



USAID Partnership for Higher Education Reform (PHER)

SCOPE OF WORK

National consultant to develop the capacity of university personnel to complete the necessary self-assessments and procedures toward ACBSP accreditation

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 to leverage their research for innovation.

To achieve these objectives, PHER activities focus on four pillars:

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 to make better informed decisions as they exercise greater autonomy and focus on academic quality.

Teaching & Learning: This pillar supports the growing of faculty professional development opportunities through the establishment of formalized Centers for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL) as well as supporting the work of less formal, more specialized faculty-driven affinity groups through Faculty Academies on Excellence in Teaching (FACET). The goals are to support 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 enhancing 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 to connect more readily with fellow experts from around the world. The objective is for VIAN activity to lead to greater knowledge sharing, 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 support the long-term sustainability of higher education reforms in Vietnam.

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

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

II. OBJECTIVE OF ASSIGNMENT

Decree 38/2013/TT-BGDĐT, issued by the Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) in 2013, regulates the process for accrediting university academic programs. Accreditation provides opportunities to develop a culture of quality and institutional growth through program self-study, external evaluation, and self-regulation. PHER aims to support ways to improve the quality of degree programs at the three partner universities in Vietnam. One path toward assuring the quality of academic programs is for universities to undergo accreditation reviews by agencies in reviewing specific academic areas of study. One such area with specialized accreditation is the field of business administration.

The Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) is a global accrediting body for business education, pioneering accreditation across all levels of collegiate business degree programs. Utilizing the Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence, ACBSP sets a



standard of excellence through its accreditation process. This process evaluates elements such as leadership, strategic planning, stakeholder relationships, academic program quality, faculty credentials, and educational support. ACBSP ensures that business programs provide a rigorous educational experience and demonstrate a commitment to continuous quality improvement.

PHER seeks a national consultant to support two (02) universities, one in Ha Noi and the other in Da Nang in developing the capacity of their personnel in fields related to business administration to complete the necessary self-assessments and procedures to apply for ACBSP accreditation. The consultant should provide additional support for ensuring the long-term capacity to address quality factors that will impact future accreditation procedures.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- Raise awareness of ACBSP standards at the 02 universities;
- Provide professional development of university personnel to help them complete the required internal assessments and prepare self-study reports in accordance with the ACBSP standards and procedures;
- Support the universities to improve their capacity to draft self-study reports;
- Support university personnel in conducting gap analysis on the status of university programs and ACBSP standards;
- Provide guidance to universities to improve the relevant academic programs to ensure they can meet ACBSP standards in the future.

All work for this assignment should be conducted in Vietnamese language and all reporting must be in English. All activities should take place without regard to gender, disability, or ethnic background.

II. TIME AND LOCATION

The work is expected to commence in March 2024 with activities completed by August 2024.

IV. TASKS, DELIVERABLES, TIMELINE AND LEVEL OF EFFORT

	Activities	Deliverables
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1	Virtual or in-person launch meeting with universities to (a) ensure a mutual understanding of ACBSP requirements, (b) chart the flow of consulting activities, and (c) universities to share institutional information to support the consultant in drafting the situational analysis of the proposed programs and readiness for undertaking accreditation steps at the 02 universities	02 situational reports (01 for each university) including step-by-step plan to support the universities in satisfying ACBSP procedures
2	In-person coaching for personnel leading ACBSP accreditation process at 02 universities at Hanoi and Danang	04 full-day coaching at VNU 04 full-day coaching at UD 02 set of coaching materials
4	Post-mission online coaching for personal learning ACBSP accreditation process at 02 universities at Hanoi and Danang	02 coaching reflection briefs 02 consultant reviews of university draft self-study reports (one for each university)
6.	Final summary report	01 final report, including (A) all prior deliverables, (B) analysis of experience in technical support on accreditation, including lessons learned, and (C) recommendations for further improvement for academic programs and accreditation procedures

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 expert to support the implementation of the activities and deliverables per the SOW above.

VI. SUPERVISION AND REPORTING

The consultant will work under the direction of the PHER team.

VII. REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Essential:



- holds a minimum qualification of a master's degree in the relevant field
- has a prior experience in leading ACBSP program accreditation

Preferred:

- holds PhD in the relevant field
- has ACBSP approval as a peer reviewer / visiting team chair / ACBSP expert
- has knowledge of the higher education system in Vietnam

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 expert fees.

Application documents should be sent to pher@sangkienvietnam.org titled “Consultant for ACBSP Standards” by **February 29, 2024**. All applications will be carefully considered, but only short-listed applicants will be contacted.