



## Australian Alumni COVID-19 Response Grants Scheme (Research)

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### PART A: Overview

#### 1. Background

The Australia Awards and Alumni Engagement Program Philippines (AAAEP-P) is funding research initiatives under the Australian Alumni COVID-19 Response Grants to respond to the emerging challenges brought about by the COVID-19 crisis. These grants will enable alumni to collaborate with peers, other individuals and organisations to undertake research that contributes to the public discourse and policy development around COVID-19. Grants will be awarded through an open, competitive process.

The AAAEP-P is an initiative of the Australian Government to support the Philippines in its development goals and to create positive relationships that advance mutual interests. In addition to supporting ongoing alumni engagement through the Australian Global Alumni network, the Program offers a mix of long-term scholarships, short courses, and other forms of training for current and emerging leaders and influencers.

The Australian Global Alumni network (<https://globalalumni.gov.au>) is an Australian Government supported virtual global network for alumni to stay connected, build and mobilise professional networks and celebrate successes. It is an active network of influential alumni leaders with strong links to Australia. Alumni are a valuable resource who can contribute to the Philippines' development needs and as ambassadors promoting Australia's position as a provider of world-class education and training services.

The Program's Research Grants Scheme aims to:

- provide alumni with opportunities to enhance and use their knowledge and skills;
- develop, maintain and strengthen professional linkages and partnerships between alumni and the Australian Government, Australian businesses, public and private organisations and educational institutions;
- connect alumni to each other across disciplines and professions, organisations and institutions, and geographic areas in order to share good practice and create opportunities for collaboration, and
- showcase Australia's excellence as a global provider of high-quality education and research.

#### 2. Objectives

The Australian Alumni COVID-19 Grants Scheme will be launched in May 2020. Through an open, competitive process, alumni will be awarded grants to undertake research to provide a better understanding of COVID-19 and how to respond to current challenges brought about by the pandemic. Using their knowledge and skills gained from their Australian education or training, grantees will:

- i. generate research evidence that will help inform policy development and decision making on relevant issues resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic;
- ii. help contribute to the limited body of knowledge and literature on Covid-19 which affected communities especially the vulnerable and disadvantaged sectors; and



- iii. help predict and respond to current development challenges in the Philippines and in vulnerable sectors of society.

## **PART B: General Guidelines**

### **3. Key dates**

<b>Application stage</b>	<b>Date</b>
Call for proposals	Friday, 1 May 2020
Deadline for applications	Tuesday, 30 June 2020*
Notification of results	July 2020
Commencement of Activity	August 2020 to June 2021

*\*Proposals will be advised not later than 31 July 2020. Proposals will be assessed as they come in, and if selected, successful proponents may begin project implementation immediately.*

### **4. Priority themes for 2020-2021**

The research grants scheme will be awarded to successful proposals that are aligned to the following priority themes:

- i. Policy Development
- ii. Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRR)
- iii. Public Health
- iv. Inclusive Development (Gender Equity, Disability and Social Inclusion - GEDSI)
- v. Supply Chain Management
- vi. Public-Private Partnerships in DRR

The Australian Government has a strong commitment to support initiatives that protect the most vulnerable sectors of society, including women and girls, persons with disabilities, children, displaced populations, the elderly, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups and strongly encourages applications from alumni supporting these sectors.

### **5. Eligible proponents**

The research grant scheme is open to all Filipino nationals who have:

- graduated from a recognised Australian tertiary education, including those that self-funded their study in Australia.
- alumni who have graduated from short-term study or fellowship programs from recognised Australian institutions
- alumni of PAHRDF/PAHRODF and AAAEP-P programs including short courses, non-formal learning opportunities and in-country scholarship program (ICSP)

Applications must be submitted by an alumnus (individual), group of alumni or a research organisation headed by an alumnus as the Team Leader.



Applications are also open to individuals and organisations who can work collaboratively with alumni and who demonstrate the ability to conduct quality research and manage grant funds according to AAAEP-P's policies (alumni should either be a team Leader or at least hold a key position in the team). If the alumnus/alumna is based in another country, he/she should co-lead with Philippine-based alumni. The research should be done in the Philippines.

Alumni and their partner individuals and organisations must demonstrate that they are ethically sound and, where necessary, seek prior approval of an appropriate review/technical board.

## **6. Funding and duration**

The Australian Alumni Covid-19 Response Grants Scheme will provide financial support of up to PHP1,000,000. The Scheme will not provide funds for:

- i. the conduct of masters or doctoral projects,
- ii. payments to non-Philippine nationals for services rendered; and
- iii. salaries and/or compensation of alumni proponent (individual, team leader and alumni members).

The amount of the research grant will depend on the scope of study and the research approach. The grant may be used as a counterpart to other grants provided by local or foreign organisations. Alumni Grant Scheme funds are to be fully acquitted and the Grantee is expected to maintain sound administrative and financial system capable of providing evidence of the delivery of activities, services and goods purchased.

The research activity should not exceed twelve (12) months from the date of commencement or be conducted beyond 30 June 2021. Proposals which exceed the funding limit and duration may be considered subject to merit and assessment.

## **7. Assessment of application**

### **A. Process**

- i. Only applications received on or before the application deadline will be assessed for consideration under the grant scheme.
- ii. AAAEP-P will shortlist the proposals based on the criteria identified below (see Table 1).
- iii. AAAEP-P will submit the proposed list of qualified applications to the Research Selection Committee (RSC) within two (2) weeks after shortlisting.
- iv. Proposals will be assessed by the RSC consisting of representatives from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and external members with appropriate expertise and experience in research and the topic of the study. The RSC shall be chaired by a DFAT representative.
- v. The RSC will select the final list of ARGs awardees.
- vi. Applicants will be notified of the selection outcome in writing.
- vii. The assessment process will ensure clear and transparent mechanisms and any potential conflict of interest will be identified and addressed early on.



**B. Instructions to applicants**

- i. The application is a one step process. Applicants may not make any changes in their submissions but may withdraw their proposal at any time through a formal letter stating such intent.
- ii. Applicants must submit a research proposal through the Australia Awards website application portal. The proposal should not exceed 10 pages (excluding relevant documents submitted as attachments), and should follow these guidelines:
  - a) The proposals must describe original research that covers the themes identified above.
  - b) Research proposals must be clear and succinct. Technical jargon and acronyms should be avoided.
  - c) The research proposal must clearly define the following: purpose and relevance of the research project, problem statement, related studies, respondents, research design (detailing methods for sampling, data gathering and analysis), budget and communication and engagement strategy.
  - d) The proposal must indicate the target print journals, papers, magazine or online platforms where the research output will be published.
- iii. Applications must contain all required information. All information must be current at the time the application is submitted. They must also be accurate and complete or, the application will not be considered for funding.
- iv. All information provided by the applicants will be treated as confidential.

**8. Pre-screening criteria**

Individual and/or Team*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The individual must have a relevant Master’s degree or PhD in the specific field of study of the proposed research;</li><li>• The individual can be supported by research associates / assistants. Fees/salaries for work/tasks carried out by these associates / assistants should be within the acceptable industry compensation and supported by clear terms of engagement.</li></ul>
Research Team*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The team leader has a relevant Master’s degree or PhD in the specific field of study of the proposed research;</li><li>• Majority of the team members must have qualifications and extensive experiences in specific field of study and have published research findings (either individually or as a group).</li><li>• The track record of all team members supports the proposed research objectives and design.</li><li>• Capacity to undertake and manage the proposed research is shown.</li><li>• Evidence of strong people-to-people links with Australia and in-country collaboration with partner institutions and/or private sector organisations.</li></ul>



**Australian Embassy**

**The Philippines**

**Table 1. Assessment criteria**

<b>Criteria</b>
Rationale / significance and innovation
Relevance
Research design
Communication and engagement
Budget and value for money



## **PART C: Instructions for Submitting Applications**

### **9. Submitting research proposals**

All applications must be submitted online at the Australia Awards Philippines website [www.australiaawardsphilippines.org/alumni/ags](http://www.australiaawardsphilippines.org/alumni/ags). Applicants must consider the possibility that technical issues may delay the transmission of their application and should submit earlier than the prescribed deadline. AAAEP-P will not consider any submissions received after the prescribed deadline, regardless of reason.

### **10. Application components**

Research proposals must contain the following information at the minimum:

- C. Abstract
- D. Title of the Research Paper
- E. Research Questions
- F. Rationale/Significance and Innovation
- G. Relevance of Study
- H. Research Objectives with clear success indicators
- I. Research Design and Methodology
- J. Outputs and Deliverables of the Research Project
- K. Risk Assessment and Management Plan
- L. Communication and Engagement Strategy
- M. Workplan and Budget (describe funds sources and uses if research is co-financed)
- N. Curriculum Vitae of Individual (if Individual) or profile of Organisation and Respective Team Members (if research organisation). This includes performance of key personnel with regards to the quality of research products and publication record
- O. Results of Review of Ethics Committee (if appropriate).

### **11. Expectations from awardees**

Aside from submitting the final research paper, the awardees are also expected to:

- A. Submit their work to refereed journals;
- B. Publish their work in an open access journals or make pre-publication versions of their work available to their peers;
- C. Present their work in a research colloquium or Knowledge Sharing Series event/s to be organised by AAAEP-P, and
- D. Submit selected outputs to AAAEP-P for uploading in the Program's Knowledge Management webpage

Awardees are also encouraged to optimise the use of research findings to help in public discourse and in the development and/or improvement of policy and processes.

### **12. Monitoring and evaluation**

Successful applications are required to submit the following reports:

- A. A final report based on the outline proposed by the applicant in its application form.
- B. Conference paper or video recording of research presentation, in case presentation via colloquium is not possible.
- C. Succinct Policy Briefs outlining key findings and policy recommendations.



### **13. Successful applications**

Successful applicants will sign a Grant Agreement with AAAEP-P. Work must commence in the first three (3) months of signing. A delay of more than three (3) months without approval will result in the grant being cancelled. Funds will have to be returned to AAAEP-P within 30 days. Extensions of time will only be granted in unforeseen circumstances beyond the research team's control.

### **14. Other Provisions**

#### **Fraud Control**

Fraud is described as “dishonestly obtaining a benefit by deception or other means”. The grants scheme strictly adheres to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Fraud Control Policy and the Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines with a “zero-tolerance” to any form of fraudulent activity. This means that the grant scheme will not condone any form of fraudulent behaviour in its operations such as payment of bribes, facilitation payments or “hidden” commissions for any reason.

#### **Child Protection**

Organisations or institutions whose applications propose working directly with children must have a clearly articulated and functional child protection policy in place. This policy shall be provided to AAAEP-P upon request. The child protection policy shall include procedures for protecting children in the proposed activity, amongst other things, from any potential sexual, mental and physical abuse by staff members or other adults involved in the activity.

#### **Terrorism Financing Risks**

All organisations or institutions must make all reasonable efforts to identify and understand the level of terrorism-financing risk that a proposed activity may be exposed to across its entire life cycle. Where a specific risk is identified, necessary actions must be taken to manage and reduce this risk. Grants will not be provided where there is non-mitigated risk of financing terrorism.

#### **Record Keeping**

The proponent shall ensure that records including all official forms and templates, minutes of evaluation proceedings and related meetings, reports (progress, mid-term, terminal, and acquittal) are properly maintained and kept. This allows easy and ready access of records should an audit arise.

[Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Declaration for panel members](#)

[Call for Disability-inclusive COVID-19 Response](#)

[CBM Guidance Note Disability Inclusion in the COVID-19 Response](#)