

DOCUMENT TITLE: D8.1 PROJECT MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK































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About INsPIRE

The overarching goal of INSPIRE is to support, through the cooperation of European institutions, the rebuilding, modernization, and internationalization of the governance system of higher education institutions (HEIs) in Iraq with a specific focus on planning and programming systems. Due to the recent crisis and political economic situation, the current higher education system requires a strong intervention to face the weakness of the existing governance system. The institutionalization of good governance practices in Iraqi HEIs, which also means enforcing institutional values such as autonomy, accountability, participation, and internationalization, as well as implementing well-structured management systems, will contribute to the development of Iraqi HIEs helping them to meet the international standards.

The aim of the project is to support HEIs in Iraq in order to make them capable of establishing a modern governance framework through the adoption of innovative practices. The specific objectives of INsPIRE are the following:

- Enhancing good governance, management and accountability practices in the HEIs;
- Establishing a clear governance framework, including well-defined and clear mission and goals through the definition and implementation of action plans;
- Strengthening the international relations management within the HEIs;
- Improving participation in strategic planning and development activities for non-university actors and non-state actors.

European Partners:

- Siena University, Italy
- Bologna University, Italy
- Evora University, Portugal
- Aydin Istanbul University, Turkey
- UNIMED- Mediterranean Universities Union, Italy

Iraq Partners:

- University of Mosul
- University of Baghdad
- University of Basrah
- Al-Furat Al-Awsat Technical University
- Sumer University
- Al-Qasim Green University
- University of Basrah Oil and Gas
- Al Karkh University for Science
- Southern Technical University
- Wasit University
- Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Iraq

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Document Information

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Responsible Author(s)	Siena research team
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Abstract (for dissemination)	A reference manual containing the project management strategy and procedures, integrating the decisions taken at the kick-off meeting, also on the composition of the Assembly of Partners and the Strategic Committee. The Handbook also summarizes the management principles and methods to be followed in the project and will be used as a reference document by both the project partners and the External Quality Expert.



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1. Introduction

This document represents the Deliverable D.8.1 of WP8-Management of the INsPIRE project. It is designed as a comprehensive guide for the project participants, describing all relevant aspects of the project's management and coordination activities. It is intended as a useful manual for the Consortium, presenting procedures and tools to implement and manage in each project phase. Effective project management aims at ensuring that the planned activities will be carried out effectively, pursuing project's objectives according to the time schedule, budget and the expected quality standards.

The Project coordinator, University of Siena, is responsible for communication with and management of all Partners within the project Consortium and also for the communications with EC, covering concertation meetings, cross-project events, etc. This Handbook contains the project management strategy and procedures, integrating the decisions taken at the kick-off meeting and subsequent meetings, and will be used as a reference document by both the project partners, the Quality Committee and the External Quality Expert.

2. Project Overview

The project is consistent with EU strategy in supporting Iraq rebuilding of public institutions through capacity building. Indeed, efforts to strengthen and support the Iraqi academic institutions, particularly the universities and research centres are also essential for the improvement of the governance of the country.

Unfortunately, Higher Education is one of the sectors that experienced serious destruction of infrastructure since 2003. The rehabilitation of the Iraqi higher education system, already damaged by almost two decades of under-investment and isolation, is hampered by insufficient infrastructure and limited capacity in terms of planning, policy and management of higher education programmes. The gap between the educational opportunities offered by Iraqi universities and the requirements for sustainable economic development is widening. Due to the recent crisis and political economic situation, the current higher education system requires a strong intervention to face the weakness of the existing governance system.

Within this context, the main goal of INSPIRE is to support, through the cooperation of European institutions, the rebuilding, modernisation, and internationalisation of the governance system of higher education institutions (HEIs) in Iraq with a specific focus on planning and programming systems.

InsPIRE complies with the Erasmus+ Capacity Building field and fulfils the aims of capacity building projects, particularly addressing the challenges faced by HEIs in Iraq in terms of governance. More in detail, the role of European experts will be the one of improving Iraqi partners' knowledge and competences in carrying on their strategic plans specifically intended to support several governance dimensions.

The project is also consistent with the European strategy for Iraq (Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council of 8.01.2018 and Iraqi national development plans), which provides the support for higher education policy and governance, by virtue of the role played by education as a catalyst for development.

General Information

Project Title	Innovative Governance Practices in the Higher Education Institutions in Iraq	
EU Programme	Erasmus+ KA2 CBHE	
Action	Structural Project	
Project Number	598790-EPP-1-2018-1-IT-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP	
Start Date	15/01/2019	
End Date	14/01/2023	
Coordinator	University of Siena	
Contact Person	Riccardo Mussari, riccardo.mussari@unisi.it	
Total grant requested	993.365,00 EUR	
Partners	 Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Iraq Wasit University Southern Technical University Al Karkh University for Science University of Basrah Oil and Gas Al-Qasim Green University Sumer University Al-Furat Al-Awsat Technical University University of Basrah University of Baghdad University of Mosul UNIMED- Mediterranean Universities Union Aydin Istanbul University, Turkey Evora University, Portugal Bologna University, Italy 	

Internal Communication Tools

Group email	Mailing list
Shared Folder	Intranet section of the project website, psw: inspire_intranet_2021\$
Project website	https://projectinspire.eu/

2.1 Priorities Addressed

INSPIRE seeks to support the rebuilding, modernisation, and internationalisation of HEIs in Iraq through the introduction of governance innovative practices. Moreover, the project aims to enhance the relevance and quality of the higher education system through the revitalization of academic life and scientific research. In this respect, European partners should provide methodological techniques and best practices to support the development of HEIs strategic plan. Acknowledging the specifics of the local context, the European partners' support will help the Iraqi institutions to define their own priorities.

On this basis, UNIMED performed a needs analysis of Iraqi Higher Education system, drawing the following priorities to be addressed for the improvement and modernization of Iraqi HEIs:

- an improved knowledge of national regulatory framework;
- empowerment of university leaders on strategic planning and management skills;
- raising awareness and competences on Quality assurance mechanisms;
- enhancing the social role of universities;
- students' participation in institutional processes;
- modernization of teaching and learning practices;
- management of research and inclusion of stakeholders;
- strengthening staff capacity to manage internationalization opportunities.

2.2 Relevance of the project. Why INsPIRE?

The project will reinforce institutional capacity of HEIs in strategic planning, as a prerequisite for them to compete in a global setting. Moreover, the project aims to enhance the relevance and quality of the higher education system through the revitalization of academic life and scientific research. In this respect, European partners could provide methodological techniques and best practices to support the development of HEIs' strategic plans. Acknowledging the specifics of the local context, the European partners will support the Iraqi institutions in defining their own priorities.

The project is consistent with EU strategy in fostering Iraq rebuilding of public institutions through capacity building. According to the Joint Communication to the European parliament and the council "Elements for an EU strategy for Iraq" (8 8.1.2018), considering the full potential of education as a catalyst for development, the EU should support Iraq in reforming policy and governance in this sector, creating the enabling conditions for learning, building the capacities of educators and trainers, as well as empowering youth with local-led initiatives. To these aims, the EU should continue to support higher education opportunities in the country, especially for displaced people and refugees. Efforts should be placed to strengthen and support the Iraqi academic institutions, particularly the universities and research centers.

2.3 Mission Statement

The overarching goal of INsPIRE is to support, through the cooperation of European institutions, the rebuilding, modernisation, and internationalisation of the governance system of higher education institutions (HEIs) in Iraq with a specific focus on planning and programming systems. To institutionalize good governance practices in Iraqi HEIs, which also means enforcing institutional values such as autonomy, accountability, participation, and internationalization, as well as implementing well-structured management systems, will contribute to the development of Iraqi HIEs helping them to meet the international standards.

2.4 Project specific objectives

The aim of the project is to support Iraqi HEIs in order to make them capable of establishing a modern governance framework through the adoption of innovative practices. More specifically, INSPIRE seeks to:

- Enhance good governance, management and accountability practices in the HEIs;
- Establish a clear governance framework, including well-defined and clear mission and goals through the definition and implementation of action plans;
- Strengthen the capacity of HEIs to develop their own specific strategies and to implement them effectively and efficiently by means of programming systems;
- Strengthen the international relations management within the HEIs;
- Improve the participation in strategic planning and development activities of non-university actors and non-state actors.

2.5 Key expected Results

The following output/outcomes are set up for the achievement of the final objectives of the project:

- Key stakeholders map
- Diagnostic tool
- Virtual focus groups with Iraqi universities
- Final report of the update needs analysis
- Online training platform
- Report on the online training seminars held by EU partners targeting Iraqi HEIs
- Report on the field visits at the EU universities
- Report on the local ToTs in Iraq
- Development of the action plan per each partner university
- Good Governance Guidelines Handbook
- Development results and impact assessment report
- Designing the WP on the basis of baseline study (WP1)
- Train the trainers International Relations Strategies...



- Updating the university international relation strategic plan
- National workshop at the Ministry of Higher Education
- Consultative centre strategy definition
- National Consultative workshop report
- Quality Plan
- Periodical quality evaluation reports
- Mid-term external evaluation report
- Final external evaluation report centre created in each HEI
- Dissemination plan
- INsPIRE Website
- Dissemination Materials
- 10 sustainability conferences
- Exploitation and Sustainability Plan
- Report of the Final conference
- Administrative Project Management
- IInterim Financial Report
- Final Financial Report

The planned activities, namely analysis, training and capacity building activities, are targeted to different categories of beneficiaries, direct and indirect groups.

The first group of direct beneficiaries is composed of top management and academic staff who are in charge of the overall strategic planning definition: this group is involved in the project during the planning and design phase, and will take a leading role during the implementation and execution of the different activities of the project.

Indirect group of beneficiaries are internal stakeholders (administrative and academic staff and students) and external stakeholders, such as policy makers through the active participation of the Ministry of Higher education and other national and local bodies.

Therefore, the level of the impact will be inside and outside the institutions:

- Inside the institution: administrative and academic staff will be supported along all the project life for the implementation of strategic plans.
- Outside the institution: through the strength of the collaboration with external stakeholders at national and local level but also at international level.

3. Management structure and flows

INSPIRE is managed by the University of Siena, as project coordinator. The management structure is conceived as functional to ensure a smooth project implementation. The project management structure is therefore organized in 3 main bodies, corresponding to different decision-making levels: a) Project Manager (PM); b) Assembly of Partners (AoP); c) Steering Committee (SC).

Project Manager (PM)

Main Mission: Day-to-day management and overall supervision of activities.

The project coordinator ensures quality project execution by providing the needed skills to manage international initiatives linked to cutting-edge education, research and technologies.

The Project Manager:

- is ultimately responsible for the direction of all aspects, including technical work, administration, control, planning, progress, revision, reporting and reviews;
- is responsible to ensure that project progress is constantly monitored, assessed and maintained at high quality standards through intermediate checks and via an intra-consortium peer review system of all deliverables;
- acts as the main interface between the Consortium and the EC;
- interacts on a regular basis with WPs and tasks leaders to make sure that technical work is carried out according to the provisions set in the proposal and within the work-plan scheduled deadlines.

Steering Committee (SC)

It is in charge of strategic input to the project.

Main Mission: Maintain a coherent and constant strategic guidance to the project.

This does not entail direct action or modifications to the work-plan (which are under responsibility of the PM) but relates to relations with stakeholders, input to the dissemination, communication and exploitation strategies and to the post-project developments within a sustainable perspective.

Decisions proposed by the WP Leaders are to be taken as project recommendations and have to be proposed by the PM and discussed within the AoP for possible implementation within the project. Therefore, the WP Leader will define, in agreement with the other partners, tasks and responsibilities for the implementation of the project, in compliance with the expected results.

Composition: WP leaders.

WP Leaders are responsible for the strategic input to the project, they guide the tasks planned within the WP, in compliance with the scheduled work plan, and they are in charge for the delivery of a set number of outputs (Deliverables). They report directly to the Project Manager.

WP Leader(s):

- Coordinates the assigned WP
- Defines WP strategies and working methods
- Draws up the templates to collect WP homogeneous data from partners
- Assures the exchange of information among partners on the activities performed
- Remind Deadlines
- Elaborates the first draft and the final version of the documents/outputs
- Draws up the WP reports and the report about mid-term results

The composition of the Steering Committee is available in Annex I.

Assembly of Partners (AoP)

It is the Forum where the positions of individual Partners are represented.

Main Mission: It is summoned when decisions pertaining to issues of relevance to all Partners need to be addressed, e.g. proposals on strategic issues, proposals from the PM or the WP Leaders, emerging issues on project implementation, such as amendments of the Grant Agreement, admission of new participants; changes in budget allocation among project partners; any other corrective measures.

The composition of the Assembly of Partners is available in Annex II.

3.1 Decision Making Process

Decisions are normally taken by consensus.

In the unlikely case that voting becomes necessary, the majority of votes of the Assembly of Partners decides. The vote of the PM, being an ex-officio member, is only counted in case of an equal number of pro and contra votes. Decisions will be collected in the AoP minutes and distributed to all partners with minimum delay and no later than 5 working days after the AoP's meeting.

3.2 Communication flow and tools

Communication flow among all entities interested in the project happens mostly via email. Documents are made available internally via email, uploaded in the Intranet section of the project website and/or the public section of the project website called "Results".

3.3 Organization of Meetings

Partnership meetings



The Coordinator shall convene ordinary meetings of the AoP planned on the original proposal and shall also convene extraordinary meetings at any time upon written request of any Partner. Regular meetings are held between Partners, formal in-presence meetings every six months (even though due to the COVID-19 emergency meetings have to be replanned online) and virtual meetings. Virtual meetings were scheduled upon necessity, in a bilateral format or for the whole partnership depending on the urgency, the topic and the relevance of participation. Due to the limitation related to the COVID-19 pandemic, after the Kick-off meeting held in Siena in February 2019, all subsequent meetings were performed online (September 2020, December 2020, June 2021).

Notice of a meeting

The Coordinator shall give notice in writing of a meeting to all Partners through the project mailing list, as soon as possible, to allow good forward planning for all partners and to reduce travel costs by early booking. The same applies when the coordinator calls for an online meeting: a sufficient notice shall be provided to Partners to maximize participation in a time of frequent online meetings and events.

Sending the agenda

The Coordinator, in collaboration with the hosting and/or responsible Partner, shall send to Partners the original agenda within at least 3 calendar days preceding the meeting. Each meeting will have a dedicated session on the current situation, with respect to the project's achieved results and future timescales.

Adding agenda items

Any agenda item requiring a decision by the Partners must be identified as such on the agenda. Any Partner may add an item to the original agenda by written notification to all of the other members. During a meeting, Partners can unanimously agree to add a new item to the original agenda. Any decision may also be taken without a meeting by circulating to all members written documents.

Minutes of meetings

The Coordinator shall produce written minutes of each meeting which shall be the formal record of all decisions taken. When appropriate, an action-list will be shared with Partners with the Minutes.

3.4 Management Principles

In order to guarantee an efficient and effective running on the project, Partners share some key principles:

- Clear role for each Partners and clear distribution of responsibilities
- Strong leadership components
- Working teams working efficiently
- Periodical virtual meetings
- o Shared Documents: the work of the partners will be visible to all and shared
- Full availability
- Simple PM tools to keep track of project progress: project log & Gantt chart

4. Project Amendment

Taken into account the administrative and political difficulties that INSPIRE had experienced during the first period after the launch of the project, as well as the huge and unpredictable consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, a request to the EACEA has been submitted for one-year extension of the period of project eligibility, deemed necessary to guarantee the full implementation of project activities. The main amendments of the new work plan are:

- Project conclusion from January 2022, to January 2023 (one-year extension);
- Project tasks held online along the year 2021, in the light of travel restrictions due to the COVID-19;
- Move all onsite activities, both in the EU and Iraq, to 2022.

In particular, with reference to each Working Package, the amendments proposed and accepted are:

- WP1 Update of the need analysis:
 - Conclusion of activities in December 2020 (and not in November 2019, as previously approved);
 - Field Visits in Iraq scheduled in September 2019 replaced with virtual focus groups in November 2020.
- WP2 Training and capacity building activities:
 - Originally scheduled for the period November 2019 December 2020, they have been postponed to November 2020 October 2022;
 - Replacement of on-site training activities, with online ones.
- WP3 Implementation of changes and best practices through action plans:
 - Originally scheduled for the period October 2020 December 2021, they have been postponed to March 2021 February 2022.
- WP 4 Modernization of Iraqi HEIS International Relations Strategy:
 - Originally scheduled for the period April 2020 November 2021, they have been postponed to January 2021 - October 2022;
 - o online activities scheduled for 2021 (modelling WP according to WP1 outcomes and selection of training participants), and on-site activities scheduled for 2022 (training visits at the University of Bologna by May 2022, definition of university international relations strategic plan for eachIraqi HEI, and national workshop at national level in Iraq by November 2022).



- WP 5 Launching consultative centres in Iraq to coordinate HEI, State and non State actors:
 - Originally scheduled for the period March 2021 January 2022, they have been postponed to September 2021 September 2022.
- WP 6 Project Quality and Evaluation:
 - As a transversal WP, it will be carried out until the new extension.
- WP 7 Dissemination and Exploitation
 - As a transversal WP, it will be carried out until the new extension;
 - o final conference postponed from the end of 2021 to the end of 2022.
- WP8 Management
 - o as a transversal WP, it will be carried out until the new extension;
 - o Project meetings held online in 2021, while resumed on-site in 2022.

5. Work Breakdown Structure

5.1 Work packages overview

INSPIRE is structured in 8 Work Packages (WPs) each of which is made up of a specific set of activities. Five of those WPs deal with technical and scientific aspects of the project, while the other three deal with transversal activities, that are Management, Quality Assurance, Dissemination and Exploitation. The table below presents a full list of WPs, deliverables, WP Leaders and co-Leaders as well as the due date for project results. The table was updated in June 2021, following the project Amendment.

List of th	List of the project deliverables				
WP	WP leader and co-leader	Deliverables	Due date		
WP1	Leader P2 - UNIMED Co-leader P7 - University of Baghdad	D1.1 Key stakeholders map	31/10/2020		
		D1.2 Diagnostic tool	30/11/2020		
		D1.3 Virtual focus group with Iraqi universities	30/11/2020		
		D1.4 Final report with the update needs analysis (included desk research	31/12/2020		

		e self-evaluation)	
WP2	Leader P4 - University of Evora	D2.1 Online training Platform	31/07/2021
	Co-leader P14 - University of Basrah)	D2.2 Report on the online trainings seminars held by EU partners targeting Iraqi HEIs	31/12/2021
		D2.3 Report on the training study visits at the EU universities	31/05/2022
		D2.4 Report on the local ToTs in Iraq	31/12/2022
WP3	Leader P5 - Aydin Istanbul University	D3.1 Development of the action plan per each partner university	31/12/2021
	Co-leader P9 - University of Sumer	D3.2 Good Governance Guidelines Handbook	30/11/2021
		D3.3 Development results and impact assessment report	30/09/2022
WP4	Leader P3 - University of Bologna Co-leader P16 - University of Mosul	D4.1 Designing the WP on the basis of baseline study (WP1)	31/10/2021
		D4.2 Train the trainers - International Relations Strategies	31/05/2022
		D4.3 Writing/updating the university international relation strategic plan	31/10/2022
		D4.4 National workshop at the Ministry of Higher Education	31/10/2022
WP5 Leader P6 - MOHESR Co-leader P8 - Al Furat University		D5.1 Consultative centre strategy definition	15/01/2022
		D5.2 National Consultative workshop report	31/03/2022
		D5.3 Consultative body created in each HEI	30/09/2022
WP6	Leader P8 - Al-Furat University Co- leader P4 - University of Evora	D6.1 Quality plan	28/02/2019
		D6.2 Mid-Term evaluation reports	15/01/2022

		(internal and external)	
		D6.3 Final Evaluation Report	14/01/2023
WP7	Leader P7 - University of Baghdad Co-leader P2 - UNIMED	D7.1 Dissemination and exploitation plan	15/06/2021
		D7.2 Project website	30/09/2019
		D7.3 Dissemination and branding materials	28/02/2019 31/08/2021
		D7.4 10 sustainability conferences in Iraq	30/04/2022
		D7.5 Final project conference	31/12/2022
WP8	Leader P1 - University of Siena	D8.1 Project Management Handbook	28/02/2019
		D8.2 WPs result Reports	31/01/2021 (WP1) 31/03/2022 (WP3)
			31/10/2022 (WP5)
			14/01/2023 (WP2,4, 6, 7)

WP1. Update of need analysis

TASKS DESCRIPTION

- T1.1 Preliminary desk research, collection of relevant data
- T1.2 Identification of stakeholders
- T1.3 Identification of existing governance frameworks and best practices
- T1.4 Design and preparation of a diagnostic tool
- T1.5 Self-evaluation for a final assessment study

WP2 TIMETABLE

January 2019 – December 2020



WP2. Training and capacity building activities for internal staff in quality assurance and strategic planning TASKS DESCRIPTION

- T2.1 Designing of training content and programme;
- T2.2Development of training methodology and didactic material;
- T2.3. Selection of training participants;
- T2.4. Implementation of online training for universities in Iraq;
- T2.5. Four virtual training seminars (1 day per week) for 4-6 sessions according to the topics by EU universities (5 people per HEI in Iraq) 1 by Siena; 1 by Bologna 1 by Evora 1 by Aydin
- T2.6. Preparation and organisation of 3 training study visits at EU Universities (Siena, Evora and Aydin Istanbul Universities) 3 days, 3 persons per HEI
- T2.7. Organisation of 10 ToT at local level (each University will organise its own ToT in its institution in Iraq)

WP TIMETABLE

November 2020 – November 2022

WP3. Implementation of changes and best practices through action plans

TASKS DESCRIPTION

- T3.1 Development of a specific action plan for each HEI in Iraq
- T3.2 Piloting the Implementation of the action plans in each Iraq HEIs
- T3.3 Drawing up of a general guideline handbook for strategic planning and governance for HEIs
- T3.4 Assessing and refining the governance framework at each university

WP TIMETABLE

March 2021 – February 2022

WP4. Modernization of Iraqi HEIs International Relations Strategies

TASKS DESCRIPTION

- T4.1 Tailor modelling of the WP according to WP1 outcomes;
- T4.2 Selection of training participants, crucial for the good outcome of the WP. This task should be carried out involving the in-selection process Iraqi University with the coordination of the WP leaders.
- T4. 3 Organisation of the trainings at University of Bologna;
- T4.4 Definition of a modern university international relation strategic plan in each Iraqi partner;
- T4.5 Organisation of a national workshop at national level

WP TIMETABLE

February 2021 – March 2022

WP5. Launching of consultative centre in HEIs to coordinate University, state and not-state actor TASKS DESCRIPTION

- T5.1 Definition of the strategy for the creation of a consultative centre in each university for a better coordination of university and non-university actors
- T5.2 Organisation of a National Consultative workshop to define the creation of consultative centre (at the MHESR, Baghdad)



T5.3 Creation and launching of the consultative centre in each HEI in Iraq

WP TIMETABLE

September 2021 - September 2022

WP6. Project Quality and Evaluation

TASKS DESCRIPTION

- T6.1 Definition of Quality Committee
- T6.2 Definition of Quality Plan
- T6.3 Internal evaluation: evaluation of the quality of each deliverable for WP and suggested improvements
- T6.4 External evaluation: Preparation of quality report (mid-term and final reports)

WP TIMETABLE

January 2019 - January 2023

WP7. Dissemination and Exploitation

TASKS DESCRIPTION

- T7.1 Design of the dissemination and exploitation plan
- T7.2 Creation and management of the Project website
- T7.3 Preparation of dissemination Materials
- T7.4 Deployment of Dissemination and Sustainability Campaign
- T7.5 Organisation of the final Conference

WP TIMETABLE

January 2019- January 2023

WP8. Management

TASKS DESCRIPTION

T8.1 Operative and financial management

T8.2 Performing of plenary and virtual meetings

WP TIMETABLE

January 2019- January 2023

5.2 Role and Tasks per Partners

P1. University of Siena

UNISI has significant experience in several previously implemented Erasmus Projects. The University of Siena has participated in the Erasmus programme since 1987 and in many international projects at international level (Erasmus Intensive Programmes, Strategic Partnerships, Erasmus Mundus). USiena has been a partner in an Erasmus mundus project with Tunisia (sAGGESSE), Palestina (UniGov) and Algeria (ERANET) and is a partner of the UNIMED network. UNISI will coordinate the project and will lead the management work package (WP8). The main objective of the management team is to ensure smooth coordination and

successful implementation of the project. USiena will ensure the widest dissemination of the project with the aim to realize sustainable outcomes and continuous improvements on the short term during the implementation and on the long-term after the closing of the project. Beside its role in project management, the university will be involved in other work packages and will participate with other activities with project partners.

P2. UNIMED

UNIMED will lead the first work package (WP1). Based on its wide expertise in capacity building project management, UNIMED will collaborate with other project partners to carry out the update of need analysis and support the self-evaluation process for defining the final assessment. UNIMED will realise these activities by providing project partners with literature background and a diagnostic tool to be used for the self evaluation. UNIMED will also contribute to other work packages, mainly it will be the co-leader of the dissemination exploitation work package (WP7). UNIMED will be involved in all the other WP both technical and managerial ones, participating in all the provided committees.

P3. University of Bologna

The University of Bologna will play a central role in the project, leading the WP4, Modernization of Iraqi HEIs International Relations Strategies. Based on previous experience in the field of international relations UNIBO will organise in Bologna a specific training on the topic and will support the definition of a modern university international relation strategic plan in each Iraqi partner. UNIBO will also lead the organisation of a national workshop at the Ministry of Higher education to guarantee a wider dissemination of the activities carried out. UNIBO will be involved in all the other WP both technical and managerial ones, participating in all the provided committees.

P4. University of Evora

The University of Evora will lead the training and capacity building activities for internal staff in quality assurance and strategic planning work packages (WP2), designing the training contents, programmes and methodology and coordinate the online platform as well the study visits in programme countries. Moreover, UEvora will lead the capacity building training in Iraq and will support the organisation of ToT at local level. In addition to this, UEvora will also be involved in the Quality plan work package as a co-leader (WP6) and in the other work packages. Indeed, UEvora will participate actively in all the other technical WP as well in the management ones, participating in all the provided committees. UEvora will also host the second project meeting.

P5. Aydin Istanbul University

The role of Aydin Istanbul University in the project is very central especially in leading the development work package (WP3). IAU will support the implementation of change, by piloting the implementation of action

plans at the level of each HEIs and drawing up a general guideline handbook for strategic planning and governance. Furthermore, IAU will be involved in all the other technical and managerial WP, participating actively in the scientific committee as well in the management committee and the quality one. IAU will also host the third project meeting.

P6. Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research will play a central role leading the WP5. The work package will lead to the creation of a consultative centre in each university for a better coordination of university and non-university actors. The MOHSER will define and implement the strategy for defining and launching the new consultative body and will organize a National consultative workshop to support this process. The MOHSER will be involved in the update of need analysis (WP1) and the training and capacity building activities (WP2). The Ministry will also participate actively in the other technical work packages as well in the management ones and will have a core role in supervising all the HEIs involved in the project but also for the dissemination to all other Iraqi HEIs and social actors in general.

P7. University of Baghdad

The University of Baghdad will lead the WP5 activities (Dissemination Exploitation) supported by strong contributions of other project partners and mainly by UNIMED support (co-leader). This will assure a wide dissemination and exploitation of results in Iraqi universities and in the society in general as well in programme countries. UOB will be involved in the preparation work package (WP1) and in all the training and capacity building activities (WP2). Then UOB will be involved directly in the realisation of the development and implementation of the other activities, the general action plan (WP3), the strategic international relations action plan (WP4) and the consultative body for strength relationships with external stakeholders. UOB will be involved in all the other technical and managerial WP, participating actively in the scientific committee as well in the management committee and the quality one.

P8. Al-Furat Al-Awsat Technical University

Al-Furat Al-Awsat Technical University will lead the Quality plan work package (WP6) with the support of the University of Evora (co-leader). The university will form a quality assurance team and this team will prepare a quality assurance plan, and will supervise the internal and external evaluations, and the implementation of evaluation report's recommendations. ATU will also be involved actively in the preparation work package (WP1) and in all the training and capacity building activities (WP2). Then ATU will be involved directly in the realisation of the development and implementation of the other activities, the general action plan (WP3), the strategic international relations action plan (WP4) and the consultative body for strength relationships with external stakeholders. ATU will also participate in all the other technical and managerial WP, participating actively in the scientific committee as well in the management committee and the quality one.

P9. University of Sumer

The University of Sumer will participate in all project activities, first of all in the preparation work package (WP1) and in all the training and capacity building activities (WP2). Then OUS will be involved directly in the realisation of the development and implementation of the other activities, the general action plan (WP3), the strategic international relations action plan (WP4) and the consultative body for strength relationships with external stakeholders. OUS will also be the co-leader of WP3. In addition, the university will be involved in all the other technical and managerial WP, participating actively in the scientific committee as well in the management committee and the quality one.

P10. Al- Qasim Green University

AL-QASIM GREEN UNIVERSITY will participate in all project activities, first of all in the preparation work package (WP1) and in all the training and capacity building activities (WP2). Then QGU will be involved directly in the realisation of the development and implementation of the other activities, the general action plan (WP3), the strategic international relations action plan (WP4) and the consultative body for strength relationships with external stakeholders. In addition, the university will be involved in all the other technical and managerial WP, participating actively in the scientific committee as well in the management committee and the quality one.

P11. Basrah University for Oil and Gas

Basrah University for Oil and Gas will participate in all project activities, first of all in the preparation work package (WP1) and in all the training and capacity building activities (WP2). Then BUOG will be involved directly in the realisation of the development and implementation of the other activities, the general action plan (WP3), the strategic international relations action plan (WP4) and the consultative body for strength relationships with external stakeholders. In addition, the university will be involved in all the other technical and managerial WP, participating actively in the scientific committee as well in the management committee and the quality one.

P12. Al-Karakh University of Science

Al-Karakh University of Science will participate in all project activities, first of all in the preparation work package (WP1) and in all the training and capacity building activities (WP2). Then KUS will be involved directly in the realisation of the development and implementation of the other activities, the general action plan (WP3), the strategic international relations action plan (WP4) and the consultative body for strength relationships with external stakeholders. In addition, the university will be involved in all the other technical and managerial WP, participating actively in the scientific committee as well in the management committee and the quality one.

P13. Southern Technical University

Southern Technical University will participate in all project activities, first of all in the preparation work package (WP1) and in all the training and capacity building activities (WP2). Then STU will be involved directly in the realisation of the development and implementation of the other activities, the general action plan (WP3), the strategic international relations action plan (WP4) and the consultative body for strength relationships with external stakeholders. In addition, the university will be involved in all the other technical and managerial WP, participating actively in the scientific committee as well in the management committee and the quality one.

P14. University of Basrah

University of Basrah will participate in all project activities, first of all in the preparation work package (WP1) and in all the training and capacity building activities (WP2). Then UOB will be involved directly in the realisation of the development and implementation of the other activities, the general action plan (WP3), the strategic international relations action plan (WP4) and the consultative body for strength relationships with external stakeholders. OUB will also be the co-leader of WP2. In addition, the university will be involved in all the other technical and managerial WP, participating actively in the scientific committee as well in the management committee and the quality one.

P15. Wasit University

Wasit University will participate in all project activities, first of all in the preparation work package (WP1) and in all the training and capacity building activities (WP2). Then UOW will be involved directly in the realisation of the development and implementation of the other activities, the general action plan (WP3), the strategic international relations action plan (WP4) and the consultative body for strength relationships with external stakeholders. In addition, the university will be involved in all the other technical and managerial WP, participating actively in the scientific committee as well in the management committee and the quality one.

P16. University of Mosul

The University of Mosul will participate in all project activities, first of all in the preparation work package (WP1) and in all the training and capacity building activities (WP2). Then UOM will be involved directly in the realisation of the development and implementation of the other activities, the general action plan (WP3), the strategic international relations action plan (WP4) and the consultative body for strength relationships with external stakeholders. UOM will also be the co-leader in the WP4. In addition, the university will be involved in all the other technical and managerial WP, participating actively in the scientific committee as well in the management committee and the quality one.

6. Project Reporting and Monitoring

Reporting on the project's progress and achievements is both a crucial and beneficial part of the project management process. The reports can be means of communication about the project. On the other hand, the submissions of a Progress Report and a Final Report are contractual obligations. Above from the information in this document, the coordinator will inform the Consortium on time about necessary steps for the completion of the reports as well as the deliverables.

The Project Coordinator must submit to the EACEA during the course of the project a Progress Report and Final Report.

Progress Report - It is intended to provide the Agency with a mid-term update on how the project is advancing against original plans and budgets. The Progress Report is due at the mid-term point of a project. In order to allow enough time for preparation, the reporting period for the Progress Report runs from the start date of the project until two months prior to the submission date of the report, meaning WP Reports and other documentation must be sent and shared two months before the deadline for the Report. Approval of the Progress Report leads to the launch of the second pre- financing payment as foreseen by the grant agreement. Due to the delays and complications that occurred during the first year of the project implementation, the Interim Report was submitted to EACEA on 22/02/2021.

Final Report - For the Final Report, the reporting period covers the entire project duration and the submission date falls two months after the end of the project, i.e. 15/03/2023. Approval of the Final Report leads to the final payment on behalf of EACEA.

8. Risk Management

Risk management is a project management tool to assess and mitigate events that might adversely impact the project. This section presents the process for implementing proactive risk management. The goal of the risk management activity is to prepare the Consortium for identifying and managing actual and potential risks that may occur during the project lifetime, such as we have foreseen with the adaptations needed to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Risk is defined as an unforeseen event or activity that can impact the project's progress, result or outcome in a positive or negative way. Risk management consists of three main tasks: identifying potential risks, assessing the likelihood and seriousness of risks, and developing strategies to manage and mitigate risks (Contingency Plan). The coordinator is the overall Risk Manager and responsible for tracking efforts to reduce risks. The Assembly of Partners is engaged in the assessment of risks and developing mitigation strategies.

Risk Monitoring - Risk monitoring systematically tracks and evaluates the performance of risk-handling actions. It is part of the Project Coordinators and the Work Package Leaders' function. The main task is to compare expected and predicted results with the results actually achieved to determine the status and the need for any change in risk-handling actions.

8.1 Risk Management Strategy

While writing the project proposal, a risk assessment exercise has been thoroughly carried out in the preparatory phase and a detailed risks analysis was performed at the inception phase of the action to evaluate immediately potential contextual risks. The project structure and Consortium have been conceived with the idea of minimizing risks as much as possible and make sure that even negative occurrences can be remedied without incurring in major deviations from the objectives pursued and from the work and resources to be deployed.

The idea is that an accurate assessment (first in the proposal preparatory phase and then during the implementation of the project) of potential risks should lead first to create conditions in which the likelihood of their occurrence is considerably reduced and then to devise effective countermeasures likely to bring the project back on track with its objectives, expected results and activities.

Type of risk

S= Scope | C= Cost | T= Time | Q= Quality

Assessment risk Legend

•	Everything is fine, on track and in control.
•	Need Attention. The project is not totally on track and in control, but it is not in the ditch yet.
•	The project is in the ditch. It will not meet its commitments for cost, schedule or scope. It will need actions (reallocation of budget or schedule increased or its scope of work increased) to get back on track.

9. Management monitoring tools

The following monitoring tools have been designed by the coordinator with the purpose to collect the necessary information to draw up the official interim and final reports to the European Commission, and monitor the progression of activities against the workplan.

Project's Deadlines Log

The Project's deadline Log is a tool used to monitor all the project deadlines. In particular, for each task to be performed, it keeps track of the progress indicators, the deadline, the days left, the date of completion and of the WPs depending on that task completion.

WP result reports template

In line with the requirement of reporting to the EACEA, each WP leader is required to fill out a report at the end of their WP, to be ready for the Mid-Term and Final Report. The WP result report template is available in the shared folder.

Meeting minute template

After each meeting, minutes are prepared, including a brief description of the attendees' speech, upcoming deadlines, future activities and results. This template is available on the shared folder.

Attendance Sheet template

At each meeting or event, participation of participants are recorded. This template is available on the shared folder.

10. Financial Procedures

General rules

Several approaches and strategies have been applied to ensure that the project's outputs and objectives will be achieved in the most effective way, also financially, and on time.

Firstly, intensive consultations have been performed with WP Leaders to identify the minimum duration and human efforts required to achieve the WP outputs, without influencing the quality of each individual output. In addition, WP Leaders have been assigned dual responsibilities, (i.e. more responsibilities and tasks are assigned to WP Leaders), which will eventually reduce the cost expenditure on each WP.

Secondly, each WP Leader identified the partners that will take a role in the implementation of the WP. For example, partners with on-hand experience are involved in the implementation of the WP. In addition, in many cases, partners that would be influenced by the WP outputs are also engaged in the implementation of WP activities (mainly Iraqi partners), but taking into account that the level of their efforts are less. As a consequence, the budget is distributed across the different WPs. The budget ensures almost equal economic distribution across the different partners, taking into account the role and significance of each partner in the project.

Thirdly, the project partners will co-finance some of the activities in the project:

- 1. Printing and publishing of brochures, training material, information booklets for the meeting;
- 2. Organization of conferences/meetings (e.g. halls/auditorium, institution's own resources);
- 3. Other costs such as bank transfers and management of the budget account, stationery, photocopying, supplies, telecommunication costs and other indirect costs.

Staff costs

To manage staff costs it is important to keep cooperation between Project Manager/Coordinator and the person in charge of financial reporting (Financial Manager). A project might have achieved all its objectives and developed all its tasks and activities in the best possible way BUT if financial reporting is incorrect/inaccurate/ badly done the project and the partners must give funds back to the European Union.

Categories of staff costs

- 4 **staff categories** depending on the **ACTIVITY CARRIED OUT** (not according to internal position in the partner institution):
 - o Manager
 - o Researcher
 - Technical
 - Administrative
- If a staff member during the implementation of the project carries out **different activities**, **different staff categories** should be reported
- Example: Prof. X will draft the need analysis (RESEARCH activity) but will also fill in the financial statement (ADMINISTRATIVE activity) à two different staff categories: one as Researcher one as Administrative. Different unit costs will apply
- Only the days of commitment on the project will be accountable
- Working days: no more than 20 per month
- 1 working day: 8 hours

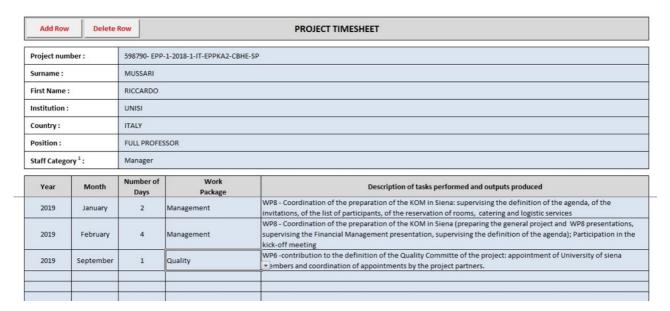
First Step: the summary of working days. Each Partner would need to verify how many days are assigned for each WP in the individual INsPIRE budget table. Duty of each Partner institution is:

- Verification of the description of the activities carried out: it must be correct, real and precise;
- Verification that the days declared are realistic (beware not to overestimate the days: 1 day = 8 hour work);
- Verification that activities have not been forgotten;
- Verification of the existence of outputs to prove the declared activities:
- Participation in a meeting: verification of the attendance sheet
- Drafting of a document/study: the document/the study, email exchanges
- Responses to questionnaires: the filled-in questionnaire

Second Step: the timesheet. The template is provided by EACEA and it is the Coordinator's duty to circulate it among Partners. One Timesheet for each staff member. One line for each month and for each WP. In the description of activity and output: always insert the number of the WP before the description; the description must be short but precise; fill the fields "Year", "month", "number of days", "Work packages" by selecting the appropriate option from the scroll menu; do not forget the activities of quality (WP6) and dissemination (WP7). Each line must correspond to one activity whose outputs are TANGIBLE. The EACEA and its auditors might decide to cut some days if they consider that the activities declared do not correspond to the results produced.

Third step: the Joint Declaration. It reports the information about the staff members, the reporting period (coherent with the months and years indicated in the Timesheet) and a brief summary of activities and outputs produced. Different Joint Declaration must be produced if the staff member had different roles in the project (i.e. one JD for activities of Manager, one JD for activities of Researcher).

Example of Timesheet:



Example of Joint Declaration



Fourth step: cross-checking. The reporting dates in the JD correspond to those of Timesheet. The number of days in the JD corresponds to those of Timesheets. 1 JD and 1 Timesheet for each category covered by the staff person. The compliance with the summary.

Fifth step: providing the Coordinator with the necessary supporting documents. The Summary, Joint declarations and Timesheets. Payslips of the months reported in the timesheet. Work contract. The coordinator is responsible for submitting in due time to the Executive Agency all reports and financial statements as required in the Grant Agreement. For this purpose and in a timely manner, the beneficiary commits to provide the coordinator with all necessary information and, if applicable, copies of supporting documents needed for drawing up reports, financial statements and any other documents required in the Grant Agreement.

Payment Arrangements

The transfer of the Erasmus+ grant contribution to individual beneficiaries will be implemented in accordance with the timetable and procedures defined in the Partnership Agreement. The Coordinator will transfer the part of the Erasmus+ grant contribution corresponding to the beneficiary using the accounts stipulated in Annex IV of the Partnership Agreement. Beneficiaries are obliged to use the Erasmus+ grant contribution exclusively for the purposes defined by the project, and in accordance with the terms and provisions of the present Agreement and the Grant Agreement and its annexes. Erasmus+ grant amounts received in advance and not used by the beneficiaries will be reimbursed to the coordinator at the latest 30 days after the end of the project's contractual period.

Reserve Fund

A reserve fund of the 20% of the staff costs is set aside by the partnership to meet any unexpected costs that may arise in the implementation of the project. The reserve fund will be used to i) co-finance travel costs and costs of stay higher than the unit costs; ii) co-finance other type of expenditures required for the implementation of the project (such as costs for dissemination, printing and publishing) which are not taken into account in the calculation of the grant. The use of the reserve fund can arise from any beneficiary and shall be approved by the partnership. The reserve fund will be managed centrally by the coordinator who will prepare a summary report on expenditures to be sent to the consortium on an annual basis. The actual reserve fund will be re-calculated globally for the overall project, on the basis of the actual expenditures. In case of need for some more resources, a formal amendment to this Agreement will be negotiated among the partners. The remaining funds will be redistributed among the beneficiaries according to the budget shares of the partners and it will be transferred to the beneficiaries' accounts with the balance payment.

Travel Cost and Cost of Stay

Several face-to-face meetings will be conducted (either for management purposes or capacity building). Intensive efforts have been made to plan these meetings (both the selection of the location of the meeting



and time) to minimize the waste of time and money. The travel restriction due to the Covid19 pandemic, moreover, has further reduced the needed budget for travelling. The final conference has been planned with the final project meeting and several virtual meetings will be organized in order to reduce cost (both travel and stay).

Although CBHE partnership applies the unit costs amounts defined in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide for the reimbursement of the travel and costs of stay incurred by the beneficiary organisations for the implementation of the project activities, the beneficiary's procedure for covering these costs will be based on the reimbursement of actual costs incurred for travel costs and costs of stay, subject to the key principles listed below.

The University of Siena delegated UNIMED to manage travel costs and costs of stay centrally under the supervision of the coordinator, due to the extensive experience of UNIMED in the management of cooperation projects. In case the global expenditures for travel costs and costs of stay exceed the unit costs amounts defined in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide, the partnership will use the reserve funds to cover the extra costs. All travels have to be consistent with the project activities. Existence of a formal employment relation is required in order to participate in a travel.

Key principles for travel costs and costs of stay:

- UNIMED- Mediterranean Universities Union will pre-reserve and pre-pay plane tickets;
- Beneficiaries are required to choose the cheapest means of travel, e.g. economy tickets for air travel
 and to take advantage of reduced fares. Where this is not the case a full explanation should be
 provided to UNIMED- Mediterranean Universities Union and the coordinator;
- Costs related to entry visas and related obligatory insurance are eligible and will be reimbursed based on the availability of exceptional travel costs and reserved budget;
- Expenses for travel by private car (private or company cars), where substantiated and where the price is not excessive, will be refunded in accordance with the internal rules of the organisation concerned and up to a maximum rate of EUR 0.22 per km. Distance will be calculated through the use of the Distance Calculator provided by the EACEA. Only the price of one car per Institution will be reimbursed, irrespective of the number of people travelling in the same vehicle;
- UNIMED will pre-reserve hotel rooms for the number of nights needed to perform the project-related activities. UNIMED- Mediterranean Universities Union will take care of planning such a number of nights in consideration of reasonable travel schedules. All other expenses (e.g. difference from a standard room to a superior room or a superior hotel, mini bar, hotel bar, additional meals, etc.) will not be covered;
- In case of cancellation, for any reason, after confirmation (i.e. after ticket purchase and/or hotel booking) the related costs will be in any case deducted from the beneficiary's project budget.

Exceptions to these modalities will be managed on a case-by-case basis. Beneficiaries need to justify the actual cost of the expenditures not anticipated by UNIMED and to provide the relevant supporting documents (e.g. invoices and receipts, travel tickets and boarding passes).

Annex I: Steering Committee Composition



WP	WP Leader	Member of Steering Committee	Email	Co-leader	Member of Steering Committee	Email
1	. UNIMED	Silvia Marchionne, Marcello Scalisi	s.marchionne@uni-med.net m.scalisi@uni-med.net	University of Baghdad	Asst. Prof. Dr. Osamah Fadhil Abdulateef	drosamah65@gmail.com
2	2 University of Evora	Paulo Silva	pfs@uevora.pt	University of Basrah	Asst. Prof. Nazar Haddad	nazar.haddad@uobasrah.edu.iq
3	Aydin Istanbul	Prof. Dr. Celal Nazım İrem	celalirem@aydin.edu.tr	University of Sumer	Dr.Muatamed Abed Hajer	dr.muatamed@gmail.com
4	UNIBO	Filippo Sartor, International Relations Officer	filippo.sartor@unibo.it	University of Mosul	Prof. Dr. Mufeed Dhanoon Younus	mufeedthanoon61@gmail.com
2	Ministry of Higher Education	Dr.Hussain Ali	hussain.ali@mohesr.gov.iq	Al-Furat	Dr. Emad Abass Almulla	almullaemad@gmail.com
9	Al-Furat	Dr. Ali Najah Kadhim	ali.alshamani@gmail.com	University of Evora	Paulo Silva, Assistant Professor	pfs@uevora.pt
7	University of Baghdad	Asst. Prof. Dr. Osamah Fadhil Abdulateef	drosamah65@gmail.com	UNIMED	Silvia Marchionne, Marcello Scalisi	s.marchionne@uni-med.net m.scalisi@uni-med.net
8	Usiena	Prof. Riccardo Mussari, Full Professor	<u>mussari@unisi.it</u>			

Annex II: Assembly of Partners Composition

INSPIRE ASSEMBLY OF PARTNERS INSPIRE ASSEMBLY OF PARTNERS INSPIRE ASSEMBLY OF PARTNERS

Partner Number	Partner Name	Name and Surname of Appointed Person	Email address	Position	Telephone (if the case)
P1	Università di Siena	Riccardo Mussari	mussari@unisi.it	Full Professor	
P2	UNIMED	Marcello Scalisi	m.scalisi@uni-med.net	Director	00356070371
P3	Università di Bologna	Filippo Sartor	filippo.sartor@unibo.it	Head of Middle East Unit, International relation Division	0039 3355468214
P4	University of Évora	Soumodip Sarkar	ssarkar@uevora.pt	Vice-Rector	00351 266 740 800
P5	Istanbul Aydın University	Celal Nazım Irem	celalirem@aydin.edu.tr	Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences	
P6	Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research	Huda Hamad	huda2006@live.ca	Translator/Minister's Office	
P 7	University of Baghdad	Sudad Al-Shaikhli	Sudadmaaf4@yahoo.com	Director of scientific affairs	+9647901807315
P8	Al-Fuart Al- Awsat Technical University	Dr. Ali Al-Shamani	ali.alshamani@gmail.com	Head of Quality Assurance Department	+9647810965606
P9	University of Sumer	Mutamed Aldakheeli	dr.muatamed@gmail.com	Vice Dean of faculty of computer science and IT	+9647830911875

P10	AL-Qasim Green University	Hadi aljanabi	hadiyasir@yahoo.com	vice president of AL-Qasim Green University	009647802595462
P11	Basrah University for Oil and Gas	Wael Hasan	wael.hasan@buog.edu.iq	Computer Center Manager	+9647707333363
P12	Al-Karkh University of Science	Sohaib Al-Kamal	sohaibalkamal@yahoo.com	Asst. Lecturer	009647732380901
P13	southern technical university	Maher Alshamkhani	maher@stu.edu.iq	director of continuing education and career center	+9647828577732
P14	University of Basrah	Nazar Samir Abd Al Wahab Haddad	nazar.haddad@uobasrah.edu.iq	Project Coordinator, Vice Dean for Scientific Affairs, College of Medicine, University of Basrah	+9647802146486
P15	Wasit University	Husam Majeed Hameed Al- Zuwayny	hhameed@uowasit.edu.iq	Dean College of Medicine/ University of Wasit	+9647827426663
P16	university of mosul	MUFEED ALMULA DHANOON	mufeedthanoon61@gmail.com	Assistant Rector for Scientific Affairs	07701772112