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# 2024 Annual Report

The Asia-Pacific Quality Network  
(APQN)

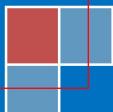
PRESIDENT MESSAGE: Welcome to 2024 APQN Annual Report! In 2024,

APQN with 196 members from 45 countries/territories, has celebrated its 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary, showing its vibrant, vigorous tendency of sustainable development. With the great contribution and support of all APQN members, APQN has made obvious achievements. One of the most important things is that 2024 AAC and AGM were held in Bangladesh. Over 200 participants from the whole globe attended AAC to discuss the theme of “Quality Assurance and Global Tertiary Education: Navigating Challenges and Embracing Innovation”.



APQN Seventh Board

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# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

**Asia-Pacific Quality Network**

**Trading as APQN**

**Dissolving Boundaries for a Quality Region**

**January 5, 2024**

**APQN Annual Report 2024**

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# THE NETWORK

## Definition of APQN

### Our Goal

To dissolve boundaries for a Quality Region.

### Our Vision

To promote quality culture and develop self-sustaining organizations, being the first point of reference, advise and support, enhance interaction and share information among member organizations.

### Our Value

To be committed to the quality of higher education and be supportive of both internal and external quality assurance in the Asia-Pacific Region.

### Our Mission

To enhance the quality of higher education in the Asia-Pacific Region through strengthening internal and external quality assurance in all kinds of organizations and extending the cooperation among them.

### Our Purpose

1. to promote good practices in developing an effective and comprehensive quality culture of higher education in the Asia-Pacific Region;
2. to foster research activities in quality assurance practices for rebuilding the employ ability oriented higher education in Asia Pacific Region;
3. to provide advice and expertise in order to assist in the development of new quality assurance organizations in the region;
4. to facilitate cooperation among Quality Assurance Agencies (QAAs) and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), and recognize each others decisions and judgment;
5. to assist APQN members in determining the quality standards operating across national borders;
6. to ensure better-informed international recognition of qualifications throughout the region;
7. to assist in the development and application of credit transfer systems;
8. to enhance the mobility of students between institutions both within and across national borders;
9. to make the APQN members aware of and alert against the dubious accrediting practices and organizations;
10. to promote the interest of the Asia-Pacific Region by effective representation vis-à-vis interacting with other networks and international organizations.

## Our Method

1. Dissemination of information through APQNews, documents, journals, anthologies and books, whether in paper-based or electronic form;
2. Training and development through seminars, workshops, conferences and staff capacity building;
3. Developing and using databases of experts and good practices both in EQEA and international networks such as INQAAHE, CHEA/CIQG and other appropriate organizations working on accreditation and quality assurance in education;
4. Recognition and dissemination of good practices through Asia-Pacific Quality Register (APQR), Asia-Pacific Quality Label (APQL) and APQN Quality Awards (AQA) and so on;
5. Other appropriate means as determined by the General Council or the Board.

## Our Principle

1. Procedure-based
2. Capacity building
3. Self-reliance and information-sharing
4. Sustainable development for final goal

## APQN

APQN is a non-profit, non-government organization. APQN is an organization established under the name of the Asia-Pacific Quality Network Inc. (APQN).

APQN intends to operate as a regional network in association with the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education Incorporated (INQAAHE).

## The Board

### **Dr.Taohong Chen Takes Over as APQN Secretary/Treasurer**

APQN Board is pleased to announce that Dr. Taohong Chen has taken over as the Secretary/Treasurer of APQN, succeeding Ms. Pingping Liu, who has stepped down from the position due to personal work commitments.

Ms. Liu has served with great dedication and professionalism, contributing significantly to the Secretariat's efficient functioning and APQN's overall development. Her leadership, commitment, and meticulous coordination have played an important role in strengthening APQN's activities and international collaboration. The Board expresses its sincere appreciation to Dr Liu for her outstanding service and continued support to APQN.

In view of this transition, and in accordance with APQN's operational arrangements, Dr. Chen has been appointed as the new Secretary/Treasurer. Dr. Chen has been an active member of the Secretariat team and has extensive experience in quality assurance and higher education evaluation. The Board is confident that under his capable leadership, the Secretariat will continue to function smoothly and further advance APQN's mission of enhancing the quality of higher education in the Asia-Pacific region.

APQN warmly congratulates Dr. Chen on his new role and looks forward to her continued contributions to the growth and success of the Network.

**APQN President**  
Prof. Dr. Galina Motova  
(Elected)



RUSSIA

**APQN Secretary/Treasurer**  
Dr. Taohong Chen  
(Ex-Officio)



CHINA

**APQN Past President**  
Prof. Dr. Jianxin Zhang  
(Ex-Officio)



CHINA

**APQN Board Director**  
Dr. Jagannath Patil  
(Co-opted as APQR Chairperson)



INDIA

**APQN Board Director**  
Mr. Nar Bahadur Raika  
(Elected)



BHUTAN

**APQN Board Director**  
Ms. Umankulova Onolkan  
(Elected)



KYRGYZSTAN

**APQN Board Director**  
Dr. Timur Kanapyanov  
(Elected)

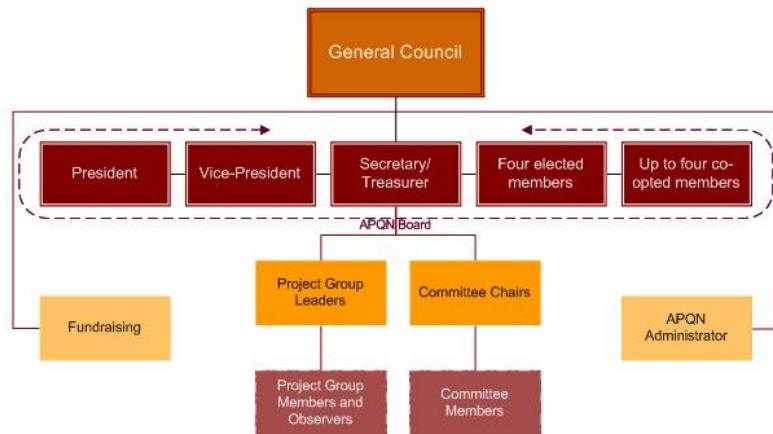


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## Organizational Structure

The governing bodies and authorities of APQN are the General Council and the Board.

The General Council is comprised of Full Members, Intermediate Members, Associate Members, Institutional Members and Individual Members of APQN, each represented by one nominated person.

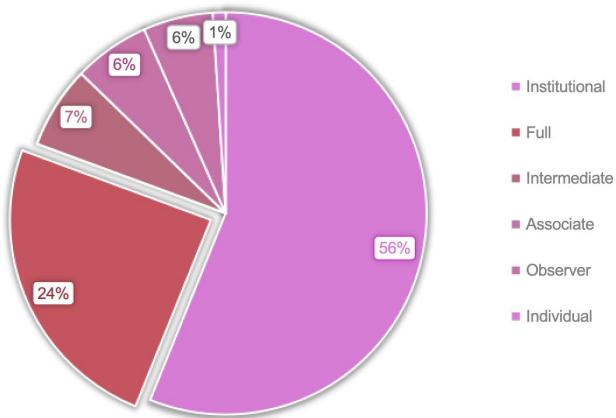


## The General Council: 196 Members

Currently, the number of APQN members of all types has reached 196 from 44 countries and regions (Figure 1).

Figure.1 Category of APQN members

### APQN Members



Among them, there are six categories: Full members, Intermediate members, Associate members, Institutional members, Observer and Individual Members. Institutional members cover 56% of the total number, which means that internal quality assurance is getting more and more important in the Asia-Pacific Region.

As it is shown in Table 1, APQN welcomed 6 new members in 2024.

Table.1 New Members in 2024

| No | New Agency                                 | Country/Territory | Membership    |
|----|--|-------------------|---------------|
| 1  | ESOFT Metro Campus                         | Sri Lanka         | Institutional |
| 2  | Namal University Mianwali                  | Pakistan          | Institutional |
| 3  | The University of Modern Sciences          | Pakistan          | Institutional |
| 4  | University of Okara                        | Pakistan          | Institutional |
| 5  | International Islamic University Islamabad | Pakistan          | Institutional |
| 6  | Pangasinan State University                | Philippines       | Institutional |

## Welcome to Join APQN

**We warmly welcome all QAs, HEIs and those who have interest in QA to join APQN!**



Membership of APQN is valuable for quality managers/officers, who would join a community of colleagues working with quality assurance of higher education.

As an APQN member you can embrace what is being offered in the region, and share in the delights of learning and expanding your own knowledge base. Specifically, full members (there might be some differences with other 4 categories) will be able to:

- Participate in APQN Academic Conference (AAC) and AGM as well as APQN online forum;
- Gain your branding through using APQN logo on your website or relative documents;
- Develop different kinds of collaborations across the distinguished network of QAs and HEIs through AACs;
- Co-organize international seminars, workshops or forums together with APQN in your local context;
- Have the right to apply for APQN Award which occurs once every year;
- Have access to over 180 consultants in Consultant Data Base and get advice on different and specific QA matters;
- Receive the electronic APQNews twice every year and Annual Report;
- Publish your qualified research paper on APQN Conference Anthology during AAC every year;
- Have the right to apply for Asia-Pacific Quality Register (APQR) for QAs;
- Have the right to apply for the accreditation of APQN Quality Label for HEIs.

The following steps for you to join APQN big family

1) Application Process for APQN Members

<http://www.apqn.org/members/application-process-for-members>

2) Choose the right membership category for your agency

<http://www.apqn.org/members/membership-criteria> (for universities, it is "institutional member".)

3) Fill in application forms with all the required information

<http://www.apqn.org/members/directory/entry/add>

4) Inquiring. If there is no feedback from APQN Secretariat after you submit your application for one month, please contact Administrator at APQN Secretariat (apqnsecretariat@163.com) for questions.

**The 1<sup>st</sup> APQN Board Meeting was held in St. Petersburg,  
Russia on Sept. 26, 2024**

The first APQN Board Meeting of 2024 was convened in St. Petersburg, Russia, chaired by Dr. Timur Kanapyanov, APQN Board Director. The meeting brought together both offline and online participants, with representatives from APQN Board, APQN Secretariat and the local host, Russian Register. Offline attendees included Dr. Galina Motova, APQN President, APQN Board Directors Prof./Dr. Jianxin Zhang, Ms. Umankulova Onolkan, Chen Taohong from Shanghai Educational Evaluation Institute (SEEI), Shi Weimin, APQN Administrator, and local host representatives from Russian Register, Aleksandra Zvezdova and Olga Safonkina. Online participation included Dr. Jagannath Patil and Mr. Nar Bahadur Raika. The meeting also featured special guest Christina Ng, Senior Registrar of the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ), who will host the 2025 APQN Annual Academic Conference (AAC) and Annual General Meeting (AGM).



Dr. Kanapyanov opened the meeting by extending his gratitude to the local hosts, Russian Register, for their hard work and dedication in organizing the 2024 AAC and AGM. He emphasized the significance of APQN's role in strengthening quality assurance across the Asia-Pacific region, highlighting the importance of collaboration and engagement in the upcoming conference. The local organizers, represented by Aleksandra Zvezdova and Olga Safonkina, provided an update on the progress of the conference preparations, confirming that all logistical arrangements were in place, and demonstrated the materials, including conference booklets, gifts, and notebooks for participants. The Board expressed their appreciation for the meticulous efforts of the local team in ensuring a smooth and successful event.

The Board then discussed the keynote presentation by Prof. Nadia Badrawi, President of ANQAHE, who, due to last-minute visa issues, was unable to attend the conference in person. It was agreed that she would deliver her address via a pre-recorded video presentation, with Dr. Kanapyanov stepping in to moderate the plenary session in her absence. This solution was well-received by the Board, ensuring that despite her unforeseen absence, Prof. Badrawi's valuable insights would still be shared and contribute to the conference's proceedings.

One of the key topics of discussion was the work of the APQN Review Committee on new membership applications. Ms. Umankulova Onolkan proposed the creation of an online system to streamline the voting and discussion process among Review Committee members. This system would allow for better tracking of the applications and reasons for rejection, providing transparency and efficiency. Dr. Kanapyanov further suggested that applicants should be required to submit additional documentation, such as licenses and proof of recognition by local or international quality assurance agencies. The APQN Secretariat, represented by Mr. Chen Taohong and Mr. Shi Weimin, agreed to explore these suggestions and present a solution to the Board in due course. The Board also discussed the

strategy to attract new, trustworthy members from the Asia-Pacific region, emphasizing the need for careful vetting of institutions.

The focus then shifted to preparations for the 2025 APQN AAC and AGM, which will be hosted by HKCAAVQ in Hong Kong. Christina Ng provided an update on the preparations, confirming that the dates would be finalized soon and discussing the need for predefined themes and subthemes for the event. The Board expressed its support for the proposed plans, and it was agreed that the formal agreement between APQN and HKCAAVQ would be signed during the 2024 AAC. This agreement will ensure that the 2025 AAC aligns with APQN's mission and continues the tradition of fostering collaboration and innovation in the field of higher education quality assurance.

The meeting concluded with a discussion on the APQN-HKCAAVQ Agreement, which outlines the responsibilities and expectations for hosting the 2025 AAC and AGM. The Board was keen to ensure that the themes and subthemes of the 2025 event reflect APQN's strategic priorities and the evolving challenges in global higher education. The finalized agreement will be signed at the closing session of the 2024 AAC, marking another milestone in APQN's ongoing efforts to strengthen regional collaboration and quality assurance practices.

Dr. Timur Kanapyanov closed the meeting by thanking all participants for their contributions and reaffirming APQN's commitment to advancing quality assurance across the Asia-Pacific region. He expressed optimism about the success of the 2024 conference and the continued efforts to enhance APQN's role as a leading platform for collaboration and innovation in higher education.

*(Written by Timur Kanapyanov from APQN Board)*

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> APQN Board Meeting was held in St. Petersburg,  
Russia on Sept. 28, 2024**

APQN second Board Meeting was held at St. Petersburg, Russia on 28th September, 2024. The theme of this meeting was “The Sustainable Development of APQN”.

Attendees included Prof./Dr. Galina Motova (APQN President), Prof./Dr. Jianxin Zhang (APQN Immediate Past President), Dr. Taohong Chen, Ms. Umankulova Onolkan(APQN Board Director), Dr. Timur Kanapyanov (APQN Board Director). Mr. Shi Weimin (APQN Administrator). Representatives from the host of 2024 AAC & AGM, Aleksandra Zvezdova (Head of the Department for Quality Assessment of Education of the Certification Association “Russian Register”), special guest from 2025 AAC & AGM, Christina NG (Senior Registrar of HKCAAVQ) also participated in the meeting.



At the opening of the meeting, Christina provided an update on the preparations for 2025 AAC and AGM. This update covered various aspects,

including keynotes, the time schedule, organization and publicity for the event. The 2025 AAC and AGM will invite three keynote speakers: one from a prominent university experienced in industry collaboration, one from a QAA or network and one from a Hong Kong university.

The proposed timeline for the next year is as follows:

- **Before June:** HKCAAC will produce a designated website for the conference.
- **Upon website completion:** A call for paper will be initiated, anticipated to begin in **May** and last for **three months**. Paper submissions should be include as an abstract.
- **August:** APQN Review Committee will start reviewing submissions with the assistance of senior staff appointed by HKCAAC. This process is expected to conclude within 30 days. During this period, online registration for the conference will commence in mid-August.
- **Mid-September:** Applicants will be notified of their paper acceptance status.

Regarding the organization of the conference, Christina suggested hiring an agency to ensure high efficiency. Once the sessions are confirmed, it will be necessary to book the venue in advance to manage costs effectively. To facilitate participants, HKCAAC will provide various hotel options, with information posted on the website. Additionally, the Board has the authority to nominate 20 places for free registration.

The second part of the meeting focused on the bank transfer issues between APQN and Russian organizations and experts. Due to restrictions on transfers, APQN cannot directly pay to some organizations and individuals. Therefore, Russian Register will determine the precise payment amounts and propose several feasible solutions via email to the APQN Secretariat, which will test these options sequentially.

Following this, APQN Board directors discussed transparency and accountability within the organization. Several areas for improvement regarding new membership applications were identified:

- 1) The review process for new entries is overly complicated. A shared document or cloud-based system should be established for Board members to streamline the process and reduce repetitive work.
- 2) The reasons for application denials are not publicly disclosed, which could be communicated to all Board Directors. Displaying denial reasons in the shared document would enhance transparency.
- 3) Applicants should provide information regarding their country of recognition and relevant licenses for review.
- 4) Applications should not be outright denied; instead, if an applicant is deemed unqualified or overqualified, the Committee should have the authority to adjust their membership category accordingly.

The responsibilities of Board directors need to be clarified and adhered to:

- 1) With the current vacancy of the vice president, it is essential to add more directors.
- 2) The current seventh Board is scheduled for 2025, and the new eighth Board should be elected before the 2025 AAC & AGM to ensure a smooth transition on the site of 2025 AAC& AGM next year.
- 3) It is recommended that the term of the Board be extended to five years, which first need the revision of the APQN Constitution. This revision should involve a vote by APQN members via the website.
- 4) All Board directors must fulfill their responsibilities, with quarterly or biannual Zoom meetings proposed to discuss contributions and progress. Each director should submit short reports before the AAC & AGM and an annual report to be published in APQNews.

- 5) Papers submitted to the Review Committee should be assigned to specific Committee members for review.
- 6) The current Board directors could potentially merge into the APQL Council; however, this proposal requires further discussion due to concerns about transparency.

Additionally, the revival of the Global Summit, which has been on hold for several years due to the pandemic, was discussed. The maintenance of the APQN website also attracted significant attention from Board directors. There is a consensus on the need to improve the layout and functionality of the current website. Important features, such as a voting system and shared documents for Board members, should be incorporated. It is crucial to designate responsibility for website management. While the idea of adding a new position within the APQN Secretariat for website updates remains contentious, there is agreement that hiring an IT company based in Shanghai to oversee the website is preferable, and the associated budget needs to be clarified.

The second Board Meeting was a constructive step towards enhancing the operational efficiency and transparency of APQN.

*(Written by Weimin Shi from APQN Secretariat)*

## ACTIVITIES & PROJECTS

### 2025 APQN New Year Greeting

**Dear APQN members, colleagues, and friends!**

Happy New Year to you all!

As the New Year draws near, we find ourselves filled with enthusiasm, working diligently to complete our current projects and planning for the upcoming 2025.

Let us look back and remember all the positive moments that we lived through. The past year was productive, impactful, and dynamic for the APQN. This year will be remembered for its dedication and significant advancements, reinforcing our optimism for what lies ahead.

In the past year, six new institutional members from Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and the Philippines joined our APQN family. By now, we have 196 members from 45 countries and territories. Two quality assurance agencies have undergone external review with the Asia-Pacific Quality Register and have reconfirmed their status as compliant with the standards and criteria for recognition and Chiba Principles for the upcoming five-year term. The Database of External Quality Assurance Results in the Asia-Pacific Region (DAQAR) now includes 5,167 programs, making them more accessible to all users, irrespective of their location or background.

APQN's Annual Academic Conference, entitled "Quality Assurance and Global Tertiary Education: Navigating Challenges and Embracing Innovation," took place in Saint Petersburg. It gathered more than 60 representatives from quality assurance agencies and higher education institutions across various countries in the Region, serving as a platform for engaging discussions, extensive experience sharing, and the exchange of best practices among APQN members.

Numerous publications that documented the APQN's activities, in-person meetings and webinars, email discussions, and responding to countless enquiries clearly showcase the efforts of the Network. Without the team of enthusiasts, loyal stakeholders, and committed members, none of this would be possible.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Secretariat and the Board of Directors, as well as to each APQN member for



your efforts and dedication, for doing the very best to make it happen, to meet deadlines, and to deliver the quality work! Behind the name of APQN are the people with the right capacity to prevail over all difficulties and challenges.

In the new year to follow, we will continue to adhere to our mission statement to “enhance the quality of higher education in Asia and the Pacific region through strengthening the work of quality assurance organisations and extending cooperation between them”. We will explore innovative technologies and facilitate innovation in teaching and learning. We will continue to foster trust in quality assurance procedures and accreditors. We will serve as a reference point for higher education institutions. We will explore a range of methods to identify those that respect the autonomy and diversity of our higher education institutions. We will continue to conduct research and engage in international projects that will benefit both APQN and its members. We will keep fostering cooperation and collaboration among our members and continue cooperative efforts across the globe.

Our goal for the new year is both inspiring and simple. We will bring together QAAs and HEIs, promote and support our members, share and disseminate best practices to enhance higher education in the region.

In the upcoming year of 2025, I wish robust development and stability for APQN. We will put in every effort to make its most ambitious projects come true. I extend my warmest wishes for a happy new year to every member of the Asia-Pacific Quality Network. I hope that 2025 will be a wonderful year for us all. I encourage everyone to believe in yourself no matter the odds and love what you do!

May the New Year bring you happiness, peace, and prosperity to your homes!

I am extending heartfelt wishes for a joyous 2025 to you and APQN!

**APQN President:** Galina Motova

**APQN Board Directors:** Jianxin Zhang, Jagannath Patil, Taohong Chen, Nar Bahadur Raika, Umankulova Onolkan, and Timur Kanapyanov



## **APQN 2024 AAC and AGM was held in St. Petersburg, Russia**

**on Sept. 26-29, 2024**

2024 APQN Academic Conference (AAC) and Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held from September 26th to September 29th in the picturesque city of St. Petersburg, Russia. This year's theme, "*Quality Assurance and Global Tertiary Education: Navigating Challenges and Embracing Innovation*," resonated strongly with the current trends and challenges in higher education, drawing a diverse and engaged audience from various regions. This report chronicles the proceedings of the conference, highlighting key discussions, speakers, and networking opportunities that emerged over the course of the event.



### **Day 1: Pre-Conference Preparations**

The conference kicked off with a series of pre-conference events on September 26, setting the stage for an engaging series of discussions. Registration for attendees began promptly at 1:00 PM in the Conference Hall Turgenev, managed by the local organizer, the Russian Register Certification Association. Attendees were greeted warmly, receiving their conference materials and schedules, which laid the groundwork for what would be the enlightening three days.

As the afternoon progressed, key committees gathered for important meetings. The Finance Committee convened from 4:00 PM to 4:30 PM to review the 2024 Finance Report and engage in budget planning for 2025. Under the chairmanship of Prof./Dr. Galina Motova, Chair of the Finance

Committee, members discussed financial strategies essential for sustaining APQN's activities and growth.



fostered critical discussions among the Board Directors of the 7th Board, alongside local organizers and special guests.

Following these discussions, the APQR Council convened to address the APQR Report for 2024 and formulate plans for 2025. Dr. Jagannath Patil, APQR Chairperson, led this council meeting, fostering a collaborative atmosphere. The APQL Council met subsequently, chaired by Prof./Dr. Jianxin Zhang, to deliberate on upcoming initiatives and opportunities for collaboration.

The day's events finished in a sense of anticipation and solidarity, as participants looked forward to the formal opening of the conference.

## Day 2: Opening Ceremony and Keynote Addresses

### 1. Open Session

September 27 marked the official start of the APQN 2024 Conference. The day began with a busy registration period for attendees, followed by the much-anticipated opening ceremony in the grand Conference Hall "Tolstoy." At 9:00 AM, a vibrant atmosphere enveloped the hall as participants gathered to hear the opening remarks.

The ceremony began with a welcome address by Prof./Dr. Galina Motova, the President of APQN. In her address, she emphasized the significance of quality assurance in higher education and the vital role of international collaboration in overcoming challenges. She welcomed participants to embrace the theme of the conference and actively engage in the discussions.

Arkady Vladimirtsev, General Director of the Certification Association "Russian Register," followed with a warm welcome, outlining the importance



of the event for fostering relationships and sharing knowledge among quality assurance professionals. In his opening remarks, Arkady Vladimirtsev expressed his pride in hosting the APQN Annual Academic Conference (AAC) and Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2024 in Saint Petersburg, Russia. He emphasized the conference theme, *"Quality Assurance and Global Tertiary Education: Navigating Challenges and Embracing Innovation,"* as a reflection of the collective commitment to addressing the complex challenges in higher education today. Highlighting key areas such as quality assurance in cross-border education, digitalization in quality processes, and improving teaching and learning in higher education institutions, he stressed the value of collaboration and knowledge exchange. He encouraged participants to engage in discussions, challenge ideas, and work together to shape the future of quality assurance in higher education, ensuring the event's success through their active participation.



This was complemented by a recorded welcome speech from Dr. Genady Voronin, President of the All-Russian Quality Organization, who shared valuable insights on the evolving landscape of quality assurance in education. He emphasized the crucial role of quality in driving national development, citing the Russian philosopher Ivan Ilyin,

who believed that Russia's salvation lies in its commitment to quality. He underscored that quality assurance is not just essential in education but in all areas of national life, including the defense industry, and is critical in addressing crises.



Dr. Ludmila Skakovskaya, a representative of the Russian Federal Government Bodies, spoke about the government's commitment to enhancing educational standards and quality. On behalf of the Federation Council Committee on Science, Education and Culture, she emphasized the importance of developing modern technologies for

independent quality assurance, designing educational programs, and utilizing accreditation monitoring results for effective education management. She

highlighted the Asia-Pacific Region's diversity in cultures, traditions, and languages, as well as its significant role as a hub of global economic growth, particularly after the unprecedented boom in East Asia during the latter half of the 20th century. Wishing APQN continued success, she expressed her hopes that it would maintain its status as the largest and most influential organization promoting quality assurance in higher education.

## 2. Releasing of 2023 Anthology

The opening ceremony concluded with the release of the Anthology of 2023 AAC Selected Papers by AIUB and APQN Board members, showcasing the collective efforts and research contributions of participants.

Dr. Timur Kanapyanov (APQN Board Director, Chair of the Conference Organizing Committee) chaired the ceremony. Prof./Dr. Jianxin Zhang (APQN Immediate Past President) and Prof./Dr. Mesbahuddin Ahmed (Chair of Bangladesh Accreditation Council) announced the official release.

The published Anthology consists of 32 accepted papers from APQN Academic Conference 2023, held at Dhaka, Bangladesh. The published papers in the Anthology adhered to the sub-themes: (1) Quality of Trans-formative learning (TL) and Informativeness teaching (TT); (2) Blended Education from the perspective of 4th Industrial Revolution and the COVID Pandemic; (3) Digital Quality Assurance and Journey to Quality Enhancement; (4) University-Industry Linkage in the background of internationalization; and (5) The 20th anniversary of APQN.



## 3. Key Note Speeches

The first keynote address, titled "QA for Cross-Border Higher Education: International Standards, Challenges, and Solutions," was delivered by Dr. Wesley Teter, Senior Consultant for the Section for Educational Innovation and Skills Development at UNESCO. His insights on the necessity of international standards in quality assurance sparked an engaging dialogue among participants.



Dr. Aleksei Kurlov, Head of the Educational

Programmes Department at Moscow State University of Geodesy and Cartography, delivered the second keynote address, "Transforming Engineering Education: Modern Strategies for Quality Assurance and Emerging Trends." He highlighted innovative strategies for enhancing quality assurance in engineering education, capturing the interest of many participants.



#### 4. Plenary Sessions

The afternoon session continued with a series of plenary sessions, offering an opportunity to delve deeper into the conference's theme of quality assurance. The first plenary session, held in Conference Hall "Tolstoy," centered on the topic of "QA for Cross-Border Higher Education: International Standards, Challenges, and Solutions." Moderated by Dr. Onolkan Umankulova, President of the Agency for Quality Assurance in the Field of Education "EdNet" from Kyrgyz Republic and an APQN Board Director, the session brought together esteemed speakers who shared their perspectives on navigating the complexities of quality assurance in a globalized educational landscape.



The session opened with Prof./Dr. Jianxin Zhang from Yunnan University, China, who presented the research paper entitled "Striving for Dissolving Boundaries for a Quality Region: Qualitative Research on APQN 20th Anniversary Celebration" Adopting qualitative research method, this paper describes the 20th AC, tries to interpret the value of this celebration, to explore APQN's achievements and contributions in the field of global education quality assurance. It can be said that this celebration is an opportunity "to review the past, to observe the present and to look for the future", which has demonstrated APQN's achievements and spiritual legacies in the past 20 years. At the same time, it also demonstrates the value and significance in building platforms, standard setting and eternal pursuit.

Following this, Dr. Oksana Tanikova from the National Centre for Public Accreditation (NCPA), Russia, explored the concept of joint accreditation as a tool for enhancing quality assurance policies. Dr. Tanikova explained how collaborative accreditation efforts can raise the standards of higher education institutions (HEIs) across borders, thereby contributing to a more harmonized and effective quality assurance framework.





Next, the session highlighted a presentation by Dr. Olga Safonkina from Olgarev Mordovia State University, Russia, who discussed the development of a new APQN Quality Label (APQL). The research, which was a collaborative effort between Aleksandra Zvezdova, Olga Safonkina, Arkady Vladimirtsev, and Evgeniya Korneva from the Certification Association “Russian Register,” explored how innovative activities within higher education institutions (HEIs) serve as the foundation for this new quality label. Dr. Safonkina outlined how the APQL is intended to raise educational standards and ensure a higher level of excellence across the APQN region.

Finally, Dr. Anatoly Safonov, Director of the ROQ Center for Expert Programs and Chief Manager of the Excellence Model Department at the All-Russian Quality Organization (ROQ), presented the “*Lens Approaches Based on the Model EFQM 2020 to Assess QA*”. His talk emphasized how this model can be applied to assess and improve quality assurance systems in higher education, offering a structured approach to excellence.



Plenary Session 2 of the conference, titled “*QA in Higher Education Institutions: Fostering Excellence in Teaching and Learning in All Stages of Life*,” chaired by Dr. Timur Kanapyanov, IAAR Deputy General Director, Kazakhstan. Dr. Ruchi from NAAC, India, discussed the “*Promotion of Quality in Teaching and Learning*” using case studies of accredited colleges. A team of Indonesian academics from ACE presented on “*Effects of Input, Management, and Process on Student Outcomes*” highlighting accreditation in Indonesia. And “*Online Courses Quality Assurance Based on International Standards: SPbSEU Experience*” by Dr. Yulia Kiseleva, Prof. Veronika Shubayeva, Daniil Antoshechkin from St. Petersburg State University of Economics, Russia.





The session wrapped up with a brief Q&A segment, where participants engaged with the speakers to further explore the challenges and solutions in cross-border quality assurance. This plenary session provided valuable insights into how international standards can be adapted and applied to ensure the quality of education across different regions, contributing to the overall theme of the conference.

## 5. APQN Award Ceremony

The APQN Quality Award Ceremony was a central event of the conference, honoring remarkable contributions to quality assurance in higher education. The ceremony celebrated individuals and institutions that had set exemplary standards in advancing educational quality throughout the APQN region.



The event was hosted by Dr. Olga Safonkina and Prof./Dr. Galina Motova. As masters of ceremony, they led the audience through the evening with insightful commentary, emphasizing the significance of commitment to quality in education. They highlighted how the continuous pursuit of excellence is crucial for institutional success and global recognition, underscoring the importance of innovation and collaboration across borders.

During the APQN Quality Award Ceremony, several prestigious awards were presented, recognizing the outstanding contributions of individuals and institutions in the field of quality assurance in higher education.

**1. APQN Quality Champions Award:** This accolade was awarded to **Arkady Vladimirtsev**, the General Director of the Certification Association "Russian Register," for his exemplary leadership and dedication to promoting quality standards in education.



**2. APQN's Best/Model Internal QA Award:** The award was presented to **American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB)**, with **Professor Dr. Mesbahuddin Ahmed** accepting the award on behalf of the university. This recognition highlights AIUB's commitment to implementing effective internal quality assurance processes.

3. **APQN's Best/Model Internal QA Award: Macao Polytechnic University** was also honored with this award, which was accepted by **Christina Ng**, Senior Registrar of the Development of the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ). This accolade acknowledges the university's exemplary practices in internal quality assurance.
4. **Honorary Life Fellow of APQN: Prof./Dr. Jianxin Zhang** was recognized as an Honorary Life Fellow. His contributions as an ex-officio Board Director and Immediate Past President of APQN, as well as his advisory role with CHEA/CIQG and his position as Secretary General of the Yunnan Association of Higher Education, exemplify his dedication to quality in higher education.
5. **Honorary Life Fellow of APQN: Dr. Jagannath Patil** was also honored with the title of Honorary Life Fellow. The award was accepted on his behalf by **Dr. Vishnu Mahesh** from the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), reflecting Dr. Patil's significant contributions to the field.
6. **Honorary Board Director of APQN: Liu Pingping** was appointed as an Honorary Board Director, with the award received on his behalf by **Chen Taohong**, Vice President of the Shanghai Education Evaluation Institute, highlighting the collaborative efforts in advancing quality assurance.
7. **APQN's Successful Host: Arkady Vladimirtsev** was acknowledged once again, this time for his role as a successful host of the event, further solidifying his commitment to enhancing quality in education.

These awards not only celebrate the accomplishments of the recipients but also inspire continued dedication to quality assurance in higher education institutions across the Asia-Pacific region.

The first day concluded with an extended networking period, where participants engaged in discussions, exchanged ideas, and established connections that would serve them well beyond the conference. The day concluded with a Gala Dinner with APQN Award Ceremony, which not only celebrated the achievements of individuals in the field but also provided an elegant setting for continued networking.

### **Day 3: In-Depth Discussions and Parallel Sessions**

The momentum built on Day 1 carried into Day 3, September 28, as the

conference resumed with parallel sessions dedicated to specific themes. The morning began promptly at 9:00 AM with three simultaneous parallel sessions that allowed participants to choose discussions that aligned with their interests and expertise.

### Parallel Session 1: QA for Cross-Border Higher Education



In the Conference Hall "Chekhov," the first parallel session on Quality Assurance (QA) for Cross-Border Higher Education commenced, under the expert moderation of Dr. Onolkan Umankulova, the APQN Board Director

and President of the Agency for Quality Assurance in the Field of Education "EdNet" from the Kyrgyz Republic. This session gathered distinguished speakers who shared their research and insights, shedding light on the challenges and best practices essential for ensuring quality in international education settings.

The session began with Ms. Anna Ishutkina, representing the National Centre for Public Accreditation (NCPA) from Russia. Her presentation, titled *"How Accreditation Impacts Qualification Recognition,"* emphasized the pivotal role of accreditation in facilitating the recognition of qualifications across borders. Ms. Ishutkina outlined how accreditation frameworks are necessary to enhance the credibility of qualifications and to support educational mobility, ensuring that students and professionals can transition seamlessly between different educational systems.

Following Ms. Ishutkina, Ms. Marina Kurdiumova, also from the NCPA, delved into the theme of academic integrity in her presentation, *"Understanding Academic Integrity: Stakeholders' Perspective."* Ms. Kurdiumova highlighted the various stakeholders involved in education and discussed their perspectives on maintaining ethical standards. She underscored the importance of fostering a culture of integrity in academic settings, positing that such a foundation is critical for upholding the overall quality of cross-border higher education.

Next, Dr. Ilya Rusakov from the Center for Expert Programs of the All-Russian Quality Organization introduced his insights on *"The EFQM Model as a Tool for Innovative Development of MPEI."* He articulated how the EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) model serves as a strategic framework for driving innovation within higher education institutions. Dr. Rusakov's emphasis on innovative practices illuminated pathways for enhancing the quality and effectiveness of educational offerings, thus addressing the needs of students and employers alike.

The session then transitioned to Prof. Dalkhat Ediev of the North-Caucasian State Academy, who explored the intersection of demographic trends and educational quality in his presentation, "*World Population Trends and Quality Higher Education.*" Prof. Ediev discussed the significant implications of global population changes, urging institutions to adapt their strategies to effectively respond to the changing educational landscape. His insights reinforced the need for higher education institutions to remain agile and responsive to demographic shifts to maintain relevance and quality.

Rounding off the session, Dr. Yulia Bogomolova from the Institute of International Economic Relations shared her insights on "*The Role of Information Technology in the Internal Quality Assessment System of Universities.*" She illustrated how the integration of information technology has transformed internal quality assessment processes. Dr. Bogomolova emphasized that leveraging technology not only streamlines evaluations but also improves data-driven decision-making, contributing to improved educational outcomes.

The session provided a platform for exchanging ideas and experiences, fostering a deeper understanding of the evolving landscape of quality assurance in cross-border higher education. The collective wisdom of the speakers illustrated the path forward, underscoring the critical importance of strong QA frameworks to develop educational quality and encourage international collaboration.

### **Parallel Session 2: Embracing Digitalization for Quality Assurance**

Held in the Conference Hall "Dostoevsky," Parallel Session 2 explored the theme of "*Embracing Digitalization for Quality Assurance,*" with a particular focus on internal quality assurance processes of Quality Assurance Agencies (QAs). Moderated by Dr. Oksana Tanikova, the Deputy Head of the Accreditation Department at the National Centre for Public Accreditation (NCPA) in Russia, the session fostered a dialogue on the important role of technology in promoting quality assurance practices.



The session featured a series of thought-provoking presentations from a

diverse group of speakers, each contributing unique insights into the intersection of digitalization and quality assurance. Natalia Ivanova, representing IPR MEDIA Group in Russia, initiated the discussion with her recorded presentation titled "*Digitalization to Improve Quality: Innovations and Prospects.*" She explored various innovative practices that have emerged from the digital transformation of educational institutions, highlighting the promising prospects for improving quality through technological advancements.

Dr. Yudha Nurhantari from Universitas Gadjah Mada in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, presented on "*The Challenges to Improve On-time Graduation as Internal Audit Findings.*" His insights shed light on the obstacles faced in ensuring timely graduation and the critical role of internal audits in identifying areas for improvement.

Next, a collaborative presentation by Dr. Raghu Ram Achar, Dr. Spreeth M, Dr. Prashant M Vishwanath, and Dr. Madhusudhan N Purohit from JSS Academy of Higher Education & Research in India took center stage. Their topic, "*Quality Quest Alongside Data Management in Higher Education Institutes with Digital Frontier,*" emphasized the significance of effective data management in increasing quality assurance in higher education institutions.

Kulebakina Yulia from LETI University in Russia contributed to the session with her presentation on "*The System of Internal Quality Assurance Agency for the Assessment of the Quality of Tertiary and Vocational Education from the Point of View of the Student Community.*" Yulia's insights underscored the importance of student perspectives in evaluating the quality of educational programs.

Dr. Petropavlovskaya Victoria from Tver State Technical University, Russia, followed with her presentation titled "*To the Quality of Education Through the Formation of a Complex System for Evaluating the Activities of the University.*" She articulated the necessity of establishing a comprehensive evaluation system to enhance educational quality.

The session concluded with another insightful presentation Dr. Maria Turovskaya from Russian Register, who addressed the "*Training of Highly Qualified Staff in Quality Management for the Purpose of Digitization.*" Their focus on staff training highlighted the need for skilled professionals to navigate the complexities of quality management in the digital age.

Throughout the session, the participants actively took part in discussions, sharing insights and experiences related to the challenges and opportunities posed by digitalization in quality assurance. The collaborative atmosphere fostered a rich exchange of ideas, emphasizing the collective commitment to developing internal quality assurance processes within educational

institutions.

In summary, Parallel Session 2 served as a vital platform for exploring the dynamic interplay between digitalization and quality assurance, equipping participants with innovative strategies and practical insights to improve educational standards.

### Parallel Session 3: Quality Assurance in Higher Education Institutions

Parallel Session 3, held in the Conference Hall "Tolstoy," focused on the theme of "*Quality Assurance in Higher Education Institutions: Fostering Excellence in Teaching and Learning in All Stages of Life.*" The session was chaired by Dr. Olga Safonkina, Associate Vice Rector for International Cooperation at Ogarev National Research State University and a member of the International Accreditation Board (IAB) in Russian Register, Russia. Under her guidance, the session became a platform for sharing best practices aimed at cultivating a culture of excellence in education.

A series of presentations were delivered by an respected lineup of speakers, each contributing valuable insights into the multifaceted aspects of quality assurance in higher education.



Dr. Nayer Fardows from Forman Christian College (FCCU) in Pakistan opened the session with his talk titled "*Ensuring Excellence: Quality Assurance in Higher Education for Lifelong Teaching and Learning.*" His presentation underscored the critical importance of maintaining high standards in education that cater to lifelong learning.

Following Dr. Fardows, Prof. Anastasia Atabekova from the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN University) shared her insights on "*QA in Higher Education and Education in Foreign Language(s).*" Her discourse provided a nuanced perspective on the challenges and opportunities in ensuring quality in education delivered in foreign languages.

The discussion then turned to the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) in India, represented by Dr. Vishnu Mahesh K R and Dr. Ruchi Tripathi, who presented a case study titled "*Promotion of Quality in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Institutions: Case Study of Randomly*

Selected Colleges Accredited by NAAC Parameters." Their findings highlighted effective strategies for enhancing educational quality within accredited institutions.

Shifting the focus back to the Russian context, Evgenii Puchkov, Szymon Jankiewicz, and Nadezhda Knyaginina from HSE University examined "*Internal and External Quality Assurance in Russian Higher Education Institutions: Breaking the Chains of State Control?*" Their presentation critically assessed the balance between state oversight and institutional autonomy in quality assurance.

Kristina Tishkina from ITMO University followed with an engaging presentation on "*The Peer-Review Approach in the Internal Quality Assurance System: The ITMO University Case.*" Her insights emphasized the value of peer review in fostering a culture of continuous improvement within educational institutions.

The session also featured Dr. Anatoly Lysyakov and Dr. Olga Safonkina discussing the "*Establishment and Development of the Russian-Chinese Institute: A Case Study in Collaborative Higher Education.*" Their collaboration demonstrated the benefits of international partnerships in enhancing educational quality.

Lastly, Professor Dr. Mesbahuddin Ahmed from the Bangladesh Accreditation Council (BAC) concluded the session with his presentation titled "*Quality Assurance and Teaching Learning in Higher Education.*" His insights illuminated the integral connection between quality assurance practices and effective teaching and learning methodologies.

After this stimulating series of discussions, attendees enjoyed a well-deserved morning tea break, where conversations continued over refreshments, fostering networking and collaboration among participants. In summary, Parallel Session 3 successfully highlighted the vital importance of quality assurance in higher education, encouraging ongoing discussions on fostering excellence in teaching and learning throughout all stages of life.

#### 4. Keynote Speeches

The conference then transitioned to the keynote speeches, commencing with the third keynote address titled "*Practice and Prospect of the Construction of the 'Five-in-One' Higher Education Quality Assurance System with Chinese Characteristics*" delivered by Jiang He, Deputy Director of the Education Quality Evaluation Agency of the Ministry of Education



(EQEA) in China. He stressed that higher education evaluation is a vital measure to ensure the quality of talent training. Over 40 years since the beginning of China's reform and opening-up, a "Five-in-One" higher education quality assurance system has been developed to suit the nation context, effectively unleashing the full potential of higher education. Embarking on a new journey, China will accelerate the establishment of a world-class higher education quality assurance system with Chinese characteristics, providing Chinese solutions to global educational governance. This address provided innovative insights into quality assurance approaches in higher education, further enriching the conference's exploration of quality assurance practices.



The final keynote address, titled *"Opportunities and Risks of Using Artificial Intelligence in Quality Assurance,"* was presented by Prof. Nadia Badawi as a pre-recorded speech. She highlighted the potential of AI technologies to transform quality assurance practices while cautioning against the risks associated with their implementation. Her insights sparked meaningful discussions among attendees, prompting reflections on how to use AI effectively.

## 5. Closing Session

Chaired by Prof./Dr. Jianxin Zhang, the closing session allowed attendees to reflect on their experiences and discuss future directions for quality assurance in higher education. The closing session consists of 4 items.

First of all, the announcement of the Next Host of 2025 AAC and Presentation by the Local Host. APQN President, Prof./Dr. Galina Motova to announce the Next Host of 2025 AAC and AGM is HKCAAVQ (Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications), China. Dr Christina from HKCAAVQ presented PPT and video to welcome all the participants to attend it. Hong Kong is a place where Eastern and Western cultures blend together, known as the "Pearl of the Orient", "Food Paradise", and "Shopping Paradise".





the Service Agreement for the Publication of APQN Anthology (2024 AAC).

Then, Closing Remarks by the APQN Board Director, Chair of the Conference Programme Committee: Dr. Timur Kanapyanov. On behalf of APQN, he extend the heartfelt thanks to the keynote speakers, plenary session presenters, panelists, moderators, especially the local host. He quoted the Chinese proverb: "The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. He ended with a quote from Mark Twain: "Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."



At last, by saying "we are looking forward to meeting you at 2025 APQN Academic Conference next year in Hong Kong, China. We wish you a safe trip back home! Good-bye and See you in Hang Kong in APQN big family again", the chair, Prof./Dr. Jianxin Zhang declared "2024 APQN Academic Conference closed.

## 6. Follow-up

Following the closing session, attendees enjoyed an afternoon tea break, which provided one last chance for informal discussions and networking before the conclusion of the conference.

At 16:20, Annual General Meeting (AGM) participated by "APQN members only" began with the chair of the APQN President: Prof./Dr. Galina Motova. AGM included 4 items: (1) welcome to new members in 2024; (2) report from APQN President by Prof./Dr. Galina Motova; (3) report on APQN finances; and (4) report on APQR.

On September 29, the final day of the conference, the participants had

the opportunity to partake in a guided city tour of St. Petersburg. This excursion allowed them to explore the rich cultural heritage and architectural splendor of the city, further enhancing their experience at the conference.

## **Conclusion**

The APQN 2024 Annual Academic Conference and Annual General Meeting proved to be an enriching experience for all involved. From the keynote speeches to the engaging discussions in parallel sessions, the event highlighted the role of quality assurance in navigating the challenges of contemporary higher education. The commitment of participants to advancing collaboration and innovation will undoubtedly continue to shape the future of quality assurance.

As the conference came to an end, attendees departed from St. Petersburg, equipped not just with valuable knowledge but also with a refreshed sense of purpose and connection among the international community of quality assurance professionals. The spirit of teamwork fostered at the AAC will surely continue, as participants join forces to improve the quality of education around the globe.

*(Written by Dr. Olga Safonkina from Russian Register  
and Jianxin Zhang from APQN)*

## 2024 APQN AGM in St. Petersburg, Russia on Sept. 28, 2024

On September 28, the 2024 APQN Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held in St. Petersburg, Russia from 16:20 to 17:10. It was chaired by Dr. Galina Motova, APQN President. The participants included Prof Dr. Jianxin Zhang (APQN Past President), Dr. Taohong Chen, Ms. Umankulova Onolkan(APQN Board Director), Dr. Timur Kanapyanov (APQN Board Director), Mr. Shi Weimin (APQN Administrator), and representatives from APQN members.



At the commencement of the 2024 AGM, Dr. Galina extended a warm welcome to all attendees. Following this, she announced the six new members, providing a brief introduction to their respective countries/territories and membership categories. APQN continues to welcome institutions dedicated to enhancing the quality of higher education and invites those interested to apply for membership by submitting an application at <https://apqn.org/apqn-members/entry/add>.

| No. | New Agency                                 | Country     | Membership    |
|-----|--|-------------|---------------|
| 1   | ESOFT Metro Campus                         | Sri Lanka   | Institutional |
| 2   | Namal University Mianwali                  | Pakistan    | Institutional |
| 3   | The University of Modern Sciences          | Pakistan    | Institutional |
| 4   | University of Okara                        | Pakistan    | Institutional |
| 5   | International Islamic University Islamabad | Pakistan    | Institutional |
| 6   | Pangasinan State University                | Philippines | Institutional |

After that, President Dr. Galina presented the “APQN President Report for 2024”. In her report, she began by outlining APQN's current administration and status. APQN now has 196 members from 45 countries/territories, being the largest and most influential non-profit and non-government



international/regional network in the region. Dr. Galina extended her appreciation to the 7th Board of Directors for their dedicated efforts and reaffirmed APQN's mission to enhance the quality of higher education across the Asia-Pacific region through the collaborative work of quality assurance organizations. Dr. Galina then summarized APQN's work in 2024. Thanks to the efforts of Dr. Jianxin Zhang, APQN Immediate Past President, APQN released three publications in 2023:

APQNews (Issue 28), APQNews (Issue 29), and 2023 Annual Report. With the support of the board directors, all the information is accurate and accessible to APQN members. She also provided an overview of the progress made by APQR and APQL. In 2023, 10 QAAs successfully underwent the APQR external review and APQR launched Database of External Quality Assurance Results in the Asia-Pacific Region. Meanwhile, APQL developed quality criteria, a PDCI and a feasible and efficient action plan for high-quality online teaching. Furthermore, 57 manuscripts were submitted and peer-reviewed with those approved for publication to be included in the AAC Anthology 2024. To honor exceptional contributions to quality assurance and a lifetime commitment to APQN, the APQN Board introduced and approved two special awards: the Honorary Life Fellow of APQN, awarded to Dr. Jianxin Zhang and Dr. Jagannath Patil, and the Honorary Board Director of APQN, awarded to Ms. Liu Pingping. In the end, APQN's tasks/focus in 2025 were also outlined, which include: 1) active promotion of APQN and its members; 2) support and dissemination of best practices; and 3) carrying out risk management to strengthen APQN sustainability.

Following the APQN President's report is the APQN Secretary/Treasurer report by Dr. Taohong Chen. Mr Chen's report consisted of two main sections: Secretariat team and Secretariat work. Dr. Chen began by introducing the Secretariat. Since 2009, APQN's Secretariat has been managed by the Shanghai Education Evaluation Institute (SEEI) and is composed of four members the Secretary/Treasurer, Dr. Le Fang and Mr.



Weimin Shi as administrators, and Ms. Cunyao Fan as the accountant. The routine work of the Secretariat spanned five areas: APQN members, board matters, events and projects, external publicity and financial affairs. In 2023, the Secretariat processed new membership applications, provided administrative and logistical support to the Board and its special committees, and contributed to various events and publications, including calls for papers, calls for host, and preparation for APQNews. It also maintained the APQN website and handled other communications. In the report, the Financial Statement was presented in an open and transparent way. In 2023, APQNs financial situation remained balanced and stable. All the final data and statements have been audited by the professional institutions. In closing the report, Dr. Taohong Chen conveyed his sincere gratitude to all the participants and reaffirmed the Secretariat's commitment to maintaining high efficiency and quality in its future work.



Dr. Jianxin Zhang, APQR Co-Chair, presented the APQR Annual Report, summarizing the accomplishments of 2023 and putting forward the work plan for 2024. To date, APQR has registered/renewed 2 QAAs to undergo the process of inclusion on APQR. They are Agency for the Assessment of the Quality of Tertiary and Vocational Education Certification Association Russian Register(RR),

Russia and Indonesian Accreditation Agency for Higher Education in Health(IAAHEH), Indonesia. Since its establishment in 2015, over 10 QAAs from around the world have been recognized and approved for inclusion in APQR. Currently, the APQR recognition for the Fiji Higher Education Commission (FHEC), which has a validity period of five years, has expired. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, APQR introduced virtual site visits in 2020, and based on this experience, will continue to employ a blended mode (desk review + online/virtual site visit) for upcoming reviews, with approval from the APQR Council. This allows flexibility for QAAs unable to undergo on-site reviews. APQR also accepts the reviews conducted by distinguished QA organizations/networks that have collaboration with APQN. The cost would be the same as given on APQR website, except for travel & other expenses which may not occur if an on-site visit does not take place. APQR Plan of action for 2024 focuses on the following three issues: 1) Complete Renewal

process for 2 QAAs which submitted EoI; 2) Follow up and encourage other QAAs due for renewal; 3) Review and update APQR process documents; 4) Reach out to APQN members to join APQR.

The representatives of APQN members unanimously approved the three reports referenced above. Additionally, AGM participants engaged in discussions regarding the attraction of new members, mutual recognition of applicants, and the denial of new entries. A consensus was reached that an official schedule and standardized process need to be refined and further developed. Enhancing the system's openness and transparency will be a key priority in APQN's future efforts.

At the conclusion of the 2024 AGM, President Dr. Galina delivered closing remarks, expressing gratitude to APQN members for their continued cooperation and support. She urged everyone to unite behind the board in working together to shape a promising future.

The 2024 AGM was a highly successful conference, marking a significant step forward in APQN's ongoing development.

*(Written by Weimin Shi from APQN Secretariat)*

**Welcome to APQN 2025 AAC and AGM in Hong Kong SAR, China:**

**Embracing Industrial Collaboration for Quality Higher Education**

**Dear APQN members, dear colleagues,**

Welcome to 2025 AAC and AGM to be held by "HKCAAVQ" in Hong Kong SAR, China, on November 20-23 (Thursday - Sunday), 2025!



**APQN 2025 AAC and AGM: Embracing Industrial Collaboration for Quality Higher Education**

The Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) is excited to extend a warm invitation to the prestigious APQN Annual Academic Conference (AAC) and Annual General

Meeting (AGM) in Hong Kong SAR, China. The great event will take place on November 20-23 (Thursday - Sunday), 2025.

APQN AAC seeks to contribute both globally and nationally to the enhancement of quality assurance in tertiary education. Internationally, the conference is designed to facilitate the exchange of best practices, insights, and experiences among practitioners, policymakers, and educators worldwide. On a national level, it empowers representatives from national quality assurance agencies (QAAs) and higher education institutions (HEIs) to gain insights into global trends and innovative solutions, refining their quality assurance frameworks for better-informed international recognition.

The theme of the conference is:

### ***Embracing Industrial Collaboration for Quality Higher Education***

Discussions during the conference will be structured around the following sub-themes:

1. *Professional Relevance and quality of Higher Education: Collaboration and Integration with Industry*
2. *Innovation and quality in Higher Education Curriculum and Pedagogy in line with industry collaborations*
3. *Fostering quality of flexible learning pathways*
4. *Driving for excellence in Higher Education: Role of External Quality Assurance*

The Conference will provide the opportunity for all stakeholders in the education and quality assurance community to exchange, update and gain insights into the global trends and latest innovations. The Conference theme and sub-themes offer a framework for discourse on the roles of higher education and external quality assurance amidst the changing landscape of higher education and the increasing relevance of industry collaborations. Technological advancements, such as artificial intelligence, create the challenges and opportunities on curriculum design and pedagogy, as well as quality assurance. High-quality education relies on robust internal quality assurance mechanisms in institutions. The functions of external quality assurance standards and processes are extending from gatekeeping to supporting development and enhancement. The Conference will also encompass discussions on development for flexible and innovative pathways, including quality assurance and recognition of non-traditional qualifications such as micro-credentials.

The upcoming conference in 2025 coincides with HKCAAVQ's 35th anniversary. Please join HKCAAVQ to celebrate. And together let's reflect on

the developments and achievements of the quality assurance community in the Asia Pacific Region.

The Conference website will be launched on 1 April 2025. All the details will be uploaded and updated on the website.

## APQN AAC & AGM 2025 in Hong Kong

| DATE                | KEY EVENT  |
|---------------------|--|
| 20 Nov 2024         | Announcement of APQN AAC & AGM 2025 with Conference Theme & sub-themes   |
| 1 Apr 2025          | <p><b>Launch of 2025 Conference website</b></p> <p>Call for Papers for APQN AAC 2025</p> <p>Call for nominations for APQN 2025 awards</p> <p>Call for EOI for hosting of APQN AAC &amp; AGM 2026</p> |
| 15 Jul 2025         | <p>Deadline for call for papers</p> <p>Deadline for call for nominations for APQN 2025 awards</p> <p>Deadline for EOI for hosting of APQN AAC &amp; AGM 2026</p>                                     |
| 1 Aug – 30 Sep 2025 | <b>Online Registration (Early bird)</b>  |
| 15 Aug 2025         | Notification of selected papers  |
| 1 Sep 2025          | <p>Announcement of accepted EoI for hosting APQN AAC &amp; AGM 2025</p> <p>Announcement of APQN 2025 awards</p>  |
| 1 Oct 2025          | Updated Conference programme   |
| 1 Oct – 31 Oct 2025 | <b>Online Registration (Regular)</b>   |
| 1 Nov 2025          | Collect presentation materials (ppts)  |
| 20 Nov 2025         | <p><b>Welcome to Hong Kong</b></p> <p>Registration (pm)</p> <p>APQN / APQR / APQL Meetings</p>   |
| 21 Nov 2025         | Conference Day 1   |
| 22 Nov 2025         | Conference Day 2   |
|                     | APQN AGM   |

| DATE        | KEY EVENT                                  |
|-------------|--|
| 23 Nov 2025 | Half-day City Tour of Hong Kong (optional) |

**Welcome to 2025 APQN ACC and AGM in Hong Kong SAR, China!**

*(Written by Christina NG from HKCAAVQ)*

**Introduction of the local host: The Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ)**

The Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ), formerly the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation (HKCAA), was established in 1990, under the law, as an independent statutory body to provide authoritative advice on academic standards of degree programmes in higher education institutions in Hong Kong. In 2007, the Council was reconstituted under the HKCAAVQ Ordinance to be the sole accreditation authority, responsible for the mandatory accreditations of academic qualifications (from sub-degrees to doctoral degrees) awarded by self-financing higher education institutions, and voluntary accreditations of vocational and professional qualifications offered by Operators in all other sectors. The Council comprises 15-21 members appointed by the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Members are appointed based on their expertise and experience in quality assurance, education and training as well as industry. The Council membership includes an international perspective by having 4-7 Members from outside Hong Kong. The services of HKCAAVQ are operated by the Secretariat, led by the Executive Director, served by around 100 staff.

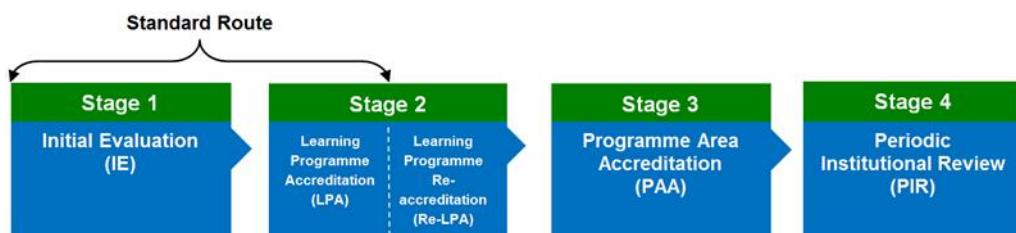
At present, there are 19 self-financing higher education institutions in Hong Kong, including 3 private universities, under the purview of HKCAAVQ. Only qualifications accredited by HKCAAVQ will be recognized under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework, which was established by the Education Bureau of the Government of HK SAR in 2008. HKCAAVQ also took on the role as the Qualifications Register Authority to manage the Hong Kong Qualifications Register (HKQR) under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF), which is an online platform listing all qualifications registered and recognized under HKQF. At present, there are over 260 operators and 9000 qualifications listed on the HKQR. Among them, around 6000 qualifications were accredited by HKCAAVQ. Others are offered by self-accrediting universities.

Under the law, HKCAAVQ performs the dual roles of a gate-opener and a gate-keeper. As a gate-opener, HKCAAVQ supports Operators in understanding the minimum accreditation requirements through the provision of information and training about the accreditation standards and process. On the other hands, HKCAAVQ performs its gate-keeping role through the accreditation process to ensure that HKQF-recognised programmes and qualifications are meeting the standards under the specified levels of the HKQF.

HKCAAVQ developed accreditation standards that have a focus on Operators' organisational competence in operating and ensuring the quality of its delivery of learning programmes under the HKQF throughout the accreditation validity period. The assessment of organisational competence takes into consideration the nature of the learning programme(s) that an Operator offers or plans to offer.

The mechanism developed is the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process (the Process) which ensures that Operators possess the competence required to operate their learning programmes (Stages 1 & 2), and in the long run encourages progressive development of organisational competence for continuous enhancement (Stages 3 & 4).

Figure 1: Four-stage Quality Assurance Process



Apart from accreditations, HKCAAVQ also conducts institutional review for post secondary education institutions seeking registration under the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance for offering degree programmes, and also for institutions intended to make an application for university title. Lately, HKCAAVQ also provides institutional review for post secondary education institutions seeking the status of university of applied sciences in Hong Kong. The institutional review reports will be considered by the Government before granting the status to the institutions.

HKCAAVQ also conducts accreditation for non-local programmes (NLP) delivered in Hong Kong. A NLP accredited by HKCAAVQ enjoys similar status to locally-accredited programmes, and its qualification is recognised under the QF and can be placed on the Qualifications Register (QR). Accredited NLP qualifications attained by individual students will be recognised as meeting

the standard of particular qualifications obtained in Hong Kong. Full-time students enrolled in tertiary-level NLPs accredited by HKCAAVQ are eligible for the Government's financial assistance schemes for post-secondary students.

HKCAAVQ plays a pivotal role in safeguarding the quality and credibility of qualifications under HKQF by providing quality assurance and assessment services to education and training institutions, course providers and the general public. With its solid expertise, HKCAAVQ also conducts accreditations and institutional reviews outside Hong Kong, particularly in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. Upon request, HKCAAVQ provides advisory and consultancy services in education qualifications and standards to government bureaux and other public organisations in Hong Kong, and beyond.

To maintain our high standard of service, HKCAAVQ regularly undergoes external evaluations to assess the efficiency and quality of our quality assurance work. In 2015, HKCAAVQ underwent an assessment by the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) to benchmark our policies, processes and practices against the Guidelines of Good Practice (GGP). The Board of INQAAHE, in October 2015, confirmed that HKCAAVQ comprehensively adhered to the GGP. In July 2023, we underwent a subsequent evaluation by INQAAHE and the Board confirmed that HKCAAVQ was fully aligned with the INQAAHE GGP 2016 for three years until 2026.

In 2021, HKCAAVQ have also undergone an external review by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). The ENQA Board in September 2021 confirmed that HKCAAVQ has obtained "substantial compliance" with ESG (Part II & III). HKCAAVQ is the first quality assurance agency outside European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and Europe to have achieved the ESG compliance status.

HKCAAVQ is committed to promoting good practices in quality assurance among institutions, training bodies, authorities and other stakeholders in both local and international contexts. To benchmark our approaches with the latest international good practices and standards, HKCAAVQ establishes links with quality assurance agencies/networks in the Mainland and overseas.

HKCAAVQ is a founding member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) and the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN). HKCAAVQ is also a founding members of the Cross-border Quality Assurance Network (CBQAN) since its inaugural general assembly held in December 2016 at the International Forum on Cross-border

Education in Haikou of Hainan Province. CBQAN is initiated by China Academic Degrees and Graduate Education Development Center (CDGDC) and its members comprise 15 quality assurance and qualification recognition institutions from 12 countries and regions.

## REPORTS BY THE BOARD

### President Annual Report by Dr. Galina Motova



The year of 2024 has been a strong year for the Asia Pacific Quality Network. Despite the challenges, we maintained our stability, successfully completed all the planned events from the previous year, and developed into a more cohesive and cooperative team of professionals who share similar values.

In this challenging time, we should remain keenly aware of the impact that the Asia-Pacific Quality Network has on the academic community in our region. By doing their work honestly and diligently, our members contribute to the quality of higher education, the level of development, the standard of living, and the quality of life for the benefit of current and future generations. QAAs need to adapt to the changing academic landscape to remain relevant and demanded by the HEIs. Therefore, for over 20 years, APQN has been the primary source of advice and support for its institutional, individual, and quality assurance members. It has been efficient in its operations and transparent in its information sharing. When I look back on the year 2024, I feel satisfied with the achievements that we made together.

In the past year, **six new institutional members** from Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and the Philippines joined APQN. By now, we have 196 members from 45 countries and territories.

**Two quality assurance agencies** underwent external review with the Asia-Pacific Quality Register and reconfirmed their status as compliant with the standards and criteria for recognition and the Chiba Principles for the upcoming five-year term.

**The Database of External Quality Assurance Results in the Asia-Pacific Region** (DAQAR) now includes **5,167** programs, making them more accessible to all users, irrespective of their location or background.

**APQN's Annual Academic Conference**, entitled "Quality Assurance and Global Tertiary Education: Navigating Challenges and Embracing Innovation," took place in Saint Petersburg. It gathered more than 60 representatives from quality assurance agencies and higher education institutions across

various countries in the region, serving as a platform for engaging discussions, extensive experience sharing, and the exchange of best practices among APQN members.

The APQN's efforts are clearly showcased through **numerous publications** that document its activities, meetings, webinars, email discussions, and responses to numerous enquiries.

I am sure we wish to continue to make a difference in the world by strengthening our academic community and promoting the quality of higher education.

APQN will always be there for its members to support them, to act as a platform for fruitful discussions, to strengthen their work and to extend cooperation in order to enhance the quality of higher education in the region and beyond.

### 1. Annual summary

The highlights from 2024 that will influence APQN in 2025 include:

- preparation and holding the **2024 Annual Academic Conference and Annual General Meeting** in Saint Petersburg with in-person participation of over 60 APQN members from 13 countries
- uploading the accredited programmes to the **Database of External Quality Assurance Results in the Asia-Pacific Region (DAQAR)**
- contributing to **UNESCO/INQAAHE Global Survey** “II Global Trends in Tertiary Education Quality Assurance: Challenges and Opportunities in Internal and External QA 2023-2025”, Focus Groups with External Quality Assurance Providers (EQAPs) and Tertiary Education Institutions (TEIs) followed with two comprehensive reports to be included into the open access publication in 2025
- making **regular publications** for APQN members: APQNews, APQN Anthology, APQN Annual Report, website publications
- participation in **international academic events** (research, webinars, opinion sharing)
- making **website updates** that included thorough content revision to make it more informative and user-friendly for APQN members.

### About the Network

The Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN) is a non-profit, non-government network/organization focusing on the quality of higher education, the provision of the education and training for quality assurance agencies (QAAs) in the Asia and the Pacific Region that contains over half the world's population.

APQN was founded in Hong Kong in January 2003, incorporated as an association in December 2004 in the State of Victoria, Australia and registered as a non-profit organization in June 2011 in Shanghai, China with support of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) and financial support from the World Bank.

Now, APQN is one of the largest associations in higher education and quality assurance after INQAAHE. As of December 31, 2024 there are **196 members** from **45 countries and territories** in APQN.

APQN keeps the register of QAAs that comply with standards and criteria developed by the Asia Pacific Quality Register (APQR).

APQN maintains the Database of External Quality Assurance Results in the Asia-Pacific Region. It is a single database of HEIs and study programmes accredited by QAAs registered in the APQR.

APQN keeps the register of universities that have undergone international recognition for the APQN Quality Label.

APQN is an open organisation that keeps the public aware of its activities through regular publications of APQNews, Annual Reports, Anthologies, research outcomes and online publications.

The key APQN's goals are to provide an easy access to high-quality, objective and up-to-date information about higher education in the Asia Pacific region; and to strengthen cooperation and information exchange between quality assurance agencies and higher education institutions/

In its work APQN adheres to the following values:

1. Public image - APQN is a proactive, visible, and recognizable association at the regional and global level. It integrates into the general trends of higher education development. The results of the APQN's work are valuable and relevant for stakeholders, including governments, authorities, higher education institutions, and professional organizations.
2. Transparency – APQN extensively disseminates information about its work and the work of its members, publishes the achieved outcomes, and provides access to information on the good practices of agencies and universities. APQN holds regular dissemination events, such as conferences, summits, seminars, and webinars, to inform the academic community of the best quality assurance practices in the Asia-Pacific Region.
3. Financial and operation sustainability – APQN works out mechanisms that enable its members to benefit from being a part of the Network and contribute to its development and extension of its influence in the Region.
4. Commitment to education quality – APQN promotes mutual support and improves collaboration among stakeholders including agencies,

universities, national governments, to enhance trust and the quality of education in the region.

APQN's vision is to be a self-sustaining Network, a first point of reference for advice or support, efficient in its operations, and open in its information sharing.

## **2. Board of Directors**

In accordance with the APQN Constitution, the 7<sup>th</sup> Board is represented by 7 elected and co-opted members and the Treasurer:

- Prof./Dr. Galina Motova: APQN President (Russian Federation),
- Prof./Dr. Jianxin Zhang: APQN Immediate Past President (China),
- Dr. Jagannath Patil: Co-opted as APQR Chairperson (India),
- Ms. Onolkan Umankulova: APQN Board Director (Kyrgyzstan),
- Dr. Timur Kanapyanov: APQN Board Director (Kazakhstan),
- Mr. Nar Bahadur Raika: APQN Board Director (Bhutan),
- Dr. Taohong Chen: APQN Treasurer (China),
- Mr. Shi Weimin: APQN Administrator (China).

In 2024, Dr. Taohong Chen and Mr. Shi Weimin assumed their roles, succeeding the previous APQN Treasurer and Administrator as a result of changes in their work arrangements.

The Board of Directors is responsible for overseeing and directing the overall work of the Network so that it functions as effectively as possible for the benefit of its members and the whole academic community in the Asia-Pacific region.

## **3. Work processes /services to its members**

In order to carry out the projects important for APQN, five permanent Committees were established with properly documented functions and members:

1. Executive Committee
2. Finance Committee
3. Review Committee
4. Editorial Committee
5. Organising Committee

The Executive Committee plays a crucial role in planning, coordinating, and controlling all APQN procedures and actions. This includes making decisions about participation in projects and conferences, and resolving unforeseen issues. The Executive Committee is also responsible for reviewing and approving the monthly plans and annual/semiannual reports of APQN.

The objective of the Finance Committee is to ensure the financial stability and operational sustainability of APQN by managing incoming membership and initial fees and working out the mechanisms that enable APQN members to benefit from being a part of the network while simultaneously contributing

to the development and extension of its influence in the region. The Finance Committee carefully analyzes the APQN's members and the reasons for some of their inactivity. The Secretariat continuously receives new membership applications, which require a thorough examination by the Review Committee before the Executive Committee approves them.

The Review Committee is in charge of updating and maintaining the relevance of APQN's documents, reviewing applications for APQN membership, and reviewing paper submissions for the Anthology.

The Editorial Committee members act as peer reviewers for the papers submitted for publication. They offer feedback and provide recommendations for enhancement to the authors and make the final decision on paper publication.

The Organising Committee is primarily tasked with planning and coordinating international research events, formulating a balanced and high-quality scientific programme for the conference, appointing and communicating with key speakers, and ensuring the smooth and efficient implementation of international academic events initiated by APQN.

All five Committees closely collaborate with each other and with the APQN Secretariat.

APQN also comprises two Councils

1. Asia Pacific Quality Register (APQR) Council
2. Asia Pacific Quality Label (APQL) Council

APQR Council is responsible for registering the external QAAs through independent review by peers.

APQL Council supports, develops, improves and enhances international excellence in HEIs and programs in the region.

#### **4. Key accomplishments in 2024**

1. Organising a series of webinars for focus groups and analyzing the outcomes of the INQAAHE/UNESCO II Global Survey resulting in two comprehensive reports.
2. Revision of new members' applications.
3. Content revision of APQN website with Board Directors actively participating in the project.
4. Work with members (responding to enquiries, updating contact details, collecting membership fees, working with former members).
5. Undergoing annual audit.
6. Promoting the DAQAR database on various platforms.
7. Reviewing papers for 2024 AAC (56 papers altogether have been reviewed and evaluated).
8. Preparation and holding the 2024 AAC and AGM in Saint Petersburg (26-29 September, 2024).

9. Making regular publications for APQN members APQNews, APQN Anthology, website publications.
10. Dealing with the organizational issues for the 2025 AAC which include selecting the host, negotiating subthemes, and selecting key speakers.
11. Contributing to the Survey on the “Use of AI in the Work of Quality Assurance Organisations”.
12. Participating in the series of online meetings and discussions.

## **5. Plans for 2025**

In 2024, APQN will maintain its commitment to its mission statement to “enhance the quality of higher education in Asia and the Pacific region through strengthening the work of quality assurance organisations and extending cooperation between them.”

APQN will investigate cutting-edge technologies and promote creativity in education and learning.

APQN will persist in nurturing confidence in quality assurance processes and accrediting bodies.

APQN will continue to act as a valuable reference for higher education institutions.

APQN will investigate various approaches to identify those that honor the independence and diversity of higher education institutions.

APQN will persist in conducting research and participating in international projects that will be advantageous for both APQN and its members.

APQN will persist in promoting cooperation and collaboration among its members while maintaining collective efforts worldwide.

The ambitious projects for 2025 are as follows:

- 1) Preparing for the 2025 AAC-AGM
  - ✓ Carry out online reunions every three months for updates on the AAC-AGM preparation progress.
  - ✓ The Editorial Committee organizes the manuscript review process as they deem relevant and effective.
- 2) Revamping APQN website.
- 3) Revising APQN membership criteria.
- 4) Implementing new projects.

- 5) Dealing with financial issues (membership fees, mandatory settlements, bank transfer solutions).

**Prof./Dr. Galina Motova**  
*APQN Seventh Board President (2024-present)*

## Secretary/Treasurer Report by Taohong Chen



The year 2024 has been a transformative one for APQN and its vibrant community. As we continue to build on the progress made in the post-pandemic era, this year also brought significant changes to the APQN Secretariat. New leadership and administrative adjustments marked a fresh chapter in our journey, reflecting the organization's adaptability and forward-thinking spirit. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the outgoing team led by Ms. Pingping Liu for their invaluable contributions. Under the continued stewardship of the Shanghai Education Evaluation Institute (SEEI), the Secretariat remains committed to advancing APQN's mission with renewed energy and dedication. The new Secretariat is composed of the following members: Dr. Taohong Chen as Secretary/Treasurer, Mr. Weimin Shi as Administrator, and Ms. Cunyao Fan as Accountant. The newly-formed team has already made significant strides in ensuring the smooth operation and strategic direction of our initiatives. Their expertise and enthusiasm will promise an exciting future for APQN.

APQN Secretariat's work in 2024 can be divided into five key areas: APQN Members, Board Matters, Events and Projects, External Publicity, and Financial Affairs.

### 1. APQN Members

The APQN Secretariat maintains an active role in processing membership applications, underscoring the dedication to expanding and diversifying the APQN community. By December 31, 2024, the Secretariat received 22 new membership applications. Following a rigorous evaluation process conducted by the Membership Review Committee and subsequent approval by the APQN Board, 7 applications were successfully accepted.

As of the year's end, APQN proudly comprises 198 members from 45 countries and regions. These members are classified as follows: 112 Institutional members (56.3%), 48 Full members (24.7%), 13 Intermediate members (6.5%), 12 Associate members (6.0%), 11 Observers (5.5%), and 2 Individual members (1.0%). The Secretariat remains committed to supporting our diverse membership, fostering collaboration, and facilitating opportunities

for professional growth and engagement.

## **2. Board Matters**

Throughout 2024, the Secretariat provided essential administrative and logistical support to the APQN Board and its various committees, including the Finance Committee, the AAC Preparatory Committee, and the Membership Review Committee. On the one hand, Secretariat assists in the publication of resolutions and decisions to ensure transparency and efficiency. On the other hand, we implement and monitor the execution of Board directives to maintain alignment with APQN's strategic objectives.

## **3. Events and Projects**

The Secretariat plays a pivotal role in the planning and execution of APQN's key events and initiatives in 2024:

**2024 APQN AAC and AGM:** The Secretariat provided comprehensive support for this flagship event, managing agenda preparation, disseminating key decisions, collecting 51 submitted papers, and coordinating with the Board, host, and other stakeholders. The review process for all submissions was efficiently facilitated, ensuring high-quality contributions to the event.

**2024 APQN Awards:** The Secretariat launched the “Call for Nominations for the 2024 APQN Awards,” collected applications, coordinated with the Board for review, and ensured timely preparation of certificates and trophies in collaboration with the event host.

**2025 AAC Host Selection:** The Secretariat issued the “Call for Host for the 2025 AAC and AGM,” processed expressions of interest (EOIs), facilitated the Board's thorough evaluation process, and liaised with the selected host, the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ). Early coordination with HKCAAVQ ensured their active involvement in the 2025 AAC and AGM.

## **4. External Publicity**

The Secretariat dedicates significant effort to enhancing APQN's external visibility and outreach. Continuous updates are made to the APQN website to provide an accessible and informative platform for members and stakeholders. The Secretariat also helps prepare the APQN Annual Report, which comprehensively outlines the organization's accomplishments, activities, and strategic goals for the year ahead. These initiatives contribute to

strengthening APQN's profile in quality assurance in the Asia-Pacific region.

## 5. Financial Affairs

The Secretariat ensures the sound financial management of APQN's resources. Key income sources include membership fees, APQR review fees, and other revenue streams. Major expenditures covered AAC-related activities, website maintenance, and administrative costs. The Finance Committee and Board conduct thorough reviews of the annual budget to ensure financial stability and accountability. A detailed financial report, including income and expenditure tables, will undergo external auditing by a qualified firm in early 2025.

As we transition into 2025, the Secretariat remains resolute in its mission to support APQN's vision of advancing quality assurance across the region. The spirit of collaboration, innovation, and dedication that defines APQN will continue to guide our efforts.

We once again thank Dr. Galina Motova and the Board of Directors for their leadership, trust, and invaluable contributions to APQN's success. Together, we look forward to achieving new milestones, fostering deeper connections, and furthering our shared goals. May the coming year bring renewed opportunities for growth, success, and unity within our network.

**Dr. Chen TaoHong**  
APQN Secretary/Treasurer  
*Deputy Director of Shanghai Education Evaluation Institute*

## Jianxin Zhang

APQN Past President

Prof. Dr. Jianxin Zhang  
(Ex-Officio)



CHINA

The year 2024 has been a year of challenges and achievements for APQN. As a Board Director, I have had the privilege to play an active role in various areas, not only facilitating the smooth progress of APQN function, but also engaging in extensive international cooperation and exchanges. Below is a brief summary of my work for the year 2024.

### I. Editing of “APQNews”

As the editor-in-chief of "APQNews," I felt a great sense of responsibility because it can "promote APQN's image and recognizability" (Galina Motova). This year, I successfully completed 2 issues of APQNews: the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> issues. These two issues featured 8 columns, covering

various activities conducted by APQN throughout the year, including quality assurance conferences, projects, activities, Board operations, as well as the latest news from educational quality assurance agencies, (QAAs) academic research, practical cases, and others. The total of 40 articles not only reflected the latest research findings in the field of educational quality assurance in the Asia-Pacific region but also shared valuable experiences from QA practices in various countries and regions. These articles, totaling 98 pages, were rich in content and diverse in form, providing valuable learning and exchange resources for APQN members.

### II. Assistance in Editing and Publishing “Anthology of 2023 Academic Papers”

After the APQN AAC and AGM held at the American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB) in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, in November 2023, I participated in the selection, review and editing of papers and assisted AIUB in successfully publishing the anthology.

On September 27, 2024, at the opening ceremony of AAC held in Saint Petersburg, Russia, the APQN 2023 Anthology was officially released, under the title of "*Innovation and Sustainable Development in Higher Education*". This anthology, was the 11<sup>th</sup> publication by APQN, provided a platform for experts to contribute research findings, insights, and best practices on QA issues. The anthology facilitated cooperation among APQN member and continuous improvement in educational standards.

### **III. Work on the APQL and the APQR**

As the Chairperson of the Asia-Pacific Quality Label (APQL) and Co-Chairperson of the Asia-Pacific Quality Register (APQR), I undertook several tasks.

Firstly, I convened an online meeting between APQL and the Russian Register (RR) on March 29, 2024, to explore potential cooperation opportunities. The meeting included three key topics: (1) the review of APQL; (2) the international pilot project of APQL in Russia and cooperation opportunities between APQL and RR; (3) the possibility of introducing innovations to APQL.

Secondly, I hosted the APQL Council meeting held in Saint Petersburg on September 26, 2024. The meeting agenda included five items. After warmly welcoming all participants and introducing themselves, I presented the development of APQL and asked the suggestions to promote APQL. Luckily, in November 2024, the APQL Council approved the EoI submitted by Vela Village in Maldives for a APQL review application.

Thirdly, I convened the APQR Council meeting on September 26, in Saint Petersburg, since Dr Jagannath Patil, the APQR Chairperson, could not attend it physically. The meeting included: (1) welcoming remarks; (2) the APQR-2024 report; and (3) the 2025 action plan report.

Lastly, at Annual General Meeting on September 28, in Saint Petersburg, on behalf of Dr Jagannath Patil, the APQR Chairperson, I reported on the progress of APQL, planning for future development directions, discussing relevant issues related to quality register and provided useful suggestions for the development of APQR.

### **IV. QA Research Work**

This year, I had the honor of representing APQN to participate the QA project of "*Survey on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Accreditation and Quality Assurance Organizations*". This project, jointly initiated by the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE) and APQN, aimed to explore the current status and future prospects of Artificial Intelligence(AI) in higher education QA. During the research process, I actively participated in project design, survey distribution, and data analysis, contributing to the successful completion of the project. On Nov. 6, 2024, together with Galina, we helped to convene the focus group discussion on AI in QA of EQAAs attended by all the Board Directors.

Starting from 2023, I also participated in the second Global Survey of INQAAHE entitled "*Global Trends in Quality Assurance in Higher Education*:

*Challenges and Opportunities for Internal and External Quality Assurance* . I chaired the second focus group discussion (FGD) and wrote the FGD report. Through in-depth research on educational quality assurance practices in various countries and regions, I also wrote “Country Case: China” and participated in revising and improving the entire research report.

## **V. Participation in AAC and AGM in Russia**

In terms of APQN academic conference, as one member of the AAC programme Committee, I actively participated in the preparations for the 2024 AAC and AGM in reviewing papers, improving the programme and others.

At the AAC and AGM held in Russia, from September 26 to 29, 2024, I not only attended the meeting as a Director of the APQN Board, but also delivered a plenary speech titled "*Dissolving Boundaries for a Quality Region: A Qualitative Study on the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of APQN.*" I also presented the report on behalf of the APQR Council and served as the host for the Keynote Speech 3 and the APQL Council meeting.

Through these activities, I not only demonstrated the work achievements and academic level of APQN, but also strengthened connections and cooperation with other members.

## **VI. Participation in Quality Assurance Activities**

In terms of QA activities, I actively participated in 2 important international and regional conferences.

From April 24 to 25, 2024, I attended the 17<sup>th</sup> Iran Conference on Quality Assurance in University Systems. As the former President of APQN, my keynote speech was titled "*Dissolving Boundaries for a Quality Region: a Case Study of APQN's 20-Year Pursuit of Its Ultimate Goal.*" The speech covered two aspects: (1) the 20-year historical development of APQN; and (2) six landmark achievements of APQN.

From May 15 to 16, I participated in the "*2024 International Conference on Education Evaluation*" held by Chongqing Education Evaluation Institute (CEEI), in Chongqing, China. As the former President of APQN, I delivered a keynote speech titled "*Dissolving Boundaries for a Quality Region.*" Focusing on the ultimate goal, I described APQN's efforts in the long journey of creating a "quality region" from its history development and its landmark achievements, namely: (1) serving a vast QA community; (2) cooperating with QAs and HEIs; (3) focusing on quality assurance themes at 19 AACs; (4) conducting over 50 QA projects; (5) implementing 14 QA actions during the COVID pandemic; and (6) publishing over 50 QA journals, books, and tool anthologies.

At these conferences, I not only gained insights into the latest developments and practical experiences in the field of quality assurance from China and Iran, but also engaged in in-depth exchanges and discussions with the peers. These activities not only broadened my horizons and ideas but also provided useful references and inspiration for my future work.

### Conclusion and Outlook

In the evening of September 27, 2024, at the Award Ceremony of AAC held in Saint Petersburg, Russia, together with Dr Jagannath Patil, I was awarded the title of "*Honorary Life Fellow of APQN*". This is the first honorary award granted by APQN since its establishment 21 years ago.

I am very happy to get this award! I cannot help telling you how honored I am, how lucky I am, and how firm and determined I am. **I am honored** because APQN is the largest and most influence QA network in the Asia-Pacific Region, it has actively been dedicate for the ultimate goal of "*Boundaries fro a quality region*" in the past 21 years. I am very proud of APQN. **I am lucky** because since 2008, I have been in the APQN big family and I have been APQN President for two terms ( fifth and sixth Board), the longest serving President of APQN. **I am firm and determined** because the title of "Lifetime Honorary fellow" is not only a symbol of honor, but also an affirmation of my contributions to APQN, what is more it is an important driving force to inspire me and other Board Directors to continue to pursue excellence of APQN and especially quality assurance in higher education.

Looking back on the work of the past year, I feel a great sense of responsibility and challenges. In my role as a Director of APQN seventh Board, I not only took on multiple important tasks but also actively engaged in extensive international cooperation and exchanges. These experiences have not only honed my organizational and coordination skills and academic proficiency but also laid a solid foundation for my future work. Looking ahead, I will continue to uphold the mission and vision of APQN and contribute to the development of educational quality assurance in the Asia-Pacific region. At the same time, I look forward to working together with APQN members, Board Directors and colleagues to "*Dissolve Boundaries for a Quality Region*".

**Prof/Dr. Jianxin Zhang**  
APQN ex-officio Board Director as Immediate Past President  
Advisor of CHEA / CIQG (2012-2018; 2022- present), USA  
Secretary General of Yunnan Association of Higher Education (YAHE), China  
Professor of Yunnan University, China

## Jagannath Patil



It gives me great pleasure to submit a brief report on activities undertaken by me as an Asia Pacific Quality Network (APQN) Board Director co-opted as APQR Chairperson.

### APQN Conference– 2024 / APQN AGM-2024, Russia

APQN Conference and APQN Annual General Meeting (AGM) - 2023 was held in Saint Petersburg, Russia on 26th / 28th September 2024. The undersigned had participated in the various Board meetings as APQN Board member in online mode.

### APQR Council:

APQR Council continues to work in sync with 7th Board of APQN with following members

- Dr. Jagannath Patil, Chairperson
- Prof./Dr. Jianxin Zhang, Co-Chairperson
- Dr Galina Motova, APQN President
- Prof. Jeanette Baird, Member
- Libing Wang, PhD, UNESCO Expert, Member
- N.B. Raika, Member

### The APQR Review of QAA's:

In 2024, APQR has received EoI from 2 Quality Assurance Agencies (QAAs) to undergo the process of inclusion on APQR.

- Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health Care (ECAQA, Republic of Kazakhstan)
- International Cooperation at the Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR), Republic of Kazakhstan

### In 2024, APQR has registered / renewed 2 Quality Assurance Agencies (QAAs) on APQR.

- “Indonesian Accreditation Agency for Higher Education in Health” (IAAHEH) based in Jakarta, Indonesia.
- “Agency for the Assessment of the Quality of Tertiary and Vocational Education” Certification Association “Russian Register,” Russia

### As of now following 10 QAAs are registered on APQR.

- I. **“Fiji Higher Education Commission” (FHEC)** based in Suva, Fiji.
- II. **Certification Association “Russian Register” (RR)** based in Saint Petersburg, Russia. [ Renewed ]
- III. **“National Centre for Public Accreditation” (NCPA)** based in Russia. [ Renewed ]
- IV. **“Indonesian Accreditation Agency for Higher Education in Health” (IAAHEH)** based in Jakarta, Indonesia. [ Renewed ]
- V. **Mongolian National Council for Education Accreditation (MNCEA)**, Mongolia.
- VI. **Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating (IAAR)**, Republic of Kazakhstan.
- VII. **Eurasian Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Health care (ECAQA)**, Republic of Kazakhstan.
- VIII. **Finance Accreditation Agency (FAA)**, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- IX. **“EdNet” Agency on Quality Assurance in Education**, Kyrgyzstan.
- X. **Samoa Qualification Authority (SQA)**, Samoa.

**Other highlights:**

Apart from these issues it has been a great pleasure and privilege to be part of various APQN Board activities such as APQN Finance Committee, membership Committee website and various other initiatives.

Overall, it was a great experience of learning and sharing with APQN quality assurance family. We hope to continue the legacy of APQN as the torch bearer of higher education quality assurance networking in Asia-Pacific Region.

**Dr. Jagannath Patil**

*Adviser, NAAC, Bengaluru, India*

*Former Specially Appointed Professor, NIAD-QE, Tokyo, Japan*

*Former President of Asia Pacific Quality Network [APQN]*

*Founder Chairperson, Asia Pacific Quality Register (APQR)*

*[jp.naacindia@gmail.com](mailto:jp.naacindia@gmail.com)*

## Timur Kanapyanov



The year 2024 has been a remarkable period of growth, collaboration, and achievement for the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN). As a Board Director, it was my privilege to contribute to the success of various initiatives that further strengthened our mission of enhancing the quality of higher education across the region.

### Leadership in Organising the AAC & AGM 2024

In 2024, I was honored to be re-elected as the Chairperson of the Organising Committee for the APQN Annual Academic Conference (AAC) and Annual General Meeting (AGM). Tasked with crafting an Action Plan for these flagship events, I actively led discussions on the draft programme, ensuring a well-structured and impactful agenda.

The 2024 AAC & AGM took place in Saint Petersburg, Russia, and brought together over 60 APQN members from 13 countries for in-person participation. The event featured esteemed keynote speakers, including:

- Dr. Wesley Teter, Senior Consultant, UNESCO Bangkok.
- Dr. Aleksei Kurlov, Head of Educational Programmes, MIIGAiK, Russia.
- Jiang He, Deputy Director, EQEA, China.
- Prof. Nadia Badrawi, President of ANQAHE, Egypt.

Their insightful contributions enriched the academic discourse and ensured the conference's success.

My responsibilities included reviewing submitted papers for AAC presentations, selecting suitable ones, and participating in the review of nominations for the 2024 APQN Quality Awards, together with my esteemed colleagues – APQN Board Members. Additionally, I chaired the 1st APQN Board Meeting in 2024, served as Chair and Commentator during key sessions, and delivered the closing remarks.

### Looking Ahead: Planning for 2025

During the 2nd APQN Board Meeting in 2024, I was elected as the Chairperson of the Organising Committee for the 2025 AAC & AGM, which will be hosted by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) in Hong Kong SAR, China, from November 20-23, 2025. The conference theme, "Embracing Industrial Collaboration for Quality Higher Education," will focus on:

1. Professional relevance and quality of higher education: Collaboration and integration with industry.
2. Innovation and quality in higher education curriculum and pedagogy aligned with industry needs.
3. Fostering quality in flexible learning pathways.
4. Driving excellence in higher education: The role of external quality assurance.

### **Contributions to DAQAR and Membership Development**

In 2024, I played an active role in the development of the APQR's Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DAQAR), ensuring the inclusion of reports and decisions from my home agency, IAAR. DAQAR has become a vital tool for promoting transparency in external quality assurance procedures.

As a member of the APQN Review Committee, I was involved in evaluating new membership applications, which resulted in the admission of six new institutional members from Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and the Philippines. Some applications were declined following rigorous reviews, reflecting our commitment to maintaining high standards.

### **Global and Regional Initiatives**

I contributed to the UNESCO/INQAAHE Global Survey "II Global Trends in Tertiary Education Quality Assurance: Challenges and Opportunities in Internal and External QA 2023-2025," involving my agency in this significant research effort. I also participated in the "Use of AI in the Work of Quality Assurance Organisations" survey, underlining the increasing role of technology in our field.

As part of the Review Panel for the re-inclusion of the Certification Association "Russian Register" into the Asia-Pacific Quality Register (APQR), I participated together with an international team, members of the Review Panel, and observed how the Russian Register has been successfully maintaining international standards despite facing very challenging circumstances.

### **Enhancements to the APQN Website**

To ensure better accessibility and engagement, I contributed to a comprehensive update of the APQN website. This effort included revising content to make it more informative and user-friendly for members.

### **Gratitude and Vision for the Future**

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the APQN Board members, Secretariat, and the entire APQN community for their unwavering dedication and support.

Together, we have navigated challenges and celebrated achievements, positioning APQN for continued growth and collaboration.

Looking ahead to 2025, I am committed to contributing further to our shared vision of enhancing higher education quality in the Asia-Pacific region. May 2025 bring success, health, and prosperity to all.

**Dr. Timur Kanapyanov**  
APQN Board Director  
*IAAR Deputy General Director for International Cooperation*

## Umankulova Onolkan



### Highlights of 2024

APQN continues to grow as a truly progressive network shaping the quality horizons of higher education across the entire Asia-Pacific region. It becomes more and more meaningful and valuable for the academic community — serving as the only platform that unites representatives from more than 50 countries to share experiences, best practices, and scientific achievements in all areas related to quality assurance and development of higher education.

Every year brings new achievements for APQN, and in 2024 one of the most remarkable milestones was the launch of the APQL – Asia-Pacific Quality Label. This initiative aims to highlight organizations that strive to meet the highest quality standards of our region. From now on, every organization that meets the requirements can seek APQL recognition. Of course, there is still much to do to make the label well-recognized and respected throughout the region — but it is a strong and confident step forward.

### Review Board 2024

As a member of the APQN Review Board, together with other colleagues, we processed around 30 new membership applications this year. Once again, we witnessed the great diversity of higher education institutions, accreditation agencies, and professional organizations applying for membership.

Our thorough and well-structured membership review procedures allow us to distinguish professional and trustworthy organizations from diploma and accreditation mills — which unfortunately still exist in our region. This process ensures that APQN remains a strong, credible, and reliable community that can be trusted by the wider education sector.

The role of APQN membership therefore becomes extremely important, since it provides verified information that APQN members are genuine contributors to the development of education and quality assurance — those who make our society better and more sustainable.

As a Review Board member, I will continue my rigorous and fair assessment of all membership applications to ensure the credibility of the APQN Membership Directory and its alignment with high professional standards. In 2025, I also plan to contribute to the revision of APQN membership standards and inclusion criteria.

## AAC and AGM 2024

In 2024, APQN successfully held another Annual Academic Conference (AAC) and Annual General Meeting (AGM), this time hosted in Saint Petersburg, Russia. I was honored to chair one of the important sessions with keynote speakers, where we discussed global issues in quality assurance — including trends in recognition, integrity, and trust-building across borders.

During the discussion, the role of UNESCO Bangkok and other regional partners in promoting quality assurance principles was especially highlighted. It was inspiring to see how the ideas of global cooperation and shared responsibility in quality assurance are being transformed into real, practical actions in our region.

## Contribution to DAQAR

Throughout the year, the EdNet Agency — which I lead and which is recognized by the APQR — contributed actively to the DAQAR database. We uploaded a number of accredited study programs and institutions, and in doing so, we identified some areas where technical improvements were needed to ensure smoother performance and user experience for all DAQAR beneficiaries.

After identifying the issues, they were quickly addressed to DAQAR administrators and resolved, which helped to ensure the stable and reliable functioning of the database for all users. I am proud that our contribution not only enriched the DAQAR content but also supported its technical development and usability for the entire community.

I strongly believe that together, through shared knowledge, trust, and collaboration, we can make APQN even stronger and more influential in shaping the quality culture in our region.

***Umankulova Onolkan***

*APQN Board Director*

*President, Agency for Quality Assurance in Education “EdNet”*

# 2024 REPORT ON FINANCE

| <b>2024 APQN Report on Finance</b>                       |  |                      |
|--|--|----------------------|
| <b>No.</b>   | <b>Categories / Programs</b>   | <b>Actual amount</b> |
| Balance carried forward from 2023 and the Previous Years |  | <b>273,851.86</b>    |
| <b>Income in 2024</b>                                    |  |                      |
| 1  | Annual Membership Fees, including Initial Joining Fees   | 31,254.17            |
| 2  | Review of Asia-Pacific Quality Register (APQR)   | 0.00                 |
| 3  | Review of Asia-Pacific Quality Label (APQL)  | 0.00                 |
| 4  | Interest received  | 737.32               |
| 5  | Contribution from AAC and Other Events   | 0.00                 |
| <b>Total income in 2024</b>                              |  | <b>31,991.49</b>     |
| <b>Expenses in 2024</b>                                  |  |                      |
| 1  | Audit Fees APQN Account  | 2,395.12             |
| 2  | Administrator's Salary & Administration of the Secretariat in 2024                                 | 15,000.00            |
| 3  | The Expenses for APQN Website in 2024 ( including the fee for new website design and maintenance ) | 3,944.54             |
| 4  | The Expenses for APQR Website in 2024  | 472.15               |
| 5  | The Expenses for APQR Database Development in 2024   | 3,000.00             |
| 6  | 2024 Sponsorship to AAC  |                      |
| 7  | Printing of the member certificates and documents for 2024 AAC                                     | 120.73               |
| 8  | Anthology Publications for 2024 AAC  |                      |
| 9  | Unexpected Projects and new project initiative   | 1,000.00             |
| 10   | Other Expenses (includes postage fee, banking fee and unexpected Expenses)                         | 213.80               |
| <b>Total Expenses in 2024</b>                            |  | <b>26,146.34</b>     |
| <b>Balance for 2024</b>                                  |  | <b>5,845.15</b>      |
| Balance carried forward from 2024 and the Previous Years |  | <b>279,697.01</b>    |

# 2024 APQN Annual Report



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