



Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY NOTE – PACIFIC RESEARCH PROGRAM

DFAT proposes to invite grant applications in February 2017 for four-year *Pacific Research Program* to fund high-quality, policy-relevant research.

High-quality research strengthens the evidence base upon which sound policy-making rests. It is valuable for development policy-making by both the Government of Australia and its partner governments in the Pacific. But high-quality research on its own is not sufficient to shape sound policy-making. **Policy-relevant research needs to be effectively communicated to the policy-making community.** This requires leadership with the ability to exercise influence, and carefully planned communication strategies.

The Pacific Research Program will provide \$20 million over four years to fund high-quality, policy-relevant research and effective, influential communication of research findings. **Research undertaken through the program will focus on the intersection of politics, governance and power with the region's most pressing development challenges.** The geographic scope of the program will be the Pacific region as a whole, with Melanesia as an area of particular interest.

Access to high-quality Pacific research and analysis benefits both government and non-government organisations in Australia as well as governments, academic institutions, intergovernmental bodies and non-government organisations in the Pacific.

The next phase of Pacific research will need to build on DFAT's twenty-year investment in supporting scholarship and research on the region. The successful applicant must be able to deliver and disseminate research and analysis that deepens knowledge and understanding of the region, is policy-relevant and helps create an informed constituency for Australia's engagement.


DFAT will provide grant funding to a research institution (or consortium) to deliver the program. **The Program's research agenda will be independent of the Australian Government, but the relationship between DFAT and the research institution will be characterised by open, honest dialogue** to ensure that the program's research remains relevant to the needs of policy-makers in Australia and the Pacific region.

The research will need to be relevant to the contemporary issues facing the Pacific and stimulate innovative ideas and approaches on issues of particular interest to Australia, including on economic growth, Pacific politics and governance, private sector development, health, women's empowerment and social inclusion. The research would provide a further knowledge and evidence base for Australian policies in the region and build networks between universities, research institutes, and philanthropic, business and community groups with links to the Pacific.

The Pacific Research Program aims to contribute to the goal of economic development, poverty reduction, security and stability in the Pacific region. It will support that goal by contributing to sound policy-making by the Government of Australia and its partner governments, through the provision of relevant evidence, effectively communicated.

Four end-of-program outcomes will contribute to that goal:

- i. High-quality, policy-relevant research is used by policy-makers in Australia and in the Pacific region
- ii. High-quality, policy relevant research is used by other relevant stakeholders

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- iii. Increased capacity of Australian and Pacific Islander researchers to provide a robust evidence base for policy-making
 - iv. Greater knowledge of the Pacific region among the Australian community

Bidders will propose how they intend to allocate the grant funding to the various components of a research program in order to achieve the outcomes sought by DFAT. Proposals will indicate an allocation of the funds to the various costs involved such as staffing, operating costs, research costs, communication, events etc.