Alumni Grant Scheme
Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Alumni Grant Scheme?

The Alumni Grant Scheme (AGS) aims to support Australian Awards alumni to apply and share the knowledge and experience they have gained during their studies in Australia or the Pacific, and help strengthen links between Vanuatu and Australia or the wider Pacific.

The specific objectives of the AGS 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.

2. Who can apply?

The AGS is open to all Vanuatu citizens who have graduated from a tertiary institution through Australia Awards Vanuatu (AAV), including:

- recipients of all Australian Government long-term scholarship programs such as Australia Awards Pacific Scholarship and Australia Awards Scholarships

AAV may ask you to provide a copy of your testamur, statement of graduation or other document to prove you are eligible.

Grant applications may be submitted by individual alumni, groups led or co-led by alumni, or organisations involving alumni. Groups may include people who are not alumni but the group must be led by an individual who is an alumnus. There is no limit to the number of people within a group although normally this would not exceed 10.

3. What kind of projects and activities do the grants cover?

The AGS supports a range of projects and activities that contribute to its objectives. Activities eligible for funding include, but are not limited to:

- Training, workshops and seminars;
- Capacity building, mentoring or coaching;
- Research and research-related activities;
- R&D and innovation;
- Knowledge and technology transfer;
- Professional networking programs

- Public awareness campaigns;
- Organisational or institutional strengthening; and,
- Community development activities.

4. What are the Grant Categories?

Category 1: Project Grant

The Project Grant provides up to $AUD 7,000 (approx. VT 550,000[1]) for you to undertake your initiative.

Category 2: Follow-on Grant

The Follow-on Grant is intended to scale-up or conduct follow-up activities of your AGS project. If you were previously awarded an AGS, and you wish to continue delivering your project, you may also apply for a grant of a further $AUD 7,000 (VT 550,000).

Note: You will need to demonstrate that your current project is achieving the objectives you stated in the original if you wish to apply for a Follow-on Grant. It is also important to detail how the additional funds will substantially improve outcomes.

5. When do applications open? Can I apply outside of these times?

Applications tentatively open during September - October of each year with specific dates to be advised. Advertising will occur through the Australia Awards Vanuatu website, DFAT social media platforms, Australia Awards Vanuatu closed Facebook page and via the alumni email database. Applications are not normally accepted outside the advertised rounds.

6. How do I apply?

You will need to submit an application via email.

7. What if I need assistance writing my proposal?

An additional resource located on the Australia Awards Vanuatu website is a video titled 'Alumni Grant Scheme Writing Workshop' that can be located here: https://australiaawardsvanuatu.org/alumni/videos/

A grant writing workshop will also be held a week prior to applications opening to take interested applicants through the process of writing a proposal. Alumni will be notified of this workshop via email and AAV's closed Facebook page.

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[1] Subject to prevailing exchange rate

8. **What information do I need to provide in my application?**

To apply for a grant, you will need to fill out the application form provided via email and on the AAV website: australiaawardsvanuatu.org

- the name of the project;
- a brief description of the project (including a list of its main activities); ▯   the proposed objectives and anticipated outcomes of the project;
- the beneficiaries of the project;
- how the project addresses the selection criteria;
- how the outcomes of the project will be assessed (including any performance targets); ▯   the potential risks to the project and how these will be managed;
- how the project will be publicised and promoted, and,
- the proposed budget and schedule of activities.

If your project involves a partnership with an Australian organisation, business or other institution, you will need to upload a letter of support.

You will need to submit your application in English and provide your budget (using the AGS budget spreadsheet proforma) in VT, except where there are expenses in other currencies. The spreadsheet proforma will calculate the total costs in VT and $AUD.

9. **How are grant applications assessed?**

Grant applications are assessed against the following criteria:

1. The project has clearly defined objectives consistent with one or more objectives of the AGS.
2. The project is linked to the knowledge and skills gained through the applicant's study program in Australia or Fiji and/or professional experience.
3. The project addresses an issue of strategic value to Australia and/or Vanuatu in relation to at least one of the following priority development areas of study that align with the National Human Resource Development Plan (NHRDP). Particular priority areas for applications include: health, climate change, education including the teaching of STEM - Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, veterinary and animal sciences, training and assessment, construction, health, mechanics, information technology and hospitality management. Additionally, projects relating to the maritime sector will be considered.
4. The project offers potential to establish or maintain sustainable linkages between Australia and Vanuatu.
5. The project will have a measurable and tangible impact. The application should demonstrate how this impact will be measured.
6. The project has a clear and realistic strategy for achieving its objectives within the stated timeframe, including sufficient budget and an appropriate assessment of risk.
7. The project represents value for money, including by leveraging contributions from third parties. Value for money is defined as economy (spending less), efficiency (spending well), effectiveness (spending wisely), and equity (spending fairly).

Information on the weighting of these criteria is available in the **AGS Grant Guidelines**.

10. What should I do if my project is delayed?

You must normally be able to use the grant funds within six months of the grant being awarded. If you think your project or activity will be delayed, you should advise AAV in writing. If you have already received the funds and your project cannot go ahead within six months, AAV may ask you to return the funds.

11. What if I want to change the activities in my project?

You can only use grant funds for carrying out the activities you described in your grant application. If you want to make any changes to the project or an activity within it you should request approval from AAV in advance.

You should also request approval from AAV in advance if your project or activity will be carried out by a person or organisation that was not mentioned in your application.

12. When will I receive the funds for my project?

Once you have been advised that your application has been successful, we will prepare a grant agreement for you to sign. The full terms and conditions of your grant will be set out in this agreement. We cannot pay any grant funds until we have received a signed grant agreement from you.

All grants are paid in VT in tranches. Normally, we will pay 70 percent of the grant when you return the signed grant agreement to us and the remaining 30 percent within 30 days of us receiving a satisfactory Activity Completion Report and Financial Report from you.

13. Can I get additional funding over and above my grant?

We can only provide additional funding for a project through a follow-on grant. You will need to apply for a follow-on grant during one of the advertised rounds and provide us with evidence that your project is performing well and that you are managing the grant funds efficiently and effectively.

14. What happens if I don't spend all the grant money?

We will pay you the actual amount it costs to implement your project. We use your Financial Report to work this out and adjust the final tranche payment to take this into account. If you spent less than the first payment tranche, you need to return the unspent balance of the first payment tranche.

15. What happens if I don't complete the project?

If you are not able to finish the project, we will ask you to return all or part of the grant funds. We will work out how much of the funds you need to return based on whether there were any circumstances outside of your control and how much of the project or activity was already completed.

15. Do I need to acknowledge Australian Government support for my project?

You should acknowledge Australian funding in the activities you carry out as part of your project and in any publicity. We encourage you to promote your projects in traditional and online media but please talk to AAV about any publicity as there are strict protocols applying to the use of Australia Awards branding.

16. What is a Testamur?

Testamur is statement of graduation or other documentary evidence to prove eligibility as an Australian alumnus, such as;

- Graduation/degree of certificate
- Statement of graduation (temporary, if the certificate is not yet available, provided by University)