

PROGRAMME DOCUMENT  
HEI-ICI Programme 2020-24

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS  
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION INSTRUMENT

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

*In the short term, the programme aims at improving institutional management and teaching capacity in HEIs in the partner countries participating in the programme.*

**The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland & Finnish National Agency for Education**

Version  
15.2.2019

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<b>Abbreviations</b>	
EDUFI	Finnish National Agency for Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEI-ICI	Higher Education Institutions - Institutional Cooperation Instrument
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PD	Project Document
RBM	Results Based Management
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal (UN 2030 agenda)

## Background

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Investing in higher education institutions (HEIs) provides wide societal benefits for developing countries. HEIs educate students who are often employed after graduation in leading positions in public, private or third sector. HEIs provide critical knowledge which takes part in the construction of the societies.

It is well acknowledged that many developing countries have increasing numbers of youths who manage to finish their secondary education but still lack employable skills. Developing countries have taken up the challenge by expanding access to tertiary education. While HEI enrolment is increasing, ensuring the quality of education throughout the tertiary education sector remains a problem. The graduates of the tertiary sector do not necessarily have skills suitable for the working places.

The scene of HEIs in developing countries is changing rapidly. Beside public universities there are private providers. International HEIs build joint degree programmes with developing countries but also attract students to their own premises abroad. E-libraries and distance education provide expanded access to teaching materials. New approaches are also being developed for former degree holders to update their skills as the labour market requirements change. While internationalisation of universities and the adoption of modern pedagogy and technology advance quickly, it does not reach all universities at the similar pace.

The HEI-ICI programme has existed since 2009. During the years it has grown into a well-established programme. Partnerships with universities in more than 20 countries have been developed. These partnerships have managed to generate numerous faculty and subject specific study programmes and courses. The relevance of education to the society has received due attention. The programmes have been generally successful because they have been based on local interest and ownership. The partnership approach, pedagogical skills and scientific expertise of the Finnish universities has been much appreciated.

The current HEI-ICI programme is built on the experiences of the previous phase, the changing situation of HEIs in the developing countries, and the lessons learnt from the implementation of the Finnish development policy.

### 1. Development policy framework

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**The HEI-ICI Programme supports Finland's development policy and cooperation objectives and guidelines.** Finland's development policy and development cooperation are guided by the **2030 Agenda**<sup>1</sup> for Sustainable Development, endorsed within the UN. The core goal of Finland's development policy is to eradicate extreme poverty and to reduce poverty and inequality.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/>

Finland is committed to supporting less developed countries in their efforts to implement the Agenda, based on goals presented in the Government Report on Development Policy<sup>2</sup>.

### 1.1. Results Based Management (RBM)

RBM is applied in all phases of Finland's development projects. RBM promotes the use of information and evidence on results (collected through monitoring and evaluation), to inform decision-making on the design, resourcing and delivery of programmes and activities

The guiding principles for RBM in Finland's development cooperation are as follows:

- The results' targets are based on partner countries development priorities and/or the development challenges of their people.
- The Results Chain and Results Framework outline the intervention logic from inputs to outputs to the outcome and long-term impact.
- Planning, monitoring and evaluation are geared towards ensuring that results are achieved.
- Credible information on results, based on indicators, as well as risks and assumptions, is collected, analysed and used for managing and guiding the programme implementation, learning and accountability.
- Risk management is an integral part of project identification, planning and implementation. RBM needs to be adjusted so that major risks will be avoided. However, some level of risk taking is also approved, especially in fragile countries.

**RBM practices in Finnish development cooperation are available in the publication: Results Based Management in Finland's Development Cooperation – Concepts and Guiding Principles (2015)**<sup>3</sup>

### 1.2. The Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA)

The realization of human rights is a key goal in Finnish Development Policy. The HRBA entails the systematic integration of human rights as a means of development cooperation. Human rights principles are considered and applied in all phases of the project cycle.

The minimum level of the HRBA in any intervention is *human rights sensitive*, which requires a basic assessment of the human rights situation and the human rights implications of the activities in the context. HEI-ICI projects are advised to screen their project cycle based on the **human rights principles**, in particular ensuring possibilities of beneficiaries to participate on equal manners, with a gender sensitive lens, to ensure all processes and information on the projects are transparent and to ensure the activities do not contribute to any indirect or direct discrimination.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://um.fi/development-policy-and-development-cooperation>

<sup>3</sup> [https://um.fi/doc/RBM\\_vleisohje/files/assets/basic-html/page-1.html#](https://um.fi/doc/RBM_vleisohje/files/assets/basic-html/page-1.html#)

Many projects promote international standards in relation to the right to education, while some other can advance fulfilment of the freedom of information and expression, the right to work, the right to food, the right to water or the right to an adequate standard of living for example. A progressive level usually requires cooperation with different stakeholders including state authorities as well as inclusion of right-holders in the process.

More information on the HRBA can be obtained from the publication **Human Rights Based Approach in in Finland’s Development Cooperation<sup>4</sup> (2015)**.

### 1.3. Cross-cutting objectives

Cross-cutting objectives refer to issues that Finnish development policy emphasizes in all kinds of projects and policy decisions. In other words, they are considered in mainstreaming, targeted action and policy dialogue. These objectives are

- gender equality,
- non-discrimination, and
- climate sustainability.

For further instruction see guidelines “Crosscutting objectives in Finnish development policy.” (forthcoming, see EDUFI website).

### 1.4. Capacity development

Capacity development is defined as a continuous process of increasing the abilities of an organisation to perform its core functions, solve problems and achieve its objectives. In HEI-ICI programme capacity development may target HEI personnel but ultimately it should focus on the organisation, e.g. the capacities of the participating HEIs as institutions. It may also address the external factors influencing the functioning of the HEIs and the operational environment.

Further reading on capacity development terminology can be obtained for instance from the UNDP manual “Capacity Development: a UNDP Primer” or from the EuropeAid web pages.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *Human Rights Based Approach in in Finland’s Development Cooperation(2015):*

[https://um.fi/documents/35732/48132/human\\_rights\\_based\\_approach\\_in\\_finlands\\_development\\_cooperation\\_\\_guidance](https://um.fi/documents/35732/48132/human_rights_based_approach_in_finlands_development_cooperation__guidance)[https://um.fi/documents/35732/48132/human\\_rights\\_based\\_approach\\_in\\_finlands\\_development\\_cooperation\\_guidance](https://um.fi/documents/35732/48132/human_rights_based_approach_in_finlands_development_cooperation_guidance)

<sup>5</sup> *Capacity Development: A UNDP Primer:*

[http://www.undp.org/content/dam/aplaws/publication/en/publications/capacity-development/capacity-development-a-undp-primer/CDG\\_PrimerReport\\_final\\_web.pdf](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/aplaws/publication/en/publications/capacity-development/capacity-development-a-undp-primer/CDG_PrimerReport_final_web.pdf)

[https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/capacity-development\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/capacity-development_en)

## 1.5. Anti-corruption policy

Finland has a very strong policy against corruption. The MFA's anti-corruption policy covers all project activities, as well as the staff of organisations involved with the projects. Good governance principles need to be taken into account in all development interventions and across all phases of the programme cycle. The anti-corruption framework in the **MFA 2012 Anti-Corruption Handbook for Development Practitioners**<sup>6</sup> provides tools to be used in the mainstreaming process.

Finland's development cooperation is carried out by means of public funds. The MFA takes all suspicions of the misuse of public funds seriously and therefore the ministry has created a web service called <https://vaarinkayttoilmoitus.fi><sup>7</sup> where anyone can anonymously inform about their suspicion about the misuse of Finnish development cooperation funds.

## 2. An introduction to the HEI-ICI programme

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### 2.1. Legal basis

The Act on Discretionary Government Transfers (Valtionavustuslaki 688/2001) is applicable for the financing of grants in the programme.

The Act on Public Procurement and Concession Contracts (1397/2016) shall be applicable when procurement is conducted within the project.

The Finnish HEI operates under the Universities Act (558/2009, amended 2011) or/and Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014). The official document directing the application process and project implementation are the following:

1. The Call for Proposals and the Call for Final Applications available in the EDUFI website [http://www.cimo.fi/programmes/hei\\_ici](http://www.cimo.fi/programmes/hei_ici)
2. Programme Document HEI-ICI 2020-24
3. The decision for the state grant for a project. This has an annex: the general terms and conditions of state aid granted by the MFA for development cooperation work by HEIs,
4. The HEI-ICI administrative handbook.

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<sup>6</sup> MFA 2012 Anti-Corruption Handbook for Development Practitioners (2012):

[https://um.fi/documents/35732/48132/anti\\_corruption\\_handbook\\_for\\_development\\_practitioners](https://um.fi/documents/35732/48132/anti_corruption_handbook_for_development_practitioners)

<sup>7</sup> <https://um.fi/do-you-suspect-misuse-of-development-cooperation-funds->

The legal stipulations of the partner countries are applied as appropriate.

## 2.2. Financing frame

The total project financing available is 12,2 million €. About 800.000 € are reserved for administrative costs of the EDUFI.

The HEI-ICI programme supports projects for a **maximum of 4 years**, to be implemented mainly during the years 2020-2024. Given the lengthy decision making process it is likely that the projects may start only as late as March-October 2020 and, therefore, the duration of the individual projects may continue up to October 2024. [For exact possible date for project start and end, see EDUFI website. See also section 3.1.]

The state aid of the HEI-ICI programme falls between 300.000 and 2.000.000 €. The financing rules are formulated so that they are expected to encourage towards ***thematic institutional cooperation between Finnish higher education institutions. Further details on this are available in section 4.1.***

The maximum amount of projects to be financed is 20 but, as a consequence of the priorities of the call, the likely number is expected to be significantly lower.

The university costs will be based on so-called total-cost model. The detailed terms for financial support are described in section 4 below.

## 2.3. The purpose and objectives of the programme

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

### 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: 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 administration.*

### Outputs of the programme:

1. The HEIs in partner countries have improved capacity to provide high-quality education to an increased number of students.



2. The institutional capacity and relevance of educational attainments of the HEIs in partner countries is improved.
3. The partnerships between Finnish HEIs and developing country HEIs stimulates mutual internationalisation and mutual learning.

Note:

The *Programme level indicator for outcome and for impact* will be monitored in all projects.

The Project level impact, outcome and outputs can be defined according to the needs on the ground. They can be formulated so that the project is easily understandable and clear in what it aims to do. However, the project outcome should be in line with the programme level outcome and impact.

The project outcome and outputs should be based on the eligible themes and the eligible methods of capacity building.

### **Theory of change of the programme**

The key question for the programme is the following:

***What are the tools and methods to scale up the project level activities from experimental approaches to wider solutions benefiting a large number of students within the partner university, partner country and even further?***

This question can be phrased also in the following terms:

***Given the rapid change in the global set-up of universities, the advancement of Open Educational Resources (OER), Open Distance Learning (ODL) and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), changing needs in the employment markets, increased demand for HEIs and the mobility of students, how can we support the developing country HEIs to prepare for the future?***

While the new online technologies need to be accompanied by traditional pedagogical methods (i.e. blended methods) to create learning outcomes, and while their adoption of new pedagogical methods requires high investment in content in order to attract student, they are increasingly important for the speeding up the curriculum changes and scaling up the access to students in the HEIs in developing countries. Since the same changes are taking place in Finland, there can be a win-win situation in creating content/courses which are also relevant for Finland but which can, after the cultural adaptation, have potential for wide markets beyond the partner universities in the developing countries.

The change theory postulates that if the Finnish HEIs working on similar issues collaborate together and if they are able to expand the cooperation from well-established partner country universities to cover also smaller and less resourced partner country universities, the networking creates the benefits of efficiency, scaling up as well as mutual learning. If suitable, the partnerships can also include CSOs and private companies. However, the total constellation of the partnership should be manageable.

The change theory is based on the premise that the institutional scene of the universities is changing globally and that the solutions of the partnership programmes need to be forward looking.

The success of the programme and the realization of the expected impact and outcome depend heavily on the launched projects and how well they will be able to reach their own project objectives.

#### **2.4. The eligible themes**

The themes are based on Finnish development policy and Finnish expertise.

The project needs to focus on one of the following three themes:

1. Solving the learning crisis
2. Climate change
3. Innovations

##### ***Solving the learning crisis***

The World Bank has demonstrated that several developing countries have witnessed the problem of low learning outcomes in primary and secondary schools. This problem relates to teacher capacities, teaching methods, teaching materials, teacher motivation, teacher incentives, teacher-teacher dynamics within the school, teacher-student relations, teacher-headmaster-community relations, student capacities and student motivations. These issues may partly result from wider policy, administrative and financial choices. These issues have cultural, language related, gendered and age related dimensions.

Partly similar observations have been made also on vocational training. The HEIs in developing countries have a role in educating their students to become as teachers also in vocational training institutions.

The solving of the learning crisis at a scale requires development efforts within the HEIs and teacher training institutions which combine pedagogical tools (including modern ICT-based tools when relevant) with socially and culturally sensitive practical examples.

##### ***Climate change***

Climate change mitigation and adaptation concern solutions which cross over traditional scientific disciplines. These include economic, social and ecological considerations. Thus forest, land, water and energy resources need to be utilised in a sustainable manner.

HEIs have an important role in acquiring and sharing information on climate change within the developing countries but also, together with other actors, in advocating solutions which are both efficient and provide employment opportunities in scale.

##### ***Social and technical innovations for employability***

Social and technical innovations may provide possibilities for poor countries to jump over major problems in logistics, communication, service provisioning and strengthening value chains. In developing countries,

the focus is mainly on adapting existing innovations to local conditions rather than launching completely new innovations.

The HEIs have a special role in the advancement of information on innovations in developing countries. They have both potentially access to new scientific knowledge and means to share this to the students and wider audiences. Here focus is placed on innovations with prospects for enhancing employability in large scale.

Orientation towards innovations concerns many disciplines but often they often have a link to commercial and technical disciplines. Cooperation with non-academic actors like companies may be useful here.

## 2.5. The eligible methods for advancing capacity building

Finnish HEI ICI partnerships can jointly apply for funding e.g. for the development of:

- curricula,
- teaching methods,
- teaching materials, including on-line materials,
- access to existing teaching materials,
- accreditation and approval mechanisms,
- equipment upgrading,
- training of trainers,
- thematic workshops and seminars,
- staff capacity building through exchange visits,
- peer learning and growing expertise,
- administrative and leadership structures,
- quality monitoring mechanisms,
- thematic networking and internationalisation,
- supportive thematic networking within Finland,
- strengthening the societal roles of HEIs,
- support services, data collection and management tasks related to any of these methods.

The financing **cannot** be used for

- research,
- student or graduate student exchange visits,
- post-graduate studies of individual students.

Since the project period is limited, the outcome of the project and the selection of suitable activities need to be realistic so that the benefits reach the main final beneficiaries, the students.

It is noteworthy that while the programme does not cover research or research training programmes, the upgrading of the skills and capacities at staff level have indirect benefits also for the research capacities of the staff.

## 2.6. HEI-ICI eligible applicants and partners

### Eligible applicants

A Finnish HEI acts as the applicant and coordinator of a HEI-ICI project. The coordinating Finnish HEIs must fulfil the following requirements to be eligible to apply:

1. The Finnish HEI operates under the Universities Act (558/2009, amended 2011) or Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014).
2. The Finnish HEI has the right to provide a public civilizing service in the field of higher education and has the right to award a higher education degree.

Finnish research institutes or trusts are not eligible partners, unless they are directly under the administration of an official HEI and have the right to award higher education degrees.

### Eligible developing country partners

The eligible development country partners function in one or several of the following countries: Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Namibia, Mozambique, Palestine Territories, Egypt, Nepal, Myanmar or Vietnam. The projects in these countries can be supported directly by the Finnish embassy, excluding Eritrea which has a unique position in Finnish development policy

The partner HEIs can be universities, universities of applied sciences or their equivalents, that have the right to award higher education degrees, or teacher training colleges. They can be public or private HEIs but they cannot be owned (majority) by foreign HEIs or foreign companies.

### Partnerships

There can be several partner HEIs from Finland and the developing country, yet the minimum partnership contains one partner HEI from a developing country and one coordinating Finnish HEI.

Finland:

Finnish Universities and Universities of Applied Sciences are encouraged to develop joint applications.

Developing countries:

Several partner HEIs from a partner country can be included in the partnership. A project may include HEIs from several developing countries listed above.

Partnerships are encouraged to engage partner HEIs in the developing country with less experience of international cooperation. This means often new and smaller HEIs located in smaller town, and other financially more vulnerable HEIs.

The project may include methods where a more advanced developing country university (within the eligible countries list) provides expertise to a less advanced country university (within the eligible countries list). This is called south-south cooperation.

### **Collaboration with non-academic stakeholders as associate partners**

It is recommended that the projects cooperate with non-academic stakeholders as associate partners, if relevant in order to achieve the results envisaged. The inclusion of national academic bodies, relevant government agencies, non-government organisations, companies and service providers can be considered to add value in the projects. The non-academic partners can be allocated resources mainly through subcontracting processes.

Activities involving non-academic partners can consist of, for example, networking and liaison activities, information dissemination activities, learning with real-life cases, input in external quality assurance activities and subcontracting for external technical expertise (ICT-services, developing training materials, translation activities, external evaluations).

## **2.7. Roles and responsibilities**

**The MFA** has the main policy-level and programme financing responsibility. The MFA is the funding decision-making authority and the contractual partner of the coordinating HEIs.

**EDUFI** is responsible for the administration of the programme. EDUFI prepares and organises the Call for Proposals, Call for Final Applications, the guidance for applicants, the selection procedure, project monitoring and reporting. EDUFI supports the projects in the planning, implementation and reporting phases. EDUFI provides appropriate communication channels for the programme and reports directly to the MFA.

**The Programme Board** has an advisory role, providing expertise for the implementation and development of the programme. The board consists of members from the MFA, EDUFI, the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Rector's Conferences of the Finnish Universities and the Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences, as well as from the student unions.

**The Finnish coordinating HEI**, in cooperation with partner institutions, bears final responsibility for project implementation and financial management. HEI's are committed to following the guidelines in the HEI-ICI Programme Document and the instructions given by the MFA and EDUFI for project implementation. The coordinator at the Finnish coordinating HEI is the contact point for the MFA (in contractual issues) and EDUFI. Additionally, a person from each partner HEI is nominated as contact person. These persons ensure internal communication and monitor activity implementation.

**The partner country HEI** has the final ownership and responsibility for the capacity development, and is the ultimate owner of the project results. The partner HEIs in the developing countries - including their students, teaching and administrative staff - are the main, direct beneficiaries.

**The Project Board** The decision-making authority in the project lies with a Project Board that consists of representatives of the cooperating HEIs, and of other stakeholders if deemed beneficial for the project. The Project Board should be chaired by a developing country HEI. The members, responsibilities and meeting arrangements of the Project Board should be defined in the Project Document.

The Project Document and budget should include a budgetary provision for the Project Board meetings.

The key function of the Project Board is to monitor project progress and to support the cooperating HEIs in carrying out the activities. The Project Board is obliged to take actions if there is a risk that the stated objectives of the project are not adhered to. The Board can also decide on the termination of the project with the consent of EDUFI and the MFA.

The Project Board approves tentatively the updated Project Document during the inception phase (and later if necessary) while the final approval is made by EDUFI within two weeks from submission. The Project Board also approves the annual reports before they are submitted to the EDUFI.

## **2.8. Monitoring and quality control in HEI-ICI at the Programme level**

The HEI partnership monitors the implementation of the project and the quality of its outputs. The MFA and EDUFI follow up the project implementation through project reporting, coordinator meetings, consultations and field visits.

**Annual reporting** Project progress is monitored by an annual report presented to EDUFI and MFA. It is important to note that the HEIs must not only report on the completion of activities and the achievements but also analyse the process towards achieving the results and project and programme indicators in the project level annual reports. The realization of risks is reported as well as possible deviations from the work plan and corrective measures. The lessons learnt are recorded and analysed. The EDUFI analyses all the annual project reports and compiles the information into a comprehensive annual programme level report which is shared to all stakeholders.

**Coordinator Meetings** Coordinator Meetings will be organised by EDUFI in Finland. The purpose is to share good practice and to inform of programme development and management needs. In addition, specific meetings can be organised to all projects sharing the same theme.

**Monitoring** EDUFI monitors the implementation of projects through visits both in Finland and in the south. The aim is to assess the relevance, results, activity implementation, budget use, management and cooperation arrangements, impact and sustainability of the projects in the HEI-ICI programme. The monitoring findings are continuously fed into the next cycle of planning and implementation, as a cornerstone of the monitoring system.

**Programme Board Meetings** The Programme Board meets once or twice a year to discuss the progress and implementation of the projects. The Board has an advisory role, providing expertise for the implementation and development of the programme, with a particular emphasis on the monitoring of the development policy objectives.

## 2.9. Risk assessment

HEI-ICI programme design is based on the previous phases which have shown remarkable results. During the previous phases, the capacities of the universities to implement the programmes have increased over time and projects have been learning environments for gradual improvement. However, the capacities of the universities tend to rest on a rather limited amount of personnel and, therefore, there are clear risks related to the person-person level cooperation. This risk has been noted. There is now more emphasis on wider projects where the personal level is combined with sound institution-institution level cooperation.

The programme has aims to scale up the impact, given the huge challenges of new universities and increasing student populations in the partner countries. However, the pedagogical solutions available for scaling up are based on teaching methods as well as technology which require certain resources as well as certain supportive attitudes. There are several identified risks related to this future oriented approach. These risks are considered worth taking. However, these require constant observation and mitigating measures.

The project level operational risks are numerous: change of personnel, change in administrative rules, lack of political support, changes in policy environment, personal level disagreements, financial management risks etc. A common feature is that the materialised operational risks tend to cause delays in the project implementation, leading to non-attainment of results at impact and outcome level. These are addressed already during project design but also through the EDUFI training during the implementation phase.

In the project application process (project proposal and project document), the quality of the risk assessment is a major evaluation criteria. Thus the risk analysis capacity is taken as a key element for the successful projects.

No risk matrix is prepared at the programme level. However, it is mandatory at the project level.

## 2.10. Programme evaluation

The Programme may be evaluated either by MFA (KEO-10 or EVA-11) during its implementation, especially if a continuation is under consideration for the period starting 2024.

The Programme is expected to apply practical lessons learned during its implementation, whenever possible.

## 3. The application and project approval processes

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### 3.1. The application process

The application process is conducted in two phases.

- A. The Call for Proposals,
- B. The Call for Final Applications targeted for the shortlisted candidates.

In both phases the Act on Discretionary Government Transfers (Valtionavustuslaki 688/2001) is applicable. In the first phase the decision concern the acceptability of the project proposal (idea) to be included for the call for Final Application. In the second, the decision concerns the possible financing of project in the programme.

The possible scenario/tentative schedule:

Month 1	The Call for Proposals open, guidance for applicants
Month 3	The deadline for Project Proposals
Months 5	The selection of Applicants eligible for submitting the Final Application
Month 5	The Call for Final Applications targeted to shortlisted Applicants opens
Month 8	The Call for Final Applications closes
Month 11	The financing decision by the MFA
Month 12-14	Contractual arrangements
Month 14-15	The project starts

The exact dates will be presented in the EDUFI website <sup>8</sup>

The EDUFI publishes the Call for Proposals. The Call for Proposals also includes key documentation for the following phase, the Call for Final Applications targeted to shortlisted proposals. The Call for Proposals as well as Call for Final Applications, including detailed information and instructions, as well as access to the application system can be found on the EDUFI website. Applications are submitted through the mechanism defined by EDUFI. A separate Guidance Session will be arranged by EDUFI when launching the Call for Proposals and again before Call for Final Applications closes.

### 3.2. The evaluation and selection process

#### ***Call for Proposals***

EDUFI performs the technical eligibility check of the applications, and applications meeting the eligibility criteria will be sent for further qualitative evaluation.

The Project Proposals are then evaluated in three phases. First, external evaluators perform a qualitative evaluation, based on set HEI-ICI Project Proposal evaluation criteria (see section 3.4 below). As a result of the consolidation meeting of the external experts a scoring list of Project Proposals is produced. A project can get maximum 100 points.

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<sup>8</sup> [http://www.cimo.fi/programmes/hei\\_ici](http://www.cimo.fi/programmes/hei_ici)



Secondly, MFA experts comment on the development policy relevance and theory of change of the proposals. The MFA may give maximum 5 additional point for a single project.

Finally, the scoring list is discussed by the Programme Board in a separate selection meeting, using the qualitative external evaluation and the MFA comments as a starting point. The mandate of the Programme Board is to give maximum 5 additional points for a single project.

The Programme Board proposes, how many projects will be shortlisted for the Call for Final Applications (maximum is 20).

The MFA decides which applicants at the phase of Project Proposals are selected in the shortlist and included in the Call for Final Applications.

### ***Call for Final Applications targeted to the shortlisted applicants***

EDUFI performs the technical eligibility check of the applications, and applications meeting the eligibility criteria will be sent for further qualitative evaluation.

The applications are assessed by a team of external experts who represent the expertise on universities, results based management and development policy. The assessment process may include an interview session of maximum one hour. The maximum points is 100.

The list is discussed by the Programme Board in a separate selection meeting, using the qualitative assessment of external experts as a starting point. The mandate of the Programme Board is to give maximum 5 additional points for any project.

The MFA approves the final state aid decision within the framework of the appropriations approved by the Finnish Parliament. Decisions are based on the Act on Discretionary Government Transfers (Valtionavustuslaki 688/2001).

EDUFI informs all the applicants of the selection results. After both parties have signed the decisions about state aid, the project implementation can begin. EDUFI is in charge of administrative procedures including the payment of state aid. State aid is paid into the coordinating Finnish HEI's account.

## **3.3. Application documents**

### ***Call for Proposals***

The application includes the following parts

- An application form
- Attachment:
  - Proposal for a HEI-ICI project

The date for the opening of the Call for Proposals will be available in the EDUFI website.

The date for the session of instructions will be available in the EDUFI website.

The date for the closing of the Call for Proposals will be available in the EDUFI website.

### ***Call for Final Applications (for shortlisted applicants)***

The application includes the following parts

- An online application form
- Attachments:
  - The Project Document (template in ATTACHMENT 1)
  - The Results Framework (template in ATTACHMENT 2)
  - The Risk Management Analysis (template in ATTACHMENT 3)
  - The Work Plan and Budget (excel template in ATTACHMENT 4)
  - The Key Expert forms (template in ATTACHMENT 5)

**The online application form** includes the basic information of the project. Access to the online application form, can be found at the EDUFI website dedicated to HEI-ICI programme 2020-24.

Also the templates for the attachments can be found in the same website.

The MFA regional department officers responsible for the country as well as Finnish embassy may be approached for receiving relevant background information on the context.

**The Project Document** should be prepared jointly by the partners. A template with instructions is presented in **ATTACHMENT 1**. The Project Document and the Results Framework should support each other.

**The Results Framework** **ATTACHMENT 2**. The Results Framework is a matrix summarizing the three result levels (outputs, outcome and impact), indicators, baselines and target values as well as related assumptions. The framework should match the narrative section “Project design” of the PD.

**The Risk Matrix Analysis** presents contextual, programmatic and institutional risks foreseen. Applicants are asked to reflect on the likelihood of each risk, their potential impact and mitigation measures. The Matrix is found in **ATTACHMENT 3**.

**The Work Plan and Budget** **ATTACHMENT 4**. The overall work of the project is broken down into activities in the Work Plan. The main outputs should be clearly described in the work plan. For example, the output "development of a new learning module" can be broken down into activities like *needs and learning outcome assessment, curriculum preparation, convincing university administration, the training of trainers, material preparation, introduction of new methodology, piloting, accreditation*. Operational responsibilities are further elaborated. The preparation of the annual work plan should take place as a consultation between the participating HEIs.

**The presentation of Key Experts** A Key expert is an individual from the participating HEIs who will provide an input of more than 20 days during project implementation. Each Key Expert confirms in the Key Expert template (**ATTACHMENT 5**), maximum one A4 per expert) that she or he has the required expertise and

experience and that she or he is available and committed to the tasks as specified in the paper. NO CVs OF THE EXPERTS ARE ATTACHED TO THE APPLICATION.

### 3.4. Selection criteria

#### Call for Proposals

##### *Eligibility Checklist*

##### **Minimum partnership composition requirements**

- At least one Finnish HEI as a coordinator and one southern HEI as a partner.
- The Finnish HEIs are eligible HEIs.
- The southern partners are eligible HEIs.

##### **The application is submitted on time**

- The application is submitted, using the methods defined by EDUFI, by the set deadline

##### **The application is prepared according to the instructions for applicants**

- The Project Proposal is signed by legal representatives of the partner HEIs (scanned signatures are accepted)
- The project duration meets the set criteria

##### **The project budget adheres to the following**

- The total costs are within the defined limits,
- The applicant approves that the self-financing amounts to a minimum of 20%

##### *Qualitative evaluation criteria*

<p><b>1. Project logic/theory of change: describe how the process of enhancing capacity creates maximum impact (max 1000 words, additional words not included in assessment)</b></p>	30
<p>Describe the specific outcome of the Project. Describe how the outcome is linked with the defined outcome and impact at the Programme level.</p> <p>Describe the approach. Explains why and how the planned methods of implementation support each other in a comprehensive way so that the expected outcome can be reached within the time available and with the capacity of the partnering institutions and persons. Describe the change process over time, including changes in skills, material resources, tools and attitudes.</p> <p>Describe the critical elements for enhancing the impact so that, within the existing time limit, the project can ensure its goals as well as reach <i>maximum impact</i> among the teaching staff and the students of the partner country HEIs.</p>	

<p>Describe the strategic choices made to enhance effectiveness and cost-efficiency. This includes the possibilities to work with more than one partner country university.</p> <p>Describe the strategic choices made to address HRBA and crosscutting objectives.</p> <p>Describe the ways to reach the final target group, the students.</p>	
<p><b>2. The analysis of risk and challenges, and the ways to overcome them (max 800 words)</b></p>	<p>20</p>
<p>Analyse the risks (contextual, programmatic and institutional) and describe their potential impact on reaching the outputs and outcome. Describe possible previous experiences in solving similar kind of risks and the methods used to mitigate the problems.</p> <p>Explain how your project design is already directed towards avoiding the most apparent and avoidable risks.</p>	
<p><b>3. Relevance and complementarity (Max 800 words)</b></p>	<p>20</p>
<p>Describe the relevant policies of the partner country and partner country institution specifically related to the outcome of the project, and the institutional mechanisms to address them.</p> <p>Describe the other related activities of the partner country institutions and the complementary of the project.</p> <p>Describe the other related activities of the Finnish development cooperation and universities (including the applicant) in the partner country and their complementarity to the project.</p> <p>Describe the wider benefits of the partnership arrangements for thematic networking within Finland and with the partner country institutions.</p> <p>Describe potential benefits for commercial Team Finland work.</p>	
<p><b>4. The quality of partnership: the capacity of the applicant, developing country partner institutions and Finnish partner institutions to implement the project (max 1000 words)</b></p>	<p>30</p>

<p>Describe the names, titles and experience of the key persons. Describe whether the partnership has the necessary skills, experience, expertise and management support, based on previous experiences if relevant, to successfully deliver all aspects of the project.</p> <p>Describe the institutional competences of the Finnish HEIs and the institutional competences at the partner country HEIs to implement the project.</p> <p>If possible younger universities with less international exposure from developing countries should also be included in the partnership, even when it creates more challenges.</p> <p>Show evidence of joint preparation and joint definition of the needs and objectives, as well as the signs for the institutional commitment to the project. Describe possible earlier cooperation between the partners if relevant.</p> <p>Describe how local ownership will be nurtured and developed during the project.</p> <p>Where relevant, describe how the project involves non-academic partners (NGOs, companies) and their specific expertise to interact within project in order to provide specific services or to enhance the contacts with the labour market and the surrounding society.</p> <p>Describe whether the project partnership arrangements facilitate a wide impact and possible multiplier effects, including wider coverage in the target country/ region.</p>	
TOTAL SCORE	100

## Call for Final Application targeted for the shortlisted applicants

### *Eligibility Checklist*

#### **Minimum partnership composition requirements**

- At least one Finnish HEI as a coordinator and one southern HEI as a partner
- The coordinating HEI is a Finnish HEI entitled to participate
- The southern partners are eligible HEIs

#### **The application is submitted on time**

- The online application form is submitted electronically by the set deadline

#### **The application is prepared according to the instructions for applicants**

- The Project Proposal is signed by legal representatives of the partner HEIs (scanned signatures are accepted)
- The project duration meets the set criteria

#### **The required mandatory attachments are provided (in the given format and templates)**

- The Project Document
- The Results Framework
- The Risk Analysis Matrix

- The Work Plan and Budget
- The Key Expert forms

**The project budget adheres to the following**

- The costs occur during the contract period
- There is an annual budget, with calendar year budgeting presented
- The self-financing amounts to a minimum of 20%
- The total sum of applied state grant meets the set funding criteria

**Qualitative evaluation criteria**

<p><b>1. Project logic/theory of change: describe how the process of enhancing capacity creates maximum impact</b></p>	30
<p>Describe the specific outcome of the Project. Describe how the outcome is linked with the defined outcome and impact at the Programme level.</p> <p>Describe the approach. Explains why and how the planned methods of implementation support each other in a comprehensive way so that the expected outcome can be reached within the time available and with the capacity of the partnering institutions and persons. Describe the change process over time, including changes in skills, material resources, tools and attitudes.</p> <p>Describe the critical elements for enhancing the impact so that, within the existing time limit, the project can ensure its goals as well as reach <i>maximum impact</i> among the teaching staff and the students of the partner country HEIs.</p> <p>Describe the strategic choices made to enhance effectiveness and cost-efficiency. This includes the possibilities to work with more than one partner country university.</p> <p>Describe the strategic choices made to address HRBA and crosscutting objectives.</p> <p>Describe the ways to reach the final target group, the students.</p> <p>These will be assessed using the project level Project document and its annexes.</p>	
<p><b>2. The analysis of risk and challenges, and the ways to overcome them</b></p>	20
<p>Analyse the risks (contextual, programmatic and institutional) and describe their potential impact on reaching the outputs and outcome. Describe possible previous experiences in solving similar kind of risks and the methods used to mitigate the problems.</p>	

<p>Explain how your project design is already directed towards avoiding the most apparent and avoidable risks.</p> <p>These will be assessed using the project level Project document and its annexes.</p>	
<p><b>3. Relevance and complementarity</b></p>	20
<p>Describe the relevant policies of the partner country and partner country institution specifically related to the outcome of the project, and the institutional mechanisms to address them.</p> <p>Describe the other related activities of the partner country institutions and the complementary of the project.</p> <p>Describe the other related activities of the Finnish development cooperation and universities (including the applicant) in the partner country and their complementarity to the project.</p> <p>Describe the wider benefits of the partnership arrangements for thematic networking within Finland and with the partner country institutions.</p> <p>Describe potential benefits for commercial Team Finland work.</p> <p>These will be assessed using the project level Project document and its annexes.</p>	
<p><b>4. The quality of partnership: the capacity of the applicant, developing country partner institutions and Finnish partner institutions to implement the project</b></p>	30
<p>Describe the names, titles and experience of the key persons. Describe whether the partnership has the necessary skills, experience, expertise and management support, based on previous experiences if relevant, to successfully deliver all aspects of the project.</p> <p>Describe the institutional competences of the Finnish HEIs and the institutional competences at the partner country HEIs to implement the project.</p> <p>If possible younger universities with less international exposure from developing countries should also be included in the partnership, even when it creates more challenges.</p>	

<p>Show evidence of joint preparation and joint definition of the needs and objectives, as well as the signs for the institutional commitment to the project. Describe possible earlier cooperation between the partners if relevant.</p> <p>Describe how local ownership will be nurtured and developed during the project.</p> <p>Where relevant, describe how the project involves non-academic partners (NGOs, companies) and their specific expertise to interact within project in order to provide specific services or to enhance the contacts with the labour market and the surrounding society.</p> <p>Describe whether the project partnership arrangements facilitate a wide impact and possible multiplier effects, including wider coverage in the target country/ region.</p> <p>These will be assessed using the project level Project document and its annexes.</p>	
TOTAL SCORE	100

## 4. Project funding

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### 4.1. Funding rules

Funding in the HEI-ICI programme is based on the Act on Discretionary Government Transfers (Valtionavustuslaki 688/2001).

The state aid applied from the HEI-ICI programme must fall between 300.000 and 2.000.000 euros.

The number of Finnish HEIs involved in application has the impact on maximum financing available for the project:

1. If the Project Proposal includes only one Finnish HEI (i.e. the applicant), the maximum MFA financing is 1.000.000 €.
2. If the Project Proposal includes two Finnish HEIs (i.e. the applicant and one partner), the maximum MFA financing is 1.500.000 €.
3. If the Project Proposal includes three or more Finnish HEIs (i.e. the applicant and at least two partner HEIs), the maximum MFA financing is 2.000.000 €.



The purpose of this rule is to encourage Finnish universities to advance towards **thematic institution level cooperation**. This means both the involvement of Finnish HEIs as institutions as well as subject-based cooperation and learning between Finnish HEI with similar expertise. Thus the projects would be less dependent on the initiative and expertise of individual HEI experts.

The number of the partner universities in the developing countries does not affect the maximum financing ceiling. However, the qualitative assessment criteria support larger networks with wider impact.

In the first round of Project Proposals, only the estimated total applied financing will be asked.

In the second round for Project Application of the shortlisted candidate, the detailed budget will be requested. At this stage, further guidance on the financing schedule (i.e. how financing is available for specific years in 2020-24) will be provided at the EDUFI website. The financing available for the first is likely to be comparably smaller.

#### 4.2. Preparing the budget for the Project Application

This instruction is meant specifically for applicants who are shortlisted to make an application in the second round.

The budget of the project should be drawn up for the entire duration of the project and follow the HEI-ICI model (ATTACHMENT 3). The budget of the projects must follow the full-cost model. The coefficients applied by the HEI at the time of application must remain the same throughout the whole project duration. The coordinating Finnish HEI is responsible for the financial management of the project and may transfer funds to the partner HEIs for the implementation of project activities.

**All HEI-ICI projects must have a minimum of 20% of self-financing.** The self-financing part can include both in-kind and cash contributions. Applicants draw up the budget to cover the funding for the entire project duration. The state aid can amount to a maximum of 80% of the total budget of the project.

**State aid (max. 80%) + self-financing from HEIs (min. 20%) = total budget (100%)**

Projects can use HEIs own basic funding and/or private funding to cover the self-financing costs. The **self-financing part** should mainly be covered by Finnish sources. However, partnerships are encouraged to look for private and/or public sector contributions in the partner countries. Other public (EU or Finnish) project funding cannot be used to cover any part of HEI-ICI projects self-financing. The source of self-financing (country, provider) shall be presented in the project budget. HEI-ICI projects cannot produce profit or have a subsidising effect to HEIs with funding from the HEI-ICI programme.

Acceptable costs for a HEI-ICI project can occur only after the decision on state aid has been signed. Costs due to planning or writing of a project application or document may not be included in the budget.

#### 4.3. Costs of the partner HEIs

Partner institution implements specific activities, which are defined in the final results framework and budget. They are entitled to salaries, fees, travel costs, administrative costs and assets. It is recommended that developing country partner institutions are together responsible for using the minimum of 25 % of the total budget.

#### 4.4. Eligible cost items

The budget is presented *in euros (€) and it is* broken down by calendar year and by the following **cost items**:

- 1 The salaries and fees of the coordinating Finnish HEI**
- 2 The salaries and fees of the developing country partner HEIs**
- 3 The salaries and fees of the Finnish partner HEIs**
- 4 Travel costs**
- 5 Services and subcontracting**
- 6 The overhead costs of the coordinating Finnish HEI**
- 7 The direct administrative costs of the Finnish HEIs**
- 8 The administrative costs of the developing country partner HEIs**
- 9 Fixed assets**
- 10 Contingency costs**

##### 1-3 Salaries

The HEIs must use permanent staff or staff recruited for the purpose of carrying out the assignment. Persons in expert roles should in general have a long-term commitment to the HEI in question, in order to ensure continuity, to ensure the utilization of knowledge and experience and the institutionalization of practices. All salaries need to be verifiable, tasks explained and justified and directed to the project. Salaries need to be based on actual working time, and must be based on working time records. Working time records of staff must be approved within the universities according to the procedures by each higher education institution. The level of salaries must be in accordance with the national/institutional remuneration policy. Salary top-ups shall be avoided.

##### 1 The salaries and fees of the coordinating Finnish HEI

The salaries of the Finnish HEI experts comprise the real gross pay of the project member multiplied by an indirect employee cost (personnel cost-coefficient). Applicants give the percentage for indirect employee costs and the overheads percentage (cost item 5) applied by their own HEI at the time of application submission. The coefficient (%) for effective working hours is included in the salary costs. The coefficient remains the same throughout the whole project duration.

## **2 The salaries and fees of the developing country partner HEIs**

Partner HEIs in this cost item refers to non-Finnish HEI partners. The payments are made through the official accounts of the partner HEI based on time records and verification of completed work and agreed deliverables. Finnish HEI should ensure that employer responsibilities according to local regulations are duly taken care of.

## **3 The salaries and fees of the partner Finnish HEIs**

The salaries of the partner Finnish HEI experts are based on time records and verification of completed work and agreed deliverables. The salaries comprise the real gross pay of the project member multiplied by an indirect employee cost (personnel cost-coefficient) and the overheads percentage applied by their own HEI.

## **4 Travel costs**

All travel arrangements must be made in the most affordable way. Travel costs include travel and accommodation costs and the per diem allowances of the coordinating Finnish HEI and partner HEIs (both non-Finnish and Finnish partner HEIs).

The level of the Finnish experts' travel costs follow the **Finnish State Travel Regulation** (Valtion matkustussääntö, annually updated and available on the web page of the Ministry of Finance in Finland <http://www.vm.fi>).

The level of per diems for 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. Per diem allowances for work and travel to Finland will be paid in accordance with the Finnish State Travel Regulations.

The budget should include travel provisions for the Project Board meetings.

## **5 Services and subcontracting**

Services cost items can for example include services such as ICT services, interpretation, translation and evaluation. Auditing costs must be budgeted under *services*. The core project activities should not be outsourced.

HEIs receiving state aid must observe the obligations set out in the Act on Public Contracts (348/2007) when subcontracting.

## **6 The overhead costs of the coordinating Finnish HEI**

The budget of the project must follow the full-cost model. The overhead coefficient applied by the HEI at the time of application must remain the same throughout the whole project duration. Calculations in

accordance with the full cost model rely on coefficients: the percentage of indirect employee costs (this applies to cost item 1) and the percentage of overheads (this applies to cost item 5).

The direct costs of project ( item 7) cannot include costs that are already included in *overheads*.

## **7 The direct administrative costs of the Finnish HEI**

In general, all the administrative costs of Finnish HEIs should be included in the overhead costs or subcontracted assignments. In case there are some administrative costs that are not included in the full cost model overheads, they can be marked as the direct administrative costs of the Finnish HEI.

## **8 The administrative costs of the developing country partner HEIs**

The administrative and technical costs of the partner country HEIs may be used by the partner HEIs to cover costs, that arise from the project management support services (excluding salaries), and other administrative costs directly related to project implementation.

## **9 Fixed assets**

Fixed assets can be procured for the developing country HEIs. As a general rule, procurements shall be made in developing partner countries based on the procurement regulations in the country of procurement. Explanations must be provided for any possible procurement made in Finland.

At the end of the project, the fixed assets will remain the property of the institution for which it has primarily been procured for and which has used it. The Finnish HEI must ensure that they are recorded as the partner HEI property and that the maintenance of fixed assets after the project funding is ensured. Please note the rules relating to subcontracting: Act on Discretionary Government Transfers (Valtionavustuslaki 688/2001) and Act on Public Contracts (348/2007).

## **10 Contingency costs**

A maximum of 10% of the total costs can be left unallocated in the planning of the project as contingencies. The Project Board decides on the utilization of the contingency funds. The contingency costs can be used only to the items which support the reaching expected outcome and outputs.

# **5. Project management**

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## **5.1. Decision making**

### **The Project Board**

The decision-making authority in the project lies with a Project Board that consists of representatives of the cooperating HEIs, and of other stakeholders if deemed beneficial for the project. The Project Board should be chaired by a developing country HEI. The members, responsibilities and meeting arrangements of the Project Board should be defined in the Project Document.

The key function of the Project Board is to monitor project progress and to support the cooperating HEIs in carrying out the activities. The Project Board is obliged to take actions if there is a risk that the stated objectives of the project are not adhered to. The Board can also decide on the termination of the project with the consent of EDUFI and the MFA.

The Project Board approves the possible significant changes in the Project Document and the annual reports before they are submitted to EDUFI. The changes in the expected outcome and impact of the project are not allowed.

The project application should include a budgetary provision for the Project Board meetings.

### **Coordinators**

A person from each participating HEI is nominated as a coordinator. These persons ensure that the activities are implemented as planned. The coordinator of the Finnish coordinating HEI (i.e. applicant) is the contact point for the MFA and EDUFI.

The project coordinators are jointly responsible for preparing Annual Work Plans. They also need to prepare the Annual Reports to be submitted to the Project Board

## **5.2. The financial management of a HEI-ICI project**

### **Payments, bookkeeping and auditing**

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. The partner agreement conducted by project partners after the State aid decision defines money transfer procedures.

Project bookkeeping must be organised so that the project is an individual cost object in the HEIs' accounting and that project expenditure and costs are transparent and easily verified from the records. All costs have to be actual, verifiable and acceptable and caused by the carrying out of the project activities.

An audit is required at least for the final completion report. The audit shall be carried out as defined in a) the General terms and conditions of state aid granted by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs for development cooperation work and b) Audit Instructions for a Development Co-operation Project with financial support through the HEI-ICI programme. Projects may be asked to perform an extra audit by EDUFI or the MFA during the project implementation.

## **Changes in project implementation and reallocations within the budget**

The project expected outcome and expected impact cannot be changed during the project implementation.

Significant changes can be made only through a special procedure. The Project Boards recommend the change and gives the reason for it. The coordinating HEI informs the EDUFI about the proposal. The EDUFI decides within two weeks whether the change is acceptable. Approved changes are reported in the annual/completion report with a reference to the EDUFI decision.

Significant changes are the following:

- Any change in the results framework,
- Reallocation of cost items within a year which together count for more or 15 percent of the amount of certain main budget item.

Note: changes in project impact or outcome statement are not allowed and will not be approved.

Minor changes can be made by the project partners flexibly but only jointly (email between all project coordinators). Any changes should be brought to the recognition of the next Project Board meeting.

When changes are made the requirement set *in the general terms and conditions of state aid granted by the MFA for development cooperation work by HEIs* cannot be overruled.

### **5.3. Project implementation**

#### **Inception phase**

The project should start with a 3-6 month inception phase. During the inception phase it is ensured that all stakeholders have similar idea about the rationale and functioning of the project. The detailed roles and responsibilities related to the decision-making, financial management and implementation are clarified. Supportive internal documents and rules are agreed.

During the inception phase, the monitoring arrangements and data collections procedures are defined and the indicators in the results framework will be updated accordingly.

The purpose of the inception phase is increasing trust between the partners and nurturing and developing local ownership within the developing country/countries.

#### **Annual work planning**

Annual work planning should be used as a method of advancing commitment and results orientation. Annual work plans are always work-in-progress versions and changes can be agreed by correspondence between the project coordinators. However, rules for changes described in 5.2. apply.

## **Experts and capacity building**

The partnerships should combine Finnish higher education expertise with the needs of this sector and partner institutions in the developing countries. Thus, the Project Document must demonstrate that the Finnish HEI has the required expertise and know-how, also making it clear how these will be applied.

Key Experts from all organisations and their tasks and duties should be described in the Project Document. A Key Expert is an Expert from the participating HEIs in Finland and in the partner country who will provide an input of more than 20 days during project implementation. Experts engaged for less than 20 days do not need to be presented with a biography but they should be introduced in the Project Document. Each Key Expert verifies that she or he has the required expertise and experience and that she or he is available and committed to the tasks as specified in the paper.

It is advisable to focus on the long-term commitment of the key experts during the planning phase because the changes in personnel have proved to be the major risk in the previous HEI-ICI projects.

### **5.4. Monitoring and self-evaluation**

The 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.

### **5.5. Reporting**

Projects receiving state aid are to report annually on the progress of the project and on the use of funds. Projects are to report according to the guidelines provided by EDUFI.

The coordinating HEI will in collaboration with partner HEI(s) prepare and submit the required annual and final completion reports. The reports are discussed and approved by the Project Board before the submission. Reports are signed by the cooperating HEIs.

The annual report reflects the project's Work Plan. The project's progress, use of funds and performance of the HEIs should be described in the report. A particular focus shall be put on monitoring the selected indicators to describe the achievements of the results. The report should focus on how the project's

objectives have been met, what kind of impact it has had, and if the expected results have been achieved. In addition, changes from the original plans should be reported. The reasons for changes, their impact and corrective measures should be briefly described. The annual reports must also elaborate the specific inputs of the experts and their impact on project performance.

The qualitative final completion report summarizes the achievements of the project. The report describes the progress made in the project towards the project objectives and both the expected results and the actual results of the project.

The annual reports and the final completion report include financial reports. The financial report will compile the costs incurred during the reporting period. Items of expenditure are reported in the financial reports under the same cost items as previously approved in the budget.

EDUFI will, if needed, request further information or clarification from the coordinating HEI whose responsibility it is to submit the reports. 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.

## **5.6. Information dissemination**

The project is expected to disseminate information active on its objectives, advancement and results. Different methods of information dissemination should be utilised to reach various stakeholders. Two-way communications channels should be utilised when feasible.

Information dissemination should be used also as a strategic tool to expand and deepen the result achievement of the project.

The EDUFI and MFA reserve right to request for brief information from the project on its results for specific communication purposes.

## **5.7. The closing of a project**

It is important to allow sufficient time for phasing out and to include related activities in the operational planning to ensure that there is enough time to process decisions regarding the transfer of responsibilities. Partner organisation's fiscal years should also be taken into account when planning the timing of phasing out and the transfer of managerial and administrative duties. The Project Board approves the final report. A closing seminar can be arranged to discuss lessons learned and document good practice.