



Ministry of Education & Higher Education

Operation Manual

of

Quality Improvement Fund (QIF)

Palestinian Tertiary Education – West Bank & Gaza Strip

Education to Work Transition Project (E2WTP)

PART I (Proposal Writing and Submission phase)

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Abbreviations

| | |
|----------------|---|
| AQAC | Accreditation and Quality Assurance Committee |
| CHE | Council for Higher Education |
| CQS | Selection Based on Consultant's Qualifications |
| EC | European Counties |
| EOI | Expression of Interest |
| E2WTP | Education to Work Transition Project |
| GA | Grant Account |
| GIA | Grant Implementation Agreement |
| IBRD | International Bank for Reconstruction & Development |
| ICT | Information & Communications Technology |
| IDA | International Development Association |
| IP | Implementation Plan |
| IT | Information Technology |
| LCS | Least Cost Selection |
| M&E | Monitoring & Evaluation |
| MOEHE | Ministry of Education & Higher Education |
| NCB | National Competitive Bidding |
| PCU | Project Coordination Unit |
| PP | Procurement Plan |
| PSRCC | Private Sector Representative Coordination Council |
| QCBS | Quality and Cost-Based Selection |
| QIF | Quality Improvement Fund |
| RFP | Request for Proposals |
| SMART | Specific Measurable Attainable Realistic Timely |
| SSS | Single Source Selection |
| TEP | Tertiary Education Project |
| TEIs | Tertiary Education Institution/s |
| TOR | Terms of Reference |
| TVET | Technical & Vocational Education & Training |
| TA | Technical Assistance |
| UNDB | United Nations Development Business |
| WB | World Bank |
| WB-IDA | World Bank – International Development Association |

1. The Quality Improvement Fund (QIF): An Overview

The Palestinian National Authority through its Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE) implemented a Tertiary Education Project in 2005 with the support of the World Bank and the European Union (EU). A major component of this Project was the establishment of the Quality Improvement Funds (QIF), which is overseen by QIF Board. The main objective of QIF is to provide support for improving the quality of Palestinian tertiary education institutions and programs in the aim of developing market-driven programs in line with international standards, developing income-generating programs, and enhancing teaching practices and methodologies. Although administered separately, the primary purpose of QIF fund is to improve quality and relevance in tertiary education and is therefore closely linked to the national accreditation process.

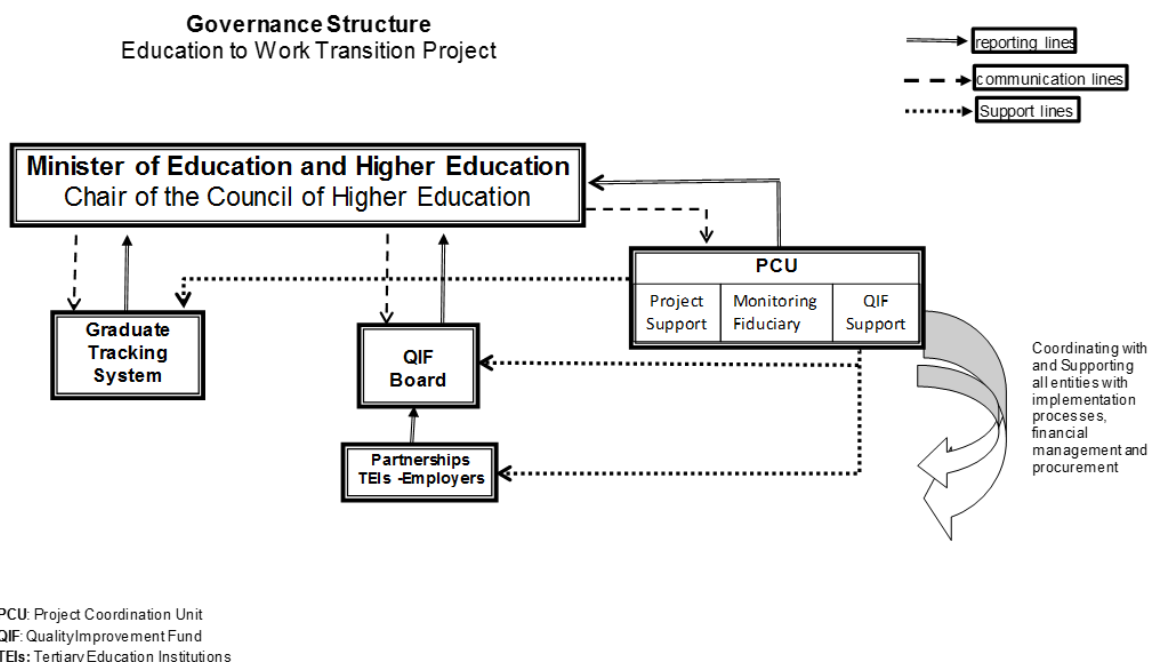
The QIF funds are allocated on a competitive basis, open to eligible tertiary education institutions in Palestine. As further described in the manual, QIF will be administered by PCU Unit, branched out of the MOEHE. PCU Unit will include small technical staff (QIF team) that is accountable to a centralized Board representative from appropriate stakeholders. PCU unit including QIF team and QIF Board will be supported by MOEHE. So far, approximately **20.2** million U.S Dollars ¹ have been made available in the fund for distribution over an approximated eleven-year period.

The MoEHE through its PCU is currently implementing 20 grants financing an amount of US\$4.5 million to QIF to support the Education to Work Transition Project (E2WTP) that is helping finance scaling-up activities of the well-performing Tertiary Education Project (TEP) to further enhance its impact. Specifically, it is funding additional two calls for proposals through QIF to provide incentives to Tertiary Education Institutions (TEIs) to develop and implement employment-oriented education programs in partnership with the private sector. TEIs are partnering with private sector employers in designing curricula, updating teaching practices, and providing practical training to students. The new QIF theme related to E2WTP is specifically expected to (i) increase the productive linkages between TEIs and businesses; (ii) promote social responsibility among the business community; and (iii) better prepare graduates to find and keep gainful employment.

The QIF will continue to facilitate a change of culture in the financing of tertiary education in Palestine, the promotion of improvement in teacher education, the setting of national priorities in the subsector, and a new framework for the relationship among TEIs and the private and public sector.

¹ Between 2005 till 2016: this includes the original TEP (5.52 million dollars from World Bank-IDA, and 3.92 million euros from the EC), the TEP AF allocated for the education programs (4.2 million dollars), and the E2WTP (4.5 million dollars).

2. Structure of QIF



2.1 QIF Board

The QIF Board is composed of 11 members who are appointed by MOEHE and is independent of the government and other related bodies. They are selected to represent the following stakeholders:

- a) Council for Higher Education (CHE).
- b) Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission (AQAC).
 - i. Director of AQAC, and
 - ii. One Commissioner related to TVET.
- c) Higher Education and TEIs sector
 - i. One from Universities, and
 - ii. One from Colleges.
- d) Engineering sector or Construction Association
- e) Health sector
- f) Private sector/industries or Private Sector Representative Coordination Council (PSRCC)
 - i. One from the Palestinian Federation for Industries, and
 - ii. One from the Banking sector, and
 - iii. One from the Business sector.
- g) Information Technology (IT) sector.

2.1.1 QIF Board Responsibilities:

- a) QIF Board members shall be appointed for a period of one cycle (four years) and may be reappointed for one extra cycle, with the exception of the Director of AQAC, who will remain to be a permanent QIF Board member.
- b) The Chair of QIF Board will be elected (preferably by rotation) every cycle by QIF Board members and may be reelected for one extra cycle.

- c) At the end of each cycle, board members will change gradually providing that the change does not exceed 50% of the original members.
- d) The QIF coordinator will act as a Secretary of the QIF Board.
- e) The QIF Board should meet at least three times per year or when necessary for purposes of: (i) determining the merit of each application and an amount at which applications will be funded. An outline of the awarding process appears in Section 6 of this Manual; (ii) realigning the priorities of the Fund, amend and reform technical issues and requirements; (iii) dealing with and deciding on appeals presented by participating institutions (if applicable)²; (iv) reviewing progress report on the implementation of the grants. This progress report should be prepared by QIF team based on updated information collected from the participating TEIs, and (v) reviewing the program strategy and process at the end of each year.
- f) As all of the appeals accepted by the QIF Board will be sent to external reviewers, the evaluations of the external reviewers will be discussed in the next QIF Board meeting for final decisions.
- g) Board members will not participate in decisions where there is a potential conflict of interest. Potential conflict of interest includes Board members' direct or indirect involvement in a proposal that is considered for funding by the QIF Board.
- h) Inactive Board members include members who are absent for three consecutive meetings or half the annual meetings. Accordingly, inactive members will be replaced by receiving a nomination from the relevant stakeholders, as listed above with the appointment made by the MOEHE.
- i) The QIF Board will agree on a basic code of rules and regulations. These will fundamentally be addressed to ensure the independence of the QIF Board and its efficiency in decision-making.
- j) The QIF Board will coordinate its work with the Project Coordination Unit in the proper management of grants.
- k) The QIF Board will submit an annual report to the MOEHE and the Council for Higher Education, reflecting the grants' progress summary and achieved outcomes.

2.1.2 Competencies of QIF Board Members:

- a) Have a comprehensive understanding of the overall needs of tertiary education in Palestine.
- b) Have a comprehensive understanding of the overall conditions and needs of the labor market demands in Palestine.
- c) Be knowledgeable about the mission and general characteristics of all institutions in the system.
- d) Be flexible in allowing a monetary range of grant requests with an eye toward maximizing the effectiveness of the QIF grants.
- e) Keep faithful to the Priorities and Primary Categories of QIF Awards.
- f) Allow for creativity and "out-of-the-box" proposals which have potential.
- g) Be vigilant that conflicts of interest are not involved among institutions, staff and Board during the awarding process.
- h) Assure that all tertiary education institutions receive adequate attention by QIF.
- i) Be aware of weaknesses in the staffing or Board structure and seek changes/replacements in order to maintain the integrity of the process.
- j) Keep a schedule and maintain a highly transparent and well-publicized process.

² When the funds are limited and all funds are committed, no appeals will be received.

2.2 Project Coordination Unit (PCU)

The Project Coordination Unit (PCU) is established by the MOEHE to monitor and assist its World Bank funded projects. Accordingly, the PCU will be responsible for fiduciary management of QIF. The PCU is physically located in the MOEHE, where the director works with QIF Board and QIF team in the proper dissemination of funds available for QIF, application process and financial and procurement guidelines for Grant implementation. The Director of the PCU will participate in the meetings of QIF Board in a consultative capacity (i.e., without vote in decisions concerning the award of funds to proposals) and will supervise and assist QIF team in the assessment of grant proposals. The PCU and QIF have interdependent activities. Specifically, the PCU will:

- a) Participate in workshops for TEIs and the private sectors related to QIF in coordination with QIF team.
- b) Provide technical assistance on fiduciary matters (i.e., information related to financial management, reporting and procurement procedures) to TEIs as required to develop QIF grants' applications.
- c) Assist in reviewing QIF applications prior to their submission to the QIF Board.
- d) Provide technical advice related to fiduciary management of the QIF Board and attend all of the Board's meetings.
- e) Prepare the grant agreement and oversee the fiduciary aspects of grant implementation, upon QIF Board decision to approve the grant.
- f) Participate in the review of semiannual progress reports for QIF recipients.
- g) Suggest pre-active measures in coordination with QIF team and other stakeholders to enhance the implementation of the projects and program.

2.3 QIF Team

Currently two staff members are hired and appointed by the MOEHE as part of the QIF team. QIF team is a qualified team to assure quality and monitoring and evaluation of the relevant QIF grants. The QIF team will be housed within MOEHE and to be managed on a daily basis by the Director of the PCU, supervised by the Minister of Education & Higher Education, and accountable to the Chairperson of QIF Board.

2.3.1 QIF Team Responsibilities

QIF team will work on the following:

- a) Work in cooperation with AQAC on the quality improvement of the Palestinian tertiary education system without confusing the assessment purpose and accreditation purpose with the Quality Improvement Fund. For instance, an accreditation outcome cannot be contingent on the receipt of a grant to improve a certain area, nor can the QIF be used directly by AQAC to improve certain aspects of institutions and programs. Institutions, on the other hand, may themselves choose to select areas identified through the accreditation process as an improvement need for QIF application.
- b) Assure that TEIs are notified of the process well in advance of the application deadlines. At the outset, every TEI should be provided with the QIF Operation Manual.
- c) Manage the call-for-proposals and its technical evaluation.
- d) Prepare and present semiannual progress reports to QIF Board. The reports should describe the progress made in the implementation of each QIF grant, the obstacles faced by TEIs in the implementation of the proposals (if any), and actions taken to overcome them.
- e) Carry out an awareness raising campaign to promote partnership between TEIs and the private sector.
- f) Provide training programs for tertiary education institutions and the private sector (when needed), taking into consideration QIF's application process.
- g) Be available to tertiary education institutions and the private sector (when needed) as they develop proposals and undergo the application process.

- h) Provide staff support to the QIF Board related to notification, implementation and follow-up meetings.
- i) Develop a process for the receipt and review of QIF applications (see appendix 5, QIF Cycle Template).
- j) Provide the QIF Board with a summary overview of the application including TEIs' eligibility; TEIs' full provision of applications' elements; applications' responsiveness to one or more of the fund priorities; and proposals' evaluation in accordance to the developed criteria.
- k) Work in consultation with the PCU for purposes of technical, procurement and financial management throughout the duration of each grant.
- l) Notify applicants of grant decisions.
- m) Receive and deal with appeals from institutions whose proposals are rejected. This would initially entail an internal review of the proposal, and consequently the intervention of a third external reviewer.
- n) Monitor progress of funded programs through semiannual reports that should be presented to the QIF Board no later than one month after the due date (End-June, End-December of each year).
- o) Propose recommendations to the board to enhance the implementation of the program and suggest recommendations for future programs.

3. Purpose and Nature of QIF Grants

3.1 Grant Awards' Priority

In the evaluation process, the QIF Board will only consider applications which meet **all the following content priorities and at least one of the following process priorities (not in order)**.

3.1.1 Content Priorities

- a) Improve or develop higher education programs in fields relevant to labor market needs, including human resource development and institutional capacity building.
- b) Develop strong partnerships between tertiary education institutes and the private sector for improving relevance, quality and on-the-job learning components of education programs.
- c) Actively monitor quality of programs in terms of employer satisfaction with programs (during and after intervention) and labor market inclusion of graduates.

3.1.2 Process Priorities

- a) Develop partnership programs with local, regional and global higher education institutions, promote consortia, and share the use of teaching and learning resources (such as library resources, information resources, laboratories and other equipment).
- b) Develop partnership and projects with the public sector, including local and regional authorities.
- c) Enhance the capacity to seek alternative funding sources and generate additional income such as through the provision of training, consulting or research services for public and private sector institutions in local or international markets.

3.2 Grants' Primary Categories (Grants' Windows)

Applications for QIF grants will be welcomed from TEIs which develop new programs, or improve existing ones (as stated in the concept note of each cycle), providing that they are demand-driven and they respond to the labor market needs.

The fund will have two windows:

Window One – Technical-production professional areas, such as: health, construction related fields, engineering, mechatronics, architecture, autotronics, computer science, informatics, ICT related fields,

agriculture, veterinary related fields, natural science (biology, chemistry, biotechnology), food industry and audiovisual media...etc.

Window Two – Business and humanities professional areas, such as: services (tourisms, hotel management, and food catering), accounting, finance, business administration (marketing, human resources, and social work), and journalism...etc.

In addition, each proposal needs to include at least the following component priorities (a) life-skill component, (b) student placement component, in participation with the private sector, (c) a curriculum improvement component, including enhancement of study programs and teaching/learning processes, (d) student supervision and mentoring component, and (e) monitoring and control system for quality assurance.

Examples of what could be covered include:

(a) Life Skills

- Language.
- Computer skills (e.g., basic office skills).
- Soft skills (e.g., leadership skills, negotiation skills, interpersonal skills, communication skills, problem solving, critical thinking).
- Entrepreneurial and managerial skills (e.g., business planning, strategic planning, financial and marketing literacy, quality and logistics management).

(b) Student placements (private sector employers): to apply theoretical knowledge in a practical setting and receive additional practical training in the workplace in order to increase employment opportunities for graduates.

(c) Curriculum improvement: to strengthen practical relevance of curriculum in partnership with the private sector (e.g., integrate the practical component as an integral part of the curriculum). Funding can be applied to curriculum development processes, hiring of specialized teaching, administrative and support staff, teaching improvement programs, design and development of new learning materials, and purchase of materials and equipment.

(d) Student supervision and mentoring to ensure that instructors, teachers and professors visit, on a regular basis, the places where students are receiving practical training and that the participating business have the capacity to mentor students while students are in practice.

(e) Monitoring and control system: develop a plan for continuously monitoring and controlling the quality of the practical training component and evaluate outcomes in terms of employment after graduation and labor market relevance.

4. QIF Grants' Use and Application Guidelines

4.1 TEIs Eligibility

All MOEHE licensed TEIs, including universities, technical, vocational and university colleges, and community colleges, in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are eligible to apply for QIF grants. QIF grants' application eligibility is dependent on credible quality assurance mechanisms at TEIs, such as a Quality Unit/Office as described below. All TEIs are expected to have a focal point for quality assurance purposes and for both internal coordination and external liaison relative to quality assessment and improvement

activities, including institutional and program accreditation. Some institutions, namely the technical, vocational and university colleges, will be put into groups with a single Quality Unit/Office. These colleges can therefore apply for QIF funds as a group/cluster or, alternatively, present individual applications or proposals separately, or with other public, private or academic partners.

Although most Quality Units/Offices will tend to reside in Academic Affairs, it is feasible that they be placed in a Planning Office or directly in the President's Office. *It is not expected for QIF purposes that a Quality Unit/Office be a fully functional component of a tertiary institution prior to the initial application for a QIF grant. However, the institution will want to focus early attention on the development of a Quality Unit/Office in order to work effectively with the national accreditation process and to maximize quality improvement activity internal to the institution.* However, a brief description of an institution's Quality Unit/Office must be on record with AQAC which will provide, whenever requested, copies to the QIF Board. The description should be at least one-page in length, and should include:

1. The name of the institution.
2. The name and contact information for the Director of the Quality Unit/Office.
3. Office location of the Quality Unit, such as Vice President of Academic Affairs, President's Office, Planning Office, or other.
4. The type of functions performed by the Quality Unit/Office.

Although each tertiary institution will have latitude in the organization and functions of the Quality Unit/Office, the following general functions are advised:

1. Provide coordinating services internal to the institutions for purposes of self-evaluation and quality improvement.
2. Provide a focal point for institutional planning, including new program development. This does not necessarily mean that the Quality Unit/Office will do these functions but they should be very aware of the various institutional functions and how they fit together to make a quality institution of tertiary education.
3. Provide liaison services for the institution to the Quality Improvement Fund.
4. As central services are provided in the areas of management and teaching/learning improvement, fund raising and other areas, provide notification to the appropriate sectors of the institution.
5. Provision of liaison services with the national accreditation process, including a focal point for the coordination of institutional or programmatic reports to AQAC.
6. Participation in training programs and system-wide meetings related to quality in Palestinian tertiary education.

4.2 Financing Eligibility

The following categories of expenditure are eligible for financing under QIF:

- Equipment & furniture.
- Scientific journals and books.
- International consultants and visiting scholars from overseas.
- Local consultants.
- Overseas fellowships and internships.
- Local fellowships and internships.
- Overseas study tours.
- Local training and workshop logistics. This also includes training expenses such as insurance for students during on-the-job training and transportation costs and miscellaneous expenses.
- Operations and maintenance.

QIF Funds *may not be* used for:

- Construction or renovation of buildings.
- Paying persons concurrently paid by the government.
- Contributing to the endowment or general fund of a tertiary institution.
- Student financial aid (e.g.; tuition).
- Procurement of vehicles.

4.3 Fund Ceiling and Duration

Fund ceiling and maximum duration in accordance to each grant window is reflected in the table below:

| Grant Window | Single TEI Fund Ceiling | | TEIs Partnership Fund Ceiling Maximum number of partnering TEIs is 4 (1 leader and 3 partner TEIs either universities or colleges) | | Maximum Percentage of Equipment | Maximum Fund Duration |
|--|-------------------------|--------------|---|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Universities USD | Colleges USD | Leader Universities USD | Leader Colleges USD | | |
| Window 1: Technical- production Professional Areas | 200,000 | 150,000 | 50,000 for each additional TEI and a ceiling grant of 350,000 | 30,000 for each additional TEI and a ceiling grant of 240,000 | 40% | 36 months |
| Window 2: Business and Humanities Professional Areas | 200,000 | 150,000 | 50,000 for each additional TEI and a ceiling grant of 350,000 | 30,000 for each additional TEI and a ceiling grant of 240,000 | 30% | 36 months |

4.4 Other Guidelines

1. The maximum fund requested for international consultants and visiting scholars from overseas by an institution for the full duration of the QIF should not exceed 20% of the total project’s budget.
2. The minimum TEI contribution should be 10% of the requested QIF Grant, in the form of in-kind contribution.
3. Proposals should clearly reflect the contribution of the requested funding in achieving the program’s objectives over its full duration.
4. Institutions may submit one or more applications individually or as a part of the consortium/ partnership for each of the grant windows, and for each QIF application cycle, as stated in each cycle’s concept note.

PCU and QIF team are the main reference for any inquiries regarding QIF grants. PCU and QIF team are in charge of managing the technical and fiduciary aspects of grants implementation.

5. Application Format and Evaluation Criteria

The grant application will follow a two-step process. First, interested TEIs will present a Preliminary Declaration of Intent Proposal which will be evaluated by the QIF Board. The selected preliminary proposals will be invited to develop a full proposal that will be evaluated by external reviewers towards receiving funding support.

4.1 Preliminary Proposals

4.1.1 Preliminary Proposals/ Application Format

The preliminary proposals should contain a covering letter, a letter of intent, executive summary, and the body of the proposal and as shown in *Appendix 1*. They should be written in a single space, font 12, and Times New Roman format. TEI shall apply using the online preliminary proposal application which can be reached at the following link: www.palpcu.ps. Applicants shall also ensure submitting a CD copy by hand to the PCU offices in Ramallah and Gaza.

Cover Letter and/or Letter of Intent:

The Preliminary Proposal must be accompanied by an endorsement cover letter from the Chief Executive Officer of the TEIs verifying the institution's awareness of and commitment to the project and the preparation of a full proposal if the preliminary proposal is approved. In addition, the preliminary proposal must be accompanied by an endorsement letter of intent from the Chief Executive Officer of the private sector employer/s (partner/s) verifying their awareness and commitment to the project, proposed roles, and area of contribution in full proposal preparation and implementation phase. The letter of intent should also clearly verify their capacity including student hosting capacity and compatibility of the project with their objectives.

Executive Summary

This section should provide a summary description of the main objectives of the proposal, its justification, anticipated costs, and a joint business plan of the TEIs and the private sector partner on working together to prepare a Comprehensive Proposal.

Main Body of the Proposal

This section should present a detailed description of the proposal objectives illustrating how the proposal responds to the real need of the business sector backing it up with supporting information and data. This section should also reflect the involvement and contribution of each of the institutions to the achievement of objectives, and the successful implementation of the project. In addition, estimated funds utilization plan should also be illustrated.

4.1.2 Preliminary Proposals/ Evaluation Criteria

QIF Board will evaluate each preliminary proposal based on clear statement of objectives, demonstrated market needs, feasibility, commitment of the institutions as indicated by the definition of roles and responsibilities, strength of partnership, and realistic preliminary estimate of funding needs, *see Appendix 2*. Appendix 2 encloses the evaluation sheet for evaluating the preliminary proposals. Preliminary proposals shall be rejected or approved by QIF Board in accordance with the primary checklist and evaluation criteria stated in the same Appendix. No appeals are accepted at this phase.

4.2 Full Proposals

4.2.1 Full Proposals/ Application Format

The full proposals should contain a letter of intent, executive summary, and the body of the proposal and other attachments as per appendix 3 and as shown in the online full proposal application that can be reached at the following link www.palpcu.ps. Applicants shall also ensure submitting a CD copy by hand to the PCU offices in Ramallah and Gaza.

Letter of Intent

An application must be accompanied by an endorsement letter of intent from the Chief Executive Officer of the TEIs and the business partner verifying that both institutions involved in the proposed project are aware of and committed to the project. The covering letter should indicate that the full proposal has incorporated the comments and recommendations made by QIF Board during the previous phase.

Executive Summary (Both in Arabic and English)

In a maximum of one page, this section should summarize the proposal, including:

1. The institution's mission.
2. Project goal (what you ultimately wish to accomplish).
3. Strategic objectives (the specific strategies chosen to accomplish the goal and how they fit the QIF (a) Priorities and (b) Categories for QIF grants (Section 4).
4. Proposed activities (list major activities that support the strategic objectives).
5. Equipment and material needs (including but not limited to technical equipment, printing materials, software, etc.).
6. Expected Outcomes (briefly describe short-term, measurable results).
7. Project director and key staff involved (list complete contact information for persons accountable for the project).
8. In consortium or partnership projects, clearly identify the lead coordinating institution.
9. Amount requested of the QIF and overall amount of the project budget.
10. Anticipated project duration (beginning and ending dates of the project) and timeframe of the project.

Main Body of the Proposal

Upon successful preliminary application, institutions are expected to submit full proposals referring to the outline attached (Appendix 3). The online full proposal application template will be available on the Tertiary Education Project website: www.palpcu.ps by due time.

4.2.2 Full Proposals/ Evaluation Criteria

It is important to distinguish between the priorities and categories for QIF grant in Section 4 and the criteria of evaluation of the applications themselves. The former identifies the favored project areas to be funded by the QIF, while the criteria for evaluation deal with the merits of the applications themselves, i.e.; clarity of relevance, partnership influence and impact, and feasibility and sustainability. The applying institutions, external evaluators and the QIF Board and Staff are reminded to take into account both Sections 4 and 5 of this manual when preparing/evaluating the proposals.

Clarity and Relevance

The proposal should be clear in terms of the real needs; the problem should be well-justified. The concept of the proposal is innovative. The Quality improvement is demonstrated through the impact of the project on the institution and the relevant sector. The objectives are SMART and have academic and technical merits which contribute to the overall QIF objective. The proposed partnership model facilitates and enhances on-the-job learning and/or students' placement. The proposal includes/ or has a clear, solid, effective, and detailed monitoring & evaluation system supported by effective and measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPI).The project outcomes and results are clear, tangible, and do include measurable indicators. The proposal documents show clear understanding of cost and benefits generated through partnership for all partners. The proposed implementation plan includes all needed and only

needed activities to accomplish projects deliverables and to achieve projects objectives, outcomes, and results.

Partnership Influence and Impact

The influence/impact of the proposed quality improvement project will be judged on the basis of the expected benefits of the project, internal and external to the institution, i.e.;

- Partnership is well established, clearly documented, and formalized through effective memorandum of understanding.
- The roles and responsibilities are well divided between partners in concrete implementation modalities.
- Compatibility of partners with proposed objectives and outcomes.
- Hosting or intake capacity of private sector partner/s is sufficient and matches students' number and on-the-job training/learning plan.
- There is a significant potential impact on institutional improvement (Human Resources, Infrastructure, and Performance), through the partnership with the private sector.
- External benefits are measured through partnerships with both local partner/s as well as an international partner/s.
- Tangible long-term prospective of the project and partnerships, developing culture for cooperation between academia and the private sector for continuous improvement.
- There is a long-term, wide, and large impact on national labor market.

Feasibility and Sustainability

The feasibility of a program proposal will be judged by taking into account both past performance of the institution and details of the program itself. An important indicator of feasibility is the extent to which the institution has already demonstrated management and implementation capacity and a commitment to quality improvement. The specific feasibility of the proposed quality improvement project will be assessed in terms of:

- The proposed methodology approaches and strategies are realistic, reasonable, effective, outcome-oriented, drawing on best practice and the latest thinking and research.
- The human and physical resources allocated and requested to this project are appropriate.
- The project is sustainable, i.e.; it will be institutionalized and alternative sources of funding will be pursued. Facilitates developing income generating programs.
- All project activities are reflected in a realistic and reasonable financial budget.
- The proposal encourages the participation of females and students with special needs.
- The target group/s in the project is/are reasonable and well analyzed and defined.
- There are in kind contributions or matches (funding, staffing, equipment, office space, etc.).
- TEI has a history of demonstrated management and implementation capacity.
- The expected risks and the tools to overcome these risks are well defined.
- The proposed schedule management plan is realistic and effective, and the time frame work for each activity is sufficient and reasonable.

4.2.3 Full Proposals/ Scoring Sheet

Appendix 4 encloses the score sheet for evaluating the full proposals. The score sheet shown in appendix 4 is expected to be used by the external evaluators in the evaluation of the full proposals and can also be used by the TEIs as well as other users in identifying the priorities of the QIF. The total maximum score is 300, divided into the main evaluating criteria, i.e.; clarity and relevance (80), partnership and impact (120), and feasibility and sustainability (100). The minimum threshold for accepting any full proposal is a total score of 210 plus a minimum score of 90 out 120 for the partnership and impact criterion.

6. Application Process

6.1 Schedule

Institutions should expect a process of up to seven months from the call for the Preliminary Proposals to the time of grant notification. This schedule is dependent on the timing of QIF Board meeting which takes place every 4 months (or 3 times per year), or whenever needed. The QIF activity outline during these seven months is provided below:

6.1.1 The Period before the Initial Deadline for QIF Applications (around seven months)

The QIF Operation Manual will be distributed to all participating institutions in Palestine. A QIF concept note for dissemination purposes will be prepared. QIF Unit will also organize an awareness workshop and training sessions for key representatives of institutions and private sector.

6.1.2 Months One and Two

QIF Unit receives the Preliminary Proposals from the participating institutions and confirms receiving them. An institution can submit one or more than one Preliminary Proposal. If more than one Preliminary Proposal is submitted, then, as stated in the concept note, the submitting institution can be a leader in one proposal and a partner in the other proposals. Submissions should be through the online application that can be reached at www.palpcu.psin in addition to submitting a CD copy by hand to the PCU offices in Ramallah & Gaza.

QIF Unit will then proceed in processing and screening applications according to the attached internal screening sheet (Appendix 2.1), which includes “Part for Use by QIF Board”, where decisions are taken based on the following evaluating criteria:

- a) A summary overview of the application.
- b) Whether all the elements of the application are provided fully.
- c) Whether the application is responsive to one or more of the fund priorities (Section 4)

Overall decision of the Preliminary Proposals is made by QIF Board as per the evaluation sheet (Appendix 2). By the third week of month two, QIF Board, through the QIF Unit, will notify applicants with the decisions of the board regarding the Preliminary Proposals, which are deemed as complete and eligible by the QIF Board to start preparing the Full Proposal.

6.1.3 Months Three and Four

By the beginning of the third month, QIF Unit will give the applicants two months to prepare and submit the Full Proposal.

6.1.4 Month Five

By the first two weeks of month five QIF team will receive the full proposals. The proposals should be then sent to selected peer reviewers to evaluate them using the score sheet designed for this purpose (Appendix 4). QIF & PCU should meet to review the full proposals and the evaluation reports received from the reviewers for that period. They will make preliminary ranking recommendations to be reviewed by QIF Board.

In the case of a score variation, which exceeds 20% of the total score between the two reviewers, the proposal shall be subject to further review by the QIF board who will decide either of the following in order to proceed:

- The board may decide on the proposal based on internal voting by the QIF Board members;
- The board may decide to send the proposal to a third reviewer and the scoring made by this third reviewer shall be considered as final.

6.1.5 Month Six

By middle of month six, QIF Unit will send their summarized forms and preliminary recommendations, together with the evaluation reports of the external reviewers, to QIF Board to provide members of the board with the sufficient time to review them.

6.1.6 Month Seven

A QIF Board meeting will take place towards the beginning of month seven. The duration of the meeting is dependent in large measure on how many applications there are to review and decide on. In order to process these efficiently and fairly, QIF Unit and Board should develop a process which will be most effective for them in reviewing a potentially large number of applications in a single Board meeting.

The QIF Board will determine when it is necessary to have representatives of the applying institution present.

6.2 Grant Decisions

There are four possible outcomes to QIF Board review of any application of QIF grant:

- a) Approval for funding at the level requested.
- b) Approval for funding at a level not requested. It is feasible that QIF Board and Unit will determine that the institution did not request enough funding or requested in excess of that which is needed. It is advisable that this outcome do not come as a surprise to the applicant who should be involved in this discussion in advance of QIF Board meeting at which the grant decision will be made. However, it should be noted that the discussion of level of funding does not imply that the grant will be approved by the QIF Board.
- c) Provisional approval given minor revisions in the application. This would involve minor revisions requested by QIF Board and external reviewers at its decision making meeting but not minor revisions requested of the institution by staff at the time of application.
- d) Approval denied. Written reason/s should be given to the institution as to why its application was denied so that the institution can make the necessary major revisions to resubmit in another cycle. The applicant may send an appeal within two weeks from sending the written rejection of the proposal. QIF Board will decide on appeals' acceptance/rejection based on the TEI argument and the available funds. In case of acceptance, the proposal will be sent to another external reviewer who will review the proposal and give the final decision.

6.3 Notification of Grant Awards

Upon the conclusion of QIF Board meeting, and no later than three months after the proposal application deadline, a letter of notification is sent to the prospective institutions, expressing QIF Board's decision in regard to the rejection or approval of an award. The letter outlines any conditions or further requirements and directs the institution to work with PCU for purposes of finalizing the Grant Implementation Agreement (GIA). A press statement is released to the media detailing all awards approved by QIF in this cycle.

7. Grant Implementation Procedures

7.2 The Grant Implementation Agreement (GIA)

Upon receiving a copy of the notification letter, QIF and PCU will update the awards file with the date of acceptance or rejection and the proposal is reclassified under rejected or approved proposals. The award is then given a Grant Agreement Number (GAN), which will appear in the Grant Implementation Agreement (GIA). The PCU then moves into the process of preparing and signing the GIA. The GIA is signed in two copies; one for the institution and the other for QIF and PCU files. The GIA is the formal legally binding contract that sets out the rights and obligations of the Ministry and the Beneficiary with regard to the funding of QIF grants. The GIA is the only document, which, in legal terms, obligates the Ministry to provide funding under QIF. A copy of GIA is appended in Appendix 4.

7.3 QIF Grants Disbursement Procedures

7.3.1 Procedures for Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries will be expected to follow the conditions for disbursing funds depicted in this Operation Manual and included in the GIA. Where changes need to be made to these conditions to take into account of the special circumstances of small institutions (such as colleges), the proposed changes will need the approval of PCU. Grant is disbursed as tranches against project completion milestones, as agreed in the GIA and identified in the progress report.

7.3.2 Special Bank Accounts

Beneficiaries will be required to open a special bank account in the name of the grant. Each grant will have its own separate bank account; i.e.; Grant Account (GA), and there will be two signatories to each account. The signatories should be legally liable and formally part of/and authorized by the beneficiary. The bank account details are also identified in the text of the GIA. If the beneficiary receives more than one grant, a separate bank account has to be opened for each grant.

7.3.3 Structuring of Payments

Payments of grant proceeds to the beneficiary will be conducted in the form of advances of about 20% of the grant amount or as may deemed appropriate by the PCU. The first payment will be made following the signature of the GIA and following the approval of the detailed Implementation Plan (IP) and detailed budget. The beneficiary must submit this documentation to the PCU within a maximum of 30 days from the receipt of the advance. Further payments will be made as tranches of funds disbursed against the clear milestones of achievement set out in the IP and against documentation of eligible expenditures. The final installment (not less than 20% of total QIF grant amount) will be transferred by the university to the beneficiary bank account, then after submitting the final completion report and all related technical and financial reports, PCU will transfer the final installment based on actual expenditures.

1.2.5 Contingency Payments

A request by the Beneficiary for a contingency payment will only be considered in exceptional circumstances on the basis of a full justification. The payment will be authorized by the PCU Director if not exceeding 20% over and above that in the provisions of the GIA; otherwise prior authorization from the QIF Board is required.

1.2.6 Breach of Agreement or Irregularity

In the case of any unsupported or doubtful payments, PCU staff will visit the institution and may decide to halt further disbursement and undertake further investigation.

1.2.7 Conditions on Payments of Installments

Installments will only be released when PCU is confident that at least 75 percent of expenditure has taken place on any previous installment/s. The amount of expenditure and the balance of installments should be documented in the justified request. The final installment will be transferred by the university to the beneficiary bank account, then after submitting the final completion report and all related technical and financial reports, PCU will transfer the final installment based on actual expenditures.

1.3 QIF Grants Procurement Procedures

1.3.1 Applicable Guidelines

Procurement would be carried out in accordance with the World Bank regulations and guidelines published in the following documents:

1. For goods: "Guidelines: Procurement of Goods, Works and Non-Consulting Services under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and Grants" by World Bank Borrowers published by the World Bank in January 2011.
2. For consultants' services: "Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and Grants by World Bank Borrowers" published by the World Bank in January 2011.
3. Guidelines on Preventing and Combating Fraud and Corruption in Projects Financed by IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and Grants", dated October 15, 2006 and updated January 2011, shall apply to the project.

1.3.2 Procurement Responsibilities

The PCU is responsible for ensuring that procurement, carried out by beneficiaries, follows Bank Procurement and Consultants' Guidelines and the Grant Agreement with the World Bank. The PCU monitors all procurement activity and ensures compliance with the sub-grant implementation agreement (GIA) and the sub-project procurement plan, at all levels. Beneficiaries are responsible for procurement of goods and consultants' services under the supervision of the PCU.

1.3.3 Procurement Plan (PP) Elaboration

Directly after signing the GIA, the beneficiary will prepare, for PCU's approval, a procurement plan for the first 24 months of sub-project implementation, which outlines the most effective way for carrying out the purchases for the sub-project. This PP is elaborated as a form (spread sheet) where simple information concerning the purchases is specified: what, how, when, how much (Annex 9-1 of Appendix 9), i.e.:

- a) For Goods: reference, contract description, estimated costs, procurement method, pre-qualification, domestic preference, prior or post review, opening dates, and comments,
- b) For Consultants: reference, description of assignment, costs, selection method, review by PCU, expected proposal submission, and comments.

Subject to the PCU prior approval, the sub-project procurement plan will be updated by the beneficiary at least annually or as needed to reflect actual implementation requirements. The sub-project PP and the list of contracts (Annex 9-2 of Appendix 9) will be available at the TEI office; it will be also available in the Project data base.

Prior Review Thresholds: Consultants selection decisions subject to Prior Review by the Bank and PCU are illustrated in the following table:

| | Selection Method | Threshold for Selection method (USD) | Threshold for Prior Review by the Bank (USD) | Threshold for Prior Review by the PCU (USD) | Comments |
|-----------|-------------------------|---|---|--|-------------------------|
| 1. | <i>QCBS</i> | No threshold | First contract | All contracts | Including advertisement |

| | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------|----------------------------------|---|--|
| 2. | <i>CQS</i> | <200,000 | First contract | All contracts | Including shortlist and proposal evaluation report |
| 3. | <i>LCS</i> | <200,000 | First contract | All contracts | Including evaluation report |
| 4. | <i>Individual Consultants</i> | No threshold | None | All Contracts | Including evaluation report and shortlists |
| 5. | <i>Single Source (Individuals & Firms)</i> | No threshold | All contracts more than 10,000\$ | all contracts equal or less than 10,000\$ | Justification is required according to paras. 3.8 - 3.11 and para 5.6 of Guidelines. |

Procurement of Goods

QIF Operation Manual sets the maximum, which can be requested for the purchase of equipment (goods) by an institution for the duration of the QIF, to 40% of the sub-grant amount. The majority of Goods to be procured for the sub-grants are expected to cost less than the equivalent of US\$100,000. The procurement methods open to beneficiaries are:

Prior Review Thresholds: Procurement Decisions subject to Prior Review by the Bank and the PCU are illustrated in the following table:

| | Procurement Method | Threshold for Procurement method (USD) | Threshold for Prior Review by the Bank (USD) | Threshold for Prior Review by the PCU (USD) | Comments |
|----|--------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| 1. | <i>NCB</i> | <500,000 | First contract | All contracts | |
| 2. | <i>Shopping</i> | <100,000 | None | Each contract > US\$ 50,000 | |
| 3. | <i>Direct Contracting (DC)</i> | No threshold | All contracts more than 10,000\$ | all contracts equal or less than 10,000\$ | Justification is required according to para. 3.7 of the guidelines |

Training Workshops and Study Visits

Prior Review Thresholds

Training Workshops and Study Visit subject to Prior Review by PCU are illustrated in the following table:

| Procurement Method | Threshold for Prior Review by the Bank | Threshold for Prior Review by the PCU | Comments |
|---------------------------|---|--|-----------------|
| - | None | All activities > US\$10,000 | PCU |

Procurement Supervision, Training and Audit

PCU will provide training on the Bank Procurement and Consultants Guidelines and procedures to relevant staff at institutions. Standard Bidding Documents (SBDs) to be used, by the Beneficiaries, for each procurement method, as well as model contracts for goods and services procurement will also be provided by the PCU. The PCU Procurement staff will assist in the preparation of TORs and will provide technical support to Beneficiaries in the preparation of tender documents and RFPs.

Procurement Documentation, Permits, Authorizations

All bidding documentation, including invoices, should be retained for review by PCU, Bank and auditors. PCU and the World Bank has the right to check and question project procurement matters at any time and to observe bid committee proceedings. It is the procurer's responsibility to obtain relevant permits and authorization for procurements. The Bank will conduct a procurement supervision mission every six months with particular focus on post-review.

1.4 QIF Grants Operational Policies and Procedures

1.4.1 Re-allocations between Eligible Categories

Beneficiaries are required to manage budgets and expenditure according to GIAs, which identify eligible expenditures and eligible categories of expenditure, The GIAs allow flexibility to reallocate 10 percent of the budget under each eligible category to an alternative eligible category without the prior notification of PCU. Reallocations greater than 10 percent require the prior written approval of the PCU in consultation with QIF Unit

1.4.2 Procedures in the Event of Non-performance by a Beneficiary

Non-performance shall include breaches of GIA conditions and failures with respect to:

- a) The non-submission of reports, or grave inadequacy with regard to the quality of reporting.
- b) Persistent under-achievement against milestones of set in the grant IP.
- c) Lack of financial control and inadequacy with regard to financial reporting.
- d) Non-compliance with regard to any aspect of a grant as identified by auditors' reports.
- e) Misprocurement.
- f) Corrupt practice.
- g) Fraudulent practice.

In the event of non-performance, PCU will immediately send the beneficiary, formal notice in writing identifying:

- a) The nature of the non-compliance;
- b) Providing notification of a formal thirty day suspension of funds to the grant, and;
- c) Providing a 14 day deadline for the Beneficiary to provide a written justification explaining the circumstances of the non-compliance and outlining the corrective action the Beneficiary will take to achieve compliance.

If compliance is not achieved within the period of the thirty day suspension of funds, by formal notice, the PCU will inform QIF Board. In the event of a termination decision is taken by QIF Board, funds will be frozen and conditions relating to *winding-down costs*, *refunding by Institutions of misappropriated funds* and *repayment of unused funds* and *arbitration* will apply.

1.4.3 Grant Adjustments

Where a beneficiary is required to make an adjustment to a sub-project requiring: (a) a reallocation of funds greater than ten percent between eligible categories; (b) a refund of funds to the PCU or the

provision of additional contingency funds; (c) changes in milestones; (d) disbursement schedules; (e) indicators of achievement, and (t) Goals, Objectives and Purposes of the grant, the beneficiary must immediately notify PCU with a formal written justified request. Where PCU, in consultation with QIF Unit, consider that such a request is justified, the approval of QIF Board will be requested through QIF Board's regular meetings, and shall accordingly commence re-negotiation with the Beneficiary resulting in a formal modification to contract documenting the agreed change to GIA. The attachment will provide justification for the change: ensuring that changes in budget and in any other modality with regard to implementation is reflected proportionately to changes in the Goals, Objectives and Purposes, and that the indicator, disbursement, monitoring and evaluation framework for the project is adjusted accordingly.

1.4.4 Limitation on Procurement

QIF will not finance the purchase of land or buildings. Depending on the nature of the project, all fixed assets should be fully insured.

1.5 Formal and Legal Considerations

1.5.1 Force Majeure

The failure of a Beneficiary to fulfill obligations to the GIA shall not be considered a breach of contract, or default, in the event of "Force Majeure." In such circumstances the party affected should have taken all reasonable precautions, due care and reasonable alternative measures, all with the objective of carrying out the terms and conditions of the contract. A "Force Majeure" is an event beyond the reasonable control of a Party which makes that Party's performance impossible or so impractical as reasonably to be considered impossible and includes, but is not limited to: war, riot, civil disorder, earthquake, fire, explosion, adverse weather conditions, strikes, or confiscation or action by governments.

1.5.2 Limits on the Ministry's Liability

The Ministry shall incur no liability with regard to any aspect of the working of the QIF other than with regard to obligations explicitly specified under the terms of a GIA. It is the responsibility of the Beneficiary to take-out and maintain responsible insurers (or make other provisions) insurance against risk and in such amount as shall be consistent with reasonable practice to carry-out obligations under GIAs.

1.5.3 Arbitration

Any dispute arising out of, or relating to the GIA, which is not settled by agreement of parties shall be finally settled by arbitration in accordance with the Palestinian Arbitration Rules as at present in force, or each party selects an arbitrator, then the two parties or the arbitrators agree on an umpire.

1.5.4 Wind-Down Costs

Wind-Down Costs are all costs or expenses associated with the closing-down of a grant by a Beneficiary upon termination of their GIA. It is the responsibility of the Beneficiary to ensure the prompt and orderly wind-down of grant-related operations and services. This includes taking all reasonable steps to minimize its Wind-Down Costs. The recipient is required to make provision, or compensate, for any payment due to a beneficiary in connection with the winding-down of sub-projects. The PCU and the Beneficiary shall complete any accounting required in connection with the grant. The obligations of both the PCU and the Beneficiaries continue after the termination of contract to ensure that the winding-down is completed in a satisfactory manner.

1.5.5 Refunding by Institution of Misappropriated funds

If at any time the PCU or a Beneficiary believes that funds have been misappropriated by various means, including by corrupt practice and fraudulent practice, the PCU or Beneficiary will cancel that portion of funds believed to be misappropriated, or the whole fund and the contract of the party responsible,

depending on the severity of the misappropriation: that is unless the Beneficiary has taken timely and appropriate action satisfactory to the PCU. In such cases where funds have been misappropriated, due to corrupt practice and fraudulent practice, the PCU will declare the party ineligible for any future Project funds, and will undertake legal recourse, as deemed appropriate.

1.5.6 Re-payment of Unused Funds

No payment shall be due to the Beneficiary other than those indicated in the Grant Implementation Plan (IP), and where such are justified costs accrued prior to the date of the termination of the GIA, provided that the Beneficiary has performed its sub-project to the satisfaction of the QIF Board. Portions of any installments not utilized under the grant shall be returned to QIF. Such amounts would be determined on the basis of the IP and by agreement between the Beneficiary and the PCU.

1.6 QIF Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

PCU and QIF Unit share the responsibility to ensure that effective monitoring and evaluation is undertaken by Beneficiaries. The task of monitoring of grants under the QIF is a shared responsibility of the PCU and QIF Unit. In order for the QIF Board to gauge the effectiveness of the QIF, M&E should enable the PCU and QIF Unit to continuously inform the Board on the following issues:

1. To what extent have beneficiaries been successful in achieving progress in the implementation of the grant, according to pre-set indicators
2. How have beneficiaries complied with the QIF operational guidelines, policies and procedures?

1.6.1 Importance of Good Sub-Project Design

The effectiveness of the M&E system is determined at the design stage. Considerable focus will be required in the grant implementation plan (IP) to ensure utmost clarity about the quantifiable outputs and activities taking into consideration the Tertiary Education Project log frame. In the IPs presented by the beneficiaries to the QIF, the details of how the monitoring system will work should be elaborated and costed, and agreement reached with the PCU on the minimum information to be reported. The Beneficiaries would need to establish a set of milestones for each grant, which show when the key results of a project are expected.

1.6.2 M&E and Reporting

The Monitoring framework is to be set out in the IP, developed by the beneficiary. The Monitoring framework can be adjusted and refined in the annually revised IPs. The results of monitoring activity will feed into PCU reporting to the Bank and QIF Unit reporting to QIF Board. The beneficiary shall use the same overall pattern of reporting as used by the PCU in its reporting to the WB. Reporting will focus on measurable outputs and benefits and will not simply be linked to the tracking of inputs or financial flows. The PCU will use beneficiary reports as the basis for compiling similar type reports for the Bank. The reporting schedules of the PCU and of the Beneficiaries are staggered to enable timely input. The results-based focus of beneficiary reporting coincides with the indicator-monitoring-disbursement approach to funds release.

1.6.3 Progress Reports and Site Visits:

For projects under all grant categories, progress reports must be submitted to the QIF Unit and the PCU on semi-annual basis. These progress reports *will take the original application* and evaluate the *progress and effectiveness* for each measurable component (including: project goal, objective, strategic activity, personnel, budget, and schedule and their relationship to the mission of the institution). Upon an interview or site visit by QIF Unit, and consultation with the PCU, a summary report will be prepared for the QIF Board's information or action. The institutions with QIF grants should expect to be visited periodically by QIF Board and/or staff to evaluate progress. It is advisable that these site visits take place approximately 3-6 months after the initiation of a grant and at the project's mid-term. It is a general rule

of thumb that if there is no activity in a project six months from time of receiving the grant, the grant will be rescinded and the disbursed funds returned to QIF. The institution will have to reapply for the grant.

1.7 PCU and QIF Unit Technical Assistant

PCU and QIF Unit are tasked with providing technical assistance (TA) to beneficiaries, in the form of in-house, and/or out-sourced expertise. The primary purpose of the TA is to resolve capacity gaps in areas that relate to the effective management of the grant. Such gaps might include M&E, output-based budgeting, procurement and participatory impact assessment. M&E training will be given to all Beneficiaries allowing skill transfer for establishing simple M&E systems. PCU and QIF Unit would need to provide strong facilitation support to beneficiaries in putting together IPs, and would be required to support the documentation of the best-practice features of Sub-projects being developed by beneficiaries.

8. Appendices

| | | |
|-------------------|--|--|
| Appendix 1 | QIF Application Form | |
| Appendix 2 | Check List &Evaluation Criteria of the Preliminary Proposal | |
| Appendix 3 | QIF Full Proposal Template | |
| Appendix 4 | Form of Score Sheet for Evaluating Full QIF Proposals | |
| Appendix 5 | Grant Implementation Agreement & Annexes (A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H) | |
| Appendix 6 | QIF Grant Cycle Template | |
| Appendix 7 | QIF Concept Note | |

**Appendix 1 Ministry of Education and Higher Education
Education to Work Transition Project-AF
Quality Improvement Fund (QIF)**

QIF Application Form & Preliminary Proposal Form

(Period No. 1/2017)

QIF Application Form

| | | |
|-------------|---|--|
| A. | General information: | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEIs are obliged to fill this application form, which should be attached to the Project Preliminary Proposal Document. • Applicant should submit electronic copy by hand to the PCU offices in West Bank and Gaza. | |
| 2. | Three hard copies and two soft copies of the preliminary proposal and all attached documents must be submitted making sure that the hard copies do match the soft copies. | |
| 3. | Attach 1-4 A4 pages about the institute's quality unit/office/process description. | |
| 4. | Attach 1-2 A4 pages about the private sector employer/s partner/s. | |
| 5. | Cover Letter from Tertiary Education Institution. | |
| 6. | Attach a Letter of Intent by private sector employer/s partner/s. | |
| B. | Tertiary Education Institute | |
| B.I | Details of Tertiary Education Institute: | |
| 1. | TEI Name: | |
| 2. | Address: | |
| 3. | Telephone: | |
| 4. | Fax: | |
| 5. | P.O. Box: | |
| 6. | E-mail: | |
| 7. | Website: | |
| B.II | Details of Contact Person | |
| 1. | Name: | |
| 2. | Position: | |
| 3. | Address: | |

| | | |
|-------------|--|--|
| 4. | Telephone: | |
| 5. | Mobile: | |
| 6. | Fax: | |
| 7. | E-mail: | |
| C. | Private Sector | |
| C.I | Details of Private Sector “PS”: | |
| 1. | Name: | |
| 2. | Address: | |
| 3. | Telephone: | |
| 4. | Fax: | |
| 5. | P.O. Box: | |
| 6. | E-mail: | |
| 7. | Website: | |
| C.II | Details of Contact Person | |
| 1. | Name: | |
| 2. | Position: | |
| 3. | Address: | |
| 4. | Telephone: | |
| 5. | Mobile: | |
| 6. | Fax: | |
| 7. | E-mail: | |
| D. | Other Partners (TEIs or PS) | |
| E. | Details of the Project | |
| 1. | Date of Submission: | |
| 2. | Submitted to: | |
| 3. | Title of the Project | |
| 4. | Application Window/s: | 1. Technical Oriented Programs <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | 2. Professional Oriented Programs <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | |
|--|---|---|----|
| 6. | Estimated Budget: | 1. Amount requested from QIF | \$ |
| | | 2. TEI contribution (min. 10% in kind) | \$ |
| | | Grand Total: | \$ |
| 7. | Expected Starting Date | | |
| 8. | Expected Duration of the Project (months): | | |
| | At your institute, Has any previous QIF grant been terminated? | | |
| | If yes, Provide lessons learnt | | |
| I, hereby, confirm that the institution/ department is not granted any funds from other donors for similar projects with similar objectives. | | | |

Preliminary Proposal Form:

| | | | | | |
|---|--|----------------|--|-------------------|--|
| Institution Name | | Faculty | | Department | |
| Proposal Title: | | | | | |
| Partners: | | | | | |
| Executive Summary (Maximum 250 words): a concise narrative that covers the main objectives of the proposal, its justification, targeted program, time frame, anticipated costs, and partner's roles. | | | | | |
| Target groups (Maximum 100 words): Indicate who are the main beneficiaries of the program. Main beneficiaries are: students who will be benefited from the project, starting from the second year till the end of the project implementation. Also indicate if others would be benefiting; others could be faculty members and partners who will be benefiting from the project during the project lifetime. | | | | | |
| Problem statement (Max. 300 words): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What problems does your project address?</i> • <i>What are the causes of these problem?</i> • <i>What approaches are suggested to improve the situation?</i> Support your argument with supporting facts and statistics. | | | | | |
| Aim of the Project (Max. 150 words): provide information why this project should exist and how the project will promote the long term change. | | | | | |
| Impact, Outcomes and Expected Outputs (Max. 250 Words): The impact or goals are broad and general statement of what to be accomplished. Objectives and outcomes flow from the goals and they should be SMART, outputs are the products and services that will be delivered during the project life cycle. | | | | | |
| Implementation Methodology & Timeline (Max. 500 words): state plan of action where you clearly explain the: who, what, where, when and how you will apply your strategy, visualizing the implementation of the project by describing the project life cycle, key stages of implementation and the sequence of major project activities over time. | | | | | |
| Project Management Capacity and Staffing (Max. 250 words): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How the project will be managed;</i> • <i>The Management Structure that you will use;</i> • <i>The allocated resources and infrastructure.</i> | | | | | |

Monitoring & Evaluation Plan(Max. 250 words):

- *How and when will you monitor and evaluate your project?*
- *What is your approach?*
- *Who will implement the M&E?*

Sustainability of the Project (Max. 200 words): what is your plan to sustain the project outcomes upon the project completion?

Feasibility of the Project (Max. 250 words): How the proposed methodology, approaches and strategies are realistic, reasonable, effective and outcome-oriented, the human and physical resources allocated are appropriate.

Unemployment rate of the targeted program in the last two years (%) to be generated through the Graduate Tracking System –GTS- if possible).

Maximum Number of Pages is 5 pages and/or Maximum Number of words is 2500 Words

Appendix 2.1: Check List & Evaluation Criteria of the Preliminary Proposal

| Education to Work Transition Project - Quality Improvement Fund – Check List. | | | | |
|---|--|-----|-------------|----------|
| Institute: | | | | |
| Proposal Title: | | | Code | |
| | | | | |
| # | Checklist Item Description | yes | no | Comments |
| 1 | The requested budget fits the fund ceiling | | | |
| 2 | The minimum TEI contribution fits QIF conditions | | | |
| 3 | Project time line consistent with QIF concept note time framework | | | |
| 4 | The preliminary proposal complies with QIF Format | | | |
| 5 | The Grant application form complies with QIF Format | | | |
| 6 | Grant application form fits with the primary grant windows | | | |
| 7 | Accreditation of the Academic Program from AQAC OR the program is in the pipeline for accreditation. | | | |
| 8 | Presence of Quality Assurance Unit, and presence of focal point, QU efficiency. | | | |
| 9 | Presence of Cover Letter from TEI | | | |
| 10 | Presence of Letter of intent from the private sector partner/s | | | |
| 12 | Presence of needed documents that shows financial clearance and eligibility of all partners | | | |
| 13 | The TEI has a satisfactory performance record in previous QIF projects | | | |
| | | | | |
| The preliminary proposal should be screened according to the above check list. | | | | |

**Appendix 2.2: Education to Work Transition Project - Quality Improvement Fund
Preliminary Proposal Evaluation Criteria**

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------|
| Institute: | | |
| Private Sector Partner: | | |
| Other partners: | | |
| Proposal Title: | | Code |
| NO. | Criteria | Notes |
| 1. | Feasibility | |
| 1.1 | Adequacy of human resources | |
| 1.2 | Availability of basic infrastructure and enabling environment | |
| 1.3 | Reasonable methodology and time line needed for adequate implementation of the project | |
| 1.4 | Well defined and justified target group and beneficiaries | |
| 1.5 | Well defined Project Risks and tools to overcome them | |
| 2. | Relevance | |
| 2.1 | The project has innovative idea or concept | |
| 2.2 | Project aim, objectives, outcomes are reasonable and comply with QIF and E2WT project concepts | |
| 2.3 | Develop Higher Education programs in fields which are relevant to labor market and business needs, (Mandatory) ¹ . | |
| 2.4 | The project supports the interdisciplinary approach | |
| 2.5 | Improve and strengthen program curriculum relevance, quality, teaching methods, and on-the-job learning components, (Mandatory). | |
| 2.6 | Improve student's life and practical skills through practical training in the workplace, (Mandatory). | |
| 3. | Partnerships | |
| 3.1 | The project is targeting multiple TEIs | |
| 3.2 | Develop strong partnership/s with private sector employers that show high commitments of partners to project success and areas of contribution of each partner, (Mandatory). | |
| 3.3 | Clear and effective roles and responsibilities of each party in all project activities including curriculum development and on-the-job learning components | |
| 3.4 | Develop partnership programs with local, regional, and global higher education institutions, or with the public sector including local and regional authorities, (Optional) ² . | |
| 3.5 | Sufficient capacity of Private Sector partner/s | |
| 3.6 | Compatibility of partners with project objectives and outcomes | |
| 4. | Sustainability and Impacts | |
| 4.1 | Tangible long-term prospective of the project and partnerships. | |
| 4.2 | Enhancement of employability of graduates. | |
| 4.3 | Developing culture for cooperation between academia and the private sector for continuous improvement. | |
| 4.4 | Enhancing the capacity to seek alternative funding sources and/or develop income generating program, (Optional). | |
| 4.5 | Actively monitor & evaluate project implementation & the quality of programs in terms of employer satisfaction with program (during and after project) and labor market insertion of graduate, (Mandatory). | |

QIF Board Decision:

- Approved**
- Rejected**

Appendix 3 QIF Full Proposal Template

| |
|--|
| <p>The proposal could be submitted in both languages “Arabic or English”. However, only the ‘Executive Summary’ section should be provided in English. All proposals should be in 12 pt., Times New Roman, single-spaced.</p> |
| <p>I. Executive Summary (750 words)</p> <p>Two to three paragraphs that serves as a brief summary of the entire proposal to highlight key aspects of the project, including the problem to be addressed, targeted program and beneficiaries, time frame and duration, goal, objectives and primary strategies, project location(s), primary partners, expected outcomes and finally the requested amount from QIF.</p> |
| <p>II. Institute Profile (1000 words)</p> <p>It should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Vision and Mission.</i> ● <i>Strategic Mandate.</i> ● <i>Primary goals, objectives and strategies.</i> ● <i>Primary donors and Partners.</i> ● <i>Quality Assurance Unit.</i> ● <i>Career / Alumni Unit.</i> ● <i>Historical relationship with QIF.</i> |
| <p>III. Project Background Justification (750 words)</p> <p>Provide information what and why you are doing this project. the following questions can be helpful:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>What problem is the project addressing?</i> ● <i>How does your project fit with QIF’s priorities?</i> ● <i>What evidence do you have to support your need for this project (e.g. research evidence/ needs assessment report /statistics on the unemployment rate...etc.)?</i> ● <i>What are the causes of the identified problem?</i> ● <i>What approaches do you suggest to improve the situation?</i> ● <i>Which TEIs offer similar programs? Why and how is the suggested project adding value to the overall Higher Education system?</i> |
| <p>IV. Project Description (2500 words)</p> <p>The project description gives a detailed description of the project. It consists of five sub sections, the first one is the <u>Targeted Program/s and Beneficiaries</u>: specify the targeted programs, expected direct and indirect beneficiaries “students, academic staff and partners’ staff” with analysis in terms of gender and special needs students for each targeted program.</p> <p>The second subsection is the <u>Project Management Capacity and Staffing</u>: answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>How the project will be managed?</i> ● <i>What are the allocated resources and infrastructure?</i> ● <i>What Management Structure will you use?</i> ● <i>What is the composition of the steering committee and what are its responsibilities?</i> ● <i>What key positions are necessary, their time allocated to the project and their responsibilities?</i> <p>the third subsection is the <u>Project Impact, Outcomes and Outputs</u>: Distinguish between the following components;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Project Overall Objective “Impact” which is the big picture, long-term, ultimate result that the project will contribute to. The overall objective is at the highest level and not usually measured in the project context. ● Project Specific Objectives “Outcomes” a statement of what the project plans to achieve |

during the lifetime of the project. These objectives should be specific, reasonable and bound to time. They should be achievable and measurable within the scope of the project.

- Expected Outputs which are directly accomplished by the management of inputs. It could be a product and/or a service (e.g. assessment report, manuals workshops, advisory services etc.) that will be delivered by the project. Project activities leading up to outputs should be included in the implementation plan.

The fourth subsection is the Project Methodology, Quality Management Plan, Implementation Plan and Risk Management Plan: visualize the implementation of the project by describing the project life cycle, key stages of implementation and the sequence of major project activities over time with clear interaction among the collaborating parties. the following aspects can be helpful:

- *Project main phases / stages with time line of each phase.*
- *Proposed partnership model and implementation mechanism.*
- *The role and contribution of each partner. What is the expected project impact on partners?*
- *Complete (Annex B & C) which are letters of support demonstrating partnership commitment to the project.*
- *Which quality standards are relevant to the project and how to satisfy them?*
- *Who will be responsible for quality control “e.g. Quality unit”.*
- *Identify and define appropriate quality measures to standardize project processes, product functionality, regulatory compliance requirements, project deliverables, project management performance, documentation, testing, etc.*
- *Identify the acceptance criteria for project deliverables and product performance in relation to the role of the quality Unit.*
- *Identify potential risks and your plan to mitigate those risks.*

See [Annex D](#)

The last subsection is the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan “M&E”: provide details how the results of the interventions will be followed up and measured. the following aspects can be helpful:

- *Complete the KPI template that describes indicators, means of verification, and the frequency of data collection. The template of the M&E plan is provided in [Annex E](#) of the QIF manual.*
- *Describe how the M&E plan will be implemented, including methodologies and tools.*
- *What indicators will be measured?*
- *Where will the information come from?*
- *Who will collect and interpret the data?*
- *How and how often will data be collected?*
- *How the data will be shared among stakeholders, including the beneficiaries?*
- *How the data will be used to inform the stakeholders for decision making?*

describe the human resources needed to monitor and evaluate the project from within the TEI or from outside

V. Scale Up and Sustainability (250 words)

Describe what components of the project will continue beyond the end date of the project and what your plan is for making this happen. the following aspects can be helpful :

- *The extent to which the project builds linkages with partnering institutions;*
- *The extent to which the project develops skills and resource bases;*
- *The extent to which the project responds to needs expressed by the target groups or other stakeholders;*
- *The extent to which Institution, partners or other stakeholders make specific commitments to follow-up actions, including in-kind and cash contributions.*

VI. Budget

Prepare the project budget using the Excel form provided in **Annex G** the following points can be helpful:

- *Identify all the activities that need financial resources; and list all the costs you need within these activities.*
- *Classify all the listed costs according to eligible expenditure categories (refer to the QIF Manual); the threshold for each category.*
- *Identify the source of funding; QIF, TEI contribution, partner, and/or any other source of fund, whether the contribution is cash or in-kind.*
- *All estimations of costs should be reasonable;*
- *All costs calculations should be clear and referenced; units costs; detailed list& quantities; timelines....etc.*

VII. List of Annexes

- Annex A: Letter of intent from TEI president /Rector.
- Annex B: Letter of intent from project partner/s.
- Annex C: Draft MOU.
- Annex D: Detailed Implementation Plan.
- Annex E: M&E Plan “KPIs”
- Annex F: Risk management Plan
- Annex G: Detailed Budget by Expenditure Category and Source of Funding.

Appendix 4 Form of Score Sheet for Evaluating QIF Proposals (to be used by external evaluators/reviewers)

Score Sheet/ Evaluation Report for Evaluating QIF Proposals

| |
|---|
| <p>Quality Improvement Fund “QIF” Background Under the framework of “<i>Education to Work Transition Project – E2WTP</i>”, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE) aims at enhancing Palestinian youth’s transition from education to work through fostering the linkage between Tertiary Education Institutions ‘TEIs’ and private/public sector employers. A main component of this project is the Quality Improvement Fund ‘QIF’. It is expected that QIF will (i) increase the productive linkages between TEIs and businesses; (ii) promote social responsibility among the business community; and (iii) better prepare graduates to find and keep gainful employment.</p> |
| Proposal Title: |
| Institution: Private Sector Partner: Other Partners: |

| | | | |
|-----------------|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| Date Submitted: | | For Review during Application Period: | |
|-----------------|--|---------------------------------------|--|

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Name of Reviewer | |
|------------------|--|

Grant Windows

| No. | Category | Selection |
|-----|--------------------------------|-----------|
| A. | Technical Oriented Programs | |
| B. | Professional Oriented Programs | |

Criteria Scoring Guidelines

| Score Rating | Explanation |
|-----------------------------|--|
| (0-30)% of the Max. Score | Range from not at all sufficient, to not sufficient and contain major defects |
| (31-60)% of the Max. Score | Range from Incomplete and needs further elaboration to complete but needs major modifications and improvements |
| (61-90)% of the Max. Score | Range from complete but needs further minor improvements to complete |
| (91-100)% of the Max. Score | Range from perfectly complete to distinguish and showing innovative ideas |

Final Score

| Evaluation criteria | Max. score | Min. Score | Score |
|---------------------------|------------|------------|-------|
| Clarity and Relevance | 80 | - | |
| Partners and Partnership | 120 | 90 | |
| Sustainability and Impact | 100 | - | |
| Total Score | 300 | 210 | |

Overall Recommendations

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

Score Sheet/ Evaluation Report for Evaluating QIF Full Proposals
Evaluating the Proposal

The proposal has the following characteristics. Note maximum scores per item and follow criteria scoring guidelines to identify score rating for each criterion.

| 1 | Clarity and Relevance | Max Score | Score | Comments |
|----------|--|------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1.1 | The proposal demonstrate a real needs / well justified problem / real opportunity | 10 | | |
| 1.2 | The concept of the proposal is innovative. The Quality improvement is demonstrated through the impact of the project on the institution and the Sector. | 10 | | |
| 1.3 | The objectives are SMART and have academic and technical merit which contributes to the overall QIF objective | 10 | | |
| 1.4 | The proposed Partnership Model Facilitates and enhances on-the-job learning and/or students placement. | 10 | | |
| 1.5 | The proposal includes/ or has a clear, solid, effective, and detailed monitoring & evaluation system supported by effective and measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPI). | 10 | | |
| 1.6 | The project outcomes and results are clear, tangible, and do include measurable indicators. | 10 | | |
| | 2. | | | |
| 1.7 | The proposal documents show clear understanding of cost and benefits generated through partnership for all partners. | 10 | | |
| 1.8 | The proposed implementation plan includes all needed and only needed activities to accomplished projects deliverables and to achieve projects objectives, outcomes, and results. | 10 | | |
| | Sub Total | 80 | | |

Score Sheet/ Evaluation Report for Evaluating QIF Full Proposals
Evaluating the Proposal (Cont'd)

| 2 | Partnership and Impact | Max Score | Score | Comments |
|------------------|---|------------|-------|----------------------------|
| 2.1 | Partnership is well established, clearly documented, and formalized through effective memorandum of understanding. | 15 | | |
| 2.2 | The roles and responsibilities are well divided between partners in concrete implementation modalities. | 15 | | |
| 2.3 | Compatibility of partners with proposed objectives and outcomes. | 15 | | |
| 2.4 | Hosting or intake capacity of private sector partner/s is sufficient and matches students' number and on-the-job training/learning plan. | 15 | | |
| 2.5 | There is a significant potential impact on institutional improvement (Human Resources, Infrastructure, and Performance), through the partnership with the private sector. | 15 | | |
| 2.6 | External benefits are measured through partnerships with both local partner/s as well as an international partner/s. | 15 | | |
| 2.7 | Tangible long-term prospective of the project and partnerships, developing culture for cooperation between academia and the private sector for continuous improvement. | 15 | | |
| 2.8 | There is a long-term, wide, and large impact on national labor market. | 15 | | |
| Sub Total | | 120 | | Minimum score is 90 |

Score Sheet for Evaluating QIF Full Proposals
Evaluating the Proposal (Cont'd)

| 3 | Feasibility and Sustainability | Max Score | Score | Comments |
|------------------|--|------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 3.1 | The proposed methodology approaches and strategies are realistic, reasonable, effective, outcome-oriented - drawing on best practice and the latest thinking and research. | 10 | | |
| 3.2 | The human and physical resources allocated and requested to this project are appropriate. | 10 | | |
| 3.3 | The project is sustainable; it will be institutionalized; alternative sources of funding will be pursued. Facilitates developing income generating programs. | 10 | | |
| 3.4 | All project activities are reflected in a realistic and reasonable financial budget. | 10 | | |
| 3.5 | The proposal encourages the participation of females and students with special needs. | 10 | | |
| 3.6 | The target group/s in the project is/are reasonable and well analyzed and defined. | 10 | | |
| 3.7 | There are in kind contributions or matches (funding, staffing, equipment, office space, etc.) | 10 | | |
| 3.8 | Tertiary Education Institution / program has a history of demonstrated management and implementation capacity. | 10 | | |
| 3.9 | The expected risks and the tools to overcome these risks are well defined. | 10 | | |
| 3.10 | The proposed schedule management plan is realistic and effective. And the time frame work for each activity is sufficient and reasonable. | 10 | | |
| Sub Total | | 100 | | |

Appendix 5

Form of QIF Grant Implementation Agreement

Grant Number: []]

This AGREEMENT [*hereinafter called the "Agreement"*] between, on the one hand, the **Ministry of Education and Higher Education**[*hereinafter called "the Ministry"*] and, on the other hand, the Recipient Tertiary Education Institution: ----- [*hereinafter called the "Recipient"*]

For the purpose of this agreement:

“PCU” is the Tertiary Education Project Coordination Unit, existing at the Ministry and responsible for managing fiduciary aspects of grant implementation

“QIF Board” is the Quality Improvement Fund Board, which is independent of government and the national accreditation process, including representative of appropriate stakeholders.

“QIF Unit” is the Quality Improvement Fund staff administered out of the Ministry and including a small staff accountable to a centralized Board.

I. Incorporation of the Preamble and Annexes in the Agreement

1. The Annexes attached at the end of this Agreement will also be an integral part of this Agreement.

II. General Conditions:

The Ministry, through the Project Coordinating Unit (PCU) undertakes to issue a *Letter of Approval* specifying the grant amount obligated for the "Recipient", the tasks needed to be taken by the "Recipient" prior to disbursement of the first installment of the Grant, and other specific conditions.

The amount of the grant specified in this Agreement will be utilized fully and solely to the items specified in Annex B of this Agreement, which is considered an integral part of this Agreement.

III. Commencement, Duration and Implementation of Agreement

This Agreement shall become effective on the date of signature by both parties, and will end at the closure of the project file.

The recipient has prepared and submitted the grant Implementation Plan (As detailed in Annex D). Approval of the detailed Implementation Plan by the PCU and the QIF Unit before signing this Agreement as a pre-requisite to disbursement of funds.

IV. Obligations and Responsibilities of the Recipient

1. The Recipient shall ensure that the funds and interest received under this Agreement are expended solely and entirely for the purpose(s) for which they were granted. If any line item is double funded from another source of fund, then the recipient will be obligated to return that amount to QIF.
2. The Recipient has prepared and submitted the Implementation Plan (As detailed in Annex D) for approval by PCU and QIF Unit during the negotiation with the recipient and preparation of the

agreement.

3. The Recipient has opened and shall maintain a separate bank account for the Grants received under the QIF. Information regarding designated bank account is provided in Annex A. For the purpose of this grant, two out of the three signatures included in Annex A will be required on the designated bank account for any withdrawals or transfers from the grant account.
4. The Recipient undertakes to provide QIF Unit and the PCU with regular reports on the progress of utilizing this Grant as outlined in Section VIII of this Agreement. These reports should be supported by receipts and other supporting documents as needed. If the Recipient cannot provide supporting documentation for any expense, then the amount allocated to this item will be returned to QIF.
5. The Recipient shall facilitate site visits of the PCU, QIF Unit, and the World Bank staff or other designated staff/consultants or external auditors by the PCU, QIF Unit or the World Bank to the Institution premises or project sites as needed, and ensure availability of records for review, and inspection at all times as part of the monitoring and evaluation process.
6. The Recipient shall insure or cause to be insured, or make adequate provision for the insurance of, the imported goods financed out of the proceeds of the Grant against hazards incident to the acquisition, transportation and delivery thereof to the place of use or installation. Any indemnity for such insurance shall be payable in a freely usable currency to replace or repair such goods.
7. The Recipient will be responsible for obtaining all permits relevant for the implementation of the project.
8. The Recipient shall at all times operate and maintain, or cause to be operated and maintained, any facilities relevant to the Project, and promptly as needed, make or cause to be made all necessary repairs and renewals thereof.
9. Upon the World Bank's request, the recipient shall furnish to the independent auditor of the PCU all relevant financial records to carry out an external audit of the grant resources.
10. The Recipient shall provide the PCU with a list of all sources and amounts of funding for the project or activity financed by this grant (As detailed in Annex B).
11. The project financed by this grant may not be altered without prior approval of the QIF Board during the period of implementation. If changes in the Recipient's priorities should occur after the QIF Board approves the grant, the Recipient must, through the PCU, seek the specific written consent of the QIF Board before any change can be carried out. This will necessitate that a Modification of Agreement is issued.
12. The Recipient is required to manage budgets and expenditure according to GIA, which identify eligible expenditures and eligible categories of expenditure, The GIA allows flexibility to reallocate 10 percent of the budget under each eligible category to an alternative eligible category without the prior notification of the PCU. Reallocations greater than 10 percent require the prior written approval of the PCU in consultation with QIF Unit.
13. The Recipient undertakes to contribute a total of US\$ ----- equivalent towards the cost of the project *in the form of in kind contribution* (As specified in Annex B).
14. Adherence to Procurement Procedures:
 - a) Procurement for the proposed project would be carried out by the Recipient in accordance

with the World Bank “Guidelines: Procurement of Goods, Works and Non-Consulting Services under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and Grants” by World Bank Borrowers published by the World Bank in January 2011, for Goods, the World Bank “Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and Grants by World Bank Borrowers” published by the World Bank in January 2011, for Consultants’ Services, following the procedures spelled out in the Operational Manual of the QIF.

- b) Guidelines on Preventing and Combating Fraud and Corruption in Projects Financed by IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and Grants", dated October 15, 2006 and updated January 2011, shall apply to the project..
- c) For each contract to be financed by the Grant, the different procurement methods or consultant selection methods estimated costs, prior review requirements, and time frame are agreed between the PCU and the Recipient in the sub-project procurement plan. Subject to the PCU’s approval, the Recipient shall update the procurement plan at least annually or as needed to reflect actual project implementation requirements..
- d) All fixed assets acquired under this Agreement shall be the exclusive property of the project and/or the institution funded by this grant and may not be disposed of, liquidated or transferred without the explicit Agreement of the PCU.
- e) In the case of liquidation of the project carried out by the Recipient and funded by the World Bank, whether liquidation has occurred prior to the termination of the project or thereafter, the Ministry, through the PCU, and with the approval of the QIF Board has the right to transfer all non-expendable fixed assets acquired throughout the project to another recipient.

15. Annex F includes the names and positions and signatures of the Recipient's authorized representatives.

In the case changes occur to those representatives during the project implementation period, the Recipient undertakes the responsibility of informing the PCU of the new representatives, by filling in "Annex F" again and sending it to the PCU within two weeks from the date of the change.

V. Obligations and Responsibilities of the Ministry

- 1. The Ministry, through the PCU, is obligated to transfer the funds of the approved Grant as per this Agreement and in accordance with the provisions outlined in Section VII (Budget and Payment Modalities) and the payment schedule in "Annex C" of this Agreement.
- 2. As outlined in the Operational Manual, the PCU and QIF Unit shall provide training and technical assistance to the Recipient. These services will either be provided by the PCU or QIF Unit, or contracted out by the Ministry to service providers and consultants to be selected by the Ministry in accordance with the procedures established for the Tertiary Education Project. Thus, the Ministry is obligated to provide these services, and the recipient is obligated under this Agreement to receive the above-mentioned services.

VI. Budget and Payment Modalities

In consideration of this Agreement, the approved Project Proposal and Work plan, the PCU will allocate a total Budget, not to exceed -----(*in words*), for the project titled:

The Payments shall be made in installments not exceeding 20% of the grant amount or as appropriate based on the credibility of the TEI and previous experience in implementing QIF grants (see the payment Schedule Attached as Annex C).

General Guidelines for Payments

1. The first payment shall be made following the signature of the GIA and following the approval of the detailed Implementation Plan. The first payment will be made in accordance with the approved project disbursement schedule (Annex C).
2. For all other payments, and prior to each installment, the Recipient must submit a full financial report as per Section VII-B of the QIF Operational Manual (QIF Grants Disbursement Procedures) and the related Appendix 7.
3. The final payment will only be disbursed when the Recipient can verify that all project components have been implemented, and that the project has been completed and all conditions in the Agreement met, and the final report received and approved by the QIF Unit and PCU.
4. All payments will be transferred into the Recipient's Bank Account details of which are attached in Annex A.
5. The recipient must keep current fixed assets register including description of assets, cost and location.

VII. Reporting: Progress and Financial

1. The Recipient shall submit *semi-annual* and final reports to the QIF Unit and the PCU in accordance with the approved Implementation Plan (Annex D). The QIF Unit and the PCU should be consulted on each type of report and special forms are retrieved from the PCU.
2. ***Project progress shall be monitored and evaluated against the approved Implementation Plan (Annex D) and the performance indicators included in Annex G.***
3. All reports mentioned above will be submitted to the PCU at the following address:

Attention: PCU Director
Ministry of Education and Higher Education
P. O. Box 576, Ramallah
Tel. # 02-2983203, Fax # 02-2983204

VIII. Termination of Agreement

1. Termination of the Agreement may only be by notice of the Ministry with the approval of QIF Board.

This Agreement may be terminated by the Ministry through a written notice. Notice will come into effect five (5) working days after certification that the Recipient has received this notice. In this case, the balance of grant funds recorded in the Agreement and not disbursed will be returned to the QIF, and all other obligations and liabilities born in this Agreement by the Ministry and/or the Recipient will cease by termination of this Agreement.

The Agreement can be terminated under one or more of the following conditions **only**:

1. If within a maximum period of six months from signature of this Agreement, the Recipient has not taken substantial steps in the direction of implementation, as per the work plan presented prior to the disbursement of the first installment, and without any justification acceptable to the QIF Board.
2. If the Recipient(s) are dissolved, and thus lose any recognized legal status.
3. If internal disputes or problems arise within the Recipient organization(s), that may block the implementation of the project in the opinion of the QIF Board.
4. If the QIF Board determines, based on established evidence, that there has been any corrupt or fraudulent management of project funds.
5. If the Recipient is taken to court by any other party or donor and mismanagement or misallocation of fund is established by court.
6. If the Ministry's Agreement with the World Bank is terminated. Under this condition alone, the Recipient shall be reimbursed for non-cancelable obligations properly incurred prior to the date of the official notice of termination.
7. In case of corrupt or fraudulent management of funds by the Recipient, the Ministry shall have the right to pursue full remedy of the situation by all legal means, and will do so.

Under all these conditions, the unspent balances outstanding in the Recipient's bank account for the purpose of this project will be returned immediately to the QIF.

IX. Special Provisions:

Special Provisions that apply to this specific Project are outlined in Annex E.

X. Entry into Force:

This agreement comes into force and effect upon signature by both parties.

This Agreement is issued in Ramallah on -----, and bound by the following signatories:

For the Ministry:

For the Recipient:

Ministry of Education and Higher Education Name of Institution

Minister of Education &

Names and signatures of

Higher Education

Authorized representatives

(Sig.)

1. (Sig. TEI) (-----)

List of Annexes to Agreement:

| | |
|----------------|---|
| <u>Annex A</u> | Details of the Grant Bank Account |
| <u>Annex B</u> | Detailed Budget by Expenditure Category and Source of Funding |
| <u>Annex C</u> | Payment Schedule |
| <u>Annex D</u> | Grant Implementation Plan |
| <u>Annex E</u> | Special Provisions |
| <u>Annex F</u> | Names and positions and signatures of authorized representatives. |
| <u>Annex G</u> | Project Performance Indicators |

Annex H H-1 MOU between the TEI and the private sector

H-2 MOU between the TEI and other TEI/s

Annex A, Details of the Grant Bank Account

**Education to Work Transition Project
Quality Improvement Fund**

Institution: -----

Project Title: -----

I hereby request that the grant proceeds for implementing the above- mentioned project are transferred to the following special bank account, which was opened in the name of the grant.

Bank Account Details:

Account Name: _____

Bank Name: _____

Branch Name: _____

Account Number: _____

Authorized Signatories (two out of the following three signatures will be required for any withdrawals or transfers from the grant account):

1. Name _____

Position _____

Contact Information _____

2. Name _____

Position _____

Contact Information _____

3. Name _____

Position _____

Contact Information _____

Name and Signature Authorized Representative

Date: / /

Annex B, Detailed Budget by Expenditure Category and Source of Funding

Education to Work Transition Project

Quality Improvement Fund

Institution: -----

Project Title: -----

| <i>Expenditure Category ^a</i> | <i>Source of Funding and Budget (US\$)</i> | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|----------|------------------------------------|----------|--------------------------------|----------|--------------------------------|----------|---------------------|
| | <i>QIF</i> | | <i>Contribution by Institution</i> | | <i>Financier 1^b</i> | | <i>Financier 2^b</i> | | <i>Total (US\$)</i> |
| | <i>Amount</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>Amount</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>Amount</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>Amount</i> | <i>%</i> | |
| Equipment & Furniture | | | | | | | | | |
| Scientific journals and books | | | | | | | | | |
| International consultants and visiting scholars from overseas. | | | | | | | | | |
| Local consultants | | | | | | | | | |
| Overseas fellowships and internships. | | | | | | | | | |
| Local fellowships and internships | | | | | | | | | |
| Overseas study tours | | | | | | | | | |
| Local training Logistics | | | | | | | | | |
| Operations and maintenance | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | | | | | | | | | |

Annex C Payment Schedule

**Education to Work Transition Project
Quality Improvement Fund**

Institution: -----

Project Title: -----

Payments of the Grant proceeds will be made according to the following Schedule³:

10 % of the Grant amount upon the signature of the GIA and following the approval of the detailed Implementation Plan by the PCU and QIF Unit.

30% of the Grant amount upon the completion of the first milestone (Specify)

20% of the Grant amount upon the completion of the second milestone (Specify)

20% of the Grant amount upon the completion of the third milestone (Specify).

20% of the Grant amount, final payment, upon the receipt and approval, by the QIF Unit and the PCU, of the final report (verifying that the project has been completed and all conditions in the Agreement met)

³or as appropriate based on the credibility of the TEI and previous experience in implementing QIF grants

Annex D, Grant Implementation Plan

**Education to Work Transition Project
Quality Improvement Fund**

Institution: _____

Project Title: _____

| No | Output | Output Indicator | Activities | Start Date | Finish Date | Responsibility | Milestone | Cost (\$) | Schedule ^a | | | | | | | |
|----|--------|------------------|------------|------------|-------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|--|--|--|--------|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | | | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | |
| 1 | | | 1.1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | 1.2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | 1.3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | 1.4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | 1.5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | 2.1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | 2.2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | 2.3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | 2.4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | 2.5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | 3.1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | 3.2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | 3.3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | 3.4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | 3.5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

a shade as appropriate to reflect schedule

Annex E, Special Provisions

**Education to Work Transition Project
Quality Improvement Fund**

Institution: -----

Project Title: -----

The following special provisions constitute an integral part of the agreement:

All other terms and conditions of the agreement shall remain unchanged

Annex F, Names and positions and signatures of authorized representatives

**Education to Work Transition Project
Quality Improvement Fund**

Institution: -----

Project Title: -----

Following are the names, positions, signatures and contact information of authorized representative of the institution with regard to the implementation of the above-mentioned project.

First Authorized Representative

Name: -----

Position: -----

Signature: _____

Contact Information: Tel: -----

 Fax: -----

 E-mail: -----

Second Authorized Representative

Name: -----

Position: -----

Signature: _____

Contact Information: Tel: -----

 Fax: -----

 E-mail: -----

Annex G, Project Performance Indicators

Education to Work Transition Project

Quality Improvement Fund

Institution: -----

Project Title: -----

By the end of the Project (end of [month] [day], [year]):

| Indicato Nam | Unit o Measur | Baselin Valu | Targe Valu | Measur Frequenc | Measur Methodolog | Responsibilitie |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

**AnnexH-1 MOU between the TEI and the Private Sector Institution
Education to Work Transition Project**

Quality Improvement Fund

Institution: -----

Project Title: -----

**Annex H-2, MOU between the TEI and other TEI/s
Education to Work Transition Project**

Quality Improvement Fund

Institution: -----

Project Title: -----

Appendix 6: QIF Grant Cycle Template

| No. | Task | Start Time |
|--|---|--|
| Phase 1: Launching and Granting of Cycle 3 | | |
| Evaluation Phase of preliminary and full proposals | | |
| 1. | Awareness workshop for TEIs and potential Private Sector partners | January 2017 |
| 2. | Call for Preliminary Proposal | mid-January 2017 |
| 3. | Receiving Preliminary Proposal | mid-February 2017 |
| 4. | Proposal review by QIF & PCU | late February 2017 |
| 5. | E-mail preliminary Proposals to QIF Board for review and feedback | Early-March –Mid March- 2017 |
| 6. | QIF Board meeting for Preliminary Proposal evaluation and notification | late March 2017 |
| 7. | Filing and coding | Early -April – Mid -April 2017 |
| Awarding and negotiation | | |
| 8. | Notify institutions about the status of the Preliminary Proposal and ask the winners to submit detailed full proposal | Mid-April 2017 |
| 9. | Receiving and checking final full proposals | Mid June 2017 |
| 10. | Request for expressions of interest - consultant services – external reviewers | Mid-April 2017 |
| 11. | Receiving CV's from Experts, Archiving and sorting the CVs | Late-April - Early-May 2017 |
| 12. | Assure the Experts acceptance of the proposal evaluation | Mid-May 2017 |
| 13. | QIF Board to approve the proper evaluators vs. Proposals | Mid-May – Late-May2017 |
| 14. | Sending proposals and the related files to the Experts. | mid-June 2017 |
| 15. | Receiving, filing, and analysis of the evaluation results | Mid-July – late July 2017 |
| 16. | QIF Board meeting to approve the external evaluation results | Early August 2017 |
| Signing Agreement | | |
| 17. | Preparing the awarding letters and sending them to TEIs about external evaluation results | Early August –late September 2017 |
| ◇ | GIA agreement and modifications of awarded proposals | Early August– Mid -September 2017 |
| 18. | Deal with appeals from TEIs whose proposals were rejected | Early-August –Mid-August 2017 |
| 19. | Sending the proposals of the corresponding Appeals to the third evaluator | Mid-August – Early-September 2017 |
| 20. | QIF Board meeting for monitoring and discussing the appeals | Mid-September 2017 |
| 21. | Press release in the newspaper about the awarded projects | Late-September 2017 |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Phase 2: implementation of cycle 3 awards | | |
| 22. | Follow up of progress through field visits and progress reports versus implementation plan and performance indicators | October 2017 – July 2020 |
| ◇ | ICR (Implementation completion report contains Outputs & Impacts of the project on the academic sector, institution, and the labor market. | August 2020- September 2020 |
| Phase 3: Launching and Granting of Cycle 4 | | |
| Evaluation Phase of preliminary and full proposals | | |
| 23. | Awareness workshop for TEIs and potential Private Sector partners | June 2017 |
| 24. | Call for Preliminary Proposal | Early-July 2017 |
| 25. | Receiving Preliminary Proposal | Early-August 2017 |
| 26. | Proposal review by QIF & PCU | Early-August – Mid-August 2017 |
| 27. | E-mail preliminary Proposals to QIF Board for review and feedback | Late-August 2017 |
| 28. | QIF Board meeting for Preliminary Proposal evaluation and notification | Mid-September2017 |
| 29. | Filing and coding | Early-September – Mid-September 2017 |
| Awarding and negotiation phase – C4 | | |
| 30. | Notify institutions about the status of the Preliminary Proposal and ask the winners to submit detailed full proposal | Mid-September 2017 |
| 31. | Receiving and checking final full proposals | Mid-November 2017 |
| 32. | Request for expressions of interest - consultant services – external reviewers | Mid-September 2017 |
| 33. | Receiving CV's from Experts, Archiving and sorting the CVs | Late-September – Early-October2017 |
| 34. | Assure the Experts acceptance of the proposal evaluation | Mid-October 2017 |
| 35. | QIF Board to approve the proper evaluators vs. Proposals | Mid-October – Late-October 2017 |
| 36. | Sending proposals and the related files to the Experts. | mid-November 2017 |
| 37. | Receiving, filing, and analysis of the evaluation results | Mid-December 2017 |
| 38. | QIF Board meeting to approve the external evaluation results | Mid-December 2017 |
| Signing Agreement –C4 | | |
| 39. | Preparing the awarding letters and sending them to TEIs about external evaluation results | Mid-December – Late December 2017 |
| ◇ | GIA agreement and modifications of awarded proposals | Early January 2018 – Early-February 2018 |
| 40. | Deal with appeals from TEIs whose proposals were rejected | Early-January – Mid- January 2018 |
| 41. | Sending the proposals of the corresponding Appeals to the third evaluator | Mid-January – Late-January 2018 |

| | | |
|--|--|------------------------------------|
| 42. | QIF Board meeting for monitoring and discussing the appeals | Late-February 2018 |
| 43. | Press release in the newspaper about the awarded projects | Early-March 2018 |
| Phase 4: implementation of cycle 4 awards | | |
| 44. | Follow up of progress through field visits and progress reports versus implementation plan and performance indicators | April 2018 - May 2021 |
| ◇ | ICR (Implementation completion report contains Outputs & Impacts of the project on the academic sector, institution, and the labor market. | June 2021 – July 2021 |
| Phase 5: QIF External Evaluation | | August 2021 – December 2021 |
| ◇ Phase 6: QIF Conclusion and Dissemination | | January 2022 |

QIF Grant cycle (2017 – 2021)

| Tasks | Year 2017 | | | | Year 2018 | | | | Year 2019 | | | | Year 2020 | | | | Year 2021 | | | | |
|--|-----------|----|----|----|-----------|----|----|----|-----------|----|----|----|-----------|----|----|----|-----------|----|----|----|--|
| | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | |
| Phase 1: Launching and granting of cycle 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Evaluation phase of preliminary and full proposals – C3</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Awarding and negotiation phase – C3</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Signing Agreements – C3</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Phase 2: Implementation of Cycle 3 awards | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Preparatory phase</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Implementation Phase</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Conclusion Phase</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Phase 3: Launching and granting of Cycle 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Evaluation phase of preliminary and full proposals – C4</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Awarding and negotiation phase – C4</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Signing Agreements – C4</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Phase 4: Implementation of Cycle 4 awards | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Preparatory phase</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Implementation Phase</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Conclusion Phase</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Phase 5: QIF External Evaluation | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Phase 6: QIF Conclusion | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

