



Australian Government  
AusAID

# AusAID DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH AWARDS SCHEME 2012 FUNDING ROUND

## Guidelines for Preparing Applications

The AusAID Development Research Awards Scheme (ADRAS) is a competitive grants program designed to attract quality primary research on priority development themes that informs policy development.

The 2012 Round is open for proposals submitted by Australian and international research institutions. The Funding Round will accept proposals of up to three years in duration.

**Closing time and date:**

**5pm AEST, Friday 21 September 2012**

## PART A: General Guidelines

### 1. KEY DATES

Application Stage	Date
Deadline for applications	Friday 21 September 2012
Notification of results	December 2012**
Commencement of Activity	January – May 2013**

**\*\*While every effort will be made to comply with these dates, they are indicative only**

### 2. OVERVIEW

The 2012 Funding Round consists of a one step process. Applicants are requested to submit an application that will total approximately 10 pages. At a minimum, applications must:

- describe an original research project that has strong policy relevance and is pertinent to AusAID, the development community and developing country partner governments
- ensure that the research project will contribute new knowledge and add to the broader body of knowledge on development issues, with a primary but not exclusive geographic focus in the Asia Pacific region
- present an achievable process of communication and engagement
- contribute to capacity building to undertake research and use research findings in developing countries.

Applications for AusAID to be an industry partner under the Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Projects Scheme will also be considered under this Funding Round.

The Funding Round is competitive and no applicant is guaranteed an award.

### 3. PRIORITY THEMES

This Round will award funding for research under the following eight priority theme areas:

1. Africa
2. Disability-inclusive Development
3. Education
4. Gender
5. Health
6. Mining for Development
7. Scholarships
8. Water, Sanitation & Hygiene

Sub-themes and related eligibility criteria under each of the priority themes are provided in the ADRAS 2012 Priority Themes.

Applicants must nominate a **single** priority theme and sub-theme and address the development issues outlined in the priority themes and sub-themes. Each sub-theme includes issues that are of particular interest to AusAID. The examples of issues under each of the sub-themes provide a guide, but applicants are not limited to addressing only these examples. Each application will only be assessed against the nominated priority theme and sub-theme.

### 4. ELIGIBILITY

Funding will be provided for up to three years in all priority themes and sub-themes except under the Africa theme which will be up to two years duration. Applications must meet all of the following eligibility criteria:

- Applications must be submitted by a research organisation or institution not by individual researchers.
- The Principal Investigator must nominate an organisation with which he/she is affiliated to administer the grant and provide support.
- The Funding Round is open to all Australian and international not-for-profit institutions or organisations where research is a core component of the

organisation's mandate and where the organisation has a demonstrated capacity to carry out quality research and manage grant funds according to AusAID's policies.<sup>1</sup>

- Project teams, administering organisations and partners funded by AusAID must demonstrate that they are ethically sound and, where applicable, seek ethics approval from their nominated administering organisation. Ethics approval requirements in the research project target location (country/countries) must be taken into consideration and met.

The ADRAS will fund primary research that has investigation as its main objective and that has observable outcomes relevant to the Australian aid program. The ADRAS does not fund bio-medical or dental research, product development (including agricultural product development) or organisational linkages (except as they relate to capacity building).

This Funding Round does not provide funding specifically for the sole purpose of hosting, organising or attending conferences or workshops; producing research publications; consultancy fees for projects that do not meet the definition of research; or specifically for travel to conferences/workshops and/or meetings.

This Funding Round will not provide financial support for the conduct of individual researchers' masters or doctoral projects. However if an organisation's proposed research project for is eligible for support, then any nominated masters or doctoral research that convincingly forms an integral part of the proposed research project may be included.

Applicants should review relevant policy documents when submitting research proposals. There is no process of appeal for those applicants whose applications have been deemed ineligible for AusAID administrative reasons.

**All applicants should also refer to the following AusAID policy documents:**

*AusAID Research Strategy 2012-2016* at [www.ausaid.gov.au](http://www.ausaid.gov.au)

*Helping the World's Poor through Effective Aid: Australia's Comprehensive Aid Policy Framework to 2015-16*

*Promoting opportunities for all—Gender equality and women's empowerment*

*Development for All: Towards a disability-inclusive Australian aid program 2009–2014*

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<sup>1</sup> The administering organisation must have access to a recognised Ethics Approval process. Organisations that cannot comply with this requirement (such as non-government organisations) should consider applying with an organisation that is able to comply.

## **5. FUNDING**

As a guide, applicants can apply for funding between AUD 200,000 and AUD 400,000 per year at differentiated levels of funding over the course of the research project. Grants will be paid in annual tranches subject to ongoing annual monitoring of the project and acceptance of a short Annual Report (template provided by AusAID). Proposals of up to three years in duration will be accepted, but the length of time must be justified by the nature of the research project.

AusAID encourages applicants to identify and include co-funding opportunities. Co-funding may include, but not be limited to, in-kind contributions such as release time from teaching duties. In the case that two or more proposals are rated as being of equal merit, preference will be given to the proposal with the greatest level of cost sharing. AusAID will require formal proof of co-funding arrangements.

ADRAS grants cover the following eligible costs:

- the direct costs of research (researcher salary, fieldwork costs, travel, insurance)
- communication and engagement
- capacity building activities.

## **6. PROCESS OF ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION**

### **Overview of Process**

AusAID will conduct a high quality process of assessment involving both internal and external review to ensure transparency, accountability and quality. Applicants will be assessed on a competitive basis according to the assessment criteria below.

Applications must be received by 5pm Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST) Friday 21 September 2012. Applications will be assessed by AusAID staff for eligibility of the organisation, consistency with application requirements, including adequate fit with the chosen priority theme and sub-theme and inclusion of key components. If an application is ineligible or incomplete, it will not be considered. All decisions are final and there is no appeal.

Applications that satisfy the basic requirements will be subject to the following assessment processes:

- There will be one Research Selection Committee for each priority theme with membership consisting of AusAID staff and external members. Research Selection Committees are usually chaired by external members.
- All applications will be initially reviewed by the relevant Research Selection Committee against the assessment criteria and a shortlist of proposals for possible funding will be developed.
- Shortlisted applications for each theme will then undergo external peer review by at least two independent peer reviewers.
- Upon receiving the recommendations of the external peer reviewers, the relevant Research Selection Committee will reconvene and make final determinations, based on peer review findings, relevant internal AusAID feedback and the Research Selection Committee's own rankings.
- Applications will be assessed and ranked against the assessment criteria. Research Selection Committee recommendations will be based on the relative merit of the shortlisted application against the Funding Round assessment criteria and total funding available.
- Applicants will be notified of AusAID's decision in writing, with successful applicants being listed on the research section of the AusAID website.
- Clear and transparent mechanisms will be available throughout the assessment process for the Research Selection Committee members or peer reviewers to declare any existing or potential conflicts of interest.

### Instructions to Applicants

It is imperative that the proposed research project is presented clearly and succinctly. Technical jargon and acronyms (except those in wide use such as 'HIV/AIDS') should be avoided.

The assessors judging the applications will evaluate their merit against:

- significance and innovation
- policy relevance
- research design and methods
- research communication and engagement

- research team
- capacity building
- budget and value for money.

See **Table 1** below detailing these criteria.

The application must contain all required information since there will be no other opportunity to provide any additional written or oral explanations, or to refer to additional documentation, unless AusAID solicits such information.

All details in the application must be current at the time the application is submitted. Once it has been submitted to AusAID, the application will be considered final and no changes will be permitted. You may, however, withdraw your application at any time in writing to [research@ausaid.gov.au](mailto:research@ausaid.gov.au).

Please ensure that all information contained in the application is accurate and complete. If an application is incomplete, incorrect or contains information that is false or misleading, the application will not be considered for funding.

Information included in the application will be treated as confidential. The information will only be viewed by AusAID administrative staff, AusAID assessors and those external third parties who assess, evaluate and verify the accuracy of the applications. Any personal information collected as part of the 2012 Funding Round will only be used for the purpose for which it is collected.

**Table 1: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

The following outlines the assessment criteria that will be used to assess applications:

CRITERION	ASSESSMENT NOTES
Significance and Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; The research addresses an important problem.</li> <li>&gt; Anticipated outcomes will advance the knowledge base of the discipline.</li> <li>&gt; The project aims and concepts are novel and innovative.</li> <li>&gt; New methods or technologies will be developed.</li> </ul>

Policy Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; The research project is relevant to the strategic goals of the Australian aid program and the activity enhances development knowledge available to key policymakers in the region.</li> <li>&gt; There is a demonstrated demand and/or a need for research on this topic within the development community and AusAID's target countries.</li> </ul>
Research Design & Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; The conceptual framework, design, methods and analyses are well developed, integrated and appropriate to the aims of the project.</li> <li>&gt; The research approach is clearly justified and the methodology is highly likely to result in meaningful findings.</li> <li>&gt; The design combines robust qualitative and/or quantitative methods with innovative thinking.</li> <li>&gt; Useful outputs will be produced that will keep all key stakeholders informed of progress of – and where applicable, engagement with – the research during the life of the project.</li> <li>&gt; A logical and feasible work plan is presented.</li> </ul>
Communication & Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; The communication and engagement strategy is innovative, plausible and achievable.</li> <li>&gt; The strategy targets specific audiences and outlines methods for meaningfully engaging each audience from the outset of the project.</li> <li>&gt; Appropriate communication activities are included in the budget.</li> </ul>
Research Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; The track record of all research team members supports the proposed activity.</li> <li>&gt; Experience in developing countries is shown.</li> <li>&gt; Capacity to undertake and manage the proposed research is shown.</li> <li>&gt; Evidence of strong in-country collaboration.</li> </ul>
Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; The project contributes to capacity building to undertake research and/or use research findings in developing countries.</li> <li>&gt; The activity will generate opportunities for developing country researchers or early career researchers to strengthen their international research experience.</li> </ul>
Budget and Value for Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; The proposed budget is appropriate and offers value for money.</li> <li>&gt; The administering organisation is contributing to the project.</li> <li>&gt; There are other partners involved in the activity who are making either financial or in-kind contributions.</li> </ul>



## **PART B: Instructions for Submitting Applications**

### **7. SUBMITTING YOUR PROPOSAL**

**The application must be submitted online via the ADRAS online web site (accessible via [www.ausaid.gov.au/research](http://www.ausaid.gov.au/research)).** If technical difficulties are being experienced please contact [research@ausaid.gov.au](mailto:research@ausaid.gov.au) prior to the due date. Ensure that you allow plenty of time to upload your application.

### **8. ENQUIRIES**

For any enquiries, please email [research@ausaid.gov.au](mailto:research@ausaid.gov.au). Note that AusAID will not enter into discussion on the technical merit or relevance of your proposed research.

### **9. APPLICATION COMPONENTS**

The information below provides brief advice on how to fill in the ADRAS application form. More details are also included in the online application form itself and in Table 1: Assessment Criteria.

#### **SYNOPSIS**

Please provide a short synopsis summarising the overall project.

#### **PROPOSAL TITLE**

Please provide a short descriptive title in plain English.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTION(S)**

Please ensure the questions are clearly articulated, unambiguous and focussed.

#### **RATIONALE AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

State the rationale for the research, indicating the need for the work, its significance and innovation. Highlight what gap in knowledge or development problem this research is seeking to address. Show how this would be useful to your audience, especially donors or developing country policy makers and outline any discussions undertaken with key stakeholders concerning the proposal. Describe likely benefits of your research activity in economic, environmental and social terms.

## POLICY RELEVANCE TO DEVELOPMENT AND AUSAID

Please provide a short statement outlining why the project is important to development broadly and to AusAID priorities.

## RESEARCH ACTIVITY DESIGN AND METHOD

Methodology should be clearly described, including underlying activities in stages where appropriate, and linked to the research aim and objectives within the time frame of the project. Innovative approaches will be favourably considered.

Please indicate how your research project will ensure that gender considerations are taken into account.

## OUTPUTS/DELIVERABLES

Each application must detail a set of interim and final outputs or deliverables. An indication of the expected delivery time should be included in the Workplan.

Researchers are expected to:

- produce both academic (e.g. submissions to refereed journals and conference presentations) and policy relevant materials (e.g. policy briefs)
- publish in open access journals or make pre-publication versions of their work available
- make themselves available to deliver policy relevant seminars/workshops at AusAID throughout the life of their project to keep policymakers informed of research progress as well as at the conclusion of the project. Delivery of seminars/workshops with other in-country policymakers will be considered highly.

## RESEARCH COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

An essential component of AusAID-funded research is a targeted communications and engagement strategy from the outset of the project. This strategy must outline:

- a maximum of three specific, relevant and accessible target audiences
- attitudes, practices or policy changes that the research will seek to inform and influence and how it is hoped the audience will use the research to achieve this
- communications channels and mechanisms through which target audiences will be engaged from the early stages of the research development throughout the life of the project.

Researchers are required to identify collaboration activities that would both inform the researchers of the relevant policy environment and issues and help to ensure that policy makers are aware of and are engaged with the research project.

A member of the team (preferably the Principal Investigator) must be available to attend a one day Communications Workshop in Canberra in early to mid-2013. Travel costs associated with this workshop should be included in the Communication and Engagement section of the budget. Further details concerning this activity will be provided to successful applicants.

Some useful resources are provided below.<sup>2</sup>

### CAPACITY BUILDING

Show how your research project contributes to capacity building and collaboration to undertake research and/or use research findings in developing countries. Capacity building as an element and outcome of research is a priority for AusAID. Projects involving in-country collaboration, developing country and/or early career researchers will be considered in the selection process as this is seen as an important capacity building element of research.

Capacity building activities can be done at various levels (for example with individual researchers, at the institutional level or at a country level) and include capacity to undertake research and use research for development decision making. The level and degree of capacity building that is appropriate will be dependent on factors such as the type of problem under investigation, the relevance of comparative information, the contribution to capacity development across jurisdictions, key stakeholders, and questions of feasibility. Applications should outline the potential capacity building outcomes resulting from the research project.

### BUDGET

You are reminded that ADRAS grants cover the following eligible costs:

- the direct costs of research (researcher salary, fieldwork costs, travel, insurance)

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<sup>2</sup> Useful resources on research communication:

John Young (2008) *Impact of research on policy and practice: Working with complexity*, Capacity.org, Issue 35, December 2008

Overseas Development Institute (ODI) (2009) *Helping researchers become policy entrepreneurs*, Briefing Paper, September 2009

Carden (2004) Issues in assessing the policy influence of research, *International Social Science Journal* 56 (1) (pp135 – 152)

Hovland (2005) *Successful communication: a toolkit for researchers and civil society organisations*, ODI toolkit. London: Overseas Development Institute

Walter, Nutley and Davies (2003) *Research impact: a cross sector review*, Literature review. St Andrews: Research Unit for Research Utilisation, Department of Management, University of St Andrews

- communication and engagement
- capacity building activities.

A breakdown of all costs associated with the research project must be provided. There must be a clear justification for the level of funding sought for researcher salaries.

Funds for an approved multi-year research project will be disbursed annually – but only after acceptance of each Annual Report.

The following set of reporting requirements must also be met:

- An **Annual Report**. This report will be a brief (five page maximum) administrative, financial and activities report to indicate progress of the project, comparing actual accomplishments with goals established for the reporting period. A template will be provided by AusAID. Acceptance of this report by AusAID will be required to release the subsequent annual tranche payment.
- A **Final Report** of findings and conclusions, using a template provided by AusAID. This report must be succinct and targeted. Hence it should not exceed ten pages and should include a short summary of the research project, the key findings and any recommendations coming out of the project.
- A **Communications and Engagement Report** outlining how specific target audiences have been engaged, the ways in which research findings have been communicated (particularly among policy and decision makers) and early evidence of research use and impact. This report is due six months after the completion of the Final Report. A template will be provided.
- Succinct **Policy Briefs** outlining key research findings and resulting policy recommendations are required.

## 10. AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL (ARC) LINKAGE PROJECTS

### SCHEME

Proposals seeking AusAID support as an industry partner under the *ARC Linkage Projects Scheme* are given the same consideration as any other application.

Please note that there are strict eligibility requirements for the *ARC Linkage Projects Scheme*. Only Australian institutions are eligible. See Appendix 1 of the Linkage Projects Funding Rules at [http://www.arc.gov.au/ncgp/lp/lp\\_default.htm](http://www.arc.gov.au/ncgp/lp/lp_default.htm) for a list of eligible institutions.

If the application is successful, AusAID will sign the ARC Linkage Form and provide a Letter of Support. AusAID's in-kind contributions will be negotiated at this point.

Funding decisions will be available to allow applicants to feed into the *2013 ARC Linkage Projects Scheme* process. However, any such AusAID funding will be dependent on obtaining ARC support. Please ensure that the level of funding sought from the ARC is clearly indicated in the application.

## **11. SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS**

Successful applicants will be required to sign a Grant Agreement with AusAID that defines the project to be implemented, specific activities and outputs, timeframe and the respective financial and other responsibilities and obligations of each party. Grant Agreements must be finalised within three months of the date on which the first draft is forwarded to the applicant and must be signed before any funds can be paid.

Work must commence in the first six months of signing. A delay of more than six months without approval will result in the grant being cancelled. Funds will have to be returned to AusAID within 30 days.

The Grant Agreement will outline the process for informing AusAID regarding in-country work. AusAID staff (either at the relevant in-country office or in Canberra) will **not** be available to assist in arranging visas, customs clearances, travel and accommodations bookings or meetings and appointments.

Extensions of time will only be granted in unforeseen and unexpected circumstances beyond the researcher's control.

## **12. ETHICS APPROVAL**

Applications proposing to conduct research with human subjects or on sensitive topics must present evidence of compliance with appropriate ethical guidelines for the conduct of such research. The Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) website, <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au>, provides a series of publications which outline principles of ethical conduct in research, including the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research

(NHMRC, ARC & AVCC, 2007). All AusAID-funded projects must conform to these principles. No person shall become the subject of research supported by AusAID without his or her competent, voluntary and informed consent.

Successful applicants must gain ethics approval from their host institution under whose auspices they propose to conduct research, where applicable. Internal ethics restrictions of host institutions will be the standard unless otherwise specified by AusAID. Ethics approval requirements in the research project target location (country/countries) must be taken into consideration and met.

If ethics approval is required it must be obtained within the first year of the project prior to the commencement of data collection. Written confirmation of ethics approval must be provided with the first Annual Report. If ethics approval is either not sought or is denied, AusAID reserves the right to terminate the research grant and seek reimbursement of all monies paid.

### **13. INFORMATION OWNERSHIP, CONFIDENTIALITY AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

AusAID receives all applications for funding in confidence. Intellectual property rights with respect to information contained within applications submitted to AusAID remains with the applicant until varied in accordance with the terms of any contract entered into between AusAID and the successful Grantee.

All information contained within applications, once received by AusAID and during the process of assessment, will only be disclosed to AusAID staff directly involved with the administration of the Funding Round, internal and external advisers, panel members, and external referees or disclosed as required by law or to enable AusAID to meet its obligations to Parliament, Ministers and within Government.

Disclosure of any information contained within an application to persons other than those referred to above, or the use of information contained within an application other than in connection with AusAID's activities and statutory reporting and archiving requirements, will require the express written permission of the Principal Investigator.

Applicants who have not been awarded funding may agree in writing to the disclosure of information contained in their applications to specified persons or for specified purposes.

AusAID does not claim ownership of any intellectual property created as a result of any project which is funded by research grants. However, AusAID wishes to be able to publish and use all or part of selected research reports. Accordingly, under the terms of the contract, the Grantee will be required to grant to AusAID a permanent, irrevocable, royalty-free licence for this purpose. This arrangement benefits both the Grantee and AusAID. The Grantee may publish their research results independently elsewhere and AusAID has the right to use the results of the research project where applicable and appropriate.