Application form - Quality Culture Project – Round III

Deadline: 27 October 2004 (postmark)

1. **Name of institution:** Åbo Akademi University
   Street: Domkyrkotorget 3
   Postal code: 20500    City: Åbo Country: Finland
   Tel. #: +358-2-215 31    Fax #: +358-2-251 7553    e-mail: webmaster@abo.fi

2. **Head of institution (name & position):** Prof. Gustav Björkstrand, rector

3. **Number of full-time students (or full-time equivalent):** 7950

4. **Institution type:** ☑ University ☐ Others (please specify):

5. **Please list the main faculties:**
   The university has seven faculties covering a broad range of scientific areas:
   - Faculty of Arts
   - Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences
   - Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences
   - Faculty of Chemical Engineering
   - Faculty of Theology
   - Faculty of Education
   - Faculty of Social and Caring Sciences.

6. **Describe briefly the specific profile that makes your university unique (about 200 words):**
   Åbo Akademi, Finland's Swedish-language university, is committed to research and research-based education of the highest quality. Åbo Akademi has a special responsibility to provide for the university-level research and educational needs of the country's Swedish language population (pop. estimated to 300 000 people). Part of Åbo Akademi's overarching national responsibility for university education in Swedish includes a commitment to provide educational opportunities across a broad range of areas. The goal is both to enable its Swedish-speaking students to enjoy freedom of choice in academic pursuits and professional careers on a par with that available to Finnish-speaking students, and to meet the demand from central sectors of society for academically educated staff capable of serving the Finland-Swedish population.

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**For office use only:**

Application number:

Postmark:
In practise the role as a university serving a minority creates a unique qualitative challenge. ÅAU has, in comparison with other universities in Finland, a great number of subjects with few students and teachers. Despite these statistics ÅAU:s aim is to belong to the top category in research and education. To achieve these goals ÅAU declares: size matters! Small scale activity gives great opportunities to create a personal atmosphere based on high class guidance of students, intense cooperation between teachers, subjects and departments, and a substantial percentage of students and staff participating in the planning and decision making process.

7. Describe briefly recent initiatives (or plans) to develop quality management in the institution (about 200 words):

The Bologna process has put quality assurance (QA) in the limelight. That is one of the reasons why the Ministry of Education has emphasized the development of more extensive QA mechanisms within the Finnish universities. The Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (FINHEEC) will audit the QA management system of every university during the period of 2005-2010.

QA management at Åbo Akademi University (ÅAU) is coordinated through the QA Board consisting of administrative staff, teachers and students. Vice rector function as chairman.

In October 2004 the Board put forward a proposal to enhance QA management. The University Senate will process the proposal in December. The proposal includes the following structures:

1) Electronic Course Evaluation and Course Evaluation Boards in each Faculty
   Goal: Enhanced student participation and evolved teaching methods.

2) Evaluation of the working conditions for students and staff by electronic questionnaires
   Goal: Pinpointed investments on student and staff well-being.

3) Public matrix describing on going development and future targets in every unit
   Goal: To improve project based thinking, raise knowledge level (staff/students/third part) on the units present situation and increase participation in the strategic planning for the future.

4) Vice dean in charge of QA management in the Faculty.
   Goal: To clarify decision making structure and improve implementation of QA procedure in the Faculty.

5) Benchmarking projects to complement regular external evaluations of Faculties.
   Goal: To improve staff and student participation in evaluation projects and expand quality culture to every level of activity.
8. Upon which area would you like to focus in the Quality Culture Project? Please select and rank two of the following themes by order of preference (1 being the highest):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Strategy and Industrial Partnerships</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementing Bologna Reforms</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching and Learning: Implementing Learning Outcomes</td>
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<td>Women in Universities: Research, Teaching and Leadership</td>
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<td>Programme Evaluations: Joint Degrees</td>
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9. Please explain how the choices in Q 8 relate to your institutional strategic objectives and what are your expectations for this project? (about 300 words):

With the strategy paper “Åbo Akademi year 2010, A Personal Top University” the institution declares where it wants to be by the year 2010. The strategy paper also includes a SWOT-analysis which purpose is to put the institution's present position on the map. The third part of the rapport describes actions needed if the university is to fulfill the aims in the strategy paper. One of the aims is to actively take part in international projects in quality assurance management. This can never be the only motivator. ÅAU has a limited number of administrative staff. The increase in work load must be balanced by concrete benefits. This is the case with the two EUA projects; leadership and Bologna reforms. In both cases ÅAU sees great potential in gaining new ideas from the project partners since the cultural differences will ensure a variety of viewpoints.

Leadership will be one of the big issues at Finnish universities during 2005. One of the reasons are the change from a fixed salary system to a system with individual contracts. Carrier development plans will steer the progress of the salary. It will be the unit leader's responsibility to ensure good opportunities for the workers to continuously enhance their carrier development. Training the senior management in carrier development planning and active elaboration of the unit will be essential.

In August 2005 Finland will introduce the Bologna model (3 year bachelor + 2 year master). During 2005 the universities are also required to introduce an electronic student guidance system and a quality assurance management system. Modification of courses and syllabuses, and reformation of administrative procedures will require new thinking. Strengthening the quality culture within the institution is a vital part of this development process. ÅAU must build up a creative milieu that inspires the teachers to develop programs that emphasizes student activity, team work ability and focusing on learning outcomes.

Participating in the EUA Quality Culture Project has top priority.

10. Did your institution participate in the following EUA activities?

   ☒ Institutional Evaluation Programme, Year 1998 / Follow-up 2001   ☒ Management Seminar, Year 1997
   ☐ Doctoral Programmes   ☐ Joint Masters

11. Did your institution apply to the Quality Culture Project in 2002 – 2003 or 2004?

12. Please identify a senior member of staff (vice-rector or equivalent) who will attend all three network meetings and manage the process and activities within your institution. This person commits to attend all meetings:

Full name: Prof. Olle Anckar
Position: vice-rector
Tel. # +358-2-215 3413 Fax # +358-2-251 7553 e-mail: olle.anckar@abo.fi

Please add address if different from above (Q 1):
13. **For coordinators only:** If you are interested in having your institution serving as co-ordinator for a network, please indicate it below and attach the CV of the senior member of staff (vice-rector or equivalent) who will be in charge:

☐ Yes, my institution is interested in co-ordinating a network and I nominate as co-ordinator:

Full name:
Position:
Tel. #       Fax #       e-mail:

*Please add address if different from above (Q 1):*

Please attach the CV of your candidate

14. **For coordinators only:** Please indicate what strengths you would bring as coordinator?

* * * * *

Date: ...............................................  Rector’s Signature: ..............................................................

Please fill in the attached application in **three copies and post** to:
Nina Arnhold
European University Association
Rue d’Egmont 13
1000 Brussels, Belgium

Please make sure that the application is **signed by the rector** and postmarked **before or on 27 October 2004**.

Unfortunately, EUA **cannot accept email or faxed applications**. Please accept our regrets.

If you have any questions, please contact Nina Arnhold: Nina.Arnhold@eua.be