

**Australian Government****Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

## BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY NOTE – PACIFIC CONNECT PILOT

DFAT proposes to issue a Request for Tender in January 2017 for a two-year pilot *Pacific Connect* program to strengthen linkages between Australian and Pacific Island governments, business and community groups.

The program will aim to foster continuing partnerships to develop leadership and dialogue on common challenges.

We wish to encourage greater dialogue and long-term linkages as we recognise that leadership in the Pacific is manifested through both formal and informal institutions. Governments play a central role in meeting the challenge of sustainable development, but the actions of community leaders and business representatives are also critical.

The *Pacific Connect* Request for Tender will not be prescriptive. DFAT will call on interested parties to consider innovative ways that a *Pacific Connect* pilot program could foster interpersonal relationships, build good-will and develop a better understanding among Pacific leaders of policies, institutions and business processes that have proven effective.


We ask potential tenderers to consider how to match current or emerging Pacific leaders – across government, business, public service, sport, arts and culture, church and community sectors – to Australian leaders to forge long-lasting personal connections and mutually beneficial relationships. This could take place through targeted visits to Australia by Pacific representatives, participation in regional or local activities and interaction with existing government, professional and community organisations.

We aim for *Pacific Connect* participants to benefit from the relationships they build in Australia – both with Australians and with other Pacific participants – and discover new opportunities for engaging with Australian institutions and businesses.

We expect *Pacific Connect* to leverage and mobilise existing private and community sector support and participation as sources of technical expertise, host partners and networking opportunities. Proposals could build on existing relationships and connections, or establish new ways of engaging existing or emerging Pacific leaders in their fields. Proposals should consider how to sustain relationships over time, including through alumni networks and social media. We will also encourage new thinking on how to identify emerging leaders in the Pacific.

DFAT expects *Pacific Connect* to provide opportunities to promote the role of women in the Pacific as current and future leaders in their fields. Promoting gender equality in the Pacific, including in the areas of women's economic empowerment, women's leadership and reducing violence against women, is a priority for the Australian Government.

*Pacific Connect* will complement other DFAT-funded initiatives including the Special Visits Program, Pacific Leadership Program, Australia Awards, Fellowship Program and people-to-people linkages initiatives within the Papua New Guinea program. The successful tenderer of *Pacific Connect* will need to work closely with DFAT and our Embassies and High Commissions in the Pacific.



DFAT will review the pilot after 18 months to consider lessons learnt and may recommend changes to the scope and direction of the program, including in the context of DFAT-funded activities in other programs.

Potential tenders should consider whether they wish to bid as a part of a consortium with others and will need to build into proposals consideration of how Pacific Connect may merge with other programs in the future. Following consideration of the review of the pilot, such changes may include scaling up DFAT's financial commitment.

#### *Indicative budget*

*Pacific Connect* is scheduled for an initial term of two years (July 2017 to June 2019) with options to extend the contract for two further terms of three years each (July 2019 to June 2022; July 2022 to June 2025), exercisable at the discretion of DFAT.

	2017-18	2018-19	Total
Proposed allocated funding (AUD)	1,000,000	1,000,000	2,000,000
Estimated GST	100,000	100,000	200,000
Total	1,100,000	1,100,000	2,200,00

