

**Vicki Stott**  
**Application for the role of President, INQAAHE**

Dear fellow Board Directors and members of INQAAHE

I am writing to submit my application for the role of INQAAHE President. I have been Chief Executive of The Quality Assurance Agency in the UK since November 2021, and a Board member of INQAAHE for almost as long. I am excited by the breadth and complexity of the Presidency and honoured to apply for it. If I were to be fortunate enough to be elected to this role, I would work with the Board, the CEO and the secretariat to ensure that INQAAHE secures a sustainable future that is vibrant, inclusive and vital.

The new President will have a complex environment to navigate and will need to be mindful of the needs of internal and external stakeholders. We are fortunate to have, in Fabrice Hénard, an extremely able CEO who, after almost two years in the role, provides effective leadership to the highly skilled secretariat. So, I would approach the Presidency with the ambition to ensure that the Board and its sub-committees and working groups are functioning in a way that optimises and supports the delivery of the strategic plan and the CEO's work plans. I would aim to build on the considerable track record of the current and previous Presidents, and communicate consistently, modelling integrity and resilience, to allow the CEO to deliver while ensuring they demonstrate accountability through the reporting and performance mechanisms already in place.

The other critical role of President, as Chair of the Board of Directors, is to steer the Board's scrutiny of the organisation's management and finances, ensuring that objectives are achieved, and the organisation is managed transparently. The President must also lead the Board through setting and delivering the organisation's strategy and defining the priorities of the strategic plan. This element of the role should be governed by mutual trust and a shared purpose in preserving and promoting the mission and aims of INQAAHE.

The strategic plan focuses on four main pillars: sustainability, community, professionalisation, and trust and it aims to ensure the operational and financial stability of INQAAHE, promote collaboration and networking among members, build capacity in quality assurance, and enhance recognition and credibility.

If elected, I would work to ensure that INQAAHE maintain a mission-driven approach to delivering its strategy and services. We will use evidence, data, and qualitative analysis to provide impactful services to our global body of members. We will support external quality assurance providers in working with providers, students, governments, funders, and other stakeholders to evidence and enhance the quality and high standards of the education they provide.

Overall, the plan aims to drive the organisation towards five years of impressive achievements and growth.

In this document, I will outline how I will work with the INQAAHE team to achieve this:

**Sustainability:** This pillar focuses on ensuring the operational and financial stability of INQAAHE to promote sustainable organisational growth. It aims to strengthen the organisational structure, improve and revise policies, and diversify funding and revenue models. I will:

- Work with the Board and the executive committee to strengthen the organisational structure to ensure efficient and effective day-to-day operation. I will ensure that INQAAHE has robust, independent decision-making capability in its recognition of alignment to ISGs.
- Empower the CEO and secretariat to revise and streamline all policies, ensuring they are consistent, easy to understand and expressed in plain language!
- Work with the Treasurer and Finance Committee, and CEO to diversify funding streams and funding models to ensure maximum financial viability to ensure that the operation can be sustained over the period.

- Support the Communication and outreach Committee and the regional networks to enhance the engagement of members. Work with the secretariat and CEO to provide training for new Board members. This might include taking formal measures to stagger Board elections to retain as much historical knowledge as possible and to allow a mentoring scheme for new members as they join the Board.

**Community:** This pillar aims to highlight the strengths and achievements of network members and promote collaboration and networking among them. It includes organizing conferences and online fora, enhancing collaboration with diverse QA networks, and expanding INQAAHE's global presence. I will:

- Encourage the Board to continue to support the organisation of face-to-face conferences and fora which complement our online work, providing a platform to experience sharing, collaboration, networking, and learning.
- Encourage INQAAHE's collaboration with diverse QA networks to contribute to regional and international developments in quality assurance.
- Support the INQAAHE Global Study's analysis of trends and challenges in quality assurance worldwide and provide recommendations for each region.
- Seek to learn from members' involvement in the activities of other QA organizations and networks.

**Professionalisation:** This pillar is aimed at building the capacity of members to carry out their tasks in quality assurance. It focuses on promoting capacity building through training programs, research activities, and consultancy services. It also aims to raise awareness and legitimization of the value of quality assurance. When colleagues are reporting workload pressures and resulting stresses, this pillar cannot be emphasised enough. I will:

- Work with the Board and secretariat to promote capacity building of INQAAHE members through training and the work of the Marjorie Peace Lenn Centre.
- Strive to identify ways to maximise provision of funding support for capacity building initiatives through the Funding Scheme.
- Encourage opportunities to foster collaboration with international organisations to promote implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in the higher education sector.

**Trust:** This pillar aims to promote the recognition and credibility of INQAAHE and its members. It includes promoting the use of international standards and guidelines and conducting external reviews. It also focuses on promoting transparency and integrity in the work of INQAAHE and its members. The establishment of an independent decision-making body for the recognition of quality assurance providers against the International Standards and Guidelines is a critical step in this pillar of the plan; this body will be critical to INQAAHE's credibility as an authority in external quality assurance evaluation and protocols. I will:

- Promote and disseminate the INQAAHE International Standards and Guidelines (ISG) as a tool for quality providers to improve and benchmark themselves.
- Work with the Board, external stakeholders and the secretariat to ensure that the independent decision-making body is rigorously robust both in its inception and the execution of its role. It should have clear scope and terms of reference; its role should be easy to understand; it should continue to harness the energy and expertise of our esteemed stakeholder body to underpin the integrity and transparency of INQAAHE's operations and uphold our global reputation.
- Promote the use of international shared best practices in quality assurance, ensuring the quality and credibility of the work delivered.

By working collaboratively in this way, it would be my goal to ensure that INQAAHE achieves its strategic goals and objectives, ensuring sustainability, fostering a strong community, enhancing professionalisation, and building trust in the quality assurance community. I will work with the CEO and secretariat to ensure regular monitoring and reporting on the progress of the operating plan, ensuring the Board is both sighted on and deeply involved in its successful implementation.

Under the leadership of the two past presidents – Deb Adair and Susanna Karakhanyan – INQAAHE has becoming an increasingly visible, professional, and trusted network. If elected, I would hope to have the honour to build on the legacies these two extraordinary leaders have left, to ensure that INQAAHE builds its knowledge base, membership profile and international presence, working across the strength of its intellectual and constitutional base to establish robust independence and secure a sustainable future.

**Vicki Stott**  
**20 May 2024**

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**Biographical Note in support of Application for role of President, INQAAHE**

I believe deeply that education is a powerful tool; to date my career has allowed me the enormous privilege of ensuring that the power of a high-quality education is extended to as many people as possible, so that they can experience the transformative benefit of it in their own lives.

I have worked as CEO of the Quality Assurance Agency in the UK since November 2021 and this role showcases my profound commitment to improving education quality and access. We provide regulatory quality assurance and enhancement services to the funders and regulators in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland; we operate a quality enhancement membership service in England. Together, we work in partnership to secure UK higher education's global reputation for excellence; safeguard academic standards and champion academic integrity and enhance the quality of the student learning experience.

I have had a long career in higher education, working in several high-profile universities (UMIST, University of Warwick, University of Birmingham, University of Oxford) on financial strategy, planning and resource allocation.

I have been an active member of INQAAHE since joining QAA and this year. As well as Board activity, I am a member of the recognition committee, and was part of the group consulting on ISG design and delivery. I was on the appointment panel for the INQAAHE CEO, and I am Chair of working group bringing the INQAAHE Forum to Bucharest.