



Australia Awards

Australia Awards South and West Asia

Alumni Innovation Challenge
Regional Alumni Workshop and
Small Grants Scheme

Application Guidelines

March 2017



Introduction

Australia Awards South and West Asia conducts one Regional Alumni Workshop each year. Each workshop is intended to be uniquely conceived to focus either on a particular sector or on participants from a particular interest group. This will be the third such workshop that the Program has organised, after the Women in Leadership Workshop in Colombo in November 2015, and the Inclusive Education Workshop in Kathmandu in November 2016.

Regional Alumni Workshops present an opportunity for alumni to present their work, share their experiences with peers formally and informally, and build and strengthen relevant professional networks across the region. This extends the alumni experience beyond the national level and brings an enhanced professional development aspect to alumni engagement.

Alumni Innovation Challenge

Workshop Dates:	Sunday 29 th October to Thursday 2 nd November 2017
Location:	Dhaka, Bangladesh
Applications Dates:	Monday 20 th March to Wednesday 19 th April 2017

The Australia Awards South and West Asia Alumni Innovation Challenge is designed to connect, mobilise and celebrate development innovators amongst the Australia Awards alumni in the region.

Through this activity, Australia Awards alumni from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are invited to submit proposals to receive a small grant with which to pilot a development innovation in any Australian Government priority area. The innovation could be related to advocacy, development and/or implementation of new practices, or new processes, approaches or technologies that strengthen existing systems. Applications can be from individuals or groups of Australia Awards alumni. Applications from groups comprising alumni from different South and West Asian countries will be considered favourably. Each grant will be worth a maximum of AUD 3,000. Up to five proposals from each country will receive a grant – making a potential total of 35 innovations being piloted.

The Program has partnered with BRAC's Social Innovation Lab, and Ashoka Bangladesh, to arrange a mentor system in which each selected grantee will be linked with a mentor who can advise and support the grantee to pilot their development innovation. Mentors will also be selected from the Australia Awards global alumni and other Program partners.

Every two months, each grantee will be required to post a brief, 30-second video update on their pilot initiative on the Global Alumni Website and other Australia Awards and social media.

Regional Alumni Workshop: Alumni Innovation Challenge

In October 2017, the grantees will mobilise at the BRAC Social Innovation Lab in Dhaka, Bangladesh for a two-day internal Design Sprint. During this Sprint, experts from Bangladesh and Australia will sit with each grantee to examine the pilot innovations and provide advice on how the innovation can be refined and scaled up. The third and fourth days of the workshop will be a conference where the grantees will showcase their innovations in a TedX-style presentation. An exhibition showcasing the outcomes of the innovations will be organised at the BRAC Centre Lobby. The fifth and final day of the workshop will be an Innovation Tour, where participants will be divided into groups and go on field trips to experience first-hand Australian Government- and/or Australia alumni-supported development innovations in Bangladesh.

Australia Awards teams will facilitate the grantees' travel, which will include return economy-class airfares, airport transfers, travel insurance, local transport, accommodation, and per diems. Participants will be expected to arrive by Saturday 28th October, and participate fully in all workshop activities. The Application Form is presented below.

Objectives

The Alumni Innovation Challenge and Regional Alumni Workshop 2017 is designed to:

- Enable the selected Australia Awards alumni to pilot their innovations by providing them financial, networking, and mentoring support;
- Foster linkages between development innovators amongst the Australia Awards alumni in the South and West Asia region;
- Provide a professional development opportunity for grantees to present their development innovations, and be exposed to other development innovations from the region;
- Provide an opportunity for Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Posts to examine and select development innovations for further funding and mentoring from the Australia Development Accelerator, managed by InnovationXchange for DFAT Posts;
- Form a Community of Practice for development innovators from South and West Asia.

Eligibility Criteria

Alumni may apply for a small grant either as individuals, or as groups consisting of two to five alumni. Applications from groups comprising alumni from different countries in the region will be viewed favourably. To be eligible for a small grant and to participate in the Regional Alumni Workshop, alumni must meet the following criteria:

- Be an Australia Awards alumnus, from either:
 - the DFAT-funded Australia Awards Scholarships, Australia Awards Fellowships, or Short Course Awards;
 - the former AusAID-funded Australian Development Scholarships, and/or Australian Leadership Awards programs, (or earlier programs like the Colombo Plan, John Crawford Scholarship Scheme, or Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB) Scholarships);
 - the Endeavour Scholarships and Fellowships Program; or
 - the Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research Scholarships Program.
- Be registered on the Australia Global Alumni Website at the time of application:
<https://globalalumni.gov.au/>
- Be residing in, and intend to use the grant to pilot an innovative activity in an Australian Government priority sector in one of the seven participating program countries;
- Agree to participate in a Fraud Management and Child Protection briefing prior to receiving the grant, and use and acquit the grant according to DFAT and Program guidelines provided during the briefing;
- Be available to travel to Bangladesh for the Regional Alumni Workshop and have a reasonable expectation that they will be released by their employer to attend the Workshop.

Grants can be used for the following:

- Piloting new and innovative technologies, designs, or approaches that have potential to contribute to national or regional development;
- Organising in-country professional workshops or short training courses, focusing on innovative activities in Australian Government priority sectors, to share knowledge/skills gained in Australia;

- Advocacy activities aimed at improving community awareness of issues relevant to advancing development in Australian Government priority sectors;
- Piloting new technologies, designs or approaches that have the potential to empower women and girls, people from traditionally marginalised groups, and/or people with a disability;
- Supporting in-country small scale development activity, which contributes towards the development of one or more Australian Government development priorities;
- Activities that will further foster people-to-people links between Australia and countries in the South and West Asia region.

Grants will not support:

- Pre-investment/feasibility studies or pilot demonstration projects related to potential commercial activities;
- Purchase of non-expendable supplies or equipment, unless essential to the conduct of the project or program, and listed in the approved grant proposal;
- The implementation of Development Impact Plans, Return to Work Plans, Reintegration Plans, or Re-entry Action Plans;
- Travel to other countries;
- Bank bonds or collateral for taking loans;
- Activities that have already received full funding from other sources;
- Fees/salaries/per diems to alumni who are involved in the execution of the approved proposal for any work/tasks carried out;
- Academic or short course training for individual alumni (i.e. the grants will not be awarded for personal capacity building of the applicant);
- The publication or public presentation of personal research articles or papers;
- Activities that require the granting of intellectual property rights; or
- The purchase of services and/or supplies not listed in the approved grant proposal.

The proposed activity in the grant application MUST align with an Australian Government priority sector in the country or region in which it is to be implemented. Priority sectors are presented in Australian Government Aid Investment Plans which can be found on Australian Embassy and High Commission websites, and below:

Afghanistan: [Link](#)

Maldives: [Link](#)

Sri Lanka: [Link](#)

Bangladesh: [Link](#)

Nepal: [Link](#)

Bhutan: [Link](#)

Pakistan: [Link](#)

Application Process

The application form is presented below. This document can also be downloaded from the Australia Awards South and West Asia website at www.australiaawardssouthwestasia.org. Applicants must complete the Application Form, Activity Work Plan Template (Annex 1); Budget Template (Annex 2); and Application Checklist (Annex 3) and submit them, along with relevant supporting documentation to alumni@australiaawardssouthwestasia.org by **Wednesday 19 April 2017**. Applications received after this date will not be accepted. Applications should be typewritten on A4-sized paper and be no more than eight pages long (excluding annexes). When presenting the Budget, please provide a breakdown of

budget items where applicable. Applicants – either individuals or groups – can only submit one proposal for this initiative.

Approval Process and Selection Criteria

The Australia Awards South and West Asia Regional Hub will oversee the shortlisting of eligible proposals and the Australian High Commission or Embassy in each program country will select the successful proposals. Decisions on applications will be announced by mid-May.

Proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

- The proposal is realistic and supported by a well-defined work plan and timeline for execution.
- The proposed activity is in a thematic area closely aligned with Australian Government development priorities in the country or region.
- The proposal clearly demonstrates how the activity could add value to existing systems or processes that deliver developmental benefits.
- The proposed activity is clearly linked to the knowledge and skills the alumnus gained through the Australia Award completed.

Grant Disbursements

The value of a small grant for a single activity will be up to AUD 3,000. The grant will be formalised through a Grant Agreement with Scope Global, the Australian managing contractor for Australia Awards South and West Asia. Grants will be disbursed in local currency in two instalments as follows:

- On approval of the proposal and completion of the Fraud Management and Child Protection briefing, 80% of the grant will be disbursed to the nominated bank account of the grant recipient;
- The final 20% (or actual outstanding funds required up to 20%) will be disbursed following the approved submissions of the 30-second video updates, approval of the Financial Acquittal Report (Annex 4) and the Activity Completion Report (Annex 5). The Financial Acquittal Report MUST include the original receipts for each approved item of expenditure.

Grants in Australian Dollars will be converted into local currency using the exchange rates provided on the www.xe.com website. The grant funds will be transferred to the grant recipient's bank account. In the case of a single alumnus, his/her bank account will be used; in case of a group of alumni, one member will be nominated by the group whose bank account will be used. Alternatively, the grant can be provided through an account payee cheque drawn in favour of the grant recipient.

Linking with Mentors

Successful grant applicants will be linked with a volunteer mentor from the Australia global alumni, BRAC Social Innovation Lab, or Ashoka Bangladesh, who can provide advice and guidance on the design and delivery of the proposed activity. The mentor may not necessarily be from the same country as the grant recipient. The grantee may also nominate a mentor for the pilot activity. It is expected that mentorship will be delivered by phone or Skype calls, and face-to-face discussions if a mentor can be identified locally. The grant cannot be used to facilitate the mentorship.

Project Delivery

The proposed activity may begin as soon as May 2017 and must be completed by October 15 2017. If for any reason, the proposed activity or related activities included in the proposal cannot proceed as originally approved, the Grant recipient(s) must inform the Australia Awards office immediately in writing. In such situations, Australia Awards will require any unexpended funds to be returned. In case of non-delivery of

the agreed activity, the Australia Awards will conduct a thorough investigation to assess the cause(s). The situation will be assessed under the following guidelines:

- In case of failure due to Force Majeure, the grantee(s) will not be liable to return the grant. However, if there are any unexpended funds, the grantee(s) will be obligated to return these to Australia Awards.
- In case the activity needs to be re-scheduled, the grantee(s) must provide substantial evidence to support the request in order to hold the unexpended funds.
- In case the activity has failed to occur due to the grantee(s) own negligence, the grantee(s) may be requested to return the total amount of funds or any unexpended funds. If it is possible for the activity to take place at a future date, the grantee(s) will be expected to complete the activity without any additional funding through this scheme.
- In case grantee(s) misuse the grant funds for personal benefit, the grantee(s) maybe be blacklisted from all future alumni activities and a procedure will be initiated to recover the full amount of the grant in accordance with DFAT's Fraud Control Plan.

Participation in the Regional Workshop is dependent on the successful completion of the activity and the submission of the Financial Acquittal Report and the Activity Completion Report.

Grant Monitoring and Reporting

The following reports will be required from Grant recipients once the approved activity has been initiated:

Bimonthly 30-second video updates on the pilot initiative to be recorded (on a Smart Phone or GoPro, for example) and submitted to the Australia Awards office for editing and uploading to the Global Alumni Website and other Australia Awards and DFAT social media.

Completion Report to be submitted within two weeks of activity completion, using the Activity Completion Report template (Annex 5). Where a group of alumni are the recipients of a small grant, a single Activity Completion Report will suffice.

Recipients may be contacted by the Australia Awards office at any time to seek information on the implementation and progress of activities for audit/review purposes.

Fraud and Misuse of Funds

The Australian Government has a zero tolerance to fraud and has robust systems and procedures in place to protect public money and property from fraud and corruption. The Australia Awards plays a critical role in minimising exposure of Australian aid funding to fraud and corruption.

All recipients of a small grant MUST attend a Fraud Briefing, either face-to-face or via Skype, delivered by the Australia Awards Office, before funds are transferred to the grantee.

Misuse of funds will be treated in line with DFAT's [Fraud Control and Anti-Corruption Plan](#). Please read DFAT's [Fraud Policy Statement](#) and [Fraud and Anti-Corruption Guidance for DFAT Partners](#) before submitting an application for a grant.

Child Protection

All recipients of a small grant must read, sign and abide by the DFAT Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct, including the guidelines for photographing and filming children. Recipients who seek to work directly with children in their pilot initiative must first complete a child protection risk assessment, in line with DFAT's [Child Protection Policy 2017](#). The Australia Awards office can provide support with this.

