



Australia Awards

Australia Awards Sri Lanka

Small Grants Scheme

September 2020



Introduction

Australian alumni in Sri Lanka have been instrumental in providing significant contributions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Aligned with priorities identified in the [Partnerships for Recovery: Australia's COVID-19 Development Response](#) the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) intends to support and build on these alumni initiatives through the availability of the Small Grant Scheme that can be accessed by Australia Awards alumni in Sri Lanka.

In responding to recovery initiatives connected to the impact of COVID-19, alumni proposals that are linked to the below priority sectors highlighted in the [Partnerships for Recovery: Australia's COVID-19 Development Response](#) will be given priority in the selection process.

Health Security	Stability	Economic Recovery
Health & Hygiene Mental health Women and disability Issues connected to children (abuse/disability etc) Gender-based violence	Food security Social security Employment security Economic security	Economic recovery Managing the economic slowdown Reducing the impact of the economic crisis on the most vulnerable

Funding will be available for 15 grants of AUD 3,000 each that support COVID-19 response and recovery efforts initiated by alumni. All projects must be completed within 3 months of grant signing.

Objective

The objectives of the Small Grants Scheme are to:

- I. Increase sustainability in the development objectives of Sri Lanka
- II. Combine capacities of skilled professionals to achieve common development objectives, and
- III. Establish a platform for sector specialists/organisations to develop linkages/consortiums that can continue to work with/or without the support of a small grant.

The small grants are designed to assist proactive alumni in implementing activities contributing to sustainable development in Sri Lanka. Alumni can propose a development related activity that supports Sri Lanka to address challenges in the wake of COVID-19, with a particular focus on gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls, health security, stability, social cohesion and economic recovery connected to the effects of COVID-19.

Application Process

All Australia Awards alumni currently residing in Sri Lanka are invited to submit applications, including those who studied in Australia through an Australia Awards Scholarship or Short Course, an Endeavour Scholarship or Fellowship.

Applications may be submitted as:

- I. An individual alumnus/alumna
- II. A group consisting of up to five global alumni (the principal applicant MUST be an Australia Awards Scholarships or Short Course alumni)

Proposed Activities need to be closely aligned with priorities identified in DFAT's [Partnerships for Recovery: Australia's COVID-19 Development Response](#).

All Applicants must;

- submit applications that are carefully targeted to achieve maximum impact and measurable outcomes
- submit complete applications with required documentation during the call for proposal period
- propose an activity that does not exceed three (3) months from the time the grant is awarded, and
- agree to acquit funds according to the given guidelines, which will be provided if you are selected for a grant.

As part of the application, applicant(s) of a grant will:

- Confirm a simple and effective approach to monitor and evaluate the grant activity
- Provide a tentative budget in a format agreed with Australia Awards Sri Lanka (this format will be determined according to the requirements of the proposal, and
- Participate in further monitoring and evaluation processes of Australia Awards Sri Lanka as part of the program's broader impact assessments.

Grants will not support:

- Pre-investment/feasibility studies or pilot demonstration projects related to potential commercial activities.
- Academic or short course training for individual alumni in-country or in any other part of the world (the grants will not be awarded for personal capacity building of the applicants)
- Research, surveys or data collection
- The implementation of a Reintegration Action Plan, Development Impact Plan or a Return to Work Plan.

All applications will be assessed under the defined criteria, standards, and procedures in line with the objectives of Australia Awards Sri Lanka. The proposed activity for the Small Grants Scheme must be completed within three (3) months of signing the grant agreement.

Priority consideration will be given to proposals that closely align with the priorities identified in DFAT's [Partnerships for Recovery: Australia's COVID-19 Development Response](#) including initiatives that contribute towards gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, health security, stability, social cohesion economic recovery connected to the adverse impact of COVID 19.

Monitoring and Reporting

Selected applicants will be required to submit the following reporting requirements;

- **Progress/Interim Reports** to be submitted at 6 weeks of grant implementation.
- **Completion Reports** to be submitted within one month of activity completion. Each grant recipient must submit an activity completion report for their proposal using the Activity Completion Report template. Where a group of alumni are the recipients of a small grant, a single Activity Completion Report will be sufficient.

Recipients may be contacted by Australia Awards Sri Lanka at any time to seek information on the implementation and progress of activities for audit/review purposes. If for any reason, the proposed activity or related activities included in the proposal cannot proceed as originally approved, Australia Awards Sri Lanka **MUST** be informed immediately in writing. In such situations, Australia Awards Sri Lanka will require any unexpended funds to be returned.

The Sri Lanka program may decide at any time during the implementation phase, to monitor the selected development activities to ensure results are being achieved as per the proposed plans. The monitoring will consist of a review of timely progress reports, meetings with the project team (face-to-face/Skype/etc.) and/or inviting project team(s) to meetings.

Funding

The value of a small grant for a single activity will be up to AUD 3000. A detailed budget of activities must be provided using the template provided along with the proposal (see Small Grant Scheme Templates for Budget Template).

Financial Requirements and Disbursements

The following budget items are not eligible for financial support under the Small Grants Scheme:

- Payments to non-Sri Lankan nationals for services rendered
- Fees/salaries to alumni who are involved in the execution of the approved proposal for any work/tasks carried out
- Compensation to alumni against writing the proposal, regardless of the proposal being approved or not
- Procurement of capital assets such as machinery, equipment, vehicles, etc.
- Building infrastructure

Grants will be disbursed in Sri Lankan Rupees in two instalments as follows:

- On approval, 80% of the grants sum will be disbursed to the recipient
- The final 20% (or actual outstanding funds required up to 20%) will be disbursed following the approval of the Activity Completion Report and the Financial Acquittal Report. The Financial Acquittal Report MUST include original receipts for each approved item of expenditure.

The grant funds will be transferred to grantee's bank account, depending on the category of the selected recipient:

- In the case of a single alumnus/alumna, 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

Fraud and Misuse of Funds

The Australian Government has zero tolerance to fraud and has robust systems and procedures in place to protect public money and property from fraud and corruption. Australia Awards Sri Lanka 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 with the Australian Government's Zero Tolerance Policy which applies to all external parties that receive Australian government funding.

Project Delivery

In case of non-delivery of the agreed activity, a thorough investigation will be carried out to assess the cause(s) of failure by the Australia Awards Sri Lanka office.

The situation will be considered 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 Sri Lanka
- 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 Australian High Commission Sri Lanka and Maldives' Fraud Policy and the 'Fraud Control Plan'.

Submitting an Application

Applications **MUST** be submitted via email to the following email address;

alumni@australiaawardssrilanka.org

For queries, please email the above email addresses (as applicable) or call +94 115 772980

