



Australia Awards

Australia Awards Global Strategic Framework

Investing in the next
generation of global
leaders for development

2021–2024



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Introduction

Australia Awards have contributed to development and diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific region for over 70 years. From the Colombo Plan of the 1950s, Australia’s development program and foreign policy has invested in human capital by supporting generations of emerging leaders from developing countries to undertake tertiary education in Australia.

Australia Awards are prestigious, transformational scholarships and short courses offered to emerging leaders from developing countries for study, research and professional development in Australia and the region so they can return home and contribute to their nations’ development, prosperity and resilience. Since the Colombo Plan seven decades ago to today’s Australia Awards, more than 100,000 women and men have received an Australian Government scholarship to study in Australia.

Australia Awards are a feature of nearly all of Australia’s bilateral aid programs, building the human resource capacity of partner countries within mutually agreed development sectors.¹

Considerable value is attached to Australia Awards at the highest levels of partner governments, with Australia Awards contributing strongly to our reputation in the region and to bilateral relationships. Australia Awards alumni add to Australia’s people-to-people networks including the Australian Government, Australian universities and Australian businesses.

Australia Awards are administered by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR). Australia Awards supports partner countries to progress their development goals. While the Australia Awards is strongly anchored in the Indo-Pacific region, partner countries are located across the Pacific, East Asia, South and West Asia and Africa.

This is a strategic framework for the devolved ecosystem of the Australia Awards. It supports a balance between global consistency and local flexibility, with a timeframe of 2021–2024 to cover the immediate COVID-19 response and beyond.

The strategic framework outlines why DFAT invests in the Australia Awards and specifically:

- outlines why Australia invests in Australia Awards
- sets out the goal and key outcomes for Australia Awards
- reflects the challenges and opportunities in the ‘new normal’ of COVID-19 and beyond
- details the operating principles and priority areas for Australia Awards
- outlines Australia Awards modalities as we emerge from the COVID-19 disruption
- articulates the roles of Australia Awards partners
- explains how performance of Australia Awards investments will be measured.

¹ The Australia Awards are a key pillar of the development program, accounting for 5 per cent of Australia’s total ODA budget for FY 2021–22.

The strategic framework on a page

Importance



Education underscores prosperity, resilience and stability at all levels. Giving the next generation of global leaders the opportunity to undertake study, research and professional development with Australia builds the capacity of our partner countries to address development challenges and builds invaluable connections and trust between nations that advances Australia's national interests.

Direction



The Strategic Framework supports targeted and flexible delivery in the context of COVID-19 and beyond. While maintaining its distinctive identity and prestige, country and regional programs will have scope to develop and pilot flexible delivery options tailored to the country context including remote learning, online and hybrid modalities.

Logic Framework



The goal of Australia Awards is to support partner countries to achieve their development goals through education and knowledge transfer and to build enduring relationships with Australia that advance mutual interests. To realise this goal, it seeks to achieve two key **outcomes**:

1. Alumni use their skills, knowledge and networks to contribute to sustainable development
2. Alumni contribute to cooperation between Australia and partner countries.

Priorities



The Strategic Framework has three **Immediate & Intermediate Priorities** aligned with *Partnerships for Recovery: Australia's COVID-19 Development Response*: health security; stability; and economic recovery. It has six **Long Term Priorities**: Agriculture, fisheries and water; Building resilience; Education and health; Effective governance; Gender equality and empowering women and girls; Infrastructure, innovation and trade.

Principles



Australia Awards operates within five key principles:

1. Alignment between Australia and partner country development priorities
2. Merit-based selection
3. Equity of access
4. Value for money and evidence-based decision making
5. Promote Australia Awards and leverage alumni engagement.

Partners



Australia Awards are administered by DFAT on behalf of DFAT and ACIAR. They are delivered and supported by a range of partners who play a crucial role in contributing to Australia Awards' success including Managing Contractors, partner country governments, education providers, awardees, alumni and the Global Tracer Facility.

Context

Australia Awards are resilient to COVID-19 disruptions. While Australia’s international borders remained closed for an extended period, recipients were unable to mobilise to commence their study. Those who completed experienced delays returning to their home countries. The Australia Awards network worked closely with partner countries to facilitate the international movement of recipients throughout the pandemic.

During this time the Australian tertiary education sector innovated to build flexibility and resilience. Australia continues to respond to this context by adapting to the broader changes in international education which have been accelerated because of the pandemic. Country and regional programs and delivery partners including education institutions increased the availability of online learning and expanded in-country options. Australia Awards research monitored awardee experience of aspects of life and study affected by COVID-19 disruptions. Themes included mental health, online learning and support networks to understand and respond to awardee experiences and needs. Australia Awards continues to address the challenges facing current and future awardees and alumni throughout the pandemic.

This strategic framework supports Australia’s whole-of-government policy, *Partnerships for Recovery – Australia’s COVID-19 Development Response*. While our efforts are focused in the region, we remain engaged in global relief and recovery efforts to support a coordinated international response. Through Australia Awards, Australia is building the capacity of partner countries to support pandemic responses and long-term health security, stability and economic recovery. This is being achieved through the integration of Australia Awards into Australia’s whole-of-government country and regional programs that contribute to respective country COVID-19 Development Response Plans (CRPs). COVID-19 related areas of study will be a priority in the foreseeable future, supporting efforts to strengthen health security and economic activity.

COVID-19 has been front and centre to DFAT’s Pacific Step Up, through which Australia aims to take its partnerships with the Pacific to a new level to realise a secure, open, resilient and prosperous Indo-Pacific, while also strengthening and diversifying partnerships across the globe. Australia Awards are a key element in building Australia’s relations and partnerships with developing countries in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond. This framework also advances Australia’s policy commitments highlighted in the 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper. Australia Awards helps Australia to realise its commitment to education, training and research exchanges which build influence and strengthen people-to-people links and mutual understanding. It also enables Australia to share its experience with economic reform, sustainable development and regulation, to help other governments achieve their own development objectives.

A new normal

This global framework builds resilience and agility to support the development needs of country and regional programs. It responds to the disruption and impacts of COVID-19 and beyond over the long-term, into a new post-COVID normal. COVID-19 travel restrictions and disruptions are likely to continue to disrupt the ability of recipients to travel out of their home countries.

COVID-19 presents an opportunity to modernise, innovate and pilot new approaches. The Australia Awards network will continue a focus on scholarships to maintain its distinctive brand, value and prestige. Country and regional programs have scope to develop and pilot flexible delivery options tailored to their country context.

Australia Awards will be flexible and targeted, during COVID-19 and beyond, including through:

- increasing access by opening up Australian education to people who are unable to relocate to Australia for long periods of time ² including through diversification of delivery including offshore and online options
- scope for online and hybrid delivery options that are appealing to recipients and pivot towards long- and short-term awards in-country and other investments in alumni when recipients cannot enter Australia
- providing broader opportunities, beyond face-to-face and in-country completion of an Australia Awards Scholarship to achieve people to people links, exposure to Australia, and soft power benefits
- other innovations, such as greater region-wide participation such as alumni engagement and thematic engagement across multiple countries, working with respective local and global leaders to address common issues, and accelerating enrichment activities.

² This is expected to remove barriers to participation for people who have narrowed opportunities to travel due to multiple obligations outside of work. This relates particularly to women, who often carry responsibility for child-rearing and care for elderly family members. Traveling out of country on long term courses may also create skills gaps and place pressure on critical services for COVID-19.

Why Australia invests in Australia Awards

The Australian Government offers the Australia Awards to invest in the future. Education underscores prosperity, resilience and stability at all levels. It contributes directly to poverty reduction, economic growth, reduced inequality and enhanced stability. Australia Awards are also an important part of Australia's commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (Target 4.b – Scholarships) which aims to substantially expand the number of scholarships available to developing countries globally.

Australia Awards are typically offered to mid-career professionals and emerging leaders to undertake a Bachelor, Master or Doctoral degree to build on their existing skills and expertise. This aligns with the World Bank findings that 'A highly skilled workforce comprised of workers who have a solid post-secondary education is a prerequisite for a country's ability to innovate and for its healthy long-term growth'.³ The rationale for our focus on building human capital is further demonstrated by research and statistics generated through the World Bank's Human Capital Project which emphasises the link between education and economic growth.⁴

Through Australia Awards, Australia is building the capacity of our partner countries to address development challenges and provide opportunities for strengthening strategic partnerships. Over the past decade, this has included Australia expanding beyond traditional long-term scholarships to offer a sophisticated suite of education, training and professional development opportunities.

Short courses also contribute to development impact. They allow awardees to quickly develop specific skills to return to their positions. Short courses are nimble and more targeted to addressing skills gaps and needs of partner countries. They support connections between government, business and civil society organisations in Australia and in partner countries. With their tailored approach to skills development, short courses can include opportunities for recipients to connect with workplace opportunities, and supplementary programs can include professional work placements and networking opportunities.

Australia's education institutions and expertise are crucial tools of influence. Australia has a state-of-the-art education system that delivers high-quality education outcomes.⁵ Our higher education system attracts international students, researchers and academics, and produces in-demand graduates. We also have rigorous quality assurance and student protection systems, supported by the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) legislative framework. We are therefore well placed to support international development through the education of future leaders.

Education, training and research exchanges remain central to Australia's soft power and long-term national interests. Australia Awards builds invaluable connections between people, trust between nations, and understanding of one another's cultures, politics, economy and society. When Australia Awards recipients study in Australia their thinking and behaviour is influenced by Australian values. Australians and awardees often create connections for life – we develop a deeper understanding of our respective cultures and are more likely to work together in the future to advance our shared interests.

In-country Awards such as the Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships foster Pacific regionalism with Australian involvement.

³ World Bank. 2018. World Bank Education Overview : Higher Education (English). Washington, D.C: World Bank Group.

⁴ Source: The World Bank Human Capital website

⁵ The framework also aligns with the Australian Strategy for International Education 2021–2030. Australia Awards supports diversifying engagement models and investments to integrate and build influence with partner countries and supports Australia's tertiary education sector to rebuild its international student market share in a globally competitive market.

Australia Awards – Investing in Leadership

Qualities of Australia Awards scholars:

- 
Aspires to be a leader in their field
- 
Strong vision for their contribution to development of their country
- 
Strong communication skills
- 
Academic credentials
- 
Resilient, motivated, talented
- 
Ability to create lasting connections between Australia, their country, profession and region

Australia Awards Scholarships (AAS) in Australia – by level of study⁶

Level of Study	No. of current awardees	Percentage of total awardees	Average length of study
Doctoral Degree	194	22	4 years
Masters Degree (Coursework)	517	59	2 years
Masters Degree (Research)	9	1	2 years
Bachelor Degree	153	17	4 years
Diploma (TVET)	7	1	1–2 years

The Ripple Effect

The impact of Australia Awards is not limited to the individual scholar. Australia Awards seeks to support enduring change in the scholar's home country. Alumni use their Australia Awards knowledge and networks to influence decision-makers in their home country to explore innovations that assist achieving key development goals. Indeed, many Australia Awards alumni return to their home country to become key decision-makers themselves.

When Australia Awards scholars return home as alumni, they are integrated with Australia's world-class education sector with access to a broad ranging network of dedicated professionals to help them contribute to achieving their country's development goals.

Australia Awards start with each individual but their impact spreads across countries and regions.

Source: Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility, Global Impact of Australian Aid Scholarships (2020)

⁶ October 2021.

Logic Framework

GOAL

To support partner countries to achieve their development goals through education and knowledge transfer and to build enduring relationships with Australia that advance mutual interests

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

1. Alumni use their skills, knowledge and networks to contribute to sustainable development

2. Alumni contributes to cooperation between Australia and partner countries.

OBJECTIVES

1. To integrate Australia Awards into Australia's whole-of-government country and regional programs, contributing to country and regional program objectives, including COVID-19 Development Response Plans in the intermediate term.

2. To utilise Australia's world-class education system to support sustainable and equitable growth in development partner countries, contributing and showcasing our expertise.

3. To maintain the prestige and quality of Australia Awards, ensure awards are targeted to recipients and partner countries, while enabling strong equity of access.

4. To establish enduring connections, as awardees develop personal and professional connections and networks, that are drawn on throughout their careers.

Goal

The goal of Australia Awards is to support partner countries to achieve their development goals through education, knowledge transfer and investment in human capital to build enduring relationships with Australia that advance mutual interests.

Australia Awards will invest in:

- current and emerging leaders in partner countries through tertiary education, training, knowledge transfer, human capital investments and professional development opportunities
- individuals' skills and capabilities by strengthening their connections with Australia's world-class education sector to support their participation in relevant high-quality courses that are aligned with the priorities of the country or regional development program and partner country
- people-to-people and institutional links in areas to help support Australia's foreign, trade and economic objectives and promote Australia's capabilities across all sectors, including in economic growth sectors.

Key outcomes

To realise the Australia Awards’ goal, DFAT will pursue two key outcomes in implementing Australia Awards investments.

Supporting development

Outcome 1: Alumni use their skills, knowledge and networks to contribute to sustainable development.

Educated populations, as powerful drivers of change, are necessary for countries to reduce poverty and overcome barriers to economic growth. Development challenges have regional and international dimensions and Australia Awards contribute to linking ideas, building skills, driving collaboration and designing and implementing new solutions for sustainable development outcomes. Australia Awards offers a suite of quality education, training and professional development opportunities and access to networks to assist alumni to make a tangible difference to their country’s development.

Building partnerships and networks of influence

Outcome 2: Alumni contribute to cooperation between Australia and partner countries.

Australia Awards build meaningful connections with future leaders who may contribute to bilateral relationships throughout their career. Australia Awards provide an opportunity for alumni to establish relationships, networks and professional links with Australia, its people, organisations alongside fellow international students. Maintaining these links following their award enhances ongoing cooperation with Australia. By investing in people-to-people and institutional links, Australia and countries in the region are better placed to pursue mutual interests. Living and studying in Australia provides the opportunity for alumni to develop a deeper understanding of Australia’s values and technical expertise; conversely interactions with Australian networks increases understanding of the cultural, social and economic drivers underpinning our mutual interests. We will continue to deepen relationships after our alumni return to their home country, forming life-long links.

Objectives

1. To integrate Australia Awards into Australia's whole-of-government country and regional programs, contributing to country and regional program objectives, including **COVID-19 Development Response Plans** in the intermediate term.
2. To utilise Australia's world-class education system to support sustainable and equitable growth in development partner countries, contributing and showcasing our expertise.
3. To maintain the prestige and quality of Australia Awards, ensure awards are targeted to needs of recipients and partner countries, while enabling strong equity of access across genders and for people with disability, in rural and remote locations, and from ethnically diverse and minority groups.
4. To establish enduring connections, as awardees develop personal and professional connections and networks, that are drawn on throughout their careers.

Determining investment priorities

Strategic priorities at the global level for Australia Awards will reflect Australia’s development priority areas. Country and regional programs have flexibility to identify specific country or sector level priorities that best meet the needs of the local context.

PRIORITY AREAS		
IMMEDIATE & INTERMEDIATE Partnerships for recovery: Australia’s COVID-19 Development Response		
Health Security	Stability	Economic Recovery
LONG TERM		
Agriculture, Fisheries, Water	Building Resilience	Education & Health
Effective Governance	Gender Equality & Women’s Empowerment	Infrastructure, Innovation & Trade

Immediate and intermediate priorities

Partnerships for recovery: Australia’s COVID-19 Development Response

In the immediate to intermediate term, Australia Awards will contribute to Australia’s COVID-19 Development Response, supporting efforts to work with governments, academic institutions and future alumni to address challenges.

We will focus our efforts in three priority areas of COVID-19 Development Response:

- Health security
- Stability
- Economic recovery

Long-term priorities

Australia Awards is a long-term proposition, investing in individuals and institutional strengthening over years and decades. Australia Awards investments focus on the six priority areas aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’s 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The six priority areas for Australia Awards investment are:

- Agriculture, fisheries and water
- Building resilience—humanitarian assistance, disaster risk reduction, social protection, stability and recovery
- Education and health
- Effective governance and innovation—policies, institutions and functioning economies, law and justice, including technology and innovation
- Gender equality and empowering women and girls
- Infrastructure, innovation and trade facilitation and international competitiveness

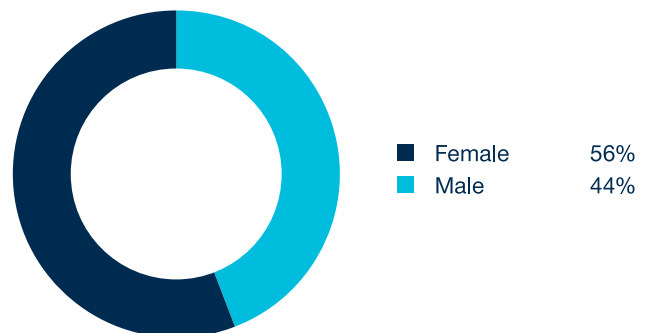
Within the logic provided by this global strategic framework, country and regional programs have the flexibility to identify annual country or sector-level priorities that best contribute to development and public and economic diplomacy outcomes.

Through a coordinated and coherent approach, investments will:

- outline the development focus for Australia Awards across Australia’s development investment priorities, including at country and sectoral levels
- detail how Australia Awards will support Australia’s cross-cutting development priorities, particularly the empowerment of women and girls, disability-inclusive development and building resilience
- detail opportunities for Australia Awards to contribute to regional economic diplomacy and Australia’s soft power objectives
- identify opportunities and priorities for engaging with awardees and alumni that promote Australia’s interests for development and diplomatic engagement with our region and beyond.

Gender and Women’s Empowerment

Gender Ratio of 2020 Intake Long-term Australia Awards



* = 4 awardees from 2020 intake didn’t specify gender

Operating principles

Australia Awards operates within five key principles.

Principle 1: Alignment between Australia and partner country development priorities

Australia Awards are designed to benefit partner countries and support their human resource development needs. Posts will have flexibility to develop delivery methods best targeted to the needs, priorities and context of recipients and partner countries. DFAT will actively align Australia Awards with its broader development and diplomatic efforts at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels to foster new connections and partnerships between countries and encourage new perspectives and solutions to national, regional and global challenges.

Principle 2: Merit-based selection

Australia Awards promotion and selection processes will seek to attract and select candidates who are the best placed to contribute to development in their countries.

Applications for long-term scholarships are open to all eligible candidates in developing country partners.⁷ Candidates for long-term awards are assessed and selected based on merit against these criteria:

- potential to contribute to development outcomes in their home country⁸
- academic competence
- professional and personal leadership attributes
- ability to make professional connections with Australian institutions and professionals.

Short-term study, training, research and professional development activities will target senior officials and mid-career professionals who demonstrate they can advance priority development and foreign policy engagement, providing key interlocutors for Australia.

⁷ General eligibility requirements are outlined in the *Australia Awards Scholarships Policy Handbook*. Additional country-specific eligibility requirements are detailed in the relevant country profile.

⁸ Priority study areas for long-term scholarships are aligned with Australia's priority areas for aid investments in that country, as detailed in the relevant country and regional program's CDRP. However, recognising that individuals are often best placed to understand the development needs of their country and drive innovation in their areas of professional expertise, scholarships are also awarded for fields of study that fall outside the aid program priority areas.

Principle 3: Equity of access

DFAT will encourage equity of access at promotion, application, on-award and post-award stages by:

- maintaining equal numbers of Australia Awards for women and men at a global level
- providing sufficient English level support prior to an in-Australia scholarships
- ensuring Australia Awards opportunities are promoted across government, civil society and private sectors in partner countries, and the effective targeting of groups and sectors
- designing appropriate interventions to address barriers to participation at the pre-award stage and provision of on-award and/or post-award support where participation by women, people with disability and other disadvantaged members of society is low.

All Australia Awards investments will seek to empower women, and will effectively address gender equality issues by:

- targeting development sectors where women's tertiary skills and increased participation in policy development, decision-making and technical implementation aspects of development are most needed in each country
- promoting women's leadership across initiatives or developing programs and support with a focus on women
- providing awards for study and training that target gender equality and women's empowerment issues
- working with awardees, alumni and their employers to build organisational capacity to better use the skills and knowledge of women.

Principle 4: Value for money and evidence-based decision making

We will ensure that Australia Awards investments achieve value for money by emphasising high standards of performance and quality in delivery of Australia Awards investments. This will include focusing on evidence-based decision making; working with the most effective partners; and seeking to streamline administration of the Australia Awards where efficiencies can be gained while maintaining effectiveness and quality standards.

Principle 5: Promote Australia Awards and leverage alumni engagement

We will promote Australia Awards to enhance visibility and recognition of the Australian Government's prestigious inbound Awards initiative, including by:

- facilitating strong alumni engagement and maintaining ongoing connections and networks
- leveraging the prestige, access and reach of Australia's global diplomatic network to celebrate Australia Awards achievements
- communicating the far-ranging benefits of Australia Awards for awardees, partner institutions and countries, and Australia.

Investment modalities

Australia Awards has three key modalities:

- **long-term scholarships** for study in Australia or through Australian institutions including Bachelor, post-graduate, and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) scholarships
- **scholarships for study in the Pacific** which provide individuals from Pacific developing countries with opportunities to study at selected education institutions in the Pacific region
- **short-term training and customised professional development courses** which are delivered by Australian providers and professionals (in Australia, partner countries or third countries) and approved local providers. These are designed to enable alumni to quickly apply the skills and knowledge they develop during their study and respond to their country's changing priorities and challenges.

Taking Australia Awards into the new normal of COVID-19 and beyond, a diversification of flexible and blended delivery models is now in play. This includes hybrid, split-course, offshore and online models, and completion of courses via intensive study modules. This seeks to ensure recipients receive an industry relevant, targeted and quality learning experience whether they choose to study in and with Australia, either onshore, online or offshore. Short courses delivered offshore also include more flexible and innovative options, such as twinning arrangements and provision of technical advice by professionals such as business executives in association with local providers.

Country and regional programs will have the flexibility to decide on the mix of awards that best responds to Australia and the partner country's priorities.

Number of Australia Awards by region, 2015–16 to 2021–22

	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22
Region	Actual number	Actual number	Actual number	Actual number	Actual number	Offered number	Offered number
Pacific	677	871	756	758	531	326	484
Southeast, East Asia and Other Asia	1,191	2,130	1,936	1,399	930	327	1,258
South and West Asia	197	649	772	582	306	154	323
Africa and the Middle East	302	465	541	314	250	11	10
Rest of the World	0	89	35	0	0	0	0
Total Australia Awards count	2,367	4,204	4,040	3,053	2,017	818	2,075

Australia Award modalities and their strategic benefits

Australia Awards modality	Strategic benefits	
Long-term tertiary education		
Scholarships for study in Australia	<p>Flagship of Australia Awards. Scholarships for selected emerging leaders to undertake tertiary level study at participating Australian universities. Scholarships may also be provided for study at higher education providers other than universities</p>	<p>Skills, knowledge and capabilities</p> <p>Quality tertiary qualifications can equip individuals with skills, knowledge, capabilities and professional standing that enhances their ability to contribute to development outcomes in their countries. Strategic investment in scholarships over an extended period can be particularly useful for building capacity in sectors where skills gaps represent a key barrier to development.</p> <p>People-to-people links</p> <p>Long-term educational and cultural exchange can create deep and long-lasting connections between alumni and Australia and between alumni and their international peers.</p> <p>Institutional links</p> <p>Scholarships are an important part of Australia’s broader international education assistance to partner countries. They foster institutional links, support institutional capacity building in developing countries and support research collaboration.</p>
Scholarships for study in the Pacific	<p>Scholarships for individuals to undertake tertiary level study at select tertiary institutions in participating Pacific countries.</p>	<p>Skills, knowledge and capabilities</p> <p>Tertiary institutions in the Pacific cater to the national and regional market, providing tertiary level qualifications relevant to advancing development in Pacific island countries and the region.</p> <p>People-to-people links</p> <p>Pacific Scholarships can create links between awardees and their peers from across the Pacific and build regional networks of development practitioners.</p> <p>Institutional links</p> <p>Scholarships for study at Pacific institutions are part of Australia’s broader objectives of promoting education and training quality in the region. Scholarships are a way to support and grow Pacific tertiary institutions.</p>
Short Courses in Australia, in a partner country, or in third countries for regional programs	<p>Targeted program of intensive training provided for cohorts of awardees, generally of 3 weeks to several months’ duration.</p> <p>Designed to quickly develop and enhance skills and knowledge of professionals working in a specific field or sector to meet identified capacity gaps in priority development areas.</p> <p>The two main modalities are Australia Awards Fellowships and Australia Awards Short Courses.</p>	<p>Skills, knowledge and capabilities</p> <p>Short Courses use Australian expertise to provide customised professional development of senior to mid-level international participants in areas of strategic importance that complement Australia’s development priorities and diplomatic efforts at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.</p> <p>People-to-people links</p> <p>Short Courses can create or strengthen people-to-people links and establish networks of practitioners on strategic issues.</p> <p>Institutional links</p> <p>Short Courses can strengthen existing partnerships or create new connections between developing country organisations. They can also catalyse on-going connections between the Australian education or training provider and participating organisations where there are mutual interests.</p>

Roles of Australia Awards partners

Australia Awards are administered by DFAT on behalf of DFAT and ACIAR. Australia Awards are delivered and supported by a range of partners who play a crucial role in contributing to the success of Australia Awards:

DFAT	<p>DFAT administers the Australia Awards through a devolved architecture, encompassing the Global Education and Scholarships Section in Canberra, country and regional programs, and posts. Awardees are also important stakeholders for State and Territory Offices. DFAT harnesses diplomatic leverage in foreign policy to promote development and soft power outcomes.</p> <p>Global Education and Scholarships Section is responsible for the overarching policy and strategic direction and provides regulatory oversight of the Australia Awards.</p> <p>Overseas Posts are responsible for managing their own budgets for Australia Awards activities. Posts either deliver Australia Awards programs or provide oversight of Australia Award investments when implemented by Managing Contractors. They are responsible for in-country communication, promotion, policy priority settings, administration and monitoring, and alumni activities.</p>
ACIAR	<p>The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) offers scholarships for partner country scientists to obtain Australian postgraduate qualifications, aiming to enhance research capacity in ACIAR's partner country institutions. ACIAR's PhD and Masters' scholarships for agricultural researchers are administered through the Australia Awards system.</p>
Partner country governments	<p>Partner governments play an important part in the establishment of priorities and targets for Australia Awards in each country or region.</p>
Academic institutions and education providers	<p>Deliver targeted, relevant and high-quality courses, and provide effective support across the scholar journey. Academic institutions provide scholarship management services according to contracts, including pastoral care by Student Contact Officers and others. Institutions also promote relevant on-award enrichment opportunities and share best practice.</p>
Awardees	<p>Awardees are at the centre of the Australia Awards. Successful completion of their academic studies to enhance qualifications is a primary goal, along with an enriching and rewarding experience that produces life-long personal and professional connections with Australia and each other. The study and research opportunities develop the skills and knowledge of individuals to drive change and contribute to development in their own countries.</p>
Alumni	<p>Alumni use their skills, knowledge and networks to contribute to sustainable development and cooperation between Australia and partner countries. Alumni are a vital diplomatic asset contributing in various ways to Australia's influence and standing in our region and globally. Alumni are encouraged to nurture professional and personal connections post-award to harness the long-term benefits of the Australia Awards.</p>
Global Tracer Facility	<p>The Global Tracer Facility, administered by the Australian Council for Educational Research, undertakes annual Global Tracer Surveys and case studies to assess the long-term development contributions and public diplomacy outcomes of Australia's investment in the Australia Awards.</p>

Change management

The strategic framework is supported by a range of materials including the Australia Awards Scholarships Policy Handbook, an Australia Awards communications framework, ongoing policy dialogue across the network, training to build DFAT staff capability, and a companion Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. This document will be reviewed at the mid-point of its implementation to reflect ongoing changes in a rapidly evolving environment in the wake of COVID-19.

Connecting with Australia

The Australian Government places great importance on giving awardees the chance to build their networks with Australia in their sectors and areas of interest, as well as with the networks of influence in Australia that can be brought to bear in future by Australia Awards Alumni. Australia Awards will creatively foster connections between awardees and Australian people, institutions and expertise as partner of their study experience with Australia, whether in Australia or offshore, including for emerging online or blended models of education.

This includes opportunities for Australia Awards scholars to establish personal and professional links with Australia, including by:

- connecting awardees with other Australia Awards awardees, other students (domestic, international, short course scholars), academics, peers in the public and private sector, and the Australian community
- targeting personal and professional links most likely to endure after award and which will assist them to contribute to development in their area of professional expertise
- complementing and connecting with other people-to-people programs and links to Australia
- enhancing scholars' knowledge and understanding of Australia and Australians, and vice-versa
- contributing to scholars' positive experience and perception of Australia.

Australia Awards are delivered and supported by many stakeholders, including Australian academic institutions, various Australian Government departments and agencies, the private sector, community groups and cultural organisations, and Australia Awards scholars themselves. All delivery partners play a crucial role in building and enhancing mutually beneficial connections, including creating and delivering activities.

DFAT-led targeted activities

Where appropriate, DFAT will continue to develop targeted activities to connect Australia Awards scholars with Australia.



The Women's Leadership Initiative (WLI) is a five-year initiative (2017–2022) promoting women's leadership for development and building a future generation of women leaders in the Pacific region. WLI delivers innovative leadership skill building, learning and networking opportunities to Australia Awards scholars from the Pacific who are studying at Australian universities. This enrichment program forges links between women leaders in the Pacific and Australia. Drawing on this unique cohort, WLI supports scholars to build their skills, networks and readiness to take on leadership roles in their workplaces, communities and countries. Global Education and Scholarships Section in DFAT leads this first phase of the Initiative, in collaboration with the Gender Equality Branch and Pacific Partnerships and Human Development Branch.

A second phase of the program (2022–2026, \$8m) will build on the strengths and lessons from the first phase with an increased focus on women's developmental leadership and with enhanced reintegration support and linkages through the Pacific Women Lead program portfolio of activities, which WLI will complement, connect and amplify.

The Australia Awards Women's Leadership Initiative

The Women's Leadership Initiative (WLI) (\$5.4 million, 2017–2022) supports participants – Australia Awards scholars from the Pacific studying at Australian institutions – to fulfil their leadership potential and drive big ideas and reforms in their communities. The program encourages Pacific women to take on leadership roles and helps to deepen people-to-people links with Australia.

The WLI has activities ranging from Pacific leadership seminars for all female and male scholars to intensive training and mentoring for a select group of women to develop their leadership capabilities.

'We mean business!

Thank you WLI for believing women in the Pacific. Women's leadership certainly plays a positive role in effecting positive and relevant development agencies in the Pacific and beyond.'

Eselealofa Apinelu,
WLI participant and
Attorney-General of Tuvalu

Linkages Framework

The Australia Awards Linkages Framework⁹ outlines the Australian Government's vision to enhance the Australia Awards on-award engagement experience. It provides a platform for supporting scholars to build both their professional and soft skills, make new connections while in Australia, and access an extensive range of development opportunities beyond the acquisition of their tertiary qualification.

Tools, guidance, and activities under the framework deliver:

- ways to improve access to linkage activities for all Australia Awards scholars
- increased collaboration and sharing of information and opportunities between linkage partners
- clear and coordinated linkage communication channels with scholars and stakeholders
- gender equality and support for women's leadership
- strengthened public and private sector engagement.

The framework includes a good practice guide for delivery partners, and a linkages guide for scholars.

The Australia Awards Linkages Good Practice Guide¹⁰

assists Australia Awards delivery partners to achieve the best possible enrichment experience for scholars, offering practical tips, ideas and highlights existing good practice case studies.

⁹ DFAT's *Australia Awards Linkages Framework*. <https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/australia-awards-linkages-framework-overview.pdf>

¹⁰ The Australia Awards Linkages Good Practice Guide: <https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/australia-awards-linkages-good-practice-guide.pdf>

Alumni

Australia Awards alumni are highly talented current and future leaders, influencers and change makers. Individually and collectively, they help shape the world around them. They are also Australia’s partners in the region for bringing about lasting change to their countries and securing the prosperity of their citizens.

Australia Awards alumni contribute in many ways to Australia’s strategic reach and influence, in the Indo-Pacific region and globally. These diverse and talented individuals are a vital diplomatic asset. Engaging more broadly with this community is a soft power priority.

Meaningful engagement with our Australia Awards alumni contributes to our national interests by:

- strengthening our people-to-people links, diplomatic relationships and mutually beneficial partnerships
- growing trade investment and business linkages
- promoting our ingenuity, capabilities and credentials in education, research and innovation
- showcasing Australia as a contemporary, innovative and open society.

Australia Awards engagement with alumni seeks to build enduring connections between alumni and Australia, strengthening our networks of influence to support achieving our diplomatic, trade, education, research and development objectives.

Alumni – building connections with change agents

The connections, collaboration and cooperation between alumni and the people they met while in Australia are vast and various. Many alumni have frequent and ongoing connections on a personal level with former teachers, students or friends from Australia. These relationships provide great benefits to individual alumni in the form of friendships or providing assistance and advice in their work.

Alumni return home and pass on their knowledge and skills within their workplaces. They strengthen the organisations they work in, universities and schools they teach in, and government departments they serve. Some alumni contribute to change at a level that influences their society, their country, or makes an international impression.

Often, the connections made by alumni while in Australia have resulted in collaboration or assistance that has had an influence beyond the individual alumni and a flow-on to their colleagues and organisation, and communities. Returning alumni are significant ambassadors for Australia in terms of promoting and highlighting the role that Australia can play in business, public policy, research and beyond.

Source: Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility Report: Global Impact of Australian Aid Scholarships (2020)

Performance management

DFAT will continue to strengthen how we measure and improve the effectiveness of Australia Awards. Evidence-based decision making and value for money is central to performance management.

The Global Australia Awards Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework (2021) is a companion document to this strategic framework which sets out how we will measure progress. It includes:

- a program logic outlining the outcomes Australia Awards are seeking to achieve, why they are important, and how we expect to achieve them through a range of change pathways
- an outline of monitoring and evaluation processes undertaken across the Australia Awards cycle by key stakeholders along with roles and responsibilities and information flows
- a system for data collection, analysis, learning and reporting that enables DFAT to tell a global performance story facilitate sharing of ideas, best practices, challenges and solutions among stakeholders and inform strategic management and adaptation.

Australia Awards are implemented across many parts of the developing world. A number of actors are involved in this implementation, and all collect, hold and use a range of information about Australia Awards and its performance. The Australia Awards Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (2021) outlines what information is required, when, and by whom. It also provides guidance notes to ensure consistency of data sets to feed into global annual performance reporting.

Assessing and reporting on Australia Awards performance

Global Education and Scholarships Section, in collaboration with program areas

Facilitate global data collection, reporting and review against the Australia Awards Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Facilitate sharing of ideas, best practices, challenges and solutions among Posts, Managing Contractors, institutions and other delivery partners.

On-award surveys, analyse and distribute OASIS (Scholarship management system) data

Commission evaluation studies

Report on performance annually through the Investment Performance Reporting process

Country and regional programs – Posts and/or their Managing Contractors

Ensure OASIS and global alumni network is up to date

Annual Investment Monitoring Reports

Reporting against Core Indicators in the Australia Awards Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework on an annual basis

Post-Award Evaluations, Impact Studies, Tracer Studies and Case Studies

Host institution annual performance assessments

Managing contractor performance assessments

Assist Global Tracer Facility with tracer studies as required

Global Tracer Facility

Tracer Studies, Impact Studies and Case Studies to assess long-term outcomes

Education and training Institutions

Ensure OASIS is up to date including awardee completion, welfare and critical incidents information

Submission of annual report covering awardee management and performance issues

Provide annual reports covering various awardee management issues

Share updated alumni details with DFAT (if agreed)

compliance with Australia Awards Policy Handbook and DFAT Policies



OUR story OUR value

Australia Awards are prestigious, transformational scholarships offered to emerging leaders from across the Indo-Pacific region. Australia Awards are a feature of nearly all of Australia's bilateral aid programs, targeting the development of human resource capacity of partner countries within mutually agreed sectors and development priorities.

Australia Awards represent Australia's largest ODA spend each year – complementing Australia's other ODA investments including infrastructure, institutional strengthening, food security, health and education. Australia Awards are highly regarded and sought after across the Indo-Pacific and represent one of Australia's most influential soft power assets.

Australia Awards have a long and proud legacy. For more than 70 years Australian Government scholarship programs have supported our foreign, trade and economic objectives around the world by strengthening our people-to-people links with key policy and decision makers. Since the 1950s, over 100,000 men and women have received an Australian Government Scholarship to study in Australia. In an ever changing and increasingly competitive world, investing in human capital has never been more important.

Australia Awards strengthen our diplomatic access and influence in key emerging markets. They reinforce our shared values with countries in our region and provide a platform to promote growth, prosperity and the importance of the international rules-based order.

Australia Awards are about investing in the future. Giving the next generation of global leaders the opportunity to undertake study, research and professional development in Australia reinforcing what we share in common. This in turn gives us influence and helps us promote our capabilities across all sectors including in economic growth sectors.

Australia Awards alumni have often gone on to become leaders in government, the private sector, academia and their communities throughout the Indo-Pacific. Such networks of influence are invaluable to Australia and our interests.

Australia Awards alumni make substantial contributions within their own countries, covering a wide range of professions from medical research, environmental management, engineering, women's economic empowerment and social protection. Many alumni have been front and centre in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. For Australia to remain safe, stable, prosperous and secure, countries in our Indo-Pacific neighbourhood must be too.

Australia Awards are equitable. To ensure equity and broad participation across all levels of society, we encourage women, people with disability, ethnic minorities, people living in rural areas and members of socio-economically disadvantaged groups to apply.

Australia Awards support and showcase Australia's world-class education sector in a globally competitive marketplace. Many alumni describe their Australian study experience as transformational, allowing them to view the world differently, embrace new ways of thinking, new technology and innovative approaches to problem solving.

The Australia Awards are a whole-of-government initiative administered by the DFAT and ACIAR. They support the Department's *Partnerships for Recovery* policy by equipping awardees with specialist skills and knowledge to drive positive change and contribute to addressing the health, economic and social impacts of COVID-19 in their home countries. This in turn contributes to a stable, prosperous and resilient Indo-Pacific.

For more information and key resources

Website

Australia Awards Scholarships | Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (dfat.gov.au)

Enquiries

enquiries.canberra australiaawards.org

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