

# **“International Specialist and IUGA Recognized Expert (*InSpIRE*) in Pelvic Floor Dysfunction”**

## **Manual for Applicants**

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## Introduction

### Background

Although there are many good and established training programs, urogynecology is not a globally recognized subspecialty. Whether a cause or an effect of the lack of official recognition, there are also disjointed and minimal levels of training and standards, if they exist at all. As a result, urogynecological procedures are conducted by medical professionals with varying specialties, backgrounds, expertise, and levels of training and experience.

### Mission and Objectives

This program is designed to develop a recognition program to verify if a practitioner has acquired a standard level of urogynecological training and education around the world, as well as to foster the development of subspecialization in countries without official certification. InSpIRE Recognition (**not a certification or accreditation**) will be an external confirmation that the recognized person has successfully completed certain learning objectives and has obtained a minimum level of knowledge and experience in the field of urogynecology.

While training or standardization programs cannot guarantee that a medical professional can provide high-quality services in every situation, through this recognition program, we can confirm that those holding the InSpIRE Recognition have obtained a minimal level of training in urogynecology. This does not guarantee a level of skill or talent, but it does ensure a standard level of theoretical knowledge and a minimum level of practical experience.

This recognition program has important benefits for patients, practitioners, IUGA, and the field of urogynecology and can be an important first step in the long-term goal of establishing urogynecology as a subspecialty around the world. Over time, these various stakeholders will come to rely upon the recognition and its value.

IUGA commits to promote those who have earned the InSpIRE Recognition by including this information on their 'Find a Provider' profile page and listing them on a dedicated webpage on the IUGA website.

### **Benefits to patients**

The vision of IUGA is “to improve the lives of all women with pelvic floor disorders, at all stages of life, through providing excellent healthcare.” An obvious addition to this vision is helping patients to be able to identify where and from whom they can receive this excellent healthcare. The InSpIRE Recognition will help women with pelvic floor disorders identify which urogynecology practitioners have acquired a minimum level of training and experience. An external verification such as this official recognition can provide a patient peace of mind and confidence in the medical professional with whom they are working. Patients may feel reassured that each practitioner has obtained this standard level of theoretical knowledge and a minimum level of practical experience, as opposed to visiting a self-proclaimed expert in the field. This may also result in more patients seeking treatment due to increased levels of reassurance.

### **Benefits to medical professionals**

In many places globally, there is no method to identify or verify experts in the field of urogynecology. As such, those with expertise in this area have no opportunity to differentiate themselves from those without this expertise. Medical professionals who are InSpIRE recognized would have the ability to promote themselves as an expert in the field of urogynecology, grow their careers, and increase their patient base and credibility.

### **Benefits to the field of urogynecology**

In the last two annual IUGA membership surveys, one challenge that has been expressed by various members is that urogynecology is not a recognized subspecialty in many places around the world. As such, any practitioner can call themselves an expert in urogynecology regardless of their experience, knowledge, or training. Differentiating experienced practitioners from those with a minimum level of knowledge and practical experience creates public awareness and trust in those practicing in this field. This will lend credibility to the field as it becomes clearer that those with this recognition have specialized knowledge and added value to patients.

## Eligibility and Application Process

### Requirements

Applicants will be required to provide detail on their experience, current role, ongoing educational activities plus involvement with teaching and training. Following a points system, each applicant's eligibility for InSpIRE recognition is determined, accompanied by guidance on sustaining urogynecology involvement to uphold this status.

To qualify for recognition, applicants must meet the following mandatory criteria: a minimum of five years of consultant gynecological experience, working at least three days per week, of which one full day in urogynecology. The applicant needs to be part of, or have access to, a multidisciplinary urogynecology or pelvic floor team, and have attended (either in-person or virtually) at two of the last five IUGA Annual Meetings.

Other requirements include a minimum length of membership in IUGA of 5 years before application and the completion of IUGA courses and other clinics or teaching activities.

Please note that the InSpIRE recognition is **only applicable to physicians from countries without an official urogynaecology accreditation**. This recognition is valid only on a personal level and does not apply to institutions.

This program is designed for individuals with an intermediate education in the field, positioned as an intermediary step between basic training (which is covered comprehensively in the fundamentals course) and a comprehensive subspecialty.

### Application Form

[Apply Here.](#)

## Evaluation and Assessment

### Selection Process

Step 1: Complete the [application form](#).

Step 2: All applications are reviewed by a taskforce consisting of 8 members from the Education Committee and the Fellowship Development Committee, including their respective chairs. The taskforce members bring diverse backgrounds and expertise, including physicians specializing in urogynecology from regions where the subspecialty is not yet officially recognized. Final approval or rejection of candidates is at the discretion of the IUGA Board.

### Requirements for renewal

The recognition will be valid for a period of 5 years after which it can be renewed, by filling up a new application form.

### **Application period**

Application Period: The application window for the InSpIRE Recognition opens once per year. The next application cycle will run **from November 15, 2024, to February 1, 2025**.

### **Recognition**

Your recognition is valid for 5 years. Newly inducted InSpIRE practitioners receive acknowledgment at the IUGA Annual Meeting, as well as on the IUGA website.

## **Cost of submission (2024)**

Submission fees for the InSpIRE Recognition are separate from IUGA membership fees and must be paid independently. These fees apply to both the initial application and renewal, regardless of the outcome of the application (whether recognition is granted or not).

Fees are based on the World Bank Classification of Countries (Categories A, B, C). You can view the complete list of country classifications by clicking [here](#).

- USD 165.00 (Cat A)
- USD 135.00 (Cat B)
- USD 0.00 (Cat C)

## **Code of Conduct and Policies**

In an effort to maintain the integrity of the InSpIRE Recognition Program, we acknowledge the challenge of verifying external learning activities, such as attending conferences, engaging in teaching or research activities, participating in clinics, and completing courses. While we request certificates of attendance for events whenever possible, we recognize that some activities may not provide formal documentation.

Applicants are entrusted with an honor system, providing truthful and accurate information about their external learning endeavors. This commitment to transparency and honesty is essential in upholding the credibility and reliability of the InSpIRE Recognition. Applicants are encouraged to prioritize the authenticity of their submissions, contributing to the program's goal of recognizing individuals with a genuine commitment to advancing their knowledge and skills in urogynecology.

## **Contact Information**

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