



Australia Awards

# The Australia Awards Linkages Good Practice Guide

Enrichment support for delivery  
partners and scholars





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# Connecting with Australia



**The Australia Awards has brought generations of emerging leaders to Australia to undertake study, research, and professional development since the early 1950s.**

In addition to receiving a world-class education, the Australian Government aims to enhance the personal and professional connections and relationships—‘the links’—forged by Australia Awards scholars and the Australian community. For this reason, we have developed the Australia Awards Linkages Good Practice Guide.

The Australia Awards are delivered and supported by many partners, 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 linkages, including creating and delivering activities. Many rewarding activities already exist, and many are under development.

Opportunities to forge strong links are also being offered by organisations and groups outside the immediate Australia Awards ecosystem. Activities can be formal, such as organised internship or mentorship activities, or informal, such as working with community groups or business networking.

The Linkages Good Practice Guide builds on the Australia Awards Global Strategy, which outlines the priorities of the Australia Awards. It also captures the ambition of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to implement the strategic vision and objectives highlighted in the 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper for enhancing and harnessing personal and professional links between people and organisations.



# How to use this guide

**This Guide has been prepared to assist Australia Awards delivery partners to achieve the best possible enrichment experience for scholars.**

It offers practical tips, ideas and case studies to showcase existing good practice. It also serves as a guide to developing new case studies that will continue to reflect the quality of enrichment experiences.

The Guide also includes ideas for Linkages initiatives which have been suggested but are not yet in place.

Together these examples (and others) can be used to inform and shape current and future planning and delivery for all Australia Awards scholars.

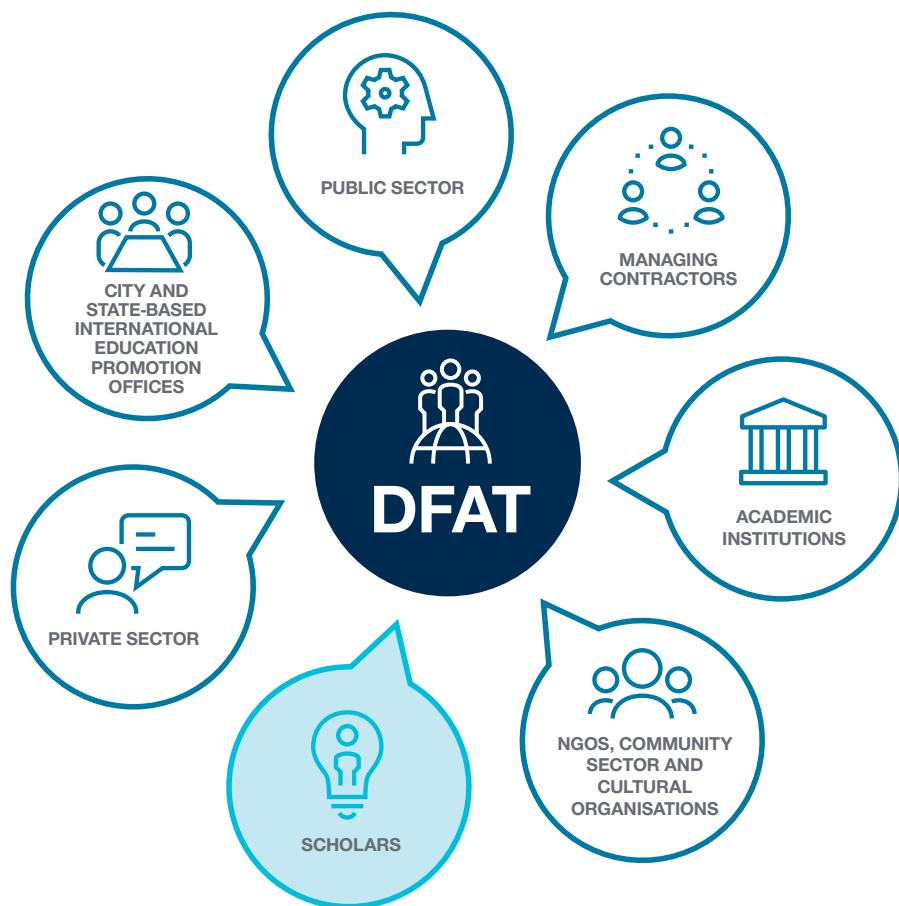
## **Promoting on award activities and events through digital media**

Delivery partners can promote their Australia Awards on award activities and events through posts on websites and social media channels. You should always acknowledge the support provided by the Australian Government for the Australia Awards. Tag @AustraliaAwards on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and DFAT could like or share the posts. Send written profiles or articles to DFAT via [australiaawardscommunications@dfat.gov.au](mailto:australiaawardscommunications@dfat.gov.au). Make sure you include a great photo!



# Supporting our delivery partners and scholars

For each section, these symbols indicate the most relevant partner organisation/s.



Australia Awards delivery partners play an important role in building and enhancing mutually beneficial connections and relationships between Australia Awards scholars and the Australian community.

# The purpose of this Guide:

## Building and enhancing connections

**The Guide seeks to harness activities and opportunities and work towards increasing access for all Australia Awards scholars. It also seeks to amplify the importance of on-award engagement by celebrating enrichment activities and encouraging case studies and examples of good practice.**

It does not intend to duplicate activities that are being successfully coordinated by others, nor directly manage or control them.

This Guide was developed to enable high quality experiences for our scholars through enrichment opportunities that occur throughout the scholar's journey.

These activities expand on the knowledge, skills, confidence and initiative of scholars, building a foundation on which meaningful connections can grow and develop.

The Guide encourages scholars to engage with activities outside the formal structure of their academic programs throughout their scholarship duration. These opportunities must be available to all scholars regardless of their institution or managing contractor.

There are many outstanding examples of delivery organisations' efforts to enrich and extend the experiences of Australia Awards scholars. But not all scholars have equal access to relevant enrichment opportunities, as these tend to vary between institutions and managing contractors.

Connections with the private and public sector, the Australian community, and with other Australia Awards scholars, including short-course participants, are a core part of the approach.

The Guide aims to develop a more coordinated and coherent approach across the Australia Awards ecosystem.

### Learn | Link | Lead



Scholars acquire the knowledge and skills to drive change and contribute to development of their countries



Scholars create and nurture lasting connections between Australia and their countries, professions and the region



Scholars return home and become part of an influential global network of leaders and advocates making a difference in their respective fields and countries



# The shared benefits of linking

The Guide seeks to improve access for all Australia Awards scholars and amplify the visibility of the connections they make.

## Linkage activities will:



Connect scholars with other Australia Awards scholars, academics, public and private sector peers and the Australian community



Target personal and professional links upon scholar's returning home and assist with the development of professional expertise



Complement and link with other people-to-people programs and strengthen Australia's soft power influence



Enhance scholars' knowledge and understanding of Australia and Australians, and vice-versa



Contribute to scholars' positive experience and perception of Australia.





# The Australia Awards scholar journey

**Engagement with emerging leaders for study and professional development in Australia begins at selection and continues through to active participation in our prestigious Global Alumni network.**

For Australia Awards scholars, developing links with Australia is a continuum that stretches from the initial application and selection phase through the study period in Australia to returning home as Australia Awards and tertiary institution alumni.

During this time, all delivery partners are encouraged to support scholars in developing their networking and soft skills to benefit their careers, the development of their home countries and their long-term connections with Australia.

Activities to connect, mobilise and celebrate span the pre- and on-award phases, as well as during the initial post-award period upon returning home when scholars transition to becoming alumni.

Longer-term linkage activities when scholars have returned to their home country are the focus of the Australia Global Alumni Engagement Strategy.





# Enrichment opportunities for scholars

**The Australia Awards has provided opportunities for thousands of individuals to enhance their qualifications and become leaders in government and private sector organisations in many countries.**

A legacy of the program over almost 70 years has been the positive person-to-person and bilateral institutional links resulting from each scholar's time in Australia.

Successful completion of academic studies is the primary goal for scholars in Australia, but there are additional ways scholars can contribute and benefit.

## Through academic institutions

During their first weeks in Australia, scholars will be introduced to support services provided for international students by their academic institution. Other activities to enhance the student experience, include:

- Clubs and societies
- Student Union
- Graduate Students' Association
- International Students' Association
- Sporting clubs

These activities are a great way to meet new people and broaden social and professional connections with Australia.

Scholars can also:

- Explore the website of their academic institution to discover what is available.
- Set a goal in the first semester to get involved in at least one of the clubs or societies.

## Outside academic institutions

These could include activities undertaken as part of academic programs including work-integrated learning opportunities, extra-curricular, non-academic and social activities, community engagement and more.

Making the most of these experiences will provide a richer experience in Australia, enhance academic studies and support scholars to make active and meaningful contributions to their home country when they return home.

## Self-led enrichment

The responsibility for the majority of enrichment rests with scholars.

Hints to get started include:

- Scholars can start with the end in mind and focus upon the experiences which could assist in the development of skills and knowledge leading to a desired outcome. A focus on reintegration or return home goals when thinking through enrichment opportunities can be a useful and self-led proactive approach.
- What types of enrichment activities will support personal and professional development? Scholars can make a list.
- Search academic institution's website, and the websites of other academic institutions and organisations which are relevant to scholar's interests. Finding events and activities which are relevant individual interests is a great way to start,

The [Australia Awards Linkages Guide](#) for scholars provides more detail and further support.

## Through Australia Awards

Scholars may be contacted by the Australia Awards to provide information about activities which might interest them.

These activities are designed for networking between scholars with individuals from a range of professional backgrounds.

Activities range from half-day to three-day events, or may require an extended period of engagement over several months.

Selected activities may be delivered directly by the DFAT and other activities will be delivered by organisations which partner with Australia Awards.

We encourage scholars to make every effort to participate in relevant events. The time investment will be repaid in many ways, not only by the advancement of knowledge and skills but by the useful person-to-person connections scholars will make.



# A continuum of engagement experience: From application to alumni

While this Guide focuses on the ‘in Australia’ or on-award experience of Australia Awards scholars, it also takes a wider view. It recognises that the process of equipping scholars with the necessary skills starts before they leave their home country—and in fact, before they are even selected. Positive linkages with Australia should also continue after they return home.

## The scholar journey

### Pre-award phase

The pre-award phase focuses on selecting the right scholars, creating a positive first impression through early connections, setting linkage expectations and preparing scholars to take advantage of learning and networking opportunities whilst in Australia. This includes examining the selection process, pre-departure training and initial welcomes to Australia.

### On-award phase

During the on-award phase, delivery partners should support scholars to acquire relevant knowledge and skills and to establish personal and professional links with Australia and each other. Providing a positive, memorable experience with exposure to Australian culture, life and values is key. Maintaining contact and support with alumni is vital for on-going engagement with Australia.

### Post-award phase

This contact is especially important in the transition period immediately after alumni return home. In preparation for the post-award phase, the reintegration support is provided to scholars and new alumni as they return to their home countries and utilise the skills, knowledge and networks gained during their on-award study period.





# The pre-award phase: Reaching the emerging leaders



## Intake promotion

This is a good example of an Australia Awards promotional campaign designed to attract networkers and highlight connections with Australia in a consistent way.



## Make a difference with an Australia Awards Scholarship Applications are now open

### Do you want to be a leader in your field and join an inspiring network of change-makers?

Australia Awards Scholarships offer more than a degree. You will gain an internationally-recognised qualification and a life-changing experience in Australia.

Reach your potential through higher learning in Australia's safe, multicultural society. We support you to live and study successfully. Expand your horizons with new knowledge, leadership skills and a life-long membership of Australia's global alumni network.

Advance your career and make a vital contribution to the development of your country.

Our application process is open and competitive, providing equal opportunity to all eligible people.

Apply today for your opportunity to gain a world-class education and become a leader for development.

#### More information

You can apply for an Australia Awards Scholarship at [www.australiaawards \[country name\].org](http://www.australiaawards[country name].org)

To find out more about studying in Australia visit [www.studyinaustralia.com.au](http://www.studyinaustralia.com.au) or [www.australiaawards.gov.au](http://www.australiaawards.gov.au)



# The pre-award phase: Preparing your scholars



## Pre-departure

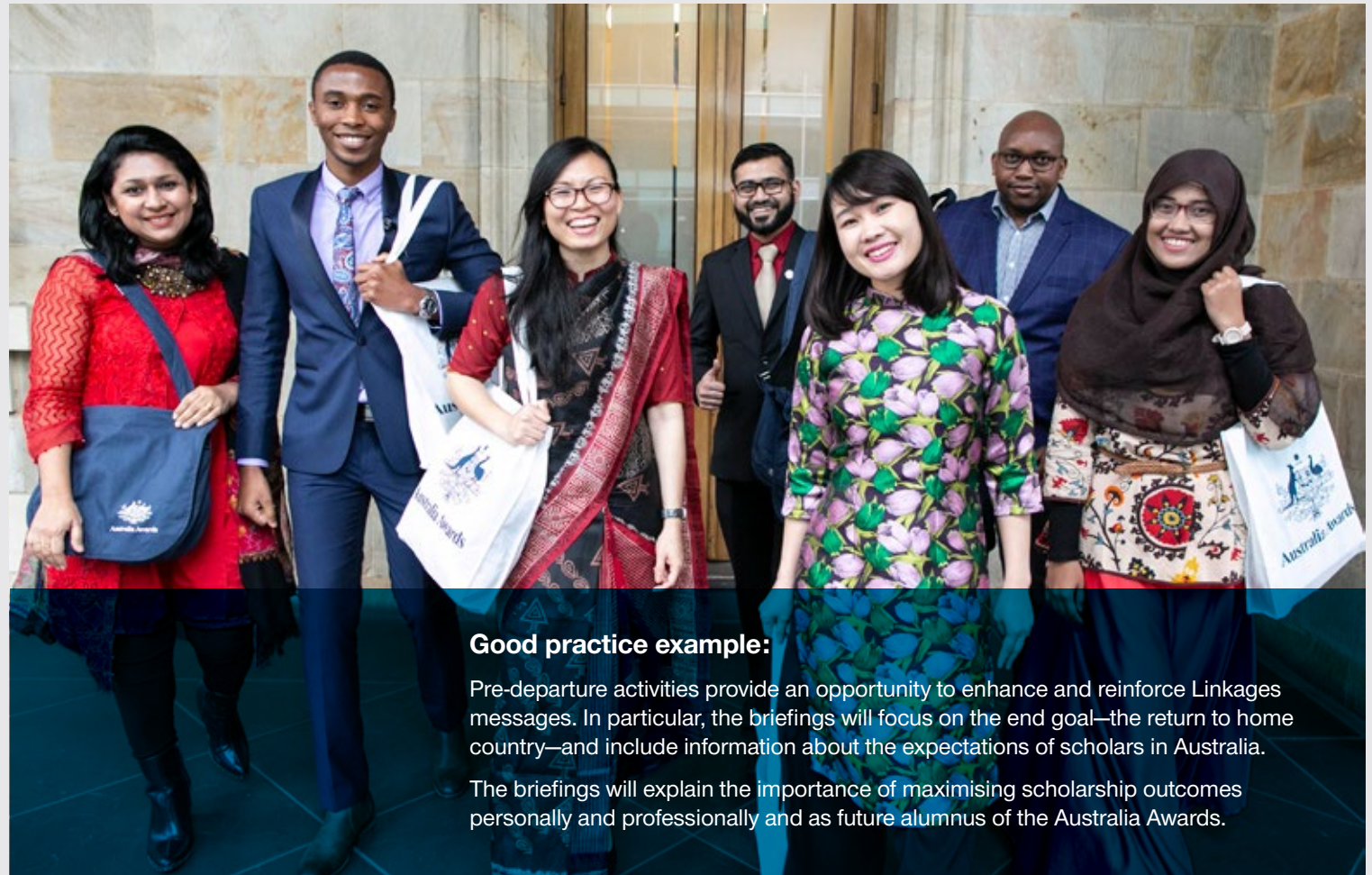
Pre-departure briefings provide a great opportunity to include information on how on-award enrichment will contribute to achieving the best outcomes for each scholar, both personally and professionally, as a future alumnus of the Australia Awards.

Program areas are encouraged to invite and profile recently returned alumni at pre-departure functions.

To complement the Australia Awards requirements for institutions to provide each awardee with an institution information kit before they depart for Australia, institutions are encouraged to include information provided by their local city and/or state study clusters designed for new international students. State and territory units such as Study Queensland, Study NSW, Study Perth, Study Melbourne, Study Tasmania, Study Canberra and Study Adelaide also offer information and services scholars may find useful in advance of their arrival.

### For more information see:

[On-track for Australia pre-departure Guidebook Australia Awards.](#)



### Good practice example:

Pre-departure activities provide an opportunity to enhance and reinforce Linkages messages. In particular, the briefings will focus on the end goal—the return to home country—and include information about the expectations of scholars in Australia.

The briefings will explain the importance of maximising scholarship outcomes personally and professionally and as future alumnus of the Australia Awards.

# The pre-award phase: Selecting great networkers



## Selection

Selection will include targeting motivated and capable scholars most likely to take personal responsibility for maximising enduring engagement with Australia.

Applicants will provide examples of extra-curricular, personal and professional development or community activities they have undertaken and describe how they would expect to do this whilst studying in Australia.

Institutions are encouraged to highlight to prospective awardees on-award engagement opportunities such as internships, women-in-leadership, professional skills development, networking, and volunteering programs.

## The application phase provides the opportunity to test the appetite of applicants who would be willing to engage.

As part of the selection process, managing contractors and DFAT program areas will consider:

- a consistent interview selection question
- an extension to the question in the OASIS application asking applicants to outline their motivation to study at a particular institution. The section could be extended to ask applicants to provide information about any plans to engage in enrichment activities outside their core academic studies, and why they would wish to do so.
- a question in the Development Impact Plan (or equivalent) component of the Reintegration Plan to test the willingness to nurture personal and professional relationships developed during their on-award experience. Applicants in certain regions are already required to complete this within their applications.

Such documents already ask applicants to outline: (1) their development priorities (2) how they will apply their new knowledge back in their home country, and (3) a realistic reintegration plan. This part of the selection will incorporate a component to encourage building professional and personal relationships with Australia and Australians, including embedding this into other elements of the reintegration plan.





# The on-award phase: Flexible, inclusive and strategic participation



**During the on-award phase, enrichment activities and opportunities are categorised into three tiers.**

This tiered approach upholds the principle of improving access, while delivering sufficient flexibility for scholars to tailor their linkage participation by interest and capacity, and scope for linkage partners to target priority areas.



1

Core **foundation** activities encourage successful study habits and meaningful engagement with the Australian community paving the way for a positive stay in Australia.

2

**Elective** activities offer a wide range of additional professional skills development and networking for scholars to tailor their own linkages experience.

3

**Targeted** activities are offered to select scholars identified as highly motivated and influential. Activities support country/regional and thematic policy priorities.

# The on-award phase:

## Flexible, inclusive and strategic participation



### More about foundation activities

All scholars will be expected to attend the foundation linkage activities to build minimum skills, knowledge and networks to maximise the value of their time studying and living in Australia.

These activities connect, celebrate and mobilise scholars, and include the pre-departure briefings, DFAT state events, Introductory Academic Programs delivered by tertiary institutions and return home briefings and functions.

### More about elective activities

Elective linkage activities are delivered by a range of partners and are open to all scholars (and typically other students) to help develop extra professional and social skills and connections.

For Australia Awards scholars, participation in these activities will also support in development-focused activities on return to their home countries.

Scholars are encouraged, and have a personal responsibility, to participate in activities according to their individual needs, interests and capacity.

### More about targeted activities

Participation in targeted linkage activities is by invitation or application. Selected scholars will attend tailored activities to advance diplomacy, networking and development priorities. Invitation of scholars to such activities may be based on country/region, thematic or sector-specific interest groups.

The selection process for all targeted activities should be merit-based and transparent. For more intensive activities, selection should ensure that scholars are suitably committed, capable and available (and are making satisfactory progress in their academic studies). Attention should be given to ensuring that selection for DFAT-funded targeted activities are gender and disability inclusive.



Scholars are encouraged, and have a personal responsibility, to participate in activities according to their individual needs, interests and capacity.



# The on-award phase



## Welcome and settling in

Many academic institutions already have comprehensive arrangements for managing arrival and settling-in issues for Australia Awards scholars. Most encourage scholars to arrive in Australia alone for the settling-in phase, rather than having families accompany them. For those who do bring families, either at the time of arrival or later, special guidance is required.

For information on studying and living in Australia the International Student Guides are a useful resource.

## Good practice example:

For the past 20 years the Bellevue Heights Primary School has supported the children of Australia Awards scholars with English language support.

The school is involved in delivering a session as part of Flinders University's IAP program to increase scholars' understanding of English language programs in government primary schools in the local area and to increase their understanding of primary and secondary school education in general.

There are three local schools with bilingual staff offering intensive English language training to children, active community outreach and activities which embrace families such as excursions and social events. Many Australia Awards scholars who have studied at Flinders say the support provided by the Bellevue Heights Primary School enhanced their sense of feeling welcome and settled in Australia.



*Information provided by Birgit Lucas,  
Intensive English Language Centre,  
Bellevue Heights Primary School, SA*

# The on-award phase



## On-campus orientation

Australia Awards scholars arrive in Australia earlier than other international students and have usually secured accommodation and settled in before other international students arrive.

Academic institutions should include Australia Awards scholars in general orientation activities with other students even if there is some duplication of content. It may be useful to give Australia Awards scholars special or specific responsibilities during general orientation.

General orientation is an important step in supporting the full integration of scholars into the international student community on campus and mitigates the likelihood of Australia Awards scholars being isolated in 'silos'.

### Good practice example:

Swinburne University recognises that the scholars' earlier familiarisation with the university environment and the Melbourne community presents an opportunity to utilise the Australia Awards scholars' skills in assisting with general orientation.

The relative maturity and knowledge developed by their earlier arrival in Melbourne makes Australia Awards scholars ideal Swinburne volunteer ambassadors to assist the more recently arrived (and often younger) international students.

This in turn benefits the Australia Awards scholars by giving them opportunities to engage actively with other students in a structured way, as their roles in relation to general orientation are specific and allocated.

While most universities generally encourage new Australia Awards scholars to participate in general orientation, the scholars may not participate, perceiving that they 'have already done it'. Swinburne's initiative does not leave the participation of the scholars in general orientation to chance, instead creating specific tasks and responsibilities for scholars at specific places, therefore greatly increasing their opportunities to meet and engage with other students who are not part of the Australia Awards program.

*Information provided by Desma Smith, Swinburne University*





# The on-award phase



## Introductory Academic Program (IAP)

The Introductory Academic Program (IAP) is an institution-based mandatory classroom activity intended to prepare scholars for academic study at the institution, through enhancing their ability to meet the demands of their studies and consequently maximising the likelihood of completing their course by the Scholarship completion date. It may include English language training if required.

The IAP provides: detailed information about course aims, objectives, content and requirements; explanations of the different teaching and learning methods used and introduces scholars to the self-directed study style; basic skills in critical thinking, evaluation and reflection, academic reading, editing and proofreading, referencing and citation to prepare scholars for reading, writing and research tasks.

The IAP is a key introduction for commencing Australia Awards scholars. The 2019 Australia Awards Scholarship Policy Handbook provides specific guidance on the expectations of the IAP. Greater flexibility is now available to academic institutions to allow for the IAP to be delivered collaboratively between two or more institutions.

Universities with small numbers of commencing Australia Awards scholars, and/or those in regional areas, may choose a collaborative option for delivery of the IAP. The benefits are that commencing Australia Awards scholars have the opportunity to participate in a larger IAP group than would otherwise be the case, increasing the possibility of meaningful connections, networking and collaboration with other scholars and academics.

*Many Introductory Academic Programs now include information about Indigenous Australian cultures.*

## Good practice example:

In 2017, La Trobe University and Swinburne University, both in metropolitan Melbourne, collaborated for the first time to deliver a joint Introductory Academic Program (IAP) to their commencing Australia Awards scholars. The program is held at the La Trobe Bundoora campus which offers accommodation for La Trobe's scholars located at regional campuses.

The joint program, which has continued in 2018 and 2019, enables Australia Awards scholars to participate in a larger IAP group than would otherwise be the case if conducted by their home institution alone, increasing the possibility of meaningful connections, networking and collaboration with each other and with participating academics. The content of the IAP is deliberately focussed on generic academic and research skills so that it is equally relevant to both groups of scholars.

For Swinburne University, the joint IAP has served to orient scholars to the city of Melbourne as they go off campus for the IAP, yet their sense of belonging to Swinburne is reinforced by spending allocated days on their home campus at Swinburne, undertaking library familiarisation and orientation to specific Swinburne support services.

Using a shared-funding model, the joint IAP is a cost-effective option for both universities, providing economies of scale to offer a range of activities in the IAP which would not be possible with smaller numbers of scholars participating.

Where applicable, this model enriches the scholar experience of the IAP by allowing participation with a critical mass of scholars in each IAP program

*Information provided by Joanna Shaw (La Trobe University) and Desma Smith (Swinburne University)*

# The on-award phase



## Linkages plan

The Linkages plan is designed to support scholars in charting and tracking their participation in on-award enrichment activities and to show how this contributes to development outcomes in their home country. The plan should reflect the goals of each scholar for their return to home country.

Preparation commences at the selection stage when applicants will be asked to identify how they will put their Award to use in the long-term to support their country's development priorities.

Each scholar will be encouraged to develop her or his own Linkages plan and to provide evidence of their on-award enrichment throughout their time in Australia.

These plans may be informal—they may be as simple as personal notes and ideas kept by the scholar.

The option of a more structured form of planning is explained further in the Guide for Scholars.

## Good practice example:

Ms Thi Thanh Thien Nguyen completed the Master of Social Work at Flinders University in 2018 and is now employed on a project in Vietnam which directly arose from the connections she established while living in Australia.

As a student with a disability with a strong interest in gender issues, Thien undertook a Social Work placement with the Gender Consortium at Flinders University. During the placement, she worked as a Social Welfare Support Officer for the Gender Consortium when it conducted an Australia Awards Fellowship program in Australia focussing on Women and Leadership in the Lao PDR. While undertaking her scholarship in Australia, Thien also offered her services as a volunteer to a range of organisations. Volunteer work included working at short-term community events and a more significant ongoing commitment to the Holiday Explorer program, a not-for-profit organisation providing holidays for adults with intellectual disabilities.

Thien also established and ran a disability club for international students at Flinders. In December 2018 she participated in a three-week work experience program (AEWEN) with the SA Government working on an assignment for Study Adelaide.

Thien's commitment and energy displayed in the activities she undertook in Australia, together with her academic qualification, led to her winning a one-year paid contract with the Gender Consortium to deliver an Australia Awards Short Course (in Vietnam and Australia) titled 'The Women in Leadership Journey'.

The course is being delivered in a partnership between the Gender Consortium and the prestigious Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics in Vietnam. Thien's role as Project Officer commenced in January 2019 and will involve working with 20 female Vietnamese emerging leaders over 10 months.



This example captures Thien's proactive, well-planned engagement in an Australian work placement, leading to lasting professional connections and results in her home country, Vietnam.

*Information provided by Thien Nguyen (alumna) and Cara Ellickson (Director of Gender Consortium at Flinders University).*



# The on-award phase



## State based events

Australia Awards events are held in each capital city offering scholars the opportunity to connect with the Australian Government and their future Alumni networks.

Included in the guest list will be academics and representatives from the private and public sector to support networking goals.

Numerous state based activities are organised by institutions and other state and territory organisations. These activities offer newly commencing scholars networking opportunities which cross institutional and nationality borders.

### Good practice example:

The Victorian universities collaborate to arrange a welcome event for newly-arrived Australia Awards scholars in the greater Melbourne area. The event is a collaborative effort of the Student Contact Officer in each of the universities and involves sharing food, networking and exchange of information.

The events have included a picnic in the Treasury Gardens in February and, in winter, the event has been held at a football match at the MCG, an iconic Melbourne venue, with tickets provided by the AFL and City of Melbourne, profiling the Australia Awards group. The key focus of the collaborative welcome event is to assist Australia Awards scholars to meet other scholars outside their home institutions and outside their country or regional groups.

*Information provided by Joanna Shaw, La Trobe University.*



# The on-award phase



## Ongoing on-award enrichment activities

There are three tiers of participation during the on-award study period, allowing scholars to engage at a level that suits their individual interests and availability:

1. Core foundation activities encourage successful study habits and meaningful engagement with the Australian community paving the way for a positive stay in Australia
2. Elective activities offer a wide range of additional professional skills development and networking for scholars to tailor their own linkages experience
3. Targeted activities are offered to select scholars identified as highly motivated and influential. Activities support country/ regional and thematic policy priorities

Each scholar will be given information and support to help plan how they will build the relevant skills, knowledge and networks to help them contribute to the development of their home country.

Each scholar to think more deeply about maximising their time in Australia and go beyond the requirements to undertake their academic programs successfully.

## Good practice example:

Australia Awards scholars in the South and West Asia region come from Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

In 2018, Australia Awards scholars from this group participated in the South and West Asia Regional Forum, the first targeted Linkage activity of its kind to build regional networks, enhance understanding of Australian systems, and plan for return to their home countries.

The objectives were to:

1. foster thinking on the development of future linkages between the South and West Asia region and Australia, with emphasis on scholars supporting public and economic diplomacy
2. provide a professional development opportunity for scholars, through building networks and enhancing their understanding of Australian policies and practices
3. better enable scholars to contribute to national development in their home country.



Forum participation was competitive: 53 participants were selected from 128 submissions. The organisers engaged with the relevant diplomatic missions, with a high representation of Heads of Missions attending the event. Key speakers included a former Australian High Commissioner in Ghana, and the CEO of Austrade.

The Forum also included 12 presentations from the scholar groups who had worked together for this event. An expanded program will be offered in 2019 to enable more scholars to participate.

*Information provided by Kerrie Lord, Coordinator On-Award Engagement, Australia Awards South and West Asia.*



### Good practice example:

#### Global Skills Passport for Australia Awards Scholars from Indonesia

The Australia Awards in Indonesia (AAI) program are piloting a micro-credentialing app developed by Australian edtech startup Practera—the Global Skills Passport.

The Global Skills Passport is a digital tool that allows scholars to capture, monitor and showcase their on-award journey, specifically their linkages to Australia. The app focuses on skills and competencies in six key areas: service oriented, problem solver, collaborative, innovative, culturally conscious and leader. It allows scholars to populate a digital portfolio which can be shared with anyone.

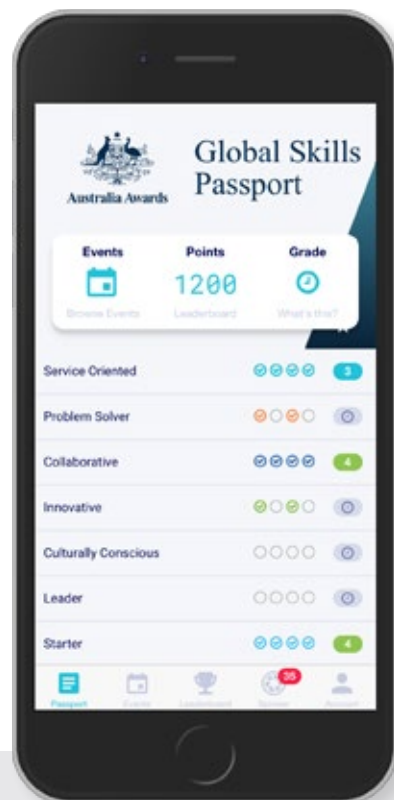
The app allows AAI to engage directly with scholars, communicating upcoming events and/or opportunities, encouraging participation and generating enthusiasm towards maximising their on-award journey.

The app was rolled out to a pilot group of 400 scholars in January 2019. Six months after launch, 92% of scholars have registered on the system, and approximately 20% had submitted a

piece of evidence without any further intervention. This significantly exceeded the pilot year goals.

**Australia Awards Demo video:** <https://vimeo.com/351322999/8bc3435b49>

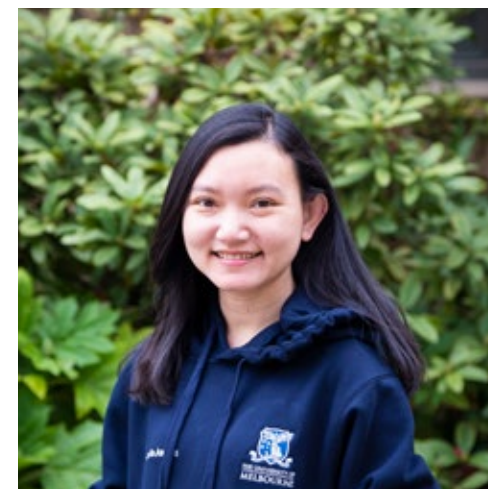
*Information from Emily Serong,  
In-Australia Engagement Adviser,  
Australia Awards in Indonesia.*



### Good practice example:

The Australia Awards Scholars Club (AASC) at the University of Melbourne organises social and cultural events for awardees and their families, gives peer support, and provides networking opportunities.

The AASC is completely student run. The University subsidises their activities, in recognition of their role in providing opportunities for awardees to engage with and contribute to their communities, and contributing to awardees' wellbeing by providing them and their families with an opportunity to connect socially.



***'Being part of the committee has made my journey in Australia more remarkable and rewarding. I enjoy working with the committee and connecting people; I'm thrilled to see the enjoyment of fellow awardees with their friends and families during our activities.'***

*Borany Bon  
Social Engagement Coordinator*

### Good practice example:

#### Australia Awards Seminar Series

A Study NSW Project

#### Enhancing linkages with the NSW Government

The Australia Awards Seminar Series was launched on 8 July 2019 at NSW Parliament House. Australia Awards scholars from Indonesia, Philippines, Cambodia and Papua New Guinea attended, along with representatives from the NSW Government, DFAT, Australia Awards in Indonesia and the Philippines Embassy.

Scholars toured NSW Parliament House and attended the first seminar of the series delivered by the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Premier's Priorities Unit. It was a highly engaging look at the implementation of the Premier's government priorities.

Scholars commented that the seminar allowed them to gain new insights into the NSW Government's program delivery and provided an opportunity to network with scholars from other countries and universities.

Scholars identified similarities and differences between the NSW Government and the state governments in their home countries, and learnt the importance of data evaluation being utilised by government.

The Australia Awards Seminar Series is designed to foster stronger links between NSW Government and Australia Awards scholars providing an opportunity to better understand the NSW public sector priorities and operations.

The series comprised five seminars:

- implementation of the Premier's government priorities—Department of Premier and Cabinet
- balancing the infrastructure needs of NSW to create liveable spaces and minimise environmental impacts—Infrastructure NSW
- NSW's healthcare system and the challenges in continuing to improve health outcomes for patients while maintaining a sustainable, efficient and affordable health system
- starts ups, and
- the environment in NSW.

### Good practice example:

#### Women in Leadership On-award Development Workshop

Australia Awards Cambodia delivered the first Women in Leadership On-Award Development Workshop in April 2019.

The workshop helps advance social inclusion and women's professional participation and leadership, and prepares women scholars for their transition back to Cambodia and the resumption of their careers. It also links into an extensive Women in Leadership Program: a seven month program of workshops, activities and mentoring offered to alumni in Cambodia within the first few years of their return from Australia.



Sixteen women engaged in a series of interactive activities and learning sessions over three days covering topics related to gender and leadership, self-awareness and self-management, and interpersonal and coaching skills.

Namadji-Ngambri alodial elder Mingku Shane Mortimer led a ceremony that included a smoking circle and storytelling. Mingku explained the significance of the country on which the workshop was being conducted, and aboriginal history and culture.

The workshop also included a guided tour of Parliament House, in Canberra, followed by an informal networking reception at Old Parliament House.

***'In that peaceful environment, it allowed me to think and reflect back what I have done well and what should I have improved regarding my academic performance and coming up with actionable plans for my future career after graduation from Australia. Attending this workshop, it did not only enhance my gender and leadership knowledge and networking skills, but I also got a chance to experience how local people live their life.'***

The participant group in the foyer of Parliament House, Canberra



## Good practice example:

### Participation in the LIVE Projects Program 2019/20

Six Australia Awards Cambodia scholars participated in the LIVE Projects Program 2019/20. An initiative of the Victorian Government through Study Melbourne, and managed by experiential learning technology company, Practera.

LIVE Projects includes a three-week program of learning and activities designed to connect international students with employers, and deliver a real project to Victorian Government agencies, business and community organisations.

Scholars worked in small teams, supported by an industry mentor to solve a real business problem and to deliver their projects. Clients ranged from start-ups, established SMEs and large enterprises, Victorian Government agencies and community and not-for-profit organisations.

Some of the projects included:

- Designing a marketing tool for a company producing a software platform to promote good mental health & wellbeing
- Creating a new media strategy for an organisation working in Indigenous education
- Completing a competitor analysis for New Zealand Corporate Meetings and incentives market
- Creating a new market entry strategy for an online community sharing platform, and
- Designing a marketing and communications strategy for an arts centre.

Scholars reported an improvement in their problem solving, time management, communication and collaboration skills as a result of participating in the LIVE Project.



Syvane Thol (middle) with her team members and mentor

Lily Chea who is studying a Master of Environment and Sustainability at Monash University said ***'I think it is a golden opportunity that I could join this project, because I am able to learn not only about working environment in Australia, but also I could gain new skillsets professionally.'***

Syvane Thol who is studying a Master of International Business at the University of Melbourne highly recommends it to other Australia Awards scholars.

***'From my perspective, this is a wonderful chance to put theory into practice by delivering a solution to a real business case. This project is a great opportunity for me to experience working on a consulting project, as well as, developing numerous soft skills such as problem-solving, analytical, presentation and teamwork. It was the most valuable experience I have had on AAS on-award enrichment program in a collaboration of Australia Awards Cambodia with Study Melbourne.'***

## Good practice example:

### Women's Leadership Initiative

To promote women's leadership through a range of learning, networking and development opportunities to Australia Awards scholars from the Pacific.

The Australia Awards Women's Leadership Initiative (WLI) is a targeted five-year program to promote women's leadership and build a future generation of women leaders in the Pacific region.

It delivers a range of learning, networking and development opportunities to Australia Awards scholars from the Pacific who are studying at Australian universities and institutions.

The WLI helps scholars build their skills, networks and readiness to take on leadership roles in their workplaces, communities and countries.

It also aims to forge links between women leaders in the Pacific and Australia, deepening Australia's relationships with its Pacific neighbours.

This photo shows Samoa's Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon. Fiame Naomi Mata'afa, as the special guest speaker at a Pacific Networking Breakfast in Melbourne in June 2019. More than 50 guests were rewarded by a candid 'question and answer' session with the Hon. Fiame.



## Good practice example:

### Professional Linkages Workshop

The Australia Awards Indonesia (AAI) Professional Linkages Workshops are fun and interactive, designed to assist commencing scholars to establish a professional network in Australia. Activities range from how to navigate a room at a networking event to developing an effective 'elevator pitch'. AAI scholar feedback indicates that these activities help to develop the self-confidence and motivation to start establishing a professional network.

The Professional Linkages Workshop is delivered in conjunction with the AAI Introduction to On Award Enrichment Workshop and together these activities are designed to assist the commencing AAI scholar to explore opportunities for professional engagement outside university life.

A comment from the 2018 Workshops:

***'Both Workshops provided me with a great start to my time in Australia and I will definitely explore the professional network aligned to my studies and work background in Indonesia.'***





# The on-award phase



## Return home and reintegration

This Guide aims to strengthen reintegration outcomes.

Active participation in on-award engagement should support scholars' capacity to contribute to development priorities at home. Reintegration should therefore form an integral component of the Australia Awards rather than a component only considered at the end of a scholar's time in Australia. This means that the long-term development objectives of the Australia Awards should be explicitly and intentionally built into the scaffolding of the scholarship at all stages.

The importance of acquiring soft skills and extending professional networks while in Australia should be stressed from the start of the scholarship journey.

As outlined in the scholar journey section of the Guide, it should be addressed during selection; introduced at pre-departure where scholars should be requested to do an initial scan of potentially-relevant linkage activities and develop their expectations in readiness for arrival; refreshed as part of the Introductory Academic Program (IAP); and where possible revisited before scholars return home.

Best practice suggests that all scholars should be provided with preparation for returning home sessions which may include information sessions or activities covering:

- reverse culture shock and managing expectations
- emotional intelligence
- articulating new skills once back in the home country
- reviewing and updating Linkages Plans with a view to sustainability.



**Photo credit:** John Eddy Sekirime from Uganda, taken at the Adelaide Stay Connected workshop on 10 July 2019 (Eddy is James Makula's carer. James is studying a Master of International Trade and Development at the University of Adelaide and Eddy accompanied James to the workshop as his carer.)

## Good practice example:

### Australia Awards—Africa

The Australia Awards—Africa Stay Connected workshops are delivered annually to scholars at the end of their first semester. The workshops encourage Australia Awards scholars to share their experiences, to learn from one another and to discuss good practice models that enhance their skills in networking and building sustainable connections.

Scholars design individual networking and linkages plans, including specific targets, content and timelines. They also revisit and refine their Reintegration Action Plans (RAPs) to ensure that the messaging of their RAPs is clear and a valuable communication asset.

Scholar testimonial:

***'The Stay Connected workshop was a very thoughtful and engaging session. It made me give my Reintegration Action Plan (RAP) priority. The session I found particularly useful was 'Building Linkages and Networks'. It made me realise the need to seek out linkages, especially with the South Australia Office of Women! I had a great time meeting other scholars from South Australia and learning more about Australian culture.'***

*Ijeoma Nkeiru Duru, Nigeria, Master of International Development, Flinders University*

*Information from Anthea Edmunds, On-Award Manager, Australia Awards—Africa*

# The post-award phase



## Global alumni activities

Alumni contribute in many ways to Australia's influence and standing in our region and globally. The [Australia Global Alumni Engagement Strategy](#) identifies Australia's diverse and talented alumni as a vital diplomatic asset.

Enrichment and connections beyond the end of the scholarship provide key opportunities to connect alumni to each other and to Australia, both face-to-face and using virtual networks.

Institutions are encouraged to update their system to tag Australia Awards scholars as so that this status follows them through to their alumni database entry. The Australian Universities Alumni Professionals Group could assist in this endeavour.

Alumni activities may be offered on a competitive basis and used to illustrate the long-term benefits of engaging actively with Linkages.

The Champions for the Environment workshop in Bhutan in November 2018 is an example of ongoing alumni benefits which may be used to illustrate the long-term potential benefits of on-award engagement.



## Good practice example:

Throughout 2018, around 50 Australia Awards alumni working in 14 teams from seven countries in South and West Asia worked as champions for the environment and climate action. They received grants to implement environmental and climate-action projects in their home countries.

Each alumni team had access to an environmental protection innovation specialist as a mentor to help shape their project. The solutions put forward were diverse and ranged from an all-women, renewable-energy boot-camp in Pakistan, to an environmental curriculum development in Sri Lanka and to a campaign against illegal stone extraction in Bangladesh.

In November 2018, the teams gathered in Thimphu, Bhutan for professional development sessions to strengthen their capability to tackle environmental issues and to communicate effectively the need for climate action.

The alumni exhibited their innovations, honed their presentation skills, and heard valuable insights from climate action specialists in Bhutan.

The event culminated in a competitive pitch with the first three placed teams receiving additional grant funds to expand their projects. The winning teams will receive additional professional development support and will be trained to become Climate Reality Leaders.

*Information from Rod Sollesta, Deputy Team Leader, Australia Awards South and West Asia.*



# The post-award phase



## Good practice example:

“Papua New Guinea and Australia’s dynamic partnership and the enduring benefits of education are on show this week at a reintegration workshop for recent graduates of the prestigious Australia Awards Scholarships program.

The 52 graduates are taking part in the workshop in Port Moresby from 20–21 June to deepen links with other alumni and future employers and connect with the PNG Australia Alumni Association (PNGAAA), which will continue to support them into the future.

Participants completed studies in Australia late 2018 and early 2019 in priority sectors such as health, education and governance.

The workshop’s key aims are to further develop ethical leadership capabilities and support the leadership role Australia Awards Alumni can play in Papua New Guinea’s economic and social development.

‘You are the change makers. You are the people with the knowledge and skills to bring positive change to the people of your great country, in all of the sectors you work in,’ Minister-Counsellor Mr Egan said.”

*Press release by Australian High Commission, Port Moresby.*



# Roles for delivery partners



## Academic institutions

- support across the scholar journey, including arrival and settling in, accommodation, Introductory Academic Program, general orientation, and ongoing enrichment opportunities during the in-Australia study period
- scholarship management services according to contracts, including pastoral care for scholars by Student Contact Officers and others
- active promotion and communication of on-award enrichment opportunities, including through a focal point if possible, and institution website and other channels
- direct delivery and active collaboration with partner organisations to deliver high quality activities for a broad range of scholars, opening up opportunities to Australia Awards scholars beyond your institution
- support employability skills for scholars through relevant work-integrated learning opportunities, either co-curricular or extra-curricular
- share information and best practice through national and state and territory-based fora.



## Managing contractors

- direct program responsibility for delivering a range of foundational, elective and targeted activities across the scholar journey, including leadership, professional development and networking skills
- active collaboration with partner organisations to deliver high quality activities and experiences for scholars
- consider sharing and collaboration opportunities across programs, where possible, including with other managing contractors, to extend opportunities to other country and regional cohorts
- continue to share good practice information and lessons learned across country and regional programs.



## Public sector

- Commonwealth, state and territory government departments and institutions engage with Australia Awards scholars in multiple ways
- public sector organisations are encouraged to continue to provide high quality enrichment opportunities for scholars to learn, share knowledge and build connections, in cooperation with DFAT and other delivery partners.



## Private sector

- increase opportunities for Australia Awards scholars to engage and develop formal and informal links with the private sector, leveraging expertise, connections and creativity for mutual benefit
- enhance professional development and connections through mentoring, work attachments, placements and experience in Australia
- look at role private sector can play in bringing Australian knowledge, ideas, capabilities to address development challenges
- consider opportunities to share knowledge and information from business-based alumni in their home countries, including through DFAT posts.
- identify a range of opportunities to cooperate and network and collaborate, through informal arrangements and partnerships, such as business association membership and attending business conferences.





### City and state-based international education promotion offices

- include state and city-based information for international students in pre-departure information kits provided by academic institutions
- consider opening up and re-framing existing activities for international students to target Australia Awards scholars and promote through websites
- consider Australia Awards-specific events in local communities, such as town hall welcomes, work experience and other networking opportunities
- facilitate collaboration with local tertiary institutions, businesses and public organisations to engage Australia Awards scholars.



### Community sector organisations, cultural organisations and NGOs

- in cooperation with DFAT and delivery partners, offer enrichment experiences to forge local relationships and extend knowledge horizons for Australia Awards scholars and their families
- increase engagement with Indigenous communities around Australia.



### DFAT

- administration of the Australia Awards through the Scholarships and Alumni Branch, country and regional programs, posts, and state and territory offices
- provide overarching strategic direction and diplomatic leverage in foreign policy to promote development and people-to-people outcomes
- share information and promote opportunities for engagement through the DFAT website and other channels
- target selection of priority candidates and provide a consistent pre-departure experience to new scholars
- identify and celebrate highly influential and proactive scholars and alumni who harness their personal and professional skills and connections
- use the Department's influence to connect scholars with Ministers, travelling dignitaries and delegations, and related opportunities



- connect scholars with DFAT, the Australian Government, fellow scholars and alumni, the private sector and people-to-people initiatives in Australia and their home countries
- support returned scholars to actively engage in alumni activities to encourage enduring links with Australia
- facilitate Linkages dialogue with delivery partners.

# For further guidance and information

## The Australia Awards Linkages Framework Overview

This overview outlines the Australian Government's ambition to enhance the Australia Awards on-award engagement experience and ensure a more coordinated approach.



## The Australia Awards Linkages Guide for Scholars

This Guide will help scholars get the most out of their Australia Award experience. It covers everything from the importance of professional organisations to what to do about work experience.

## The Australia Awards website





