

International Relations Grants Program Australia-ASEAN Council 2023-24 Grant Guidelines

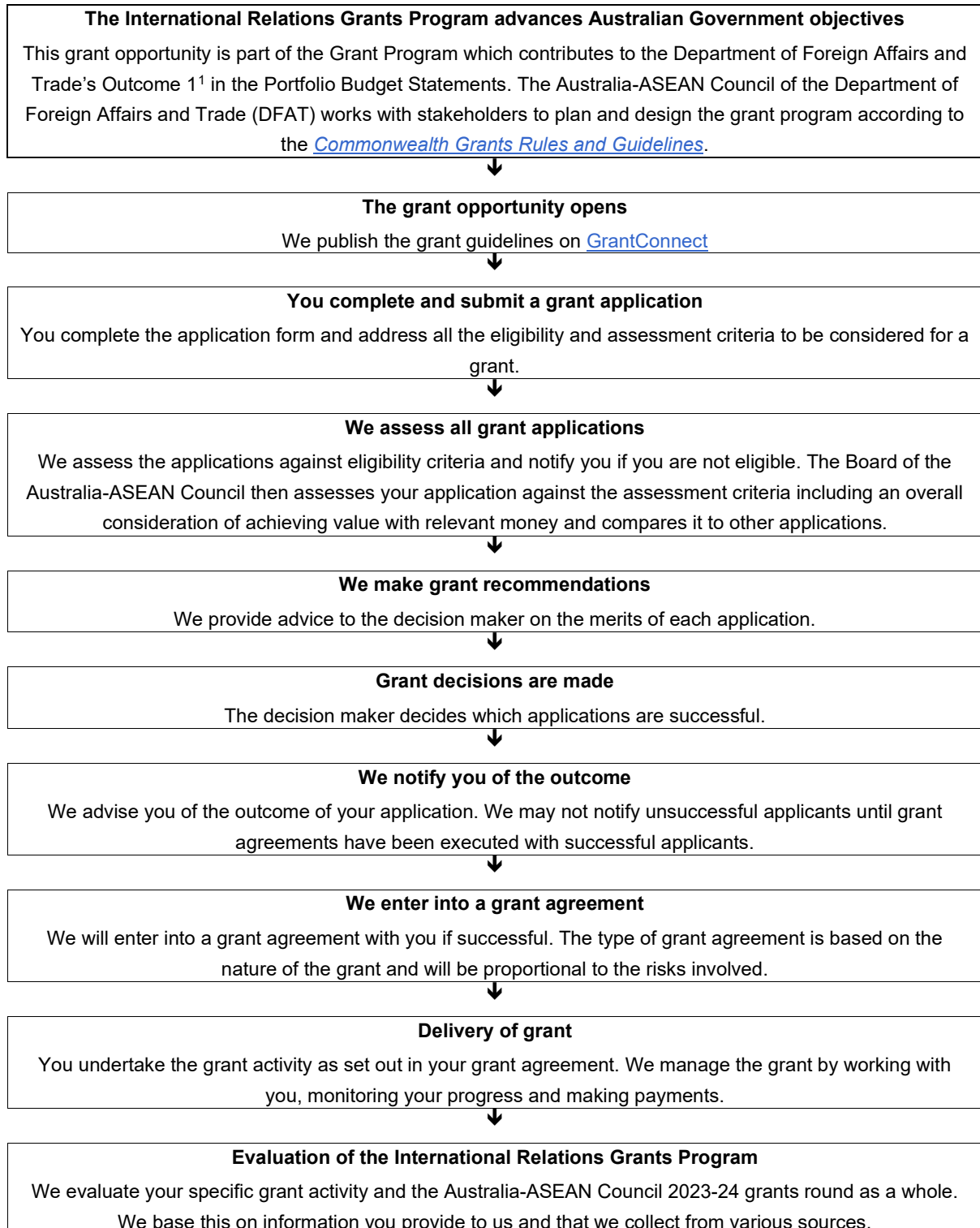
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Co-sponsoring entity:	Not applicable
Administering entity	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Enquiries:	If you have any questions, please contact the Australia-ASEAN Council Secretariat on (02) 6261 1333 or aac@dfat.gov.au Questions must be received no later than 15 December 2023
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Type of grant opportunity:	Open competitive

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1. International Relations Grants Program: Australia-ASEAN Council 2023-24 grants round process



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 priorities.

1.1 Introduction

These guidelines contain information for the Australia-ASEAN Council 2023-24 grants round.

You must read these guidelines before filling out an application.

This document sets out:

- the purpose of the grant program/grant opportunity
- the eligibility and assessment criteria
- how grant applications are considered and selected
- how grantees are notified and receive grant payments
- how grantees will be monitored and evaluated
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

2. About the grant program

The International Relations Grants Program (the Program) is an ongoing program, subject to annual budget appropriation.

The objectives of the Program are to promote people-to-people links and a contemporary and positive image of Australia and support for the Australian Government's international policy goals.

The expected outcomes are:

- strengthened bilateral and multilateral relationships in areas of mutual interest with particular countries and regions
- international networks, collaboration and connections between institutions and communities to build understanding, trust and influence
- enhanced Australian international reputation and reach through the promotion of our economic, creative and cultural, sporting, innovation and science, and education assets
- increased understanding by Australians of the cultures and opportunities in Southeast Asian countries.

Further information on the International Relations Grants Program, including descriptions of previous grant funded projects, is available at www.dfat.gov.au/councils.

In 2023-24, approximately \$350,000 is available for grants between \$15,000 to \$50,000.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade reserves the right to cease selection processes for Grant Opportunities under the Program.

We administer the program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017](#) (CGRGs)².

2.1 About the Australia-ASEAN Council

The [Australia-ASEAN Council](#) (AAC) seeks to strengthen the ASEAN-Australia relationship in ways that enhance mutual understanding and people-to-people, institutional and business connections.

In September 2023, the Government launched [Invested: Australia's Southeast Asia Economic Strategy to 2040](#). The AAC contributes to deepening economic engagement with the region in line with this strategy.

In 2024, Australia will mark 50 years of dialogue relations with ASEAN and host a Special Summit to commemorate the anniversary. Projects that support this milestone by promoting the ASEAN-Australia relationship, are multi-country in scope, or strengthen regional responses to contemporary challenges will be favourably considered.

The objectives of the AAC grants program are to:

- build people-to-people, institutional and business connections between Australia and Southeast Asia

²<https://www.finance.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-11/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-guidelines.pdf>

- increase mutual understanding and awareness of the importance of ASEAN-Australia relations
- increase Australian capacity and capability to effectively engage with Southeast Asia
- develop sustainable partnerships in areas of shared interest.

Strategic priority areas of the AAC 2023-24 grants round are:

- cross cultural collaborations
- economic, education and scientific cooperation and innovation
- climate resilience (climate change, clean energy transition and green economy)
- regional international relations.

The AAC will consider high quality applications for projects aligned with these objectives and strategic priority areas.

3. Grant amount and grant period

3.1 Grants available

In 2023-24, approximately \$350,000 is available for this grant opportunity.

Grant applications for a minimum of \$15,000 to a maximum of \$50,000 will be considered.

Co-contributions from applicants and other funding sources that demonstrate commitment to the grant project will strengthen your application and are encouraged.

3.2 Grant period

Grant funding is available in the 2023-24 financial year. Grant projects typically run for 12 months but can be longer if agreed by the AAC. You must complete your project by the end date designated in your application. The funding amount can be using over multiple financial years.

Following completion of the project, you will have a period of 30 days to evaluate the outcomes of their project and submit an acquittal report in SmartyGrants.

A no-cost grant extension up to one year from the original grant agreement end date may be considered in exceptional circumstances (subject to performance). An extension must be confirmed and approved by the AAC Secretariat in writing.

4. Eligibility criteria

Applications must satisfy all eligibility criteria to be considered.

4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

To be eligible you must:

- be one of the following entity types:
 - an Australian entity with an Australian Business Number (ABN), Australian Company Number (ACN), or Indigenous Corporation Number (ICN)
 - an Australian consortium with a lead organisation³
 - an international consortium led by an Australian organisation
 - an Australian registered charity or not-for-profit organisation
 - an Australian local government body

³ The Australian Government recognises that some organisations may seek to form consortia in order to apply for a grant under the Program. Consortia are eligible to apply and the relevant conditions applicable to consortia are at 7.2 Joint (consortia) applications.

- an Australian State/Territory government body
 - a Corporate Commonwealth Entity
 - an Australian statutory authority
 - be an Australian citizen or permanent resident of Australia
- be willing to provide or develop child protection guidelines that meets the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's [Child Protection Policy](#) for your project if it involves people under the age of 18 years.

Applications from First Nations people and organisations are strongly encouraged.

Applications with Southeast Asian partners are strongly encouraged.

Applications from consortia are acceptable, provided you have a lead applicant who is the main driver of the project and is eligible as per the list above.

Individuals who intend the grant to be administered by a university should apply on behalf of the university, i.e. your university is the applicant.

4.2 Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- an organisation, or your project partner is an organisation, included on 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
- not an Australian citizen, Australian permanent resident or Australian organisation
- a previous applicant who has failed to provide a full and proper acquittal of an earlier IRGP grant.

5. What the grant money can be used for

5.1 Eligible grant activities

To be eligible the grant project outlined in the application must:

- contribute to the objectives of the AAC grants program
- increase mutual understanding and connections between Australia and Southeast Asia
- address one of the strategic priority areas: cross cultural collaborations; economic, education and scientific cooperation and innovation; climate resilience (climate change, clean energy transition and green economy); and regional international relations.

The guidelines to counter foreign interference in the Australian university sector on the Department of Education, Skills and Employment website could be a useful resource.

5.2 Eligible expenditure

You can use the grant to pay for costs detailed in your budget and grant agreement, including:

- economy flights, appropriate standard of accommodation costs, reasonable amount for meals, travel allowances, and other transportation costs, with the requirement to demonstrate the best value for money principle (refer to [ATO Tax Determination – reasonable travel and overtime meal allowance expense amounts](#) for guidance)
- communication and translation

⁴ The National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Grant Connected Policy makes non-government institutions named in applications to the Scheme, or in the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, that do not join the Scheme ineligible for future Australian Government grant funding. The National Redress Scheme Grant Connected Policy came into effect on 1 January 2021. The Department of Social Services is the responsible entity for questions and advice regarding this policy (see www.dss.gov.au).

- venue hire and catering
- advertising and promotion, graphic design, photography, social media, video and printed material
- production costs, including freight and artists' wages
- only one participant per conference or meeting and only where the participant is a principal speaker and the subject of the conference is of direct relevance to the grant opportunity.

For activities delivered in Australia, applicants are encouraged to consider the use of an Indigenous supplier, if they intend to subcontract any of the services above. A directory of registered Indigenous businesses is available on the [Supply Nation website](#).

You can only spend grant funds on eligible grant expenditures that enables the grant activities as defined in the grant agreement.

5.3 What the grant money cannot be used for

You cannot use the grant for the following:

- capital expenditure, including purchase of real estate and vehicles
- purchase of equipment (for example, musical instruments, computers, videos, photographic or printing equipment)
- the covering of retrospective costs or recurrent funding of activities (this includes any expenses already incurred or work already undertaken prior to the grant agreement date)
- activities assessed by the Australia-ASEAN Council Board which are already commercially viable in their own right
- activities which will provide commercial advantage to the applicant (e.g. promotion of the applicant's own business)
- costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation
- subsidy of general ongoing administration of an organisation such as electricity, phone, rent, salaries (including for research assistants or administrative staff), honorariums or administrative charges levied by the applicant's organisation
- activities for which other Commonwealth, State, Territory or Local Government bodies have primary responsibility (e.g. academic research, assistance to business, development assistance projects)
- activities undertaken by primary or high schools, including study tours, where travel by a significant number of students is the principal element of the proposal
- scholarships to individual students
- completed projects.

We do not solely fund travel and accommodation for attendance at conferences or meetings, participation in fieldwork, sporting or other events, unless they are directly related to achieving the project outcomes. Such activities must be of direct relevance to the AAC and its objectives. To be considered, a substantial program should exist in the sidelines or around the conference and there should also be a strong argument for the selection of applicants.

6. The assessment criteria

Eligible applications will be considered through an open competitive grant process. Your application will be considered on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the criteria
- how it compares to other applications.

You will need to address all assessment criteria in your application. The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your application should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount requested.

Criterion 1 (20%)

The grant project contributes to the objectives of the Australia-ASEAN Council.

You must demonstrate how your project aligns with:

- the AAC's grants program objectives

- the AAC's strategic priority areas
- delivering ongoing and sustainable connections and outcomes beyond the grant period.

Criterion 2 (20%)

The grant project addresses a specific need.

In providing a response to this criterion you should demonstrate how your activity would address, but are not limited to:

- a gap or new area of interest and cooperation between Australia and Southeast Asia
- an existing area of interest and cooperation between Australia and Southeast Asia in an innovative and improved way.

Criterion 3 (20%)

The grant project increases mutual understanding and connections between Australia and Southeast Asia.

In providing a response to this criterion you should demonstrate, but are not limited to:

- how your grant project will build or strengthen people-to-people, institutional or business connections and your plan for creating sustainable partnerships
- how your grant activities would reach out to a broader audience (e.g. the public and/or decision makers)
- how you would increase awareness of the importance of ASEAN-Australia relations
- any proposed quantitative or qualitative performance measures to indicate the expected reach of your project such as anticipated:
 - events (e.g. public seminars, promotional events, performances, exhibition days, or community events)
 - number of participants/audience spectators (and a description of your target audience) and why you expect this level of engagement
 - media engagement plans (including social media), the type of media interest you seek to generate (e.g. articles, radio and television broadcasts) distribution plans (e.g. of a publication).

Criterion 4 (20%)

The grant applicant has proven capability to deliver the project.

In providing a response to this criterion you should demonstrate you and/or your organisation's capability and capacity to successfully undertake your grant activity. You should include, but are not limited to:

- a one-page capability statement of the organisation and/or CV of the project leader(s)
- two signed references from referees with no direct financial interest in your project
- if you have a partner/s also provide a partner capability and commitment statement, including a letter of support from the partner/s
- details of your project budget.

Criterion 5 (20%)

The grant project considers environmental, social and governance (ESG) elements.

In providing a response to this criterion you should demonstrate, but are not limited to:

- how gender equality, diversity and inclusion will be achieved in your project
- how a risk management plan will be managed in your project
- your organisation's business practices and performance on sustainability and ethical issues
- inclusion of other sources of income which can include other grants from Australian federal government, state government, local government and in-kind contributions from your organisation and your partner
- appropriate, reasonable and realistic economy travel costings

- alternative options for face-to-face conferences, forums, roundtables and meetings where appropriate.

7. How to apply

Before submitting your application, you must read these grant guidelines, the application form, the draft grant agreement and the sample final report.

You must submit your grant application in English on the application form, which can be downloaded at the SmartyGrants website. The application form includes help information.

This is an online application form that you can submit electronically. If you have any technical difficulties please contact SmartyGrants Help Desk (service@smartygrants.com.au, +61 3 9320 6888 between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday).

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade will not provide application forms or accept applications for this grant opportunity by fax or mail.

You are responsible for ensuring that your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code 1995* and we will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your application from further consideration.

You must address all of the eligibility and assessment criteria and provide two short signed independent references to be considered for a grant. Please complete each section of the application form and make sure you provide the information we have requested.

Please keep a copy of your application and any supporting papers.

We will acknowledge that we have received your grant application, through an automated email from the online grants management system, SmartyGrants, within one working day.

If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should contact the Australia-ASEAN Council Secretariat, immediately on 02 6261 1333 or aac@dfat.gov.au. We do not have to accept any additional information, nor requests from you to correct your application after the closing time.

If we find an error or information that is missing, we may ask for clarification or additional information from you that will not change the nature of your application. However, we can refuse to accept any additional information from you that would change your submission after the application closing time.

7.1 Attachments to the application

We require the following documents with your application:

- two short signed independent references
- letter of support from nominated partners (if relevant)
- organisation capability statement or individual's curriculum vitae (optional)
- if you apply on behalf of a university, a letter of support from your Research Office.

Supporting documentation should be attached to the application form. Only attach the documents you have been asked to include.

Among applications from universities, the most competitive applications will be those with letters of support from the relevant Research Office highlighting the alignment of the proposed project to the Australia-ASEAN Council's priority outcomes, the relevance of the project to the University's strategic goals in the relevant country and demonstrating that the project is not more appropriately funded by the Australia Research Council or alternative Commonwealth funding body.

You must attach supporting documentation to the application form in line with the instructions provided within the form. You should only attach requested documents. We will not consider information in attachments that we do not request.

7.2 Joint (consortia) applications

Some organisations may apply as a consortium to deliver grant activities. A consortium is two or more organisations who are working together to combine their capabilities when developing and delivering a grant activity.

If you are submitting a grant application on behalf of a consortium, a member organisation or a newly created organisation must be appointed as the 'lead organisation'. Only the lead organisation will enter into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth and will be responsible for the grant. The lead organisation must complete the application form and identify all other members of the proposed consortium in the application. The application must include a letter of support from each organisation involved in the grant. Each letter of support should include:

- details of the partner organisation and an overview of how the consortium will work together to complete the grant activity
- an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise of the consortium members
- the roles/responsibilities of consortium members and the resources they will contribute (if any)
- details of a nominated management level contact officer
- details of the lead organisation.
- Applications must be submitted between the published opening and closing dates. Late applications will not be accepted.

7.3 Timing of grant opportunity processes

Activity	Timeframe
Application period	November-December 2023
Assessment of applications	4 weeks
Approval of outcomes of selection process	December – January 2024
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	February 2024
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	February – March 2024

7.4 Questions during the application process

If you have any questions during the application period, please contact the Australia-ASEAN Council Secretariat, (02) 6261 1333, aac@dfat.gov.au. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade undertakes to respond to emailed questions within five working days.

Questions must be received no later than 15 December 2023.

Applicants may speak with the Australia-ASEAN Council Secretariat in their first language by telephoning the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 (local call anywhere in Australia) and asking to be connected with the Secretariat.

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander applicants may wish to access assistance in submitting an application where English is not their first language. In these cases, applicants may contact an Indigenous language centre for assistance.

8. The grant selection process

8.1 Assessment of grant applications

We first review your application against the eligibility criteria.

If eligible, we will then assess your application against the assessment criteria (see Section 6) and against other applications. We consider your application on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the criteria
- how it compares to other applications
- whether it achieves value with relevant money⁵

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

- the overall objective/s to be achieved in providing the grant
- the relative value of the grant sought
- extent to which the geographic location of the application matches identified priorities
- the extent to which the evidence in the application demonstrates that it will contribute to meeting the outcomes/objectives.
- how the grant activities will target groups or individuals.

8.2 Who will assess applications?

The Australia-ASEAN Council Board will assess each application. Board members are listed on the [AAC website](#). Board members are treated as Commonwealth officials due to their role in the assessment process in accordance with Part 1, section 2.8 of the CGRGs and the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act.

While an application may meet the assessment criteria, a grant is not guaranteed.

The Australia-ASEAN Council Secretariat, within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, will provide information and advice to the Board to assist its determination of policy and its assessment of grant applications.

The Board may seek additional input from relevant Australian missions overseas about you or your application. They may also seek additional information from other Commonwealth agencies, even if the sources are not nominated by you as referees. The Board may also consider information about you or your application that is available through the normal course of business.

If the selection process identifies unintentional errors in your application, you may be contacted to correct or explain the information.

8.3 Who will approve grants?

The Board will make recommendations to the First Assistant Secretary, Southeast Asia Regional Division, or his/her delegate within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The delegate will make the final decision to approve a grant.

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

- the approval of the grant
- the grant funding amount to be awarded.

The delegate will not approve funding if they reasonably consider the program funding available will not accommodate the funding offer, and/or the application does not achieve value with relevant money.

The AAC reserves the right to offer less funding than that sought by the applicant.

There is no appeal mechanism for decisions to approve or not approve a grant.

9. Notification of application outcomes

We will advise you of the outcome of your application in writing. If you are successful, we will advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

If you are unsuccessful, we will give you an opportunity to discuss the outcome.

⁵ See glossary for an explanation of 'value with relevant money'.

You can submit a new application for the same grant (or a similar grant) in any future grant opportunities under the program. You should include new or more information to address any weaknesses that may have prevented your previous application from being successful.

9.1 Feedback on your application

If you are unsuccessful, you may ask for feedback from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade within one month of being advised of the outcome. Requests for feedback should be sent to aac@dfat.gov.au.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade will only provide verbal feedback within one month of the feedback request.

10. Successful grant applications

10.1 The grant agreement

You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth. We use the simple grant agreement in this program.

Each agreement has general terms and conditions that cannot be changed. Sample grant agreements are available on GrantConnect.

We must execute a grant agreement with you before we can make any payments. We are not responsible for any of your expenditure until a grant agreement is executed. If you choose to start your grant activities before you have an executed grant agreement, you do so at your own risk. You must not start any Labour Sending Support activities until a grant agreement is executed.

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

Simple Grant Agreement

We will use a simple grant agreement.

You will have 30 days from the date of a written offer to execute this grant agreement with the Commonwealth ('execute' means both you and the Commonwealth have signed the agreement). During this time, we will work with you to finalise details.

The offer may lapse if both parties do not sign the grant agreement within this time. Under certain circumstances, we may extend this period. We base the approval of your grant on the information you provide in your application.

Any additional conditions attached to the grant will be identified in the grant offer or during the grant agreement negotiations.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade will negotiate agreements with successful applicants in January and February 2024. If there are unreasonable delays in finalising a grant agreement, the grant offer may be withdrawn, and the grant may be awarded to a different applicant.

Where a grantee fails to meet the obligations of the grant agreement, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade may withhold or suspend the funding to the grantee; and/or require the grantee to repay all or part of the grant. No compensation is payable by the Department for termination in these circumstances.

You should not make financial commitments until a grant agreement has been executed by the Commonwealth.

10.2 How we pay the grant

The grant agreement will state the:

- maximum grant amount to be paid

- proportion of eligible expenditure covered by the grant (grant percentage)
- any financial contributions you must make
- any in-kind contributions you will make
- any financial contribution provided by a third party.

We will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur extra costs, you must meet them yourself.

We will pay 100 per cent of the grant on execution of the grant agreement and on receipt of a valid invoice. You will be required to report how you spent the grant funds at the completion of the grant activity.

10.3 Grants Payments and GST

Payments will be made as set out in the grant agreement. Where appropriate, payments will be GST Inclusive.

If you receive a grant, you should consider speaking to a tax advisor about the effect of receiving a grant before you enter into a grant agreement. You can also visit the [Australian Taxation Office website](#) for more information.

11. Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant will be listed on the [GrantConnect website](#) and on the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website within 21 days of the date of effect⁶ as required by Section 5.3 of the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017.

12. How we monitor your grant activity

12.1 Keeping us informed

You will be required to:

- complete a brief communications outline within two weeks of accepting the grant offer,
- provide a final report, including financial acquittal, using the online template within 30 days of project completion, and
- where conference or meeting participation of a principal speaker is funded, a copy of the paper presented by the participant in addition to the report.

You should let us know if anything is likely to affect your grant activity or organisation.

You must submit reports in line with the timeframes in the grant agreement. Sample templates for these reports are available on the GrantConnect website. We will expect you to report on:

- progress against your communications plan actively deepening international relationships and promoting your project and the AAC
- progress against agreed project milestones
- contributions of participants directly related to the project
- eligible expenditure of grant funds
- results against key performance indicators and the project specific outputs detailed in your application.

You will also be responsible for:

- meeting the terms and conditions of the grant agreement and managing and promoting the activity efficiently and effectively
- complying with record keeping, reporting and acquittal requirements as set out in the grant agreement
- all administrative arrangements associated with your project including visa and travel arrangements, visa charges, airport taxes, ground transport, travel and health insurance for

⁶ See glossary.

project participant's medical and hospital insurance cover both overseas and in Australia for visitors not covered by Medicare (including evacuation and death cover), and necessary insurance for equipment and accommodation costs and arrangements

- other insurances, including workers' compensation, as required by law, and professional indemnity, public health and liability insurance, as required by the project
- complying with all applicable domestic and international laws.

12.2 Reporting

You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement. We will expect you to report on:

- progress against agreed grant activity milestones and outcomes
- contributions of participants directly related to the grant activity
- expenditure, evaluation and interim/final acquittal of the grant.

The amount of detail you provide in your reports should be relative to the size, complexity and grant amount.

We will monitor progress by assessing reports you submitted and may conduct site visits or request records to confirm details of your reports if necessary. We expect you will be in contact with us monthly on your progress. Occasionally we may need to re-examine claims, seek further information, or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

12.3 Compliance visits

We may visit you during or at the completion of your grant activity to review your compliance with the grant agreement. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

12.4 Record keeping

We may also inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement.

12.5 Evaluation

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade will evaluate the Australia-ASEAN Council 2023-24 grant activities to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. Your grant agreement requires you to provide information to help with this evaluation.

12.6 Acknowledgement

The Australia-ASEAN Council logo/Australian Government crest is to be used on all materials related to grants. Whenever the logo/crest is used in a publication, the recipient must also acknowledge the Commonwealth as follows:

'This activity received grant funding from the Australia-ASEAN Council of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.'

Invitations to board members and/or officers of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to represent the Australian Government support for the project are welcomed.

13. Probity

The Australian Government will make sure that the program process is fair, according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the CGRGs.

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. It is recommended that you review obligations and responsibilities under the Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme on the [Attorney General's Department website](#), before establishing project partners.

Note: These guidelines may be changed from time-to-time by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. When this happens, the revised guidelines will be published on the Department's website.

13.1 Enquiries and feedback

All complaints about a grant process must be lodged in writing with the AAC Secretariat.

Any questions you have about grant decisions for the Program should be sent to aac@dfat.gov.au. **You may wish to list @dfat.gov.au as a trusted emailer in your email system.**

If you do not agree with the way the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has handled your complaint, you may complain to the Commonwealth Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (toll free): 1300 362 072
Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au
Website: www.ombudsman.gov.au

13.2 Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade staff, Australia-ASEAN Council Board member, any member of a committee or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel:

- has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer [or member of an external panel]
- has a relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently or
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the grant program/ grant opportunity.

You will be asked to declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later identify an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in writing immediately.

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.

We publish our conflict of interest policy on the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's website.

13.3 Privacy

We treat your personal information according to the [Privacy Act 1988](#) and the [Australian Privacy Principles](#). This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect
- why we collect your personal information
- who we give your personal information to.

Your personal information can only be disclosed to someone else for the primary purpose for which it was collected, unless an exemption applies.

The Australian Government may also use and disclose information about grant applicants and grant recipients under this grant opportunity in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes disclosing grant information on GrantConnect as required for reporting purposes and giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

We may share the information you give us with other Commonwealth entities for purposes including government administration, research or service delivery, according to Australian laws.

As part of your application, you declare your ability to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988* and the Australian Privacy Principles and impose the same privacy obligations on officers, employees, agents and subcontractors that you engage to assist with the activity, in respect of personal information you collect, use, store, or disclose in connection with the activity. Accordingly, you must not do anything, which if done by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade would breach an Australian Privacy Principle as defined in the Act.

13.4 Confidential Information

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to disclose to any person, other than us, any confidential information relating to the grant application and/or agreement, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where you are 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).

We may at any time, require you to arrange for you; or your employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to nondisclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

We will keep any information in connection with the grant agreement confidential to the extent that it meets all of the three conditions below:

1. you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential
2. the information is commercially sensitive
3. revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else.

We will not be in breach of any confidentiality agreement if the information is disclosed to:

- the [committee] and other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help us manage the program effectively
- employees and contractors of our department so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities
- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery
- other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary, and
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

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

13.5 Sexual misconduct prevention and response

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH). It is expected that all individuals participating in this program will comply with this zero-tolerance approach. Any allegations or reports of misconduct will be taken seriously. The *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)* defines the nature and circumstances in which sexual harassment is unlawful.

In response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the Australian Government has introduced the National Redress Scheme, which provides acknowledgement and support to people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse.

For more information and support, please visit: [National Redress Scheme website](#) or call the National Redress Scheme line on **1800 737 377**.

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](#) (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 exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

All Freedom of Information requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing.

By mail: The Director, Freedom of Information Section
Public Interest Law Branch
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
accountable authority	see subsection 12(2) of the <i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i>
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
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.
commencement date	the expected start date for the grant activity
completion date	the expected date that the grant activity must be completed and the grant spent by
co-sponsoring entity	when two or more entities are responsible for the policy and the appropriation for outcomes associated with it
date of effect	can be the date on which a grant agreement is signed or a specified starting date. Where there is no grant agreement, entities must publish information on individual grants as soon as practicable.
decision maker	the person who makes a decision to award a grant
eligibility criteria	refer to the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria.

Term	Definition
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 PGPA Act
Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs)	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.
grant	<p>for the purposes of the CGRGs, a ‘grant’ is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. under which relevant money⁷ or other Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) money⁸ 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
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 CGRGs
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.
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.

⁷ Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 8, Dictionary.

⁸ Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money.

Term	Definition
grantee	the individual/organisation which has been selected to receive a grant
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.
selection criteria	comprise eligibility criteria and assessment criteria.
selection process	the method used to select potential grantees. This process may involve comparative assessment of applications or the assessment of applications against the eligibility criteria and/or the assessment criteria.
value with relevant money	<p>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.</p> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • the potential grantee's relevant experience and performance history.

Appendix A. Acronyms

Acronyms used in these guidelines, online and within application forms.

AAC	Australia-ASEAN Council
ABN	Australian Business Number
ACDGP	Australian Cultural Diplomacy Grant Program
ACN	Australian Company Number
AEDT	Australian Eastern Daylight Time
AEST	Australian Eastern Standard Time
AII	Australia-Indonesia Institute
AJF	Australia-Japan Foundation
AKF	Australia-Korea Foundation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CAAR	Council for Australian-Arab Relations
CGRGs	Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines
COALAR	Council on Australia Latin America Relations
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
FCI	Foundations, Councils and Institutes
FOI	Freedom of Information
GST	Goods and Services Tax
IRGP	International Relations Grants Program
PBS	Portfolio Budget Statement
PGPA Act	Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act
PSEAH	Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) Policy