

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

for External Evaluation to the INSPIRE project

### INSPIRE Innovative Governance Practices in the Higher Education Institutions in Iraq

Grant Agreement Number 598790-EPP-1-2018-1-IT-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP

#### 1. Background of the project

The project aims at reinforcing institutional capacity of HEIs in strategical planning, as a prerequisite for them to compete in a global setting. Moreover, the project aims to enhance the relevance and quality of the higher education system through the revitalization of academic life and scientific research. In this respect, European partners could provide methodological techniques and best practices to support the development on HEIs strategical plan. Acknowledging the specifics of the local context, the European partners' support will help the Iraqi institutions to define their own priorities.

The project is consistent with EU strategy in supporting Iraq rebuilding of public institutions through capacity building. Indeed, efforts to strengthen and support the Iraqi academic institutions, particularly the universities and research centers – once among the best in the region – are also essential for the improvement of the governance of the country. Unfortunately, Higher Education is one of the sectors that experienced serious destruction of infrastructure since 2003. The rehabilitation of the Iraqi higher education system, already damaged by almost two decades of under-investment and isolation, is hampered by insufficient infrastructure and limited capacity in terms of planning, policy and management of higher education programs. The gap between the educational opportunities offered by Iraqi universities and the requirements for sustainable economic development is widening. The overarching goal of INSPIRE is to support, through the cooperation of European institutions, the rebuilding, modernization, and internationalization of the governance system of higher education institutions (HEIs) in Iraq with a specific focus on planning and programming systems. Due to the recent crisis and political economic situation, the current higher education system requires a strong intervention to face the weakness of the existing governance system.

To institutionalize good governance practices in Iraqi HEIs, which also means enforcing institutional values such as autonomy, accountability, participation, and internationalization, as well as implementing well-structured management systems, will contribute to the development of Iraqi HIEs helping them to meet the international standards.

The aim of the project is to support HEIs in Iraq in order to make them capable of establishing a modern governance framework through the adoption of innovative practices.

More specifically, it seeks to:

- Enhance good governance, management and accountability practices in the HEIs
- Establish a clear governance framework, including well-defined and clear mission and goals through the definition and implementation of action plans

- Strengthen the capacity of HEIs to develop their own specific strategies and to implement them effectively and efficiently by means of programming systems
- Strengthen the international relations management within the HEIs
- Improve the participation in strategic planning and development activities of non-university actors and non-state actors

INSPiRE is co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union during the period January 2019 – January 2023. The project reference number is: 598790-EPP-1-2018-1-IT-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP.

The project is carried out by a consortium composed of: University of Siena (IT) (Coordinator), Bologna University (IT) Evora University (Pt), Aydin Istanbul University (TR), UNIMED Mediterranean Universities Union (IT), University of Mosul (IQ), University of Baghdad (IQ), University of Basrah (IQ), Al-Furat Al-Awsat Technical University (IQ), Sumer University (IQ), Al-Qasim Green University (IQ), University of Basrah Oil and Gas (IQ), Al Karkh University for Science (IQ), Southern Technical University (IQ), Wasit University (IQ), and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Iraq (IQ).

Project duration: From 15 January 2019 to 14 January 2023

## 2. Objectives and Key Principles of the Evaluation

The aim of the external monitoring and evaluation is to ensure that monitoring of the project is performed adequately and accurately. It identifies procedures, criteria and resources for monitoring the project. It also deals with the evaluation of the progress of the project, risk and issue management and with the evaluation of the results in comparison with the needs of the target group(s) and sector(s).

The external monitoring and evaluation includes the evaluation of:

- partnership performance (quality of the management and WP leaderships, effectiveness of communication, meeting deadlines, etc.);
- progress toward the contractual outcomes and respect of the work plan.
- quality and relevance of the project outcomes in reaching the set objectives.

Furthermore, the partners will identify key areas of concern for additional evaluation.

In the framework of INSPiRE the External Quality Expert(s) will contribute to:

- the monitoring of effectiveness of management activities; partnership performance (quality of the management and WP leaderships); effectiveness of communication;
- progress toward the contractual outcomes and respect of the contractual work plan;
- the definition of monitoring procedures;
- the design of tools to evaluate the project plenary meetings;
- effectiveness and impact of dissemination activities;
- the evaluation of the quality and appropriateness of the project results;



The External Quality Expert(s) will take part in in at least 2 in-presence meetings and take part in the online meetings, upon availability; will co-operate with the Quality Committee and integrate the results derived from the internal evaluations with the results of the external evaluations; elaborate evaluation reports.

The results of the evaluation will be shared and discussed within the partnership. On the basis of recommendations from Evaluators and feedback from partners, corrective actions will be taken if necessary.

### 3. Contents of the Evaluation and document to be produced

Deliverable	Delivery Date
<p><b>Quality and Evaluation Plan - External part</b></p> <p>At the outset of her/his activities, the External Quality Expert will provide a contribution (external part) to the project Quality Plan. The document, prepared by the Leaders of the WP6 Quality and Evaluation (Al-Furat Al-Awsaat Technical University and the University of Evora) defines the methods for the project quality and evaluation. The External Quality Expert(s) will contribute to the document with an indication of the evaluation procedures, the roles that the various Partners have in the quality control of the project, the criteria and the quality indicators. The document should contain a series of evaluation schemes and checklists in order to standardize as much as possible the external monitoring process.</p>	30/09/2021
<p><b>Quality mid-term report and final report</b></p> <p>These documents are periodically produced by the Quality Committee supported by the External Evaluator according to the schedule for the quality control. These documents report the results of the quality control on the different activities of the project and include eventual recommendations to be taken into consideration to solve wrong situations.</p>	14/01/2022 14/01/2023

### 4. Contract Period

The contract shall be carried out during the eligibility period of the project (15 January 2019 – 14 January 2023). In case of an extension to the eligibility period of the project, the contract period is intended to be extended accordingly.

Starting date of the assignment: 15 July 2021

Finishing date of the assignment: End of the project

### 5. Form of Contract

Goods or services ordered by the INsPIRE consortium as a result of the bid shall be in accordance with the INsPIRE conditions of contract. The Terms and Conditions are those of the contractor which is UNIMED - Mediterranean Universities Union.



## 6. Budget

The total value of the contract (including any taxes and contributions) shall not exceed 12.000 EUR.

VAT exemption is applicable. For Italian providers, the VAT exemption is applicable according to the Article 72 of the Italian Law D.P.R. 633/72. Providers based in other countries must refer to the national legislation and indicate the applicable law.

Any travel costs incurred while carrying out assignment(s) are covered directly by the provider.

## 7. Application procedure

Offers should include:

- CVs of relevant staff members(s) who will directly perform the Evaluation activities;
- reference projects;
- a concept note with an indication of the evaluation methodology (max 2 pages);
- detailed financial offer for the implementation of the tasks.

Deadline for receipt of offers: **06/07/2021**

Applications should be sent in English to: [uni-med@pec.it](mailto:uni-med@pec.it)

## 8. Selection Criteria

The contract will be awarded to the bid offering best value for money (best price-quality ratio).

The criteria for the selection of applications are:

- 30% price;
- 30% professional experience and reference projects; it would be a plus to speak Arabic, and have knowledge of the Iraqi Higher Education system and experience with cooperation projects in Iraq;
- 40% concept note on evaluation methodology

## 9. The Debriefing

Both successful and unsuccessful contractors who wish to have the opportunity of debriefing should contact Mr. Marcello Scalisi after award of the contract.

## 10. Contact

Marcello Scalisi, Director

UNIMED - Mediterranean Universities Union

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