



USAID Partnership for Higher Education Reform (PHER)

SCOPE OF WORK

for national / international consultant(s) to develop and launch a Technology-mediated Faculty Professional Development Module on Improving the Quality of Blended Course Delivery

I. BACKGROUND

The Partnership for Higher Education Reform (PHER) is an initiative to help strengthen Vietnam's leading public universities. The project activities are funded by USAID to support targeted reforms to improve institutional leadership and administrative capacity, improve teaching practices to enhance student learning outcomes, elevate university research capacity to international standards, network Vietnamese researchers to maximize access to global knowledge, enable university graduates to better engage with the labor market, and help university faculty leverage their research for innovation.

To achieve these objectives, PHER activities focus on the following:

Governance: This pillar supports the building and strengthening of institutional performance management systems based on agreed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) supported by a comprehensive Management Information System (MIS) that provides consistent, reliable data for decision making and for accreditation of institutions and programs. This includes the establishment of a robust internal quality assurance (IQA) system at each of the target universities. Improved governance will help the leadership of public universities in Vietnam make better informed decisions as they exercise greater autonomy and focus on academic quality.

Teaching and Learning: This pillar supports the expansion of faculty capacity to design state-of-the-art courses, digitize curricula, support the development of priority online courses and programs, improve student learning assessment techniques, and develop graduate students in the teaching profession. This pillar will also support technical assistance to help prepare faculty and administration for international accreditation reviews of academic programs and institutions. The objective is for improved teaching and learning at Vietnam's public universities to increase learning outcomes, enhance recognition of high-quality academic programs, and improve the employability of graduates.

Research & Innovation: This pillar supports the enhancement of research capacity so that the scientific outputs of public universities in Vietnam meet international standards, increase knowledge sharing among specialists, grow the number of publications in recognized journals, and align research activities to the social and economic needs of the country. This will take place through faculty exchanges, visiting scholar programs, research conferences, webinars, workshops, and short course training on research methodologies and academic specialties. The key vehicle for this pillar is the establishment of Vietnam International Academic Networks (VIAN) to help scientists across Vietnam connect more readily with fellow experts from around the world. The objective is for VIAN activity to lead to greater knowledge sharing, a broader promotion of research taking place in Vietnam, and enhanced opportunities for joint research and publications with partners abroad.

The PHER project also seeks deeper exploration of policy areas vital to the improvement of Vietnamese public higher education by supporting analytical work on the areas of technology and digitization, as well as gender equity. These cross-cutting policy areas are essential to success across the four pillars and to supporting the long-term sustainability of higher education reforms in Vietnam.

PHER focuses on reforms at three major Vietnamese public universities, their member universities, and their respective institutes and academic programs:

- Vietnam National University-Hanoi (VNU),
- Vietnam National University-Ho Chi Minh City (VNUHCM), and
- The University of Danang (UD)

II. OBJECTIVE OF ASSIGNMENT

Blended learning is the fusion of technology-mediated and online instruction with traditional, face-to-face classroom teaching. It is intended to offer a wide range of learning modalities and methods to ensure greater student accessibility to educational material and respond to a broad range of learning styles. During the Covid-19 pandemic, university professors worldwide had to adapt rapidly to remote delivery of traditional content, yet they often lacked the background necessary to maximize faculty instructional potential and ensure student learning outcomes. Vietnam recognizes that blended learning will remain an important delivery method for academic courses and programs going forward. The universities of Vietnam seek to ensure that their instructional faculty have adequate, in-depth training in the design and instruction of blended courses and programs to ensure the quality of blended programs and academic delivery to enhance student learning.

As such, PHER aims to support universities in growing professional development opportunities for university faculty in the area of blended learning design and delivery. PHER therefore seeks a national / international consultant(s) to create, produce, and deliver a high-quality professional



development module in the field of blended learning for university professors. The focus of the module will be on ensuring that Vietnamese faculty develop broad based awareness of blended learning and build baseline design capacity so that they can independently design blended courses and programs. The goal of such training is to enhance the quality of teaching in a blended environment to maximize student learning outcomes. The delivery of this professional development module will be technology-mediated in order to train the largest number of faculty with uniform content in an accessible manner that can be readily scaled up. The program will be designed around eight substantive chapters, each focused on a key theme:

Introduction - welcome to the module and expected learning outcomes (10 minutes)

Chapter 1 - general principles of blended learning (20 minutes)

Chapter 2 - curriculum development of blended programs (20 minutes)

Chapter 3 - syllabi development for blended courses (20 minutes)

Chapter 4 - student learning assessment in a blended learning environment (20 minutes)

Chapter 5 - pedagogy of blended course instruction (20 minutes)

Chapter 6 - technical tools for blended instruction (20 minutes)

Chapter 7 - stepwise guidance for instructional design (20 minute)

Chapter 8 - ways to ensure accessibility of content to all learners by considering Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles in course and program development (20 minutes)

Conclusion - Wrap up test and guide to resource materials (10 minutes)

The consultant(s) will craft and produce a 180-minute professional development module on the principles of blended instruction and essential faculty skills for blended course and program development. The module must be tailored for delivery through the existing Learning Management System (LMS) currently in use at Vietnam National University Hanoi (VNU).

Each substantive chapter should require approximately 20-minutes of faculty time to complete, but must be supported by a rich and comprehensive set of carefully vetted practical reference and resource materials that include published literature, guidelines, web tools, and links on blended / online learning and instructional design further support faculty members as they independently explore each theme more deeply to develop and deliver their own skill to design high-quality blended learning courses.

This module on Improving the Quality of Blended Course Delivery must be compatible with VNU's current Learning Management System (LMS). This faculty development module will eventually be shared with all PHER partner universities in Vietnam. The work of this assignment is to be conducted in Vietnamese or English with translation supported by PHER, but all summary reporting

is required in English. All activities should ensure equitable treatment, irrespective of gender, disability, or ethnic background.

The work of this assignment should be conducted in either Vietnamese or English language and all reporting is required in either Vietnamese or English. PHER will provide translation / interpretation support. All activities should take place without regard to gender, disability, or ethnic background.

III. TIME AND LOCATION

The work is expected to commence in March 2024 with activity completion and final delivery of the online module by August 2024.

IV. TASKS, DELIVERABLES, TIMELINE and LEVEL OF EFFORT

No.	Tasks	Deliverables
1	Analyze the current LMS at VNU	01 report on VNU LMS compatibility and suggestions for module integration
2	Develop outline / schematic of the professional development module for Quality of Blended Course Delivery including background reference and resource materials for review	01 outline / schematic of the professional development module on the Quality of Blended Course Delivery.
3	Develop beta version of faculty professional development module focusing on content, usability, functionality, security, and reliability	01 beta version of online module duly tested with summary memo with 10 draft packages of reference and resource materials
4	Guide VNU in beta testing of the module followed by analytical reflection on its operation and proposed updates to generate alpha version with alpha testing focused mostly on usability, functionality	- 01 alpha version of online module duly tested with summary memo with 10 final packages of reference and resource materials (01 for introduction, 01 per module chapter, and 01 for conclusion) further updated according to feedback from VNU
5	Lead the in-person training for module review	03 in-person training (95 faculty and staff) to develop a community of practice in Instructional Design at 3Us
6	Lead follow-up webinar	03 webinars
7	Conduct faculty learner assessment and revise the training module as needed	03 assessment results memo and a revised module (as needed)



8	Complete the final report	01 final report, including (A) all prior deliverables 1-7, (B) analysis of experience in course development, including lessons learned, and (C) recommendations for further module delivery and instructions for updating reference materials.
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Notes:

The final report should include all background materials, agendas, and reports, along with analysis of objectives, lessons learned, and recommendations - in addition to a roster of all deliverables.

V. BUDGET

The USAID PHER grant will allocate a budget agreed with the consultant(s) to support the implementation of the activities and deliverables per the SOW above.

VI. SUPERVISION AND REPORTING

The consultant will work in collaboration with VNU but under the direction of the PHER team.

VII. REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Essential:

- holds a master’s degree in instructional design, technology, or pedagogy
- has at least five-year experience in instructional design and e-learning development in higher education or professional development training
- has expertise in course creation software, learning enhancement tools, and/or LMS used for online/blended courses
- has experience facilitating training workshops for educators.

Preferred:

- holds a doctoral degree in education, technology, instructional design
- is familiar with the LMS in use at VNU Hanoi
- has experience with educational video production, development and editing

VIII. APPLICATION

The application documents include:

- A letter of motivation
- CV with three references

- A technical proposal responding to the objectives and deliverables of this assignment
- Financial proposal, indicating the expected daily rate or consultancy fees.

Application documents should be sent to pher@sangkienvietnam.org titled “Consultancy for Improving the Quality Blended Course Delivery” by **February 28, 2024**. All applications will be carefully considered, but only short-listed applicants will be contacted.