



## **SPECIFICATIONS**

### **EXTERNAL FINANCIAL EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT "RENEWED UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA" (PURSEA)**

**WP10.3 "Mandatory external financial audit at the end of the project".**

**Report of Factual Findings on the Final Financial Report – Type II**

**Key Action 2 - Capacity Building - Reference: 609879-EPP-1-2019-1-VN-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP**

**Client: Hanoi University (HANU)**

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## FOREWORD

The project "**Pilotage universitaire rénové dans le Sud-Est Asiatique - PURSEA**" (<http://pursea.hanu.vn/>) is being implemented from January 14, 2020 to July 14, 2023 by a consortium of 16 partners from Vietnam, Cambodia, Belgium, France and Germany.

Co-financed by the European Union's Erasmus+ program with a budget of **947,046 euros over a 3.5-year period** (a half-year extension was granted by the European Union due to the Covid-19 pandemic), the project aims to strengthen the governance capacity of partner higher education institutions (HEIs) by defining and implementing contextualized strategic planning to support their development plans, and by providing support for its implementation, taking into account the political will to empower HEIs in partner countries.

The project's three specific objectives are to:

1. Develop the methods and tools needed to improve partner HEIs' strategic development plans, and design their operational action plans.
2. Implement a priority action plan in each partner HEI, its steering system and support for change.
3. Develop tools that will enable the pooling and dissemination of regional expertise in strategic planning and procedures for evolving the governance and management of SEEs.

The project is coordinated by Hanoi University, and its various work packages are co-coordinated by a European partner and an Asian partner:

### 1. Europe

1. Agence universitaire de la Francophonie - Delegation in charge of relations with the European Union (AUF-ASBL)
2. University of Lorraine (UL)
3. Bordeaux Montaigne University (UBM)
4. Toulon University (UT)
5. University of Western Brittany (UBO)
6. Grenoble National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS de Grenoble)
7. Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB)
8. University of Duisburg-Essen (UDS)

### Vietnam

1. Hanoi University of Architecture (UAH)
2. Hanoi School of Transport and Communication (ESTC)
3. Danang University (Polytechnic Institute) (IPD)
4. HoChiMinh City University of Social Sciences and Humanities (USSH)
5. HoChiMinh City University of Economics and Law (UED)

### Cambodia

1. University of Health Sciences of Cambodia (USS)
2. Institute of Technology of Cambodia (ITC)



The project also includes a number of associate partners. A detailed list of project partners is available here: <http://pursea.hanu.vn/partners>.

**Work package WP8 - Project Quality Assurance** consists of monitoring the achievement of planned results and adherence to the PURSEA project schedule. An internal quality control process is implemented throughout the project to measure and report on the actual quality of project deliverables and impacts.

Led by the University of Duisburg-Essen (P16 - Partner No. 16), WP8 will be responsible for the quality and internal evaluation of the project. P16 will rely on an ESC (external scientific committee) made up of 5 experts from outside the project to guarantee the integrity of the project and its monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. This committee will be informed in advance of interim reports, deliverables and methodological guides, so as to be operational rapidly once on site.

Interim reports to monitor the quality and progress of the project will be produced at the end of 2020, 2021 and 2022, and compiled in the final year for greater readability. It will also enable us to measure the impact of the PURSEA project's results against the objectives set at the outset.

### **Mandatory external financial audit in year 3 (subject of this call for tenders)**

#### **About Hanoi University (<https://hanu.edu.vn/>)**

Hanoi University (UH in French or HANU in English) is a public university established in 1959. It offers four main fields of study: languages and linguistics, management, international studies, communication and information technology. By 2023, HANU will be educating around 14,000 students at three levels (bachelor's, master's and doctorate) through 46 training programs. It employs 750 staff, not including visiting professors.

Since 2015, HANU has been implementing a pilot program to reform operational mechanisms (also known as the Higher Education Autonomy Project) in accordance with Prime Ministerial Decision No. 377 / QD-TTg dated March 20, 2015.

To achieve university autonomy, governance will be the first area requiring intervention. Vietnamese universities in general, and UH in particular, will have to move from operating within the framework of a state-supported annual plan to a long-, medium- and short-term strategic development plan with 100% equity.

During three years of experimenting the new autonomy mechanisms, from 2015 to 2017, HANU implemented four major projects, including one with AUF and three KA2 Erasmus+ projects:

- "Integrating a quality approach into higher governance" co-financed by AUF and HANU to apply the two quality approach guidelines in university governance innovation;
- "Tourism" (reference 561656-IT) to enhance the employability of graduates,
- "MarcoPolo" (9574027-EPP-1-2016-1-ES-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP) aims to strengthen international cooperation between Southeast Asian universities.
- "Active Learning in Engineering Education" (586297/2017) focuses on the active education of engineers."

The HANU has used these experiences to support the PURSEA project, and has coordinated this project with the support of the AUF to share its experience within the consortium and adapt the results of the various projects from which it has benefited to serve innovative and effective governance.

## **SPECIFICATIONS CLAUSES**

### **Article 1: Purpose of the Terms of Reference (ToR)**

This consultation concerns **the recruitment of a firm specializing in external financial auditing of European projects** funded under the Erasmus+ Key Action 2 - Capacity Building in Higher Education program, in accordance with the clauses stipulated in the PURSEA project, which requires the use of an external evaluator.

The consortium of PURSEA project partners wishes to retain the services of a specialist consultancy firm in order to: i) ensure an external view of the quality of the project's financial management and ii) provide a Report of Factual Findings on the final financial report - Type II in relation to the grant agreement signed with the EACEA.

This mission will consist of:

- The implementation of specific expenditure control procedures detailed in Appendix of this document and the examination of the factual information contained in the TSU's Final Financial Report by comparing it with the terms and conditions set out in the grant agreement between the TSU and the EACEA.
- The submission of a Report of Factual Findings on the specific procedures carried out at the HANU.

### **Article 2: Award procedure**

A call for tenders has been launched for the selection of an external financial auditing firm for European projects. The tender documents are available on the PURSEA project website: <http://pursea.hanu.vn/>

Proposals must be sent by e-mail (only) to [giangdh@hanu.edu.vn](mailto:giangdh@hanu.edu.vn) to the attention of Mr. DANG Hoang Giang, project assistant, **before 5:00 pm (Hanoi time), on July 24, 2023**. Selection results will be announced before 5:00 pm (Hanoi time) on July 31, 2023.

Each proposal must contain:

- A presentation of the consulting firm
- Technical conditions for implementing the assignment, in particular the detailed timetable for carrying out the external financial audit
- The proposed methodological approach
- Content of deliverables
- Financial offer

### **Article 3: Selection criteria**

- **5 years'** proven experience in financial evaluation of international cooperation projects
- Provision of external financial audit references on Erasmus+ projects, KA 2 Capacity Building in Higher Education (or equivalent).

### **Article 4: Obligations of the service provider**



- Be able to plan work in a timely manner so as to achieve effective expenditure control by carrying out the procedures specified in Appendix "Guidance notes – Report of factual findings on the final financial Report – Type II".
- Be able to study documents in English, French, Vietnamese and Khmer; write interim and final Report of Factual Findings in Vietnamese and English.
- Complete the external financial audit between August 07 and August 16, 2023 and submit the interim Report of Factual Findings by August 24, 2023.
- Submit the final Report of Factual Findings to the TSU no later than September 1, 2023.

The auditor shall ensure that the work has been undertaken:

- in accordance with the International Standard on Related Services ('ISRS') 4400 *Engagements to perform Agreed-upon Procedures regarding Financial Information* as promulgated by the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board (IAASB) of IFAC;
- in compliance with the *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* issued by the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants (IESBA) of IFAC. Although ISRS 4400 provides that independence is not a requirement for agreed-upon procedures engagements, the Agency requires that the auditor also complies with the independence requirements of the *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants*.
- in accordance with specific EU guidance (Appendix).

#### Article 5: Selection procedure

The firm is selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the guidelines of the European Commission's Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA).

A selection committee (SC) will rank the applications according to the following criteria:

| Selection criteria  | Rating     |
|---|------------|
| Proven <b>experience</b> in external financial auditing of international cooperation projects<br><b>Number of references in financial auditing of Erasmus+ projects</b> (firm's reference certificates) | 50         |
| <b>Expert qualifications</b> (diplomas, training certificates)  | 20         |
| <b>Years of experience</b> (proof of professional experience)   | 30         |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>100</b> |

At the end of the selection process, the CS will draw up a shortlist of firms for contract negotiation. A minimum score of 70/100 is required to be eligible. Any application with a score of zero in one of the two sections is eliminated from the selection process, regardless of its final score.

Before final award, the contract will be negotiated with the selected firm. The negotiations will focus on:

- Technical conditions for implementing the assignment, in particular the detailed timetable for completion.
- Methodological approach.
- Content of deliverables.
- Financial offer.

The award method will be "best value for money".

#### **Article 6: Deliverables**

1. Submission of an **interim report of factual findings**, for the opinion of the selection committee, presenting:
  - The methodology used and the evidence obtained or to be obtained as part of the procedures described in Appendix to form the basis of the Report of Factual Findings to be submitted to the TSU.
  - The auditor's conclusions and recommendations regarding financial management and the use of the EACEA grant.
  
2. Filing of a **final report of factual findings** presenting:
  - The objective, agreed procedures and factual findings in sufficient detail to enable the TSU and EACEA to understand the nature and scope of the procedures performed by the auditor.

This report must be drawn up in the format imposed by the EACEA, following the template provided by the TSU. It will be attached to the Final Report to be submitted by the TSU to the EACEA.

#### **Article 7: Schedule and delivery date**

- Consultation launch date: **July 3, 2023**
- Deadline for receipt of proposals: **July 24, 2023 at 5 p.m. (Hanoi time)**
- Reply from the selection committee (sent by e-mail): **July 31, 2023**
- Negotiation and signing of the contract with the selected firm: **from August 1<sup>st</sup> to August 4, 2023**
- External financial audit: **between August 7 and August 16, 2023**
- Submission of an interim report for the opinion of the Project Steering Committee: **August 24, 2023**
- Submission of final Report of Factual Findings: **September 1, 2023, final deadline.**

#### **Article 8: Terms of payment**

Under a tripartite service contract between HANU, the Agence universitaire de la Francophonie (a partner in the PURSEA project, which manages the sum earmarked for the external audit for HANU and the service provider, payments will be made on presentation of detailed invoices.

Tranche 1: **30%** on signing the contract

Stage 2: **70%** on receipt of the validated final Report of Factual Findings

**NB: Please note that no additional budget will be allocated for travel during the project's external financial audit period.**

#### **Article 9: Conflicts of interest**

Firms in conflict of interest, i.e. those who have any direct or indirect interest in the project, or who have a personal or professional relationship with the project coordinator or partners, must declare their conflict of interest when submitting their application for the assignment; in particular, any civil servant holding an administrative position must present the necessary authorizations to carry out the assignment.

#### **Article 10: Confidentiality**

The firm selected for the present assignment is bound to observe strict confidentiality with regard to third parties, for all information relating to the assignment or collected in the course of it. Any breach of this clause will result in immediate termination of the assignment. This confidentiality remains in force without limitation after the end of the assignment.

*Hanoi, July 3rd, 2023*

**PRESIDENT OF HANOI UNIVERSITY**  
  
**TRƯỜNG  
ĐẠI HỌC  
HÀ NỘI**  
★ **Nguyen Van Trao**