



## AUSTRALIAN DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH AWARDS

### 2008 FUNDING ROUND

#### General Guidelines

The Australian Development Research Awards selection process will take place from August–December 2008. This Round is open for proposals submitted by Australian and international researchers. AusAID seeks to attract high quality, innovative and relevant research projects that address development challenges of interest to AusAID, our partner countries, and the development community more generally<sup>1</sup>.

The 2008 ADRA round will award funding for research under the following nine priority themes:

- 1 Development Effectiveness
- 2 Disability
- 3 Economics
- 4 Education
- 5 Environment
- 6 Food Security
- 7 Gender
- 8 Governance and State Building
- 9 Health

For more information on each AusAID priority theme, please refer to the 2008 Research Priority Themes Document.

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<sup>1</sup> The Australian Development Research Awards are listed on the Australian Competitive Grants Register

## KEY DATES

Application Stage	Date
Proposals due	29 <sup>th</sup> August 2008
Notification of results	December 2008
Contracts developed and signed	December 08 – February 09

**While every effort will be made to comply with these dates, they are indicative only. Please refer to the [AusAID research web page](#) for the most up to date information.**

## KEY FEATURES AND CONSIDERATIONS

Following are the key features and considerations of the 2008 Funding Round for the Australian Development Research Awards.

- > Funding will be provided for up to three years in all Priority Theme and Sub Theme areas except under the Gender Priority Theme and the following Sub-themes: Enhancing the Effectiveness of Humanitarian Assistance, Better Governance and Leadership and Fragile States and Peace Building.<sup>2</sup> Successful proposals are eligible to receive between AUD 50,000 and AUD 250,000 per year. Applications outside of these time and budget limits may be considered, but only at the discretion of the relevant Research Selection Committee.
- > Applications must be submitted by a research organisation or institution not by individual researchers.
- > At a minimum, Applications must:
  - describe an original research project that has strong policy relevance and is pertinent to AusAID, the development community and developing country partner governments; or
  - describe a research project that will contribute new knowledge and add to the broader body of knowledge on development issues in the Asia Pacific region;and

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<sup>2</sup> Please note that Applications of up to one years duration will be accepted under the Enhancing the Effectiveness of Humanitarian Assistance Sub-theme; Applications of up to eighteen months duration will be accepted under the Better Governance and Leadership Sub-theme; and Applications of up to two years duration will be accepted under both the Fragile States and Peace Building Sub- theme and the Gender Theme.

- present an interesting and achievable process of knowledge transfer and exchange.
- > Research proposals submitted by institutions that have a demonstrated capacity to produce high quality research, particularly institutions in developing countries, and proposals that build viable linkages between developed and developing country research institutions will be given preference provided the research proposals meet quality requirements.
- > Applications for AusAID to be an industry partner under the Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Projects Scheme will also be considered under this Funding Round.
- > The Funding Round is competitive and no applicant is guaranteed an award.

## **1. OBJECTIVES**

AusAID has six objectives for funding research:

- > to build a stronger evidence base for policy and programs
- > to create incentives for innovative ideas and strategies
- > to deepen the pool of academic expertise about and within countries in the Asia-Pacific region that have traditionally received relatively less research attention
- > to contribute to research efforts for the global public good
- > to develop partner country capacity to solve local problems
- > to foster linkages that encourage solutions to development challenges

The over-arching purpose of the Australian Development Research Awards is to attract high quality research that informs policy development and/or increases the stock of knowledge around development problems. Applications should also address other AusAID research objectives (such as building partner country capacity).

The Australian Development Research Awards are a pillar of the recently launched AusAID Development Research Strategy which significantly scales up AusAID's development research program.

## OVERALL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The 2008 Funding Round consists of only one stage. Applicants are requested to submit one Application that will total approximately 10 pages. There will be no expression of interest stage during this round.

To be eligible, Applications must meet all of the required eligibility criteria and applicant components outlined below.

Also note that:

- > The Funding Round is open to all Australian and international not-for-profit institutions or organisations where research is a core component of the organisation's mandate and where the organisation has a demonstrated capacity to carry out quality research and manage grant funds according to AusAID's policies.<sup>3</sup>
- > AusAID will fund primary research that has investigation as its main objective and that has observable outcomes.
- > AusAID does not fund bio-medical or dental research, product development (including agricultural product development) or organisational linkages (except as they relate to capacity building).
- > This Funding Round does not provide funding specifically for the purpose of hosting, organising or attending conferences or workshops; producing research publications; consultancy fees for projects that do not meet the definition of research; or specifically for travel to conferences/workshops and/or meetings.
- > This Funding Round will not provide financial support for the conduct of individual researchers' masters or doctoral projects. However if an organisation's proposed research project for this Funding Round is eligible for support, then any nominated masters or doctoral research that convincingly forms an integral part of the proposed research project may be included.
- > Applicants should review relevant policy documents when submitting research proposals, with particular reference made to the *AusAID Development Research*

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<sup>3</sup> The administering organisation must have access to a recognised Ethics Approval process. Organisations that cannot comply with this requirement (such as non-government organisations) should consider applying with an organisation that is able to comply.

*Strategy and Gender Equality in Australia's Aid Program - Why and How* as well as policy documents for each thematic priority area.

- > Proposals funded under the Australian Development Research Awards must have broad applicability to the Asia Pacific region. Therefore, a research project that is global in nature must have demonstrable relevance to the Asia Pacific region. By the same token, country-specific projects must demonstrate a broad applicability and relevance to the region.
- > AusAID will provide no process of appeal for those applicants whose Applications have been deemed ineligible for administrative reasons.
- > Project teams, administering agencies and partners funded by AusAID must demonstrate that they are ethically sound and, where applicable, seek ethics approval from their nominated administering organisation. Ethics approval requirements in the research project target location (country/countries) must be taken into consideration and met.

### 3. APPLICANT COMPONENTS

#### 3.1 APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS

The Principal Investigator must nominate an organisation with which he/she is affiliated to administer the grant and provide support. While researchers can apply as individuals or as part of a team, the chosen research method and all members of the research team must be justified.

#### 3.2 THEME FOCUS

Applicants must nominate a **single** AusAID Priority Theme and Sub Theme and address the development concerns outlined in the Theme/Sub Themes description/selection criteria. Each Sub Theme includes topics that are of particular interest to AusAID. Applicants are not obliged to submit a proposal addressing only these topics; however these identified areas will be given higher priority in consideration of development merit.

Each application will only be assessed against the nominated AusAID Priority Theme/Sub Theme.

### 3.3 ELIGIBLE COSTS/FUNDING

The Funding Round will accept proposals that are up to three years in duration,<sup>4</sup> but the length of time must be justified by the nature of the research project.

Applicants can apply for funding between AUD 50,000 and AUD 250,000 per year at differentiated levels of funding over the course of the research project. This range is discretionary and a proposal that has a funding level outside of these limits may be submitted for consideration; however, a plausible justification for a deviation from the recommended range must be provided. Grants will be paid in annual tranches subject to ongoing annual monitoring of the project and acceptance of a short Annual Report (expected to be no more than five pages).

If a research project requires a significantly higher level of funding or a longer timeframe than three years, applicants should consider requesting AusAID to be an industry partner and should submit an application to the *Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Projects Scheme* (See Section 3.6 for further details).

AusAID encourages applicants to identify and include co-funding opportunities. Co-funding may include, but not be limited to, in-kind contributions such as release time from teaching duties. In the case that two or more proposals are rated as being of equal merit, preference will be given to the proposal with the greatest level of cost sharing. AusAID will require formal proof of co-funding arrangements.

AusAID research grants cover the following eligible costs:

- > The direct costs of research (researcher/s salary, fieldwork costs, travel, insurance)
- > Knowledge transfer and exchange
- > Capacity development activities (if applicable)

### 3.4 CAPACITY BUILDING

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<sup>4</sup> Please note that the Humanitarian Effectiveness sub-theme will provide funding for one year only; the Better Governance and Leadership sub-theme will only accept research proposals of up to eighteen months duration; and the Fragile States and Peace Building sub- theme will only accept research proposals of up to two years duration.

The principal purpose of the Australian Development Research Awards is to fund high quality research, however given the importance of research capacity to a country's (and a region's) economic growth and development, applications that have a significant element of capacity building will be considered favourably.

### 3.5 COMMUNICATION OF RESEARCH

An essential output of AusAID-funded research is the communication of the results of the research project across a range of stakeholders from academia, partner countries, the development community and policy-makers. Research findings have the potential to influence, among other things, the design and delivery of development initiatives and policy development and effectiveness.

Applicants must suggest an indicative set of interim and final deliverables resulting from the research project. Applicants are encouraged to explore strategies, both proven and innovative, for the communication of information and knowledge with the aim of increasing the impact of the research results. Applicants should be able to demonstrate good familiarity with this important aspect of development research.

### 3.6 AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL (ARC) LINKAGE PROJECTS SCHEME

Some Australian research organisations are eligible to submit an application to the *ARC Linkage Projects Scheme* (see [http://www.arc.gov.au/ncgp/lp/lp\\_default.htm](http://www.arc.gov.au/ncgp/lp/lp_default.htm) for details on eligibility). The *Scheme* supports collaborative research and development projects between higher education organisations and other organisations, including those from within industry, to enable the application of advanced knowledge to identified problems.

Research organisations wishing to approach AusAID to be an industry partner under the ARC Scheme should do so through this Funding Round. Simply check the box in the Application Form that states that the organisation wishes AusAID to consider being an industry partner. Funding decisions will be available to feed into the May 2009 *ARC Linkage Projects Scheme* process.

## 4. ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION

### 4.1 PROCESS FOR ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION

AusAID will conduct a high quality process of assessment involving both internal and external review to ensure transparency, accountability and quality. Applicants will be assessed on a competitive basis according to the selection criteria (listed below); consequently not all applicants will be successful.

Applications must be received by 5pm Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST) 29<sup>th</sup> August 2008. Applications will be assessed by AusAID staff for consistency with application requirements, including adequate fit with the chosen Theme/Sub Theme and inclusion of key components. If, on the basis of staff review, an Application appears to be ineligible or is considered incomplete, it will be forwarded to the Chair of the respective Research Selection Committee to determine if the Application should be accepted for review. If deemed ineligible, the Application will not be reviewed and the applicant will receive a brief explanation of the committee's decision. All decisions are final and there will be no appeal.

Eligible Applications will be reviewed by the Research Selection Committee. This Committee includes both development research experts and thematic/sectoral experts from within AusAID and external to the Agency. There will be a Research Selection Committee for each AusAID Priority Theme and in some cases for Sub Themes.

Please note that as intellectual property rights are being granted to the applicant, if the proposed research topic is considered politically sensitive (for either the Australian Government and/or Developing Country Government), the Application may be deemed ineligible by the relevant Research Selection Committee.

Following the evaluation of all eligible Applications, the Research Selection Committee will present its recommendations to AusAID. These recommendations will be based on the assessed relative merit of the proposal against the Funding Round assessment criteria: funding available; the potential development impact of the

proposed research project; and the assessed relative importance in terms of relevant current whole-of-government priorities.

*Late applications or those that do not comply with the Guidelines may not be assessed.*

## 4.2 ASSESSMENT REVIEW CRITERIA

In judging proposals assessors will determine the relative merit of proposals against three broad assessment criteria:

- 1 Quality of proposal
- 2 Development merit
- 3 Funding availability

Components of these three assessment criteria are listed below. Please refer to these when filling in your application form.

### QUALITY OF PROPOSAL

- > Does the application address all the required components?
- > Is the research question(s) and objectives clear?
- > Is there a clear understanding of the state of existing research on the identified research topic?
- > Is the proposed methodology and research design suited to the proposed project?
- > Is the project cost-effective?
- > Is the suggested time frame appropriate?
- > Is the project team appropriate and does the team demonstrate adequate capacity to conduct the project?
- > Does the institution submitting the application have the capacity to produce quality research and to provide the support required by the project and the team?
- > Are the additional eligibility criteria specified in the 2008 Research Priority Themes Statement addressed (if applicable)?

### DEVELOPMENT MERIT

- > Does the project address a gap in knowledge or a development challenge?

- > Does the project clearly address one of the AusAID Priority Themes and Sub-Themes?
- > Will the project facilitate knowledge transfer and exchange between researchers and key stakeholders? Are the suggestions for communication and interaction plausible and achievable?
- > Will the project foster links between researchers working in the Asia Pacific region?
- > Will the project potentially assist capacity development in developing country research and/or engage with early career researchers?

### **FUNDING AVAILABILITY**

- > Does the project involve applicant and counterpart cost-sharing contributions?

## **5. APPLICATION COMPONENTS**

Applications should be no longer than ten pages and must contain the following;

- > A clear title relevant to the research proposal.
- > An indicative timeline of the project (at a minimum expected commencement and completion dates).
- > An unambiguous and well-articulated research question.
- > A short statement outlining how the project will add to the existing body of knowledge.
- > A short statement outlining the policy relevance of the project and/or why the project is important to development.
- > A short summary of the proposed project that outlines the research methodology and activities.
- > A short statement outlining how the activities and findings of the project could be communicated to a wide group of stakeholders, including those outside of the research community.
- > A list of the project team and team members' credentials, including both principal investigators, cross institutional partners, developing country partners and early career researchers, with clear illustration of the capacity to produce quality research.
- > Institutional affiliations of the project team

- > The anticipated budget of the project broken down annually and in total (in Australian dollars).
- > Details of potential cost-sharing.

**Applicants must use AusAID's Online Application Form. No other format will be accepted.** If technical difficulties are being experienced please contact [research@ausaid.gov.au](mailto:research@ausaid.gov.au).

## **6. FEEDBACK ON DISCUSSIONS**

The Applications will be assessed against set selection criteria to ensure transparency, accountability and quality in decision making. AusAID will provide no system of appeal for any applicant deemed ineligible for administrative reasons, for example, late submission or non-compliance with the Guidelines.

The Research Selection Committee will provide a general statement on the decisions after their recommendations have been approved by AusAID. This general statement will be posted on the website. No feedback will be provided for individual Applications.

It should be noted that the funding round is competitive. No applicant is guaranteed selection and the decision of the Research Selection Committee is final.

## **7. QUESTIONS, FEEDBACK AND GENERAL ENQUIRIES**

Prior to the closing date, AusAID will accept any questions, feedback, and general enquiries relating to the grant process in writing via email. Please clearly identify the reason for the correspondence in the subject line and address all questions, feedback and general enquiries to [research@ausaid.gov.au](mailto:research@ausaid.gov.au).

## **8. INFORMATION OWNERSHIP – CONFIDENTIALITY AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

- a AusAID receives all applications for funding in confidence.
- b Intellectual property rights with respect to information contained within applications submitted to AusAID remains with the applicant(s) until varied in

accordance with the terms of any contract entered into between AusAID and the successful Grantee(s).

- c All information contained within applications, once received by AusAID and during the process of assessment, will only be disclosed to AusAID staff directly involved with the administration of the Funding Round, internal and external advisors, panel members, and external referees or disclosed as required by law or to enable AusAID to meet its obligations to Parliament, Ministers and within government.
- d Disclosure of any information contained within an application to persons other than those referred to above, or the use of information contained within an application other than in connection with AusAID's activities and statutory reporting and archiving requirements, is not permitted.
- e Applicants who have not been awarded funding may agree in writing to the disclosure of information contained in their applications to specified persons or for specified purposes.
- f AusAID does not claim ownership of any intellectual property created as a result of any project which is funded by research grants. However, AusAID wishes to be able to publish and use all or part of selected research reports. Accordingly, under the terms of the contract, the Grantee will be required to grant to AusAID a permanent, irrevocable, royalty-free licence for this purpose. This arrangement benefits both the Grantee and AusAID. The Grantee may publish their research results independently elsewhere and AusAID has the right to use the results of the research project where and as applicable and appropriate.