

World Intellectual Property Organization, WIPO

Institutional Capability Framework, ICF

Invitation to participate in the Pilot Phase

Introduction

WIPO invites expressions of interest from universities and public research institutions to participate in the pilot phase of the Institutional Capability Framework, ICF.

Universities and public research institutions play a central role in translating knowledge into societal, economic, and public value. However, institutions operating in similar environments, with comparable mandates and resources, often achieve markedly different outcomes in knowledge and technology transfer, K/TT.

The ICF has been developed to help institutions understand the internal conditions that shape these differences in capability and outcomes. It is a structured diagnostic tool that examines how K/TT functions in practice across the institution, including scrutinising leadership, capacity, culture, infrastructure, operations, stakeholder engagement, learning, and wider ecosystem linkages. Its purpose is to support institutional reflection, learning, and more informed improvement.

Following expert review and an initial Proof of Concept involving institutions across four countries, WIPO is preparing a broader pilot phase involving approximately 30 to 50 institutions globally. WIPO invites the participation of universities and public research institutions to whom this pilot would be of interest.

Purpose of the pilot phase

The pilot phase will support the further refinement and validation of the ICF across a broader range of institutional and ecosystem contexts. It will also allow participating institutions to engage early with a framework designed to strengthen institutional capability for more impactful K/TT.

This phase will help test the framework's usability, relevance, and analytical value at greater scale, while ensuring that its continued development remains informed by institutional experience from different regions and settings.

Value of participation

Participation offers institutions a structured opportunity to examine how K/TT functions in practice across the institution as a whole.

The value of the ICF lies in its ability to reveal institutional patterns that are often difficult to see through conventional reporting alone. Institutions may have formal strategies, policies, and structures in place, yet continue to experience weak coordination, unpredictable success in implementation, limited demand-side integration, or persistent gaps between leadership intent and operational reality.

Equally, positive outcomes in one area may depend on isolated effort rather than a stable and well-supported institutional system. By examining how formal arrangements, lived experience,

and institutional conditions align in practice, the ICF can provide a more credible basis for institutional enhancement, reform, and strategic improvement.

Participation can therefore provide institutions with:

1. A strong evidence base for institutional improvement, reform, or enhancement
2. Clear identification of where institutional systems are functioning well and where they are constrained
3. A grounded basis for prioritising action across leadership, support functions, and innovation practice
4. Early engagement with a WIPO-led framework intended for broad international use
5. A structured diagnostic output that can support internal planning and institutional development

Participation in the pilot

Participating institutions will be invited to nominate a focal point and support a limited number of activities during the pilot period. These will include sharing selected institutional information and materials relevant to K/TT, facilitating responses from a small number of personnel across relevant roles, and engaging with WIPO on the overall experience of using the framework.

WIPO will provide guidance and support throughout the process in order to keep participation manageable, constructive, and proportionate.

Confidentiality and institutional trust

The ICF is a developmental tool. It is intended to support learning and improvement within institutions. The ICF is not designed for ranking or comparative judgement between institutions since many other widely available tools do so.

Information shared during the pilot will be handled on the basis of trust, transparency, and institutional ownership. Sensitive information will be treated accordingly, and any wider analytical use beyond the participating institution will be undertaken only in anonymised form and in line with agreed conditions.

Expressions of interest

Institutions interested in participating in the pilot phase are invited to contact us at icf@wipo.int for further information on scope, timing, and practical arrangements.

Participation in the pilot offers institutions an opportunity both to help shape the development of an international framework and to generate a more useful evidence base for their own institutional development.