Higher Education Institutions
Institutional Cooperation Instrument HEI ICI

HEI ICI 2020–2024

Administrative Handbook

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Ministry for Foreign
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Introduction

This Administrative Handbook is targeted for higher education institution practitioners in Finland and in partner countries receiving HEI ICI Programme funding during the project implementation period 2020-2024. The Handbook is a complementary document to the Decision on State Aid by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) (06/2020), the [General conditions and project conditions for HEI ICI](#) and the [HEI ICI Programme Document 2020-2024](#).

Chapter 1 covers different aspects of project implementation while Chapter 2 concentrates on the financial management of HEI ICI projects. Chapter 3 summarises the monitoring procedures and Chapter 4 includes instructions regarding reporting. Chapter 5 lists relevant links and documentation for project implementation. From the annexes the reader can find the change request template, Reporting content template and Guidelines for auditing.

As this Handbook is a complementary guideline for projects, EDUFI reserves the right to update the document. Updated versions will be available online on the [HEI ICI website](#) and coordinating HEIs will be informed when updates occur. In case of uncertainty regarding the interpretation of the rules of the Programme, you are always advised to contact the Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI) at heiici@oph.fi.

The HEI ICI team at EDUFI is the responsible authority in administrating the programme. The team provides all necessary instructions to implement the HEI ICI projects and offers support services. The team, for example, organises reporting webinars and coordinator meetings 1-2 times a year. The administration also conducts monitoring visits both in Finland and in partner countries during the programme period. The programme administration team reports the progress of the HEI ICI projects to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The content of this document is based on the previous HEI ICI programmes and on the experiences and good practices the previous project coordinators have shared with us. We would like to thank them and their contribution towards this programme. Their role has been significant in developing the HEI ICI programme. Thank you!

The Programme administration welcomes any feedback and observations from the project staff also in the future – do not hesitate to contact us.

The HEI ICI Team

1. Project Implementation

Once the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has made the *Government Discretionary Transfer Decision* (= state aid decision*)* and the recipient (coordinating Finnish HEI) has signed the Letter of Commitment, the recipient enters a legal relationship governed by public law with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. In short, this means that the Finnish coordinating HEI and the MFA are legally committed to the *Government Discretionary Transfer Decision* and that the Finnish Coordinating HEI is fully responsible for the use of funds in the project.

Partnership agreement

As the state aid decision legally commits only the coordinating HEI, it is strongly recommended to create an additional partnership agreement between the coordinating HEI and each of the project partners. Agreements are prepared **in consultation with the legal departments of each partner**. It is advisable to begin the process promptly after a positive funding decision to avoid delays to project implementation.

The internal partnership agreement typically includes the following information:
- Names of the partners
- Short project description and project-specific details
- Obligation of each partner to provide necessary information for state aid officials to follow the use of funds
- Roles and responsibilities, division of labour and tasks, special obligations concerning allocation of working time
- Financial management procedures including timetables of reporting and payments
- Term of the partnership
- Necessary signatures by the legal representatives of the partner institutions

It is also recommended to agree on the following details:
- Liability
- Resolution of disputes
- Confidentiality
- Procedure for modifying the partner agreement
- Termination of the partner agreement

Finally, it is advisable that the agreement refers to at least the following documents:
- Government Discretionary Transfer Decision (Valtionavustuspäätös)
- Terms and conditions for the use of discretionary government transfers granted by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and additional terms and conditions for project support
- HEI ICI Programme Document 2020-2024
- HEI ICI Project Document

Partnership management

The success of a project is largely determined by the quality of the cooperation between project partners. Past experience highlights the importance of the following elements in partnership management:

The quality of communication makes up the foundation for mutual understanding and the flow of information in a project. It is advisable to invest time in establishing trust and a shared understanding of the project's goals and activities early on. Effort will also be required to learn how to engage in dialogue, negotiation and decision-making in the cross-cultural context of your partnership. Allocating time for discussion throughout the project can help mitigate risks related to insufficient communication.

A sense of **ownership** on an individual as well as organisational level is crucial for the partners' sustained motivation and commitment towards the project. To this end, it is strongly recommended to involve both senior staff and junior experts, as well as students in the implementation of the project. Involving a larger pool of individuals also helps mitigate the risk of staff changes. It is further advised that projects establish a wider stakeholder cooperation structure and engage both internal and external stakeholders actively in all stages of the project cycle (design, planning, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of results).

The **inception phase** covers the first three to six months of the programme. During inception phase, the key issue is the enhancement of the shared understanding on the project. It is useful to combine a set of official meetings and seminars with unofficial occasions to provide various stakeholders to voice their needs and concerns. One important task during the inception phase is to discuss the results framework and to check that selected indicators are SMART (data is measurable and the baseline and target can be set).

Steering and formal decision-making takes place in the Project Board and if desired, in an additional Steering or Advisory Group. Projects are free to compose these groups to best serve their goals. You may consider the benefits of including, for instance, senior/junior, internal/external, implementing/non-implementing and academic/non-academic members. Considering environmental sustainability, projects are encouraged to explore the possibility of remote board/steering group meetings whenever possible.

Finally, **practical issues** related to daily administration, travel arrangements and ICT connections are very common and may end up consuming more working hours than projects initially expect. Ensure enough time and administrative resources for tasks such as: agreements, reporting, visas, residence permits, travel insurance, travel permits (e.g. high-risk areas), medical and safety precautions, transport, and accommodation. Familiarise yourself with the details of financial management as well (See Financial management). Regarding ICT tools, previous HEI ICI projects have found email and cloud services useful for document sharing with daily communication often taking place both on email and on social media channels. Online meetings are usually arranged via video call services, but if necessary, even via chat.

Risk management in HEI ICI projects

For general information about risk categories and mitigation as part of project management, please consult the HEI ICI Programme Document 2020-2024, chapter 2.9.

In the higher education partnerships working in developing countries and funded through the HEI ICI programme, the below-mentioned risks have been identified, with some mitigation measures attached.

Changes in the political environment have occurred in several projects. In some cases, elections have caused negative consequences, causing unrest, strikes or interruptions in the academic year. On the other hand, the consequences of the elections could also be positive and offer new legislation with e.g. more academic freedom and new collaboration opportunities for HEIs.

In many countries, the formal **accreditation process** of newly designed or revised courses and study programmes can be a very time-consuming, lengthy and complicated procedure. It is strongly advised to start the process at an early stage, and possibly check whether new courses can be accommodated as part of the institutional autonomy, without external accreditation.

When the HEI ICI project plans **procurements, that even can be a prerequisite for the implementation** of other project activities, it is of great importance to start the procurement discussions immediately after the decision of state aid, as the procurement processes can often be more time-consuming than planned.

When **introducing new technology, e-learning, ODL and online platforms**, it is good practice to appoint **local "focus groups" or individuals, who can act as mentors** in encouraging colleagues to start using the new methodology. In many projects, it has been noticed that a few training sessions offered by external trainers is not enough to fully integrated a new form of teaching and learning among teaching staff. Many times, also the students can act as "agents of change" and influence teaching staff, it is advisable to include them in the project implementation.

In some unstable regions, **restricted physical mobility** caused major changes in the project implementation. However, through online trainings and videoconferencing facilities, the activities were carried out in an efficient manner and results were achieved.

At times, there have been **epidemics or climate-related events influencing travel recommendations** to the partner country regions. It is good to keep in mind, that the Finnish HEIs are responsible for their employees and have their own travel-related institutional guidelines, please consult them and also check the recommendations given by the Finnish MFA for the particular region. Finnish personnel are encouraged to conduct contact information procedure (um.fi/matkustusilmoitus) prior to their travels.

In relation to **Training of Trainers** and capacity building, remember to **involve enough people from the start** to mitigate the challenges in changing staff.

Sometimes, the HEI ICI project management in partner HEIs can be cumbersome due to leading partner country academics over-burdened with teaching, administrative and research duties, in addition to coordinating international projects. It is worth mentioning, that the partner HEI can hire part-time project management assistance through their HEI ICI budget.

Risk is an uncertainty about development result (output, outcome or impact) that may negatively affect achieving the results and difficult to control. The purpose of risk management is to identify, analyze and react to various categories of risks at all stages of project implementation. The aim is to avoid most apparent risk and less apparent by identifying them and reacting upon them. In addition to identifying risks, it is important to estimate the likelihood of the risk, impact level of

the risk and risk response and mitigation measures. The mitigation measures should include concrete tasks within the project activities. If the risk has high likelihood and impact, the mitigation measures should be strong and include even reallocating resources and defining new activities.

Risk categories include contextual, programmatic and institutional risks. *Contextual risks* are related to country specific context in which the projects are operating, and often external actors have limited control over those risks. Contextual risk can be for instance state failure, development failure, conflicts or humanitarian crises. They may have a high impact on the implementation of the projects. Based on the previous HEI ICI projects contextual risks may include for instance changes in political environment that negatively affect the implementation of development projects. Contextual risks include also changes in policies and regulations of the Finnish HEIs or the partner country HEIs.

In short *programmatic risk* is the failure to achieve the expected aims and objectives of the project. In HEI ICI projects the programmatic risks are related to accreditation processes of new curricula, ownership of the partner countries, unforeseen changes in staff and to lack of institutional support from partner organisations, misuse of funds or inefficient use of funds, misunderstanding or conflict between persons, unclear decision making practices, difficulties to proceed according to schedules, difficulties to receive necessary permits etc.

Institutional risk refers to political risks that may include internal risks from the perspective of the donor or the implementing partners. Institutional risks include security risks and reputational risks.

Risk management plan is prepared already when planning a project and it is submitted with the project proposal. However, it is important to update the risk management plan during the whole project implementation period as part of the internal quality assurances and monitoring processes. The annually updated risk management table can be perceived as a means to communicate issues between partners. It can be used to highlight new risks and possible mitigations measures.

Read more about risk management from the [RBM handbook](#) (pp. 13).

Intellectual Property Rights

On Intellectual Property Rights, the [General conditions of state aid](#) outline the following:

"The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland has free and unlimited access to use all materials and results that have been subject to governmental financial support, including the right to use, copy, modify and deliver the materials to a third Party. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland has the right to publicly expose results and materials that have resulted from activities subject to governmental support, for instance on governmental website."

In addition to the above-mentioned statement, it is advised that all project partners have access to project results, documents and materials both during and after the project.

Changes in project implementation

The project partners are committed to implement the project according to the project proposal approved by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in the state aid decision. However, unforeseen changes that require adjusting the project plan, budget or key personnel may occur in almost every project.

All changes must be brought to the recognition of the Project Board and discussed at a Project Board meeting. **Minor changes** can be made by the project partners flexibly as long as the decision-making is collective (e.g. email between all project coordinators).

Major changes require also an approval by EDUFI/MFA through a formal Change Request. Major changes include:

- Changes to the Result Framework's outputs, output indicators or activities (please note that the project's impact or outcome statement cannot be changed)
- Reallocation of cost items which together count for more or 15 percent of the amount of total budget (main) cost item
- Changes in staff or key experts, e.g. several key expert leave in the middle of the project. Each key expert (who will provide an input of more than 20 days during project implementation) must fill in and signed the key expert form and those must be delivered to EDUFI
- Major changes to the Work Plan's schedule
- Procurement of fixed assets that were unforeseen in the project document.

The implementation of major changes is not allowed prior to EDUFI's approval. To seek approval with a formal Change Request, please take the following steps:

1. The Project Board recommends the change with clear supporting arguments

2. The coordinating HEI submits a Change Request form (ANNEX 1) to EDUFI via email (heiici@oph.fi)
3. EDUFI informs the coordinating HEI whether the change is acceptable within two weeks

Sometimes major changes might be approved with certain conditions, depending on the nature of the change. If you are uncertain whether a Change Request is required for the planned change, please contact EDUFI. Approved changes are reported in the annual and final reports with reference to the EDUFI decision.

Communication and dissemination

HEI ICI projects are expected to actively communicate their objectives, progress and results to stakeholders outside of the core project staff. The projects are encouraged to establish websites and share information on their activities and results publicly. It is also recommendable to write articles and blogs which highlight achievements and best practices. Communication and dissemination should occur regularly throughout the project period, strategically expanding and deepening the project's results whenever possible. This is useful for maintaining profile within Finnish HEI, wider Finnish audience, partner country HEI and partner country wider audience.

To this end, a communication plan may be created to support the implementation of communication and dissemination activities. A communication plan answers questions such as:

- What are the intended target groups of the communication? (E.g. students and academics, local communities, CSOs, public administration, media, private sector)
- What information is relevant to each target group?
- How would the information best reach them? (E.g. project website or a blog, social media, academic or popular articles, brochures or other printed materials, events)
- How, when and in which format will information be communicated to them? Are adaptations needed to ensure access to information for all (e.g. language, disability considerations)?
- Who will take care of the communication?
- How and by whom will dissemination and communication be monitored?

To enhance the impact of communication and dissemination activities, projects are strongly encouraged to contact Finnish embassies in the partner countries. Embassies have information on

past and ongoing projects being funded in the same region or country, and have many times had a crucial role in creating wider synergies and coordinating dissemination events.

The MFA is interested in sharing the results information and best practices also through its own communication channels. Be aware that there are also journalists who have a special interest towards developing countries. Their contact information can be reached by contacting the

Communication Unit at the MFA.

Practical communication guidelines:

- All publications should be accessible to the wider public
- On social media, the use of the official HEI ICI hashtag *#heiici* is recommended
- The MFA logo is to be used in all visual communications to clearly indicate that the project is funded with Finnish Development Cooperation Funds. Download MFA and EDUFI logos here
- The projects should also include the following explanatory text in all their HEI ICI project related materials:

  "The Higher Education Institutions Institutional Cooperation Instrument (HEI ICI) supports cooperation projects between higher education institutions in Finland and the developing world. The projects support the HEIs as they develop their subject-specific, methodological, educational and administrative capacity. The programme is funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and administered by the Finnish National Agency for Education. "

In addition to the above guidelines, HEI ICI projects are warmly welcome to create their own logos and visual identities for communication purposes. To maximize your project's reach, **kindly inform EDUFI of important project visibility** by contacting heiici@oph.fi. EDUFI and MFA may share the news on their communication channels.

2. Financial management

The coordinating Finnish HEI is responsible for the financial management of the project and makes funds available to the partner HEIs for the implementation of the project. It is useful to share the names and contact addresses for persons responsible on financial management, so that swift and practical work arrangements can be created.

Project bookkeeping must be organized so that the project is an individual cost object in the HEI's accounting and that all project costs are transparent and easily verifiable at all times. All costs must be acceptable as defined in the Programme Document and the General conditions and project conditions for HEI ICI and caused by the carrying out of the project activities. In the beginning of project implementation partners must familiarise themselves with the programme-level documents guiding the financial management of HEI ICI projects.

It is important to note that financial management, the transfer of funds, the opening of accounts, budget monitoring, etc. are all questions that are to be agreed upon by partner HEIs at the initial stage of the project and based on the financial mechanisms and procedures of the HEIs involved. The financial management practices vary from one country and HEI to another.

At least the following aspects are recommended to be discussed and agreed upon by the partners at the initial stage of the project:

- Fund transfers:
    - Do the partner HEIs need to open a separate bank account for the HEI ICI project? Is the account to be in USD, EUR or local currency? Are there effects of possible inflation to be considered?
    - Are funds transferred in advance and/or against invoices?
- The processes for internal budget monitoring (ongoing) and financial reporting (annual)
- The process and authority for approving payments from a project account
- Travel practicalities: Read more on Cost Items - Travel cost. In addition, share the higher education institutions' travel documents, regulations and processes
- The documentation of possible in-kind self-financing, read more on chapter 3.5 Self-Financing
- Procurement processes, considering esp. national and/or institutional regulations
- Arrangements for audits

It is recommendable to involve the partner institutions' financial and/or administrative departments in all countries when planning the project's budget and financial management. Financial management requires professional staff and may be time-consuming as the administrative procedures differ from one country to another. It is advisable to reserve enough resources and working time for the administration and financial management of the project.

Budget and invoicing

State aid can be used between 1 September 2020 and 31 August 2024. Only costs incurred during this period are eligible, except for the costs pertaining to the required audit at the end of project implementation.

The coordinating Finnish HEI invoices EDUFI annually. The first invoice is submitted after the coordinating HEI has submitted the declaration to accept the state aid (The Letter of Commitment). The following invoices are available in the beginning of each year. The last 10% will be available for invoicing after approved final report. The amount of state aid paid each year varies based on the available financing budget of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs as follows:

HEI ICI Programme year	Available state aid for invoicing (% of state aid)	Financing available for invoicing
2020	6%	After the project has submitted the signed Letter of commitment
2021	11%	Available in January 2021 (The updated project documents must be approved)
2022	18%	Available in January 2022 (2020 annual report must be approved)
2023	20%	Available in January 2023 (2021 annual report must be approved)
2024	35%	Available in January 2024 (2022 annual report must be approved)
2024	10%	After approved final report

The projects plan their budget according to the needs of the project but can only invoice the annual available percentage of the state aid.

The coordinating Finnish HEI invoices the state aid from EDUFI and makes funds available for the partners. HEI ICI project partners cannot directly invoice EDUFI. Unused funds can be transferred to the following annual budget. Possible unused funds must be returned to EDUFI after the Final reporting.

EDUFI receives, processes and archives its purchasing invoices only as electronic invoices. Thus, the projects are requested to submit their annual invoices as electronic invoices through Opus Capita Solutions Oy, the government's e-invoicing operator. Detailed instructions for invoicing are attached to the state aid decision.

Cost items

(Information on the cost items is also available in the Programme Document (p. 25-28).)

In general, costs directly benefitting the project results are eligible. However, for example hospitality costs, gifts and alcohol are non-eligible costs that cannot be reported under project costs. Only moderate costs arising from meeting arrangements are eligible. If you are not sure whether a cost is eligible, contact EDUFI. Non-eligible costs cannot be included in financial reporting and in the project bookkeeping.

The project budget template and the financial report template both use the cost items below. Items of expenditure are reported in the financial report under the same cost items as previously approved in the budget. The list of the cost items below presents examples of which costs should be allocated under which cost item. Reallocation of cost items which together count for more or 15 percent of the amount of total budget (main) cost item requires an approval by EDUFI/MFA through a formal Change Request.

Salaries

Salary costs are broken down in three cost items: The salaries and fees of the coordinating HEI (Cost item 1), The salaries and fees of the developing country partner (Cost item 2) and the salaries and fees of the Finnish partner HEIs (Cost Item 3).

The salaries of the Finnish HEI experts comprise the direct salary costs multiplied by an indirect employee cost (personnel cost-co-efficient).

All HEIs must use permanent staff for carrying out the core project activities but it is possible to recruit assisting staff for administration, organising events, dissemination activities etc. Each project staff member, in Finland and in the partner countries, must keep record on their working time by an hourly basis. Working time records/time sheets of the staff must be approved according to the procedures of each HEI. Time sheets must include the name of the employee, date, hours reported to the project, tasks and signatures by the employer and employee. The salaries and working time records of all HEIs are monitored against outputs and activities. Time sheets are not attached to the annual reports, but are stored at the HEIs, and will be checked in the final audit and during monitoring visits by EDUFI. Please indicate the total working hours of each staff member in the financial report. Also contracts of the staff working for the projects will be checked during the monitoring visits by EDUFI.

Travel costs

Travel costs (cost item 4) include travel and accommodation costs and per diems for the Coordinating, Southern and Finnish Partner HEIs.

In Finland, the Finnish regulations of the Finnish State Travel Regulation[1] apply. Partner country experts are paid according to their own country specific regulations, however in such a way that the costs do not exceed the amounts in the Finnish State Travel Regulation.

When travelling between Southern partner countries, local daily allowances can be applied, but they may not exceed the maximum amounts of the Finnish State Travel Regulation. It is advisable to discuss the travel regulations between all partners and agree on common procedures (i.e. per diem rates and travel reimbursements) to follow during the entire project period to avoid misunderstandings.

Services and subcontracting

Costs pertaining to services provided by non-academic partners and subcontractors are budgeted under services and subcontracting (cost item 5). As non-academic partners can be allocated resources only through sub-contracting, The Act on Public Procurement and Concession Contracts (1397/2016) or partner country procurement act and HEI-specific procurement processes are to be followed when subcontracting. Examples of services and subcontracting costs include:

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[1] The Finnish Travel regulations are updated annually. Please check the latest version from the webpage of the Ministry of Finance.

- Interpretation and translation
- Dissemination of results
- License fees
- Technical services
- Catering costs and rents in moderation
- The mandatory audit(s) conducted by an external, authorized auditor (see Financial audit)
- Other outsourced services or activities

However, in basic functions of the projects, outsourcing or subcontracting is not preferred as generating sustainable results can best be made by using permanent staff. In principle, consultants may not be used. The main assignments or activities of the project may not be passed further to external agencies unless deemed necessary for the achievement of the project objectives. These types of assignments must be planned to directly support the institutional development of partner country HEIs.

Generally, hospitality costs are not eligible costs in the HEI ICI programme. Possible hospitality costs should be covered by the institutions' and not from HEI ICI funding, which is Official Development Aid (ODA). Direct costs related to workshop, trainings and seminar arrangements can be accepted as eligible costs, these can include catering costs. Concerning catering costs, a list of participants must be available for auditing purposes. Funds cannot be used for gifts or alcohol.

The overhead costs
The overhead percentage remains the same throughout the project in Finnish HEIs.

The direct administrative costs of the Finnish HEIs
Only administrative costs which are not included in the full-cost model overheads (e.g. bank transfer costs, exchange gain/loss), can be reported under direct administrative costs (Cost item 7).

The administrative costs of Southern partner HEIs
No undefined general overhead costs are accepted under this cost item. The southern partner HEIs may include administrative costs directly related to project implementation, as well as costs pertaining to project management support services (excluding salaries).

Examples of administrative costs include venue rents and facility costs, internet, bank transfer fees, exchange gains and losses, accounting services, photocopying and printing or other indirect costs. Administrative costs need to include a clear description of the purchased services/items and be

verifiable from the bookkeeping. The administrative costs cannot include costs that are not eligible according to the HEI ICI programme rules.

Fixed assets, Southern partners

Fixed assets (cost item 9) can be procured for the Southern HEIs only. Procurements must be made according to national and/or institutional procurement regulations. As a generic rule, procurements are done in the partner country. Explanations must be provided if any fixed asset has been procured from Finland due to difficulties to make the procurement in the partner country. Even if procurement was conducted in Finland, the fixed assets must be registered as the partner institution's property. The procurement offices in the partner HEI are a good place to begin any procurement processes.

At the end of the project, fixed assets will remain the property of the southern institution for which they have primarily been procured for and which has used them. The Coordinating Finnish HEI must ensure that fixed assets are formally recorded as the partner HEI's property and that there is a plan for their maintenance after the project funding has ended. In the final project report, a list of all procured fixed assets is required for the purposes of programme-level evaluation.

Please note the rules relating to subcontracting: Act on Discretionary Government Transfers (Valtionavustuslaki 688/2001) and The Act on Public Procurement and Concession Contracts (1397/2016).

Contingency costs

Contingency costs (cost item 10) can be at most 10% of the total costs of the project. The Project Board must approve any use of the contingency budget, but project does not have to submit a change request form to EDUFI. Contingency budget can be reallocated to other cost items. The reallocated costs are still to be reported under Contingency cost item in the financial report. Kindly note that possible accessibility costs for people with special needs are to be covered from the contingency costs.

Transfer of funds

The coordinating Finnish HEI invoices the state aid from EDUFI and makes funds available for the partners through money transfers. Funds can be transferred as advances to the partner HEIs or

against payment requests. It is advisable to discuss the possible options with the partners in advance and include the protocol already in the partnership agreement (see [Partnership agreement](#)). The payments are made through the official accounts of the partner HEI based on time sheets and receipts translated in English.

Self-financing

The HEI ICI projects must have a minimum of 20% self-financing and the state aid can thus amount to a maximum of 80% of the total project budget. The self-financing can consist of state allocations for the general functioning at the HEI, income from business activity or commercial or business activities, donations or salaries.

The fulfilment of the self-financing requirement must be monitored and reported, and any problems must be reported without delay. The fulfilment of the self-financing is followed annually. If the project is unable to fulfil the self-financing requirement in the end of the project period, the MFA funding will be reduced accordingly. Self-financing is compulsory for all Finnish partners and optional for Southern partners, although it recommended that all partner participate even with a small share to the self-financing. Project partners can decide themselves how much each partner contributes for the self-financing share so that the 20% minimum requirement is fulfilled.

In the financial report, the shares of the state aid and self-financing are calculated on the basis of the total sum. Thus, projects do not need to report which costs are covered with MFA funding and which is self-financing. However, all costs, including costs covered with self-financing, must be verifiable in the bookkeeping. If non-academic partners provide in-kind self-financing for the project (e.g. working time used for the project) a clear calculation including a list of tasks and signature, has to be attached to the financial report.

Tips for Financial management

Based on the most common issues and best practices from previous HEI ICI programmes, we have gathered some tips for financial management. The tips have been collected from previous HEI ICI projects' coordinators and staff. Please note that these are only general tips and may not be applied in all partner countries and/or projects as such.

COMMON CHALLENGES	TIPS TO OVERCOME THEM
HEI ICI admin rules do not fit with Southern HEIs' procedures, for example: • different bookkeeping procedures • overheads costs • per diem practices	Go through the financial management practices and HEI ICI programme rules in the beginning of the project between all partners. Involve HEIs' financial administration staff already in the planning phase and during the whole project period. Should there be contradicting practices, try to find a compromise or contact EDUFI.
Overheads are not allowed for Southern partners	No undefined overheads for Southern HEIs are allowed but admin costs may include direct administrative costs and costs pertaining from project management support services. Examples of administrative costs: venue rents and facility costs, internet, bank transfer fees, exchange gains and losses, accounting services, photocopying and printing or other indirect costs. Administrative costs need to include a clear description of the purchased services/items and be verifiable from the bookkeeping.
The different fiscal years and practices cause delays in financial reporting between the partners	Discuss and agree on the financial reporting timetable and on reporting practices in the beginning of the project To send receipts, time sheets, etc. for the coordinator, some projects have used file sending

	programmes (i.e. Funet) or they take picture of the receipts and send them as soon as possible to the Finnish coordinator. The receipt/time sheets must be stored and available for the monitoring and auditing purposes.
Financial administration is time-consuming and requires resources	Allocate enough resources and working time for the financial management in all partner countries, for example a separate administrative coordinator is worth considering.
Difficulties to follow self-financing, especially in the South	If the self-financing originates as in-kind contribution from private sources and cannot be registered to the bookkeeping, a separate document should be prepared and stored for monitoring/auditing purposes. Self-financing is not compulsory for Southern partners but even a small contribution signals institutional commitment.
Slow bank services when transferring money, expensive bank services and exchange course rate losses	Reserve enough time when transferring money to the partners especially if there are no previous experiences of the bank used. Exchange rate losses and bank services are eligible costs and can be reported as project costs.
Issues with procurements	Always start the procurement process by contacting the procurement offices at the coordinating and the partner HEIs.

	Reserve enough time for the procurement process and do not leave the process till the end of the project period.

If for some exceptional reason, e.g. the procurement process is not successful in the partner country, the procurement can be made in Finland. Explanations must be provided for any possible procurement made in Finland.

Even if procurement was conducted in Finland, the fixed assets must be registered as the partner institution's property. |
| Unsure whether a cost is eligible or not | Generally, all costs that directly benefit achieving the results of the project are eligible.

Direct costs related to workshop, trainings and seminar arrangements can be accepted as eligible costs, these can include catering costs. Funds cannot be used for hospitality costs (e.g. gifts or alcohol).

Familiarise yourself with the HEI ICI programme document, General terms and conditions of state aid and The Finnish Travel regulations. In cases of uncertainty, please contact EDUFI.

HEI ICI funding is Official Development Aid, so the rules for eligible costs in some cases may be stricter compared to other funding sources. |

3. Monitoring and self-evaluation

The HEI ICI project is expected to organise its **data collection for monitoring purposes during the inception phase**. Monitoring needs to be organised so that it feeds relevant and timely information to the decision-makers. Direct feedback from stakeholders in seminars and training sessions should be collected and the key observations discussed jointly. Use of qualitative and process indicators is recommended especially for locating changes in working methods, attitudes and commitment.

Self-evaluation workshop using participatory methods should be organised within the second year of the project implementation.

EDUFI and MFA reserve right to make monitoring visits to the projects. They also reserve right to make project or programme level evaluations.

HEI ICI projects are subject to ongoing supervision and monitoring by EDUFI. The objectives of monitoring are:

- to stay up to date on project implementation and progress
- to review the use of the funds
- to provide assistance, if needed, during implementation and ensure that projects are achieving their objectives in accordance with their Work Plan

Monitoring is divided in two parts: desk monitoring and field monitoring. **Desk monitoring** refers to day-to-day monitoring of the project's progress by e.g. analysing the mandatory reports (annual and final reports), processing Change Request forms and assisting projects in their implementation process.

Field monitoring refers to meetings between representatives of the project and EDUFI either in Finland or in partner countries. In addition to EDUFI, representatives from MFA may join the field monitoring visits. EDUFI strives to visit all projects at least once during the programme period either in Finland or a partner country. EDUFI pays their own monitoring travel costs.

The purpose of the field monitoring visits is to assess the implementation and impact of the HEI ICI programme in Finland and in the southern higher education institutions. Typically, the visit entails analytical discussions on the project's progress and its relevance, ownership and impact with the project staff and representatives of the university. Before the monitoring visit, EDUFI sends the

hosting HEI a Monitoring Visit Guideline with more information on how to prepare for the monitoring visit.

Monitoring visits also include **a financial review** which aims to ensure that funds are used appropriately, and that the financial management of the project adheres to the programme rules. Financial coordination and the related procedures, the project budget (incl. self-financing) and the eligibility of project costs are all subject to monitoring as part of the review. Bookkeeping records, documentation of working hours, employment contracts and the clearances of the partner universities will also be checked. The financial review further monitors that there is a clear separation between the MFA funding and other funding. The financial review is typically conducted in cooperation with the project staff and the university's financial services. Observations from the monitoring visits are communicated with the project staff both during the visits and in a separate monitoring feedback sent by email to the project coordinator after the monitoring has taken place. The monitoring feedback is also shared with the MFA.

The ideal schedule for the field monitoring is during spring after the projects have submitted their annual reports. After annual reporting either an online discussion of full field monitoring visits will be organised. The aim is to reduce overlap and unnecessary repetition between reporting and monitoring. For example, the projects are reporting their administrative procedures only in their first annual report and after that these operations will be checked during the monitoring visits. The field monitoring visits will start from 2022 onwards.

4. Reporting

Regular reporting provides HEI ICI projects with a valuable overview of project progress and the use of funds and indicate where steering will most be needed in the future. They are also formally required by MFA and EDUFI.

Reporting focuses strongly on linking the projects to the overarching Programme level Results Framework and its outlined impact, outcome and indicators. All reports include a financial section on the use of the budget, as well as a qualitative part, to monitor the progress of the activities and the achievement of the planned results. An online system is used to submit reports.

In addition to the written reporting, interview might be arranged between EDUFI and the HEI ICI projects to follow-up and discuss unclear issues.

Reporting Schedule

The coordinating HEI will in collaboration with partners prepare and submit **four reports during the project implementation period 2020-2024**. If the project life span is shorter than 4 years, the final report may be submitted earlier. Reports are submitted to EDUFI according to the following schedule:

1) Annual Progress Report I by 31 March 2021
2) Annual Progress Report II by 31 March 2022
3) Annual Progress Report III by 31 March 2023
4) Annual Progress Report IV by 31 March 2024
5) A Final Report by 31 October 2024

The reports should be prepared and compiled jointly by the project partners. **All reports are also to be discussed and approved by the Project Board before submission.** The minutes of the Project Board meeting will be checked as part of EDUFI's monitoring visits.

EDUFI will analyse the annual reports and provide approval/response to the HEI ICI project within two months from receiving the report and launch the procedure for annual payment. EDUFI will analyse results information from reports and the websites of the projects and prepare a compiled programme level report by the 30th May.

Annual Reporting

The aim of the annual reports is to follow the progress in project implementation and gain important input on project results so far. Annual report is a major communication tool between the project partners. Therefore, it is essential that the annual reports are prepared jointly with the project partners using the draft versions before filling in the online report.

The Annual Progress Reports cover all activities up until the end of the previous year. Annual reports should specify significant changes made in the project implementation plans. Which activities were not realized? Which challenges were met and how were they were solved? Possible updated versions of work plan or budget should be attached to the report, together with a Change Request Form if needed.

The Annual Report consists of an **online tool for the narrative reporting,** with the **following attachments:**

- Financial report in Excel format
- Accounts extract; bookkeeping printout with project number from coordinating HEI, preferable in Excel format
- Events and trainings table with data
- Updated Risk Matrix
- Project level results (word)

Reporting content

The following elements are covered in the online tool for the narrative reporting: overview of project implementation, achievement of results, consistency with the Finnish development policy and visibility. In addition, during the first annual reports the reporting includes questions related to project management. After the first reporting, these questions will be covered during the monitoring visits.

Please find a list of reporting elements in Attachment 2, HEI ICI Online Reporting Content 2020-2024.

Results Based Management as a methodology

Results Based Management (RBM) is a specific methodology with a special rationale. More information on the RBM can be obtained from the publication Results Based Management (RBM) in Finland's Development Cooperation – Concepts and Guiding Principles (MFA, 2015). This guidance is supported by guidelines on Human Rights Based Approach, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Crosscutting Objectives, Risk Management, Corruption Prevention and other relevant MFA guidelines which are available through MFA web page.

Results reporting and linkage to HEI ICI Programme level

a) Reporting against the programme level impact and outcome indicators (see ANNEX 3)

A particular focus of the reporting is put on demonstrating the change process through monitoring the selected indicators outlining the results. The report focuses on how the project's objectives have been met, what kind of impact it has had, and whether the expected results have been achieved.

In the HEI ICI programme, the project linkages to the *Programme level indicator for outcome and for impact* will also be monitored in all projects.

Impact of the programme:

The long-term expected impact of the programme is to strengthen the capacity of HEIs in the partner countries in order to contribute to well-functioning, relevant and accessible higher education for the students.

> *Indicator 1: The benefit to students measured in terms of passed new training (total number of students who have passed at least education equivalent to 5 ETCS).*

Outcome of the programme:

In the medium term, the programme expected outcome is improved institutional management and teaching capacity in HEIs in the partner countries participating in the programme.

> *Indicator 2: Number of faculties, schools or equivalent in the partner universities where capacity building process (curriculum updating, pedagogical updating, a training package equivalent to 5 ECTS credits, administrative upgrading etc) has been finalised and approved by the university*

b) Reporting against SDG related indicators (See ANNEX 3)

The MFA has been assigned to report to the minister annually and to the parliament every fourth year on the advancement of the major programmes like HEI ICI. The reporting is made against the SDG targets and indicators whenever possible. Therefore, the projects are requested to report on the following indicators annually:

> *Indicator 3: Number of educational institutions, incl. higher education, reached through measures aimed to increase their capacity*
>
> *Indicator 4: Number of teachers and teacher education students who participated in pre- or in-service training*
>
> *Indicator 5: Number of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) partnerships with education and research institutions and private sector actors, number of solutions that enhance climate resilient and low-emission development*

c) Reporting against project level indicators

In addition to the programme level indicators, each project has project level indicators to be reported annually.

The annual report must show clearly how the project resources have been used and whether their use corresponds to the aims set out in the Project Document and the annual plan drawn up at the beginning of the year. In addition, changes from the original plans should be reported. The reasons for the changes, their impact and corrective measures should be briefly described. **Annual reports reflect the project's Work Plan and are directly based on the approved Results Framework**.

The primary use of the project level indicators is communicating project advancement among the project implementers. Therefore, data based on quantitative and qualitative indicators which can be collected easily, and which has direct value for direct communication between partner agencies is most useful.

Final Reporting

In the final report projects report on their progress during the last reporting period and reflect on the results and impact of the project as a whole. The aim of the Final Report is to analyse the final impact and results of the project activities that have been implemented.

The final report summarizes the achievements of the project, describes the progress made in the project towards the project objectives and discusses both the expected results and the actual results of the project. The final report should reflect on the achieved results, good practices, sustainability and possible challenges during the whole project period; in short how well the project targets have been reached and if not why.

Attachments for final report:

- Financial report (covering the entire project period, in Excel format)
- Bookkeeping report (printout from the accounting system covering the last reporting period, in Excel format)
- Audit report(s)
- Updated Events table
- List of procurements
- Possible external evaluation reports

Financial reporting

The annual reports and the final report always include a financial report. Financial reporting consists of an Excel document (template available on the HEI ICI website) and the coordinating HEI's bookkeeping report. In the final year, an external audit report is also required (see Financial Audit).

Financial reporting compiles the costs incurred during a reporting period. Items of expenditure are reported in the financial report under the same cost items as approved in the budget. The coordinating HEI has the overall responsibility of the expenditure according to the approved budget. However, the report should be prepared in close collaboration with all partners.

The financing by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (80%) and the amount of self-financing (20%) are automatically calculated in the Excel template on the basis of the total annual expenditure. There is no separate space for cost item-specific reporting of the self-financing part.

The template contains separate sheets for each reporting period, and the same document is to be used throughout the whole project implementation period. The data inserted in the annual reports automatically show in the summary sheet. If you add rows, double-check that the formulas remain functional and that the amounts add up. Use the commenting function to present additional details on the use of funds.

Only costs that occur between the HEI ICI contract period 1 September 2020-31 August 2024 and that are directly linked to the project activities can be charged to the project. Costs must be actual, accrued costs that are verifiable from the project bookkeeping.

The bookkeeping report and the financial report should be convergent. If they do not match, please provide an explanation for the variation. If the expenditures of the partner university are not shown on the coordinating HEI's bookkeeping report, please indicate in the financial report which costs are in which bookkeeping. Only the coordinating HEI's bookkeeping report is required. Partners' bookkeeping is reviewed during the monitoring visits.

EDUFI will, if needed, request further information or clarification on financial reporting from the coordinating HEI. A delay in reporting or neglecting to report may lead to the MFA refusing to pay the granted aid and/or recovering aid already paid.

Please ensure that the project's bookkeeping report includes direct salaries, indirect personnel costs and overhead expenses as well as transfers from EDUFI and transfers to the partner universities.

A cost is to be reported in the year that it is shown on the accounts extract, regardless of when the actual activity happened.

Keep the following project-related documentation for monitoring purposes:

- Time sheets of the key experts
- employment contracts
- Fixed assets register
- All documentation related to possible subcontracting, audits and procurements made in the project

EDUFI/MFA preliminarily approves the financial reports of the annual reporting. If necessary EDUFI/MFA or the projects themselves can make corrections to the project costs during the programme period. The final approvement occurs only after the final reporting when all the project costs have been audited by an external financial auditor and auditing report has been submitted.

Financial audit

An external financial audit is required at the end of project implementation from all HEI ICI projects. The auditor must be independent from the audited organization. Audits shall be carried out in accordance with international auditing standards.

The external audit report(s) is delivered with the final project report at the end of the implementation period. The audit report should be as comprehensive as possible in order to clarify for project partners and possible evaluators the financial standing of the project. The audit report(s) must be available in English.

An audit report is requested from all project partners. The Finnish HEI is responsible for auditing the entire project. However, if local expenses are recorded as part of the project partner's accounting in their country, these expenses must be audited locally. The local auditor must meet the statutory qualification requirements in their country. The Finnish auditor issues an opinion concerning the project partners' audit report(s).

The Admin Handbook will be update later with the guidelines for the auditor that can be used for compiling the terms of reference for the audit. Also, The General conditions and HEI ICI project conditions include instructions for the audit.

How to Submit a Report

HEI ICI reports are submitted through the EDUFI online reporting system (Valtionavustusjärjestelmä = VA-system). The system provides an online form for narrative reporting and an attachment feature for uploading the financial report and other required documents.

For easy circulation, compilation and Project Board approval of the narrative report, projects are advised to use a Report Template in Word format. The template is available on the HEI ICI website and is identical to the online reporting form (Available in autumn 2020).

EDUFI may arrange reporting webinars in the beginning of each year before annual reporting deadlines to give directions and guidelines on how to fill in the online form.

HOW TO SUBMIT A REPORT

1

Enter the online reporting system via a personal link

A personal link will be sent to the Finnish HEI's coordinator from the address no-reply@valtionavustukset.oph.fi. Clicking the link will take you to the electronic reporting form. If you have not received the link, please check your junk mail folder. A new link is sent for each report annually

2

Fill in the narrative report form in the system

The online form is identical to the Report Template, which projects are encouraged to use to prepare their content. The online system saves all input automatically. Kindly note that the online form enforces a character limit in each section.

3

Upload attachments

Attachments are uploaded at the bottom of the online form in the VA-system. Only one file can be uploaded in each of the attachment slots, so please combine files into one as necessary.

4

Submit the report by pressing the "Lähetä käsiteltäväksi" button

Please submit your report on time as the online form cannot be accessed after the deadline. Should EDUFI request changes to your report, the reporting system will be re-opened and changes submitted online.

5. Useful links and document

Below there are listed relevant MFA links and documents that can be useful in the implementation of the HEI ICI project. Links include documents provided by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs concerning various aspects of implementing a development cooperation project.

HEI ICI Programme web page

HEI ICI box communication material

Finland's Development Policy – One world, common future – Towards Sustainable development

Theories of Change and Aggregate Indicators for Finland's Development Policy 2020

Human Rights Based Approach in Finland's Development Cooperation

Results Based Management (RBM) in Finland's Development Cooperation – Concepts and Guiding Principles

The Finnish Approach to Addressing the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Development Cooperation and Policy

Anti-Corruption Handbook

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Change Request Form

(Available also on HEI ICI web page)

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">CHANGE REQUEST FORM
Return a signed copy (scanned) via email to hei.ici@oph.fi</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Date (dd/mm/yyyy): Click or tap to enter a date.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">HEI ICI project acronym: Click or tap here to enter text.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">HEI ICI project name: Click or tap here to enter text.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Category of planned change (check all that apply)
☐ Budget   ☐ Fixed assets   ☐ Results Framework   ☐ Staff or Key Experts
☐ Work Plan   ☐ Other, what: Click or tap here to enter text.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Description and arguments for the change
Click or tap here to enter text.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Consequences or risks to be considered for the change
Click or tap here to enter text.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Description of internal decision-making process Describe how the project partners, including the Project Board, have agreed on the change.
Click or tap here to enter text.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Attachments Provide a numbered list of documents you wish to attach to your request. For budget reallocations exceeding 15%, include a revised budget.

Click or tap here to enter text.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Signature and name clarification Signature of the Project Coordinator or other project representative. Electronic signatures accepted.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">For EDUFI use only</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Decision: ☐ Reject   ☐ Approve   ☐ Approve with Conditions</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Justification of Rejection or Approval (incl. possible conditions):</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Signatures on behalf of EDUFI and/or the MFA</td></tr>
</table>

Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	Name & Title	Signature
Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	Name & Title	Signature

Annex 2: HEI ICI Online reporting content 2020-2024

(Reporting documents available on HEI ICI web page)

Annex 3: HEI ICI programme level indicators- methodology and rationale

HEI ICI PROGRAMME-LEVEL INDICATORS

Rationale

Programme level indicators describe the advancement of a single HEI-ICI *project* towards wider goals of the *programme*. The word 'programme' means here the group of 9 projects with similar HEI-ICI programme rules and regulations.

The programme-level indicators A and B emanate from the Programme Document. The programme-level indicators C, E and E emanate from the international SDG-framework. HEI-ICI is expected to contribute towards the fulfilment of the SDGs internationally.

Five indicators

HEI-ICI programme indicators:

1: The benefit to students in terms of passed new training (number of students who have passed education equivalent to min. 5 ETCS). (IMPACT)

2: Number of faculties, schools or equivalent in the partner universities where capacity building process (curriculum updating, pedagogical updating, a training package equivalent to 5 ECTS credits, administrative upgrading etc) has been finalized and approved by the university administration. (OUTCOME)

MFA/SDG-indicators:

3: Number of educational institutions, incl. higher education, reached through measures aimed to increase their capacity
4: Number of teachers and teacher education students who participated in pre- or in-service training
5: Number of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) partnerships with education and research institutions and private sector actors.

1   Indicator: The benefit to students in terms of passed new training (number of students who have passed education equivalent to min. 5 ETCS).

Rationale: Indicator measures the *impact* of the programme: The long-term expected impact of the programme is to strengthen the capacity of HEIs in the partner countries in order to contribute to well-functioning, relevant and accessible higher education for the students.

Methodology: When HEI-ICI project has established new training, and the training has been successfully implemented, the headcount of the students is collected.

Disaggregation: The data is disaggregated by sex.

Data sources: The data is collected from the official student registry of the university whenever possible.

Interpretation for HEI-ICI: The training is interpreted as new when similar training did not exist before or if more than 50 % of the previously existing course has been modified. Only students who have successfully passed the exam are included.

2   Indicator: Number of faculties, schools or equivalent in the partner universities where capacity building process (curriculum updating, pedagogical updating, a training package equivalent to 5 ECTS credits, administrative upgrading etc) has been finalized and approved by the university administration.

Rationale: Indicator measures the *outcome* of the programme; In the medium term, the programme expected outcome is improved institutional management and teaching capacity in HEIs in the partner countries participating in the programme.

Methodology: The aim is to locate processes which have completed and officially approved. The focus is placed upon concrete 'units' or packages which have managed to make a difference. Each process is named. The reporting includes the list of the completed processes. The list leads to a number of processes.

Disaggregation: The processes are classified as a) curriculum updating, pedagogical updating, and/or a training package equivalent to 5 ECTS credits, b) administrative upgrading, c) other.

Data sources: Project monitoring.

Interpretation for HEI-ICI: "Officially approved" means officially approved or institutionally applied in teaching by partner country HEI or a higher educational authority in the partner country. Official approval by other stakeholders is not included.

3   Indicator: Number of educational institutions, incl. higher education, reached through measures aimed to increase their capacity

SDG Target 4.8: Teaching and learning practices and educational environments improved

Rationale: As institutional capacity to improve learning outcomes is difficult to measure, its progress is possible to monitor on the basis of the number of institutions reached through programmes and projects that aim to increase their institutional capacity as such.

Capacity development programmes of educational institutions aim at increasing pedagogical and/or managerial capacity of the institutions. It is assumed that their successful implementation thus leads to improved learning outcomes.

Methodology: Strengthened capacity is understood as institutions that receive support for their capacity development. This can take various forms as per context.

Disagregation: N/A

Data sources: HEI ICI projects

Interpretation for HEI-ICI: When capacity building programme has started, it is enough to report the number of partner HEIs in the developing country.

4   Indicator: Number of teachers and teacher education students who participated in pre- or in-service training. (For global learning crises projects only*)*

SDG target 4.8: Teaching and learning practices and educational environments improved (SDG 4.8.)

Rationale: Poor teaching skills have been identified as a cause of the learning crisis. The pre- and in-service teacher education programmes aim at improving teachers' skills. Better access to teacher education is likely to contribute to improved teaching and learning.

Methodology: The indicator includes also the teachers in vocational schools.

This indicator is derived from SDG4.c.1 Thus, its methodology may be useful: https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/files/Metadata-04-0C-01.pdf

Disaggregation: Sex and disability (at minimum)

Data sources: HEI ICI global learning crises projects: Number of teachers and teacher students who participated in pre- or in-service training.

Interpretation for HEI ICI: This concerns only projects under global learning crises theme. When actual training for teacher students or the in-service training for primary/secondary school teachers has started, the headcount of students, disaggreted by sex, should be done. If disability data (any reported physical disability) is available, this should also be included. Disability data need not be disaggregated. The number of the HEI level professors or lecturers trained need not be counted.

5   Indicator: Number of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) partnerships with education and research institutions and private sector actors

SDG target 9.5: Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending

Rationale: To advance sustainable development and co-creation of innovations requires strengthening partnerships between education institutions (universities, colleges, etc.) and private sector actors (enterprises, business membership organizations, etc.) that focus on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) supported by Finland.

Typically, a STI partnership is a partnership between universities and colleges focusing on knowledge-transfer and capacity building (HEI-ICI). Here, a STI partnership is between education institution and private sector actor/entity and/or focusing on enhancing skills and knowledge to support private sector innovation capacity related core business.

Methodology: This indicator is mainly quantitative, counting the number of STI partnerships and/or solutions created by the partnerships.

Disaggregation: N/A

Sources results data: HEI ICI projects

Interpretation for HEI-ICI: When HEI ICI project has launched cooperation with private enterprises, the number of private enterprises is given. The number refers to the private enterprises which have actually and actively participated in HEI-ICI project events. Preferable at a minimum of three events per private enterprise. Thus, the figure does not include private enterprises which have once participated in mass seminars, worked indirectly with HEI ICI project or visited the HEI-ICI lab/library/contact center. For a private enterprise to be counted, no MOU or other official partnership agreement is needed.

Annex 4: Auditing guidelines
(Available later)