

*The Tertiary Education Project
The Quality Improvement Fund (QIF)*

For

Palestinian Tertiary Education

Operations Manual



West Bank and Gaza Tertiary Education Project
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Quality Improvement Fund for Palestinian Tertiary Education



I. The Quality Improvement Fund: An Overview

The Palestinian government through its Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE) is implementing a Tertiary Education Project with the support of the World Bank group and the European Union (EU). A major component of this Project is the creation and implementation of the Quality Improvement Fund (QIF), which is overseen by the QIF Board and then by the Project Technical Committee (PTC). The main objective of the Quality Improvement Fund is to provide support to improve the quality of Palestinian tertiary institutions and programs in order that they are relevant to the job market and economic development of Palestine; made competitive with international standards and capable of developing income-generating programs; change agent of teaching practices. Although administered separately, the primary purpose of the QIF fund is to improve quality and relevance in tertiary education and is therefore closely linked to the national accreditation process and the institutional self-evaluation initiative.

The QIF is established on a competitive basis open to eligible tertiary institutions in Palestine. As further described in this Operations Manual, the QIF will be administered out of the MOEHE by a small technical staff accountable to a centralized Board representative of appropriate stakeholders. Both the QIF staff and the QIF Board will be housed and supported by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. So far, approximately **11.5** (US\$ 5.52 million from IDA and 3.92 million euros from the EC) U.S. dollars have been made available in the fund for distribution over an approximated four-year period. Other donors will provide through the World Bank additional 4.2 million dollars to support and implement the teacher education strategy¹ for the coming next three years.

In the context of the EDSP, the EC through the UNESCO will also contribute to the implementation of the teacher education strategy through implementing Quality Systems for Quality Teachers Program This will be used as a basis to assess the quality and relevance of the upcoming QIF grants using the 4.2 million dollars from the bank. All proposals shall abide by:

1. National Professional Standards (NPS) Framework for teachers.
2. Framework for Accreditation of Continuous Professional Development of Teachers

The QIF will continue to facilitate a change of culture in the financing of tertiary education in Palestine, the promotion of improvement on teacher education, the setting of national priorities in the sub sector, and a new framework for the relationship among tertiary institutions, and between those institutions and schools as well as the private and the public sector.

II. Organization of the Quality Improvement Fund

A. The QIF Board

¹ MoEHE Teacher Education Strategy in Palestine, May 2008

The Quality Improvement Fund Board (the QIF Board) is independent of government and the national accreditation process. It will be comprised of at least one representative from each of the following stakeholder categories, appointed by MOEHE:

- Council for Higher Education (CHE)
 - Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission (AQAC)
 - a. One Staff Member, and
 - b. One Commissioner
 - Higher Education Teachers Union and TEIs representatives:
 - a. one from the West Bank, and
 - b. one from Gaza
 - Engineers Association representative
 - Health care Association representative
 - Two independent Experts in Teacher Education. One of them will represent the Commission for Developing the Teaching Profession (CDTP)
 - Private sector/industry
 - One from the Palestinian Federation of Industries, and
 - One from the economy and banking Sector
-
- The members of the QIF Board shall be elected for a period of two years and may be reappointed for one extra year, with the exception of the Director of AQAC, who is the permanent Board member.
 - The Chair of the QIF Board will be selected (preferably by rotation) every year by the board members (1 August of every year).
 - The QIF Board should meet at least two times per year or when necessary for purposes of determining the merit of each application and an amount at which applications will be funded. An outline of the awarding process appears in Section VI of this Manual. The Board should also meet regularly to realign the priorities of the Fund, amend and reform technical issues and requirements, and to deal with and decide on appeals presented by participating institutions. All of the appeals accepted by the QIF Board will be sent to external reviewers. The evaluations of the external reviewer will be discussed in the next QIF Board meeting for taking decisions.
 - Board members will not participate in decisions where there is a potential conflict of interest. More specifically, this would be the case where a Board member is directly or indirectly involved in a proposal that is going to be considered for funding by the QIF Board.
 - The Board will define “inactive status” and inactive Board members, considering the absence of three consecutive meetings or half the yearly meetings, will be replaced by receiving a nomination from the stakeholder categories listed above with the appointment made by the MOEHE.
 - In the period between project appraisal and project effectiveness, the QIF Board will agree on a basic code of rules and regulations. These will fundamentally be addressed to ensure the independence of the Board, its representative nature of the tertiary education sector, and its efficiency in decision-making.
 - The QIF Board will coordinate its work with the Project Coordinating Unit (see below) in the proper management of grant funds.

- The QIF Board will submit to the MOEHE, to the Higher Education Council, and to the Project Technical Committee (PTC), a yearly report reflecting the summary activity and outcomes of the Fund.

Generally speaking, in order to make fair and effective decisions, it is the responsibility of the QIF Board to:

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

B. The QIF Staff

Three staff (director and two technical) and one clerical staff will be hired by QIF Board and appointed by the MOEHE in consultation with AQAC as QIF Staff. One of the technical staff will be a qualified consultant in the field of teacher education to assure quality and monitoring and evaluation of relevant QIF grants.

QIF staff will be housed with Ministry of higher education and will be supervised on a daily basis by the Director of the QIF and supervised by the Assistant Deputy for Higher Education and accountable to the Chair Board

Jointly, it will be the responsibility of the Director of AQAC, in his condition of Secretary General of the QIF Board, and QIF staff to:

- Work in cooperation with each other for the quality improvement of the Palestinian tertiary education system, but to not confuse the assessment purpose and process of accreditation with the Quality Improvement Fund. For example, 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 the programs. Institutions, on the other hand, may themselves choose to select areas identified through the accreditation process as needing improvement for QIF application.
- Assure that tertiary institutions are notified of the process well in advance of application deadlines. At the outset, every tertiary institution should be provided a QIF Manual

The general responsibilities of QIF staff will be to:

- Provide training programs for tertiary institutions as to the nature of the QIF and its process of application
- Be available to tertiary institutions as they develop proposals and undergo the application process
- Provide staff support to the QIF Board relative to notification, implementation and follow-through of meetings
- Develop a process for the receipt and review QIF applications (see appendix 5, QIF Cycle Template).
- Provide the QIF Board with a summary overview of the application including whether the institution is eligible; whether all the elements of the application are provided fully; whether the application is responsive to one or more of the fund priorities; and rate the proposal on the criteria for evaluation
- Work in consultation with the Project Coordinating Unit for purposes of procurement throughout the duration of each grant (see below)
- Notify applicants of grant decisions.
- Receive and deal with appeals from institutions whose proposals are rejected. This would entail, first, an internal review of the proposal and the intervention of a third external reviewer.
- Monitor progress of funded programs through annual reports

C. Project Technical Advisory Committee:

A technical Advisory committee for teacher education shall be established by the ministry of education and higher education and in full cooperation with the QIF board. The committee shall be comprised of three members as follows and shall work in full coordination with the QIF unit during the initial screening of the received proposals under each cycle:

- Two independent teacher education specialists from the higher education sector. One of them would be the consultant working in QIF
- One representative from the National Institute for Educational Training (NIET)

The main role of this committee shall be identified as follows:

- Advise the QIF board defining the technical aspects of the calls for proposals related to teacher education;
- Advise the QIF board on technical aspects of the evaluation of proposals related to teacher education;
- Initial internal screening of proposals related to teacher education and send recommendations -with detailed explanation- to board that will decide on the final results of the internal screening and approve sending the proposals to the external reviewers for detailed review.

D. Project Coordinating Unit (PCU)

The Project Coordinating Unit (PCU), established by the Ministry of Education to monitor and assist its Projects, will be responsible for Fiduciary Management of the QIF. The Director of the PCU is physically located in the MOEHE and works with the QIF Board and QIF Staff in the proper dissemination of World Bank and European Union funds available for the QIF, application process and financial and procurement guidelines for Grant implementation. The Director of the PCU will participate in the meetings of the QIF Board in a consultative capacity (i.e., without vote in decisions concerning the award of funds to proposals) and will

assist QIF Staff in the assessment of grant proposals. The PCU and the QIF have interdependent activities. Specifically, the PCU will:

- Participate in workshops for tertiary institutions related to the QIF in coordination with QIF Staff
- Provide technical assistance (i.e., information related to financial management, reporting and procurement procedures) to tertiary institutions as they require it in developing applications for QIF grants
- Assist the QIF Staff in the review of QIF applications prior to their submission to the QIF Board
- Provide technical advice to the QIF Board and attend all of the Board's meetings
- Upon a QIF Board decision to grant, prepare the grant agreement and oversee the fiduciary aspects of grant implementation. Participate in the review of annual progress reports for QIF recipients

III Eligibility for QIF Grants: Institutional Plans for Quality Assurance and Self-Evaluation

All tertiary institutions (including universities and technical & university colleges) in the West Bank and Gaza which are licensed and accredited by the MOEHE are eligible to apply for QIF grants. Eligibility for applying for QIF grants is further dependent on the university or college having an Institutional Plan for Quality Assurance and Self-Evaluation (which is going to receive targeted funds under Component 2 of the Higher Education Project supported by the World Bank.

All tertiary institutions 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 groupings with a single Quality Unit/Office. These colleges can therefore apply for QIF funds as a grouping/cluster or, alternatively, present individual applications or proposals 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 copies to the QIF Board. At least one page in length, the description should include:

- The name of the institution
- The name and contact information for the Director of the Quality Unit/Office
- In what office does the Quality Unit/Office reside (such as Vice President of Academic Affairs, President's Office, Planning Office, or other)

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

- Provide coordinating services internal to the institutions for purposes of self-evaluation and quality improvement;
- 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;
- Provide liaison services for the institution to the Quality Improvement Fund;
- 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;
- Provision of liaison services with the national accreditation process, including a focal point for the coordination of institutional or programmatic reports to AQAC;
- Participation in training programs and system-wide meetings related to quality in Palestinian tertiary education.

It is expected that Tertiary Education Project funds outside of QIF will be available to institutions to assist in funding the activities of tertiary institutions in the areas of quality, planning and management. This process will be developed and overseen by a Higher Education Project Technical Committee composed of representatives of the QIF Board, AQAC, the Council for Higher Education, the PCU and other bodies and will be chaired by the Assistant Deputy Minister for Higher Education. To continue receiving non-QIF funds for quality, planning and management functions, the institution must demonstrate *progress* in carrying out these activities as evaluated by the Tertiary Education Project Technical Committee.

IV Purpose and Nature of QIF Grants

A. Priority for Grant Awards

In the evaluation process, the QIF Board will give priority to applications which meet one or more of the following (not in priority order).

Content priorities (see grant categories)

- Improve or develop programs in fields which are relevant to labor, teacher education and social needs;
- Human resource development and Institutional Capacity, including pedagogical Capacity Building of teacher educators;
- Improvement of Institutional Information (quality of institutional information, governance, and general and financial management)

Process priorities (see evaluation criteria)

- Develop *partnership* programs with local, regional and global higher education institutions. Promote *consortia* or the shared use of teaching and learning resources (such as library resources, information resources and laboratory and other equipment);
- Develop *partnership* programs and projects with the *private sector/industry*;
- Develop partnership programs and projects with the public sector, including local and regional authorities.
- Promote *distance and e-learning* as an enhancement_delivery tool in tertiary education.
- *Enhance the capacity to seek alternative funding sources/generate additional income* such as through the provision of training, consulting or

research services for public/private sector institutions in local or international markets.

B. Primary Categories of Grants

Applications for QIF grants will be welcomed from the following primary grant categories:

1. Programs of Relevance to Labor Market and Social Needs.

Timeframe for projects: 2 to 3 years.

Funding ceiling per approved project: 250.000 USD

Funding ceiling per approved project involving consortia or partnerships: 350.000 USD.

Proposals which develop new programs, or improve existing ones, leading to an increase of graduates in fields designated as high domestic needs. Provisionally, and based on data and recommendations from related sectors including the Ministry of Labor, this Manual assumes the following priority fields for Tertiary education in Palestine:

- Computer Science/Engineering and IT related studies.
- Natural sciences, (Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics)
- Engineering (both short-cycle and long-cycle programs),
- Financial and general management,
- Agriculture,
- Vocational programs (Tourism, System Analysts, Social Work, etc.).
- English language

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, on-line student support systems, purchase of materials and equipment

2. Human Resource Development and Institutional Capacity Building

Timeframe for projects: 6 months to 18 months.

Funding ceiling per approved project: 75.000 USD

Funding ceiling per approved project involving consortia or partnerships: 125.000 USD.

Proposals which develop or improve institutional units and programs in the areas of:

- Governance
- Participation in national and international professional development opportunities.
- Institutional Management [If applying in this category, include a complete description of management, including organizational charts and a 3 year plan of how the institution plans to manage itself.]
- Financial Management and Planning [If applying in this category, include a 3 year financial plan]
- Student Services, including Counseling and/or Career Guidance
- Fund-Raising (Development)

- Pedagogical Capacity Building of teacher educators through twinning arrangements with prominent international Teacher Education Institutions
- Program modernization of teacher training institutions through two or three additional rounds of funding of quality improvement proposals

3. Improvement of Information

Timeframe for projects: 6 months to 18 months

Funding ceiling per approved project: 100.000 USD

Funding ceiling per approved project involving consortia or partnerships: 150.000 USD.

Proposals, which will develop or improve data gathering and analysis on strategic issues:

- Analysis and planning related to institutions and their programs,
- Graduate tracer studies,
- The relationship of higher education to the labor market,
- Other areas in which better information may be needed for the institution and its programs.

C. Guidelines for Application and Use of QIF Funds

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
- 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
- Procurement of vehicles

Other Guidelines:

- The maximum, which can be requested for the purchase of equipment by an institution for the duration of the QIF, is 40% of the total budget required from QIF.
- The maximum, which can be requested for international consultants and visiting scholars from overseas by an institution for the duration of the QIF is 20% of the total budget required from QIF.

- The Minimum TEI contribution should be 10% of the total budget of the project in the form of in kind contribution.
- Proposals for funding may be made for an amount most feasible to accomplish the program's objectives over the duration of the project.
- Institutions may submit one different application – individually or as part of a consortium/partnership – per each of the grant categories and for each QIF application period (which should take place at least 2 times per year²).

If there is any question about the use of QIF grants, it should be referred to the QIF Staff and to the Project Coordinating Unit (PCU) in charge of managing fiduciary aspects of grants implementation.

V Application Format and Criteria for Evaluation

A. Application Format

The following is a generic outline for a grant application.

1. Cover Letter

An application must be accompanied by an endorsement cover letter from the chief executive officer of the institution verifying that the departments and personnel involved in the proposed project are aware of and committed to the project.

2. Executive Summary

In two pages or fewer (in 12 font and single spaced), summarize the proposal, including:

- The institution's mission
- Project goal (what you ultimately wish to accomplish)
- 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 IV)
- Proposed activities (list major activities that support the strategic objectives)
- Equipment/Material needs (including but not limited to technical equipment, printed materials, software, etc.)
- Expected Outcomes (briefly describe short-term, measurable results)
- Project Director and Key staff involved (list complete contact information for persons accountable for the project)
- In consortium or partnership projects, state which the coordinating institution is.
- Amount requested of the QIF and overall amount of the Project budget.
- Anticipated project duration (beginning and ending dates of the project) and timeframe of the project.

3. Proposal

It is preferred to use the log frame in the project design (available on the Tertiary Education Project website: www.tep.ps)

B. Criteria for Evaluation

² For the additional funds of 4.2 million dollars this will not be applicable. TEIs will abide by specifications indicated in each specific call for proposals.

It is important to distinguish between the Priority and Categories for Grant Awards in Section IV and the Criteria for Evaluation of the applications themselves. The former identifies the favored project areas to be funded by the QIF; the following Criteria for Evaluation deal with the merits of the applications themselves. The applying institutions and the QIF Board and Staff are reminded to include both Sections IV and V of this Manual into account when evaluating proposals.

1. Clarity and Relevance:

Clarity and relevance of the proposed project will be evaluated in terms of:

- a. Clarity and appropriateness of the project objectives
- b. Whether these objectives can be measured
- c. Consistency of the project objectives with the overall objectives of tertiary education development
- d. Academic and technical merit
- e. The project outcomes and results are clear, tangible, and do include measurable indicators
- f. The proposal has a sound methodology
- g. The activities will achieve the expected outcomes
- h. There is a solid evaluation plan

2. Influence/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:

1. Internal benefits are measured by performance indicators such as: student/teacher ratio, unit cost per FTE (full-time equivalent) student progression and drop-out rates, employment of graduates, introduction of new or revised courses in response to labor market demand and improved linkages between teaching and research, higher education and industry.
2. External benefits are measured by benefits to tertiary education in the country as a whole; relevance to the labor market; international partnerships; etc.

Cost-effectiveness will be judged by the extent to which programs inputs will contribute to these outputs.

3. 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:

- a. Management and implementation capacity, taking account of both the track record of the institution that has submitted the proposal and the implementation plan of the department or unit within the institution that has specific responsibility for implementing the program

- b. Availability of qualified academic and technical staff, buildings and other physical resources necessary to ensure effective implementation of the program
- c. Financial sustainability through the contribution of the institution to the program implementation by the earmarking of non-budget income and revenues, and the extent to which the program will generate additional resources to support future quality improvements.

C. Score Sheet for Evaluating QIF Proposals

A *Score Sheet for Evaluating QIF Proposals* is enclosed in Annex 2, it delineates:

a. **The grant category in which an institution is applying:**

The priority is given to proposals which, fall into the category of Programs of Relevance to Labor Needs. . The difference in the priority will be reflected in the funding ceiling without reflecting that in the scoring. See Section IV for a description of these three grant categories.

b. **The quality of the proposal itself under the major headings:**

1. **Clarity and Relevance**
2. **Influence and Impact**
3. **Feasibility and Sustainability**

- All of the elements of clarity and relevance have 10 as a maximum score:
- All of the elements of influence and impact have 40 as a maximum score.

Proposals can have a maximum combined score potential of **300**.

This Score Sheet is expected to be used by the external evaluators in the evaluation of proposals and can be used by institutions and other users in identifying the priorities of the Quality Improvement Fund in a brief format. QIF Board and QIF staff are using a separate checklist and scoring for the purpose of internal evaluation (see Appendix 2).

VI Application and Evaluation Process

A. Schedule

Institutions should expect a process not to exceed 4 months from application deadline to time of grant notification. In addition, they should expect notification of deadlines for a four-year period *prior* to the outset of the QIF fund. This schedule is dependent on the QIF Board meeting every 4 months (or 3 times per year). An activity outline is provided below:

Three Months Prior to Initial Deadline for QIF Applications:

This QIF Manual will be distributed to all tertiary institutions in Palestine. A QIF brochure for dissemination purposes will be prepared. QIF Staff will also organize workshops and training sessions for key representatives of institutions.

Month One:

QIF Staff receive applications from tertiary institutions and confirm receipt. Institutions can apply for one project (individually or in partnership) per grant category and grant period. Submissions should be made 3 hard copies and 1 electronically readable.

QIF Staff should have ready a process and master data base for processing institutional applications according to the attached internal screening sheet which includes part for use by the QIF Board on which will be recorded:

- A summary overview of the application including whether the institution is eligible
- Whether all the elements of the application are provided fully
- Whether the application is responsive to one or more of the fund priorities (Section IV)
- A rating of the proposal for each criteria for evaluation (e.g., clarity and relevance; influence/impact; and feasibility – see Section V-A)

By month one, the board through the QIF staff shall:

- Notify applicants of deficiencies in the application for purposes of correction prior to sending them to the external reviewers.
- Work with the PCU relative to procurement information and issues as they appear in the application

Month Two:

Those proposals, which are deemed as complete and eligible by the QIF staff and upon corrections from the TEIs, will then be sent to two independent/external peer reviewers. These reviewers will be selected ad/hoc for each of the proposals by the QIF staff, on grounds of their technical or subject expertise. Standard forms will be provided for them to rate the proposals (the suggested minimum score is 200 as a threshold). They will also be asked to provide a precise recommendation to the QIF Board with regard to the Grant Decision (see Section B below). In case there is a difference between the two reviewers with the scoring result (one above the threshold and one below the threshold), a third one will be asked.

Month Three:

By *early* in Month Three, QIF staff should meet to review the proposals received for that period and the evaluation reports submitted by the external reviewers. They will make preliminary ranking recommendations for review by the QIF Board. **Each staff member should have a certain number of applications for which he/she is responsible for shepherding from time of application through time of grant notification.**

By *late* in Month Three, QIF staff should send their summarized forms and preliminary recommendations, together with the evaluation reports of external reviewers, to the QIF Board to provide Board members with sufficient time for their review.

Month Four

A QIF Board meeting should take place toward the end of Month Four. The duration of the meeting is dependent in large measure on how many applications there are to review. In order to process these efficiently and fairly, the QIF Staff 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. Some examples of how to make this manageable include:

- All QIF Board members will review the *summarized* comments and recommendations of the QIF Staff for *all* applications, but all QIF Board members do not need to review the full submissions of all applications. The full applications can be divided evenly across all QIF Board members so that each has no more than 3 or 4 to review in depth.
- At each meeting of the QIF Board, those Staff and Board members with primary responsible for an institution's application will lead the discussion for that particular application.

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

B. Grant Decisions

There are four possible outcomes to a QIF Board review of an application for a QIF grant:

1. **Approval for funding at the level requested**
2. **Approval for funding at a level not requested** (It is feasible that the QIF Board and Staff 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 not come as a surprise to the applicant who should be involved in this discussion in advance of the 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.)
3. **Provisional approval given minor revisions in the application.** (This would involve minor revisions requested by the QIF Board at its decision making meeting but not minor revisions requested of the institution by staff at the time of application.)
4. **Approval Denied** (Written reason should be given to the institution as to why its application was denied so that the institution can make the major revisions necessary or consider alternative proposals.) The institute may send an appeal within two weeks from sending the written rejection of the proposal. The proposal shall be sent another external reviewer who will revise the proposal and give the final decision

C. Notification of Grant Awards

Upon the conclusion of the QIF Board meeting, and no later than four months past the application deadline, A letter of notification is sent to the prospective institutions, expressing the 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 the PCU for purposes of finalizing the Grant Implementation Agreement. **A press statement is released to the media describing all the awards approved under the QIF.**

VII. Grant Implementation Procedures

A. The Grant Implementation Agreement (GIA)

Upon receiving a copy of the notification letter, the QIF and PCU updates 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, which will appear in the Grant Implementation Agreement (GIA). The PCU then moves into a process of preparing and signing the GIA. The GIA is signed in three copies; the first is submitted to the institution, the second to QIF staff and the third is retained in 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. The text of the GIA is appended in Annex 3

B. QIF Grants Disbursement Procedures

Procedures for Beneficiaries

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

Special Bank Accounts

Beneficiaries will be required to open a Special Account in the name of the grant. Each grant will have its own separate bank account; Grant Account (GA), and there will be two signatories to each account. The signatories should be legally liable and formally part of and authorised by the Beneficiary. The bank account details are also identified in the text of the GIA.

Structuring of Payments

Payment of grant proceeds to the Beneficiary will be conducted in the form of advances not exceeding 20% of the grant amount. The first payment shall be made following the signature of the GIA and following the approval of the detailed Implementation Plan (IP). The beneficiary must submit 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.

Handling of Payment Requests

Payment requests will be submitted to PCU with a Progress Report -containing required outputs and financial expenditures, which provide full justification for the completion of the milestone. QIF staff will review the technical aspects of the report, to assess the progress in implementation and to verify the completion of the milestone. Accordingly, QIF Staff will endorse the payment request and will forward it to the PCU for disbursement.

The PCU does not settle any payment for Beneficiaries until the results and content of the payment request are officially approved in writing by authorized representatives of the institution. Requests for payment are stamped with the date of receipt and logged into the project information system. The PCU reviews payment requests and makes sure that appropriate internal administrative and accounting procedures have been followed. These include ensuring that:

- 1) Requests are signed by authorized persons;
- 2) Expenditures are eligible and properly documented;
- 3) The request is in conformity with the information supplied by the bank statement;
- 4) Payments are to be made in accordance with the implementing Beneficiary bank account details as identified in the Grant Agreement;
- 5) Original request is held on the accounts file;

- 6) A copy of the notification letter agreeing payment and signed by the Director or his designee is held on the accounts file;
- 7) The date of issue bank transfer and amount is logged in the information system.

No payment will be made without approval and signature of the PCU Director or his designee who reviews payments to ascertain that:

- (a) any justified request and report of expenditure under a previous payment is true and accurate;
- (b) payments correspond with the provisions of the Grant Implementation Agreement (GIA),

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.

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.

Conditions on Payments of Instalments

Installments will only be released when the 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.

Scrutiny of the Disbursement Process

Prior to any payment being made, the PCU will ensure

- 1) That adequate justifications have been provided for any variance that affects the payment schedule;
- 2) That payments are made according to the budget line - the eligible expenditures and categories of the grant as indicated in the agreement; ineligible expenditures will remain as advance to the beneficiary until providing eligible expenditures in lieu or refund the grant account.
- 3) That agreed procurement procedures are properly applied and where specified full justifications are given;

Where any problems or irregularities occur, the PCU will issue a 'Rejection of Payment' to Beneficiary stating the reasons for rejection for follow-up and subsequent release of payment. The Beneficiary will be required by the terms of the GIA to inform the PCU immediately and provide reports as appropriate.

Other Methods of Payments

Payment of grant proceeds to the beneficiary may also be conducted in the following two methods:

- a. **Reimbursement:** This is the preferred method, whereby the Beneficiary pays for the items under the grant (consulting, goods) and then applies for reimbursement from the PCU. Full supporting documents should be provided to the PCU to allow for the reimbursement.
- b. **Direct Payment:** For large payments (i.e., \$20,000), the beneficiary may request the PCU to directly pay the consultant or supplier.

Additional Provisions

- Original invoices and supporting documents will be retained by the beneficiaries.
- Expenditures above threshold level should be submitted to the PCU with full supporting documents to allow reimbursement; originals will be retained by the beneficiaries.
- Beneficiaries will report quarterly to PCU on the use of the grant/advance within two weeks of each quarter end, unless a payment request is submitted at that time.
- Expenditures made under the grants will be subject to the PCU authentication, IDA reviews as part of regular supervision visits, and the external auditor annual audit process.
- PCU will assist beneficiaries to maintain adequate financial management throughout grants implementation.

C. Eligible Expenditure Categories

The following categories of expenditure are eligible for financing under a grant:

- 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
- Operations and maintenance

D. QIF Grants Procurement Procedures

Procurement Responsibilities

The PCU is responsible for ensuring that procurement carried out by Beneficiaries, follows Bank Guidelines. The PCU monitors all procurement activity and ensures compliance with contract provisions at all levels. Beneficiaries are responsible for procurement of goods, supplies and consultant services under the supervision of the PCU. Procurement would be carried out in accordance with the World Bank's "Guidelines: Procurement Under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits" dated May 2004 and revised in October 2006; and "Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers" dated May 2004 and revised in October 2006.

Procurement Methods

A. Selection of Consultants

The consultant procurement methods open to Beneficiaries are:

1. *Quality and Cost-Based Selection (QCBS)* - QCBS uses a competitive process among short-listed firms that takes into account the quality of the proposal and the cost of the services in the selection of the successful consultant. The relative weight to be given to the quality and cost shall be determined for each case depending on the nature of the assignment. The award of contract shall be published in UNDB online and dgMarket in accordance with the provisions of clause 2.28 of the Bank's Consultants Guidelines.
2. *Selection Based on Consultants' Qualifications (CQS)* - This method is used when

assignments are small and the need for preparing and evaluating competitive proposals is not justified. The Client shall prepare the TOR, request expressions of interest and information on the consultants' experience, establish a short list, and select the consultant with the most appropriate qualifications and references. The selected firm shall be asked to submit a combined technical-financial proposal. The award of contract shall be published in UNDB online and dgMarket in accordance with the provisions of clause 3.8 of the Bank's Consultants Guidelines.

3. *Single Source Selection (SSS)* - This method does not provide the benefits of competition for quality and cost, lacks transparency, and should only be used exceptionally where there is a clear advantage for: (a) tasks that represent a natural continuation of previous works; (b) where rapid selection is essential; (c) for very small assignments, or; (d) when only one firm is qualified or has experience of exceptional worth. The award of contract shall be published in UNDB online and dgMarket in accordance with the provisions of clause 3.13 of the Bank's Consultants Guidelines.
4. *Individual Consultants* - For services where teams of consultants are not required, and where the experience and qualifications of the individual are of paramount importance, services may be procured under contracts awarded to individual consultants in accordance with the provisions of section V. (Selection of Individual Consultants) of the Bank's Consultants Guidelines.

Short lists of consultants for services estimated to cost less than US\$200,000 equivalent per contract may be composed entirely of national consultants in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2.7 of the Bank's Consultant Guidelines.

The selection of firms for consulting services under contracts awarded on the basis of Quality-and-Cost-Based-Selection, (QCBS), would be carried out in accordance with para. 3.2 of the Bank's Consultants Guidelines.

The selection of firms for consulting services estimated to cost less than US\$200,000 would be carried out using the Consultants' Qualifications Selection, (CQS), method, in accordance with para. 3.7 of the Bank's Consultants Guidelines.

The selection of Individual Consultants, , would be carried-out in accordance with section V. (Selection of Individual Consultants) of the Bank's Consultants Guidelines.

Invitations for expression of interest would be advertised in United Nations Development Business (UNDB) and dgMarket for all consulting contracts with an estimated contract value above US\$200,000.

Prior Review for Consultants: For contracts above certain prior review threshold, and before selection decisions are taken, the World Bank will review the selection process for the hiring of consultants to ensure that it is in conformity with the Guidelines. The review includes the terms of reference (TOR's), the shortlist, the cost estimate, the Request for Proposal (RFP), applicable procedures, selection criteria, the evaluation, the contract, etc. Contracts below those thresholds will be subject to prior review by the PCU.

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

	Selection Method	Threshold for Prior Review by the Bank (USD)	Threshold for Prior Review by the PCU (USD)	Comments
1.	QCBS	Each contract \geq 200,000	Each contract < 200,000	Including advertisement
2.	CQS	None	All contracts	Including shortlist and proposal evaluation report
3.	Individual Consultant's, Section V of the Bank's Guidelines	Each contract \geq 100,000	Each contract < 100,000	Including evaluation report
4.	Single Source (Individuals & Firms)	All contracts	None	Justification is required according to paras. 3.9 - 3.13 of Guidelines.

B. Procurement of Goods

The QIF manual sets the maximum, which can be requested for the purchase of equipment (goods) by an institution for the duration of the QIF, to \$100,000. Therefore this item is expected to be small in size and would be procured through Shopping, which applies to contracts less than US \$100,000, and is based on at least three quotations. In the exceptional case that a contract for the procurement of goods is estimated to cost more than \$100,000, National Competitive Bidding will be used. In exceptional cases and subject to the Bank's prior review, Goods may be procured through Direct Contracting in accordance with para. 3.6 of the Bank's Procurement Guidelines

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 Prior Review by the Bank (USD)	Threshold for Prior Review by the PCU (USD)	Comments
1.	Shopping	None	Each contract > US\$ 50,000	
2.	National Competitive Bidding (NCB)	None	All contracts	
3.	Direct Contracting (DC)	All contracts	None	Justification is required according to para. 3.6 of the guidelines

C. Training Workshops and Study Visit

Prior Review Thresholds: Training Workshops and Study Visit subject to Prior Review by the Bank and the 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

As the Tertiary Education Institutes have no past experience in working with the World Bank’s Guidelines of procurement and selection of Consultants, the PCU will provide training on those 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. A qualified Procurement Officer at the PCU 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 the PCU, Bank and auditors. The PCU and the 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

E. QIF Grants Operational Policies and Procedures

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 the PCU. Reallocations greater than 10 percent require the prior written approval of the PCU in consultation with QIF Staff.

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) and fraudulent practice.

In the event of non-performance, the 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 the QIF Board. In the event of a termination decision is taken by the 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.

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 the PCU with a formal written justified request. Where the PCU, in consultation with QIF Staff, consider that such a request is justified, the approval of the QIF Board will be requested through the 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.

Limitation on Procurement

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

F. Formal and Legal Considerations

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

G. QIF Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

The PCU and QIF Staff 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 Staff. In order for the QIF Board to gauge the effectiveness of the QIF, M&E should enable the PCU and QIF Staff 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?

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 PCU, 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.

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 Staff 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.

Progress Reports and Site Visits:

For projects under all grant categories, progress reports must be submitted to the QIF Staff and the PCU on quarterly 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 staff, 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.

H. PCU and QIF Staff Technical Assistance

The PCU and QIF Staff 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.

The PCU and QIF Staff 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

Appendix 1 - QIF Application Format

Applicants for QIF grants are advised to use the outline provided by the QIF staff (Project Design for writing proposals) which is available on the project website: www.tep.ps.

In Addition, The TEIs are obliged to fill the following application form (below), which should be attached to the Project Proposal Document.

Period No. 2 / 2005

***Ministry Of Education and Higher Education
Tertiary Education Project
Quality Improvement Fund-(QIF)***

Grant Application Form

The applicant name: _____

Address: _____

Phone No: _____

Fax No: _____

P.O. Box: _____

E. mail: _____

Website: _____

Contact person name: _____

Position: _____

Address _____

Phone: _____

Fax _____

Email address _____

Date of submission: _____

Submitted to: _____

Title of the project:

Number of Copies: 3 Hard copies 2 Soft copies

(Please make sure that the hard copy does match with the soft copy)

Grant application for the following categories:

A. program of relevance to labor market needs

B. Human resources development and capacity building

C. Improvement of information

Description of the project:

Estimated Budget:

<u>1. Amount requested</u>	<u>\$</u>
<u>2. TEI contribution (min. 10% in kind)</u>	<u>\$</u>
<u>Grand total</u>	<u>\$</u>

Target Group and beneficiaries:

Expected duration of the project: (months)

Expected starting date: _____

Quality unit/office/ process description (Attachment 1-4 A4 pages)

Appendix 2 – QIF Board checklist and Score Sheet

Tertiary Education Project - Quality Improvement Fund - Internal Evaluation Sheet			
Institute:			
Proposal Title:			Code
#	Checklist	Tick	Notes
A	All elements of the application are provided fully		<i>institution should be provided by a form</i>
A1	Grant application form fits category		
A2	Accreditation of the Academic Program from AQAC (if needed)		
A3	Presence of Quality Assurance Unit		
A4	The project has external benefits measured by partnerships & role of the partner (added Value)		
A5	Introduction and Summary		
A6	Project goals and developmental objectives measured by performance indicators		
A7	Expected results (outputs) measured by performance indicators		
A8	Project Risks and tools to overcome them		
A9	Workplan: tasks, sub activities, strategies, and implementation (should be consistent with the outcomes and results)		
A10	Monitoring and evaluation plan		
A11	Feasibility studies, survey, training, workshops		
A12	Project financial sustainability (alternative sources of funding will be pursued)		
B	Institute's Credibility & Management: Negative Scoring of TEI (to be filled by QIF) TEI has credibility for implementing QIF projects based on its records at QIF and as evaluated by the board and technical teams, Project management (Team) (HR + physical resources)	Max Score	QIF Staff Score
B0	TEI never Funded by QIF	0	
B1	Reliable Contact Person	(-1 or 0)	
B2	Abide to Deadlines	(-1 or 0)	

B3	Communication & Logistics	(-1 or 0)	
B4	Feedback & Reporting	(-1 or 0)	
B5	Positive cooperation	(-1 or 0)	
C	Requested Budget		
C1	Max equipments (40% of QIF)		
C2	Max international consultants (20% of QIF)		
C3	Min contribution of TEI (10% of the total budget)		
C4	Detailed & Summarized budget		
C5	Project Duration - consistent with QIF manual		
*	overall project value is high (Relationship of benefits to cost)		
D	Project Concept: A score to be filled individually by each board member followed by group discussion during board meeting to finalize the score. (Success Threshold is 70)	Score	<i>Aparagraph should be provided to be read by board</i>
D1	Project is relevant to Quality Improvement of Tertiary Education (QIF objectives)	40	
D2	Problem statement/project justification /Target group/ are well defined	25	
D3	Project has influence and impact on labor market and/or institutional improvement	25	
D4	Project has an innovative idea or concept	10	
QIF Board Decision: Project concept final score ()			

Appendix 3 – Form of Score Sheet for Evaluating QIF Proposals

Score Sheet/ Evaluation Report for Evaluating QIF Proposals

Proposal Title:

Institution:

Institutional Contact Person:

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

Person Scoring Proposal:	Total Score:
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Grant Category

The proposal is submitted in the following grant category. Select only one primary grant category by placing (X):

No.	Category	Selection
1.	Programs of Relevance to Labor Needs	
2.	Human Resource Development and Institutional Capacity	
3.	Improvement of Institutional Information	

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

The proposal has the following characteristics. Note maximum scores per item.

1. Clarity and Relevance	Max Score	Score	Comments
<i>a. Proposal document demonstrate a real need or problem.</i>	10		
<i>b. The concept of the proposal is innovative.</i>	10		
<i>c. The objectives are clear, appropriate, measurable, and contribute to the overall objective of the quality improvement fund – QIF.</i>	10		
<i>d. The objectives have academic and technical merit.</i>	10		
<i>e. The project outcomes and results are clear, tangible, and do include measurable indicators.</i>	10		
<i>f. The proposal has a sound methodology. The proposed methods, approaches, and strategies are realistic, reasonable, effective, outcome-oriented - drawing on best practice and the latest thinking and research.</i>	10		
<i>g. The project activities are expected to achieve the expected outcomes and results.</i>	10		

<i>h. The target group/s in the project is/are well defined.</i>	10		
<i>i. The project activities are reflected in the estimated financial budget.</i>	10		
<i>j. The proposal includes/ or has a solid, clear and detailed monitoring & evaluation plan.</i>	10		

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

2. and Impact	Influence	Max Score	Score	Comments
a. There is a long-term, wide, and large impact on national labor market, and social needs.		40		
b. There is a significant potential impact on institutional improvement (Human Resources, Infrastructure, and Performance).		40		
c. External benefits are measured by partnerships either with public or private sector, or consortia arrangements with other tertiary institutions.		40		

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

3. Feasibility and Sustainability	Max Score	Score	Comments
a. Institution /program has a history of demonstrated management and implementation capacity.	10		
b. The human and physical resources allocated to this project are appropriate.	10		
c. The project is sustainable; it will be institutionalized; alternative sources of funding will be pursued.	30		
d. <i>There are inkind contributions or matches (funding, staffing, equipment, office space, etc.).</i>	10		
e. <i>The Quality improvement is demonstrated through the impact of the project on the institution and the sector.</i>	10		
f. <i>The expected risks and the tools to overcome these risks are well defined.</i>	10		

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 Staff 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 Staff, and the World Bank staff or other designated staff/consultants or external auditors by the PCU, QIF Staff 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 in the allocation of funds can be carried out. This will necessitate that a Modification of Agreement is issued.
12. 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).
13. Adherence to Procurement Procedures:
 - a) Procurement for the proposed project would be carried out in accordance with the World Bank's "Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits" dated May 2004 and revised in October 2006; and "Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers" dated May 2004 and revised in October 2006, and the provisions stipulated in the Legal Agreement.

For each contract to be financed by the Grant, the different procurement methods or consultant selection methods, the need for pre-qualification, estimated costs, prior review requirements, and time frame are agreed between the Borrower and the Bank are summarized in the **Operational Manual** of the QIF.

- b) 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.
 - c) 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.
14. 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 Staff shall provide training and technical assistance to the Recipient. These services will either be provided by the PCU or QIF staff, 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 the followings, attached to a Progress Report:
 - 1) A "Financial Management Report" in the form requested by the PCU and included in Annex H)
 - 2) The latest bank statement showing the balance of the funding in the account designated for the Projects Funds.
 - 3) All supporting documentation for all expenditures affected, including invoices. It will be needed to send copies of invoices stamped by the Recipient, certifying that it is an identical copy of the original.
 - 4) In case of procurement, meeting minutes of the bidding committee should be attached.
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 Staff 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 *quarterly* and final reports to the QIF Staff and the PCU in accordance with the approved Implementation Plan (Annex D). The QIF Staff 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. Box576, 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:

Ministry of Education and Higher Education

**Minister of Education &
Higher Education**

(Sig.)

For the Recipient:

Name of Institution

**Names and signatures of
Authorized representatives**

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

2. (Sig.) (-----)

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
<u>Annex H</u>	Form of Financial Management Report

Annex A, Details of the Grant Bank Account

**Tertiary Education 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 _____

Date: / /

Name and Signature Authorized Representative

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

**Tertiary Education 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									
Operations and maintenance									
Total									

Annex C Payment Schedule

Tertiary Education Project Quality Improvement Fund

Institution: Palestine Polytechnic University

Project Title: Establishing a Biotechnology Training and Research Unit

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

1. 20 % of the Grant amount upon the signature of the GIA and following the approval of the detailed Implementation Plan by the PCU and QIF Staff.
2. 20% of the Grant amount upon the completion of the first milestone (Specify)
3. 20% of the Grant amount upon the completion of the second milestone (Specify)
4. 20% of the Grant amount upon the completion of the third milestone (Specify).
5. 20% of the Grant amount, final payment, upon the receipt and approval, by the QIF Staff and the PCU, of the final report (verifying that the project has been completed and all conditions in the Agreement met)

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

Annex D, Grant Implementation Plan

**Tertiary Education Project
Quality Improvement Fund**

Institution: _____

Project Title: _____

No	Output	Output Indicator	Activities	Deadline	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

**Tertiary Education Project
Quality Improvement Fund**

Institution: -----

Project Title: -----

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

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
5. All other terms and conditions of the agreement shall remain unchanged

Annex F, Names and positions and signatures of authorized representatives

**Tertiary Education 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

Institution: -----

Project Title: -----

By the end of the Project (end of -----):

1. -----
2. -----
3. -----
4. -----
5. -----

Annex H, Financial Management Report Form

**Tertiary Education Project
Quality Improvement Fund**

Financial Management Report for Grant Number: _____

Institution: -----

Project Title: -----

<p>Project Sources & Uses of Fund For the Period: / / to / / In (US\$)</p>

	Period		Cumulative	
Cash Receipts				
QIF				
Contribution by Institution				
Total Financing				
Less: Expenditures by Activity				
Output 1				
Output 2				
Output 3				
Output 4				
Output 5				
Total Expenditures				
Receipt Less Expenditures (Net change in Cash)				
Ending Bank Balances / /				
Opening Cash Balance				
Paid by Institution into GA				
Paid by QIF into GA				
Total Opening Cash Balance				
Add: Net change in cash				
Net Cash Available				
Closing Cash Balances				

Financial Management Report for Grant Number: _____

Project Uses of Fund By Output, Activity

For the Period: / / to / /

In (US\$)

Project Output/ Activity	Period	Cumulative
Output 1		
Activity 1.1		
Activity 1.2		
Activity 1.3		
Activity 1.4		
Activity 1.5		
<i>sub-total</i>		
Output 2		
Activity 2.1		
Activity 2.2		
Activity 2.3		
Activity 2.4		
Activity 2.5		
<i>sub-total</i>		
Output 3		
Activity 3.1		
Activity 3.2		
Activity 3.3		
Activity 3.4		
Activity 3.5		
<i>sub-total</i>		
3. Others		
1. Bank Charges		
2		
3		
Total Project Expenditures		

Financial Management Report for Grant Number: _____

Statement of Project Commitments by Expenditure Category (Above US\$ 5000 per contract)
--

No.	Category	Contract Name	Contract Value (US\$)	Contract Date	Contract Duration
1)	Equipment & Furniture				
2)	Scientific journals and books				
3)	International consultants and visiting scholars from overseas				
4)	Local consultants				
5)	Overseas fellowships and internships.				
6)	Local fellowships and internships				
7)	Overseas study tours				
8)	Local training				
9)	Operations and maintenance				
Total					

Appendix 5: QIF Grant Cycle Template

No.	Task
1	Pre-Cycle workshop
2	Call for proposals
3	Receiving proposals
4	QIF Board meeting for Proposals opening
5	Filing and coding
6	QIF Board meeting for Internal evaluation screening, and QIF Board Decision on internal screening
7	Receiving and checking the missing documents
8	QIF Board meeting to approve the missings and discussing the external evaluation process
9	Request for expressions of interest - consultant services – external reviewers
10	Receiving CV's from Experts, Archiving and sorting the CV's
11	Assure the Experts acceptance of the proposal evaluation
12	QIF Board to approve the proper evaluators Vs Proposals
13	Sending proposals and the related files to the Experts
14	Receiving, filing, and analysis of the evaluation results
15	QIF Board meeting to approve the external evaluation results
16	Preparing the awarding letters and sending them to TEIs about external evaluation results
17	GIA agreement and modifications of awarded proposals
18	Deal with appeals from TEIs whose proposals were rejected
19	Sending the proposals to the third evaluator
20	QIF Board meeting for monitoring and discussing the appeals
21	Press release in the newspaper about the awarded projects
22	Follow up of progress through field visits and progress reports versus implementation plan and performance indicators
23	ICR (Implementation completion report contains Outputs & Impacts of the project on the academic sector, institution, and the labor market.

