



Australian Government
Department of Education and Training

Australian International Education: Enabling Growth and Innovation

2017-18 Program Guidelines

Applications open on 15 November 2017
and close at 5.00 pm AEDT on 15 December 2017

If you have any questions regarding the Australian International Education: Enabling Growth and Innovation program, please:

- email EGI@education.gov.au, or
- visit www.internationaleducation.gov.au

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Section A: Program Overview

1. Context

International education is Australia's third largest export and one of five super growth sectors that will support Australia's future prosperity. The benefits of international education are broad ranging. International students enrich Australia's campuses and colleges and help to build the intercultural capabilities of Australian students. Australian education delivers both onshore and offshore projects to build people-to-people links and connections with Australia. Recognising the importance of developing Australia's role as a global leader in education, training and research, the Australian Government released the [National Strategy for International Education 2025](#) (the National Strategy) in 2016. The National Strategy sets out a 10-year plan for strengthening and sustainably growing Australia's international education sector. It aims to build on the current success of the system to grasp new opportunities to expand and improve our education offerings.

The Department of Education and Training (the department) leads Australian Government policy development for international education and drives implementation of the National Strategy in partnership with the education, training and research sector.

In conjunction with Austrade's market development roadmap, [Australian International Education 2025](#) (AIE 2025), the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's [Australia Global Alumni Engagement Strategy 2016 – 2020](#) and the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science's [Global Innovation Strategy](#), the National Strategy positions Australia to compete globally through maximising new and emerging opportunities both on- and off-shore.

To help implement the National Strategy, the Australian Government will provide \$3 million per year through the *Australian International Education: Enabling Growth and Innovation* (EGI) program.

The EGI program contributes to Outcome 2 in the Education and Training Portfolio Budget Statements 2017–18: *“Promote Growth in economic productivity and social wellbeing through access to quality higher education, international education and international quality research, skills and training.”*

These program guidelines outline the eligibility and selection criteria, as well as the terms and conditions of funding for the EGI program. These program guidelines do not create any legal, equitable or other relationship between the Commonwealth and an applicant.

For the purposes of these guidelines, the international education community refers to all sectors within the international education and training industry, including higher education, vocational education and training, English language and schools.

2. Program objectives

The purpose of the EGI program is to support the implementation of the National Strategy. The program will achieve this by supporting big picture projects that develop Australia's role as a global leader in education, training and research. Projects must benefit the broader Australian international education community, and contribute to at least one of the goals of the National Strategy.

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

To focus activity under the National Strategy, the Council for International Education (the Council), has set the following four priorities for action for 2017-18:

- Develop a nationally-consistent approach to marketing and branding of international education
- Enhance international cooperation through in-country projects, research collaboration, two-way mobility and transnational education
- Provide the best possible student experience, including developing employability skills and regional engagement
- Communicate the benefits of international education to the Australian community.

3. Available funding

The Australian Government will provide \$3 million each year through the EGI program. In 2017-18, approximately \$0.9 million has already been committed through multi-year funding agreements, leaving approximately \$2.1 million available through this funding round.

Funding of up to \$250,000 (GST exclusive) per project is available through this open, competitive grant round. There is no minimum funding amount. Funding amounts will be fixed in Australian dollars. Additional funding is not available for fluctuations in exchange rates.

3.1 Value for money

In considering whether your project represents good value for money, we will look at the expected outcomes, the amount of funding requested and any contribution your organisation, or other project partners, will make. You must contribute to achieving value with public money by:

- considering how to deliver the project and achieve the greatest outcomes in the most cost effective way possible
- having in place an effective risk management plan that will minimise risks and ensure the funding contributes to achieving the project's outcomes and goals of the National Strategy
- effective ongoing monitoring and management of the grant and project
- providing financial and project progress reports as requested.

4. Roles and responsibilities

The Minister for Education and Training will make all funding decisions regarding the program.

The Council for International Education is the advisory body responsible for overseeing and driving the implementation of the National Strategy. Council members include experienced international education experts and practitioners, and Australian Government ministers with portfolio responsibilities for international education. The Council will determine priorities for action under the National Strategy, which will in turn impact the priorities and objectives for the EGI program.

The department administers the EGI program. The department may make policies, consider exceptions and issue guidance for the administration of the program.

Section B: Eligibility, application and assessment

5. Applicant Eligibility

Funding is available to organisations that contribute to Australia's international education community. To be eligible to apply for funding through this program you must meet all of the following criteria:

- be an Australian legal entity, including
 - incorporated association
 - company
 - state/territory and local government
- have an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- be registered for GST
- have relevant public liability insurance
- have no outstanding reports, acquittals or serious breaches relating to any Australian Government funding. A serious breach is one that has resulted in, or warrants, termination of a funding agreement
- not be bankrupt or subject to insolvency proceedings (as relevant to the entity type), and
- not be named by the Workplace Gender Agency as an organisation that has not complied with the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth).

Applications from consortia are acceptable and encouraged. A consortium must have a lead applicant that is eligible as per the above requirements, and will be the main driver of the project.

Individuals and Australian Commonwealth Government entities including international posts, embassies and counsellors are not eligible for funding.

6. Project Eligibility

To be eligible to receive funding under the program, your proposed project must align with, and clearly contribute to, the implementation of the National Strategy. Projects must contribute to at least one of the goals outlined in the National Strategy, and should consider and contribute to the priorities for action set by the Council. You must read the National Strategy, available at www.internationaleducation.gov.au, before starting an application to ensure your project meet this criterion.

To be eligible for funding through the EGI program, projects must also:

- demonstrate benefit to the broader Australian international education community, or a sector within the community. Benefits may include economic, sociocultural or sectoral benefits, among others
- have a practical application within or for the international education community, or for a specific sector.

Your eligibility for funding will be determined by the department. In the event that we determine part of your application to be ineligible, we may assess your application based only on the eligible components. In this instance, you may be offered partial funding for your project.

6.1 What we will fund

Examples of eligible projects include, but are not limited to:

- development of strategies (including an implementation plan) that can be used by participants across the sector, for example to improve or enhance service delivery or the student experience
- scoping studies to inform the development of subsequent work
- research and review projects that fill critical sector-wide knowledge and data gaps
- innovative or new modes of delivery.

A maximum of 10 percent of the total grant money may be used for project administration including items such as printing costs, postage, phone calls, book-keeping, audits and financial management, or as a contribution to wages for staff critical to the project.

The remaining grant funds must be used for the delivery of the project. For example, contractors, consultants, resource development, travel critical to the success of the project, research.

The Minister for Education and Training may approve less funding than requested by an applicant, or approve a project in part. If this occurs, the department will work with the relevant organisation to revise the project objectives and budget.

6.2 What we will not fund

EGI program funding is not available for:

- projects or organisations that do not meet the eligibility criteria
- projects or components of projects that are already funded or more appropriately funded by other programs administered by the Australian Government, such as:
 - Global Innovation Linkages Program
 - Cooperative Research Centre Projects
 - Regional Collaborations Program.
- an organisation's business as usual activities
- activities aimed at enhancing international education capacity at an individual organisation, such as:
 - providing essential or industry standard student services
 - staff development
 - events and conferences
 - infrastructure
- hosting of, or attendance at, conferences or events
- devolved programs, including bursaries or scholarship programs
- projects that have a primarily commercial outcome, including product development
- activities that have already occurred or costs associated with completing and submitting this application.

6.3 Overseas expenditure limits

Any project funds spent overseas must be consistent with the funding agreement and must significantly improve the competitiveness, productivity and sustainability of Australia's international education market, in line with the objectives of the program and the National Strategy.

Eligible activities may be conducted in Australia or overseas and may be conducted by the applicant, project partners, contractors or subcontractors. Eligible overseas activity expenditure is not capped but will be considered as part of the assessment process. See Section 7.4 for more information.

Applicants must consider the tax implications associated with spending money overseas.

6.4 Travel costs

Expenditure on international travel to or from partner countries, including a contribution towards travel allowance, for periods of time in those countries by key 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 travel costs are:

- travel costs for international economy class return airfares and domestic economy class transportation in Australia and overseas, plus reasonable costs for ground transport
- a contribution towards living allowance, including accommodation and meals, during periods of travel overseas
- visa and insurance costs associated with travel to global partner countries.

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.

7. Selection criteria

The department will consider all eligible applications and assess them against the goals of the National Strategy, the priorities determined by the Council, and the following criteria.

7.1 Effectiveness

- The extent to which the project aligns with, and contributes to, the pillars, goals and actions outlined in the National Strategy and considers the priorities for action set by the Council.

7.2 Need and benefit

- Demonstrated need for the project in the Australian international education community
- Demonstrated benefit to the broader Australian international education community.

7.3 Quality

- The quality of the outcomes the project will achieve.
- The articulation of measures of success in the application, which are both ambitious and achievable.
- The applicant's experience in working within the area their project focuses on and evidence of their ongoing commitment to the international education community.
- The skills, experience and expertise of the key personnel involved in the project, including staff, facilitators and consultants.

7.4 Efficiency

- Risks associated with the proposed activity are identified and minimised.
- The project budget is realistic and reasonable, with the whole project demonstrating value for money. Projects that demonstrate financial or in-kind contributions from the applicant or other project partners (either based in Australia or overseas) will be encouraged.
- For projects that include significant expenditure overseas, we will consider:
 - the appropriateness and cost implications of carrying out activities overseas rather than in Australia
 - whether conducting the activity overseas helps the project meet the program objectives
 - whether the applicant clearly demonstrates the benefits of the activity occurring overseas.
- An evaluation strategy, including monitoring the performance and measuring the effectiveness of the proposed activity, is in place.

8. Application and assessment process

To apply for funding through the open grants round, you must submit an application online at <https://submissions.education.gov.au>. The application form is designed to assist you to demonstrate how your proposal meets the eligibility criteria and objectives of the program, and address the selection criteria.

As part of the application you will also be required to submit a detailed budget for the entire project, which specifies how you will spend your funding and any financial and in-kind contributions your organisation or other project partners will make to the project.

You may submit an application for more than one project by completing a separate application form for each project. Incomplete applications or ineligible entities will not progress in the assessment process.

8.1 Closing date

Applications must be submitted by 5.00 pm AEDT, Friday, 15 December 2017.

Please make sure you keep a copy of your application and submission details for your records.

8.2 Late applications

Applications lodged after the closing date may be accepted for assessment in cases where the delay in submission is due to exceptional and unanticipated circumstances only. The decision to accept late applications will be at the discretion of the program manager.

8.3 Assessment process

Funding available through the program is limited and, as we anticipate a strong demand for the funds, the application process will be very competitive.

Your application will be assessed in competition with other applications based on the information you provide in your application and your responses to the selection criteria. Key stages in the assessment process are:

- Applicant and project eligibility are assessed and eligible applications proceed in the assessment process
- The department assesses applications against the selection criteria
- Recommendations are made to the Minister for Education and Training who will be the final decision maker. These recommendations are made in the context of the funding available and the objectives of the National Strategy.
- Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application in writing.
- The department will also publish details of successful projects on its website, and on GrantConnect as required under the [Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines](#), after funding agreements have been signed .

8.4 Offence to provide false or misleading information

Applicants should be aware that giving false or misleading information to the Commonwealth is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth)*.

Applications may be disregarded, offers revoked or a project terminated if it is the belief of the department that false or misleading information has formed a component of an application.

Section C: Funding arrangements

9. Funding agreements

Successful applicants 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 program 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.

Please note:

- Applicants are responsible for all costs incurred in the preparation and lodgement of their applications.
- Funds will not be paid unless the funding agreement has been signed by both parties.
- Activities must not begin before the funding agreement is signed by both parties.

10. Payments

Funding recipients will be required to nominate the bank account for the purpose of depositing and withdrawing grant funding. This can be a new bank account established for the purpose of the grant, or can be an existing account already held by the recipient.

Payments will be made against the agreed schedule, set out in the funding agreement and are subject to the department's acceptance of performance and financial activity reports as set out in the funding agreement. Payments will not be processed where the recipient has a breach, overdue report or acquittal relating to previous funding or milestones.

11. Tax Obligations

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

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

12. Reporting requirements

Reporting on Australian Government funded activities ensures that funding is used for the intended purpose and that funds can be fully accounted for. Reporting also provides valuable data that can inform further development of policy.

At the end of each financial year or at the end of the funding period, funding recipients will be required to acquit all funding. Specific reporting requirements will be outlined in the funding agreement. You will be required to acquit your grant within 30 days of the conclusion of the activity. You will be provided with reporting templates as required.

Funding recipients may also be required to provide information for inclusion in government publications and on government websites including the department's website.

13. 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.

14. Disclosure of information

The use and disclosure of information provided to the department by applicants is regulated by legislation including *the Public Service Act 1999* (Cth), the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth), the *Crimes Act 1914* (Cth), the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth) and the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth), as well as the common law.

14.1 Announcements

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

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, and on GrantConnect as required under the [Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines](#).

14.2 Privacy Act 1988

The department is bound, in administering the Enabling Growth and Innovation program, by the provisions of the *Privacy Act 1988* ("the Privacy Act"). The Privacy Act contains the Australian Information Privacy Principles (APPs) which regulate the handling of personal information of individuals by government agencies and certain private sector organisations, including the collection, storage, use and disclosure of that information.

14.3 Privacy Responsibilities

Persons, bodies and organisations involved in the Enabling Growth and Innovation program must be familiar with and abide by the APPs when handling personal information collected for the purposes of that program.

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: www.education.gov.au/privacy.

Or write to:

Privacy Contact Officer
Legal and Compliance Group
Department of Education
GPO Box 9880
Canberra ACT 2601

Or email: privacy@education.gov.au

14.4 Privacy Complaints

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.

14.5 Identification of confidential information

Information which satisfies the four criteria listed below will be treated by the Australian Government as confidential information:

- the information to be protected has been clearly identified by the applicant
- the information is commercially sensitive
- the disclosure of the information would cause unreasonable detriment to the applicant or another party, and
- the information was provided by the applicant under an understanding that it would remain confidential.

Confidential information also includes information designated by the department as confidential or that either party knows or ought to know is confidential. This does not include information that is otherwise in the public domain.

Applicants must ensure that they clearly mark information in their application that is confidential and explain why it should be treated as confidential information.

14.6 Use of confidential information

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
- 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
- provide information about the applicant and the project to the Minister for Education and Training, and other Australian Government Members of Parliament or Senators as required
- include details of the project, including project outcomes, in an annual report to the Prime Minister on progress against the National Strategy.

The department and/or the Minister may also publicly announce information as outlined in Section 10 of these guidelines.

Confidential information may also be disclosed if the Australian Government is otherwise required or permitted by law to do so (for example in accordance with the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) (FOI Act)), where the consent of the Tertiary Education Provider and/or Student to the release of information is obtained prior to its disclosure, or where the information enters the public domain due to the actions of someone other than the Australian Government. Personal Information will be handled in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles contained in the Privacy Act.

14.7 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*.

15. Conflict of Interest

Applicants must immediately notify the department in writing and take all reasonable steps (including by taking steps that the department reasonably requires) to resolve or otherwise deal with an actual or perceived conflict of interest that arises or is likely to arise and that it likely to interfere with or restrict the applicant undertaking a project fairly and independently.

In the assessment process, APS employees are subject to the Australian Public Service (APS) Code of Conduct (section 13 (7) of the *Public Service Act 1999*) requires that APS employees disclose, and take reasonable steps to avoid, any conflict of interest (real or apparent) in connection with their

APS employment. It is also in the interests of all employees that the firms and people we do business with are confident that we act in accordance with the Code of Conduct and do not make improper use of information.

There is also an obligation under the *Public Service Regulations 1999* on employees not to disclose any information about public business or anything of which the employee has official knowledge and, under the *Crimes Act 1914 (Cth)*, it is an offence for an employee to publish or communicate such information.

16. Contact Details

Engagement and Delivery Section, International Strategy Branch, International Group
Department of Education and Training, LOC: C50MA10
GPO Box 9880, Canberra ACT 2601
or EGI@education.gov.au.

17. Complaints and feedback

17.1 Feedback

The department will not accept responsibility for any misunderstanding arising from the failure by an applicant to comply with these guidelines, or arising from any ambiguity, discrepancy or error contained in an application.

17.2 Complaints

All complaints must be lodged in writing, by email to EGI@education.gov.au or via the [department's website](#). If you do not agree with the way the department has handled your complaint, you may take the matter 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