



Australia Awards

Australia Awards Vanuatu
Alumni Conference Funding Guidelines

March 2025



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1. Conference Funding Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the Conference Funding is to support in-Australia conference participation to enhance the opportunity for professional linkages with Australians and Australian organisations.

There will be three conference funding packages available for AAS alumni and three available for AAPS alumni. The maximum amount an alumni can be funded for is \$7,000AUD inclusive of all flights, transport, accommodation and stipend for the duration of the trip.

The Conference Funding is also intended to facilitate the strengthening of linkages between Vanuatu and Australia and to facilitate regional Pacific linkages.

The objectives of the Conference Funding are:

- to provide alumni with opportunities to enhance and capitalise on their knowledge and skills to improve practice in their professional fields and communities;
- to develop, maintain and strengthen professional linkages and partnerships between alumni and the Australian government, and Australian businesses, organisations and educational institutions;
- to 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
- to develop a network of alumni who view Australia's capabilities and credentials in a positive light; and
- to showcase Australia's excellence as a global provider of high-quality education and research

The Conference Funding is administered by AAV in accordance with the Funding Guidelines. The Guidelines may be subject to adjustment from time to time depending on funding allocations and program priorities.

2. Eligibility

Conference Funding is open to all Vanuatu nationals who have graduated from Australia Awards Vanuatu programs (Australia Awards Scholarships and Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships) and its predecessor programs including (but not limited to) Australian Development Scholarships and Colombo Plan Scholarships. Applicants must be working at least 2 years before being eligible to apply for this conference funding.

Applicants may be required to provide a copy of their testamur, statement of graduation or other documentary evidence to prove their eligibility.

3. Application process

Conference Funding is offered once a year. AAV advertises application rounds through the AAV closed Facebook page and direct emails to alumni in order to attract a range of applicants from across the alumni network.

The application round will last for three weeks and applications will be submitted via email. Applications must be received by midnight (Vanuatu Standard Time) on the advertised closing date. Late applications will not be accepted.

For 2025, the application round will commence on Tuesday 20 May and close on Tuesday 10 June, with alumni to attend conferences between July – November. This is a pilot year for the Conference Funding initiative and time frames will likely be adjusted in future years. Alumni will be provided with some suggested conferences they may wish to

consider (see Annex 5) but they may also nominate a conference found through their own research.

Applications may be deemed ineligible if they are incomplete, do not include the requested documentation, or do not address the selection criteria. Unsuccessful applicants and previous recipients are welcome to submit applications in subsequent application rounds.

Conference Funding application information must include:

- Conference details
- Justification for attendance
- Contributions to industry and/or community after attending
- Anticipated networking, professional growth, or research collaboration opportunities
- Expected outcomes
- Impact on organisation or industry

Applications must be submitted in English.

4. Selection Criteria

The selection of conference funding recipients is assessed against the following criteria:

- The applicant demonstrates a strong alignment with academic/professional background, and well-defined benefits for personal and community growth.
- The applicant provides complete details: full name, contact, year of graduation, degree, and current role/industry. Strong professional context.
- The applicant provides a strong justification of its relevance to field of study or career.
- Provides a compelling case for attending, with well-articulated benefits in terms of knowledge, skills, industry contributions, and networking.
- The applicant fully adheres to format, meets the deadline, and includes all required documents (CV, references, endorsements, if needed).
- The application is well-written and logically structured.
- The applicant must be working for 2+ years after returning from an Australia Awards Scholarship or an Australia Awards Pacific Scholarship.

5. Selection process

Phase 1 Details	Details
Stage 1	AAV screens all applications received before the deadline to ensure that applications are complete and all requisite supporting documentation has been provided. Complete applications are deemed eligible for funding.
Stage 2	AAV assesses all eligible applications. The eligible applications are scored by the AAV Consultant and reviewed by the AAV

	Alumni Committee for endorsement. Eligible applications scored against the Selection Criteria and receiving a total score of 22 or higher are recommended for possible funding. AAV will conduct due diligence on recommended applications.
Stage 3	AAV forwards recommended applications to the Australian High Commission in Vanuatu for final selection and approval. A list of ineligible candidates should also be submitted for DFAT's awareness.
Stage 4	AAV advises all applicants (successful and unsuccessful) of the outcome of their application in writing (by email). Applicants will normally be advised six weeks from the closing date for applications.
Stage 5	AAV profiles recipients awarded on the AAV website and social media platforms.

6. Funding Terms and Conditions

- AAV will be responsible for making payment to the relevant stakeholders including, but not limited to:
 - i. Conference tickets
 - ii. Flights
 - iii. Accommodation
- The remaining funds to support a recipient, such as per diem, ground transport, etc., will be paid and distributed directly in a single tranche to each successful applicant.
- Activities may not be carried out by any other person or organisation other than the recipient.
- If you become aware of a breach of terms and conditions committed by yourself or another recipient under the funding agreement, you must contact us immediately.
- Within 7 days after you complete the conference, you will be requested to submit the following:
 - i. Main outcomes of the conference
 - ii. Conference overview
 - iii. Conference highlights
 - iv. Testimonial
 - v. Photographs
- Participants may be able to claim expenses related to travel within Australia, such as transportation to and from the conference venue. Participants are required to maintain receipts and other documentation to verify the validity of any claims. This could include taxi receipts, train tickets, or bus tickets, depending on the type of ground travel. Proof of such expenses must be provided within 7 days of returning from conference travel.

7. Insurance

Travel insurance is provided to all Guests* and Consultants traveling at the request of the Policyholder who are domiciled in Australia *Guests means individuals invited and authorised to participate in a covered activity that is under the control of the Policyholder.

8. Evaluation

AAV will evaluate the Program to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. We may use information from your application and reports for this purpose. We may also interview you or ask you for more information to help us understand how the Program impacted you, and to evaluate how effective the Program was in achieving its outcomes.

9. Privacy and Freedom of Information

Information provided by applicants is used to process and assess the application. This information is stored by AAV. It is available to employees of AAV, Tetra Tech International Development Pty Ltd, and the Governments of Australia and Vanuatu on a need-to-know basis. The information provided by the applicant may be made public through national and local media or via the Global Alumni, AAV, Australian High Commission websites and/or social media platforms.

AAV and DFAT may also publish this information, excluding personal information, in Annual Reports. In other circumstances, AAV only uses and/or discloses personal information in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988.

Applicants should also note the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 1982 apply to documents in AAV and DFAT's possession. Further information is available in DFAT's privacy policy.

10. Risk Management and Fraud Control Guidelines

In alignment with the principles set out in the *Conference Funding Guidelines*, the following risk management and fraud control measures are to be observed by all applicants, recipients, and stakeholders participating in the Conference Funding initiative. These measures are intended to uphold the integrity of the programme, safeguard public resources, and ensure alignment with the policies of the Australian Government and DFAT.

Risk Management Responsibilities

All alumni receiving funding are required to:

- Proactively identify, assess and report any potential risks that may impede the achievement of the programme's objectives. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Operational delays (e.g. cancelled travel, postponed conferences)
 - Financial discrepancies
 - Non-compliance with programme terms
 - Reputational risks to AAV, DFAT, or the Australian Government
- Implement appropriate mitigation strategies where possible, and communicate with AAV in a timely manner regarding emerging risks.
- Submit any identified risks or incidents in writing to AAV within five (5) business days of detection, including a description of the issue, potential impacts, and proposed corrective actions.

AAV reserves the right to conduct its own risk assessments, request further information, and adjust funding arrangements accordingly.

Fraud Prevention and Integrity Assurance

AAV adopts a zero-tolerance approach to fraud in any form. All funded alumni are expected to:

- Comply fully with the DFAT Fraud Policy Statement and Fraud Control and Anti-Corruption Plan, which collectively define fraud as *dishonestly obtaining a benefit, or causing a loss, by deception or other means*.
- Avoid any actions that may constitute fraud, including but not limited to:
 - Falsifying application information or documentation
 - Misusing funds allocated for conference attendance (e.g. spending on unauthorised personal items)
 - Submitting forged travel or accommodation receipts
 - Engaging in bribery, collusion, or other corrupt activities
 - Disclosing confidential programme information without authorisation
- Maintain accurate records of all expenditures related to the conference, such as travel, accommodation, and incidentals. All receipts must be retained and provided to AAV upon request within the stipulated seven-day post-travel reporting period.

Reporting and Investigation of Fraud

If an alumni or stakeholder becomes aware of suspected, alleged, or actual fraud, they must notify AAV immediately by sending a written report to: info@australiaawardsvanuatu.org. The report should include all available evidence and relevant contextual information.

AAV is obligated to report all cases of fraud to DFAT within five (5) business days. Investigations will be handled promptly, professionally, and confidentially. Individuals found to have engaged in fraudulent activities may be:

- Required to return misused funds
- Disqualified from current or future funding rounds
- Subject to legal or disciplinary action, as deemed appropriate by AAV or DFAT

Ethical Conduct and Accountability

Recipients of Conference Funding are considered ambassadors of the Australia Awards programme and are expected to uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct throughout their participation. This includes:

- Acting in good faith and with transparency
- Using funds solely for the purposes outlined in their approved application
- Demonstrating accountability through accurate reporting and financial stewardship

Failure to comply with these principles may result in suspension or termination of funding and reputational consequences within the alumni network and broader professional community.

11. Complaints and Appeal

Feedback, inquiries and complaints in relation to the processing and selection of applications should be made in writing and sent to info@australiaawardsvanuatu.org. Appeals against decisions on the selection of grantees will not be considered.

Contact details

Alumni Conference Funding

Australia Awards Vanuatu

PO Box 54

Vila Mall, Port Vila

Vanuatu

Phone: +678 22114

Email: info@australiaawardsvanuatu.org

Annex 2

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) – CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE APPLICATION FORM

SECTION A: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION

Full Name: _____
Email Address: _____
Phone Number: _____
Year of Graduation: _____
Name of Graduating Institution: _____
Country of Graduating Institution: _____
Degree / Area of Specialisation: _____
Current Role: _____
Organisation / Industry Sector: _____

SECTION B: CONFERENCE DETAILS

Alumni will be provided with some suggested conferences they may wish to consider (see Annex 5) but they may also nominate a conference found through their own research. Note that the maximum amount an alumni can be funded for is \$7,000AUD inclusive of all flights, transport, accommodation and stipend for the duration of the trip. When selecting a conference, carefully review the cost of conference tickets to ensure there is sufficient funding remaining to support your travel and accommodation arrangements.

Conference Name: _____
Conference Date: _____
Conference Duration (e.g., 1 day, 1 week, etc.): _____
Conference Location in Australia: _____
Cost of Conference Tickets: _____
Relevance to Your Field of Study or Career:
(Briefly explain how this conference aligns with your academic background or professional expertise)

SECTION C: JUSTIFICATION FOR ATTENDANCE

How will attending this conference enhance your knowledge and skills?

How do you plan to contribute to your industry or community after attending?

What networking, professional growth, or research collaboration opportunities do you anticipate?

SECTION D: EXPECTED OUTCOMES

How do you plan to apply insights gained from the conference?

Do you intend to share key takeaways? If so, how? (e.g., presentations, reports, mentorship, etc.)

☐ Yes – Specify: _____

☐ No

What impact do you anticipate on your organisation or industry?

SECTION E: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Please attach the following documents (if required):

☐ CV / Resume

☐ Employer Endorsement

Submission Deadline: [Insert Deadline]

Submission Method: [Email]

Applicant's Signature: _____
Date: _____

Annex 3

Rubric for Evaluating Alumni Expressions of Interest (EOI) for Conference Attendance

This rubric ensures a fair and consistent evaluation of EOIs, helping to identify the most suitable alumni for conference participation.

Criteria	4 – Excellent	3 – Good	2 – Satisfactory	1 – Needs Improvement
Purpose of the EOI	Clearly and convincingly articulates interest in the conference, strong alignment with academic/professional background, and well-defined benefits for personal and community growth.	Adequately expresses interest, aligns with background, and identifies benefits, though some details may lack depth.	Provides basic interest and relevance but lacks strong justification or community impact.	Weak or unclear statement of interest, little connection to background, and minimal discussion of benefits.
Personal and Professional Background	Provides complete details: full name, contact, year of graduation, degree, and current role/industry. Strong professional context.	Includes most required details with minor omissions or lacks clarity in professional background.	Some key details are missing or vague, making it difficult to understand the applicant's background.	Incomplete or missing background information, making evaluation difficult.
Conference Relevance	Clearly outlines the conference details (name, date, location) and provides a strong justification of its relevance to field of study or career.	Includes conference details and relevance, but explanation could be stronger.	Conference details provided, but connection to professional goals is weak or unclear.	Missing conference details or fails to explain why it is relevant.
Justification for Attendance	Provides a compelling case for attending, with well-articulated benefits in terms of knowledge, skills, industry contributions, and networking.	Justification is clear but could be more detailed or persuasive regarding professional benefits.	Basic justification with minimal discussion of professional impact or industry relevance.	Weak or vague justification, lacking clear benefits for personal or professional growth.
Expected Outcomes	Strong and detailed plan for applying knowledge gained, with clear methods for sharing insights and measurable impact on industry or organisation.	Outlines expected outcomes, though details on application and impact could be more specific.	Mentions potential impact but lacks a concrete plan for application or knowledge sharing.	Fails to describe how the conference experience will be utilised or shared.
Submission Guidelines (Format, Deadline, and Supporting Documents)	Fully adheres to format, meets the deadline, and includes all required documents (CV, references, endorsements, if needed).	Mostly adheres to format and includes most documents but may have minor errors.	Submission lacks some key components (e.g. missing a supporting document, minor formatting issues).	Fails to meet format requirements, is late, or missing essential documents.

Clarity and Professionalism	Exceptionally well-written, professional tone, logically structured, and free from errors.	Well-written and mostly professional, with minor structural or grammatical issues.	Some areas lack clarity, or professionalism is inconsistent (e.g. minor grammatical errors, unclear structure).	Poorly written, lacks professionalism, or has frequent errors that impact readability.
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Scoring Guide:

- **28–32 (Outstanding):** Strong, well-structured EOI with clear purpose, justification, and expected outcomes.
- **22–27 (Good):** Solid submission with minor areas for improvement in clarity or detail.
- **16–21 (Satisfactory):** Meets minimum requirements but lacks depth or clear justification.
- **Below 16 (Needs Improvement):** Weak or incomplete submission, requiring significant revision.

Annex 4

Alumni Conference Funding Report Template

Instructions:

As a recipient of conference funding, you are required to submit a report upon your return. Please complete this template and submit it along with any supporting materials (e.g., photographs) by the specified deadline. This report helps assess the impact of the funding and provides valuable insights for future funding opportunities.

Section 1: Recipient Information

- **Name:**
 - **Email:**
 - **Phone Number:**
 - **Affiliation (Institution/Organisation):**
 - **Conference Attended:**
 - **Conference Dates:**
 - **Conference Location:**
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Section 2: Conference Overview

Provide a brief summary of the conference, including its purpose, themes, and key topics discussed.

(Response: 150–250 words)

Section 3: Main Outcomes of the Conference

Describe the key takeaways from the conference. Highlight any new knowledge gained, professional connections made, or skills acquired. If applicable, mention how these outcomes will impact your work, research, or academic/professional development.

(Response: 200–300 words)

Section 4: Conference Highlights

Share the most valuable or insightful sessions, workshops, or networking opportunities you participated in. Include any key speakers, notable discussions, or unique experiences that stood out.

(Response: 200–300 words)

Section 5: Testimonial

Provide a brief testimonial on how attending this conference benefited you professionally or academically. This may be used for future promotional materials.

(Response: 100–200 words)

Section 6: Photographs

Attach 2–3 high-quality photographs from the conference. These can include images of keynote sessions, networking events, alumni near signage advertising the conference, or participation in panel discussions. Please ensure you have the necessary permissions to share these images.

Photo Descriptions (Optional):

1. *[Brief description of photo 1]*
 2. *[Brief description of photo 2]*
 3. *[Brief description of photo 3]*
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Section 7: Additional Comments (Optional)

Feel free to share any additional insights, suggestions for future attendees, or recommendations for improving the funding process.

(Response: Optional – 100–200 words)

Submission Instructions:

- Complete this template and **submit it via email within 7 days of your return to Vanuatu.**
- Ensure that all sections are filled out thoughtfully and comprehensively.
- If you have any questions, please contact junila.sese@australiaawardsvanuatu.org or sarah.freeman@australiaawardsvanuatu.org

Annex 5 Proposed Conferences

Conference Type	Location & Date	Cost	Bio
Quality Teaching Practice Conference in	Newcastle University. 8-9 July	Single delegate pass \$935	https://qtacademy.edu.au/eclevacrm-event/quality-teaching-in-practice-conference-2025/ <i>We are thrilled to announce the highly anticipated return of the Quality Teaching in Practice conference for its fourth consecutive year. QTIP25: The Power of Pedagogy will be held at the University of Newcastle on Tuesday 8 – Wednesday 9 July 2025. QTIP25 seeks to bring together hundreds of passionate teachers and school leaders from across Australia. The conference will provide a platform for attendees to represent their diverse school communities and engage with leading education researchers and policy makers. QTIP25 aims to be the bridge between quality research and practice to have a positive impact for teachers, students, systems, and equity.</i>
Australian Public Health Conference 2025	Novotel Wollongong Northbeach	Single delegate pass \$TBC	https://www.austph2025.com/about <i>The Australian Public Health Conference is a national conference held by the Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA), which presents a national and multi-disciplinary perspective on public health issues. PHAA members and non-members can contribute to discussions on the broad range of public health issues and exchange ideas, knowledge and information on the latest developments in public health.</i>
Climate Adaptation 2025	23 - 25 July, Pan Pacific Perth	Single delegate pass \$1,350	https://www.ivvy.com.au/event/CA2025/ <i>The conference is Australia's preeminent event focused exclusively on climate vulnerability, impacts and adaptation. It is</i>

			<p><i>an opportunity to share knowledge and experience, to network and strengthen the growing community of adaptation practice and research in Australia.</i></p> <p><i>The program across three days includes plenary sessions focused on key voices, panel sessions and workshops addressing specific challenges and thematic sessions of delegate presentations.</i></p>
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