

Financial Guidelines

(for the AAGF Round 4 - 2021)

Overview

These Financial Guidelines must be used in conjunction with the Australian Alumni Grants Fund (AAGF) Guidelines for Applicants applying to the AAGF Round 4 and are incorporated into your Grant Agreement. As a recipient of a grant under the AAGF you agree to maintain a sound administrative and financial system capable of verifying all Financial Reports and Acquittals. The funding comes from the Australian Government and therefore may be subject to audit. **Therefore, grant recipients must take personal responsibility for the financial management of grants.** Aus4Skills is committed to working with alumni grant recipients to ensure accountability and value for money and to simplify the administration of the grants process as much as possible.

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist you to complete your financial acquittal responsibility as a grant awardee. Failure to acquit may result in funding suspension, the requirement to return all or part of the grant funds and/or further legal action as may be necessary to resolve the issue.

Payment of Grant Funds

Grants will only be disbursed by bank transfer in Vietnamese Dong (VND) to a Vietnamese bank account, unless otherwise approved in advance by Aus4Skills. 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) upon Aus4Skills' receiving a satisfactory First Funds Request.
- Second disbursement will be up to 40% of Total Approved Aus4Skills Budget (equal to Total Aus4Skills & Contingency, and Matching Funds) 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.

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

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

Grants are normally disbursed as set out below.

First Disbursement

After receiving Aus4Skills correspondence informing grantees that their projects have been approved, the grantees must complete an online First Funds Request Form. The form will then be reviewed for approval. Upon approval, the grantees will be notified to print, sign and submit the final hard copy to Aus4Skills by post. For documents which require signatures and full names, this must be done by all members named in the project. The first funds approved will be advanced.

The following documents are required for completion of the online First Fund Request:

1. Copies of the Bank document with the name and the account number of the grantee to whom the grant funds will be transferred.
2. Documents showing the preparations for your grant implementation (*e.g. invitation letter, conference/workshop agenda, training materials, correspondences contacting local departments, list of survey participants, survey questionnaires, acceptance letters from local authorities etc.*)
3. Evidence showing the provision and usage of co-funding if applicable in line with the approved project plan and budget.

No funds will be advanced unless this step is completed to Aus4Skills' complete satisfaction.

Second Disbursement

Within 30 days from the accomplishment of the activities listed on the First Funds Request, the grantees must complete an online Progress Report (including Financial Acquittal Report)/Second Funds Request Form. The form will then be reviewed for approval. Upon approval, the grantees will be notified to print, sign and submit the final hard copy with original financial documents to Aus4Skills by post. For documents which require signatures and full names, this must be done by all members of project. The second funds disbursement approved will then be advanced.

The documents required for completion of the online Progress Report (including Financial Acquittal Report)/Second Funds Request are:

1. A scanned copy of all receipts and other forms of documentation in sequence for financial acquittal of the first disbursement.
2. Evidence showing the provision and usage of co-funding if applicable in line with the approved project plan and budget.
3. Photographic evidence of your activities (*at least three to five photos with captions*).

No further funds will be advanced unless this step is completed to Aus4Skills' complete satisfaction.

Final Disbursement (Final Acquittal)

Within 30 days from the accomplishment of the activities listed in the second advance, the grantees must complete the online Completion Report (including Financial Acquittal Report)/Final Funds Request Form. The form will then be reviewed for approval. Upon approval, the grantees will be notified to print, sign and submit the final hard copy with original financial documents to Aus4Skills by post. For documents which require signatures and full names, this must be done by all members of project. The final funds disbursement approved will then be paid.

To complete the online Completion Report (including Financial Acquittal Report)/Final Funds Request, the following documents must be prepared:

1. A scanned copy of all receipts and other forms of documentation in sequence for financial acquittal of the second disbursement.
2. Evidence showing the provision and usage of co-funding if applicable in line with the approved project plan and budget.
3. Communication materials for your activity promotion including photographs (*at least three to five photos with captions*) and/or videos, news articles, social media posts, website etc.

No further funds will be paid unless this step is completed to Aus4Skills' complete satisfaction.

First Funds Request, Progress Report/Second Funds Request and Completion Report/Final Fund Request and other financial documentation once approved must be sent to the following address:

Australian Alumni Grants Fund
Aus4Skills
Room 502A, 5th Floor, Building A, 14-16 Ham Long Street
Hoan Kiem District, Hanoi, Vietnam
Phone: + 84 24 3939 3991/ 2
Fax: + 84 24 3934 6782

Aus4Skills may request further documentation as necessary to process your acquittal. Please ensure that a copy of all submitted documents is kept for your own records.

Financial Acquittal Requirements

- All approved expenses in Vietnam over VND300,000 must be accompanied by a Ministry of Finance (MOF) official invoice (Hóa đơn tài chính), if possible.
- All approved expenses amounting to VND5,000,000 and above must be paid by bank transfer and supported by a contract or Terms of Reference (TOR) for personnel services.
- All approved expenses outside Vietnam in foreign currency equivalent to over VND300,000 must have the supplier's receipt(s) and convert into VND by using exchange rate by Vietcombank (Transfer/ Mua chuyển khoản column)
- Exchange rate sheet must be attached with foreign currency receipts for financial acquittal.

Sundry Small Expenses

For small expense amounts (up to VND300,000 per approved item of expenditure) individual invoice/ receipts are not required. However, these expenses must still be listed in the Financial Acquittal Report of the Progress Report/Second Funds Request or/and Completion Report/Final Fund Request, which is signed by grantees to certify the expenses are correct, and in accordance with the actual disbursement of funds on activities.

Instead of a receipt number, these expenses should be noted as “Sundry Small Expenses” in the Financial Acquittal Report.

Allowable Expenditures and the Required Supporting Documents

As a grant recipient you must provide the required documentary evidence outlined below for approved expense items being acquitted/ reimbursed.

Table: Allowable Expenditures

#	Expenditure	Required Supporting Documents	Remarks
1	Economy class airfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official receipt (Hóa đơn Tài chính) or Bank statement or online payment notification if purchased online E-ticket Boarding pass 	Must be most direct best price on the day of booking.
2	Bus/train fare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ticket or ticket stub if over VND300,000 	Must be most direct best price on the day of booking. Amount being reimbursed/ acquitted must be shown on the ticket.
3	Taxi fare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official receipt for trips if over VND300,000 	If two or more persons are travelling to training venue/ airport/ bus/ train station, it is recommended that participants share a taxi.
4	Private car	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official receipt issued by petrol station if over VND300,000 Travel expense report certified by authorised person/organisation(s) 	Reimbursed at VND3,000/km. Applicable to a distance over 20km and where public transport is not available. Costs related to driver are not covered.
5	Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hotel receipt or official receipt if over VND300,000 	According to UN-EU cost norm 2017
6	Training/workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official receipt if single item amount of individual expenditure for workshop such as venue, refreshment, cleaner, technical assistance, backdrop is over VND300,000 	
7	Per diem/travel allowance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel expense report certified 	According to UN-EU cost norm 2017. Forms will be available on request.

#	Expenditure	Required Supporting Documents	Remarks
		by authorised person/organisation(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receipts from beneficiaries 	
8	Professional/ general service fees (e.g., interpreter, consultant/ general labour/ personnel costs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terms of reference/ hiring contract Receipt from interpreter/ consultant/ worker/ etc. Duly approved timesheet (for full-time/ part-time job) Bank statement showing payment for personnel services if over VND 5 million 	According to UN-EU cost norm 2017. Forms will be available on request.
9	Consumables/ stationery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official receipt if amount purchased is over VND300,000 	
10	Equipment/assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract/ agreement for items over VND 5 million Official receipt if amount is over VND300,000 At least 3 quotes from suppliers for equipment valued over VND 5 million 	
11	Conference fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receipt issued by the organiser 	
12	Australian visa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official receipt 	
13	Hire/rental fee (experiment equipment, venue, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract/ agreement for items over VND 5 million Official receipt if amount is over VND 300,000 At least 3 quotes for items if rental costs exceed VND 5 million 	
14	Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement of expenditure supported by service provider's bills or prepaid top up cards (retail invoice is not encouraged) If telephone costs exceed VND 5 million, bank statement for service provider(s) must be provided. 	
15	Photocopies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receipt of photocopy shop if over VND300,000 	
16	Fees related to publishing an article in a newspaper/ journal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receipt issued by the publisher 	

Non-Allowable Expenditures

The following budget items are not eligible for financial support under the Australian Alumni Grants Fund:

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

All grant recipients must remember:

- Grantees are not permitted to use the grant funds to pay for items other than those listed in their approved proposal unless they have prior written approval from Aus4Skills.
- Unauthorised use of grant funds will result in delays processing your acquittal and you could end up paying for the unauthorised expenditure.

Note that the unauthorised use funds may be considered fraud (see below).

Taxation

Grantees are responsible for making their own arrangements regarding any taxation liabilities that may arise from the award of funding.

Termination or Withdrawal of Funding

Aus4Skills reserves the right to withhold or withdraw funding, terminate a project, or require grantees to return all or part of the grant funds if:

- the grantee fails to comply with the Grant Agreement or the AAGF Guidelines;
- the grantee fails to comply with lawful and reasonable instructions given by Aus4Skills;
- Aus4Skills believes there has been unsatisfactory progress in carrying out the project;
- Aus4Skills believes the grantee has not carried out the project with reasonable care, thoroughness, and competence and to a standard that would be expected for the grantee's level of experience in their practice, profession or line of work;
- the grantee does not complete the funded project;
- the grantee provides false or misleading information to Aus4Skills;
- the grantee acts illegally or negligently at any time during the funding period, and Aus4Skills believes this action significantly affects the project, or is likely to harm the reputation of Aus4Skills or the Government of Australia; or,

- Aus4Skills suspects that fraud has been committed. Where fraud is determined to have taken place, Aus4Skills may pursue criminal charges in accordance with the DFAT's requirements and local laws.

Aus4Skills will determine the amount of funds to be returned, taking into account:

- whether there were any circumstances outside of the grantee's control;
- whether the issue can be satisfactorily addressed within a reasonable time frame; and,
- the proportion of the project that has already been successfully completed.

Unexpended Funds

If for any reason the proposed activity or any activities included in the proposal cannot proceed as originally approved, Aus4Skills must be informed immediately. In such situations, 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 project, any unexpended funds must be returned. In the event that Aus4Skills is not informed immediately, it may seek to recover funds from the grantee(s).

Failure to commence within 2 months of funding approval without valid justification may result in the withdrawal of grant. Similarly, for activities with an extended start date, failure to commence within 4 months of grant approval date may result in the withdrawal of grant.

If unexpended funds need to be returned, grantees must contact Aus4Skills to transfer the funds to the following account.

Account Name: CHUONG TRINH PHAT TRIEN NGUON NHAN LUC O-XTRAY-LI-A-VIET NAM

Account number: 700017172475

Bank: Shinhan Bank

Address: 14 Le Thai To, Hanoi, Vietnam

Fraud

DFAT and Aus4Skills have zero tolerance policy on fraud and are committed to minimising the incidence of fraud through the development, implementation and regular review of fraud prevention, detection and response strategies. Aus4Skills expects all grantees to comply with DFAT's Fraud Policy Statement and Fraud Control and Anti-Corruption Plan.

The Fraud Policy Statement defines fraud as 'dishonestly obtaining a benefit, or causing a loss, by deception or other means'. This definition extends beyond the legal definition of fraud to include benefits obtained that can be both tangible and intangible. It thus encompasses activities or behaviours broader than the misuse or misappropriation of monies or assets and includes:

- theft;
- obtaining property, a financial advantage or any other benefit by deception;
- causing a loss, or avoiding or creating a liability by deception;
- providing false or misleading information, or failing to provide information where there is an obligation to do so;

- making, using or possessing forged or falsified documents;
- bribery, corruption or abuse of position;
- unlawful use of computers, vehicles, telephones and other property or services belonging to the Australian Government or its' aid delivery partners;
- divulging confidential information to outside sources; and
- hacking into, or interfering with, a computer system belonging to the Australian Government or its' aid delivery partners.

Where Aus4Skills or DFAT have reasonable concerns about how the grantee(s) manage the grants, Aus4Skills or DFAT may require explanation and additional supporting documentation. If this does not alleviate the concerns, Aus4Skills or DFAT may require the grantee(s) to undertake an independent financial audit. The cost of the audit will be taken out of the AAGF budget for the project.

Aus4Skills is obligated to report all cases of suspected, alleged or committed fraud or corruption to DFAT within five business days of becoming aware of the fraud or corruption. All cases of fraud and corruption are handled in a confidential, prompt and professional manner.

Where fraud is determined to have taken place, Aus4Skills may pursue criminal charges in accordance with the DFAT's requirements and local laws.

Further information on DFAT's fraud control strategy is available at: <https://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/corporate/fraud-control/Pages/fraud-control>.