

ADRAS research theme: *Scholarships*

Total funding available: Up to AUD 1.5 million over three years.

The Australian government's commitment to scholarships is long term and continues to grow. Scholarships are the single biggest program managed by AusAID, at \$303 million in 2011-12 it comprised 36 % of AusAID's education spending and 5 % of the total aid program. Approximately 4000 scholarships (long and short term) will be offered in 2011/12, of these around 2150 are for long term study in Australia. The high-level objectives of Australia Awards are:

- To develop capacity and leadership skills so that individuals can contribute to development in their own country; and
- To build people-to-people links at the individual, institutional and country levels.

Scholarships play an important role in strengthening partnerships with developing countries, developing human resources and forging enduring links with Australia. A condition of the scholarship is that on completion of their study, the scholar must return to their home country for at least two years, so they can use their new skills and knowledge to contribute to development.

Scholarships create enduring people to people links between Australia and developing countries which allow us to work together to address regional and global challenges, and which help overcome communication and cultural barriers, resulting in strengthened policy dialogue. As well as for study in Australia, scholarships have been offered for some 30 years for study in the Pacific region. AusAID's Australian Regional Development Scholarships (ARDS) have provided people in the Pacific with opportunities to study at regional institutions, which provide strong, basic and relevant qualifications for the region. Many Australia Awards alumni are now in positions of influence across the Pacific region working across all employment sectors.

Subthemes have been developed to address key areas for improving the effectiveness and value for money of the AusAID Scholarships Program. Gender equality and disability-inclusive development are important issues across the Scholarships Program and applicants should incorporate a focus on these.

Please see the AusAID Scholarships webpage for further information:

<http://www.ausaid.gov.au/scholar/Pages/default.aspx>

Eligibility criteria

Applications for funding for up to three years will be considered. Applicants are eligible to receive between AUD 200,000 and AUD 400,000 in funding per year.

Applicants must address one of the sub-themes below. Applicants must clearly articulate the relevance of their proposal to the selected theme.

There is no restriction on country of focus. The largest AusAID scholarship programs are in Indonesia, Vietnam and PNG, research with an application to these countries is encouraged.

Sub-theme: Barriers to reintegration

We know that particular groups of scholars face significant barriers to reintegration in their home countries and in implementing their new knowledge and skills.

Some examples of issues within this sub-theme include but are not limited to:

- Effective strategies to overcome barriers to reintegration faced by alumni once they return home.
- Effective strategies to support alumni in implementing their new knowledge and skills once they return home.

Sub-theme: Development impact of networks

The development of networks between scholars and with Australia is one of the mechanisms through which scholarships support development. Research on the ways in which the existence of networks contribute to development impact would be useful and would help AusAID to tailor reintegration and alumni activities to maximise benefit.

Some examples of issues within this sub-theme include but are not limited to:

- Ways in which the existence of networks contribute to development impact.

Sub-theme: Long term institutional impact of tertiary education scholarships

In a number of countries, AusAID has had long term engagement with specific institutions, both through scholarships and other forms of tertiary capacity development.

Some examples of issues within this sub-theme include but are not limited to:

- The impact alumni have had and how change has been brought about could be used to inform future institutional engagement strategies.
- How scholarships can work with other forms of capacity building is another area.
- The impact of support for tertiary education in strengthening reform across a sector such as health or education.