



# Guidelines for Pacific Public Sector Linkages Program 2010-11

Closing time and date: 5pm AEDT, 12 March 2010

These Guidelines contain five sections:

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- > assessment process (p. 4), and
- > implementation (p. 5).

## 1. INTRODUCTION TO PACIFIC PSLP

### BACKGROUND

The Pacific Public Sector Linkages Program (Pacific PSLP) provides funds to Australian government agencies to undertake work with their Pacific and Papua New Guinea counterparts to address development issues.

The aims are to build capacity in Pacific partner governments and Pacific regional organisations, and foster links between Australian and Pacific public sector agencies.

### ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants for Pacific PSLP funding are:

- > **Australian** federal government departments, agencies and statutory authorities<sup>1</sup>, and
- > **Australian** state and territory government departments, agencies and statutory authorities<sup>1</sup>.

Federal, state and territory government applicants may involve other organisations such as universities, local government agencies or New Zealand government agencies to support Pacific PSLP activities in two ways:

- > as partners in the delivery of the activity, but with the federal, state or territory applicant as the lead agency accountable for Pacific PSLP implementation, and/or
- > under consulting or procurement arrangements.

### ELIGIBLE COUNTRIES

Activities can support Pacific regional organisations, single countries or groups of countries. The countries eligible for Pacific PSLP activities are:

- Cook Islands
- Federated States of Micronesia
- Fiji<sup>2</sup>
- Kiribati
- Marshall Islands
- Nauru
- Niue
- Palau
- Papua New Guinea
- Samoa
- Solomon Islands
- Tokelau
- Tonga
- Tuvalu
- Vanuatu

The inclusion of East Timor in regional Pacific activities will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### ELIGIBLE COUNTERPARTS

Counterpart organisations **must** be in the partner country's public sector or a Pacific regional organisation. A counterpart organisation cannot apply directly for Pacific PSLP funding, but it can initiate contact with an Australian organisation to explore the latter's interest in applying for funding.

<sup>1</sup> Excludes government business enterprises and other profit-making public sector organisations

<sup>2</sup> Certain restrictions apply to aid activities involving Fiji. Consult the Pacific PSLP Secretariat if you are considering activities involving Fiji (see page 5 for contact details).

## ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Pacific PSLP Activities **must**:

- > have a primary development focus and be definable as Official Development Assistance (ODA)<sup>3</sup>, and
- > clearly identify sustainable benefits to the partner country.

Activities will primarily deliver technical assistance and training and can include:

- > institutional strengthening and/or capacity building in counterpart organisations in partner countries
- > short-term training for a counterpart organisation's staff in the region or Australia
- > secondments and work attachments for a counterpart organisation's staff with the Australian counterpart organisation
- > secondment of Australian staff to advise or work in the counterpart organisation in the partner country, and
- > applied policy research, feasibility studies and the implementation of small projects (excluding activities focused primarily on basic research or capital procurement).

Activities must **not** provide or aim to provide a direct commercial benefit to any company or consortium (other than any subcontracted to assist Activity implementation).

Pacific PSLP does **not** fund Activities that have already commenced.

Pacific PSLP does **not** fund scoping exercises. Applicants are expected to have already consulted their counterpart organisation and obtained in-principle agreement on a clearly outlined program of work.

Pacific PSLP does **not** support Activities that could be funded by the applicants themselves.

Pacific PSLP does **not** fund Activities prepared by applicants with little input from their counterpart organisation. Activity Concepts can originate in Australia, however, applicants should

demonstrate that they have consulted their counterpart and adapted the Activity to suit its needs.

Activities **must** be implemented in partnership with the counterpart. Subcontracted consultants and third parties may be used to facilitate implementation where justified, however, this should be minimised as a primary objective of Pacific PSLP is to build linkages between Australian and counterpart public sector organisations. Subcontracting processes must comply with the Australian Government Procurement Guidelines or their state or territory equivalents.

## COST

Activities generally will cost between \$50 000 and \$250 000 per annum. However, Activity Concepts costed outside of these limits are eligible and will be considered.

## DURATION

Activities must start in 2010-11 and be complete by 30 June 2013. Activities should be long enough to transfer capacity building skills and build sustainable development-focussed linkages.

## 2. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

### GENERIC ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Preference will be given to activities that:

- > are consistent with:
  - the Australian aid program's objective 'to assist developing countries reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development, in line with Australia's national interest'
  - the principles outlined in AusAID's development policy guidelines on gender and development (at a minimum, **gender equity in Activity participation must be addressed**), environment, sustainability, family planning and conflict prevention / peace building
- > clearly articulate achievable objectives, outcomes, outputs and inputs as well as credible cost estimates

<sup>3</sup> The OECD Development Assistance Committee defines ODA as those financial flows from the official sector for – and technical cooperation with – developing countries that are administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as the main objective.

- > address institutional strengthening and capacity building needs of the partner country organisation
- > indicate at least in-principle endorsement by a clearly identified lead counterpart organisation in the partner country
- > contribute to development of sustainable institutional links that promote positive partner country development outcomes
- > demonstrate how Activity benefits will be sustained over the longer term without dependence on continued Pacific PSLP funding
- > seek to ensure that the most appropriate participants for study tours, secondments and/or training are selected from the counterpart, and that the participant's new knowledge is disseminated as widely as possible in the appropriate quarters (see Appendix B), and
- > maximise applicant, counterpart and/or third party cost-sharing contributions. Where Activities are assessed as being of equal merit, preference will be given to those with the greatest level of cost-sharing.

#### PACIFIC-SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Preference will be given to Activity Concepts that:

- > address Australia's development assistance priorities in the Pacific, particularly those expressed through Pacific Partnerships for Development<sup>4</sup>
- > address the national priorities and development plans of partner countries and/or
- > strengthen the ability of Pacific regional organisations to deliver their core programs.

The development challenges and priorities outlined in Pacific Partnerships for Development and various national development plans are large and complex. Recognising the relatively small size of Pacific PSLP activities, Activity Concepts

<sup>4</sup> Pacific Partnerships for Development are in place with Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu (as at December 2009).

that complement or add value to existing approaches to problems will be given preference.

In line with Australia's strong commitment to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, proposals that align Australian activities with partner government systems and/or link to existing Australian or other donor initiatives will be given preference.

Information on Pacific development assistance priorities can be found at AusAID's website ([www.aisaid.gov.au](http://www.aisaid.gov.au)), the websites of Pacific regional organisations and internet searches for partner country development plans. Counterpart organisations should also be able to provide relevant information. Applicants can also seek information from Pacific PSLP contact officers in each post (see Annex A). Please note that bulk emails with vague requests for information will not be welcomed.

### 3. ELIGIBLE COSTS

#### APPLICANT ORGANISATION PERSONNEL – SALARIES

For applicant organisations only<sup>5</sup> Pacific PSLP can meet 100% of:

- 1 the salaries cost of the staff input<sup>6</sup> required for activity implementation
- 2 fee costs of subcontracted consultant input required for Activity implementation, and
- 3 reasonable charge-out rates normally applied by organisations required to operate on a cost-recovery basis.

#### APPLICANT ORGANISATION PERSONNEL – TRAVEL COSTS

Pacific PSLP will meet the costs of **airfares** (up to Business Class on international sectors and domestic sectors in partner countries, and economy class on Australian domestic sectors),

<sup>5</sup> Pacific PSLP cannot meet salaries or associated staff costs of partner country counterpart organisations.

<sup>6</sup> 'Salaries cost' is defined as the amount payable to the staff member as salary for the number of work days of input required, plus the amount payable as the employer's superannuation contribution for that period. Salary and superannuation contributions are based on the entitlements of the official immediately before starting work on the Activity. Scheduled pay rises should be factored into application costings.

**insurance** (medical, dental, travel and *force majeure* evacuation), **ground transport** and **living expenses** (accommodation, meals and incidentals). Applicants should follow their own guidelines for levels of domestic and international living expenses. If these do not exist, applicants should consult the Australian Tax Office taxation determination titled 'Income tax: what are the reasonable travel and overtime meal allowance expense amounts?'<sup>77</sup> which is updated each financial year.

#### APPLICANT ORGANISATION – ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT COSTS

Pacific PSLP's contribution towards administrative support costs will be capped at up to an additional 10% of each Activity grant. This additional financial support must be included in the normal end-of-Activity funds acquittal.

Administrative support costs cover staff costs incurred in (a) arranging travel, accommodation and visit programs (e.g. workshops and meetings), and (b) complying with official AusAID Activity reporting and financial acquittal requirements.

Activity Concepts must **not** include administrative support costs under any other cost category.

Please note that on-costs and administrative overheads remain **ineligible** for Pacific PSLP funding. These costs (which include overtime/allowances, leave accrued, office rental, depreciation, IT and corporate support, human resources development, utilities, communications and postage) continue to be welcomed as a cost-sharing contribution by the applicant organisation.

#### PARTNER COUNTRY COUNTERPART ORGANISATION – TRAVEL COSTS

Pacific PSLP will meet the costs of **airfares** and **medical insurance** for counterpart organisation staff when in Australia or a third country, **travel insurance**, **ground transport** and **living expenses** where the per diems paid by the

counterpart organisation are insufficient to cover them. Entitlements are at the discretion of the applicant organisation but cannot exceed the above-specified limits for applicant organisation personnel and must be cost-effective.

#### PROCUREMENT

Pacific PSLP will meet the small-scale purchase, freight (and/or hire) costs of items essential for achieving Activity objectives, but only if the non-hired items become the property of the counterpart organisation upon Activity completion.

#### TRAINING

Pacific PSLP will meet the cost of trainers, consumables, venues, printing, training materials, course evaluation, etc.

Strict limits will apply to Pacific PSLP contributions towards the cost of opening functions, dinners, end-of-course presentations and closing ceremonies.

#### COST SHARING

Sharing the costs of Activity implementation is an important Pacific PSLP principle. Applicants should be prepared to contribute to the Activity from their own financial resources. Counterpart organisations in the partner country should also share costs by, for example, making in-kind contributions.

## 4. ASSESSMENT PROCESS

### STAGE ONE: COMPETITIVE ASSESSMENT

Activity Concepts are assessed on a competitive basis by an Inter-Departmental Assessment Panel chaired by AusAID and comprising senior representatives from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

The Panel recommends to AusAID Activity Concepts that should be pursued in more detail based on relative merit against the Pacific PSLP Guidelines, generic and Pacific-specific assessment criteria and the available budget.

<sup>77</sup> Taxation Determination TD2009/15 available at <http://law.ato.gov.au/atolaw/finldbatoctdocs.htm>

AusAID, in consultation with the Panel, retains flexibility to determine and assess Activity Concepts at any time in light of evolving whole-of-government priorities.

**Because Pacific PSLP is a competitive funding mechanism, your Activity Concept may not be successful.**

AusAID seeks partner government (aid coordinating authority) endorsement for all successful bilateral Activity Concepts.

Note: Comments from the partner government may require an Activity to be modified.

#### STAGE TWO: DETAILED PROPOSAL PREPARATION

When AusAID seeks partner government endorsement of the Activity Concepts it has accepted, it also asks successful applicants to:

- > advise their counterpart of the conditional success of their applications, and
- > expand their Activity Concepts by completing the Activity Details form in conjunction with their counterpart, after reading the **Information on the Activity Details form** document and drawing on the Pacific PSLP informal note, *Aspects of development and Activity design*, to help ensure design integrity.

Credible monitoring, risk management and sustainability enhancement strategies **must** be articulated in the Activity Details form, along with how the Activity would support adoption of new skills in the counterpart organisation. Applicants should include in their Activity Details form the time and cost needed to undertake monitoring and evaluation, especially for larger (>\$250 000 per annum) Activities.

The completed Activity Details form **must** be submitted within six weeks of notification of in-principle AusAID endorsement of the Activity Concept.

The completed Activity Details form **must** be accompanied by a letter from the partner country counterpart organisation(s), signed at senior level. The letter **must** include a clear commitment to ensuring that participants in study tours, secondments and training will disseminate the new information they have

learned once they return to their workplace(s) (see Appendix B).

## 5. IMPLEMENTATION

### RECORD OF UNDERSTANDING

Once the partner government has endorsed the Activity Concept and the Activity Details form has been agreed between AusAID and the applicant, a Record of Understanding/Activity Agreement **must** be signed that defines the Activity, its timeframe and the respective financial and other responsibilities and obligations of each party.

Records of Understanding/Activity Agreements need to be finalised within one month of the first draft being forwarded to the applicant. Delays may cause AusAID to withdraw the funding offer.

### FUNDING CYCLE

Funds for most Activities are disbursed as an annual advance after the Record of Understanding has been signed and AusAID has received a valid Tax Invoice from the Activity implementer.

Pacific PSLP funding of subsequent years of a multi-year Activity depends upon:

- > the availability of funds, and
- > a positive review of the Progress Report showing satisfactory progress of planned outcomes.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

The Activity implementer is responsible for:

- > all funds granted by AusAID
- > all aspects of implementation including official, personal and commercial arrangements  
(Note: AusAID staff in any location are **not** available to assist in arranging visas, customs clearances, travel and accommodation bookings, meetings or appointments)
- > advising AusAID in advance of official travel to a partner country

- > advising AusAID of media contact and clearing media releases where necessary
- > adhering to the Australian Government Procurement Guidelines (or the state or territory equivalents) when undertaking any procurement (including subcontracting)
- > obtaining prior AusAID approval for any significant (10%+) variation(s) to a budget component of an activity<sup>8</sup>
- > advising AusAID if an Activity will not be completed by the date specified in the Record of Understanding, stating the reason for the delay, and
- > submitting the completion report to AusAID within six weeks of the Activity end date.

The Activity implementer **must** contact the relevant Australian High Commission or Embassy before planning and carrying out major parts of activities (eg setting dates for and carrying out visits to and from countries, setting dates for training courses and identifying candidates for training or placements).

#### COMPLETION REPORT AND FUNDS ACQUITTAL

A Completion Report **must** include results of monitoring and evaluation undertaken during the Activity to support statements of success or otherwise and identify lessons learned.

The Completion Report includes a Funds Acquittal which **must** be signed by a delegated officer. Significant variations from the approved budget must be explained. Variations in excess of 20% may impact on the success of an applicant's future Concept submissions.

The Completion Report must be co-signed by a senior officer of the counterpart organisation. For regional activities, the Completion Report will need to be co-signed by a majority of the counterpart organisations.

An organisation's eligibility to apply for new Pacific PSLP grants depends on the timely submission and AusAID's acceptance of

satisfactory Completion Reports for previous activities.

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information, the Activity Concept form and the various documents referred to in these guidelines are available at:

[www.ausaid.gov.au/business/other\\_opps/pac\\_pslp.cfm](http://www.ausaid.gov.au/business/other_opps/pac_pslp.cfm)

All inquiries should be directed to the Pacific PSLP Secretariat by email at

[PacPSLP@ausaid.gov.au](mailto:PacPSLP@ausaid.gov.au)

Any advice provided to potential applicants concerning possible Activity Concepts will not be binding on either AusAID or the Pacific PSLP Assessment Panel in their consideration of any Activity Concept.

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<sup>8</sup> Minor changes to the funds allocation structure agreed in the Activity Details form can be made without reference to AusAID, provided the intended activity outputs do not change and the overall Activity budget does not increase.

## APPENDIX A PACIFIC PSLP CONTACT OFFICERS AT PACIFIC AND PNG POSTS

If you need postal addresses, please contact the Pacific PSLP Secretariat at [PacPSLP@ausaid.gov.au](mailto:PacPSLP@ausaid.gov.au).

Country	Contact	Email	Telephone
Cook Islands	Claire Drake	<a href="mailto:claire.drake@dfat.gov.au">claire.drake@dfat.gov.au</a>	(64) 4 473 6411
Federated States of Micronesia	Majella Walsh	<a href="mailto:majella.walsh@dfat.gov.au">majella.walsh@dfat.gov.au</a>	(691) 320 5448
Fiji	Alex Konrote	<a href="mailto:alex.konrote@dfat.gov.au">alex.konrote@dfat.gov.au</a>	(679) 338 2475
	Rosalyn Morgan	<a href="mailto:rosalyn.morgan@dfat.gov.au">rosalyn.morgan@dfat.gov.au</a>	
Kiribati	Joanne Craigie	<a href="mailto:joanne.craigie@ausaid.gov.au">joanne.craigie@ausaid.gov.au</a>	(686) 21 184
Marshall Islands	Majella Walsh	<a href="mailto:majella.walsh@dfat.gov.au">majella.walsh@dfat.gov.au</a>	(691) 320 5448
Nauru	Lydia Bezeruk	<a href="mailto:lydia.bezeruk@dfat.gov.au">lydia.bezeruk@dfat.gov.au</a>	(674) 444 3380
Niue	Claire Drake	<a href="mailto:claire.drake@dfat.gov.au">claire.drake@dfat.gov.au</a>	(64) 4 473 6411
Palau	Majella Walsh	<a href="mailto:majella.walsh@dfat.gov.au">majella.walsh@dfat.gov.au</a>	(691) 320 5448
Papua New Guinea	Rosemary Cassidy	<a href="mailto:rosemary.cassidy@ausaid.gov.au">rosemary.cassidy@ausaid.gov.au</a>	(675) 325 9333
Samoa	Misileti Satuala	<a href="mailto:misileti.satuala@ausaid.gov.au">misileti.satuala@ausaid.gov.au</a>	(685) 23 411
	Asenati Tuiletufuga	<a href="mailto:asenati.tuiletufuga@ausaid.gov.au">asenati.tuiletufuga@ausaid.gov.au</a>	
Solomon Islands	Aileen Croghan	<a href="mailto:aileen.croghan@ausaid.gov.au">aileen.croghan@ausaid.gov.au</a>	(677) 21 561
Tokelau	Claire Drake	<a href="mailto:claire.drake@dfat.gov.au">claire.drake@dfat.gov.au</a>	(64) 4 473 6411
Tonga	Debbie Reschke	<a href="mailto:debbie.reschke@ausaid.gov.au">debbie.reschke@ausaid.gov.au</a>	(676) 23 244
Tuvalu	Noa Seru	<a href="mailto:noa.seru@dfat.gov.au">noa.seru@dfat.gov.au</a>	(679) 338 2475
	Lily-Anne Homasi	<a href="mailto:lily-anne.homasi@dfat.gov.au">lily-anne.homasi@dfat.gov.au</a>	
Vanuatu	Nick Cumpston	<a href="mailto:nick.cumpston@ausaid.gov.au">nick.cumpston@ausaid.gov.au</a>	(678) 23 341
<b>Regional Organisation</b>			
Forum Fisheries Agency	Laura Holbeck (Canberra)	<a href="mailto:laura.holbeck@ausaid.gov.au">laura.holbeck@ausaid.gov.au</a>	(02) 6206 4754
Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC)	Jonathon Mitchell	<a href="mailto:jonathan.mitchell@ausaid.gov.au">jonathan.mitchell@ausaid.gov.au</a>	(679) 338 2475
Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat	Filipe Koro	<a href="mailto:filipe.koro@dfat.gov.au">filipe.koro@dfat.gov.au</a>	(679) 338 2475
Secretariat of the Pacific Community	Tim Wilcox	<a href="mailto:timothy.wilcox@ausaid.gov.au">timothy.wilcox@ausaid.gov.au</a>	(679) 338 2475
South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment	Lori Banks	<a href="mailto:lori.banks@dfat.gov.au">lori.banks@dfat.gov.au</a>	(679) 338 2475
South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)	Jonathon Mitchell	<a href="mailto:jonathan.mitchell@ausaid.gov.au">jonathan.mitchell@ausaid.gov.au</a>	(679) 338 2475
University of the South Pacific	Lori Banks	<a href="mailto:lori.banks@dfat.gov.au">lori.banks@dfat.gov.au</a>	(679) 338 2475

## APPENDIX B GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING PARTICIPANTS FROM COUNTERPART ORGANISATIONS FOR STUDY TOURS, SECONDMENTS AND TRAINING

To maximise the developmental benefits and sustainable impacts of study tours, secondments and training, the applicant and counterpart should ensure that such events have:

- (a) a clear objective
- (b) clear participant selection criteria, so that the right participants are selected in the right numbers for the right (including merit-based) reasons, and
- (c) effective, formal and structured strategies to disseminate information that have been developed, negotiated and agreed with counterpart organisations, and that oblige participants in study tours, secondments and training to disseminate their new knowledge as widely and appropriately as possible after their return home to the partner countries

### OBJECTIVE(S)

The objective (a) **must** inform the criteria (b) and strategies (c).

### PARTICIPANT SELECTION CRITERIA

The returns from investing in study tours, secondments and training depend crucially on the quality and appropriateness of the selected participants. There **must** be agreed, clear and unambiguous selection criteria that will promote the prospects of maximising Activity benefits and achieving sustainable impacts by facilitating the selection of appropriate participants.

Ideally, these criteria should be developed jointly by the applicant and its counterpart organisation. It is also highly desirable for the Australian organisation to be involved in the counterpart's selection process. Such an approach would enable the rationale for the number of proposed participants to be readily articulated.

The criteria should ensure that participants are appropriate in terms of, for example:

- > **skills** (e.g. some minimum level of English language for study tours, secondments and training in Australia)
- > **aptitudes** (e.g. some aptitude/experience as a speaker and/or trainer if participants are to disseminate information and/or conduct train-the-trainer workshops at home)
- > **experience** (e.g. some experience in an area related to the training proposed)
- > **professional positions** (clearly appropriate to the specified objectives and sufficiently senior to be able to act on/implement what has been learned on their return home)
- > **career aspirations** (e.g. for trainees, an intention to remain with the counterpart organisation for at least 12 months after the training)
- > **education** (e.g. a degree from a university or equivalent tertiary institution), and
- > **cooperative relationship** with their Australian counterparts that is strong and will be maintained.

As far as possible there must be **gender equity** in Activity participation (eg via use of a written criterion for selection of women participants).

### INFORMATION DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

Partner country counterparts should oblige participants in study tours, secondments and training to implement some process of disseminating the new information they have gained.

In the absence of such strategies and obligations, there is an unacceptably high risk that the proposed investment will not produce any real developmental benefit for the participants' organisations and countries.

Strategies and obligations could include providing senior management and relevant staff written reports on key issues and new knowledge of most use and importance to their organisations, and conducting a seminar or series of seminars for relevant senior and other staff to present such reports.