



International Mediation Institute

PROFESSIONAL MEDIATION WORLDWIDE
Promoting Consensus and Access to Justice
www.IMImediation.org

Meta-Culture

Dispute Transformation and Dialogue

IMI QUALIFYING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Introduction & Background

Founded in 2005, Meta-Culture is India's only full service conflict resolution consulting business. Meta-Culture was founded by Ashok Panikkar who has over 15 years of experience as a Dispute Resolution professional, of which 10 were in the USA and the rest in India.

Our corporate consulting team includes multinational mediators and consultants who are highly trained with decades of experience at organizations in India, North America, the Middle East, Africa and Europe. Our consultants bring the best practices in mediation, conflict management, design of grievance policies, organizational change management and consensus building to assist our clients with internal and external relationship challenges. Through our mediation, consulting and training services we give our clients the understanding, skills and tools to create strong relationships within their communities and organizations as well as with other stake holders. Our clients include organizations and businesses such as The World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Catholic Relief Services, Infosys Technologies, Accenture, Wipro Technologies, Nike, Novo Nordisk, Airtel Enterprise, Nokia, Nokia Siemens Networks, General Motors etc. as well as families and communities in conflict.

1. Mediator Experience

The Qualifying Assessment Program (QAP) must include a methodology for ensuring that Applicants have demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Program's Assessors a substantial level of experience as a mediator. The QAP must include clearly identified criteria on this requirement.

MFN Registration would be unachievable for mediators not having significant experience of mediating. Almost all MFN Registered Mediators have considerably more experience than the minimum recommended by IMI (200 hours or 20 mediations). The interview that follows the Practical Skills roleplay is designed to draw heavily on, and to assess, the candidate's actual experience. Moreover, to retain the status of MFN Registration, a mediator must, in addition to accumulating a certain number of CPD points every three years, certify that they acted as a mediator during the previous 3 years in at least 9 mediations cumulatively exceeding over 36 hours of mediation, of which at least 2 mediations occurred in each Registration year.

2. Mediation Knowledge

The QAP must include a methodology for determining that Applicants have demonstrated a strong understanding of general mediation theory and practice which may be based on written tests, essays, reports, theses interviews and/or other testing platforms.

Meta-Culture will test mediation knowledge in a three-stage process:

1. Applicants for certification will be required to write an essay in response to a prompt chosen from a list of topics in the field of mediation that Meta-Culture will compile. Applicants may choose to write on a different topic of their choice if Meta-Culture approves the candidate's topic in advance of the application.
2. Each applicant's knowledge will also be evaluated in a one-hour interview conducted by Meta-Culture staff assessors which will explore the candidate's knowledge of mediation theory and practice.
3. Each applicant will also have to participate in a role play where he/she will demonstrate their knowledge of process and capabilities with regard to handling difficult situations.

3. Mediator Skills

The QAP must include a methodology for the evaluation of candidates' performance in terms of the occurrence and effectiveness of mediation process and mediation techniques, against high competency benchmarks. The Evaluations/Assessments may be based on roleplay or live action assessments, and may include videotaped and online assessments such as web dramas, self-assessments, interviews, peer reviews, user feedback and other in-practice skill evaluations.

To test mediation skills, Meta-Culture will require applicants to mediate an approximately two-hour role-play, followed by a self-assessment and evaluation by Meta-Culture staff assessors. This process will be videotaped and applicants must be able to show adequate

knowledge and application of mediation skills in structuring the mediation and effectively facilitating a resolution to the extent possible.

Meta-Culture assessors will also observe at least one live mediation where we will verify the candidate's sensitivity, flexibility, technical competence and ability to be creative under difficult situations.

4. Program Transparency

The benchmarks and criteria applied by the QAP must be published and be openly accessible on the organization's website. Details of all approved programs will be listed on the IMI web portal www.IMImediation.org and will include a direct link to the credentialing organizations' websites.

All information relating to mediator certification requirements and processes will be available on the Meta-Culture Consulting website at www.meta-culture.in, as well as the Meta-Culture Dialogics not-for-profit trust site at www.meta-culture.org.

5. Program Integrity

Each Assessor must have substantial experience of assessing the performance of mediators. At least one of the Assessors on each Program must be independent of the QAP.

Meta-Culture consultants are extensively experienced at mediation, mediation training, mediator development, and mediation program evaluation. In addition to decades of combined mediation experience, our staff have trained mediators in India and the United States, supervised community mediation programs, and established mediation program monitoring and improvement systems. At a minimum, any Meta-Culture staff member involved in the certification of mediators will have conducted a minimum of 40 mediations, and will be required to have previous experience as a mediation trainer, coach, assessor or program manager. In addition to our in-house expertise, Meta-Culture will evaluate applicants with the assistance of individuals independent of our organization. These external individuals will be required to possess similar qualifications as the Meta-Culture staff assessors in order to be able to review and evaluate applicants.

6. Ongoing Monitoring of Program

The QAP must include a process for the ongoing monitoring of the performance and practice of the Assessors. IMI will liaise closely with all recognised program organizers to maintain a sustainable quality control system.

The assessors of Meta-Culture must meet the following requirements in order to maintain the status of an assessor:

- They need to have at least 50 mediations under their belt;
- Conduct trainings and assessments on a regular basis; and
- Attend at least 4 ongoing education classes related to the field of training/assessment in Conflict Resolution.

7. Commitment to Diversity

The QAP must be accessible on an equal basis to experienced mediators regardless of their professional affiliations, gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation or other personal characterization.

Meta-Culture has a multi-national staff that is committed to developing the field of Mediation in India and Asia, regardless of professional affiliation, gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation, or any other classification. Our certification process will be open to any individual able to meet the strictly professional criteria of the organization. In order to be inclusive we also have a series of fellowships and scholarships for deserving candidates who are unable to pay the normal program fees.

To ensure diversity in the certification program, Meta-Culture will conduct education and outreach activities aimed at community groups or media outlets that are likely to reach the widest audience possible, with special efforts made to include women; ethnic and racial minorities; economically and socially disadvantaged people and others who have thus far been underrepresented in the mediation community.

8. Does your organization provide other mediation training or assessment programs?

Meta-Culture has in the past offered open-enrollment basic mediation training programs for individuals without mediation experience. Meta-Culture also conducts

2-5 day training programs in Advanced Negotiation, Conflict Resolution, Third Party Dispute Resolution etc.

9. Are any of your mediation training or assessment programs designed for experienced mediators?

Meta-Culture offers internships and fellowships for experienced mediators. We also conduct 2-5 day training programs in Advanced Negotiation, Conflict Resolution, Third Party Dispute Resolution etc for advanced practitioners.