



Australian Government
Department of Education and Training

Australian International Education: Enabling Growth and Innovation

2016-17 Program Guidelines



Purpose

The purpose of these program guidelines is to provide a framework for the operation and administration of the *Australian International Education: Enabling Growth and Innovation* project fund. Projects funded through this program will support implementation of the [National Strategy for International Education 2025](#).

These program guidelines do not create any legal, equitable or other relationship between the Commonwealth and an applicant.

Contact details

If you have any questions regarding the Australian International Education: Enabling Growth and Innovation program, or if you require a hard copy of these guidelines, please:

- email ies@education.gov.au, or
- visit internationaleducation.gov.au.

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Australian International Education: Enabling Growth and Innovation

Part One: Program Overview

1. Introduction

The Department of Education and Training (the department) is responsible for administering the *Australian International Education: Enabling Growth and Innovation* fund (the fund). The fund was announced in 2016 and will provide \$3 million a year over four years, from 2016-17 to 2019-20.

These program guidelines set out the funding rules for the *Australian International Education: Enabling Growth and Innovation* program (the program). Projects funded through the program will support implementation of Australia's first [National Strategy for International Education 2025](#) (the National Strategy). The program aligns with the requirements of the [Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines](#).

This program contributes to Outcome 2¹ in the department's Portfolio Budget Statements.

2. Program Overview

The National Strategy sets out a 10-year plan for developing Australia's role as a global leader in education, training and research. It aims to build on the current success of the system to grasp new opportunities. The strategy is built on three pillars:

Pillar 1 – Strengthening the fundamentals

Goal 1: Building on a world-class education, training and research system

Goal 2: Delivering the best possible student experience

Goal 3: Providing effective quality assurance and regulation

Pillar 2 – Making transformative partnerships

Goal 4: Strengthening partnerships at home

Goal 5: Strengthening partnerships abroad

Goal 6: Enhancing mobility

Goal 7: Building lasting connections with alumni

Pillar 3 – Competing globally

Goal 8: Promoting our excellence

Goal 9: Embracing opportunities to grow international education

¹ Promote growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality higher education, international education, and international quality research, skills and training.

In conjunction with Austrade's market development roadmap, [Australian International Education 2025](#) (AIE 2025), the National Strategy positions Australia to compete globally through strengthening our onshore services and maximising new and emerging opportunities.

3. Funding amount and funding period

In 2016-17, \$2.1 million is available through this grants process. The remaining \$0.9 million will fund research and other strategic projects commissioned by the Council for International Education (the Council) or the department to inform the implementation of the National Strategy.

Applicants may request between \$20,000 and \$500,000 per project per year for a maximum of four years.

The funding will be fixed in Australian Dollars. It will not be increased for cost increases including currency fluctuations.

4. Program Objectives

The objectives of this program are to support projects that strengthen the fundamentals of Australia's international education sector, promoting partnerships between Australian institutions, students, business and overseas counterparts. This will support delivery of the Australian Government's [National Strategy for International Education 2025](#).

4.1 Strategic Objectives

Projects must demonstrate how they meet one or more of the following strategic objectives.

- Strengthen strategic engagement with Australia's key international education partners
- Facilitate opportunities for Australian education providers to engage regionally through policy collaboration and technical assistance
- Support the two-way mobility of students, academics and researchers
- Promote Australia's education, training and research excellence
- Increase international research collaboration
- Enhancing the student experience, including building a strong and sustainable international student voice
- Promote the benefits of international education to the Australian community
- Establish an evidence base to inform policy and strategic operations for Australian international education stakeholders
- Contribute to the ongoing internationalisation of Australian education
- Enhance Australia's ability to compete globally
- Developing a nationally-consistent approach to marketing and branding of Australian international education

The Council will provide advice to the Minister for Education and Training (the Minister) on annual priorities for implementation. The department, on behalf of the Minister, may from time to time amend the strategic objectives above to reflect the Council's priorities.

Part Two: Eligibility

5. Eligible Applicants

To be eligible you must be one of the following:

- an Australian entity with an Australian Business Number (ABN) or an Australian Company Number (ACN)
- a consortium with a lead organisation²
- a registered charity or not-for-profit organisation
- an Australian local government body
- an Australian State/Territory government body
- a corporate Commonwealth entity, or
- an Australian statutory authority.

Applications from consortia are acceptable, provided you have a lead applicant who is the main driver of the project and is eligible as per the list above.

6. Eligible Activities and Expenditure

Projects must clearly contribute to the goals outlined in the National Strategy. The types of activities eligible for funding through this program include, but are not limited to:

- individual or joint research projects with Australian partners and/or global partners
- conferences, workshops, symposia
- scoping studies to inform the development of subsequent work
- communications or advocacy campaigns.

6.1 How we verify eligible expenditure

If your application is successful, we may ask you to verify the project budget that you provided in your application when negotiating your funding agreement. You may need to provide evidence for major cost items.

You will need to detail and cost all in-kind contributions. In-kind costs must be directly related to costs of delivering the activities of the project. They can include salaries of staff for the time they are involved and other costs incurred for the duration of these activities.

The funding agreement will also include details of the evidence you may need to provide when you achieve certain milestones in your project. This may include evidence related to eligible expenditure.

If requested, you will need to provide the agreed evidence along with your milestone achievement reports.

You must also keep payment records of all eligible expenditure, and must be able to explain how the costs relate to agreed project milestones and activities. At any time, we may ask you to provide

² The Australian Government recognises that some organisations may seek to form consortia in order to apply for funding. Consortia are eligible to apply and the relevant conditions applicable to consortia are at 7.3.

records of your paid expenditure. If you do not provide these records when requested, the expense may not qualify as eligible expenditure.

6.2 Overseas expenditure limits

Where funds are to be spent overseas, consistent with the funding agreement, such expenditure must significantly improve the competitiveness, productivity and sustainability of Australia's international education market, especially in line with government priorities.

Eligible activities under the program may be conducted in Australia or overseas and may be conducted by the applicant's staff, contractors or subcontractors. Eligible overseas activity expenditure is not capped but will be reviewed as part of the assessment process. In deciding whether to recommend a project with large amounts of overseas expenditure we will consider matters such as:

- the appropriateness of carrying out activities overseas rather than in Australia
- cost implications
- the benefits associated with conducting the activity overseas in helping the project meet the program objectives
- the benefits for the applicant or Australian partners from the activity occurring overseas.

6.3 Travel costs

International travel and associated costs to partner countries and living allowance for periods of time in those countries by Australian personnel directly involved in project activities are considered eligible expenditure. Travel and living allowance expenses must not exceed 20 per cent of the grant funds awarded. Eligible costs are:

- travel costs for international economy class return airfares and domestic economy class transportation while overseas
- living allowance including accommodation and meals, during periods of time overseas
- visa and insurance costs associated with travel to global partner countries.

Expenditure is limited to the reasonable cost of accommodation and transportation required to conduct project activities overseas.

Specific travel costs not identified in the application are not eligible unless the department approves a request from the applicant prior to the travel taking place.

Part Three: Applications and Approval

7. Applications

7.1 Overview

In 2016-17 funding recipients will be selected through a closed or targeted non-competitive process. The Minister or his delegate will determine the allocation of funding with advice from the Council for International Education.

We will publish information relevant to the funding round, including the government priorities applicable to the round, on the following websites:

- <https://education.gov.au>
- <https://internationaleducation.gov.au>
- GrantConnect (<https://grants.gov.au>)

Eligible organisations will be approached by the department and invited to submit a proposal for funding. Applications for funding must be submitted to the department .

You are responsible for ensuring that your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information will exclude your application from further consideration. We will first assess your application against the eligibility criteria. Only eligible applications will proceed to the merit assessment stage.

7.2 Application process timing

Applications must be submitted to the department by the closing date identified in your invitation to apply. The Australian Government will only accept a late application in exceptional circumstances where permission has been granted by the department in advance of the closing time and date.

7.3 Applications from consortia

Some organisations may apply as a consortium to deliver projects. A consortium is two or more organisations who are working together to combine their capabilities when developing and delivering a project.

If you are submitting an application on behalf of a consortium, a member organisation or a newly created organisation must be appointed as the 'lead organisation'. The lead organisation will enter into a funding agreement with the Commonwealth and will be responsible for the project. The lead organisation must complete the application form and identify all other members of the proposed consortium in the application. The application must include a letter of support from each organisation involved in the project. Each letter of support should include:

- an overview of how the consortium will work together to complete the project
- an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise of the consortium members
- the roles/responsibilities of consortium members and the resources they will contribute (if any)
- details of a nominated management level contact
- details of the lead organisation.

8. Selection Criteria

The department will consider all eligible applications and assess them against the goals of the National Strategy, in addition to the following criteria:

- the project proposal meets at least one of the following requirements:
 - conducts research into factors influencing international education policy
 - builds on strong and emerging international partnerships
 - fosters an international outlook
 - attracts international students and researchers
 - ensures a positive and rewarding student experience
 - embraces opportunities to grow Australia's international education market
- the project proposal is the result of an agreed bilateral or multilateral outcome

- a clear strategic focus is articulated, aligning with the National Strategy
- the project will benefit the Australian international education community
- measures of success have been articulated and are achievable
- the proposal demonstrates overall value for money.

The department will give strong consideration to projects that meet the above selection criteria and include project partners that will match Commonwealth funding and/or contribute in-kind support to the project.

The department, in consultation with the Council, may consider adding specific selection criteria for specific projects, reflecting priorities identified by the Council.

9. Assessment

The department will consider project proposals against the selection criteria outlined in these guidelines. Each project will be assessed on its ability to meet the objectives of the program, and the extent to which it progresses the implementation of the National Strategy. The department will also take into account the total funding request and whether the projects presents value for money.

Projects will be presented to the expert members of the Council before the department provides funding recommendations to the Minister. The Minister, or his delegate, will make the final decision regarding funding.

10. Reporting

All recipients are required to provide reports to the department at specified instances. Individual funding agreements will outline the reporting obligations of recipients.

Part Four: Funding Agreement

11. Funding Agreement

Successful organisations will be required to enter into a funding agreement with the Commonwealth, represented by the department. The funding agreement sets out the nature of the relationship between the Australian Government and the funding recipient.

The funding agreement will specify, among other things, the terms and conditions of the funding agreement, the objectives, milestones, key performance indicators, timeframe, budget, reporting and audit requirements.

All funding will be subject to the terms and conditions set out in the funding agreement, including conditions relating to the deposit of funds, auditing and unspent grant funds. Breach of an organisation's funding agreement may result in a requirement to repay funding to the Australian Government.

All funds provided by the department must be appropriately expended in accordance with the approved budget prior to the end of the funding period identified in the funding agreement.

12. Acknowledgement of Funding

Successful applicants will be required to acknowledge the Australian Government's support for the projects by including the Department of Education and Training's logo on all appropriate materials, including publications, promotional materials and activities relating to the projects. The following acknowledgement must also be included:

This project is supported by the Australian International Education: Enabling Growth and Innovation project fund, Department of Education and Training. For further information, please visit www.internationaleducation.gov.au.

Part Five: Program Governance

13. Roles and Responsibilities

13.1 Minister

The Minister will approve the expenditure of funds on projects through the grant program.

13.2 The Council

The Council for International Education is responsible for overseeing and driving the implementation of the National Strategy. With regards to the 2016-17 round of this grant program, the Council will review and endorse proposed projects prior to the department making recommendations to the Minister.

13.3 The department

The department is authorised to make decisions in relation to the administration of the program, the interpretation of these program guidelines and other documents used in, or in relation to, the fund. The department may make policies, authorisations and delegations, consider exceptions, and issue guidance documents for the administration of the program, but the policies and documents must not be inconsistent with these program guidelines.

The department is responsible for:

- ensuring overall efficient and effective administration of the program
- determining the eligibility of applications for support and funding
- considering approving and rejecting applications for funding
- entering into funding agreements on behalf of the Commonwealth with recipients
- approving variations to the funding agreement
- authorising payments of funding by the Commonwealth to recipients.

The department will carry out other functions as authorised by the Minister.

14. Announcements

The Minister and/or the department may publicly announce successful projects, including details of successful recipients and funding.

Such public announcements may also include information provided by successful applicants or compiled or obtained during the assessment of applications and negotiation of funding agreements that the Commonwealth determines is not confidential, following consultation with applicants as required.

The department will also publish details of successful projects on its website, as required under the [Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines](#), and on GrantConnect.

15. Conflict of Interest

The department has procedures for managing disclosure of interest by departmental staff involved in assessment of applications. Conflicts of interest will be managed in accordance with these procedures.

The department's procedures for managing disclosure of interest are in accordance with the requirements of the APS Code of Conduct, Section 13 (7) of the *Public Service Act 1999*, and are published on the department website.

Applicants are required to disclose any conflict of interest that may impact on their application.

16. Complaint Handling Mechanism

All complaints must be lodged in writing. Any questions you have about the decisions for the program should be sent to ies@education.gov.au. Alternatively, you can lodge a complaint on the [department's website](#).

If you do not agree with the way the department has handled your complaint, you may complain to the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#).

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on 1300 362 072 or by writing to:

Commonwealth Ombudsman
GPO Box 442
Canberra ACT 2601

The department will not provide individual feedback on why applications were unsuccessful. Applicants are responsible for all costs incurred in the preparation and lodgement of their applications.

17. Contact Details

Strategic Policy Section, International Strategy Branch, International Group,
Department of Education and Training, LOC: C50M10, GPO Box 9880, Canberra ACT 2601 or
ies@education.gov.au.

18. Confidentiality and Protection of Information

The use and disclosure of information provided to the department, and by *Applicants* (including information provided as part of any application) is regulated by the relevant provisions and penalties of the *Public Service Act 1999 (Cth)*, the *Public Service Regulations*, the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*, the *Crimes Act 1914 (Cth)*, the *Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth)* and general law.

The relevant parties will use and disclose the information provided by Applicants for the purposes of discharging their respective functions under these program guidelines and otherwise for the purposes of the fund and related uses. The department may *also*:

- use information received in applications in any other departmental business;
- use information received in applications and during the performance of the Project for reporting and consultation with other Commonwealth, State or Territory government agencies; and
- during the assessment of applications, and in the course of administering the fund, consult with other Commonwealth, State and Territory governments and agencies about an Applicant's claims and disclose information about Applicants as needed. The department may also engage third parties (including auditors) to review applications to provide technical or financial advice on a contract basis.

The department and/or the Minister may also publicly announce information as outlined in Section 14 of these guidelines.

For further information about the department's privacy policy, including how to access or correct personal information held by the department or how to make a privacy complaint, please go to our website: <http://education.gov.au/privacy> or write to:

Privacy Contact Officer
People, Communication and Legal Group
Department of Education and Training
GPO Box 9880
Canberra ACT 2601
Or email: privacy@education.gov.au

Privacy complaints may be made directly to the Federal Privacy Commissioner, but will only be actioned where the complaint was made to the department in the first instance but was not dealt with to the complainant's satisfaction.

19. Freedom of Information

All documents created or held by the department in relation to the program will be subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the FOI Act).

If a request is made under the FOI Act for access to a document subject to the FOI Act, then that document will be made publicly available unless it can be demonstrated that the document falls under an exemption provision, or a conditional exemption provision and disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest, as specified in the FOI Act.

All FOI requests must be referred, immediately via email at foi@education.gov.au. Decisions regarding requests for access will be made by an authorised officer in accordance with the requirements of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

20. Program Evaluation

The department will monitor and evaluate the performance of the fund. Successful Applicants will be asked to provide data to the department for the purposes of preparing periodic performance reports which are analysed and compared to industry standards.

Performance and evaluation data includes a number of capture points to evaluate changes to a business following the commencement of the Fund.

The department will:

- ensure that data from applications and project reporting is maintained in a form that is available for program monitoring and evaluation
- in collaboration with relevant policy partners, facilitate and cooperate with an independent evaluation of the fund.

Recipients must, at their own cost, cooperate with any evaluation of the fund undertaken by the Commonwealth or independent third parties, including by providing information requested by the Commonwealth or a relevant third party for the purposes of the evaluation.

21. Tax Obligations

Applicants are expected to seek out independent expert advice as to whether an activity funded through a grant under the fund will attract the *Goods and Services Tax (GST)*.

Grants are typically treated as assessable income for taxation purposes, unless specifically exempted. On this basis, applicants are recommended to seek their own independent professional advice on their taxation obligations.

Appendix A. Definitions of key terms

In these guidelines unless the contrary intention applies:

AIE2025 means Austrade's *Australian International Education 2025* market development roadmap

Applicant means an entity referred to in these guidelines that submits an application form for funding on behalf of participants.

Application Form means the document issued by the department for the purposes of applicants applying for funding under the program.

Council for International Education (the Council) means the advisory body which supports the implementation of the *National Strategy for International Education 2025* and AIE2025. Council membership consists of experienced international education experts and practitioners and Australian Government ministers with portfolio responsibilities in international education.

Conflict of Interest means the exercise of a power or making of a decision by a person in a way that may be, or may be perceived to be, influenced by either a material personal interest (whether financial or non-financial) or a material personal association.

Department means the Commonwealth department with responsibility for the administration of the program, which at the time of publishing these guidelines is the Department of Education and Training.

Eligible Activities means the activities as specified in Section 6 of these guidelines.

Eligible Application means an application for funding under the program that meets the criteria set out in Section 5 of these guidelines and that the department has determined is eligible for assessment in accordance with these guidelines.

Eligible Expenditure means the expenditure of funds incurred by a lead participant or identified participants in relation to a project and deemed eligible for funding by the department in accordance with these guidelines and the funding agreement.

Funding or **Funds** means the funding made available by the Commonwealth of Australia to successful applicants under the program.

Funding Agreement means a single agreement between the Commonwealth and the successful applicant for the receipt of funding under the program for the conduct of an eligible activity.

Government Priorities means the priorities identified by the Australian Government from time to time with respect to the program, as published on education.gov.au or internationaleducation.gov.au.

Minister means the Minister with responsibility for the program, which at the time of publishing these guidelines is the Minister for Education and Training

National Strategy means the *National Strategy for International Education 2025*

Personal Information means the same as in the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*

Program means the *Australian International Education: Enabling Growth and Innovation* grant program.

Program Guidelines or **Guidelines** means these guidelines approved by the Minister to provide a framework for the operation and administration of the program.

Project means a project described in an application for program funding, which includes one or more eligible activities.

Project Partners means entities which are participants in a project for which an application for funding is made.

Recipient means an entity that has been offered funding and has entered into a funding agreement with the Commonwealth in relation to the program.