

**OPEN CALL FOR TENDER:**  
**European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)**  
External review of ENQA's agency review process  
Deadline: 16 November 2018

**Background**

The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) is a membership association which represents its members at the European level and internationally. ENQA members are quality assurance organisations from the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) that operate in the field of higher education. The [membership criteria](#) of ENQA encompass Parts 2 and 3 of the [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(ESG\)](#). Bodies that do not wish to, or for whatever reason are unable to, apply to become members of ENQA may request affiliate status within ENQA. Affiliates are bona fide organisations or agencies with a demonstrable interest in the quality assurance of higher education. ENQA represents its members at the European level and internationally, especially in political decision making processes and in co-operations with stakeholder organisations.

ENQA contributes to this goal by promoting European co-operation in the field of quality assurance in higher education and disseminating information and expertise among its members and towards stakeholders in order to develop and share good practice and to foster the European dimension of quality assurance.

An external review against the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)* is a prerequisite for application to become a member of ENQA. It is also a requirement for agencies wishing to apply to the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), as set by the Bologna Process Communiqué of London, 2007:

*applications for inclusion on [EQAR] should be evaluated on the basis of substantial compliance with the ESG, evidenced through an independent review process endorsed by national authorities, where this endorsement is required by those authorities.*

As of 1 July 2011, most reviews of agencies wishing to apply for or reconfirm their membership in ENQA are coordinated by ENQA in order to guarantee a higher level of consistency of the reviews.

ENQA manages all aspects of the review process. The ENQA Secretariat coordinates the reviews, manages the database of experts, organises trainings for the experts participating in reviews, and drafts the contracts and coordinates the site visits of the agencies. More detailed information about the ENQA agency review process can be found on the [ENQA website for reviews](#) or in the [Guidelines for ENQA agency reviews](#).

In 2018-2019, ENQA is looking to conduct an external review of this agency review process. This Call for Tender is open to QA experts, agencies and organisations who can conduct this external review independently and accurately, according to the requirements set out below.

## 1. Location and contact information for ENQA

European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)  
Avenue de Tervuren 36-38  
1040 Brussels  
Belgium

Phone: +32 2 735 56 59  
Email: [secretariat@enqa.eu](mailto:secretariat@enqa.eu)  
Website: <https://www.enqa.eu>

## 2. The review guiding body

The external review of ENQA's agency review process is guided by the ENQA External Review Steering Committee (henceforth referred to as the Committee). The Committee is chaired by:

Juan Carlos Hernández Buades  
Email: [jchernandez@ceuandalucia.es](mailto:jchernandez@ceuandalucia.es)

All inquiries about the Call for Tender or for further information can be directed to the ENQA Secretariat directly at [secretariat@enqa.eu](mailto:secretariat@enqa.eu).

## 3. Minimum requirements

### **Budget:**

The maximum price for the review is set at €30,000 excluding VAT. This price must include: the coordinator fee; the fees for the reviewers; the travel, accommodation, and subsistence costs for the site visit; communication and briefing costs of reviewers and other eventual costs related to the coordination and execution of the review process.

Please note: the participation of interviewees to the site visit is guaranteed and paid for by ENQA outside of this budget.

### **Timeline:**

The tender must be submitted to the ENQA External Review Steering Committee by 16 November 2018. The selection of the Coordinator will take place during the Committee's meeting on 30 November 2018 and will be announced shortly thereafter.

A panel of experts for the review is expected to be selected by the Coordinator by April 2019. The Committee will approve the panel by the end of May. However, the tender may include a list of potential experts in order to give the Committee an idea of the direction the Coordinator would take this review.

ENQA will submit its Self-Assessment Report (SAR) in mid-June 2019.

The site visit of the external review panel is expected in September 2019.

The External Review Report from the external review panel of experts is expected to be completed and approved by the Committee by December 2019.

**Please note:** ENQA will maintain ownership of the External Review Report and the right to publish it.

#### 4. Scope of the review

The scope of the review is to evaluate the transparency and independence of the ENQA agency review process with the intention to support the improvement of its usefulness and fitness-for-purpose. In order to do so, the final report should assess, on the one hand, how the principles outlined in the standards of ESG Parts 2 and 3 for QA agencies are reflected in the reviews of agencies (while adapting them to the context and work of ENQA) and, on the other hand, how far the ENQA procedures contribute to the improvement of the quality of work in QA agencies and allow for innovative approaches to QA processes. When needed, the [ENQA Agency Review Guidelines](#) can be used as a source of inspiration for the review process.

In this context, it is noteworthy that currently a large majority of ENQA member agencies use the ENQA coordinated review as basis for their application to be included in the Register of QA agencies operating in compliance with the ESG. Notably, the external review reports also are expected to fulfil the expectations set by the EQAR Register Committee. Therefore, any recommendations the panel of experts may put forward should be contextualized, meaning they should include an analysis of the impact that the proposed changes potentially have on the relationship between [ENQA](#), [EQAR](#), and associated agencies.

#### 5. Expectations for the review panel

The panel of experts for this review should contain at least five experts, of which there is at least:

- a) One external quality assurance expert
- b) One student
- c) One academic
- d) At least one expert with a broad understanding of the European Higher Education policy context. Ideally the entire panel would have a good understanding of the higher education sector or some aspects of it.
- e) A fair gender balance between all the experts
- f) An appropriate geographical spread, and with members coming from at least three different countries. Ideally, there would be at least one panel member from a non-European country for a diversified opinion, but in general the panel should be well versed in the European context as a whole

#### 6. Requirements for the tender

##### **Basic requirements:**

In order to be considered by the Committee, the tender must include the following:

1. Name and contact information of the proposed review coordinator
2. Proof of relevant experience, expertise and capacity of the coordinator to carry out a review process according to the set requirements
3. Written acceptance of the anticipated review timeline found in Section 3 of this Call for Tender
4. Proof of a convincing and reliable review methodology that takes into account:
  - a. the specific role of ENQA,
  - b. the requirements of the ESG for external reviews (independence, transparency, stakeholder engagement, etc.),
  - c. current good practice,
  - d. and expectations of stakeholders

5. Precise indications of how the review process would be carried out and who would be involved
6. Guarantees of independence of the reviewers and transparency of the procedure
7. An explanation of the procedure used for the selection of experts. If possible, the tender may include a preliminary list of experts for the review panel, but this is not required. In any case, the tender should prove beyond any doubt that a panel could be formed with the requirements found in Section 5 of this Call for Tender.
8. An explanation of how the panel of experts will be trained and briefed
9. A list of any eventual (additional) requirements or expectations related to: ENQA's self-assessment report; the organisation of the site visit programme; or any other eventual areas where ENQA's contribution is needed
10. Indication of the expected length and content of the final report (what it will contain, how it will be structured)
11. Examples of the Coordinator's expertise in the field of QA and past review experience

The tender must be drafted in English. The Committee reserves the right to ask for further information and additional clarification on the tender.

### 7. Causes for disqualification

The tender will be automatically disqualified for the reasons listed below. A Coordinator from any agency or organisation that falls into one of the categories below is not recommended to draft a tender:

- a) Members and Affiliates of ENQA
- b) Agencies registered on EQAR
- c) Organisations, agencies, or other entities that have had an active working relationship with ENQA for the ENQA agency review process over the last three years. **NB:** Organisations that have only worked with ENQA on projects or events may be considered, but they should make sure to include an explanation of their independence for the process in the tender
- d) A review Coordinator with less than five years of experience with quality assurance
- e) A tender with a budget over €30,000
- f) An incomplete tender
- g) A tender not meeting the deadline

### 8. Basis of selection

The selected tender will be based on the following criteria:

1. The tender must respect the €30,000 budget (before VAT). Within this limit, the price has no further impact on the selection, which will be on the basis of quality of the proposal.
2. Experience of the proposed Coordinator
3. Inclusion of an adequate and appropriate methodology
4. Assurances/guarantees on selection and training of members of the review panel. A reviewer's training programme should be provided. Explanation of applicant experience in reviewers training should be given.

### 9. Submission and deadline

The tender must be submitted to the ENQA External Review Steering Committee by email to:

Juan Carlos Hernández Buades  
 Email: [jchernandez@ceuandalucia.es](mailto:jchernandez@ceuandalucia.es)

The deadline is **16 November at 17.00 Brussels time**.

Any further questions or inquiries can be directed to the ENQA Secretariat at [secretariat@enqa.eu](mailto:secretariat@enqa.eu).