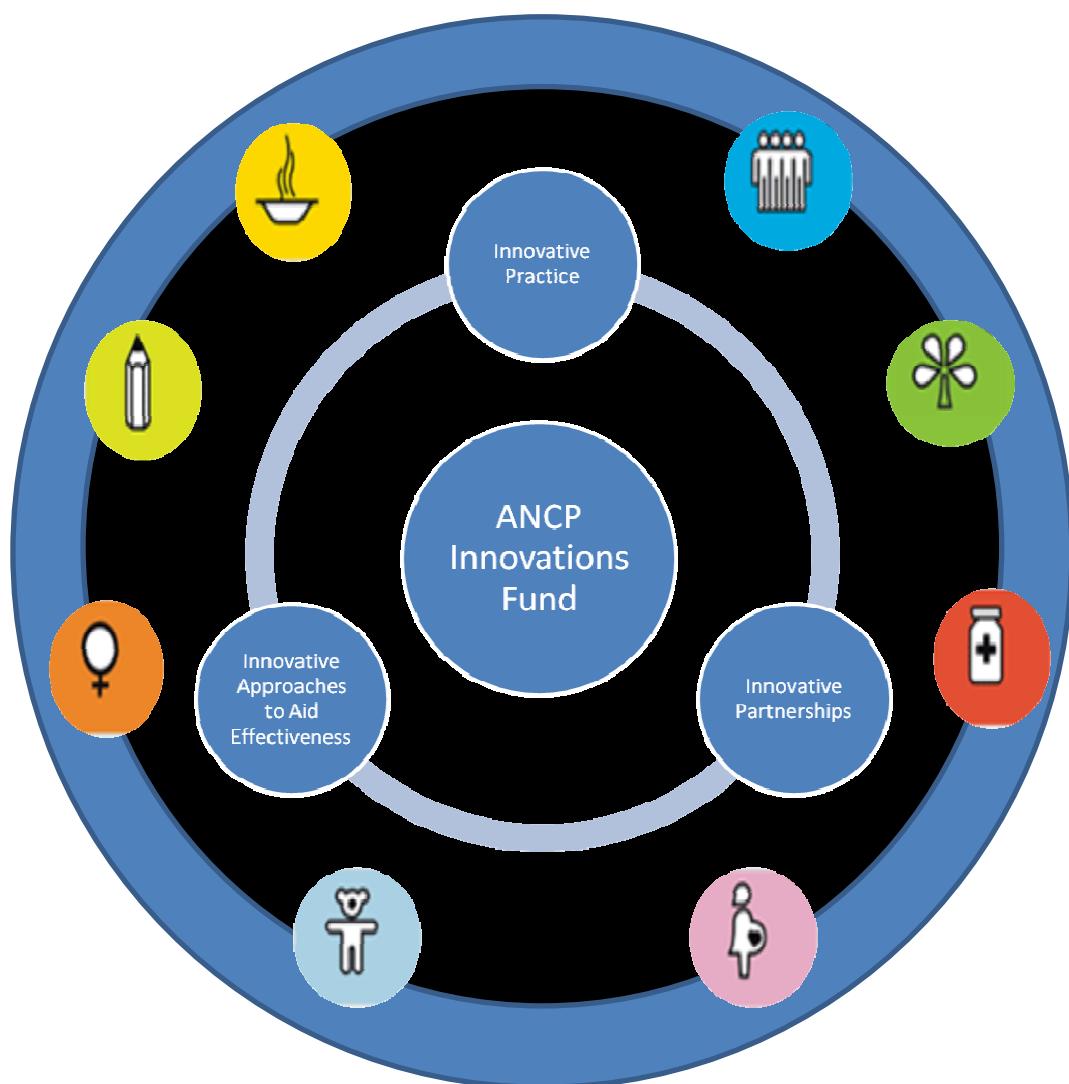




The AusAID NGO Cooperation Program INNOVATIONS FUND GUIDELINES 2011-12





What is the ANCP Innovations Fund?

The goal of the ANCP Innovations Fund is to support innovation in community focused poverty reduction activities that contribute to the achievement of the Australian aid program's five strategic goals and AusAID country program strategies.

This year, the Australian Government will provide up to AUD\$2 million to accredited Australian NGOs for effective innovative development initiatives that will improve and increase the results of the Australian aid program. Proposals funded under this program will clearly demonstrate an innovation in the areas of:

- Saving lives
- Promoting opportunities for all
- Sustainable economic development
- Effective governance

Please note: Consistent with the ANCP, AusAID's strategic goal of humanitarian and disaster response is not included as part of this program. However, organisations may submit activities relating to disaster risk reduction.

These strategic goals are integral to Australia's commitment to make the aid program as effective as possible and to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

Why support “innovation” in AusAID-NGO cooperation?

AusAID recognises that to find solutions to complex problems faced by those living in poverty it is critical to support NGOs' work with local communities to address difficult challenges. To be catalysts for positive, sustainable change, accredited Australian NGOs often develop new ways of working, and innovative ways of achieving goals with their in-country partners. Such innovative activities are often accompanied by significant risks, as NGOs trial and pilot new ideas to improve the success of poverty reduction efforts.

AusAID supports the innovations of accredited Australian NGOs to help find new ways of improving the results and effectiveness of the Australian aid program. This includes supporting the expansion of tested innovative approaches to allow NGOs to scale up existing programs to achieve greater development results. When innovation is supported and learning is shared, development activities have the potential to improve the lives of targeted communities and to influence a broad cross-section of the international development sector grappling with similar challenges.



Innovations Fund Principles

Innovation in the ANCP program is categorised under four principles:

- 1. innovative partnership;*
- 2. innovative practice;*
- 3. innovative approaches to aid effectiveness; and*
- 4. dissemination of results, lessons and learning.*

1) Innovative Partnership ¹

This principle aims to promote partnerships between NGOs, AusAID and local and international stakeholders. AusAID recognises that in order to achieve lasting development results, robust partnerships among development actors including local communities, businesses, the private sector, institutions, universities, governments and other NGOs are needed.

Proposals should also demonstrate innovative ways to address the coordination and cooperation challenges of aid delivery, as they work to build communities of practice to help improve the lives of the most vulnerable.

Programs which seek to strengthen collaboration between accredited NGOs and other sectors will be looked upon favourably. The objective is to utilise the expertise of accredited NGOs and their non-accredited partners to achieve greater results and build capacity.

2) Innovative Practice

Innovative practice refers to methods and modes of operation that NGOs adopt to achieve lasting development results. Programs should demonstrate:

- approaches to particular issues which have proven development outcomes in pockets of practice, and where opportunities for implementation exist in other development contexts;
- ‘niche’ approaches that have a direct and transformative impact in poor communities, particularly the most marginalised in poor communities; and
- approaches that have the potential to scale up significantly in the region, or which involve particularly innovative practices that could be hybridised or replicated elsewhere.

3) Innovative Approaches to Aid Effectiveness

This principle recognises the vital role played by local implementing partners, and seeks to encourage systematic incorporation of local

¹ See also Accra Agenda for Action at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/58/16/41202012.pdf> .



feedback into NGO approaches to programs under the ANCP. It aims to promote effective, professional and accountable Australian development NGOs through support to active civil societies, institutions and governments that are accountable to poor and vulnerable people.

Proposals may include one or more activities that:

- enable Australian NGO(s) and partner country stakeholders to ensure beneficiaries of aid and development are able to guide NGO practices and processes. This often requires significant changes to institutions, and AusAID seeks to encourage inclusive methodologies that ensure targeted communities are able to meaningfully contribute to NGO processes of positive change.
- include innovative approaches to aid effectiveness that promote new or improved ways of working on locally led accountability mechanisms, or capturing beneficiary perspectives in monitoring, reporting and evaluation approaches. This also includes innovation that strengthens existing local government systems and processes, and aligns with AusAID's country program strategies.

4) Dissemination of results, lessons and learning

Proposals must include activities that seek to capture and report on the outcomes of innovation. Proposals should be able to inform a broader range of development actors and enable NGOs to address development challenges in specific regions or sectors. Innovations Fund results, lessons and learning will be reported under the new ANCP Monitoring and Evaluation Framework which is currently being developed in consultation with accredited NGOs.

Who is eligible to apply for the ANCP Innovations Fund?

Accredited Australian NGOs, excluding ANCP Partners, are eligible to apply for the ANCP Innovations Fund.

Further information about Accreditation is available at
<http://www.ausaid.gov.au/ngos/accreditation.cfm>.

Priorities for funding

Priority will be given to applications that:

- Focus on innovative partnership, innovative practice and/or innovative approaches to aid effectiveness
- Demonstrate a clear link to one of AusAID's five strategic objectives
- Demonstrate a clear link to AusAID's relevant country program
- Detail clearly articulated, achievable objectives, outcomes, inputs and outputs
- Demonstrate innovation through partnerships with other stakeholders e.g. business.



Can other development NGOs access funds from AusAID?

There are a number of other funding opportunities available for NGOs that are not accredited with AusAID. To find out more about options for your organisation, visit www.ausaid.gov.au.

What activities are not eligible under the Fund?

Funding will **not** be provided for activities which:

- are determined to be contrary to the interests of the Commonwealth of Australia;
- subsidise or support evangelism or missionary outreach;
- support the activities of partisan political organisations;
- support independence movements;
- provide direct assistance to unions to organise industrial action and give direct material assistance to striking workers (while not precluding activities in the areas of labour union institution capacity building, training and advice, labour law and workers' rights activities are subject to prior approval);
- are emergency relief activities;
- are for recurrent costs;
- involve retrospective funding (funding for previous financial years); and/or
- do not comply with AusAID's Family Planning and the Aid Program: Guiding Principles, August 2009.

What is the selection process?

The assessment panel will consist of two AusAID staff members and a representative from another Australian government department, and will be chaired by a non-voting AusAID officer.

AusAID will fund the top ranked proposals that reach a combined value of approximately AUD\$2 million.

Relevant AusAID Posts and/or Desk areas will consider proposals and potential contribution and alignment with country strategies and AusAID's five strategic goals. Their comments will be provided to the selection panel and will be taken into consideration in the final ranking.

Collaborative, eligible applications between accredited NGOs and other organisations will be considered favourably. However, the application must clearly indicate the accredited NGO that would receive the grant and be responsible for reporting, if the application was successful.



Applications may include requests for funding for the expansion or continuation of ongoing innovative programs, or those that are new initiatives in 2011-12.

AusAID will advise successful and unsuccessful applicants in writing. Successful organisations and activities will be published on the AusAID website. Proposals that are ranked but not funded may be considered for funding in 2012-13.

Organisations that have been successful in their application are eligible to reapply for funds in consecutive years. Funding in consecutive years for the same innovation, however, is not guaranteed under this scheme.

Organisations that were unsuccessful in previous years may submit an application for the same activity in future years.

How will the applications be assessed?

Proposals will be assessed by an assessment panel on merit and quality according to how they contribute to the achievement of one or more of the five strategic goals defined in *An Effective Aid Program for Australia* as presented against the following criteria:

1. demonstrated innovation, or potential for innovation, relevant to the NGO's expertise and/or geographic area of operation;
2. demonstrated knowledge of and experience with identified local stakeholders and beneficiaries;
3. demonstrated understanding of how the activity contributes to AusAID country program priorities and the Australian aid program's five strategic goals;
4. demonstrated good practice relating to gender, environment, family planning, disability, child protection, governance and human rights;
5. demonstrated collaboration with non-accredited partners, whether other Australian CSOs, business, or in-country partners.
6. NGO's capacity to evaluate and disseminate results and learning in relation to the program; and
7. capacity to demonstrate effectiveness and value for money.

What level of funding can eligible Australian accredited NGO apply for?

Proposals up to a value of **AUD\$500,000** are sought.

AusAID's contribution to successful programs must be utilised by **30 June 2013**. Although the funding is only guaranteed for this period of time the activity timeframe may be longer.



What contribution is the NGO expected to make?

There is no mandatory matching ratio applied to funding for the ANCP Innovations Fund. However, AusAID expects that organisations that are successful through the ANCP Innovations Fund will make financial and/or human resource commitments to any program successful under the scheme. Consistent with the AusAID NGO Cooperation Program, NGOs may choose to allocate up to 10% of their ANCP Innovations Fund allocation to administrative costs and must indicate this on the application.

Funds will be provided to successful organisations no later than 30 June 2012. All reporting and acquittal associated with the activities should be included in the NGOs' annual reporting for FY 2012-13.

Accredited NGOs that receive funds through this scheme should look to lead, facilitate and/or participate in sector-wide or AusAID learning initiatives relating to their ANCP Innovations Fund Program. Funding for proposed activities may be included in the application.

If I have questions about the ANCP Innovations Fund, who should I contact?

If you have further questions regarding the ANCP Innovations Fund, including information on country programs, send your question in writing to ancp@ausaid.gov.au.

Answers to questions which may be of interest to other potential applicants will be posted on the AusAID website, without identifying the organisation which asked the question. Organisations are encouraged to regularly check the website for updates.

How does an organisation apply?

Eligible accredited NGOs may submit **one** application for funding. Applications must be no more than six pages in length. The Application Template can be found at <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/ngos/ancp.cfm>.

Closing date for proposals is 23 April 2012. Late applications will not be accepted.

Applications can be submitted to ancp@ausaid.gov.au, or by mail to
ANCP Manager
AusAID
GPO Box 887, Canberra ACT 2601