences.

3.3 WINDOW 3: RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Window 3 projects address innovation and research related activities in line with the INQAAHE strategic priorities. They are managed through a call for proposals published on annual basis based on the INQAAHE Board's decision. The overall grant amount to be allocated per year comes to total US$ 7, 500, which is envisioned to cover 3 projects over a period of maximum 1 year.

4   ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION CRITERIA

In order to be eligible for the IFS, the applicant must be an INQAAHE member.

The following criteria will be applied while evaluating the propsals. Each criterion has a relative weight, and the evaluation is conducted according to the procedures and the evaluation forms specified in this OM.

4.1 WINDOW 1: INQAAHE INITIATIVES

The selection criteria for W1 are as follows:

- **Relevance:** in this section the applicant should provide a well-supported justification on how the proposed initiative meets the strategic obejectives set by INQAAHE. Relevance in terms of meeting the strategic objectives and responding to the needs of the system in which the project will take place should also be justified.

- **Feasibility:** the proposals should be feasible in terms of the timelines set and the activities to be carried out within the specified budget.

- **Quality of the partnership:** partnerships are very important to ensure involvement and equal opportunity for all INQAAHE members. Partnerships are encouraged for the Initiative Window projects. Each project under the Initiative Window should ensure involvement of members from both developing and developed systems. In addition, a fair distribution of tasks and responsibilities among the partners should be included in the application.

- **Technical quality of proposals**. Applicants have to prove that they have the necessary capabilities and resources to ensure successful achievement of the project's major and specific objectives. Rational and consistent project design that presents detailed objectives and strategies to make them possible is essential. A high level of detail in proposals would help the process of monitoring and evaluation that is required to facilitate sustainable development and impact after the implementation period. That is to say, to be selected, projects have to present:

  o   a clear strategic analysis and background data;

  o   a qualified project management team;

  o   a detailed budget;

  o   a clear implementation plan as well as monitoring and evaluation plan.

- **Expected impact/benefits**. Projects should be relevant and generate solutions for regional and institutional needs. In addition, they should have an innovative nature or capacity building nature, contribute to improvement of quality assurance provisions, always considering that benefits must exceed costs. A detailed dissemination plan should be presented to ensure a broader and deeper impact both during and after the implementation timespan. That is to say, to be selected, projects have to:

–   Justify the innovative nature/capacity building nature and present specific benefits of the project;

–   Provide a sustainability plan for the project results after the life-time of the project;

–   Present a dissemination plan.

4.2 WINDOW 2: CAPACITY BUILDING

The selection criteria for W2 are sa follows:

-   **Relevance:** in this section the applicant should provide a well-supported justification on how and to what extent the proposed capacity building event meets the strategic topics set by INQAAHE in its annual call for proposals. Relevance in terms of meeting the strategic objectives of the context in which the project will take place should also be justified.

-   **Feasibility:** the capacity building proposals should be feasible in terms of the timelines set and the activities to be carried out within the specified budget.

-   **Technical quality of proposals**. Applicants have to prove that they have the necessary capabilities and resources to ensure successful achievement of the project's major and specific objectives. Rational and consistent project design that presents detailed objectives and strategies to make them possible is essential. A high level of detail in proposals would help the process of monitoring and evaluation that is required to facilitate sustainable development and impact after the implementation period. That is to say, to be selected, projects have to present:

    o   a clear strategic analysis and background data;

    o   a qualified project management team;

    o   a detailed budget;

    o   a clear implementation plan as well as monitoring and evaluation plan.

-   **Expected impact/benefits**. Projects should be relevant and generate solutions for regional and institutional needs. In addition, they should have an innovative nature or capacity building nature, contribute to improvement of quality assurance provisions, always considering that benefits must exceed costs. A detailed dissemination plan should be presented to ensure a broader and deeper impact both during and after the implementation timespan. That is to say, to be selected, projects have to:

    o   Justify the innovative nature/capacity building nature and present specific benefits of the project;

    o   Provide a sustainability plan for the project results after the life-time of the project;

    o   Present a dissemination plan.

4.3 WINDOW 3: RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

The selection criteria for W3 are sa follows:

- **Relevance:** in this section the applicant should provide a well-supported justification on how the proposed research and innovation topic meets the strategic topics set by INQAAHE in its annual call for proposals. Relevance in terms of meeting the strategic objectives of the context in which the project will take place should also be justified.

- **Feasibilty:** the research and innovation proposals should be feasible in terms of the timelines set and the activities to be carried out within the specified budget.

- **Theoretical Framework:** the theoretical framework should be coherently and logicaly designed and provide references to the most recent research literature and developments in the sepcified field.

- **Contribution to the body of knowledge:** the proposal should highlight the specific contribution to the body of knowledge. It should also outline the applicability of the obtained knowledge in different contexts.

- **Consistency/coherency in the design and methodology:** this criterion refers to the design of the whole project, including but not limited to the management, activity plan, timelines, budget allocated.

5   ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES

Eligible expenditures refer to the types of expenditures that are covered by IFS resources and solely aim achievement of the project goals. They are broadly categorized as follows:

- Consultancy services (local and international);

- Staff costs;

- Organization of seminars, workshops, trainings;

- Travel costs and costs of stay (in case of internships and capacity building);

- Tuition fee (in case of QAP).

6 OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

This section indicates IFS's operational guidelines and procedures corresponding to the different stages of the project cycle. It will detail the project evaluation and selection process, project implementation guidelines, and financial management of IFS.

There are two distinctive project selection procedures:

- Based on the call for proposals (Windows 2 and 3);

- Based on specific initiatives approved by the Board (Window 1).
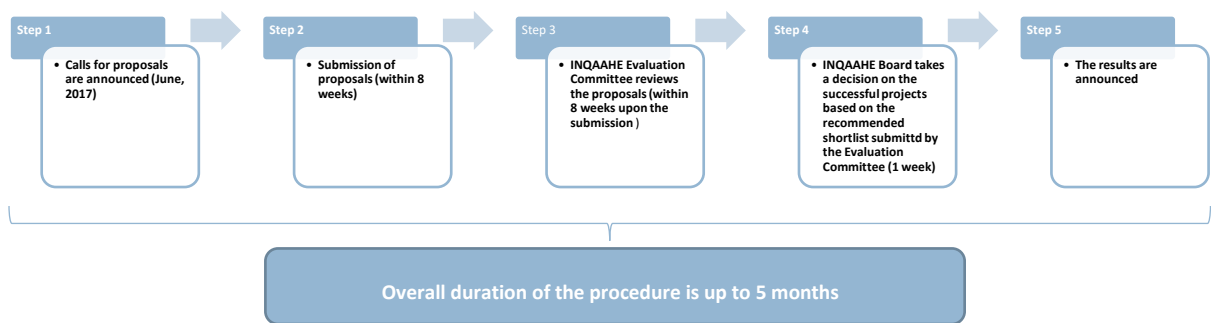
6.1 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The IFS is implemented by means of open calls for proposals, which outlines the main goals of the call, the timelines/deadlines for the project proposal submission, eligibility criteria and other necessary conditions.

The calls for proposals is issued once a year. In general, each applicant may have one project running at a time. However the number of applications would be unlimited in order to ensure participation, creativity and buy-in of different members.

6.2 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS: THE PROCEDURE

Proposals can be submitted using electronic mail to the INQAAHE Secretariat. There would be deadlines established for submission, and proposals received after those dates will not be accepted.

A typical procedure includes the following steps:

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
• Calls for proposals are announced (June, 2017)	• Submission of proposals (within 8 weeks)	• INQAAHE Evaluation Committee reviews the proposals (within 8 weeks upon the submission)	• INQAAHE Board takes a decision on the successful projects based on the recommended shortlist submittd by the Evaluation Committee (1 week)	• The results are announced

Overall duration of the procedure is up to 5 months

6.3 ELIGIBILITY AND COMPLETENESS EVALUATION

After the proposal submission, the INQAAHE secretariat initially evaluates the proposals against eligibility criteria and verifies that the proposals are complete. A proposal is considered complete if it is developed following the guidelines in this OM and has a complete list of documents outlined in the Call for proposals. If a proposal is incomplete, the INQAAHE Secretariat notifies the applicant, which will have, at most, one week after the notification to provide the missing documents and /or redevelop the application.

Those project proposals, which do not meet the set requirements after the redevelopment will not be processed.

6.4   PROPOSAL REVIEW PANEL

The INQAAHE *Membership and Services to the Members Committee (MSMC)* is responsible for the technical evaluation of the project proposals. The Evaluation Committee reviews the proposals drawing on the scoring system and evaluation forms in this OM and submits the shortlists and draft decisions for the INQAAHE Board for the final decision taking.

While evaluating the proposals, drawing on the peculiarities of the proposals and in case of need for expertise outside the INQAAHE Board, a peer-reviewer will be contacted to provide an expert opinion on different aspects of the project.

6.5   MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE PROJECTS

The project applicants should provide a detailed monitoring plan for the project implementation. Additionally, INQAAHE Secretariat will take care of the monitoring under the lead of the MSMC.

The monitoring plan will serve as the main tool for evaluating the achievements once it is apporved by the INQAAHE Board. In case of non-compliance with the proposed plan the grant will be terminated and no financial allocation will be made.

6.6   FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

The INQAAHE Funding Scheme is performance based by nature. Thus, all the financial allocations are to be made based on the availability of tangible outcomes and outputs within the set timeframes.

In case of need for pre-financing, and based on a well-justified proposal, up to 20% of the proposed budget could be transferred to the grantholder subject to financial reporting. In case of failure to report in due manner on the pre-financing, the installment of the rest of the amount as well as the grant will be terminated. If this is the case, the pre-financing amount should be paid back to INQAAHE.

6.7   PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

To avoid double funding, all the proposals submitted to INQAAHE should be original in nature and not duplicate any other project that is already being funded by some other organization. In case the porposal is already submitted to any other organization for funding but not yet approved, a clear statement should be made with provision of all the details relevant to the project.

In case of detection of plagiarizm, the project will be terminated at any point, be it submission or implementation. Respective arrangements will be made to transfer back the funds to INQAAHE in case the allocation has already been made.

The outcomes and outputs of the projects funded under INQAAHE Funding Scheme are property of INQAAHE and should be acknowledged in due manner.

7   ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: PROPOSAL EVALUATION FORMS

INQAAHE Evaluation Form: Window 1

(Evaluation scale from 1 to 5: 1 – not convincing at all; 5 – highly convincing)

Relevance	Feasibility	Quality of the partnership	Technical quality of the proposal	Expected impact and benefits

INQAAHE Evaluation Form: Window 2

(Evaluation scale from 1 to 5: 1 – not convincing at all; 5 – highly convincing)

Relevance	Feasibility	Technical quality of the proposal	Expected impact and benefits

INQAAHE Evaluation Form: Window 3

(Evaluation scale from 1 to 5: 1 – not convincing at all; 5 – highly convincing)

Relevance	Feasibility	Theoretical framework	Contribution to the body of knowledge	Consistency in the design and methodology

ANNEX 2: PROPOSAL SUBMISSION FORM

INQAAHE Funding Scheme

Templates for Window 1 and Window 2 grants

Window 1: Initiatives

Window 2: Capacity Building

Grant amount requested from IFS: _____

Total grant amount (in case of co-funding): _____

Window of funding (please, specify) _____

Part A: Project Profile

A.1: Title of the project:

A.2: Acronym of the project:

A.3: Duration of the project:

A.4: Project major goal:

(Up to 50 words)

A5: Summary of the project:

The summary should provide an overview of the project and should describe its main features, including the wider and specific objectives, principal outcomes and outputs. This section will be reproduced, as presented below, in the relevant dissemination and reporting documents.

(Up to 250 words)

B. Grant Coordinator information:

B.1: Name of the institution:

B.2: Grant Applicant (the person who is legally authorized to represent the institution)

Name:

Contact Information:

Mailing Address:

Telephone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Website:

B.3: The Coordinator of the Project:

Name:

Contact Information:

Mailing Address:

Telephone:

Fax:

E-mail:

B.4: Description of the organization and Date of Establishment:

(Up to 250 words: please, state the specifications relevant to the project goals and objectives)

C: Partnering Organizations (if any)

C.1: Name of Organization (1):

Main contact person (name and title):

Type of Partnering Organization:

Organization Website:

Mailing Address:

Telephone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Description of the Institution and Date of Establishment:

(Up to 250 words: please, state the specifications relevant to the project goals and objectives)

C.2: Name of Organization (2):

Main contact person (name and title):

Type of Partnering Organization:

Organization Website:

Mailing Address:

Telephone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Description of the Institution and Date of Establishment:

(Up to 250 words: please, state the specifications relevant to the project goals and objectives)

D: Project details

D1: What challenge/problem in quality assurance will the proposed project address? What do you expect to learn from this project, which would be relevant to the national and institutional priorities? Please, provide an in-depth analysis of the needs for the project proposal. Explain why this/these problem/s were selected over others, and how the project proposal fits within the development strategies of the partners involved. Define the major goal and specific objectives as well as target group(s)/target sector(s) that will be addressed and/or benefit from your project.

(Up to 700 words)

D2: Project specific objectives:

Please, write the specific objectives of the project. Please note that each objective will produce outputs and has to be quantitatively measured with performance indicators.

(Up to 300 words)

D3: Project Methodology:

Please, describe the methodology you will follow while implementing the project. Provide links with the objectives of the project, activities, expected results and outcomes and strategies to be used to implement the project. The description must clearly indicate the working methodologies and processes to be used.

(Up to 1500 words)

D4: Proposed Project Tasks:

Please provide a detailed description on the proposed tasks to be funded under this project. Please, describe all the tasks that will be undertaken during the project, their purposes, duration, and the ways in which they will interact. This should include, for instance, the topic of consultation, workshop, training, any other capacity building event; role, and length of stay of any visiting expert; the contribution of the experts; and the unique features of any new approach to existing processes, procedures and methods.

(up to 1500 words)

D5: Project management team

Please, describe the project management team, the human resources involved in the project while ensuring links with the specific objectives. Discuss the complementarity of the project management team qualifications.

(Up to 500 words)

D6: Innovativeness of the project:

Please, state the innovative aspects of the project.

(Up to 300 words)

D7: Sustainability of the project:

Please, describe the aspects of the project that ensure longer-term sustainability. Explain how the planned exploitation activities will ensure optimal use of the results during and beyond the lifetime of the project.

(Up to 300 words)

D8: What are the tangible and non-tangible outputs of the project?

(Up to 500 words)

D9: Quality of the partnership

Please, provide a description of the project's partners, the complementarity of the skills, competencies and capacities to manage the project and roles of each partner in the project. Explain why the selected partners are best suited to participate in the project. Describe any complementary skills, expertise and competences within the consortium (including external experts, if any) directly relating to the planned project activities

(Up to 700 words)

D10: Monitoring and evaluation plan

Please, provide a detailed description of the monitoring and evaluation plan for project implementation. Provide clear performance indicators and benchmarks.

(Up to 300 words)

D 11: Dissemination plan of the project results

Please, provide a detailed dissemination plan and expected impact.

(Up to 250 words)

E: Budget

Please, provide a detailed budget for the activities envisioned to achieve the project specific goals.

F: Grant Implementation Plan:

Please, provide a detailed Grant Implementation Plan (Appendix C). Provide the expected dates for the start and completion of all activities. For each activity, please also provide the following information: (a) output of the activity; (b) output indicator; (c) the deadline; (d) the people responsible for the activity; (e) related costs; and (f) the schedule.

INQAAHE Funding Scheme

Window 3: Research and Innovation

I. **Project Title**

II. **Name of the Researcher(s)** (Include institutional affiliation and contact information.)

III. **Project Timeline** (Include projected completion date.)

IV. **Status with INQAAHE** (e.g., full member, affiliate)

V. **General and Specific Objectives**
   a) Provide supporting rationale for the general and specific objectives of the study.
   b) State the research question(s) being asked or the hypothesis(es) being tested.

VI. **Methods**
   a) Participants (Describe sampling procedures, sample size, participant characteristics, and how participants will be recruited.)
   b) Data Collection Procedures (Describe where and how data will be collected including what participants will be expected to do.)
   c) Data Analysis Procedures (Provide explanation of statistical design.)
   d) Data Handling Procedures (Describe how confidentiality will be maintained, where data will be stored, who will have access to it, and how it will be secured.)

VII. **Expected results**

VIII. **Risks, Discomforts, and Benefits**
   a) Identify all risks and potential discomforts to participants and describe how participants are protected from possible risks, such as embarrassment or invasion of privacy.
   b) Provide an explanation of all expected or potential benefits to participants.

IX. **Budget**

X. **Time to completion and chronogram, stating deadlines for both a mid-term and a final report (two pages each).**

XI. **Attached Appendices**
   a) Informed Consent Documents
   b) Survey Instruments* and/or Interview (Focus Group) Questions
   c) Curriculum Vitae of Primary Researcher(s) (and abbreviated vitas of other researchers)

*If using any instruments or scales, you must demonstrate that you have permission to use the instrument. For each instrument or scale listed, provide a copy of your permission to use the instrument or indicate if the instrument is in the public domain. If you purchased the instrument or scale, provide proof of purchase.

Window 2: Capacity Building

INQAAHE

CALL FOR CAPACITY BUILDING PROPOSALS

I.   **Background**

Among the priority purposes of INQAAHE, the Constitution lists

- To provide advice and expertise to assist existing and emerging quality assurance agencies;
- To facilitate links between quality assurance agencies and support networks of quality assurance agencies;
- To assist members to determine the standards of institutions operating across national borders and facilitate better-informed international recognition of qualifications.

These purposes are achieved through different means as outlined in the INQAAHE Strategic Plan, but are not limited to the following:

- Objective 1.2: Promoting the interests of its members at different levels and through diversity of approaches;
- Objective 2.1: Encouragement of INQAAHE members' involvement in specific activities and expansion of the links between INQAAHE and other stakeholders
- Objective 4.1: Policy recommendations to tertiary education institutions and QA agencies
- Objective 4.2: Consultancy provisions.

In the pursuance of the purposes, INQAAHE is allocating a small amount of money for supporting capacity building and enhancement of quality assurance systems.

II.   **Who can apply, and what type of proposals may be presented**

This invitation is addressed to all INQAAHE members, whether full or associate. Affiliates may also apply.
- Capacity building;
    - o   Consultancy,
    - o   Trainings,
    - o   Workshops,
- Internships;
- Quality Assurance Program;
- INQAAHE Fellowship Program

III. **Eligible (overarching) topics**
- National quality assurance framework
- Institutional quality assurance framework
- Links between external and internal quality assurance framework
- Qualifications framework and measurement of alignment between the programs and qualifications framework
- Mutual recognition.

IV. **Evaluation of proposals**

The proposals will be evaluated against the following:
- **Relevance:** justification of the need, which should be in line with the national agend aiming at promotion of the goals related to higher education quality assruance;
- **Feasiblity:** justification that the project objectives can be achieved within the proposed time frames and with the resources available;
- **Technical quality of the proposal:** strategic analysis and background data, project methodology and coherency in the desing, the management team, budget and cost-effectiveness, monitoring and evaluatoin.
- **Expected impact and benefits**: the exptected impact on the QA system and the benefits to the higher education system.

Time lines

The proposals, mid-term and fianl reports are to be submitted to the INQAAHE Secretariat at secretariat@inqaahe.org by the following deadlines:

The proposals should be submitted by MONTH DAY, 20XX.

The successful applicant will be notified by MONTH DAY, 20XX.

Capacity Building Award

INQAAHE will fund **X** proposals for the period 20XX-20XX. Funding will be limited to USD XXXXX, which will be transferred against receipt of the final report.

Any publication or presentation of results of the project must be approved by the INQAAHE Board in advance to ensure that confidential information regarding INQAAHE and its programs is not inadvertently divulged. The INQAAHE Board will not unreasonably withhold or delay approval. Permission to present or publish project results will not be given until the final report has been submitted to the INQAAHE Board. A formal review of the final report will be conducted within 30 days of submission. The INQAAHE Board reserves the right to refuse dissemination of research results if the applicant(s) does not adhere to the approved project proposal. A prompt attempt to negotiate a resolution to any disagreement will be conducted.

INQAAHE Fellowship: additional provisions

The INQAAHE Board of Directors will make the final decision based on applicant's ability to describe how he or she meets or exceeds the qualifications and experiences outlined below. The applicants must be students who are currently enrolled in doctoral programs focused on issues in higher education and/quality assurance.

Application materials should be emailed to INQAAHE at secretariat@inqaahe.org. All questions regarding the INQAAHE Fellowship program should also be directed to this email address.

The application must include the following and must be submitted in English:

- cover letter describing the applicant's career objectives
- one page document outlining why the applicant has applied for the INQAAHE Fellowship and what the applicant hopes to gain from the experience if chosen
- copy of the applicant's resume or curriculum vitae
- Sample of writing from a work or school-related activity two letters of recommendation
- Two letters of reference, including at least one from the applicant's doctoral program advisor and/or a faculty member who has worked closely with the applicant
- Copy of certificate of proficiency in English (if applicable; that is, English is not the applicant's native tongue)

Qualifications and/or Experience

- Good command of the English language
- Relevance of degrees previously obtained and degrees being sought
- Relevant work experience in issues related to higher education
- Excellent writing skills
- Ability to clearly articulate career goals, including steps taken already to meet those goals and how the fellowship opportunity will further assist in attaining them.

Window 3: Research and Innovation

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INQAAHE

CALL FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROPOSALS

</div>

I. **Background**

Among the priority purposes of INQAAHE, the Constitution lists

- to create, collect and disseminate information on current and developing theory and practice in the assessment, improvement and maintenance of quality in higher education and;
- to undertake or commission research in areas relevant to quality in higher education.

These purposes are achieved through different means:

- Every two years, INQAAHE holds an international conference, where a significant number of papers are presented, providing participants with an updated and wide ranging view of the theory and practice of quality assurance around the world.
- The network also has a long standing association with the journal *Quality in Higher Education*, which is published four times a year and gathers a number of academic papers on its field. This journal is distributed free of charge to all network members.
- Another channel for promoting research is through commissioning papers on specific issues.

In the pursuance of the purposes, within the frames of the latter project, INQAAHE is allocating a small amount of money for supporting the preparation of research papers or essays, in accordance with the following terms of reference.

II. **Topics identified for 20XX-20XX call**

1. New modes for quality assurance in well-developed systems;
2. Independence of quality assurance decisions;
3. Corruption in quality assurance;
4. Diversity of approaches to institutional and academic programme quality assurance including new modes of study (e.g. e-learning, MOOCS);
5. External quality assurance and its impact on internal quality management;
6. Impact of international accreditation on newly developing systems;
7. Quality assurance of external quality assurance;
8. Impact of quality assurance on teaching and learning; to what extent the latter promotes relevance to the socio-economic needs;

9. The extent, nature and effectiveness of cross-border quality arrangements (assurance/accreditation/validation);
10. Qualificaions framework and measurement of alignement between the programs and qualificaitos frameworks;
11. Mutual recognition of accreditation decisions in political, academic and legal terms.

III. Who can apply, and what type of proposals may be presented

This invitation is addressed to all INQAAHE members, whether full or associate. Affiliates may also apply.

Proposals should fall under one of the following categories:
- Studies or research projects referring to one of the topics outlined above. These must follow an empirical approach, and report on the results of research projects or case studies.
- Essays, covering an original discussion of one of the topics in this call for papers. They can refer to theoretical or methodological discussions, an analysis of published research, or of good (or bad) practices.
- Innovative experiences, which present, analyse and discuss these practices and their relevance to the enhancement of quality assurance processes.

Contents of the application (see the template for the Research Proposal outline below)

Evaluation of proposals

The final paper will be published in the journal *Quality in Higher Education*.

The proposals will be evaluated against
- Importance of the research questions/objectives to INQAAHE and their alignment with the focus of this call for proposals;
- Research must go beyond studies of "perceptions" and attempt to gather outcome evidence;
- Contribution to the body of knowledge;
- Theoretical framework;
- Consistency in the design and methodology;
- Feasibility and suitability of the plan of action, including timelines and deadline for completion
- Adherence to the Research Proposal outline provided below
- Qualifications of the primary researcher(s) and other people involved in the project.
- Appropriateness of budget requirements for the study.

Time lines

The research proposals, mid-term and final papers are to be submitted to the INQAAHE Secretariat at secretariat@inqaahe.org by the following deadlines:

The proposals should be submitted by MONTH DAY, 20XX

The mid-term paper should be submitted by MONTH DAY, 20XX

The final paper should be submitted by MONTH DAY, 20XX.

The successful applicant will be notified by MONTH DAY, 20XX.

Research Funding Award

INQAAHE will fund **XX** proposals for the period 20XX-20XX. Funding will be limited to USDXXXX, which will be transferred against receipt of the final paper.

> Any publication or presentation of results of the research must be approved by the INQAAHE Board in advance to ensure that confidential information regarding INQAAHE and its programs is not inadvertently divulged. The INQAAHE Board will not unreasonably withhold or delay approval. Permission to present or publish research results will not be given until the final report has been submitted to the INQAAHE Board. A formal review of the final report will be conducted within 30 days of submission. The INQAAHE Board reserves the right to refuse dissemination of research results if the researcher(s) does not adhere to the approved research proposal. A prompt attempt to negotiate a resolution to any disagreement will be conducted.