



INTERNATIONAL  
STRATEGIC PLAN

INTER-EDU'S PATH

Association for  
internationalization of  
education and science

Inter-Edu

2018

The international strategic plan was published in November 2018 following broad consultation with the INTER-EDU community and external stakeholders. The strategic plan is available in electronic form and is updated as opportunities, needs and directions arise.

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## INTRODUCTION

International strategic plan: Path is formed with a reference to the international scope of the Association for internationalization in education and science Inter-Edu aiming at international presence, cooperation with educational institutions, associations and organizations and membership in foreign associations. Path begins with a vision of Inter-Edu as a globally significant association, known for its excellence in project administration and management and internationalization, and its high level of engagement with communities everywhere. To bring this vision to achievement, Path provides a strategy that reflects the important role of international engagement in advancing Inter-Edu's goals and commitments.

There is hardly any aspect of Inter-Edu's activities that does not have an international dimension, so Path plan provides guidelines for the international engagement of the association for the next three to five years and contains specific goals that can be achieved by Inter-Edu's team. The plan does not limit activity, yet it is strategic because Inter-Edu seeks to form partnerships that are strategic and substantial while developing its existing links and gaining the full benefits of ongoing relationships and expertise. This international plan shall be a subject to the changes that shape our world thus it is envisaged as a living document which is electronically presented and open to modification.

## THE PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

Path is constructed with a purpose to guide international engagement activities at Inter-Edu. It aims to identify things that can be achieved within the next three to five years and sets out measurable goals and specific strategies while indicating a broad strategic framework that will advance the international engagement, and promote information sharing, networking and transparency within Inter-Edu. It is in line with Inter-Edu's vision, mission and strategic goals:

- 1) internationalization and modernization of education and science through exchange of experiences and good practices;
- 2) networking through joint projects of educational and scientific character in order to provide for significant contribution to the development in education and science.

International engagement is essential to any organization in the twenty-first century and it must demonstrate an ethics and a politics that reflect their core values Inter-Edu perceives as both a measure of, and means to, success. Our commitment to sharing knowledge means that Inter-Edu is inherently committed to capacity building and public interest around the globe. This means that our association has a role in international development, and despite working in less prosperous country our commitment to international engagement means striving to make a contribution in the world.

## **FRAMING INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT AT INTER-EDU**

The Inter-Edu's strategic plan, Path, was published in November 2018 with a clear commitment to Inter-Edu's international engagement, and the objective to 1) increase the capacity of Inter-Edu's staff to engage internationally and 2) to strengthen Inter-Edu's presence as a globally prospective association.

This strategy focuses on international engagement: how the association should expand its global reach and strengthen its international partnerships. To be a globally significant association, Inter-Edu must demonstrate that it is engaged in projects on the major issues facing education and science. In that regard, the current projects are in the field of linguistics and foreign languages, critical thinking based curriculum, communication, research administration, agriculture, rural development, ICT, medicine, engineering, sports and life-long learning.

There is hardly any aspect of Inter-Edu's activity that does not have an international dimension. The association is involved in projects with internationally grounded perspectives and critical capacities to advance knowledge in areas of vital global concern such as sustainability as well as to disseminate this knowledge globally while promoting intercultural understanding within our communities. In that context this international strategic plan will help us to raise the bar in particular areas by setting goals and striving to meet them. It also allows us to consider the risks and opportunities on the international plane at present. While the plan offers strategic direction, it is not intended to impose limits on the international engagement that is ongoing at Inter-Edu. Instead, this plan provides guiding principles to achieve specific goals during the three- to five year time frame of the plan. It is a way to articulate Inter-Edu's values and its fulfillment will improve the flow and availability of information about our international engagement and creation of effective links.

To this end, one of the goals of the first year of this plan is to integrate a statement of ethics into partnership protocols. Geographic focus, bilateral relationships and specific priorities all need to be designed to maximize opportunities for the association.

The Path plan sets the goal of strengthening Inter-Edu's presence globally and refers to increasing the number of substantial strategic partnerships as a way of achieving this goal. Such partnerships are an important asset because they bring significant, on-going collaborations across several disciplines.

Diversity is a critical factor in achieving a balanced set of partnerships thus Inter-Edu aims to create relationships with a wide range of research subjects, geographical locations, languages and cultures. Anyway, there are some core principles that hold for all of them. Truly sustainable partnerships bring value for both parties. In building new partnerships and maintaining existing ones, we need constantly to assess the value brought to Inter-Edu and also to the partner by the relationship. This is the foundation of all our links. When we partner with peer institutions with similar interests and areas of expertise, the partnerships can bring similar advantages to each party. It is also important to maintain provincial and national networks to support our international endeavors.

In seeking to refocus our partnerships we need to map our current affiliations more systematically. This will serve the purpose both of showing us where we are and also in facilitating the strengthening of our existing connections or creation of new ones. Often external partners are more aware of our international connections and profile than internal stakeholders. To us, international partnerships are an important feature of research excellence and research collaborations are an important feature of any international strategy.

## **INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY AND STAFF**

To ensure that Inter-Edu has professional staff capable of supporting its international engagement, staff members at all levels need access to international opportunities in order to secure promotion of civil society and local communities, as well as for carrying out activities for encouraging moral values, strengthening interethnic relations and economic development for in the territory of Macedonia and beyond. For example, by attending training and conferences, staff members gain opportunities to network, exchange best practice with their international counterparts in order to contribute to the development of education and science through internationalization and creation of modern curricula and tools as well as to maintain their professional skills.

There are existing opportunities for staff activity at the international level, for example the variety of EU educative programs. It is important for staff to be aware of these opportunities and the value they bring to the work experience at Inter-Edu. The Statute of Inter-Edu encourages cultural diversity, dialogue, and debate and promotes effective intercultural professional development through learning programs for faculty and staff. As always, people are the cornerstone of Inter-Edu. We want to inspire the very best in our staff and partners, and we recognize the degree to which we continue to be inspired by the people and the communities with whom we work. This is our moment to harness the energies and strengths of an extraordinary institution to contribute to sustainable and positive change, both locally and globally. This is our moment to inspire.

## AREAS OF GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

International engagement at Inter-Edu literally knows no bounds and we need to set a framework for our objectives. While the three-to-five-year timeframe of the plan is one way of creating a focus, the geographical concentration is another way. Inter-Edu will have three areas of geographic focus for strategic engagement over the next three to five years: United States of America, Northern African countries and Europe. In each of the three areas of focus, the aim of this strategic plan is to concentrate efforts in order to make solid efficient partnerships with visible impact. We would anticipate that the subsequent plan would not have the same regional areas of focus, because significant shifts will already have been made.

Inter-Edu's engagement in each of these regions has a different starting point. While there are some similarities in our forward plan for engagement in each region, there are important differences in our approach. For example, there is a need to increase Inter-Edu's profile and make better use of existing expertise and connections for all three areas. There will be synergies across our approach in each region, but strategies are presented separately to emphasize the need to respond to different starting points as well as the different local conditions in each region.

United States are largest research partner, the source of substantial research funding, the location of many significant interactions, and a good example of how the time frame and the areas of regional focus might interact. Over the next three to five years, our strategy is to widen the cooperation with US institutions as well as to sustain the relationships which are currently in good health. We do not see a pressing need to make game-changing moves with regard to the United States.



The landscape of higher education and research in North African countries is in a state of rapid change and universities and research institutions are themselves in a state of flux. We need to step up our efforts in order to keep up with the opportunities offered in these highly dynamic environments. North Africa represents huge potential, but also risk which means that future engagement needs to be done in a strategic way with a view to using resources effectively. Anyway it is important to step up engagement in those countries now because they are in a rapid state of change due to investments in education. Our current engagement in North Africa is much less developed and it pops-up on creating joint project proposals with an expected outcome to bring to a very strong base of partnership and academic exchange. In establishing partnerships and building connections with North African educational institutions, we aim to create opportunities for project collaboration among the countries.



Compared with the other areas of international engagement, Inter-Edu has few formal connections in Europe. Europe is a particularly important region for research collaboration, and we are now beginning to take advantage of these strong links to

form strategic partnerships. There are highly developed European programs for project and research collaboration and a wide scope for new opportunities in research excellence. Our aim is to strengthen our own collaborations as well as to explore opportunities for joint partnerships because Europe has a large number of world leading institutions and offers research excellence and a great capacity building.



Over the next three to five years, we aim to build our understanding of Middle East and Latin America so that we can consider whether we ought to make it a focus of the subsequent plan. To that end our goal with regard to these regions is to set up a focus committee and commission a survey to identify the current strengths and linkages for cooperation.

**APPENDIX: MATRIX**

Year One	Create accessible communication tools for Inter-Edu's international activities
	Set objectives on project proposals
	Create project consortiums
	Secure funding for project proposals
	Produce a statement of ethics for international engagement
Year Two	Set up advisory committees on Latin America and Middle East
	Increase the number of partnerships within Europe and USA
	Set target for overseas project proposals and exchange activities
	Begin consultation on Inter-Edu representation in USA
	Implement recommendations on task force on research administration and project management
Year Three	Review issues to ESP in project management and agriculture and write recommendations
	Complete study on potential partner universities from Latin America and Middle East
	Launch task force on English for Agriculture Purposes
	Announce new strategic partnerships
	Start next cycle of international strategic planning