



Australian Government



NEW COLOMBO PLAN

Connect to Australia's future - study in the region

New Colombo Plan Scholarship Program 2026 Round Guidelines

Opening date:	12 August 2025
Closing date and time:	11.30pm Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST) on 23 September 2025
Commonwealth policy and administering entity:	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Enquiries:	If you have any questions, contact ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au Questions should be sent no later than 5.00pm AEST on 16 September 2025
Date guidelines released:	12 August 2025
Type of grant opportunity:	Open competitive

Contents

1	New Colombo Plan Scholarship Program: 2026 Round processes	4
1.1	Introduction	5
2	About the grant program.....	5
2.1	Strategic objective and outcomes of the NCP	5
2.2	About the NCP Scholarship Program	6
2.3	Roles and responsibilities of the Australian Government	7
2.4	Roles and responsibilities of Australian universities	7
2.5	Roles and responsibilities of applicants	8
2.6	Roles and responsibilities of scholars.....	9
2.7	Roles and responsibilities of the Managed Administration and Support Services Contractor	10
3	Grant amount and grant period	11
3.1	Scholarship grant funding	11
3.2	Scholarship grant period	11
4	Eligibility criteria	11
4.1	Who is eligible to apply for a scholarship?.....	12
4.2	Who is not eligible to apply for a scholarship?.....	12
4.3	Nominations	12
5	What the grant money can be used for.....	13
5.1	Eligible scholarship program activities	13
5.2	Eligible scholarship program components	14
5.3	What the scholarship grant money cannot be used for	17
5.4	Scholarship benefits	18
5.5	Eligible host locations	21
5.6	Permitted gaps	23
5.7	Community engagement and advocacy	24
6	The assessment criteria	25
6.1	Priority areas for selection	25
6.2	Assessment criteria.....	26
6.3	Other considerations	27
6.4	Selection of fellows	28
7	How to apply	28
7.1	Overview	28
7.2	Written applications.....	29
7.3	Referee reports	29
7.4	Attachments to the application.....	29
7.5	Timing of grant opportunity processes.....	30
7.6	Questions during the application process	31

8	The grant selection process	31
8.1	Assessment of grant applications and who will assess applications	31
8.2	Who will approve the award of scholarships?	32
9	Notification of application outcomes.....	32
9.1	Feedback on applications	33
9.2	Offer and acceptance processes	33
10	Successful grant applications	33
10.1	Scholarship agreement	33
10.2	Specific legislation, policies and industry standards.....	33
10.3	How DFAT pays the grant.....	33
10.4	Grants payments and GST	34
11	Announcement of grants	34
12	How DFAT monitors your grant activity	34
12.1	Keeping DFAT informed	34
12.2	Reporting.....	34
12.3	Variations to scholarship programs.....	35
12.4	Compliance visits	35
12.5	Record keeping	35
12.6	Evaluation	35
12.7	Acknowledgement.....	36
13	Probity	36
13.1	Enquiries and Feedback	36
13.2	Fraud and Corruption.....	37
13.3	Conflict of interest	37
13.4	Privacy	38
13.5	Confidential Information	40
13.6	Freedom of information.....	40
14	Glossary	42

1 New Colombo Plan Scholarship Program: 2026 Round processes

The New Colombo Plan (NCP) Scholarship Program is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives

This scholarship opportunity is part of the NCP Scholarship Program which contributes to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)'s Portfolio Budget Statement Outcome 1 (The advancement of Australia's international strategic, security and economic interests including through bilateral, regional and multilateral engagement on Australian Government foreign, trade and international development policy priorities). DFAT works with stakeholders to plan, design and administer the grant program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles 2024 \(CGRPs\)](#).



The NCP Scholarship Program grant opportunity opens

We publish the NCP Scholarship Program Guidelines on [GrantConnect](#). Australian universities nominate eligible students.



Applicants complete and submit an application

We invite nominated students to apply for an NCP scholarship by completing the application form and addressing all eligibility requirements and assessment criteria.



Applications are assessed

We assess applications against eligibility requirements and assessment criteria, and compare them to other applications. DFAT invites shortlisted applicants to attend an interview.



Selection panels make recommendations

Selection panels interview shortlisted applicants and advise DFAT on the merits of each recommended applicant.



Scholarship decisions are made

The NCP delegate decides which applicants are successful.



We notify applicants and their Australian university of the outcome.



We enter into a Scholarship Agreement (a grant agreement) with successful applicants (scholars)



NCP scholars undertake their programs

Each scholar undertakes their scholarship program. All program components as outlined in the scholar's application must be approved and undertaken in accordance with the scholarship agreement. DFAT's Managed Administration and Support Services contractor works with scholars to prepare them for departure, monitor their progress and make payments. The CGRPs are applied throughout the program, including in assessing the validity of variations from the program set out in the scholar's application, which is the basis for an award being granted.



Evaluation

DFAT evaluates individual scholarships, and the NCP Scholarships Program as a whole, based on information provided to us by Australian universities and scholars, and that we collect from various sources.

1.1 Introduction

These guidelines apply to the 2026 round of the New Colombo Plan (NCP) Scholarship Program, for the duration of the scholarships awarded in that round. Scholarships awarded in previous rounds comply with guidelines of the round under which they were awarded. Before applying, applicants must read these guidelines and the 2026 Advice to Applicants on [GrantConnect](#). These guidelines take priority to the extent of any inconsistency with the Advice to Applicants.

These guidelines set out:

- the NCP strategic objective and outcomes
- the eligibility requirements and assessment criteria
- how scholars are selected
- how applicants are notified of the outcome
- how scholars are supported, including payments and advice
- how monitoring and evaluation of the NCP Scholarship Program may be conducted, and
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

DFAT administers the NCP according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles 2024](#) (CGRPs).¹

2 About the grant program

2.1 Strategic objective and outcomes of the NCP

The strategic objective of the New Colombo Plan, as described in Program 1.5 of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Portfolio Budget Statement (PBS) is to advance Australia's interests and bilateral relationships through enduring people-to-people, institutional and business links with the Indo-Pacific region.

Through Program 1.5, the NCP contributes to DFAT PBS Outcome 1 – the advancement of Australia's international strategic security and economic interests including through bilateral, regional and multilateral engagement on Australian Government foreign, trade and international development policy priorities.

The NCP provides opportunities for Australian undergraduate university students to develop their Indo-Pacific capability and Asia literacy through immersive, structured learning and internships in the Indo-Pacific region. The intended outcomes of the NCP are:

- for participants to acquire Indo-Pacific capability and Asia literacy
- to foster deeper people-to-people and education relationships between Australia and the Indo-Pacific, and

¹ [Federal Register of Legislation - Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles 2024](#)

- to increase Australia's economic engagement with the region by supporting NCP participants to build job-ready skills, and supporting NCP alumni to maintain their ties to the Indo-Pacific.

In the 2026 round, the NCP includes three programs:

- **Scholarships Program:** experiences of up to 19 months for students to strengthen their Indo-Pacific capability and Asia literacy, including through study, language learning and internships.
- **Semester Program:** leveraging Australian universities' partnership arrangements to support one-to-two semester length experiences for students to develop Indo-Pacific capability, including language learning and internships.
- **Mobility Program:** short-term, credit-bearing experiences of four-to-nine weeks to develop Indo-Pacific capability, including structured learning, internships, mentorships, practicums, and/or research.

The NCP also includes NCP alumni engagement, which is open to all NCP scholars, semester and mobility students who have complied with all requirements of the NCP on completion of their award, and supports alumni to maintain a connection to each other, the NCP and the Indo-Pacific as they progress in their lives and careers.

2.1.1 Objectives and outcomes of the NCP Scholarships Program

The objective of the NCP Scholarships Program is to provide opportunities for Australian undergraduate students to **strengthen their Indo-Pacific capability and Asia literacy**, including in Asian language learning, through immersive, long-term structured learning and internships in the region, in areas of Australia's strategic and economic interests.

The intended outcomes of the NCP Scholarship Program include:

- scholars strengthen their Indo-Pacific capability and Asia literacy in areas of Australia's strategic interest, including in priority host locations, languages and sectors.
- scholars are supported to engage with Australian business, including through internships, to build the cohort of work-ready, Indo-Pacific capable Australians and to increase Australia's economic engagement with the region.
- program alumni maintain their Indo-Pacific knowledge and capability, including language skills, and undertake continued engagement with the Indo-Pacific.

2.2 About the NCP Scholarship Program

The NCP Scholarship Program provides scholarships to a cohort of Australian undergraduate students to undertake offshore programs including study, internships, mentorships and language training for up to 19 months in eligible Indo-Pacific host locations.

The 2026 NCP Scholarship Program will run from 1 January 2026 to 31 July 2028.

2.2.1 Priority areas for selection

To support Australia's capability in Asian languages, immersive experiences and enduring partnerships in the region, priority in the selection processes for the 2026 NCP Scholarship Program will be accorded to:

- Programs which are to be undertaken in the priority host locations, languages and sectors outlined in section 6.1. These areas are consistent with Australia's foreign policy priorities for engagement in the Indo-Pacific region, including as outlined in [Invested: Australia's Southeast Asia Economic Strategy to 2040](#) and [A New Roadmap for Australia's Economic Engagement with India](#). These priorities will be reviewed annually.

- Programs where the main focus is for the study of an Asian language. In the 2026 round, all NCP programs (including the NCP Scholarships Program) will have a language target set at 15 per cent.

2.3 Roles and responsibilities of the Australian Government

The NCP Secretariat within DFAT is responsible for strategic leadership, policy, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and public diplomacy for the NCP.

DFAT has contracted a Managed Administration and Support Services provider (the contractor) to deliver administration and support services during the NCP scholarship lifecycle, including the application period, while scholars are on award, and when they participate in NCP alumni activities. This contractor has delegated legal responsibility to act on behalf of the Commonwealth in implementing NCP services. This includes requirements to collect timely information, manage payments and benefits as well as managing scholar risks, emergencies and safeguards. The contractor has established relationships with our partners overseas and with home universities.

DFAT and/or its contractor is not responsible for arranging study, internships, mentorships, language training or travel arrangements (including visas and accommodation) but will review the scholar's proposed arrangements for these matters to ensure compliance with the NCP Scholarship Program Guidelines and risk management considerations.

Scholars are responsible, in consultation with their home universities, host institutions, host organisations, language training providers and their case managers (from the contractor), for planning and carrying out their approved scholarship program in line with their application.

2.4 Roles and responsibilities of Australian universities

Each participating Australian university:

- a) nominates an NCP International Liaison Officer (ILO) for Scholarships (and an alternative contact, where possible) who will submit nominations on behalf of the Australian university and receive updates during the selection process
- b) will nominate students to apply for the NCP Scholarship Program.

In nominating students for the NCP Scholarship Program, the Australian university agrees to:

- i. obtain the consent of each nominee to provide their personal details to DFAT (see section 4.3)
- ii. ensure all personal information, including email addresses, provided about nominees is accurate and up to date
- iii. support each applicant to arrange a study component and confirm that each applicant's proposed study components meet the requirements in section 5.2.1
- iv. assist applicants to obtain evidence of acceptance by their host institution and should support them to arrange internships, mentorships and language training
- v. work with scholars to undertake risk assessments of host locations, that consider the risks of host locations, plus any personal risks (for example health conditions) or contextual risks linked to the proposed activities to be undertaken (for example an activity that is part of study – such as field research or safeguarding risks associated with internship activities,

see section 5.5.4), and approve the risk assessments at least six weeks prior to the scholar's departure from Australia

- vi. work with scholars to update risk assessments to reflect any new host locations or new program components proposed by scholars during their program, or changes to their personal risk levels (for example an emerging health condition), and approve the risk assessments at least six weeks prior to departure to the new host location or commencement of the new program component
- vii. approve internship and language training proposals that are credit-bearing to the applicants' home degree
- viii. ensure participating students are aware of and comply with DFAT's [Child Protection Policy](#) and [Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy](#) including the reporting obligations under these policies, and incorporate appropriate risk mitigation strategies into their risk assessments, as well as understand their own and other's responsibilities and mandatory reporting requirements (see section 10.2), and
- ix. ensure that applications comply with the NCP Scholarship Program Guidelines, include all supporting documentation, and ensure all details are correct and complete.

Australian public universities have obligations under the Foreign Arrangements Scheme when entering into arrangements with foreign entities, including certain foreign universities. Universities must comply with these obligations in relation to the NCP Scholarship Program. Information about the Foreign Arrangements Scheme is available at <https://www.foreignarrangements.gov.au/>.

The contractor will engage with ILOs along with other university staff where appropriate and may request the assistance of ILOs when necessary.

2.5 Roles and responsibilities of applicants

Each applicant:

- a) must ensure their application, including supporting documentation and referee reports, is complete and is submitted by the closing time, and that all information is correct
- b) is responsible for any costs associated with preparing and lodging their application
- c) is responsible for the decision to apply for and, if successful, accept a scholarship. The Australian Government will not be liable for any loss, damage, injury or harm that might be suffered during, or in connection with, the NCP Scholarship Program
- d) must make their own enquiries about the risks involved in overseas travel, including travel to host location(s), taking account of their personal and program context as it relates to risk levels when overseas, and be fully informed about the risks at all times
- e) must read carefully the travel advice for their host location(s) and other relevant pages on the Smartraveller website for information about risks overseas and preparing for overseas travel
- f) must read, understand and comply with the content of the NCP Scholarship Program Guidelines and the NCP Scholar Code of Conduct.
- g) must not propose programs in a host location or region within a host location for which the Australian Government's Smartraveller advice is 'Do not travel' or 'Reconsider your need to travel', as outlined in section 5.5, and
- h) must exhibit professional behaviour throughout the selection process.

2.6 Roles and responsibilities of scholars

Each scholar must:

- a) travel to, enter and depart from host locations/s under an Australian passport which must have six months' validity beyond the end date of the scholarship program
- b) subscribe to relevant travel advisories on Smartraveller prior to commencing their scholarship
- c) obtain, pay for and comply with appropriate visa/s for the duration of their scholarship and maintain evidence of up-to-date and appropriate visas with the contractor at all times during the program. Written advice on visas must be sought from your host location's immigration authorities (not from any other source, including private visa agents, host organisations or other international students)
- d) not travel to a host location or region within a host location for which the Australian Government's Smartraveller advice is 'Do not travel' or 'Reconsider your need to travel', as outlined in section 5.5
- e) register on any crisis page on the Smartraveller website related to their host location that is activated during a major overseas incident during their program
- f) must make further enquiries about the risks involved in overseas travel, including travel to host location(s), building on those made at the application stage (refer to section 2.5 above) and have an up-to-date and full understanding about the location, personal or contextual risks at all times, and complete a risk assessment and have it approved by the home university and case manager at least six weeks prior to departure from Australia. Approval to travel is contingent on a risk assessment being approved
- g) must work with their home university to update risk assessments to reflect any new host locations or new program components proposed during their program, and obtain approval for the risk assessments from the home university and case manager at least six weeks prior to the departure to the new host location or commencement of the new program component. Approval to travel to the new location and/or start a new component is contingent on a risk assessment being approved
- h) must obtain approval from their Australian university for internship and language training proposals that are credit-bearing to their home degree
- i) comply with their Scholarship Agreement and its incorporated documents such as the NCP Student Code of Conduct, including exhibiting professional behaviour during their scholarship program. Evidence of unprofessional behaviour, including but not limited to, misrepresentation of the truth in an application or at interview, undisclosed conflicts of interest, or inappropriate social media posts or public commentary referencing the NCP Scholarship Program can be grounds for not awarding or for cancelling a scholarship (see NCP scholarship agreement, NCP Media and Publication Guidelines, and NCP Student Code of Conduct)
- j) agrees to comply with DFAT's [Child Protection Policy](#) and [Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy](#) including the reporting obligations under these policies (see section 10.2)
- k) cooperate with, and comply with directions given by, DFAT and the contractor, including always communicating in a respectful and polite manner with both parties

- l) not participate in another offshore scholarship or mobility project while undertaking their scholarship program. After commencing their NCP scholarship program at the host location, NCP scholars are not permitted to pause their scholarship program to undertake another offshore scholarship or mobility project
- m) arrange all scholarship program components by contacting the relevant host organisations and liaising with their home university and their case manager
- n) where a scholar is currently employed and will return to the same employer after the conclusion of their scholarship program, the scholar must obtain written approval from their employer prior to commencing their program demonstrating agreement to the scholar undertaking their program, including providing leave. The scholar must also declare any conflict of interest, particularly in relation to their program
- o) attend all classes and complete all assessments in person, as required by their host institution, and
- p) scholars must obtain and submit travel medical clearance from a clinic specialising in travel medicine, including any necessary vaccinations, prior to commencing travel. This should include a medical / health clearance, stating fitness to travel and live overseas to undertake the NCP Scholarship Program and with a plan to manage any pre-existing conditions. This plan is to be included in the risk assessment and should consider how any medical costs for prevention, management or treatment would be covered, including potentially the scholar purchasing additional insurance, over and above that provided under the NCP, at their own cost (see section 5.4.4). The scholar is responsible for any cost of the medical assessment.

The scholar should familiarise themselves with the travel and health insurance cover provided under the NCP, including exclusions under the policy and clauses concerning pre-existing conditions.

2.7 Roles and responsibilities of the Managed Administration and Support Services Contractor

The contractor is the first point of contact for applicants and Australian universities on administrative matters, including eligibility for the NCP Scholarship Program, nominations, applications and candidate interviews.

The contractor assigns a case manager and provides advice, assistance, and program management, for each scholar. These services include:

- a) administration of nomination, application and selection processes
- b) pre-departure support (scholars are still responsible for organising visas, flights, accommodation, study component credit approval and enrolment, and other components) and providing the contractor with timely documentation confirming that plans are compliant with all requirements in these guidelines and the scholarship agreement)
- c) a briefing pack of relevant information
- d) scholarship allowances
- e) advice and guidance during the scholarship on the components, entitlements and responsibilities as identified in these guidelines and the scholarship agreement
- f) assistance with scholarship variation requests where circumstances beyond the scholar's control require a variation, and

- g) manage critical incidents involving NCP scholars in conjunction with home and host universities, DFAT and emergency services and the NCP Program's emergency assistance provider, as well as any relevant emergency services in the location where the incident is occurring.

The contractor will review each scholar's risk assessment before the scholar departs Australia, and/or to any other approved location, or when the risk profile for the scholar changes requiring significant updates to the assessment, to confirm whether it is fit for purpose. The contractor will work with home university ILOs, as necessary.

3 Grant amount and grant period

3.1 Scholarship grant funding

NCP has an annual appropriation of \$50.933m over four years from 2025-26 to 2028-29. A total of \$35.343 million is available in NCP grant program funding for the 2025-26 financial year with \$3.413 million in funding available for NCP Scholarship Program. Expenditure related to the NCP Scholarships Program 2026 round is expected to be expensed over three financial years to 2027-28 at a total of \$22.751 million for 350 scholarships.

	Available Grant Funding		
	\$ million		
2026 rounds only	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-28
NCP Mobility Program	\$8.17m		
NCP Semester Program	\$23.76m		
NCP Scholarship Program	\$3.413m	\$15.925m	\$3.413m
Total	\$35.343m		

The remaining funding in the NCP's annual budget appropriation will cover NCP scholars from previous rounds who continue their programs in 2025-26, as well as administrative support expenses for program delivery.

The maximum total grant amount for an NCP scholarship is \$107,000. Entitlements will be calculated based on the program proposed in the scholarship application and the actual program undertaken in line with the Guidelines.

See section 5.4 for scholarship benefits.

3.2 Scholarship grant period

The term of an applicant's proposed scholarship program must:

- have a duration between three and 19 months, and
- commence between 1 January 2026 and 31 December 2026.

4 Eligibility criteria

DFAT will only consider applications that satisfy all eligibility requirements.

4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a scholarship?

To be eligible for a scholarship, and to remain eligible during their scholarship program, an applicant must:

- a) be nominated for the NCP Scholarship Program by their home university (see section 4.3)
- b) be an Australian citizen
- c) not be a current citizen or permanent resident of their proposed host location(s)
- d) be admitted into an Australian undergraduate degree program for which they will receive full academic credit for the study component of their NCP scholarship program
- e) have mandatory units to enrol and undertake in that home degree program after they return to Australia following the end of their NCP scholarship program
- f) be between 18 and 30 years of age (inclusive) for non-Indigenous applicants, or between 18 and 35 years of age (inclusive) for Indigenous applicants, as at 1 January 2026
- g) not be a previous recipient of an NCP scholarship (note: previous NCP Mobility Program or Semester Program grant recipients are eligible to apply for a scholarship), and
- h) not be an employee of the branch of DFAT or the contractor that administers the NCP.

Scholars must continue to meet these eligibility requirements during the term of their scholarship.

*Note: The definition of 'undergraduate courses' for this purpose is as defined by the [Higher Education Administrative Information for Providers](#) (see Glossary).

4.2 Who is not eligible to apply for a scholarship?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- an individual, or student within a home university which is included in the National Redress Scheme's website on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme' (www.nationalredress.gov.au).

4.3 Nominations

Only students nominated by their home university can apply for a scholarship. Students interested in applying for a scholarship should contact the NCP International Liaison Officer for Scholarships or the international office of their home university.

There is no cap on the number of student nominations from each university to encourage a wide pool of applicants.

Each Australian university may nominate students enrolled at that university, without ranking them. Students may undertake a study component in any field (provided they meet eligibility requirements in sections 4.1 and 5.2.1). Longer term language study and a higher language-focused study load will be prioritised, within the \$10,000 tuition fees cap (section 5.4.2).

Each Australian university determines its own process for selecting nominees but should consider the eligibility requirements and assessment criteria. Australian universities must only nominate students that they consider to be academically and personally capable of successfully completing their proposed overseas program and building lasting linkages with the Indo-Pacific (see assessment criteria in section 6), including by developing Indo-Pacific capability and literacy. DFAT strongly encourages Australian universities to ensure their nominees are representative of the diversity of the Australian university student population.

DFAT will consider reasonable accommodation to support participation of students with disability. Scholars with disability should declare their disability early in the scholarships process, to enable working with their case manager on a disability support plan, if needed, prior to departure from Australia. Additional funding for disability support may be provided on a case-by-case basis.

Australian universities must submit nominations online through the NCP Online website. The contractor will provide the Australian university NCP International Liaison Officers for NCP Scholarships with instructions to access the website and submit nominations.

Nominees should be aware that the home university will be required, as part of the online nomination process, to provide the following information about each nominee:

- name
- gender
- date of birth
- email address
- mobile phone
- residential address
- degree in which the nominee is enrolled
- academic transcript (official)
- intended primary host location, and
- confirmation that the nominated student has been advised that the contractor will arrange a police check for each applicant who is shortlisted for interview.

The contractor will invite eligible nominated students to submit an application. Nominees should ensure that any documentation they provide aligns with any supporting documentation provided to the contractor by the home university.

Each participating Australian university must ensure that they have appropriate policies in place to handle personal information and have obtained each nominee's written consent to use and disclose their personal information to DFAT for the purpose of nomination in accordance with these guidelines.

Each applicant must agree to the terms of use of such personal information (section 13.4) when submitting their application.

The contractor will arrange a police check for each applicant who is shortlisted for interview. The Australian Government expects NCP scholars to enhance the reputation of Australia and the NCP while overseas. An adverse finding may not automatically disqualify an applicant from receiving a scholarship. However, if a successful applicant is found to have a criminal record or conviction, including one that was not disclosed prior to the offer being made, DFAT may revoke or decline to offer a scholarship to the applicant.

5 What the grant money can be used for

5.1 Eligible scholarship program activities

To be eligible, an applicant's proposed scholarship program must:

- a) include at least one study component commencing within six months of the scholarship program commencement date. Scholars must confirm admission by the host institution

prior to commencement of the scholarship program, or if this is not possible, provide a copy of the relevant exchange agreement as evidence of admission.

- b) be for a scholarship term:
 - of between three and 19 months in duration, and
 - commence on or between 1 January 2026 and 31 December 2026 inclusive, and
- c) at all times during the scholarship term, involve the scholar undertaking either:
 - a full-time study component
 - a full-time internship component
 - a full-time language training component, or
 - a permitted gap.
- d) be arranged such that the first component is undertaken at the primary host location.

In addition, scholarship programs may include:

- a) a part-time internship component (see section 5.2.2) undertaken concurrently with a full-time study component or full-time language training component
- b) a part-time mentorship (see section 5.2.3) undertaken concurrently with a full-time study component, full-time internship component or full-time language training, or
- c) a part-time language training component (see section 5.2.4) undertaken concurrently with a full-time study component or full-time internship component.

The award of an NCP scholarship does not represent automatic approval of proposed program components in the application. All program components will be subject to due diligence and risk assessment to ensure alignment with relevant DFAT policies and must be approved prior to the scholar's departure from Australia and commencement of any component.

5.2 Eligible scholarship program components

5.2.1 Study component

All study components must:

- a) be at least one full-time study period, which is either a semester or trimester as defined by the host institution (this is mandatory; summer/winter school or short-term study programs are not eligible)
- b) except via a research-based Honours program, be undertaken through attendance at face-to-face course delivery (except in exceptional circumstances as approved by DFAT), on the host institution premises or such other physical premises that the host institution has approved for delivery of the teaching component of the course (and not via online, pre-recorded or other remote technology)
- c) be a course undertaken at the host institution, for which the applicant's home university has agreed to grant full-time academic credit towards the completion requirements of a bachelor degree, Bachelor Honours Degree or eligible undergraduate language-focused course (see section 4.1). The scholar must be admitted and undertaking the degree stated in their application to which their program will receive credit. Courses that provide whole or partial credit towards a concurrent Diploma (in addition to full-time academic credit towards

a bachelor degree, Bachelor Honours Degree or eligible undergraduate language-focused course) are also permitted

- d) for scholars studying an Honours research-based program, be supervised by an academic from their host institution
- e) not exceed the maximum tuition fees payable in section 5.4.2 (for fee-paying students), and
- f) be confirmed by the host institution and home university (and approved by the case manager) prior to program commencement.

Scholarship programs may include up to one academic year of study components. Each study period as part of the academic year is regarded as a separate study component.

When there is a period between the end of one study component and the commencement of the next study component, and a scholar is not undertaking a full-time internship or full-time language training, the scholar must apply (and have obtained approval) for a permitted gap covering that period.

Scholarship programs must not be undertaken at an offshore campus of a university established or headquartered outside the host location (for example, an offshore campus of a third location university) with the exception of Australian offshore campuses that are able to offer a genuinely immersive experience.

An academic transcript showing the course dates and that the scholar has met all course requirements must be provided by the study host institution to the scholar. The scholar must provide the academic transcript to their case manager upon completion of the study component. All study components must be arranged directly with the local host institution except in priority host locations where students may choose to engage the services of non-profit consortia/membership organisations to provide academic services. All invoices, outside of invoices issued in priority host locations, must be issued by, and will be paid to, the host institution. Invoices from non-profit consortia-based academic service providers operating in priority host locations may be accepted where DFAT has agreed to fund those services prior to the scholar engaging the service provider. Consortia or third-party services engaged by the scholar without DFAT's prior agreement will not be funded by the NCP and will be at the scholar's own cost.

5.2.2 Internships

Internships enable scholars to have immersive work experiences with Indo-Pacific institutions and businesses relevant to their academic course and professional development. Internships can include (but are not limited to) clinical placements, practicums or artist residencies.

An internship component as part of an NCP scholarship program is optional, but must be undertaken:

- a) full-time (between 22 and 38 hours per week) prior or subsequent to a study component (subject to section 5.1 a)). (The minimum duration of any full-time internship placement is two weeks. The total cumulative duration of all full-time internships undertaken during a scholarship program must not exceed six months), or
- b) part-time, concurrent with a full-time study component or a full-time language training component (there is no maximum duration)
- c) in the primary host location, or in a secondary host location, in accordance with section 5.5, and

- d) with a single internship host organisation.

An internship must be undertaken face-to-face at the premises of the host organisation, or elsewhere in the host location where the host organisation conducts regular business. An internship must not be undertaken online or remotely.

Examples of appropriate internship host organisations include Australian businesses operating in the host location, local businesses, institutions, peak bodies, NGOs, civil society organisations, universities and research agencies that are headquartered in the region, and multilateral organisations. Internships at Australian diplomatic missions are not permitted.

Scholars may undertake either paid or unpaid internships. An internship must not incur any cost to the scholar, their home university or their host university, such as for training, program materials or delivery or staff wages. Attending courses or participating in conferences/seminars (informal or formal; free or involving payment) does not count as internships.

A scholar who is employed with an organisation (during or prior to taking up an NCP scholarship) must not undertake an internship with that organisation offshore as part of their NCP program (whether the internship is paid or unpaid).

Internships and mentorships do not need to be confirmed at the time of application. All internships must be approved by DFAT through the contractor before commencement. An internship that is credit-bearing to a scholar's Australian degree must be approved by the home university, prior to DFAT's consideration and before commencement of the internship.

All internship components must be arranged directly with the local host organisation, not through a third party provider.

When planning internships, scholars must allow sufficient time for visa processing by host location immigration authorities. This can often be a lengthy process. Internships must be approved and confirmed prior to internship commencement.

5.2.3 Mentorships

A mentorship may only be undertaken concurrently with a full-time study component, full-time internship component, or full-time language training component and must not incur a cost to the scholar.

A mentorship is negotiated between the scholar and mentor and can be undertaken face-to-face or via remote methods. There is no minimum time commitment for a mentorship.

All mentorships must be approved by DFAT through the contractor before commencement.

5.2.4 Language training

DFAT strongly encourages scholars to undertake formal language training as the first component of their scholarship program (in addition to any language learning that may be part of the scholar's study component). Language training as part of a scholarship program must be:

- a) undertaken in the same host location as a study component or a full-time internship component
- b) in an official language, or a commonly spoken language or dialect (other than English), of the scholar's host location
- c) delivered formally and face-to-face by a single bona fide training provider (as assessed by DFAT in its sole and absolute discretion).

When proposing to undertake language training a scholar must provide:

- evidence that the language training provider is a registered language training organisation with physical premises and appropriately qualified and experienced language teaching staff, and has policies for ensuring student welfare, managing risk and monitoring student attendance and achievement, and
- details of the proposed training, including level, outline of course content, mode/s of delivery and training assessment.

d) undertaken either:

- full-time, which means for a minimum of 15 contact hours per week (plus personal language study/practice, bringing the expected total hours of language study to between 22 and 38 hours per week). (The minimum duration of any full-time language training is two weeks. There is no maximum duration, noting the requirements about maximum scholarship duration in section 5.1 and the maximum amount payable for tuition fees in section 5.4.2), or
- part-time, concurrently with a full-time study component or a full-time internship component (there is no maximum duration, noting the requirements about maximum scholarship duration in section 5.1 and the maximum amount payable for tuition fees in section 5.4.2).

All language training must be approved by DFAT through the contractor before commencement. DFAT prioritises language training undertaken early in a scholar's deployment, to maximise the utility of training outcomes. Requests to undertake language training at the end of a scholar's deployment will require justification, particularly for non-priority languages. Language training that is credit-bearing to the scholar's Australian degree must also be approved by the home university before commencement.

On completion of language training, a scholar must submit in a timely manner a certificate of completion from the language school, indicating the attendance and the level of language competence achieved by the scholar. The language training tuition fee entitlement may be used to cover the cost of language competence testing at the end of the language training.

All language training components must be arranged directly with the local language training provider, not through a third party provider. All invoices must be issued by, and will be paid to, the language training provider. DFAT may agree to fund non-profit consortia-based academic service providers in DFAT priority host locations with prior agreement. DFAT will not provide funds to any third party without prior agreement.

5.3 What the scholarship grant money cannot be used for

You cannot use the grant for the following activities:

- purchase of land
- wages
- major capital expenditure
- covering retrospective costs
- costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation
- subsidy of general ongoing administration costs of an organisation such as administration, electricity, phone and rent

- major construction/capital works, or
- activities for which other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies have primary responsibility.

5.4 Scholarship benefits

5.4.1 Overview

Scholars are responsible for their own financial circumstances while undertaking their NCP scholarship program. Before applying for a scholarship, an applicant must consider their personal circumstances and ensure that undertaking a scholarship program will not overextend them financially. In particular, applicants should be aware that exchange rates can fluctuate. Applicants should familiarise themselves with the relative cost of living, including options for suitable accommodation, in their proposed location, before submitting an application.

Scholars may receive the scholarship benefits described in sections 5.4.2, 5.4.3 and 5.4.4 during the scholarship term, depending on their scholarship program and whether they continue to meet the requirements for each benefit in the scholarship agreement.

The scholarship benefits provided to scholars relate only to the scholarship round in which the scholar was awarded a scholarship.

The terms on which scholars will receive scholarship benefits are set out in the scholarship agreement and are based on the proposed program in the scholar's application, that will be subject to approval before commencement. In most cases, scholarship benefits are paid as a reimbursement to the scholar or directly to the host institution, host organisation, language training provider or relevant third party, and not to the scholar in advance. Benefits are paid on provision of required supporting documentation (for example an official invoice and proof of payment for reimbursements). Any scholarship benefits received must only be used for the purpose of the scholarship program.

All amounts in this section or the scholarship agreement are expressed in Australian dollars. Where amounts are converted into foreign currency (including where an invoice is paid on behalf of the scholar, or the scholar's eligibility for a reimbursement needs to be determined), the then current exchange rate will be applied, as determined by DFAT.

Not all expenditure during a scholarship program is eligible for grant funding. The DFAT delegate makes the final decision on eligible expenditure.

5.4.2 Tuition fees

Tuition fees are payable directly to the relevant host institution and any language training provider, up to the maximum amount for each activity set out in the following table. All invoices, outside of invoices issued in priority host locations, must be issued by, and will be paid to, the host institution. Invoices from non-profit consortia-based academic service providers operating in priority host locations may be accepted where DFAT has agreed to fund those services prior to the scholar engaging the service provider. Consortia or third-party services engaged by the scholar without DFAT's prior agreement will not be funded by the NCP and will be at the scholar's own cost. A scholar is responsible for any tuition fees in excess of the maximum amount per approved activity.

Item	Activity	Length of activity	Expenses payable under the Tuition fees	Maximum amount of expenses payable as Tuition fees for the activity
1	Study component	As defined in section 5.2.1	1. Course fees at the host institution where the scholar is a fee-paying international student. The tuition fees only cover course fees at the host institution if no current exchange agreement relevant to the scholar's field of study is available between the home university and the host institution. The applicant's proposed study component and study host institution are subject to final approval by DFAT. All study components must be arranged directly with the local host institution, not through a third party provider. DFAT may agree to fund non-profit consortia-based academic service providers with prior agreement. DFAT will not provide funds to any third party without prior agreement. 2. Applicable student services and amenities fees at the host institution. 3. Other amounts payable to the host institution where all of the following requirements are met: (a) the total of the costs is more than \$200 (b) the costs are not covered under an applicable exchange agreement place (c) the host institution certifies in writing that the costs are mandatory for completion of the study component, and (d) an invoice for the relevant amount is issued by the host institution. Examples of this cost may include compulsory course field trips within the host location; fieldwork research costs; compulsory materials or equipment (for example safety or personal protective equipment); or the use of the host institution's facilities by scholars undertaking a research-based study component ('bench fees').	Up to \$15,000 per semester or \$10,000 per trimester, up to a maximum of \$30,000 for the duration of the program

Item	Activity	Length of activity	Expenses payable under the Tuition fees	Maximum amount of funding payable for Tuition fees for the activity
2	Language training	As defined in section 5.2.4	Fees for the language training payable to the language training provider. All language training components must be arranged directly with the local language training provider, not through a third party provider. All invoices must be issued by, and will be paid to, the language training provider.	Up to \$10,000

5.4.3 Allowances

- a) **A one-off travel allowance** of \$3,000 paid to a scholar (\$1,500 paid prior to travel from Australia to the scholar's first host location, and \$1,500 paid upon return from the host location to Australia at the end of the scholarship term) to contribute to costs associated with the scholar's travel to and from the host location, including domestic travel to an international airport for departure and visa costs.
- b) **A one-off establishment allowance** of \$3,000 paid to a scholar to contribute to the costs associated with the scholar settling in at their host location. These may cover expenses such as rental bonds, textbooks, study materials (including IT equipment) and additional medical insurance.
- c) **A scholarship allowance** of up to \$3,000 paid to a scholar as a monthly stipend during the scholarship term to contribute to the scholar's basic living costs in their host location, when on an approved scholarship program component and permitted leave. Scholars do not receive stipend when on suspension or in Australia.
- d) **A one-off fellow allowance** of \$1,000 paid to fellows (see section 6.4) to purchase study materials for use during their scholarship and to contribute to costs associated with the fellow's promotion of the NCP. Scholars who are appointed as fellow under more than one applicable award will receive a fellow allowance for each position.
- e) **New Colombo Plan ASEAN-Australia Centre Scholarships** are open to scholars pursuing their program in ASEAN countries within the NCP in resources, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), and related sectors. DFAT will select a cohort of NCP applicants who demonstrate interest in learning about and experiencing Southeast Asia to engage in enrichment activities such as conferences, projects, seminars, courses, and events related to their studies.

5.4.4 Other scholarship benefits

Scholars also receive:

Insurance

Travel and medical insurance while undertaking an approved NCP scholarship program outside Australia, are provided under an existing policy of cover and are subject to certain terms and exclusions.

Mental health support valued up to \$3,000, reimbursed to a scholar to contribute to the cost of professional mental health services delivered by qualified/registered psychologists and social workers to assist with mental health issues, with prior approval by their case manager. Scholars are only eligible for this allowance if they are accessing these services while undertaking their program in the host location. This allowance is not applicable for mental health services accessed when the scholar is physically in Australia.

5.4.5 Allocation of case manager

The scholar will be supported by a case manager for the duration of their scholarship. Their services include pre-departure engagement, advice on health and travel insurance, and payment of scholarship benefits.

5.5 Eligible host locations

5.5.1 Host locations

Subject to sections 2.5 g) and 5.5.4, NCP scholarship programs must be conducted only in the following host locations:

- Bangladesh
- Bhutan
- Brunei Darussalam
- Cambodia
- China
- Cook Islands
- Federated States of Micronesia
- Fiji
- French Polynesia
- Hong Kong
- India
- Indonesia
- Japan
- Kiribati
- Laos
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Marshall Islands
- Mongolia
- Nauru
- Nepal
- New Caledonia
- Niue
- Palau
- Papua New Guinea
- Philippines
- Republic of Korea
- Samoa
- Singapore
- Solomon Islands
- Sri Lanka
- Taiwan
- Thailand
- Timor-Leste
- Tonga
- Tuvalu
- Vanuatu

- Vietnam

5.5.2 Primary host location

A primary host location is the host location for which the scholarship is awarded. The most substantial study component and the majority of the duration of the scholarship program must be completed in the primary location to ensure the scholar has a genuinely immersive experience. In exceptional circumstances DFAT may agree to scholars undertaking part of their scholarship in a secondary host location, but scholars must undertake the majority of their scholarship program at the host location for which they were awarded a scholarship. Scholars must commence their first program component at their primary host location.

5.5.3 Secondary host location

In exceptional circumstances, a scholar may undertake their scholarship program in more than one host location and/or at more than one host institution or host organisation. If an applicant plans to undertake part of their scholarship program in a secondary host location, the applicant must outline in their application the rationale for including the secondary host location. The proposed secondary host location should be proximate to the primary host location. For example, a scholar undertaking their study component in Malaysia (primary host location) may seek to undertake their internship in Singapore (secondary host location).

The maximum number of secondary host locations is one, and the secondary host location must align with NCP objectives and be coherent with the objectives of the rest of the scholar's NCP program.

The total time spent at the secondary host location must not exceed the total time spent at the primary host location.

Inclusion of a secondary host location in a scholarship program does not entitle a scholar to any additional travel allowance or establishment allowance (see section 5.4.3).

Scholars who propose a secondary host location, or propose to change their secondary host location after they have commenced their scholarship must seek DFAT's approval via their case manager. If approved, scholars must update their risk assessment to include the secondary host location and have it approved by their home university and case manager at least six weeks prior to departure to the secondary host location.

5.5.4 Travel requirements

Scholars are responsible for making their own travel arrangements, including obtaining and complying with appropriate visas for each host location in which the scholar will undertake their approved scholarship program. Written advice on visas must be sought from your host location's immigration authorities (not from any other source, including private visa agents), based on full and accurate information on the activities to be undertaken under the NCP scholarship.

Scholars are responsible for the costs of applying for, or obtaining visas. Family members visiting or accompanying a scholar must obtain their own visas. There are no additional entitlements for accompanying family members.

Applicants must carefully consider the risks of travel to the proposed host locations and regions before deciding whether to apply. Scholars must make their own independent enquiries about the risks involved in overseas travel and to the host location(s), and ensure they are fully informed about the risks at all times.

Scholars must obtain and submit travel medical clearance from a clinic specialising in travel medicine, including any necessary vaccinations, prior to commencing travel. Scholars are

responsible for ensuring they take precautions to protect their health, including keeping relevant vaccinations up-to-date and accessing medical services and treatment – including for any pre-existing conditions or disabilities.

Scholars must not travel to a host location or region within a host location for which the Australian Government's Smartraveller advice is 'Do not travel' or 'Reconsider your need to travel' (see www.smartraveller.gov.au). Where the Smartraveller advice is raised to 'Do not travel' or 'Reconsider your need to travel' for a host location during the application process or while a scholar is on award, the scholar's case manager will work with the scholar on their return to Australia and to identify an alternate host location if required.

Scholars are required to acknowledge in their scholarship agreement (see section 10.1) that they have considered the risks carefully and investigated all personal welfare, health, safety and security precautions before deciding to travel to any host location.

Scholars must work with their home university to address the issues identified in the risk assessment for all host locations undertaken in section 2.4.

5.6 Permitted gaps

While undertaking a scholarship component (commenced, but not concluded a component), scholars must not travel to another host location for personal travel to ensure continuity and immersion of their scholarship program.

During the scholarship term, gaps may be approved as detailed in the scholarship agreement. During such gaps the scholar is not required to undertake the scholarship program on a full-time basis in accordance with section 5.1 c).

A permitted gap counts towards the maximum period of the scholarship term, as approved as per the scholarship application and must not result in the scholarship term exceeding 19 months.

A permitted gap must not incur any additional costs to the NCP Scholarship Program, the contractor, host institution(s), host organisation(s) (if any) or language training provider (if any).

A permitted gap may impact on a scholar's entitlement to insurance under the relevant policy terms. Scholars are responsible for informing themselves of the insurance policy terms, and taking out appropriate alternative or additional insurance cover where the insurance is impacted by a permitted gap.

When a scholar has concluded a scholarship program component and has received approval of a confirmed subsequent component, the scholar can apply for gap leave for the period between both components.

A permitted gap may be either:

- a) Gap leave (between components) - when there is a gap between the end of and subsequent commencement of a full-time study component, full-time language training component or full-time internship component and is for a maximum of:
 - i. 28 days in the first 12-month period of an NCP scholarship program (calculated on a pro rata basis if the scholarship program is shorter than 12 months in duration), and
 - ii. 14 days in any subsequent period of an NCP scholarship program (in addition to any unused gap leave under section 5.6(a)(i), and calculated on a pro rata basis if the scholarship program is shorter than 19 months in duration).

Gap leave is calculated in calendar days between full-time components.

When applying for gap leave, scholars must demonstrate that it is reasonably necessary in order to complete their scholarship program, with no reasonable alternatives. Scholars must apply for gap leave as soon as they become aware of the need for gap leave. Scholars must remain in their current host location or another eligible host location during any period of gap leave.

Scholarship benefits are unaffected by approved gap leave.

b) **Leave of absence** - for a maximum of:

- i. 14 days in the first 12-month period of an NCP scholarship program (calculated on a pro rata basis if the scholarship program is shorter than 12 months in duration), and
- ii. 7 days in any subsequent period of an NCP scholarship program (in addition to any unused leave of absence under section 5.6(b)(i), and calculated on a pro rata basis if the scholarship program is shorter than 19 months in duration).

Leave of absence is calculated in calendar days between full-time components.

A leave of absence may be for

- personal or professional development (excluding undertaking internships or extending existing internships)
- compassionate and compelling reasons
- issues relating to the scholar's safety and security
- travel to another host location for visa requirements while a component is underway (commenced but not concluded a component) for example during a semester break.

Scholarship benefits are unaffected by approved leave of absence.

c) **Suspension** - a scholar may apply for a suspension on the terms in the NCP scholarship agreement DFAT may, at its discretion, require a student to be on suspension in accordance with the processes set out in the scholarship agreement.

During any period of suspension there is no entitlement to, or payment of, NCP scholarship benefits or payments for costs incurred during the suspension. Nor is the scholar covered by NCP insurance.

If a scholar travels to Australia after commencing their scholarship program, they will be considered to be on suspension for the duration that they are in Australia.

Suspension periods must:

- only be used as a last resort, where gap leave or leave of absence has been exhausted
- be kept to a minimum to ensure continuity and immersion of a scholar's program
- not exceed 30 days in a single block unless agreed by DFAT in exceptional circumstances.

5.7 Community engagement and advocacy

We encourage scholars to engage with local community groups in their host location and to promote the NCP and the linkages it is creating between Australia and the Indo-Pacific.

The Australian Government, including through its overseas diplomatic missions and offices, may invite scholars to participate in events during their NCP scholarship program, in addition to the formal requirements of the scholarship program.

We encourage scholars to share their experiences of their scholarship program with the NCP Secretariat, other students and their community, including through engaging with the NCP alumni community and through appropriate use of social media. We encourage scholars to participate in activities that promote the NCP and to advocate for the NCP, including the benefits of studying and undertaking work placements in the Indo-Pacific.

6 The assessment criteria

6.1 Priority areas for selection

All NCP programs must be conducted only in the host locations at section 5.5.1. As outlined in section 2.2.1, priority during selection processes for the 2026 NCP Scholarship Program will be given to the following:

- Programs that will be undertaken in the priority host locations, languages and sectors outlined in the table below. These areas are consistent with Australia's foreign policy priorities for engagement in the Indo-Pacific region, including as outlined in [Invested: Australia's Southeast Asia Economic Strategy to 2040](#) and [A New Roadmap for Australia's Economic Engagement with India](#). These priorities will be reviewed annually. Applicants may still submit applications for other NCP host locations (listed in section 5.5.1), languages and sectors. Where eligible, these applications will be assessed on their merits in accordance with the assessment criteria at section 6.2.

Priority Host Locations	Of the eligible NCP host locations, applications to the following locations where Australia wishes to expand linkages will be prioritised: • India • Indonesia • Vietnam • Timor-Leste
	Applications for the following host locations, where Australia wants to maintain its strong, existing engagement, will also be considered highly favourably: • China • Fiji • Japan • Republic of Korea • Malaysia • Singapore • The Philippines • Taiwan • Thailand
Priority Asian Languages	The Australian Government is committed to building Australia's Indo-Pacific capabilities and deepening Asia literacy, including in languages. Applications that demonstrate a focus on learning the following Asian languages will be prioritised: • Bahasa Indonesia • Malay • Chinese (Mandarin) • Hindi • Japanese • Korean • Vietnamese

Priority Sectors	Australia's prosperity, security and economic future is tied to the Indo-Pacific region. Applications demonstrating a relationship to the following sectors will be a priority: • Economics and Business • Environment, Primary Industries and Natural Resources • Infrastructure, Climate and Energy • Law, Asian Studies, Culture, and Human Development • Technology and Innovation
-------------------------	---

- **Programs where the main focus is for the study of an Asian language.** In the 2026 round, all NCP programs will have a language target set at 15 per cent of the cohort undertaking language study. This target builds on the language stream introduced in the 2025 NCP Scholarships Program. For Australian undergraduates awarded under the NCP Scholarships Program, the language target criteria include meeting one or more of the following:
 - 50 per cent or more of the planned university study component program, to be delivered by the host institution and approved by scholars' Australian home university for credit towards their Australian home degree, is delivered in an official or commonly spoken language (other than English) of an eligible primary NCP host location where the host institution is located, via face-to-face mode; or
 - 50 per cent or more of the planned university study component program, approved by the scholars' Australian home universities for credit towards their Australian home degree, is to study the official or commonly spoken language (other than English) of an eligible primary NCP host location where the host institution is located, via face-to-face mode; or
 - a planned language course(s) through in-location registered language training providers to study the official or commonly spoken language (other than English) of an eligible NCP host location where the study component or internship component is planned to take place, via face-to-face mode with minimum of 10 weeks full-time study (as defined in section 5.2.4 d) in a continuous block or an equivalent part-time study alongside a study and/or internship component.]

6.2 Assessment criteria

In addition to meeting the eligibility requirements, applicants will be assessed in accordance with the process in section 8 and against assessment criteria below (for both the written application and at interview). Responses will be limited to 300 words per criterion. Applicants must be assessed as at least satisfactory against each assessment criterion. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend an interview.

Criterion 1

Alignment of application with the Australian Government's geographic and sectoral priorities in the Indo-Pacific region

Weighting: 35 per cent

You should demonstrate this by:

- a) describing how your scholarship program aligns with and will contribute to Australian Government priorities, demonstrating a well-researched, cohesive scholarship program that provides an immersive experience, and
- b) describing the linkages (personal and institutional) that you will develop while undertaking your NCP Scholarship, building on your demonstrated interest in, and knowledge of, the Indo-Pacific.

Criterion 2

Focus on Indo-Pacific languages, especially priority languages

Weighting: 15 per cent

You should demonstrate this by:

- a) describing how you will incorporate the study of an Indo-Pacific language, especially a priority Asian language, into your NCP Scholarship Program and the level of capability you aim to achieve, and
- b) outlining how you will use and maintain the language proficiency obtained during your NCP Scholarship in your future studies, work or community engagement.

Criterion 3

Personal attributes for successful completion of scholarship

Weighting: 30 per cent

You should demonstrate this by:

- a) describing the challenges and risks you might face in your host location and how you would respond to them – for example academic, cultural, personal – demonstrating a well-researched host location, and
- b) describing why you consider you have attributes that will enable you to deal with these challenges and risks.

Criterion 4

Future impact of NCP experiences focussed with regards to you maintaining engagement with the Indo-Pacific

Weighting: 20 per cent

You should demonstrate this by:

- a) describing how you plan to use your NCP experience after you have completed your scholarship, demonstrating a long-term forward plan, and
- b) describing how your scholarship experience will establish your Indo Pacific-links and your plan for maintaining those links.

6.3 Other considerations

In addition to section 6.1 (Priority areas for selection) and section 6.2 (Assessment criteria), DFAT may accord priority to applications against the following factors (in order of priority):

- a) representation from diverse student groups including but not limited to, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students, students from a low socio-economic status background, students from regional/remote areas or universities, students who are first in their immediate family to attend university, students across the genders, female students

studying in non-traditional fields, students with disability, and students from a non-English speaking background

b) applicants proposing:

- longer periods of study components
- an internship component or a mentorship that is complementary to their overall program
- how the proposal contributes to value with relevant money.

6.4 Selection of fellows

Fellows are NCP scholars who are encouraged to play a strong leadership role in promoting the NCP and its objectives during their scholarship and afterwards as part of the NCP alumni network.

Selection panels may nominate, from among highly-ranked applicants, to be NCP fellows:

- a) one First Nations fellow who is encouraged to promote First Nations engagement and participation in the NCP
- b) one ASEAN fellow, one Pacific fellow, one Climate Change fellow and one Language fellow, chosen from scholars whose proposed program closely aligns, and advances the NCP program's objectives, with the relevant organisation/subject.

DFAT's delegate decides which candidates are offered a fellowship. DFAT may establish further categories of fellows at its discretion.

Fellows are entitled to a fellow allowance (see section 5.4.3).

7 How to apply

Before applying, each applicant must read these guidelines and the sample scholarship agreement which can be found at [GrantConnect](#). GrantConnect is the authoritative source for Australian Government grants information. Any alterations or addenda² will be published on GrantConnect. By registering on GrantConnect, individuals will be notified automatically of any changes.

7.1 Overview

DFAT or the contractor will contact individuals nominated by Australian universities by email and provide instructions on how to submit an application.

Each applicant must:

- a) complete the online application available from a link provided to the applicant by DFAT
- b) provide all information requested in the required format
- c) address all eligibility requirements and assessment criteria
- d) include all necessary attachments, and
- e) submit their application online by the closing time.

An applicant may only submit one scholarship program proposal. An applicant cannot change their primary host location in their application once it has been submitted.

² Alterations and addenda include but are not limited to: corrections to currently published documents, changes to close times for applications, Questions and Answers (Q&A) documents and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) documents.

Each applicant is responsible for ensuring their application is complete and accurate and meets the requirements outlined in these guidelines. If applications are not compliant, they may not be considered for the application process. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the [Criminal Code Act 1995 \(Cth\)](#). Applications may be excluded from consideration, offers revoked or a scholarship terminated if DFAT reasonably believes that false or misleading information has formed a component of an application. Further terms relating to the termination or cancellation of scholarship are in the scholarship agreement.

DFAT does not have to accept any additional information, and DFAT will not accept requests to correct an application after the closing time.

Each applicant should keep a copy of their application and any supporting documents.

DFAT will acknowledge receipt of a submitted application via an automatically generated email.

7.2 Written applications

Applicants must provide written responses to the assessment criteria. An applicant must outline their proposed scholarship program, including the mandatory study component, any proposed internships, mentorships and language training, and the host location(s) in which they intend to undertake each component. Applicants must nominate a primary host location in their application.

Applicants should ensure that any information provided as supporting evidence, particularly relating to priority areas for selection (section 6.1) or other considerations that may influence the selection process (section 6.2) is accurate based on information available at the time of submitting the application. If selected, there is an expectation that the scholar will follow the program set out in the application (including field/type of study and duration of components), including any aspects of the program related to priority areas which may have contributed to a scholar being selected. The scholar may not be approved (except in exceptional circumstances) to start or continue their program if they do not undertake their program as proposed, including any changes to proposed language training or study type or duration that had originally met the criteria as a priority area for selection (for example priority languages, more than 50 per cent of credit bearing study component or more than 10 weeks of full time continuous language training).

7.3 Referee reports

Applicants must submit two referee reports with their application, with at least one report from an academic referee from the applicant's home university.

Each referee must:

- a) comment substantively on the applicant's abilities and experience relevant to the assessment criteria, and
- b) hold a position that gives their comments credibility (for example, a position in the applicant's home university, workplace or community).

7.4 Attachments to the application

Applicants must also submit the following documentation:

- a) evidence of Australian citizenship (for example current Australian passport bio page or Australian citizenship certificate)
- b) a letter of current enrolment from their home university, including expected completion date for the course towards which the overseas study program will be credited, ensuring that dates in the application are consistent with the enrolment letter

- c) a current, complete-to-date official academic transcript from their home university
- d) evidence of affiliation with their proposed host institution if applicable (applicants must liaise with their home university's NCP International Liaison Officer for Scholarships or international office to obtain this evidence).
 - If intending to apply for an exchange place for the study component under an agreement between the applicant's home university and the host institution:
 - a copy of an exchange agreement between the applicant's home university and the host institution, or a letter from the applicant's home university outlining partnership arrangements to allow for commencement on or between 1 January 2026 and 31 December 2026.
 - if intending to apply for a fee-paying place for the study component:
 - confirmation from the home university that no current exchange agreement is in place between the home university and the host institution (as described in item 1 of the table at section 5.4.2)
- e) a letter from the applicant's home university faculty, endorsed by the home university's NCP International Liaison Officer for Scholarships or university office delegated with authority to endorse the letter, attesting to the feasibility of the applicant's proposed study component, with reference to the requirements in section 5.2.1
- f) a current CV outlining the applicant's work experience, community engagement activities (for example, volunteering, memberships, mentoring) and extra-curricular interests, and
- g) photo identification.

Applicants should only attach requested documents. Information that has not been requested will not be considered.

7.5 Timing of grant opportunity processes

The list below summaries the indicative key dates and steps in the selection process. DFAT may amend the timeframe at any time by posting a notice on GrantConnect.

Table: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Indicative Timeframe
Applications open	12 August 2025
Australian universities nominate students	12 – 26 August 2025
Nominations close at 11.30pm Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST)	26 August 2025
Nominated students receive an invitation to complete an online application. Applicants submit their application and supporting documentation	27 August – 23 September 2025
Applications close at 11.30pm AEST ('Closing Time')	23 September 2025
Applications are shortlisted. Shortlisted applicants are notified.	End September – October 2025

Activity	Indicative Timeframe
Shortlisted applicants are interviewed	October – November 2025
Selections are finalised. Successful and unsuccessful applicants are notified of the outcome of their application.	December 2025
Scholarship agreements executed	December 2025
Scholars are announced and their details published on the NCP website	December 2025
Scholars commence their scholarship	1 January 2026 to 31 December 2026
2026 NCP Scholarships Program cohort completion date	31 July 2028

7.6 Questions during the application process

Please direct any questions during the application period to the NCP Secretariat at ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au. If applicable, answers to questions will be posted on GrantConnect.

The NCP Secretariat will not respond to questions received after **5.00pm (AEST) on 16 September 2025**.

8 The grant selection process

8.1 Assessment of grant applications and who will assess applications

DFAT will only accept and consider applications submitted by the closing time. DFAT assesses applications as follows:

Stage 1: Eligibility screening

Only applications that meet all eligibility requirements and have submitted applications that comply with all requirements will be assessed in Stage 2.

Stage 2: Assessment of written applications against assessment criteria

Eligible applications are assessed through a competitive process by a panel of independent assessors who are experienced in assessing Commonwealth grant applications or similar processes managed by Commonwealth departments. All assessors will be required to perform their duties in accordance with the CGRPs.

Each eligible application is assessed against the assessment criteria and against other applications. The merits of each application are considered based on:

- how well it addresses the assessment criteria
- how it compares to other applications, and
- whether it provides value with relevant money.³

³ See glossary for an explanation of 'value with money'

As outlined in section 2.2.1 and section 6.1 in assessment of grant applications, priority will be given to scholarship programs:

- that will be undertaken in the priority host locations, languages and sectors in the table in section 6.1, and
- whose main focus is for the study of a priority language (noting that language learning remains optional).

When assessing the extent to which the application represents value with money, we will have regard to:

- the extent to which the evidence in the application demonstrates that it will contribute to meeting the NCP strategic objective and outcomes
- other considerations included in section 6.3.

Referee reports will be considered by assessors in the assessment process.

The assessors provide an order of merit to DFAT. The NCP Secretariat determines which applications are shortlisted for interview based on the order of merit proposed by the assessment panel and other considerations outlined in section 6.3.

Stage 3: Interviews

DFAT or the contractor invites shortlisted applicants to participate in an interview in accordance with the timetable in section 7.5.

Members of interview panels have relevant expertise and are drawn from: government officials, private sector representatives, experts on Indo-Pacific affairs and international education specialists.

Panels rate each applicant on the basis of the assessment criteria and other considerations outlined in section 6.3. Panels provide an order of merit to DFAT.

8.2 Who will approve the award of scholarships?

DFAT's NCP Secretariat moderates the interview panel recommendations for consistency across panels and with the NCP strategic objective, and presents its findings to the Program Delegate. The Program Delegate, DFAT First Assistant Secretary responsible for the NCP, decides the applicants to be awarded a scholarship, taking into account recommendations of the interview panels and the availability of NCP program funds.

The Program Delegate's decision is final in all matters, including:

- a) awarding of scholarships
- b) grant funding amount to be awarded, and
- c) terms and conditions of the scholarship.

There is no appeal mechanism for the Program Delegate's decision to award or not award a scholarship.

DFAT will advise the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the outcome of the round.

9 Notification of application outcomes

DFAT or the contractor will advise applicants of the outcome of their application via email. DFAT will advise successful applicants of any specific conditions attached to the scholarship. DFAT will also advise home universities of the successful applicants from their university.

9.1 Feedback on applications

Individual feedback will not be provided to unsuccessful applicants. Unsuccessful applicants may apply for any future grant opportunities under the NCP. Any subsequent application will be assessed on its merits.

9.2 Offer and acceptance processes

Each offer of a scholarship is subject to the applicant accepting and signing a scholarship agreement and being able to obtain appropriate visa(s) for their host location(s).

10 Successful grant applications

10.1 Scholarship agreement

A scholar must enter into a legally binding scholarship agreement with the Commonwealth, based on the program proposed in the scholar's application, before scholarship benefits can be paid to the scholar, or to any host institutions including any third party before the scholar commences their scholarship program.

Applicants should read the sample scholarship agreement on GrantConnect before submitting their application. The Australian Government will not be liable for any costs incurred by the scholar or a third party in relation to a scholarship program before a scholarship agreement is entered into.

The scholarship agreement will detail the scholar's responsibilities in relation to the scholarship program and the scholarship benefits payable by the Australian Government. The scholarship agreement may have specific conditions determined by the assessment process or other considerations made by the delegate. DFAT will identify these in the scholarship agreement.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the scholarship agreement.

The version of the guidelines in place at the closing date/time of this round will apply to the scholarship program.

10.2 Specific legislation, policies and industry standards

Scholars must comply with all relevant Australian law, as well as the local laws and regulations of their host locations, while in Australia and in host locations on scholarship. This includes compliance with laws relating to child protection and the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

DFAT does not tolerate sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment. This applies within DFAT and extends to those we work with including students and partner universities. NCP scholars must read and adhere to DFAT's [Child Protection Policy](#) and [Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy](#), which set out expectations in relation to appropriate behaviours and reporting requirements. DFAT takes all allegations and reported incidents of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment seriously. NCP scholars also have an obligation to comply with their university's policies on child protection and PSEAH.

Scholars must take into account the [Guidelines to Counter Foreign Interference in the Australian University Sector](#).

10.3 How DFAT pays the grant

The scholarship agreement provides information on when and how scholarship benefits will be provided to scholars.

Some scholarship benefits will be paid directly to the scholar. Other scholarship benefits, such as tuition fees, will be paid directly to the host institution or language training provider, as relevant. All payments require supporting documentation as will be advised by the Contractor case manager.

10.4 Grants payments and GST

Payments will be GST Exclusive.

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. DFAT recommends scholars seek independent professional advice on their taxation obligations or seek assistance from the [Australian Taxation Office](https://www.ato.gov.au/).⁴ Neither DFAT nor its contractor provide advice on particular taxation circumstances.

11 Announcement of grants

DFAT may publicise details of individual scholarships and scholars including, but not limited to:

- a) names of successful scholars, their home university, host location(s), host institution, host organisation and language training provider
- b) description of scholarship programs being supported (including timing)
- c) the amount of funding awarded, and
- d) photographs of scholars, both provided by scholars or taken at DFAT and other events.

If successful, your grant will be listed on the GrantConnect website no later than twenty-one calendar days after the date of effect as required by section 5.4 of the [CGRPs](#).

12 How DFAT monitors your grant activity

Requirements and expectations for monitoring a scholar's scholarship program are set out in the scholarship agreement.

12.1 Keeping DFAT informed

Scholars must inform DFAT or the contractor if anything is likely to affect their ability to undertake their scholarship program, in accordance with the scholarship agreement.

You must also inform us of any changes to your:

- name
- home address
- nominated contact details
- bank account details.

If you become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the scholarship agreement, you must contact us immediately.

12.2 Reporting

Scholars must report in accordance with the scholarship agreement.

⁴ <https://www.ato.gov.au/>

12.3 Variations to scholarship programs

After an offer is accepted, scholars will not be permitted to vary their scholarship program as outlined in their application, unless there are exceptional circumstances. This includes variations to:

- a) incorporate an internship or mentorship where the intention to undertake an internship or mentorship has not been identified in the application
- b) increase the duration of the study component or language study
- c) reduce the duration or remove language training, where this was as presented as meeting the priorities for selection in section 6.1
- d) change host locations or add extra an extra host location.

Exceptional circumstances are those that could not have been predicted or avoided, and would prevent the scholar from completing their scholarship program as originally proposed.

Any request for a variation must be made on a program variation request form provided by the case manager, at least one month in advance of the proposed variation commencing, or unless a shorter timeframe has been agreed in advance, and relates to unavoidable or unexpected circumstances.

The decision to approve a variation to a scholarship program will be made on a case-by-case basis by DFAT or the contractor, in its sole and absolute discretion. You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on provisions in the grant agreement and the likely impact on achieving outcomes.

Without limitation, DFAT or the contractor, may consider:

- a) the merits of the request (and funding being available, if required) in respect of achieving the NCP strategic objective and outcomes
- b) demonstrated coherence across study components, any internship or mentorship components or any language training components of the scholarship program, and
- c) ensuring that the scholarship program remains consistent with the eligibility requirements.

Scholars are liable for any financial commitments made by them in relation to their proposed change of scholarship program where those commitments are made before receiving formal advice granting the scholarship program variation.

12.4 Compliance visits

We may visit scholars during or at the completion of their scholarship program to review their progress and compliance with the scholarship agreement. We will provide scholars with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

12.5 Record keeping

We may inspect the records that scholars are required to keep under the scholarship agreement.

12.6 Evaluation

The Australian Government reports on and evaluates the NCP Scholarship Program. DFAT and the contractor may use information about scholars and their scholarship program, home university, host institution, host organisation and language training provider for performance monitoring and management of the NCP, and to evaluate how effective the program is in achieving the NCP's

strategic objective and outcomes. DFAT may also draw on information to create testimonials for NCP promotion.

DFAT and the contractor will monitor performance and manage scholarships through the NCP Online website. Information about applicants, program outcomes and performance will also be collected.

Program stakeholders, including university representatives, interview panel members, nominees and scholars may be asked to participate in evaluating the NCP Scholarship Program.

NCP scholar alumni are expected to participate in surveys and other program monitoring and evaluation activities after completion of their scholarship program, as required by DFAT.

12.7 Acknowledgement

Where possible, the NCP program logo should be used on materials related to grants under the program. Whenever the logo is used, the publication must also acknowledge the Commonwealth as follows: 'New Colombo Plan Scholarship Program – an Australian Government initiative'.

The NCP logo can be found at: <https://www.dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/new-colombo-plan/resources/Pages/logos-and-branding>, and should be used in accordance with the New Colombo Plan Brand Guidelines.

If use of the NCP logo is not possible, use the following wording: 'This [name of grant activity or project/services] received grant funding from the Australian Government.'

13 Probity

The Australian Government will ensure the grant opportunity process is fair, is conducted in accordance with the published scholarship opportunity guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud and corruption, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the CGRPs.

The Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme provides the public with visibility of the nature, level and extent of foreign influence on Australia's government and politics. The scheme requires registration of certain activities that are undertaken in Australia on behalf of a foreign principal, for the purpose of political or government influence. It is recommended that you review obligations and responsibilities under the scheme at <https://www.ag.gov.au/integrity/foreign-influence-transparency-scheme> before establishing project partners. Enquiries about the scheme should be sent to transparency@ag.gov.au.

DFAT may change these guidelines from time to time. When this happens, the revised guidelines will be published on [GrantConnect](#). By registering on this website, you will be automatically notified of any changes to these guidelines.

You should be aware of your obligations under the [National Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2022](#), noting that under the Act grantees will generally be considered 'contracted service providers' (see <https://www.nacc.gov.au/resource-centre/nacc-fact-sheets>).

13.1 Enquiries and Feedback

Enquiries and feedback about this scholarship opportunity should be sent to ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au. All complaints about a grant process must be provided in writing.

If an applicant, or any other person, does not agree with the way DFAT has handled their feedback/complaint, they can refer the matter to the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#). The

Ombudsman will not usually consider a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with DFAT.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au

Website: www.ombudsman.gov.au

The Australian Government is not responsible 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.

13.2 Fraud and Corruption

DFAT does not tolerate inaction to fraud or corruption. This applies within DFAT and extends to those DFAT works with. Australian universities must have appropriate fraud and corruption controls in place relating to the NCP Scholarship Program. Specific fraud and corruption obligations for Australian universities are set out in relevant agreements. Australian universities may also fall under the National Anti-Corruption Commission's jurisdiction. Further information for the contractor and Australian universities over developing strategies to meet DFAT's fraud and corruption control contractual requirements can be found in the DFAT [Fraud Control Toolkit for Funding Partners](#).

Australian universities, applicants and scholars must report any fraud or corruption relating to the NCP Scholarship Program they become aware of to the relevant area within DFAT:

- For passport related fraud: passports.fraud@dfat.gov.au
- For fraud or corruption by DFAT staff: conduct@dfat.gov.au
- For any fraud or corruption relating to the NCP Program, including but not limited to, NCP scholars, the NCP service provider, third party organisations receiving NCP funding (for example host organisations receiving payment for tuition/study fees report to: fraud.corruption@dfat.gov.au <https://docs.dfat.gov.au/icms/external-fraud>)

To avoid any scams, applicants should obtain official information about the NCP from DFAT or its contractor or from www.dfat.gov.au/ncp.

13.3 Conflict of interest

Any conflicts of interest, or perceived conflicts of interest, could affect the performance of the NCP Scholarship Program or an NCP scholarship.

An Australian university that makes a nomination must disclose any conflict of interest in relation to a nomination in writing to ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au at the time of submitting the nomination form or when the conflict of interest arises or is likely to arise. Australian universities must take such steps as reasonably required by DFAT to resolve or otherwise deal with any conflict of interest.

Applicants must disclose any conflict of interest in relation to an application in writing to ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au at the time of submitting the application or when the conflict of interest arises or is likely to arise. Applicants must take such steps as DFAT is reasonably required to resolve or otherwise deal with any conflict of interest.

Scholars must disclose any conflict of interest while undertaking their program by writing to their case manager or to ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au.

The Service Provider and stakeholders involved in assessment/selection processes will also be required to disclose conflict of interest and declare any conflicts to ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff will be handled as set out in the Australian [Public Service Code of Conduct \(section 13\(7\)\)](#) of the [Public Service Act 1999](#). Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

13.4 Privacy

DFAT manages the NCP Scholarship Program with the support of contractors it engages to deliver the NCP. DFAT and its contractors are bound by the provisions of the [Privacy Act 1988](#) (Privacy Act) and the [Australian Privacy Principles](#) which regulate how personal information can be handled.

The below notice provides you with important information about how DFAT and its contractors will handle personal information through the NCP Scholarship Program.

Why might your personal information be collected?

If you apply for the NCP, your personal information will be collected by DFAT and its contractors for the purpose of managing, promoting and evaluating the NCP.

If your application is successful, your personal information may be used in media releases, publications and in public relations activities, including on the internet, to promote the NCP and other Australian Government programs or activities.

Your personal information may also be used to contact you after the completion of your NCP scholarship, to follow up on your experiences and achievements and how your participation in the NCP may have contributed to this.

What types of personal information and sensitive information will need to be collected?

Below are examples of the personal information (and sensitive information) DFAT or its contractors may collect about you:

- your name and contact details
- gender
- date of birth
- academic results
- diversity information
- police checks, and
- the personal information (including sensitive information) set out in any of the documents required above at section 7.4 of these guidelines.

What happens if we do not collect this personal information?

If DFAT or its contractors request any of the information above, unless you provide it we may not be able to:

- contact nominees to invite them to apply
- assess applications
- undertake administration and performance monitoring and evaluation of the NCP

- promote the NCP, including to scholarship recipients and to media representatives and in promotional material, information and publications in hardcopy and/or on the internet, and
- invite NCP scholars and alumni to relevant functions and events held in Australia and overseas.

Who will your personal information be disclosed to?

If you apply for, or are accepted into the, NCP, DFAT and its contractors may disclose your personal information to third parties for the purpose of managing, promoting or evaluating the NCP. For example, your personal information may be disclosed to:

- other Australian Government departments and agencies, including the Department of Education and Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
- State and Territory Governments
- other Commonwealth agencies, Ministers and their officers, members of Australian parliament and parliamentary committees
- law enforcement agencies, including the Australian Federal Police, the Department of Home Affairs or State and Territory law enforcement agencies
- agents, contractors or service providers engaged by DFAT to carry out or assist its functions and activities such as survey work and case studies or profiles for NCP scholars
- the government of your host location
- your current and past education institutions
- other individuals or entities involved in the delivery of your NCP, such as industry mentors
- medical professionals (in the case of a health or welfare incident)
- any other person, agency or organisation which may be able to contribute information relevant to your suitability to participate in the NCP
- your next of kin or authorised agent if you are involved in a critical incident
- Australian universities, including to the NCP International Liaison Officers for Scholarships
- potential internship/mentorship host organisations, language training providers, host location governments/authorities or non-government organisations. These may be foreign organisations (noting that they may not be bound by Australian privacy legislation or equivalent privacy legislation in their own jurisdictions)
- scholarship host organisations, including but not limited to companies or professional bodies, and
- media representatives, including foreign media representatives.

DFAT may disclose your personal information to overseas recipients listed above - that is, individuals or entities who are not in Australia - for the purpose of managing, promoting or evaluating the NCP. If you provide your consent, you acknowledge and agree that Australian Privacy Principle 8.1 will not apply to the disclosure and that you understand DFAT will not take any steps to ensure that an overseas recipient does not breach an Australian Privacy Principle under the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) (Privacy Act).

DFAT's [Privacy Policy](#) contains information about DFAT's collection, use, disclosure and storage of personal information, including sensitive information, and how individuals may

- access and seek correction of personal information that we hold; or

- complain about how DFAT has handled their personal information, and how DFAT will deal with such a complaint.

13.5 Confidential Information

Other than information available in the public domain, an applicant or scholar must agree not to disclose to any person, other than DFAT, any Confidential Information relating to the application and/or scholarship agreement, without DFAT's prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where the applicant or scholar is required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

DFAT may at any time, require the applicant to give a written undertaking relating to nondisclosure of DFAT's Confidential Information in a form DFAT considers acceptable.

DFAT will keep any information in connection with the scholarship agreement confidential to the extent that it meets one of the conditions below:

1. the applicant/scholar clearly identifies the information as confidential and explains why DFAT should treat it as confidential
2. the information is commercially sensitive
3. revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to the applicant/scholar or someone else.

DFAT will not be in breach of confidentiality if the information is disclosed to:

- the NCP Secretariat and other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help us manage the NCP Scholarship Program effectively, including for an integrity purpose
- employees and contractors of DFAT so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse DFAT programs and activities
- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery
- other Australian Government agencies for law enforcement purposes, where the disclosure will serve the Australian Government's legitimate interests and, if necessary, to substantiate an applicant's claims
- other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government agencies in NCP Scholarship Program reports and consultations
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman, Privacy Commissioner or National Anti-Corruption Commissioner, or staff of their agencies
- the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary, or
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

The scholarship agreement may also include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the scholarship agreement.

13.6 Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about this grant opportunity, are subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1982](#) (Cth) (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exemptions outlined in the FOI Act.

All FOI requests must be made to DFAT's FOI Director in writing.

By mail: The Director, Freedom of Information Section
 Regulatory and Legal Policy Division
 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
 R.G. Casey Building, John McEwen Crescent
 BARTON ACT 0221

By email: foi@dfat.gov.au

14 Glossary

Term	Definition
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	a person of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander heritage who identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which they live, or formerly lived.
Academic transcript	an official document issued by the home university as a record of all completed units and results throughout the student's enrolment.
Academic year	the annual period of study sessions of a home university and/or host institution.
Administering entity	when an entity that is not responsible for the policy, is responsible for the administration of part or all of the grant administration processes.
Applicant	a person who is applying or has applied for an NCP scholarship.
Application	an application for a scholarship under the NCP Scholarship Program.
Assessment criteria	are the specified principles or standards, against which applications will be judged. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive grant opportunity, to determine application rankings.
Australian university	a registered higher education provider for the purposes of the <i>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011</i> (Cth) that is registered in an 'Australian university' category.
Bachelor degree	Bachelor Level 7 as defined in the Australian Qualifications Framework.
Bachelor honours degree	Bachelor Honours Level 8 as defined in the Australian Qualifications Framework.
Case manager	staff of the contractor assigned to a scholar and responsible for providing that scholar with information and support to undertake their scholarship program.
Closing date/time	the date and time beyond which applications will not be accepted, as specified at section 7.5.
Commencement	the date in the application that the scholar is required to commence the first component of the scholarship program.
Commonwealth entity	a Department of State, or a Parliamentary Department, or a listed entity or a body corporate established by a law of the Commonwealth. See subsections 10(1) and (2) of the <i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i> (Cth).

Term	Definition
Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles 2024 (CGRPs)	establish the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and articulate the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration. Under this overarching framework, non-corporate Commonwealth entities undertake grants administration based on the mandatory requirements and key principles of grants administration.
Scholar completion date	the expected date that the grant activity must be completed and the grant spent by.
Cohort completion date	The final date on which all 2026 NCP Scholarships Program cohort can complete is 31 July 2028.
Concurrent diploma	undergraduate studies at a diploma level as defined in the Australian Qualifications Framework, undertaken concurrently with a bachelor degree or bachelor honours degree.
Confidential information	information which satisfies the criteria listed at section 13.5 or is designated by the Australian Government 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.
Conflict of interest	real, apparent, or potential private or personal associations or interests (financial or non-financial) which improperly influence, or may improperly influence, a person's performance of their role and responsibilities in relation to the NCP Scholarship Program.
Contracted service provider (the contractor)	DFAT's contracted service provider who provides administration and support services to the NCP program. a contracted service provider is a person who is a party to a Commonwealth contract or is a party to a subcontract with a contracted service provider and is responsible for the provision of goods or services under contract, either directly or indirectly.
Decision maker	the person who makes a decision to award a grant.
Disability	any limitation, restriction or impairment which restricts everyday activities or assistance is required and has lasted or is likely to last for at least six months.
Eligibility criteria	refer to the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant. Eligibility criteria should be developed to enable objective validation and are either 'met' or 'not met'. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria.
Establishment allowance	the meaning in section 5.4.3 b).
Fellow	the meaning in section 6.4.
Fellow allowance	the meaning in section 5.4.3 d).

Term	Definition
Foreign Arrangements Scheme	the Foreign Arrangements Scheme is administered by DFAT to implement <i>Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act 2020 (Cth)</i> .
Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme	the Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme is administered by the Attorney-General's Department to implement the <i>Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act 2018 (Cth)</i> .
Gender	part of a person's social and personal identity, and may not necessarily be the same as the person's sex. When applying, individuals are given the option to select M (male), F (female) or X (Different term).
Grant	for the purposes of the CGRPs, a 'grant' is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth: a. under which relevant money⁵ or other Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) money⁶ is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth; and b. which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government's policy outcomes while assisting the grantee achieve its objectives.
Grant activity/activities	refers to the project/tasks/services that the grantee is required to undertake.
Grant agreement	sets out the relationship between the parties to the agreement and specifies the details of the grant. The NCP Scholarship Agreement is a grant agreement between DFAT and NCP scholars governed by the CGRPs.
GrantConnect	is the Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRPs.
Grant opportunity	refers to the specific grant round or process where a Commonwealth grant is made available to potential grantees. Grant opportunities may be open or targeted, and will reflect the relevant grant selection process. NCP Scholarship Program grant opportunities are targeted at Australian undergraduates who are nominated by their home university and meet NCP eligibility criteria.

⁵ Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 8, Dictionary.

⁶ Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money.

Term	Definition
Grant program	a 'program' carries its natural meaning and is intended to cover a potentially wide range of related activities aimed at achieving government policy outcomes. A grant program is a group of one or more grant opportunities under a single [entity] Portfolio Budget Statement Program.
Grantee	the individual/organisation which has been selected to receive a grant.
Home university	the Australian university which nominated the applicant(s), at which an applicant or scholar is enrolled while applying for and undertaking their scholarship program and which will confer the student's degree upon completion.
Host institution	a university where the scholar undertakes their study component in the host location. Excludes offshore campuses of universities established or headquartered outside the host location, with the exception of Australian offshore campuses that are able to offer a genuinely immersive experience.
Host location	the geographic location(s) in the Indo-Pacific, as listed in section 5.5.1, in which the scholar undertakes their scholarship program.
Host organisation	the organisation at which the scholar undertakes an internship or mentorship in the host location.
Insurance	the meaning in section 5.4.4.
Internship	work experience in which a scholar has learning goals relevant to their academic course and professional development. Internships can include clinical placements, practicums or artist residencies.
Internship component	an internship undertaken as part of a scholarship program that meets the eligibility requirements in section 5.2.2.
Language training component	training in a language undertaken as part of a scholarship program – separate from and/or additional to the credit-bearing study component (including language focused study components) that meets the eligibility requirements in section 5.2.4.

Term	Definition
Language target	for Australian undergraduates awarded under the NCP Scholarships Program, the language target criteria includes meeting one or more of the following: • 50 per cent or more of the planned study program, to be delivered by the host institution and approved by scholars' Australian home universities for credit towards their Australian home degree, is delivered in an official or commonly spoken language (other than English) of an eligible primary NCP host location where the host institution is located, via face-to-face mode, or • 50 per cent or more of the planned study program, approved by scholars' Australian home universities for credit towards their Australian home degree, is to study the official or commonly spoken language (other than English) of an eligible primary NCP host location where the host institution is located, via face-to-face mode, or • A planned language course(s) through in-location registered language training providers to study the official or commonly spoken language (other than English) of an eligible NCP host location where the study component or internship component is planned to take place, via face-to-face mode with minimum of 10 weeks full-time study in a continuous block or an equivalent part-time study alongside a study and/or internship component.
Language training provider	a registered training provider of language training at which a scholar undertakes language training in the host location.
Low Socio-Economic Status (SES)	students who are from a low SES background, as measured by the lowest quartile of the ABS Socio-Economic Index for Areas Index of Education and Occupation measured at Statistical Area 1 level.
Mental health support	the meaning in section 5.4.4.
Mental health service	professional counselling to foster a state of well-being, in which the scholar realises their own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. Does not include medical professional(s) providing support for serious/chronic mental health conditions or disabilities.
Mentorship	a developmental relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person guides a less experienced or less knowledgeable person, relevant to work, career, or professional development.
Mobility program	see the meaning of New Colombo Plan (NCP) Mobility Program below.

Term	Definition
National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC)	the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) is an independent Commonwealth agency. It detects, investigates and reports on serious or systemic corruption in the Commonwealth public sector. The Commission operates under the National Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2022 .
New Colombo Plan (NCP)	the NCP Scholarship Program, NCP Semester Program, and NCP Mobility Program.
New Colombo Plan (NCP) International Liaison Officer for Scholarships	the person(s) designated by an Australian university to submit student nominations and receive NCP Scholarship Program updates.
New Colombo Plan (NCP) Mobility Program	the program of that name administered by DFAT.
New Colombo Plan (NCP) Scholarship Program	the meaning in section 2.2.
New Colombo Plan (NCP) Semester Program	the program of that name administered by DFAT.
New Colombo Plan website	http://www.dfat.gov.au/new-colombo-plan
Non-profit consortia-based academic service provider	an association of organisations, not operating for the profit or personal gain of its members or individuals that provides academic services in an NCP host location.
NCP Online	DFAT's online system for managing nominations, applications and scholarships.
Outcome	the meaning in section 2.
Offshore campus	of an Australian university refers to a branch campus in a location outside Australia.
PBS Program	described within the entity's Portfolio Budget Statement , PBS programs each link to a single outcome and provide transparency for funding decisions. These high-level PBS programs often comprise a number of lower level, more publicly recognised programs, some of which will be Grant Programs. A PBS Program may have more than one Grant Program associated with it, and each of these may have one or more grant opportunities.
Permitted gap	the meaning in section 5.6.

Term	Definition
Personal information	the same meaning as in the Privacy Act, which defines Personal Information as <i>“information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is readily identifiable: (a) whether the information or opinion is true or not; and (b) whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.”</i>
Primary host location	the meaning in section 5.5.2.
Privacy Act	the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth).
Private sector organisation	Australian, global and local commercial enterprises (businesses) and non-profit organisations, ranging from those in the informal sector to large multinational organisations, which are not owned by or under the direct control of a government. This does not include host institutions.
Program	the NCP Scholarship Program.
Reasonable accommodation	the provision of support, modifications and/or adjustments that meet the individual needs of scholars with disabilities to enable their participation in the NCP on an equal basis with other scholars.
Regional/remote	a region designated as regional or remote by the Australian Bureau of Statistics Australian Statistical Geography Standard.
Scholar	an applicant awarded an NCP scholarship.
Scholarship	an award under the NCP Scholarship Program, including the relevant scholarship benefits.
Scholarship agreement	the agreement entered into between the Commonwealth and a scholar prior to the start of their scholarship program. The NCP Scholarship Agreement is a grant agreement covered by CGRPs.
Scholarship allowance	the meaning in section 5.4.3 c).
Scholarship benefits	travel allowance, establishment allowance, fellow allowance (if applicable), scholarship allowance, tuition fees (if applicable), mental health allowance and insurance as described in section 5, and any other financial or other assistance that may be available to a scholar based on the individual circumstances of a scholar's scholarship program.
Scholarship program	the mandatory study component, and optional internship component, mentorship activities and language training that applicants propose in their application (subject to any approved variations under the scholarship agreement in accordance with the process in section 12.3).
Scholarship program commencement date	the date in the scholarship application on which the scholar is required to commence the first component of the scholarship program or such other later date in accordance with the scholarship agreement.

Term	Definition
Scholarship program completion date	the date in the scholarship application on which the scholar is required to complete the scholarship program or such other later date as agreed in writing by the parties. The completion date will be the final date of the scholar's last component which would be either the final date for assessment of a study component or language training component, or the final date of the internship.
Scholarship term	from the scholarship program commencement date to the scholarship program completion date, including any period(s) of a permitted gap (including any approved suspensions).
Secondary host location	the meaning in section 5.5.3.
Selection criteria	comprise eligibility criteria and assessment criteria.
Selection process	the method used to select potential scholars/grantees. This process may involve comparative assessment of applications or the assessment of applications against the eligibility criteria and/or the assessment criteria.
Strategic objective	the meaning in section 2.1.
Study component	an approved course of study at a host institution as part of a scholar's scholarship program that meets the eligibility requirements in section 5.2.1.
Travel allowance	the meaning in section 5.4.3 a).
Tuition fees	the monetary contribution available towards a scholar's tuition fees for a study component and language training (if any) as in section 5.4.2.
Undergraduate course	As defined by the Department of Education in Higher Education Administrative Information for Providers, an undergraduate course of study is: • an undergraduate certificate • a diploma that is not accredited as a VET award • an advanced diploma that is not accredited as a VET award • an associate degree • a bachelor degree; or • an honours program Note – as outlined in section 4.1, NCP scholars must be enrolled in a Bachelor or Bachelor Honours degree at an Australian university, unless they are studying an eligible undergraduate language-focused qualification.

Term	Definition
Value with money	value with money in this document refers to ‘value with relevant money’ which is a judgement based on the grant proposal representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations. When administering a grant opportunity, an official should consider the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each proposal including, but not limited to: • the quality of the project proposal and activities • fitness for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives • that the absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and government’s outcomes being achieved, and • the potential grantee’s relevant experience and performance history.
We / our / us	The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.