



International Mediation Institute

PROFESSIONAL MEDIATION WORLDWIDE

Promoting Consensus and Access to Justice

[www.IMImediation.org](http://www.IMImediation.org)

## BRDGES Academy

IMI INTER-CULTURAL QUALIFYING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (ICQAP)

### I. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

*Any ICQAP must meet the following general criteria in order to be able to qualify mediators for IMI Inter-Cultural Certification:*

#### A. Methodology

*All ICQAPs must implement a performance-based assessment methodology for assessing whether each candidate's performance meets each of the Substantive Criteria in Section II below.*

##### **First Stage.**

Each Candidate must submit a training/experience questionnaire providing evidence that:

**1) Intercultural Training** The candidate has completed at least 20 hours of training in intercultural mediation, a certificate of completion from a pre-approved training provider's registered program or by submitting curricula syllabi from courses completed;

**2) Online simulation/role-play** Each candidate shall complete a 2-3 hour online simulation/role-play of an international mediation. Mediation fact patterns will be drawn from ICC published actual international cases. Each role play will be recorded.

1. At least one week prior to the mediation simulation, each candidate shall prepare a written mediation strategy on how to manage the mediation process, which shall include identification of cultural patterns and preferences, if any, and design of appropriate processes and potential interventions. This Mediation Strategy shall be provided to the Assessors prior to the Role-play.

2. The Mediation Role-play or simulation shall be observed and assessed. There shall be two Assessors who shall have substantial experience evaluating performance of mediators. At least one of the Assessors shall be independent of the ICQAP Training faculty and preferably a member from IMI. The second Assessor shall be a member of BRDGES Academy's international faculty. The Assessment shall be a written, performance-based assessment which measures knowledge, self-awareness, applicable multi-cultural perspectives, and communication skills. Each Assessor shall score the Assessment.

### **Second Stage.**

3) **Evaluations.** Each party to the mediation shall complete a written assessment similar to that of the Assessor. After observing the Mediation Role-Play video, the Mediator shall complete a written Self-Assessment which shall address:

- Did he or she follow the Mediation Strategy, and if not, why not;
- Challenges he or she experienced and how he or she addressed them;
- Special issues and opportunities connected with the experience;
- Use of cultural theory in the Role-play, if any;
- How did one's own culturally-shaped perspectives or behavior affect the parties' interactions;
- Recognition one's culturally shaped perspectives and interactions during the Role-play and how they impacted the mediation;
- Identification of communication differences, and how such were facilitated

4) **Oral Interview and Evaluation.** The ICQAP Candidate shall meet with the two Assessors, who prior to the meeting shall have reviewed all of the assessments, including the Mediator's Self-Assessment; the Parties' Assessments and the both Assessor's Reviews. Discussion will focus on areas for improvement, if any.

5) The ICQAP candidate must receive positive evaluations from both Assessors in order to receive the recommended ICQAP.

## **B. Transparency**

*The benchmarks and criteria applied by an ICQAP must be published and be openly accessible on the organization's website.*

The BRDGES Academy, with its predecessor organization of the Cole Academy for International Mediation Training, has been in operation for six (6) years and is approved to be listed as a Continuing Mediation Education Provider (“CME”) by the Florida Supreme Court, the first fully regulated mediation certification program in the United States. As such, the BRDGES Academy has been offering CME (or CPD) courses to mediators for CME credits to over 6000 certified mediators in the State of Florida.

The President of the BRDGES Academy is Lynn Cole, also a certified IMI mediator and Past President and Chair of the Board of Mediators Beyond Borders, International.

The BRDGES Academy has its own website at [www.BRDGESAcademy.com](http://www.BRDGESAcademy.com). Linked to the BRDGES Academy is [www.LynnCole.com](http://www.LynnCole.com) where one can find Ms. Cole’s full CV.

## C. Integrity

*Each Assessor must have substantial experience of evaluating the performance of mediators and in working in inter-cultural situations. At least one of the Assessors on each Program must be independent of the ICQAP training faculty for Inter-Cultural Certification.*

**Assessor Qualifications and Monitoring.** The BRDGES Academy will develop standards and criteria for selection of professionals to hold positions of Assessors with the Academy. Mediation professionals with advanced training and international experience will be solicited as Assessors. For example, other experience mediation professionals, academicians and researchers may be asked to become BRDGES Academy assessors if they meet the developed standards and criteria.

In the assessment of any application or Role-play, at least one (1) of a team of two (2) assessors or two (2) of a team of three (3) assessors are required to be independent of the BRDGES Academy.

The President will be responsible for ensuring the selection of Academy Assessors who meet this independence standard, as well as qualification and competency standards.

The BRDGES Academy is reaching out to two other organizations, ACR and MBB, organizations for which Lynn BRDGES has served in elected capacities, to develop a co-monitoring of Assessors program.

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experience mediation professionals, academicians and researchers may be asked to become BRDGES Academy assessors if they meet the developed standards and criteria.

Yes. In the assessment of any assignment in the courses or in the Final Role-play, at least one (1) of a team of two (2) assessors or two (2) of a team of three (3) assessors are required to be independent of the BRDGES Academy.

The assessors need to sign an integrity declaration for each assignment stating:

*“To the best of my knowledge, this mediator has been assessed in line with my professional integrity, according to the ACB standards and requirements for professional assessments and on an equal base (independent of personal preferences, a specific mediation style or approach, training, or training institutes, professional affiliation, region, gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, or other personal characterizations or affiliations). I hereby attest that all marks were placed independently and to the best of my ability. Also I ascertain confidentiality of and privacy for the documents, information gathered as part of this assessment as well as the video materials.”*

The President will be responsible for ensuring the selection of Academy Assessors who meet the Academy's independence standard, as well as qualification and competency standards.

**Assessor Monitoring.** The BRDGES Academy is reaching out to two other international mediation and conflict resolution to develop a co-monitoring of the Assessors program.

**Assessor Training.** There will be an initial start-up training for all Assessors to understand their duties and responsibilities and to use training online.

Assessors will meet as a group quarterly to review and discuss how the system can be improved. A policy of assessor collaboration for dialogue and improvements will be established.

All Assessors will be required to enroll in and complete the BRDGES Academy Intercultural Courses for 20 credits.. All Assessors will be expected to maintain regular CME/CPD credits of a minimum of 16 hours every two years.

**Assessor Complaint Process.** BRDGES Academy considers transparency and issue-related dialogue to be of the utmost importance in maintaining the integrity of the IMI QAP process. At times, Assessor(s) and an applicant may disagree. If and when that happens,

a complaint panel consisting of two assessors not involved in the issue will address the issue. and consult with the disputing parties to reach a resolution.

## D. Diversity

The ICQAP 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. This should be clearly stated on each ICQAP's website.

The BRDGES Academy is wholly female owned. In addition, the BRDGES Academy Team currently is comprised of a German female who reads and writes in three (3) languages and lives in Munich, German; a second generation Lebanese male law student; Lynn Cole, an experienced female mediator trains in emotional intelligence. The faculty at BRDGES is international and diverse ethnically and religiously. Lynn COLE is committed to diversity in both her personal and professional life.

BRDGES also believes in corporate social responsibility, "CSR," and is committed to acting as a Global Corporate Citizen. We are incurring short-term costs that do not provide an immediate financial benefit to the company, but instead promote a positive social mission of improving intercultural communications to foster peace. We make it our practice to offer full scholarships to men and women from around the globe.

## II. SUBSTANTIVE CRITERIA

*Any training program that offers IMI Inter-Cultural Certification must meet these minimum substantive criteria when teaching mediators inter-cultural elements:*

### A. Knowledge

**1. Cultural Framework(s):** Ability to apply at least one recognized cultural theory in order to identify relevant Cultural Focus Areas for facilitating inter-cultural mediations ([See Appendix 1](#)). The theory and approach shall include an appreciation of similarities and differences among cultures.

**2. Self-awareness.** Ability to recognize one's own cultural influences and their possible effect on the mediation.

**3. Multi-Cultural Perspectives:** Ability to recognize each participant's culturally-shaped perspectives of behaviors or events. Ability to understand and appreciate participants' similar and different cultural perspectives, and possible imbalances between them. Ability

to manage ambiguities and mistakes that may emerge in multi-cultural situations. Ability to use the mediator's understandings of these possible differences and similarities to create a workable environment for all participants, including one that optimizes communication among them.

## B. Skills

**4. Communication:** Ability to adjust one's own communication style to the preferred styles of participants from other cultures, and to help participants communicate optimally with each other, including establishing suitable processes to facilitate communications.

**5. Preparation:** Ability to prepare for a mediation by identifying possible cultural patterns and preferences (e.g., identifying specific Cultural Focus Areas for each mediation) and designing potentially appropriate processes and possible interventions.

**6. Managing the Process.** Ability to detect whether, when and how cultural considerations (e.g. Cultural Focus Areas) may be impacting on the mediation process as the mediation progresses including abilities to adapt the process accordingly and design appropriate interventions, that also encompass any settlement and compliance phases.

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## General Information

Full legal name: The BRDGES Academy, d/b/a Law Offices of Lynn Cole, P.A.

Year organization formed and laws of the country: The Law Offices of Lynn Cole is a corporation organized under the laws of Florida and registered in the State of Florida to perform law related work since 1995.

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