

FAQS - Scheme for Accreditation of EIA Consultant Organizations

GENERAL		
1	What is accreditation?	Accreditation is a process of verifying the capability of an organisation against a set of criteria to provide a service or product through third-party verification.
2	Is Accreditation by NABET for EIA Consultants Organization mandatory?	Yes. Vide Gazette Notification dated March 03, 2016 from Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change.
3	What is the association between NABET and QCI?	NABET is a constituent Board of QCI
4	What is the purpose of accreditation	EIA Study Report to be prepared by the EIA Consulting Organizations needs to be authentic, reliable, and transparent, which will enable the stake holders to use it as dependable tool to take a decision to go ahead with the project at the selected site / alternatives or discard to avoid future liabilities. The Accreditation of EIA Consulting Organization/s is to ensure their capability in preparing a quality EIA Report.
5	What are the benefits of accreditation?	Recognition of competence and capability of the EIA consultant Organizations, availability of a list of capability-verified consultants for different sectors on QCI and MoFECC website for all stakeholders, growth in business for the ACOs, reduced risks on investments for investors by choosing capable EIA Consultants.
6	Who can apply for NABET accreditation	Only registered organizations, such as government, public, private, partnership, proprietary firms and bodies registered under Society Act, Research Institutes and the like engaged in EIA Consultancy service can apply in the prescribed format as per NABET Scheme.
7	How the Accreditation Scheme has been developed?	The Scheme was developed after extensive interaction with experts in the field including academicians, consultants, regulators, industry, EAC members etc. The Scheme undergoes routine review and revisions based on the feedback from the organizations, assessment outcome, and expert advice in specific fields.
8	Can we suggest changes in the EIA Accreditation Scheme?	Yes. There is provision of sending suggestions on the Scheme on the QCI/NABET website. Also, all the updates wrt the Scheme is time to time available in the form of clarification which is uploaded on NABET Website. Link for the same is: http://eiameeting.qci.org.in/Environment/meetings.asp
9	How can one empanel as an assessor under the Accreditation Scheme?	The qualification and experience requirements for an assessor is mentioned on the QCI/NABET website. One can apply to CEO, NABET, if meeting such requirements.
10	Can one give feedback on the Scheme?	The ACOs may share their feedback related to the EIA accreditation process, its improvement and implementation or

		other related to the scheme. ACOs may provide their feedback through EIA online portal, or may send it through email also.
11	How can a complaint be lodged against NABET?	Complaints may be lodged by individuals or organisations to CEO, NABET.
12	Is there any validity of the approval of experts?	Yes An expert (IH/emp.) if approved for Cat. A or B, he /she should be given approval as per the latest assessment, If norms are not changing.
13	Is there any validity of the office assessment?	Yes An Initial Assessment shall be valid for the six month from the date of last day of office assessment. While in case of RA/SA the validity of the assessment will be for 3 months from the last date of office assessment.
14	What will happen if the ACO fail to meet assessment shortfall?	If the ACO not meet the requirement within 90 days the name of ACO will moved to List B and the ACO name last here for more 90 days. Afterwards, the ACO name will be moved to non-accredited list.

ACCREDITATION PROCESS		
15	How to apply for accreditation?	All the applications like IA/SA/RA, supplementary and scope expansion are to be filled through ONLINE PORTAL only, through the registered user id and password. FAQs and guidance is available on the EIA portal. NABET do not accept any application through email etc. The application will be submitted only when the fees is paid though the online portal. Incomplete applications/forms are not accepted and processed by NABET. All the Annexures should be filled by the concerned ECs/FAEs/FAA and TM etc with proper due diligence.
16	What are the minimum strength and facilities should an organisation have to apply for accreditation?	An organisation should meet the following minimum requirements before applying – i. 3 in-house experts- one EC and two other FAEs, who together should cover any of the Core functional areas (FAs) ii. IH or empanelled experts for balance FAs iii. In-house NABL accredited / MoEF&CC recognised lab. or agreement / MoU/ Empanelment with any such external lab. iv. A Quality Management System meeting the NABET Guidelines. v. Enabling office facilities for preparing an EIA.

17	Is it necessary to have in-house laboratory to apply for accreditation?	No. Please refer the answer above
18	How much time is required to get accreditation?	If all information are provided in completeness in the application, the process can be completed within 3 months.
19	Is there any Category of accreditation	The NABET Accreditation of EIA Consulting Organizations is of two Categories, namely, Category 'A' and Category 'B' in conformity with the Schedule of MoEFCC Gazette Notification No. S.O.1533 dated 14 th September, 2006, and subsequent Amendments. An Organization scoring minimum 60% marks during Stage-III office assessment by the NABET Assessors will be eligible for undertaking EIAs for all types of projects both for 'A' and 'B' Category of the Schedule. The Organizations scoring less than 60% but above 40% will be of 'B' Category and eligible for undertaking EIA for 'B' Category projects only as listed in the Schedule.
20	What is the period of accreditation?	Accreditation is given for a period of 3 years with the provision of a surveillance assessment after 18 months of accreditation
21	What are the eligibility criteria (qualification and experience) for an EIA Coordinator (EC) in Category A & B and how many sectors can s/he apply for?	A candidate for EC should be a bachelor in a technical subject or a Masters in science or humanities subject. S/he should have minimum EIA related experience of 7 years for category A and 5 years for Category B EC. A candidate may apply for maximum 5 sectors.
22	What are the eligibility criteria (qualification and experience) for a FAE in Category A & B and how many FAs can s/he apply for?	A candidate for FAE should be a bachelor in specific technical subject or a Masters in specific Science or Humanities subject, as applicable for the FA and mentioned in the scheme. S/he should have minimum overall and EIA related experience in the FA of 5 & 3 years for category A and 3 & 1 year for Category B FAE. A candidate may apply for maximum 4 FAs.
23	Who can be proposed as an 'empanelled expert' and what are the criteria applicable?	Any person meeting the qualification and experience requirements of the scheme and not a full time employee in any company may apply to be considered as an empanelled expert. A person academic institution or an NGO may also apply, with NOC from authorities as specified in the scheme Criteria for approval of an empanelled expert are the same as those for in-house experts. Additional points are- i. A person may be proposed by maximum 5 organisations for empanelment. ii. However, those in an academic institution or a NGO may apply from 3 organisations. iii. An empanelled expert may be proposed for maximum 5 sectors and 4 functional areas, all organisations put together.
24	What is meant by IA, SA and RA?	IA - Initial Accreditation (when primarily the potential of an applicant organisation is assessed) SA – Surveillance Assessment held after 18 months of IA (when the performance of the accredited organisation

		and compliance to conditions of accreditation are assessed) RA – Re-accreditation held after 3 years of IA (when the performance and improvements achieved are assessed).
25	When to apply for SA and RA application.	Application for SA/RA must be submitted three months prior to when SA/RA is due i.e. on completion of 15 months after date of office assessment for IA/SA/RA as applicable / as per the ACO's accreditation cycle. If ACO fails to submit a complete application for SA/RA, as applicable. Also, late fees will be charged by NABET. If ACO fails to submit the application, NABET shall shift the name to List-2 in the Monthly List. Kindly refer Clarifications to the 'Scheme for Accreditation of EIA Consultant Organizations: Version 3': dated 24 February, 2021 in this regard uploaded on NABET website.
26	What are NCs and Obs?	NC is the Non Conformance with the Scheme requirement, and Obs. is the Observation as recorded by the NABET Assessors during assessment process. organization is required to respond to the NC/s and Obs to the satisfaction of the Assessors and closure by them to proceed to the subsequent stages of assessment process.
27	What is the provision for a candidate/organisation to re-apply once it is not approved on qualification/experience/knowledge/other grounds?	An organisation or an expert is considered for re-assessment after a gap of 3 months with necessary application fee once the shortcomings have been addressed.
28	How can a fresh graduate enter the Scheme?	A fresh graduate may enter the Scheme as an Functional Area Associate (FAA) meets the relevant qualification requirements for the FA. A candidate may be proposed as an FAA for maximum two FAs, so that s/he can pick up the subject properly. S/he will work under the guidance of a FAE in the FA for 3 years then may be proposed as a FAE. Since FAA option is to encourage young professionals, a candidate is considered for FAE up to 5 years after obtaining the requisite qualification. For more experienced people provision of Team Member is there (see below).
29	Who can be a 'Team Member' and/or 'Mentor'?	A professional having work experience of more than 5 years' after obtaining the requisite qualification but no EIA exposure may be proposed as a 'Team Member' (TM) to work with an approved expert. The TM provision may also be used to expand the area of association for an approved expert. NABET needs to be informed PRIOR to putting a person as a TM. • All the proposed TM should fill the details in the online portal. The experience shall be counted from the date of uploading the details on the portal. • NABET do not charge any fees for TM.

		• TM do not get formal approval, they are only accepted by the EIA-AC. • A TM's work is assessed in the next assessment but no formal approval is necessary. • A TM may be proposed after getting the requisite experience as an EC and/or a FAE. Some senior professionals who may not like to visit site frequently as required by an EC or FAE, may serve as a 'Mentor', to guide and train AFAEs. A mentor is met by the NABET assessors but no formal approval is given.
30	What is procedure for up-gradation of organization from Cat. B to A after IA, SA & RA	For up-gradation from Category B to A, an ACO needs to score 60% or more overall in SA. In RA an ACO is assessed afresh and need to score 60% or more to get Category A
31	What is procedure for up-gradation an individual candidate from Cat. B to A after IA, SA & RA?	Similar to those for an Organisation as above (refer point 15). Any candidate who was assessed by NABET Assessors, can apply for up gradation after three months from the date of last assessment.
32	When is assessment online and offline?	During Covid conditions, NABET conducted all assessments through Video Conference mode. However, post-Covid IA and RA assessment are done through physical mode, but SA still continues with the VC mode.
33	Improvement in Quality of EIAs for an ACO in RA.	If an ACO in RA scores 40% to less than 50% in 'Quality of EIAs' aspect, accreditation is continued with an alert to the effect that the ACO must improve in this aspect.
34	What is six monthly clause?	To maintain the uniformity in assessment. NABET has applied this clause with the following condition: If the proposed candidate/s was assessed and approved within last six months, then s/he will not be re-assessed and will continue as per last approval, <u>however, need to be present for formal interaction</u>. Also, the following documents are required to be submitted by the concerned ACO to QCI-NABET for necessary verification: 1. Copy of MoU with the expert/s 2. Undertaking by Head of Organization 3. Copy of MoMs wherein s/he has been approved for the proposed sector/FA Also, if the candidate is applying for up-gradation/ scope expansion, the candidate should be available during the assessment.
35	Who are Assessors?	Assessors are professionals with minimum 12 years overall experience of which 8 years should be EIA related as defined in the Scheme. They are not connected in any manner with preparation of EIA reports by EIA Consultants.
36	How to qualify as an assessor under this Scheme	The qualification and experience requirements of an assessor are posted on the QCI/NABET website. One can apply to CEO, NABET, if meeting such requirements.

37	What are accounts details of QCI/NABET for online money transfer?	Bank details are available at NABET website: May follow the link below: https://nabet.qci.org.in/bank-details
38	How can I appeal against the decision of QCI/NABET	There is a 2 tier Complaint and Appeal mechanism – i. Review of decision by the Accreditation Committee ii. Appeal to be heard by an independent Appeals Committee formed by the NABET Board All complaints to be addressed to the CEO, NABET