



INQAAHE

CALL FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS

2015-2016

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 2015-2016 call

1. New modes for quality assurance in well-developed systems;
2. Independence of quality assurance decisions;
3. Diversity of approaches to institutional and academic programme quality assurance including new modes of study (e.g. e-learning, MOOCS);

4. External quality assurance and its impact on internal quality management;
5. Impact of international accreditation on newly developing systems;
6. Quality assurance of external quality assurance;
7. Impact of quality assurance on teaching and learning; to what extent the latter promotes relevance to the socio-economic needs;
8. The extent, nature and effectiveness of cross-border quality arrangements (assurance/accreditation/validation);
9. 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:

- a) 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.
- b) 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.
- c) Innovative experiences, which present, analyse and discuss these practices and their relevance to the enhancement of quality assurance processes.

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

V. 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.

VI. 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 October 1, 2015
- The mid-term paper should be submitted by 30th January, 2016
- The final paper should be submitted by March 31st, 2016.

The successful applicant will be notified by October 31st, 2015.

VII. Research Funding Award

INQAAHE will fund **three** proposals for the period 2015-2016. Funding will be limited to USD 2500, which will be transferred against receipt of the final paper.

Any publication or presentation of results of the research must be approved by INQAAHE Board in advance to ensure that confidential information regarding INQAAHE and its programs is not inadvertently divulged. 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 INQAAHE Board. A formal review of the final report will be conducted within 30 days of submission. 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.

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Research Proposal Outline (Fall 2015)

- 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.