



Aus4Skills

Small Grants Fund Guidelines for Applicants

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Aus4Skills is an Aus4Vietnam Investment - managed by Coffey, a Tetra Tech company, on behalf of the Australian Government

Abbreviations

AAF	Australia Awards Fellowships
AAS	Australia Awards Scholarships
AAV	Australia Awards Vietnam
ACIAR	Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
SGF	Small Grants Fund
VGAC	Vietnamese Graduates from Australia Club
VIED	Vietnam International Education for Development
VAHRDP	Vietnam-Australia Human Resource Development Partnership

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1 INTRODUCTION

The alumni-based Small Grants Fund (SGF) is an element of the Alumni Engagement Strategy and Plan administered by Aus4Skills (formerly known as the Vietnam-Australia Human Resource Development Partnership (VAHRDP)). The SGF has been established to fund proposals from Vietnamese alumni of Australian tertiary education institutions.

These guidelines will apply for the second SGF round under Aus4Skills and may be revised subsequently.

2 CONTRIBUTING TO AUS4SKILLS PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Any Small Grants activity must contribute to one or more of the following three Aus4Skills Program Outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Male and female alumni use new skills and knowledge to make positive contributions to selected priority areas
- Outcome 2: Stronger workplace enabling environments for skills utilisation in selected priority areas
- Outcome 3: Australia and Vietnam have stronger, sustainable links in selected sectors/agencies

The **selected priority areas/sectors** for this round of Small Grants are:

- **Governance and Economic Growth** (economics, competition, international trade, public policy, public finance management, corporate finance, law to support economic integration, entrepreneurship and innovation)
- **Transport** (project management and financing, traffic forecasting, transport engineering, social and environmental safeguards, urban transport planning and management, transport master planning, public-private partnership, transport economics, road safety and audit)
- **Water and sanitation** (water management, water engineering, water quality and supply systems, water and waste water)
- **Education** (education management, vocational education management)
- **Gender Equality** (gender and development, women's studies)
- **Agriculture and Rural Development** (agribusiness, agricultural economics, rural development, sustainable tourism management)
- **Regional Stability and Human Rights** (international law, international human rights law)
- Disability
- **Climate Change**

Additional principles applied in selection of successful small grant proposals are that:

- Proposals must deliver broad-based effects or outcomes (i.e. they must not just be focused on individual benefits to an alumnus or small group of alumni).
- Proposals must result in an on-going delivery of benefits beyond grant completion.
- Proposals must address the issues of gender equality, disability inclusion and the inclusion of the rural disadvantaged including disadvantaged ethnic minority communities.

- Proposals must be written in English. If a supporting document is not in English, a translation should be submitted together with the original.
- Proposals must be written and submitted by applicants unless applicants are persons with disability whose health condition does not allow them to write and submit.
- Proposals will be given priority if they deliver outcomes specifically relevant to Program Outcome 2: *Stronger workplace enabling environments for skills utilization in selected priority areas*.
- Applicants must not be named in more than one proposal in any single SGF round.
- Applicants must not have an ongoing or un-acquitted small grant (i.e. grants cannot be for overlapping periods).
- Successful applicants will be required to sign a Grant Agreement before a grant is awarded, which includes mandatory financial and progress reporting requirements.
- Applicants whose study in Australia was not funded under an Australia Award or Vietnamese Government scholarship must provide evidence of their Australian qualification.

Note: Alumni who have previously received an SGF grant may also be eligible for follow-on grants provided the proposed activity is a relevant follow-on from the alumni's previous grant activity.

3 ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The following categories of activities are eligible for SGF funding:

- **Category 1.** Development and conduct of a training course, workshop, seminar or conference.
N.B. proposals merely to attend one of the above are not eligible.
- **Category 2.** Applied Research
N.B. This category may include presentation of papers or posters of which an alumnus is a lead author at industry or academic fora in Australia only.
- **Category 3.** Organisational and Institutional Change
N.B. This category includes scope for innovative activities promoting organisational and institutional change (that are not covered under the first two categories), especially activities which improve the workplace enabling environment, in particular for women.

Examples of relevant results of small grant activities might include (but are not limited to):

- Sustainable improvements to gender equality, disability and social inclusion in an organisation, professional field or community
- Improved capability of alumni and their work units to apply new or improved professional approaches
- Improved policy within alumni work units
- Improved ongoing leadership opportunities for alumni, especially women
- Improved organisational systems, procedures or policies
- Improved teaching and learning practice in alumni work units
- Improved research practice in alumni work units
- Strengthened productivity of professional networks of alumni
- New or improved productive linkages between Vietnam and Australia
- Improved social and economic conditions among disadvantaged, vulnerable groups or in local communities
- Improved private sector development
- Positive contributions to emerging issues identified by the Australian Embassy

4 APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

1. All Vietnamese who have completed their studies in an Australian education institution through the Australia Awards, including the Australia Awards Scholarships, the Australia Awards Fellowships, the Endeavour Scholarships and Fellowships, and the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) Scholarships.
2. Vietnamese alumni who have completed their studies in an Australian education institution through Vietnamese Government scholarships.
3. Vietnamese alumni who have self-funded their studies or received other scholarship support and who have completed post-graduate studies at an Australian education institution in Australia or Vietnam.

Up to 10% of the SGF funds each funding round is available for this third category.

4. Professional Groups established under the Australia Alumni in Vietnam Strategy.

5 DURATION OF GRANT IMPLEMENTATION

The maximum duration for implementing a grant activity is 12 months. Grant implementation should commence within 3 months of the notification of grant approval.

Aus4Skills approval must be obtained by the grantee in case of a delay in implementation. Requests to delay implementation must be accompanied by justifiable reason(s) for the delay, the proposed new start date (but should be within 6 months of notification of the grant approval) and the proposed new implementation timelines.

Requests to extend the timeframe will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Failure to commence by the agreed start date without valid justification may result in the withdrawal of the grant.

6 FUNDING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The value of a grant is based on the following table.

Number of alumni applicants	Maximum Grant
One or two alumni	VND 166 million
Three alumni	VND 249 million
4 alumni and more	VND 332 million
Australia Alumni Professional Groups established under the Australian Alumni in Vietnam Strategy	VND 332 million

Any activity that has the involvement of an alumni team must clearly demonstrate that it is a team activity with specified roles for each alumnus. It should show the added value in submitting a team proposal as compared to individual submissions.

Consideration may be given to a higher amount for **Professional Groups** based on the merits of the proposal and its contribution to the Strategy's objectives.

If for any reason the proposed activity or any activities included in the proposal cannot proceed as originally approved, Aus4Skills must be informed immediately. In such situations, any unexpended funds must be returned to Aus4Skills.

Grants will be disbursed by bank transfer in Vietnamese dong (VND). Grants usually are disbursed over several payments in response to Funds Requests received from grant awardees based on the following principles:

1. Up to 50% of total approved funds during the 1st disbursement, except for presentation at international conferences.
2. 1st disbursement of funding presentation at international conferences may be up to 80% of the approved budget.
3. Disbursement of the outstanding grants subject to approval of supporting documents for subsequent fund request forms

In special cases, the total grant amount may be given upfront in one disbursement as appropriately determined by Aus4Skills.

Grantees are required to acquit all grants received on scheduled acquittal dates by submitting a Financial Acquittal Report. This must be accompanied by official MOF receipts for approved items as appropriate.

Non eligible items for financial support

Please note that the following budget items are not eligible for financial support under the SGF:

- Payments to non-Vietnamese nationals for services rendered.
- Fees/salaries for alumni for any work/tasks carried out by alumni who submit proposals.
- Office equipment such as computers, photocopiers, cameras and mobile phones.
- Any personal items not relevant to the implementation of the SGF-funded activity.

Fraud

Note carefully that Aus4Skills has a zero-tolerance policy on fraud. Where DFAT or Aus4Skills have reasonable concerns about how the grantee(s) manage the grants, Aus4Skills or DFAT will require explanation and additional supporting documentation. If this does not alleviate their concerns, Aus4Skills or DFAT may require the grantee to undertake an independent financial audit.

Aus4Skills Equity of Access Fund

For alumni with disability and rural disadvantaged alumni (including rural disadvantaged ethnic minority alumni) wishing to participate in the SGF or already implementing an SGF activity, adjustments to enable equal participation in the SGF may be provided through the Aus4Skills Equity of Access Fund. More information on the Equity of Access Fund can be found at equity@australiaawardsvietnam.org.

7 APPLICATION, APPRAISAL AND APPROVAL PROCESS

The closing dates for submission of proposals will be publicised on the [Australia Awards Vietnam website](http://www.australiaawardsvietnam.org) (www.australiaawardsvietnam.org), Aus4Skills Facebook page and LinkedIn Alumni Page. Emails will be sent to the alumni registered on the Aus4Skills database. The Department of Education and Training at the Embassy, Vietnam International Education for Development (VIED), the Vietnamese Graduates from Australia Club (VGAC) and representatives of Australian institutions in Vietnam will be informed of the closing dates of each round.

Proposals to present papers at business and academic fora in Australia may be submitted outside of the round, provided that the time for registration, submission of abstracts or the timing of the fora does not fit into the regular submission and approval process. However, to ensure balance among types of activities to be funded, total available funds for such activities between rounds would not exceed 20% of the SGF annual budget.

Proposals should be submitted online at the SmartyGrant system at <https://vietnam.smartygrants.com.au/SGFRound2>

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria that will be used in evaluating proposals are as follows. While it is recognised that specific criteria may be more or less applicable to any particular proposal, you should complete the proposal template as fully as you are able.

Evaluation Criteria	Weighted Percentage
Strategic purpose	20 (30 for conferences)
Gender, disability and social inclusion	15
Ownership and sustainability	20 (30 for conferences)
Methodology	20 (0 for conferences)
Financial and risk management	15
M&E	10

Proposals will be approved on a competitive basis by the Australian Embassy.

The applicant(s) may be requested by Aus4Skills to provide additional information and to resubmit the proposal. Proposals can be resubmitted a maximum of two times.

Applicants may also be requested to attend an interview by Aus4Skills to verify the proposal details and implementation arrangements.

All unsuccessful applicants will be informed of the reasons for their proposal's non-approval. Decisions will be considered final and no further negotiations on unapproved proposals will be undertaken.

8 SUPPORT FOR ALUMNI

Aus4Skills will provide support for alumni in preparing SGF proposals and managing SGF activities as deemed feasible. This support will normally take the form of training workshops in Hanoi and HCM City conducted by Aus4Skills approximately 4 weeks before the submission closing date and will include capacity building on mainstreaming gender, disability and social inclusion and M&E. At Aus4Skills discretion, an online mode of training such as a video may be conducted for those not able to attend the face-to-face sessions in Hanoi and HCM City.

In addition, following the Embassy approval of grants, Aus4Skills will conduct a face-to-face briefing session on financial management and reporting in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. An online mode of training such as a video may be conducted for those not able to attend the face-to-face sessions in Hanoi and HCM City.

9 RECOGNITION OF SUCCESSFUL GRANT COMPLETION

When a grant has been successfully implemented and both the completion and final financial reports have been received, a Certificate of Grant Completion will be awarded to the respective alumnus.

10 GRANT PROMOTION AND AUSTRALIAN IDENTITY

Aus4Skills promotion of the SGF will include publicising successful outcomes of grant activities on the [Australia Awards Vietnam website](#), the Aus4Skills website, [Aus4Skills Facebook](#) and in other media channels as appropriate.

Grantees will be asked to provide suitable photographs, video footage and other relevant materials for Aus4Skills promotion activities. Recipients of grants are encouraged to publicise the grants through their own networks.

Grantees are requested to acknowledge the Australian Government's support in an appropriate way in their publications, reports, at training courses and workshops and in presentations at conferences by using the disclaimer provided below (in both English and Vietnamese).

Disclaimer

This report/research/publication is supported by the Australian Government. The opinions expressed in this report/research/publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Government.

Tuyên bố miễn trừ trách nhiệm

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Grantees should contact Aus4Skills for appropriate specific guidance for using the Australian Government [logo](#) in their communication materials prior to publications or public presentations.

11 FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information can be obtained from the Aus4Skills at:

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