

## **IFPRA Academy (Qualification Scheme)**

In recent years IFPRA has been pursuing the possibility of a Qualification Scheme for parks professionals with the Eppley Institute, Indiana, USA. In 2010, President Torgeir Sorenson established a committee comprised of the following to pursue this initiative.

1. Dr. Christy Boylan **Chair**  
Landscape Consultant, IFPRA Vice-President, Secretary, IFPRA Europe, Dublin 15, Ireland
2. Stephen A. Wolter, Executive Director, Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands,  
Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, 47404, USA
3. Dr Cecil C. Konijnendijk, Professor, Green Space Management  
Danish Centre for Forest, Landscape and Planning, Faculty of Life Sciences,  
University of Copenhagen, Denmark
3. Prof RM Hendrick PhD (Vista), Associate Professor of Ornamental Horticulture,  
Director: School of Environmental Science, College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences,  
UNISA, Florida, South Africa

### **Brief:**

The committee was given two briefs by President Torgeir Sorenson

1. **Pursue the establishment of enhanced professional membership categories within IFPRA**
2. **Pursue the establishment of an IFPRA Qualification**

The committee have pursued their brief through a number of meetings via Skype technology and a workshop held in Copenhagen in November 2010 at which President Torgeir Sorenson participated.



### **IFPRA Academy Workshop in Copenhagen, Denmark**

(L-R) Dr Cecil C. Konijnendijk (Denmark), Professor RM Hendrick (South Africa), Dr. Christy Boylan, Vice President IFPRA World (Ireland), Torgeir Sorenson, President IFPRA World (Norway) and Stephen A. Wolter, Executive Director, Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands, Indiana University, USA.

**The following is a summary of the proposals which have emerged.**

**1. Proposed New Membership Categories**

Because of the diversity of education, experience and culture within IFPRA members it was decided that the proposed scheme should recognise those who have made significant contributions to their field and encourage them to pursue further studies for an IFPRA qualification.

It was agreed therefore to recommend two additional professional categories within IFPRA i.e.

- **“Certified Parks Professional” (CPP)** with a particular set of requirements and
- **“Certified International Parks Professional” (CIPP)** with a more stringent set of requirements

Those who are accepted as **CPP** can in time advance to the status of **CIPP** by further studies or other activity which has IFPRA recognition. These may be educational programmes, conferences, seminars or workshops organised by universities or professional organisations other than IFPRA.

**2. IFPRA Academy**

The second part of the committee’s brief to develop an IFPRA qualification was considered a more complex task and it was decided to establish the IFPRA Academy for that purpose.

It is proposed therefore that the IFPRA Academy and certification program will be administered by an international body that governs these programs independent of Ifpra’s board and governance process. This is critical to ensure the professional focus, rigor, and further developments of the international profession are the focus, and separate from the administration of IFPRA. As a result the IFPRA Academy and certification program will be administered by a board that will:

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**These proposals are detailed further hereunder:**

**1. Proposed New Membership Categories**

IFPRA proposes to strengthen its support for members by introducing opportunities for new membership categories and through the IFPRA Academy by providing programmes in education to facilitate members who wish to advance professionally within the organisation and in their career.

The proposed new professional categories within IFPRA are as follows:

- **“Certified Parks Professional” (CPP)** with a particular set of requirements and
- **“Certified International Parks Professional” (CIPP)** with a more stringent set of requirements

The requirements for “Certified Parks Professional” (CPP) will be as follows:

1. **The possession of a university degree or equivalent in a relevant discipline.**
  - Applicants will be required to submit a portfolio of evidence demonstrating a combination of formal education, continuing professional education, work experience, practicing professional experience to satisfy the education requirement
  - Requires an application and fee payment of \$55
2. **To have at least two years of experience in any aspect of the management of parks**
  - Management of parks includes green space management, public lands management, urban parks management, conservation area management, green infrastructure management, liveable places management, cultural and heritage area management, landscape architecture, biodiversity, street trees and urban forest management, watershed management, civic and ornamental areas management, etc.
3. **To have been a member of IFPRA for at least one year in the Professional category**

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The requirements for “Certified International Parks Professional” (CIPP) will be as follows:

1. **The possession of a university degree or equivalent in a relevant discipline.**
  - Applicants will be required to submit a portfolio of evidence demonstrating a combination of formal education, continuing professional education, work experience, practicing professional experience to satisfy the education requirement
  - Requires an application and fee payment of \$85
2. **To have a minimum of 5 years of experience in any aspect of the management of parks .**
  - Management of parks includes green space management, public lands management, urban parks management, conservation area management, green infrastructure management, liveable places management, cultural and heritage area management, landscape architecture, biodiversity, street trees and urban forest management, watershed management, civic and ornamental areas management, etc.
3. **To have been a member of IFPRA for 3 or more years in the Professional category**
4. Persons awarded the CPP (or eligible for same) may progress in time to a CIPP award through participation in the IFPRA Academy program over a 3 year period.
5. Successfully participation in the CIPP Academy Program includes the following:
  - Register and pay fee(s);
  - Attend IFPRA World Congress and attend required educational sessions;
  - 3 year distributed education study
  - Exam- test, portfolio, application of what is learned in the Academy to the individuals work, agency, or NGO with review of the portfolio by IFPRA Academy Board.

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## Condition admission for issuance CIPP

- The scheme will include grand person clause for 1<sup>st</sup> year only to recognize prior learning related to the contents of the CIPP Academy
- The requirements will include at least ten (10) years of experience in any aspect of the management, research, and/or education related to parks.
- Member of IFPRA for more than 3 years will be invited to apply for CIPP status, pay a fee of \$85 and be asked to complete a professional self-assessment application based on CIPP competencies- this will be used to inform the CIPP that they will be asked to participate in the Academy mentoring program (and create a personal self-development plan for IP gap analysis).

## Relevant Discipline:

- In regard to the university degree requirement the following disciplines are proposed in Parks Planning, Design, Construction, Management (promotion), and Conservation, including but not limited to:
  - Education and research related to parks.
  - Parks, Recreation, and Public Lands Management
  - Tourism and Special Events Management
  - Horticulture, Forestry and Landscape Management
  - Environmental Science and Ecology including Urban Ecology
  - Landscape Architecture
  - Urban Planning, Open Space, Environmental Economics Management
  - Arboriculture and/or Forestry Management
  - Agricultural Science
  - Environmental Management, Biodiversity
  - Conservation and/or Cultural Heritage Area Management
  - Gardens, Urban Art, and Urban Design Management
  - Nature Conservation
  - Asset and Facility Management
  - Sustainability- Community Gardening-Urban Agriculture Management
  - Public Health, Active Living, and Social
  - Emerging disciplines of quality of life, sustainability, climate change, and other issues that may be identified as the program develops.

## Experience:

- Applicants will be considered for the “**Certified Parks Professional**” (CPP) and the “**Certified International Parks Professional**” (CIPP) category in situations where their experience is appropriate and extensive but their level of education is below the standard required, e.g. they may not possess the required degree or the degree may not be considered relevant (e.g. Accountancy)
- Because of the diversity of education, experience and culture within IFPRA members the proposed new categories will recognise those who have made significant contributions to their field and encourage them to pursue further studies for an IFPRA qualification.

## Services available to CPP/CIPP

- Access to e-network for discussion forums, ask other experts bulletin board,
- Intranet – Access to web links for issues.
- High quality lectures on specific thematic issues relating to management of parks internationally.
- Access to online learning
- Resource and expert list
- Entitlement to use of the post nominal letters, *first name last name, CPP or CIPP*

## **Procedure**

The procedure for introducing the new categories following adoption by IFPRA will be as follows;

1. All members of IFPRA will be invited to apply to the IFPRA Academy for the proposed new membership categories CPP and CIPP). A special form will be available for the purpose.
2. Applications will require a curriculum vitae, statement, and a short paper of experiences the applicant believes they can share, provide to the other CPP/CIPP members, and competency analysis
3. The applications will be considered by members of the Academy upon review of the content and rigour of any education and training the applicant holds the individual's experience and a statement of their contributions to the profession.

## **Maintaining Status**

An individual may be given a renewal of a CPP/CIPP membership if they receive a certain amount of training every 2 or 3 years that is relevant, from a broad array of providers (IFPRA programmes, on line modules from Eppley Institute, local country universities, national professional organizations, cities, etc.) that meet a standard that IFPRA publishes. This standard can include international bodies such as ....

- IACET (International Association for Continuing Education and Training),
- ISA (International Society of Arboriculture),
- Bologna Process (European Higher Education standards), etc. and

## **Acceptable continuing professional development (CPD) hours to retain the credential**

- CPP or CIPP must provide evidence of 30 hours of relevant continuing education every 3 years, or
- A CIPP may mentor an Academy candidate over the 3 years of the candidate's participation as evidence of relevant continuing education.
- An IFPRA professional member, with approval of the Academy, may mentor an Academy candidate over the 3 years of the candidate's participation.
- CPP or CIPP members will be required to complete an application for renewal every 3 years, listing continuing education, providing dates/times of training attended, and submit a renewal application fee of \$60

IFPRA will publish the training standard, giving advance review requests to organisations requesting to see if a training event meets the IFPRA standard.

## **2. IFPRA Academy**

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- Serve as trustees of the IFPRA Academy and certification program and
- Comprise a maximum of 7 members and include the Chair of the IFPRA Scientific Task Force and
- Have the President of IFPRA World serve as an ex-officio member and
- Chair of the Academy board will serve as a Vice-President of the IFPRA World Executive,
- Be appointed by the World Commission to serve 3 year terms, and be eligible to serve no more than 2 consecutive terms (initial appointment for 3 years; 1/3 of the term expires annually after the initial appointments;)
- Reflect a broad variety of the world-international community,
- Govern the policies and programs of the IFPRA Academy and certification program to include the power to co-opt, establish sub-committees as needed, consult with the World Executive as needed, provide an annual report to the World Commission, incorporate the work of the IFPRA Science Task Force, set fees and approve expenditures of the Academy, generally guide the IFPRA Academy and certification program, and exercise other powers inherent in governing a credentialing and education function,
- Select an organization or organizations to administer the program and details of the IFPRA Academy and certification program including budget and financial reporting,
- Will serve without fee or compensation, however expenses for travel, lodging, and per diem may be reimbursed at the discretion of the IFPRA Academy board,
- Will meet at least 2 times annually; one time at the World Congress and one time mid-year to plan the Academy workshop and affairs of the Academy,
- Sustain the Academy through fees and charges, retaining revenues to reinvest in the continuation of the Academy and certification program including scholarship programme for participants, research grants for scientific study, CIPP exchanges, general support of IFPRA, and other reinvestments as the budget may allow,
- Pay a capitation fee of 10% to IFPRA from all IFPRA Academy and certification program revenues.

### **Competencies**

An initial stage is the identification of competencies that are considered appropriate for parks professionals. While many studies describe different sets of competencies for people in various organisations the following groups were considered applicable for an IFPRA qualification.

#### **Universal Competencies**

- To include communication skills, writing, speaking, etc.
- these are implied to be acquired, demonstrated, through experience, educational credentials, etc.; not measured or taught by the academy
- critical cross field competencies such as skills in IT, communications, language fluency, problem solving, critical thinking, and group work
- Since participants will have varying levels of these competencies, they will not be the focus of the IFPRA Academy.

## **Expert Competencies**

- From an individual's education, experience, and qualifications, CPP related
- To include professional skills for the particular discipline whether it is Horticulture, Landscape Architecture, Recreation, etc.
- Expert focus from degree, education, university programs, etc., to be assumed.
- It will be assumed that participants will have a range of these competencies; they will not be the focus of the IFPRA Academy.

## **Signature Competencies focused on CIPP – To be the focus of the IFPRA Academy program.**

- Behaviour demonstrated that distinguish this practitioner from others- it is assumed you have CIPP and have capabilities that can be expected of this person in their performance
- MITD: multi, inter, trans, disciplinary
- international approaches and context;
- focus on international seminar-education
- Academy teaches these as they relate specifically to parks management
- **Park Management Competencies**
  - These skills would apply to people at various levels within organisations where they would require
    - Different approaches to managing parks, urban spaces, conservation areas as may be learned in different countries...international focus
    - international approaches and context;
    - focus on international seminar-education of the CIPP Academy
    - Group projects and case study focus in the CIPP Academy

**The following are some general topics that will form the basis of the initial programme to be delivered through the IFPRA Academy. These will be expanded in greater detail when the Academy is launched in September 2012.**

1. Leadership and Management Techniques for Parks & Recreation professionals;
2. Marketing Techniques – Availing of commercial opportunities.
3. Exchange of Best Practices in different countries
4. Public Consultation Methods used in different countries for communicating with user groups (including politicians).
5. Park and Facility Asset Management-Renewal Planning
6. Green Infrastructure Planning
7. Economic and Economic Evaluation Techniques
8. The value and use of green space for promoting healthy communities.
9. Universal design and program access
10. International approaches to global issues and management approaches to global issues

## **Peer Review**

The next stage is to obtain peer review of the programme through the IFPRA Scientific Task Force before formally launching it in September 2012 at the IFPRA Europe Congress in Basel, Switzerland.

**Dr. Christy Boylan  
Chair, IFPRA Academy  
January 2012**