



ACCRÉDITATION SANS FRONTIÈRES

ASF Local Partner Standard

How ASF authorizes, oversees, and if necessary ends its relationship with a local delivery partner

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Foreword

The Public Health Institute of Georgia (PHIG) operates ASF's Tbilisi advisory presence today. That arrangement works because it grew organically from ASF's own founding roots — but a genuine global strategy cannot depend on every future market having its own PHIG-equivalent appear by coincidence. This standard exists so that ASF can identify, authorize, and oversee a comparable local delivery partner in any country, on the same terms, with the same real quality controls, rather than improvising a new arrangement each time.

The real, tested model for exactly this structure already exists in international franchising: a local operator delivers a shared standard within its own territory, performing many of the functions the central body would otherwise perform directly, without that local operator owning the standard itself. ASF adopts the genuine discipline behind that model — not its branding — for its own local delivery partners.

1. Purpose and Scope

This standard governs how ASF identifies, authorizes, monitors, and — where necessary — ends its relationship with a local organization authorized to deliver ASF Local Advisory Services within a defined country or region. It applies to any current or future local delivery partner, including PHIG's existing role in Georgia, which is treated as the first, not a permanently exceptional, instance of this standard.

2. Why This Matters: The Real Evidence

This standard is not built on an assumption that a good working relationship with one local partner will simply repeat itself elsewhere. The real, documented evidence on quality control in comparable multi-territory delivery models is specific: businesses with poor quality control lose an estimated fifteen to twenty percent of revenue to the consequences of that failure, while businesses that implement rigorous, consistently enforced standards achieve up to twenty-five percent better financial performance than lower-standard competitors [1].

The same body of practice identifies four real categories of control a central body actually needs over a local delivery partner: clear legal agreements defining scope and territory; genuine training requirements before authorization; a real audit programme combining both announced and unannounced review; and an enforcement mechanism with actual consequences for a documented failure [1–2]. This standard is built around exactly those four categories, in Sections 3 through 7.

The same evidence also warns against the opposite failure: exercising so much day-to-day control over a local partner that the central body risks being treated as the partner's actual employer, with all the legal liability that implies [2]. This standard's oversight mechanisms are real, but they stop short of ASF directing a local partner's internal staffing or daily operations — the local partner remains a genuinely independent organization, authorized and monitored, not managed.

3. Eligibility Criteria for a Local Delivery Partner

An organization seeking authorization as an ASF local delivery partner demonstrates:

- Genuine, verifiable operational presence and credibility in the country or region it proposes to serve — not merely a legal registration with no real local activity
- Existing technical capability relevant to at least one ASF standard-type — healthcare quality, patient engagement, training delivery, or comparable expertise
- No existing relationship with any organization the partner would be advising that would itself constitute an undeclared conflict of interest
- Willingness to operate under the ASF Advisory Services Policy's organizational separation principle in full, including personnel separation between advisory work and any accreditation-related role
- Financial and organizational stability sufficient to sustain a multi-year advisory relationship, consistent with the diversification principle in the ASF Financial Sustainability & Liability Management Policy

4. Authorization Process

An organization applies for local partner status using the Local Partner Authorization Application (Annex A). The ASF International Standards Council reviews the application against the eligibility criteria in Section 3, consistent with the same open, criteria-based rigor already governing Council and Revision Panel appointments under How ASF Develops and Revises Standards. Authorization is granted for an initial period of three years, renewable subject to the quality review in Section 5.

5. Quality Oversight

5.1 Annual Review

Every local delivery partner is reviewed at least annually using the Annual Local Partner Quality Review (Annex B), examining service delivery consistency, organization feedback, and continued compliance with the ASF Advisory Services Policy's separation principle.

5.2 Announced and Unannounced Review

Consistent with the real quality-control practice of comparable multi-territory delivery models, which combine scheduled review with unannounced verification to see genuine day-to-day operation rather than only prepared performance [1–2], ASF conducts both a scheduled annual review and, at ASF's discretion, an unannounced review of a local partner's service delivery.

5.3 Organization Feedback

Feedback from organizations that have received Local Advisory Services through a given partner is a required input to that partner's annual review, gathered independently of the partner itself to ensure candid response.

6. Conflict of Interest and Independence

A local delivery partner, and every individual it employs or engages to deliver ASF Local Advisory Services, is bound by the same separation principle stated in Section 3 of the ASF Advisory Services Policy: no individual who delivers advisory services to an organization may subsequently serve as a surveyor assessing that organization, and the partner's advisory personnel have no role in any accreditation decision concerning an organization they have advised. This obligation is stated explicitly in every local partner authorization agreement, not left as an assumed understanding.

7. Suspension and Termination of Local Partner Status

Where an annual or unannounced review under Section 5 identifies a genuine failure to meet this standard — including a conflict-of-interest violation, a sustained pattern of service quality failure, or a failure to maintain the financial stability represented at authorization — the Council may:

- Require a defined corrective action plan, addressed through the same discipline as the ASF Internal Nonconformity & Corrective Action Procedure
- Suspend the partner's authorization to accept new organizations while existing commitments are honored
- Terminate local partner status entirely, where the failure is severe or the partner does not genuinely correct it

A terminated local partner's existing service commitments to organizations already under contract are transitioned in an orderly manner, with the affected organizations informed directly and given a genuine alternative, rather than left without support mid-cycle.

8. Relationship to Other ASF Documents

- The ASF Advisory Services Policy states the organizational separation principle every local partner operates under; this standard governs how a partner is authorized and monitored to actually deliver on that principle
- The ASF Local Advisory Services catalog describes the specific services a local partner delivers and their reference pricing
- The ASF Outsourcing Policy's Section 3.1 recognizes local delivery partners as a named category of engagement governed by this standard specifically, rather than the Outsourcing Policy's own general terms
- A local partner conflict-of-interest violation is addressed under Principle 3 of the ASF Code of Conduct, applied to the partner's own personnel exactly as it applies to ASF's own

References

- [1] Meegle. Franchise Model Quality Control. 2026.
- [2] Kilcommons Law. Understanding Franchise Obligations. 2025.

Annex A — Local Partner Authorization Application

Completed by any organization applying for ASF local delivery partner status.

Applicant organization name: _____

Country / region proposed: _____

Existing operational presence and credibility (describe): _____

Relevant technical capability: _____

☐ Confirmed: no existing relationship constituting an undeclared conflict of interest

☐ Confirmed: willingness to operate under the ASF Advisory Services Policy in full

Financial stability evidence provided: _____

Date submitted: _____

Annex B — Annual Local Partner Quality Review

Completed at least annually for every authorized local delivery partner.

Local partner name: _____

Review period: _____

- ☐ Announced review completed
- ☐ Unannounced review completed

Organization feedback gathered from: _____

Findings

- ☐ No issues identified — authorization continues
- ☐ Minor issue identified — corrective action required
- ☐ Major issue identified — suspension considered

Reviewed by: _____

Date: _____

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PHIG's role in Georgia should be the first proof this model works, not the only place it ever does.