

Australian Alumni Grants Fund Guidelines for Applicants Round 3 - 2020

Updated April 2020

Aus4Skills is an Aus4Vietnam Investment - managed by Coffey,
a Tetra Tech company, on behalf of the Australian Government



Abbreviations

AAGF	Australian Alumni Grants Fund
AASC	Australia Awards Short Course
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
DPO	Disabled People's Organisation
HRD	Human Resource Development
ILO	Informal Learning Opportunity
SGF	Small Grants Fund

Table of contents

1	INTRODUCTION	4
2	CONTRIBUTING TO AUS4SKILLS PROGRAM OUTCOMES	4
3	APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY.....	5
4	ELIGIBLE PROJECT CATEGORIES FOR A GRANT.....	6
5	DURATION OF GRANT IMPLEMENTATION.....	8
6	FUNDING AND ACCOUNTABILITY	8
7	APPLICATION, APPRAISAL AND APPROVAL PROCESS	10
8	SUPPORT FOR ALUMNI	12
9	RECOGNITION OF SUCCESSFUL GRANT COMPLETION.....	12
10	GRANT PROMOTION AND AUSTRALIAN IDENTITY.....	12
11	FURTHER INFORMATION	13

1 INTRODUCTION

The Australian Alumni Grants Fund (AAGF), formerly known as the Small Grants Fund (SGF) is an activity under the Australian Alumni in Vietnam Strategy administered by Aus4Skills. The AAGF has been established to fund proposals from Vietnamese alumni of Australian education institutions to consolidate their professional knowledge and skills and strengthen linkages between Australia and Vietnam through undertaking applied research, organising training courses and workshops and improving their workplace systems and processes. Under Aus4Skills to date, two grant rounds open for Australia Awards and broader alumni and one pilot round open to only Aus4Skills non-scholarships human resource development (HRD) alumni have been implemented.

These guidelines apply to the AAGF Round 3 which targets the following alumni cohorts/categories: Broader alumni, Aus4Skills HRD alumni and Disability Inclusion alumni. (See section 3 for more detail)

Proposals will be given special consideration if they assist Vietnam's response to Covid-19.

2 CONTRIBUTING TO AUS4SKILLS PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Any AAGF project must contribute to one or more of the following three Aus4Skills Program Outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Male and female alumni use new skills and knowledge to make positive contributions to selected priority areas
- Outcome 2: Selected Vietnamese government, private sector and civil society organisations, and other partners, demonstrate organisational change as program-facilitated improvement(s) in policies, practices and/or performance standards
- Outcome 3: Australia and Vietnam have stronger, sustainable links in selected sectors/agencies

Additional principles applied in selection of successful grant proposals are that:

- Proposals must deliver broad-based effects or outcomes (i.e. they must not just be focused on individual benefits to an alumnus or small group of alumni).
- Proposals must result in an on-going delivery of benefits beyond grant completion.
- Proposals must address the issues of gender equality, disability inclusion and the inclusion of the rural disadvantaged including disadvantaged ethnic minority communities.
- Proposals must be written in English. If a supporting document is not in English, a translation should be submitted together with the original.
- Proposals must be written and submitted by applicants unless applicants are persons with disability whose health condition does not allow them to write and submit.
- Proposals will be given special consideration if they deliver outcomes specifically relevant to Program Outcome 2: *Selected Vietnamese government, private sector and civil society organisations, and other partners, demonstrate organisational change as program-facilitated improvement(s) in policies, practices and/or performance standards.*
- Applicants must not be named in more than one proposal in any single AAGF round.
- Applicants must not have an ongoing or un-acquitted grant under the AAGF (i.e. grants cannot be for overlapping periods).
- Successful applicants will be required to sign a Grant Agreement before a grant is awarded, which includes mandatory financial and reporting requirements.

3 APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

The three following alumni cohorts/categories are eligible for specific project proposals. The details are as below.

Cohort / Category	Eligible applicants	Project proposals
Broader alumni	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vietnamese alumni who have completed their studies in an Australian education institution through the Australia Awards, including the Australia Awards Scholarships, the Australia Awards Fellowships, the Endeavour Scholarships and Fellowships, and the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) Scholarships. • Vietnamese alumni who have completed their studies in an Australian education institution through Vietnamese Government scholarships. • Vietnamese alumni who have self-funded their studies or received other scholarship support and who have completed post-graduate studies at an Australian education institution in Australia or Vietnam. 	<p>Contribution to the selected priority areas/sectors including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance and Economic Growth (economics, competition, international trade, public policy, public finance management, corporate finance, law to support economic integration, entrepreneurship and innovation) • Infrastructure and Transport (project management and financing, traffic forecasting, transport engineering, social and environmental safeguards, urban transport planning and management, transport master planning, public-private partnership, transport economics, road safety and audit, logistics management) • Water and Sanitation (water management, water engineering, water quality and supply systems, water and waste water, water governance, water security, drought management) • Education (education management, institutional governance, vocational education management) • Gender Equality (gender and development, women’s studies) • Agriculture and Rural Development (agribusiness, agricultural economics, rural development, sustainable tourism management, food safety) • Regional Stability and Human Rights (cyber security, criminology and public governance, international law, international human rights law) • Climate Change (including disaster risk reduction) • Innovation (science and technology transfer and commercialisation) • Health (related to Covid-19 impacts)
HRD Alumni	<p><u>Only</u> alumni of Aus4Skills Australia Awards Short Courses (AASC) and Informal Learning Opportunities (ILOs). Other alumni of Australian education institutions can be part of an eligible team of alumni under an HRD</p>	<p>Contributions to HRD component targets</p>

	<p>cohort, with the condition that the team is led by an HRD alumnus.</p> <p>HRD Alumni are strongly encouraged to apply under the HRD Alumni Cohort/Category (unless their project is targeting Disability Inclusion when it must be submitted under the Disability Inclusion Cohort/Category)</p>	
Disability Inclusion	<p>Alumni must either be a person with disability and/or working at a Disabled People’s Organisation¹(s) (DPO) and/or partnering with a DPO(s) to undertake proposed projects, in line with ‘nothing about us, without us’ principle – to provide perspectives based on their experiences of living with disabilities, to inform effective inclusion efforts.</p> <p>Other alumni of Australian education institutions can be part of an eligible team of alumni under the Disability Inclusion cohort, with the condition that the team is led by a Disability Inclusion alumnus.</p> <p>All projects targeting Disability Inclusion must be submitted under this Cohort/Category.</p>	<p>Contributions to Disability Inclusion targets (promoting accessibility for people with disabilities in Vietnam to: physical environments; and/or assistive technology; and/or education; and/or employment; and/or health care)</p>

Proposals under AAGF Round 3-2020 will be given special consideration if they assist Vietnam’s response to Covid-19 in the areas detailed under the Project Proposals column in the table above.

4 ELIGIBLE PROJECT CATEGORIES FOR A GRANT

The following categories of projects are eligible for AAGF funding:

Category 1. Development and conduct of a training program or training course(s), workshop(s), seminar(s), or conference(s) (proposals only to attend one of these events are not eligible), or **public awareness campaigns or advocacy activities.**

Category 2. Applied research activities. Proposals only to present papers or posters at conferences are not eligible.

¹ “Disabled People’s Organisations (DPOs) are defined as organisations that represent or support people with disabilities; they can be global, regional, national or local organisations. Generally, the main common feature is that their membership comprises, and they are run by and for, people with disabilities in line with the ‘nothing about us without us’ principle. They must be registered as a DPO or as an NGO with the government.

Category 3. Organisational and Institutional Change. This category provides scope for innovative activities that contribute to changes/improvements in an organisation and to a better workplace enabling environment, including for the advancement of women. The improvements may be in the form of policy, practice and/or performance standards.

- **Policy (includes ongoing policy development)**

Any work that has or will likely result in a product that will give instructions to others (even without the person who produced it present). Includes curricula & published applied research.

- **Practice**

Any work that involves application of skills provided by the grant or procedural changes otherwise facilitated by the grant, other than work on policies. Includes examples of new collaboration or links, and cultural, attitudinal and behavioural change where it manifests as something tangible, like staff attendance habits or female participation in decision-making.

- **Performance Standards**

Any change to the quality or quantity of results achieved by an organisation or group as a result of the grant (new or improved outputs or outcomes by organisation or group), other than new or improved policies.

Category 4. HRD application projects/action plans. This category refers to a single or group application project or action plan or the extension or upscaling of these projects/plans that have been or are being applied as a result of participation in Aus4Skills HRD activities. This category also includes a project which involves the application of learning more generally from participation in Aus4Skills HRD activities.

Examples of relevant results of grant projects might include (but are not limited to):

- Sustainable improvements to gender equality, disability and social inclusion in an organisation, professional field or community including promoting accessibility for people with disabilities
- Improved capability of alumni and their work units to apply new or improved professional approaches
- Improved policy within alumni work units
- Improved ongoing leadership opportunities for alumni, especially women
- Improved organisational systems, procedures or policies
- Improved teaching and learning practice in alumni work units
- Improved research practice in alumni work units
- Strengthened productivity of professional networks of alumni
- New or improved productive linkages between Vietnam and Australia
- Improved social and economic conditions among disadvantaged, vulnerable groups or in local communities
- Improved private sector development
- Contribution to policy dialogue between the Australian and Vietnamese Governments

Ineligible proposals and items

The following types of proposals are **not eligible** for funding under the AAGF:

- Proposals which are entirely or primarily for the purchase of equipment or construction.

- Proposals which, in effect, subsidise the commercial activities of an individual applicant, a group of applicants and/or a private sector enterprise², for which the individual applicant, a group of applicants and/or enterprise would normally be expected to invest its own funds.

The following budget items are **not eligible** for financial support under the AAGF:

- Payments to non-Vietnamese nationals for services rendered.
- Fees/salaries for alumni for any work/tasks carried out by alumni who submit proposals.
- Fees (i.e. tuition, enrollment, attendance) for formal studies, trainings or short courses in Vietnam, Australia or any other country.
- Office equipment such as television, computers, printers, photocopiers, cameras and mobile phones, etc. or any other equipment for commercial purposes.
- Any personal items not relevant to the implementation of the AAGF-funded activity.
- Payments to applicants' employer(s) if proposals are approved.

5 DURATION OF GRANT IMPLEMENTATION

The maximum duration for implementing a grant project is 12 months. Grant implementation should commence within 3 months of the notification of grant approval.

Aus4Skills approval must be obtained by the grantee in case of a delay in implementation. Requests to delay implementation must be accompanied by justifiable reason(s) for the delay, the proposed new start date (but should be within 6 months of notification of the grant approval) and the proposed new implementation timelines. In case of delay in implementation, the project end date will not be extended.

Failure to commence by the agreed start date without valid justification may result in the withdrawal of the grant.

6 FUNDING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Application can be submitted up to the maximum levels below:

Number of alumni applicants	Maximum Grant
One or two alumni	VND 150 million ³
Three alumni	VND 220 million
Four alumni and more	VND 300 million

² This does not apply to private colleges or universities which are eligible for AAGF funding.

³ The figures listed here are respectively the approximate equivalent of AUD10,000, AUD15,000 and AUD20,000.

Any project that has the involvement of an alumni team must clearly demonstrate that it is a team project with specified roles for each alumnus. It should show the added value in submitting a team proposal as compared to individual submissions.

Additional funding: Co-funding

Aus4Skills will provide matching funds of 100% of a contribution by the applicant, employer or other relevant Vietnamese/ Australian organisation (e.g. DPO; industry association) **to a maximum of VND50,000,000⁴**. The co-funding must be in the form of cash (not *‘in kind’* contribution) and be shown as part of the budget in the AAGF application including the timing of the provision of the co-funding. Such a co-funding arrangement will increase the amount of funds available for a proposal as well as strengthen the commitment of the applicant / employer / organisation to the proposal. Aus4Skills will assess in its sole discretion whether ‘matching funds’ are available.

	Example 1:	Example 2:
AAGF project grant	VND 150,000,000	VND 150,000,000
Co-funding (i.e. from employer)	VND 50,000,000	VND 100,000,000
AAGF matching funds	VND 50,000,000	VND 50,000,000
Total	VND 250,000,000	VND 300,000,000

The maximum matching funds are VND50,000,000 regardless of the amount of co-funding amount. Aus4Skills will not match funds sourced from loans.

Disbursements

Grants will be disbursed by bank transfer in Vietnamese Dong. Grants usually are disbursed over several payments in response to Funds Requests received from grant awardees based on the following principles:

- First disbursement may be up to 40% of Total Approved Aus4Skills Budget (equal to Total Aus4Skills & Contingency, and Matching Funds).
- Second disbursement will be up to 40% of the grants value upon Aus4Skills’ receiving a satisfactory Progress Report including Financial Acquittal Report and Second Funds Request.
- Disbursement of the outstanding portion of the grant based on actual costs will be subject to Aus4Skills’ receiving a satisfactory Completion Report including Financial Acquittal Report and Final Funds Request.

Documentary evidence showing the provision and usage of co-funding in line with the approved project plan and budget must be provided to Aus4Skills’ satisfaction at the first, second or final disbursement requests. Failure to provide the evidence to Aus4Skills’ satisfaction will result in withdrawal of the matching funds.

If for any reason the proposed project or any component(s) of the project included in the proposal cannot proceed as originally approved, Aus4Skills must be informed immediately. Aus4Skills will review the status of the project with the grantee(s) and advise whether it will continue to support the project and in what form. In the event that Aus4Skills determines in its sole discretion that it will not continue to support the

⁴ This figure is the approximate equivalent to AUD3,000.

project, any unexpended funds must be returned to Aus4Skills. In the event that Aus4Skills is not informed immediately, it may seek to recover funds from the grantee(s).

Once a grant application has been approved no further funds will be made available for that project.

Further information is contained in the [AAGF Financial Guidelines](#).

Fraud

Note carefully that Aus4Skills has a **zero-tolerance policy on fraud**. Where DFAT or Aus4Skills have reasonable concerns about how the grantee(s) manages the grants, Aus4Skills or DFAT will require explanation and additional supporting documentation. If this does not alleviate their concerns, Aus4Skills or DFAT may require the grantee to undertake an independent financial audit. In the event of fraud, Aus4Skills will seek to recover funds from the grantee(s).

Further information is contained in the [AAGF Financial Guidelines](#).

Aus4Skills Equity of Access Fund

For alumni with disability and rural disadvantaged alumni (including rural disadvantaged ethnic minority alumni) wishing to participate in AAGF events organised by the Australian Embassy or Aus4Skills, alumni may seek the support from the Aus4Skills [Equity of Access Fund](#).

7 APPLICATION, APPRAISAL AND APPROVAL PROCESS

Proposals must be completed in English and submitted online at the SmartyGrants system at <https://vietnam.smartygrants.com.au/AAGFRound3>

The closing date for submission of proposals is midnight (Hanoi time) Saturday, 20 June 2020.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria that will be used in evaluating proposals are as follows. While it is recognised that specific criteria may apply to any particular proposal to varying degrees, you should complete the proposal template as fully as you are able.

Evaluation Criteria	Weighted Percentage	Assessment questions
Strategic purpose	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem Analysis • Objectives and Expected Results of the Project • Contribution to Aus4Skills Program Outcomes • Contribution to broader impacts
Methodology/ Approaches	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methodology for delivering the project • How to achieve the expected results • How research methodology has been reviewed and endorsed by expert(s) in the field • How the target numbers of interviews, surveys and focus groups will be achieved and a schedule for data collection • How to identify and priority the need for particular training and at what stage a training needs analysis is undertaken • How to identify and priority the key problem/ issue to be addressed by the project • Implementation Plan
Gender, Disability and Social inclusion	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project contributes to gender equality • Project benefits people with disabilities • Project benefits people that are rural disadvantaged, including rural disadvantaged ethnic minorities • Direct beneficiaries • Indirect beneficiaries
Financial and Risk management	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget items • Co-funding (if applicable) • Quotation • Risk management
Ownership, Sustainability and Communications	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant to expertise and skills gained from Australian studies • Supported by employer, community or DPO(s) • Lasting benefits/results which continue beyond the project completion and not just be a one-off event • Plan to scale up or replicate project or its results in other organisations, locations or communities • Promotion of the findings, results, outputs of the project to a wide audience
Monitoring & Evaluation	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome Indicators • Output Indicators
Total	100	

As stated above, proposals under AAGF Round 3-2020 will be given special consideration if they assist Vietnam's response to Covid-19.

The applicant(s) may be requested by Aus4Skills to provide additional information and to resubmit the proposal. Proposals can be resubmitted a maximum of one time.

Proposals will be approved on a competitive basis by the Australian Embassy.

All unsuccessful applicant(s) will be informed in general terms of the reasons for their proposal's non-approval. Detailed reasons will not be given because of the number of applications received and resulting resource constraints. Decisions will be considered final and no further negotiations on non-approved proposals will be undertaken.

8 SUPPORT FOR ALUMNI

Aus4Skills will provide support for alumni in monitoring AAGF projects as deemed feasible. Following the Embassy approval of grants, Aus4Skills will provide successful applicants with a training workshop (either face-to-face or online) on financial management and reporting. The support will also take the form of instruction materials on completion of funds request and progress/completion reports (including financial acquittal reports) on SmartyGrants, the online system used to manage the AAGF application process and approved grants.

9 RECOGNITION OF SUCCESSFUL GRANT COMPLETION

When a grant has been successfully implemented and both the completion and final financial reports have been received and accepted by Aus4Skills, a Certificate of Grant Completion will be awarded to the respective alumnus/alumni team.

10 GRANT PROMOTION AND AUSTRALIAN IDENTITY

Information of AAGF Round 3 will be published on media channels of the [Australia Global Alumni website](#), the [Australia Awards Vietnam website](#), [Australia Alumni in Vietnam Facebook](#), [Aus4Skills Facebook](#) and in alumni activities. A media release will be sent to our media list to promote the round.

The three HRD component managers will have primary responsibility for communicating information about the round to their respective component participants.

Aus4Skills' promotion of the AAGF will include publicising successful outputs and outcomes of grant projects on the mentioned above channels and on other media channels as appropriate.

Grantees are requested to provide suitable photographs, video footage and other relevant materials for Aus4Skills promotion activities. Recipients of grants are encouraged to publicise the grants through their own networks.

Grantees are requested to acknowledge the Australian Government's support in an appropriate way in their publications, reports, at training courses and workshops by using the disclaimer provided below (in both English and Vietnamese).

Disclaimer

This report/research/publication is supported by the Australian Government through the Australian Alumni Grants Fund. The opinions expressed in this report/research/publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Government.

Tuyên bố miễn trừ trách nhiệm

Báo cáo/ Nghiên cứu/ Ấn phẩm này do Chính phủ Australia hỗ trợ thông qua Quỹ Hỗ trợ cựu sinh viên Australia. Mọi quan điểm và nhận định trình bày trong báo cáo/ nghiên cứu/ ấn phẩm này là của cá nhân tác giả và không nhất thiết thể hiện quan điểm của Chính phủ Australia.

Grantees are required to use the co-branding logo of Australia Global Alumni and Aus4Skills in their projects' communication materials. Grantees should contact Aus4Skills for specific guidance for using the co-branding logo in their communication materials prior to publications or public presentations. All requirements will be detailed in the grant agreement. Further information is contained in the [AAGF Communications Guidelines](#).

11 FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information can be obtained from Aus4Skills at:

Australian Alumni Grants Fund

Aus4Skills

Room 502A, Building A, 14-16 Ham Long Street

Hoan Kiem District, Hanoi

Phone: +84 24 3939 3991/2

Fax: +84 24 3934 6782

Email: AAGF@australiaawardsvietnam.org

Website: www.australiaawardsvietnam.org