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This document describes the ISSP Education Partner Program and Policy.

Program Vision and Purpose

The vision of the ISSP Education Partner Program is to foster partnerships with high quality sustainability education providers worldwide. ISSP and its Education Partners seek to provide sustainability professionals with training and education on the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for excellence and best practices in order to make sustainability standard practice around the world.

The purpose of the ISSP Education Partner Program is to:

- Identify Education Providers that have the resources and programs to provide superior education for ensuring sustainability professionals have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to address the sustainability challenges currently being faced by the world.
- Provide organizations interested in creating sustainability education with guidance on the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed of sustainability professionals and the criteria for providing that education
- Provide guidance to current and aspiring sustainability professionals on
 - Education providers who meet the standards and criteria established by ISSP for sustainability education programs and
 - Opportunities for sustainability education and professional development opportunities to enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities required of sustainability professionals to be truly effective in their work

Educational Providers who meet the criteria of this program will be designated an ISSP Education Partner (ISSP EP).

- Initially this program will focus on Educational Providers who offer educational programs to prepare individuals with the knowledge, skills and abilities outlined in the ISSP Body of Knowledge for Sustainability Professionals and allow those individuals to pass the ISSP-SA and ISSP-CSP certification exams.
- It is anticipated that within a year, this program will also include Educational Providers who offer on-going continuing education units (CEUs) for certified sustainability professionals seeking to maintain their ISSP certification through the ISSP re-certification process.

Eligibility and Responsibilities

All organizations interested in becoming an ISSP Education Partner (ISSP EP) will be evaluated based on the following eligibility requirements¹ relating to:

- Mission and History
- Accreditation
- Qualification of Personnel, Courses, and Programs

Mission and History

To be eligible to be an ISSP Education Partner, an organization must demonstrate:

- Alignment of their mission, organization, department, course(s) and instruction with the ISSP mission and body of knowledge.
- A history of sustainability education and training.
- A commitment to the ISSP Certification process by signing a [declaration of support](#)²

Accreditation

Accreditation is a formal and external process through which organizations demonstrate that they have met a minimum standard for providing educational training programs. ISSP does not require that an Education Partner be accredited by a specific accrediting body, however all ISSP Education Partners must be able to show that they are accredited by a recognized accrediting body or that they operate at or above the standards required for accreditation.

The application process is much simpler for organizations that can show they have an accreditation from a recognized accrediting body since the process of accreditation requires that an educational provider meet certain minimum standards relating to:

- Responsive and appropriate governance structure and fiscal capacity.
- Processes to ensure confidentiality of student information and use of student information for marketing purposes only with appropriate releases.
- Ongoing quality assurance and continuous improvement.
- Ongoing certification of instructor and curriculum developer qualifications.
- Institutional commitment to student learning and achievement.
- Demonstrated success with student achievement.

¹ ISSP reserves the right, at ISSP's sole discretion, to waive one or more eligibility requirements if an applicant is deemed by the ISSP to have sufficient strengths in other areas.

² In some cases, where the Education Partner is a program of a larger organization and it is not possible to get an institutional declaration of support, ISSP may allow personal declarations of support from the program head, instructors and curriculum developers to be substituted.

- Appropriate infrastructure to identify and resolve student concerns and issues including drop/add and course content / instructor concerns.

Only accredited³ organizations will be eligible for the *initial pilot* of this program, so the additional requirements for unaccredited organizations are not addressed in detail in this version of the program description.⁴

Qualifications of Personnel, Courses and Programs⁵

Program, Course and Curriculum Developer Qualifications

For courses that are intended to prepare students for ISSP certification exam (exam-prep courses), ISSP certified sustainability professionals must have been involved in the curriculum and content development.

For courses and programs that are intended to prepare students more generally to be sustainability professionals and for courses and programs that are intended for continuing education credit toward re-certification, ISSP certified sustainability professionals must have been involved in the program, curriculum and content development.

An Education Partner must demonstrate a track record of successfully delivering content in the modality (face-to-face, distance learning) in which their courses are described in the application, including having student satisfaction scores for instructors participating in the ISSP certification program.

Instructor Qualifications

For any courses specifically aimed at exam preparation, course instructors must be certified to the level of ISSP certification for which the exam is preparing the students.

ISSP Certification is not required for instructors teaching courses intended for general career preparation for new sustainability professionals or for instructors of courses for continuing education credits towards re-certification as these courses may be in a

³ Institutions of higher education must be accredited by the appropriate accrediting body in their country. Other organizations must have an accreditation from an accrediting body whose standards meet the intent of this section. ISSP reserves the right to determine whether a particular accrediting body is acceptable.

⁴ For information on accreditation and accrediting bodies, see [Appendix A](#). After the pilot period of the Education Partner Program, [Appendix B](#) will include information on the additional material required of organizations that are not accredited.

⁵ Within the first two years following the announcement of the first cohort of ISSP-CSP's (2/8/2016), the requirement for ISSP certification may be waived, at ISSP's sole discretion, if the individuals are in the process of obtaining ISSP certification or have 5 plus years of experience in teaching sustainability in accredited programs.

specialty area for which ISSP certification isn't a common criteria of expertise. However, if the instructor is not ISSP certified, an ISSP certified sustainability professional must be involved in the course content and curriculum development to identify which knowledge, skills and abilities in the ISSP Sustainability Professional Job Task Analysis the course addresses.

Responsibilities of ISSP Education Partners

Description of educational offerings

Under no circumstances will an Education Partner use language in their promotional or exam preparation materials, including any certificate of course completion, that refer to completion of their educational program and/or courses as "certification".

Compliance with education provider standards

The Education Partner must comply with the following standards:

1. Student record confidentiality: Student records must be kept confidential to the standard described by the US Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or a similar standard based on the Education Partner's country of operation. Policy must include restrictions on use of the student information for marketing purposes outlined in the US [Federal CAN SPAM Act](#) (or similar standard based on country of operation)
2. Quality assurance: The Education Partner must have documented quality assurance processes of the organizations exam preparation offerings including:
 - a. Curriculum development and review process, including schedule and frequency of review and criteria for quality improvements and updates.
 - b. Evaluation mechanism for products and services - surveys, focus groups, testimonials - and a process for responding to the evaluation results.
 - c. Customer service and student satisfaction policy. Policies regarding responding to student inquiries, complaint policy and resolution process, drop and refund policies and any associated fees.

Commitment to ISSP Code of Ethics and Education Partner Policy

The Education Partner and any personnel involved in developing or teaching courses covered under the ISSP Education Partner Program must agree to abide by the [ISSP Code of Ethical Practice and Values](#).

The Education Partner must agree to follow this ISSP Education Partner Policy.

ISSP Education Partners Program



Payment of Education Partner Fees

The Education Partner must submit a completed application along with all supporting documentation and payment of the current Education Partner application and yearly membership fees.

Participation in ISSP Education Partner Meetings

The Education Partner must have a representative attend quarterly Education Partner meetings and Annual Education Partner Round Table meetings via webinar if held virtually or in person if meetings are held at the ISSP annual conference.

Program Benefits

Program Fee: \$750/\$550 (for-profit/nonprofit) annual fee, plus a one-time nonrefundable \$250 application fee

Benefits

- Designation as an ISSP Education Partner, which includes permission to display “ISSP Education Partner” logo on organization’s website
- Individual membership and corresponding benefits for up to 2 staff members and a discount on membership for additional individuals (\$100 each)
- Discounted student memberships (\$50) for full-time students and discounted regular membership (\$100) for non-full-time students of Education Partner.
- Promotional./Marketing benefits
 - Listing on ISSP website on the Education Partner page - listing includes organization name, brief description (250 words), logo, and hyperlink to organization’s website
 - Listing of 1 event per month in the ISSP Education and Events (E&E) mailing
 - Organization’s events can be listed on ISSP’s Other Events page (no more than 2 events concurrently)
 - Discounted advertising (\$250/month - a 50% discount) in
 - ISSP’s monthly e-Newsletter
 - Education & Events mailing (2 x per month)
 - Preferred treatment of at least 3 education-related posts/year from organization in the ISSP LinkedIn group.
 - ISSP retweets organization’s education-related tweets as requested, maximum 1/month.
 - Access to ISSP Education Partner Program advertising and promotional materials to attract candidates
- Regular updates on certification related activities and materials including standards, job task analyses, testable knowledge lists, certification requirements, etc.
- One free copy of certification-related publications, such as the ISSP Study Guide as they become available.
- Participation in Quarterly and Annual Education Partners Meeting (via webinar or in conjunction with ISSP conferences. Quarterly survey followed by a quarterly meeting for all Education Partners

Application Process

There are two pathways to becoming an ISSP Education Partner depending on whether or not an organization is accredited by a recognized accrediting body. For the initial pilot, only organizations that are accredited will be eligible to apply.

Application Process for Accredited Education Providers

1. Provide Organizational Information and Contact information, along with application payment
2. Once the above has been reviewed and approved, provide information on:
 - a. Organization's history of sustainability training with documentation including: duration, course titles, description of trainings.
 - b. Organization's accreditation and compliance with educational standards and the ISSP Education Partners Policy, including:
 - i. type of accreditation, the accrediting body, date of accreditation
 - ii. Sign the ISSP Ethical Code of Values and Conduct certifying that the EP and its personnel abide by the ISSP Ethical Code of Values and Conduct. By signing the application, the applicant attests that the EP requires all instructors to sign the ISSP Ethical Code of Values and Conduct and keeps a record that the instructors have signed.
 - iii. Documentation of compliance with educational standards including:
 1. Student record confidentiality and use in compliance with US FERPA and US [Federal CAN SPAM Act](#) or similar rules based on educational providers country of operation on maintenance of the confidentiality of student records policy.
 - iv. Documented quality assurance processes of the organization's exam preparation offerings including:
 1. Curriculum development and review process, including schedule and frequency of review and criteria for quality improvements and updates
 2. Evaluation mechanism for products and services - surveys, focus groups, testimonials.
 3. Customer service and student satisfaction policy. Policies regarding responding to student inquiries, complaint policy and resolution process, drop and refund policies and any associated fees.
 - c. Certification of applicable personnel
 - i. Resumes or CV's of curriculum developers and instructors outlining subject matter expertise and training in best practices for post-secondary and/or adult learners.

- ii. Copies of ISSP certification (SA or CSP) for instructors and curriculum developers.
- d. Curriculum and Course offerings
 - i. Detailed course information including syllabus, summaries of required texts and readings, other activities and other supporting documents that includes the following:
 - 1. name of course
 - 2. type of course - online, classroom based, hybrid.
 - 3. contact and/or credit hours
 - 4. methods of assessment and criteria/standard for successful course completion.
 - 5. documentation of post-course surveys
 - 6. ISSP exam level desired, including clear map of alignment between published ISSP certification exam (ISSP-SA or ISSP-CSP) criteria and course content. Clear map of course content and course assessments. Applying organization must show clearly how the content and evaluations meet or align with ISSP exam certification standards (ISSP-SA or ISSP-CSP). **(Please note that all submitted curricula, training materials, examination materials and other supporting documents will be held in strict confidence, as any proprietary materials. However, these materials cannot be returned to the applicant.)**
- 3. Upon acceptance, applicants will be charged their first annual fee to become part of the Education Partners program

Appendices

Appendix A - Accreditation and Recognized Accrediting Bodies

Institutions of higher education are generally accredited by organizations with an official standing in the country where the educational institution is located. For example, in the US, the US Department of Education, a US federal agency, publishes a list nationally [recognized accrediting agencies](#) that the US Secretary of Education determines to be reliable authorities as to the quality of education or training provided by the institutions of higher education and the higher education programs they accredit. Other countries have similar processes.

For educational providers that are not higher education institutions, there are other bodies that provide accreditation services. For example, in the US, the [Interstate Renewable Energy Council \(IREC\)](#) provides accreditation for training providers of clean energy educational programs.

Although accreditation is not required to be an ISSP Education Partner, organizations that can show they have an accreditation from a recognized accrediting body will not have to provide detailed documentation for the areas that accreditation also covers including:

- Standards for faculty qualifications and evaluation.
- Reporting on student learning, outcomes and assessment.
- Reporting on student and graduate satisfaction.
- Reporting on placement, retention and graduation rates.
- Standards for programmatic length and award of credit.

Appendix B - Additional Requirements for Non-Accredited Organization

The information below is a first draft of requirements for non-accredited organizations. Non-accredited organizations are not eligible for the initial pilot of the ISSP Education Partner program. When the program is officially launched, the information will be revised and updated based on the pilot results.

Application Process for Unaccredited Education Providers

1. Provide Organizational Information and Contact information
2. Accreditation Standards Related Information
 - a. The mission of your organization.
 - b. Governance structure of your organization including roles, terms and brief outline of accountability and decision making structure.
 - c. Copies of policies related to Student record confidentiality (must meet or exceed those outlined in the [US FERPA requirements](#) and the US [Federal CAN SPAM Act](#) (using and selling the student's information for bulk mail/email or other marketing purposes). Includes no reselling of student information and only using information internally if students have opted in, otherwise can't send non-course related email (ie marketing) to any student that hasn't opted in for that kind of marketing.)
 - d. Brief outline of methods your organization uses for evaluation and continuous improvement of your organization and its educational offerings, including how often these activities take place.
 - e. Standards your organization uses to assess quality of educational offerings and trainers, teachers, instructors or faculty.
 - f. Qualifications of trainers - degrees, certifications, credentials
3. Certification of applicable personnel
4. Curriculum and course offerings