



Staff Exchange Project

**between the
Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN)**

and the

**European Consortium for Accreditation in
Higher Education (ECA)**

21 August 2014

I. Introduction

APQN is a non-profit organization established in 2003 by the quality assurance agencies, with the mission to enhance the quality of higher education in Asia and the Pacific region through strengthening the work of quality assurance agencies and extending the cooperation between them.

ECA is a non-profit consortium of nationally recognized European accreditation/QA agencies established in 2003 and incorporated as association on 15 April 2014 that strives for continuous progress in the area of accreditation and external quality assurance, facilitates mutual recognition of qualifications, promotes internationalization of higher education and creates transparency in QA to the benefit of students, HE institutions and society.

APQN and ECA share some common areas of interest like promoting Good Practices of QA, mutual recognition initiatives in QA with the goal to facilitate cross-border recognition of qualifications, to support internationalization of HE institutions and students, and to provide transparent information on quality.

Recognizing the similarities of the mission and goals the APQN/ECA Staff Exchange Project is being announced with following details:

II. Highlights of the APQN/ECA Staff Exchange Project

1. APQN and ECA will function as an intermediate to encourage member agencies of APQN and ECA to exchange staff members for visits to member agencies in the other region. This exchange underpins the importance of building stronger relations in QA in HE between the Asia-Pacific and European regions.
2. APQN and ECA will develop a format for visits of at least 1 week to an agency in the other region. Applicants can also submit special needs for the visit from the perspective of the sending agency.
3. Member agencies will cover international travel cost and accommodation of staff members nominated by them. Host agencies will offer local logistical guidance and advice on accommodation. The host agency also sets up about a program of at least 1 week, taking into account the provided format and the needs of the sending agency.
4. After completion of the program a short evaluation report is completed by the visiting staff member. The host agency has the opportunity to make comments which will be included in the evaluation report. The evaluation report will be submitted to the Boards of APQN and ECA.
5. Reciprocity is advisable but not required, i.e. a visit of a staff member of a sending agency could be followed by a visit of a staff member of the host agency to the other agency, but this is not mandatory.
6. APQN and ECA will issue a certificate to those that have completed the program and submitted an evaluation report.
7. APQN and ECA will apply for funding opportunities if these are available, e.g. to partially support staff members from low income countries.
8. After 1 year the APQN/ECA staff exchange project will be evaluated by APQN and ECA. If the evaluation is positive it may be prolonged for another year. In addition, it will be investigated whether an exchange of experts (by involving them in QA procedures in other regions) is possible.

III. Call for Sending Agencies

APQN and ECA will send out a call to their members with the request to indicate an interest of agencies in participating in the staff exchange project. The agency should nominate staff members before 21st October 2014 by sending the nomination to the Secretariat of their network (APQN or ECA). The nominations need to include CVs of the nominees, and the application should detail what they expect from the exchange and in what ways the visit will be useful to host agencies. The nominating agency should be aware that it will pay for the international travel and accommodation of its nominees.

IV. Call for Hosting Agencies

For purposes of implementing this project, APQN and ECA call for the support of member agencies to act as host agencies. The list of nominees with CVs and expectations will be made available to host agencies by 21st October 2014. Expressions of interest may indicate a first, second and third preference for nominees. The expression of interest should also indicate in what way the host will be able to receive and conduct the program. The APQN/ECA format for visits is the starting point but can be adjusted. The name, email address, and telephone number of the contact person from the host agency should be provided. Agencies are requested to indicate their interest in hosting by informing the Secretariat of their network (APQN or ECA) before 1st November 2014.

V. Final Selection

A selection of nominees and host agencies will be made by a joint committee of APQN and ECA. The preferences of both nominees and host agencies will be taken into account. If there is a clear match between nominees and host agencies according to their indicated preferences then this should be respected. It should be avoided that nominees and host agencies are selected against their preferences. Therefore, the joint committee may initiate additional consultations with nominees and host agencies if necessary. After this selection the sending and host agencies will be informed. After confirmation of both agencies the host agency should take over and run the program as per need.

VI. Timeline for Applications

Deadline for submitting applications for nominees: 21st October 2014.

Deadline for indications to serve as host agency: 1st November 2014.

Deadline for final selection: 1st December 2014.

VII. Certificate

The staff member will submit an evaluation report with the possibility for comments by the host agency. Upon receipt of the evaluation report APQN and ECA will issue a joint certificate to staff members who have completed a visit under the APQN and ECA staff exchange project.

Links to list of member agencies

- APQN full member agencies: <http://www.apqn.org/membership/members/?type=Full%20Member>
- ECA member agencies: <http://ecahe.eu/home/about/members/members-directory/>

Signatures



Prof. Rafael van Grieken
Chairman of ECA



Dr. Jagannath Patil
President of APQN