



Australian Government



NEW COLOMBO PLAN

Connect to Australia's future - study in the region

# New Colombo Plan Mobility Program 2024 Round Guidelines

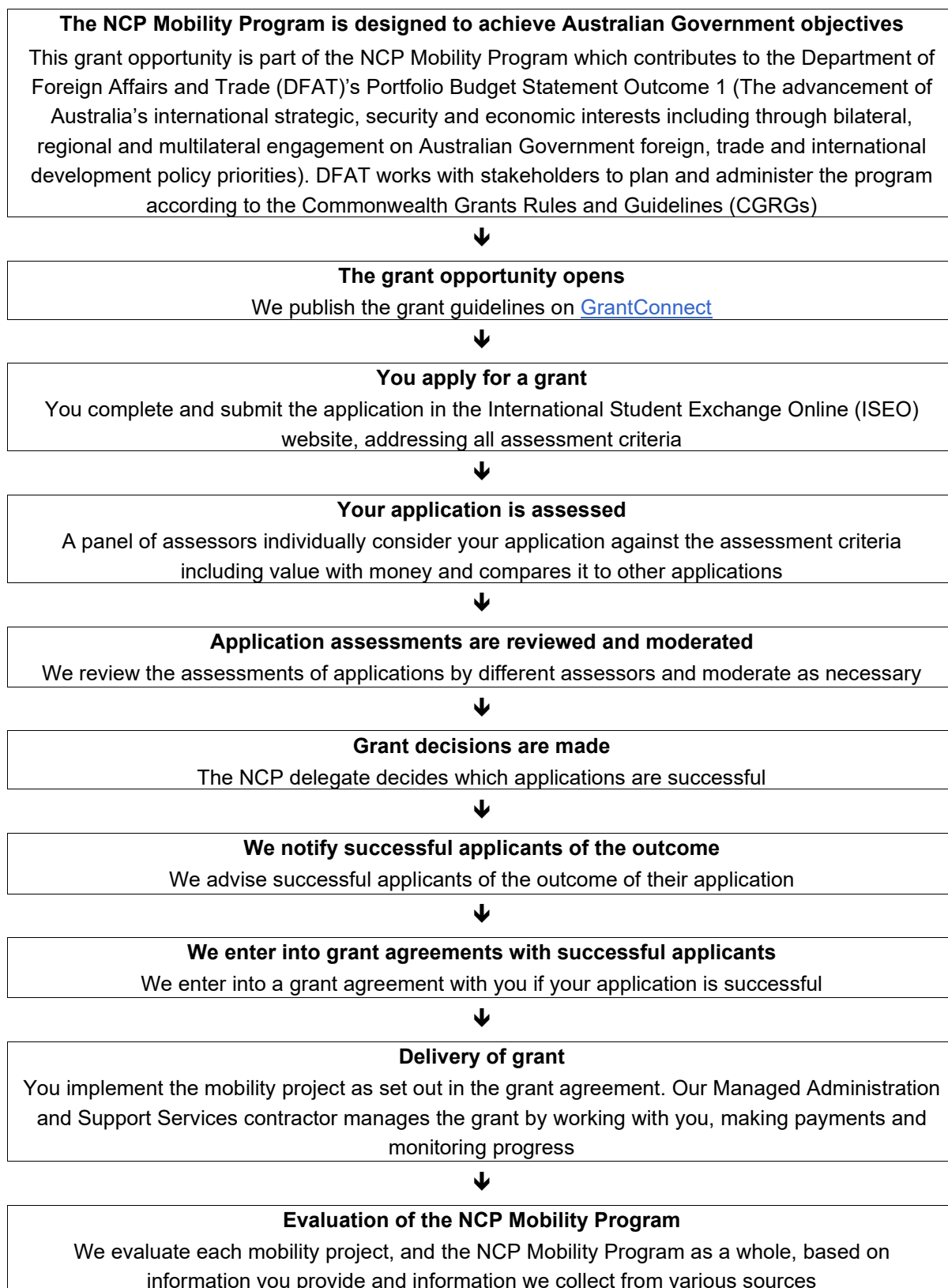
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Applications closing date and time:	11.30 pm AEST on 31 August 2023
Commonwealth policy and administering entity:	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Enquiries:	Please send any questions to <a href="mailto:ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au">ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au</a> , no later than 24 August 2023
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## 1. New Colombo Plan Mobility Program 2024 Round processes



## 1.1 Introduction

These guidelines relate to the 2024 round of the New Colombo Plan (NCP) Mobility Program. You must read these guidelines in full and the 2024 Advice to Applicants on the DFAT [website](#) before applying. These guidelines take priority to the extent of any inconsistency with the Advice to Applicants.

These guidelines set out:

- the purpose of the NCP Mobility Program and this grant opportunity
- eligibility requirements and assessment criteria
- how grant applications are assessed and selected
- how grantees are notified and receive grants
- how grants are monitored and evaluated, and
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

## 2. About the grant program

### 2.1 Strategic objective and outcomes of the NCP

The NCP, launched in 2014, aims to lift knowledge in Australia of the Indo-Pacific by supporting Australian university students to study and undertake internships in the region.

The NCP has two programs: scholarships (for up to 19 months) and mobility grants (between two weeks and two semesters). Both programs include study, internships, mentorships and language training. The NCP also includes the NCP Alumni Program, which is open to all NCP scholars and mobility students on completion of their award, and supports alumni to maintain a connection to each other, the NCP and the Indo-Pacific as they progress in their lives and careers.

The strategic objective of the NCP is to strengthen Australia's regional standing by building a diverse cohort of Australian alumni with deeper Indo-Pacific knowledge, capability and connections.

The intended outcomes of the NCP are:

- increased number and diversity of Australian university graduates with Indo-Pacific capability
- deeper people-to-people and institutional relationships between Australia and the Indo-Pacific, and
- students and alumni connected with leaders in government, business and civil society in the Indo-Pacific.

We administer the program according to the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines* (CGRGs)<sup>1</sup>

### 2.2 About the NCP Mobility Program

The NCP Mobility Program provides funding to Australian universities to deliver mobility projects that enable Australian university students to participate in study, internships, mentorships, practicums and research in eligible Indo-Pacific host locations.

The NCP Mobility Program encourages universities to develop innovative partnerships with organisations and communities in Australia and the region to enhance NCP student experiences. For

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.finance.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-11/commonwealth-grants-rules-and-guidelines.pdf>

example, a private sector organisation may offer additional internship opportunities or other support to NCP students.

### 2.3 Roles and responsibilities of the Australian Government

The NCP Secretariat within DFAT is responsible for strategic leadership, policy, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, business liaison and public diplomacy for the NCP.

DFAT has contracted a Managed Administration and Support Services provider (the contractor) to support the management of application and selection processes of the NCP Mobility Program. All persons involved in selection processes have the skills and experience to assess applications. All personnel are subject to the CGRGs and are required to declare any conflict of interest.

The contractor is the first point of contact on administrative matters, including eligibility for the NCP Mobility Program, applications and funding arrangements, variations to approved projects, risk management, completion of reporting and acquittals, and monitoring and evaluation.

DFAT is not responsible for arranging study, internships, mentorships, language training, travel (including visas and accommodation) or other aspects of mobility projects, including managing risk and critical incidents. Home universities, host institutions, host organisations and language training providers are responsible for planning, implementation and managing mobility projects.

### 2.4 Roles and responsibilities of Australian universities

Australian universities can apply for funding under the NCP Mobility Program to deliver a mobility project. Australian universities are responsible for managing their NCP projects, including the welfare and safety of participating students. Australian universities are responsible for:

- a) ensuring the mobility project complies with the home university's quality assurance processes
- b) being aware of relevant travel advice on the Australian Government's [Smartraveller](#) website and carefully considering the risk of travel to proposed host locations and regions within host locations before applying
- c) actively promoting the NCP and complying with [NCP Media and Publication Guidelines](#)
- d) ensuring students are eligible to participate and the process used to select students is fair, independent and transparent, and providing details of this process to DFAT on request
- e) actively supporting participation of a diverse range of students
- f) informing students of other funding available to help with the cost of undertaking mobility projects, for example OS-HELP<sup>2</sup>
- g) ensuring staff and students participating in the mobility project subscribe to relevant travel advisories on Smartraveller prior to travelling overseas. If Smartraveller activates a crisis page for an overseas incident, students in those location(s) must register on that page
- h) ensuring staff and students participating in the mobility project do not travel to or remain in locations where Smartraveller advice is "Do not travel" or "Reconsider your need to travel"
- i) ensuring appropriate risk management and safety precautions are in place, uploading critical incident plans and risk management plans to ISEO at least four weeks prior to the commencement of overseas travel. Critical incident plans must include procedures for managing and reporting critical incidents and emergency contact details (the NCP Student Welfare Risk Management Better Practice Guide refers)

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<sup>2</sup> OS-HELP is a loan available to eligible students enrolled in an Australian Government-supported place who want to undertake some of their study overseas. Information on OS-HELP is available from <https://www.studyassist.gov.au/help-loans>

- j) requiring students to obtain travel medical advice, including any necessary vaccinations prior to commencing travel, and the management of pre-existing conditions
- k) ensuring travel insurance has been provided, or support students to seek, and ensure they have obtained, their own insurance, and
- l) ensuring adequate support is in place at the host institution and/or host organisation and home university
- m) ensuring staff and participating students are aware of and comply with [DFAT's Child Protection Policy](#) and [Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy](#) including the reporting obligations under these policies (see Section 10.3)
- n) taking into account the [Guidelines to Counter Foreign Interference in the Australian University Sector](#)
- o) complying with all applicable requirements under the Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act 2020 (Cth). Australian public universities have an obligation under the Foreign Arrangements Scheme when entering into arrangements with foreign entities, including certain foreign universities. Universities must comply with these obligations in relation to NCP Mobility Program. Information about the Foreign Arrangements Scheme is available at <https://www.foreignarrangements.gov.au/>
- p) not providing support or resources to organisations or individuals associated with terrorism, including 'terrorist organisation' as defined in Division 102 of the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth)
- q) arranging appropriate pre-departure briefing for participating students, including ensuring all students complete DFAT's online NCP pre-departure training modules (i.e. the Risks and Responsibilities and Cultural Awareness modules).
- r) ensuring students travel using only an Australian passport, obtain appropriate visas for host locations and comply with the terms of those visas
- s) ensuring students are advised that the Australian Government may collect, use, disclose and publish a student's personal information (see Sections 12.4, 13.3 and 13.4)
- t) ensuring all student details are entered into ISEO at least three weeks before a student departs Australia
- u) ensuring all students receive the NCP Mobility Program information letter, NCP Student Code of Conduct, and NCP Media and Publication Guidelines prior to departure
- v) ensuring students sign an acknowledgement that they have read the NCP Student Code of Conduct prior to departure
- w) issuing NCP Completion Certificates and Welcome to the NCP Alumni Program letters from ISEO to students who have completed a mobility project
- x) providing supplementary information about the mobility project, if requested by DFAT or the contractor, to assist NCP Mobility Program promotion, monitoring and evaluation
- y) submitting a completion report within four weeks of participating students' return to Australia, including providing additional information, if requested, to enable acceptance of the report, and
- z) providing services to encourage, enable and support the participation of a diverse range of students in NCP projects including, but not limited to, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students, students from a low socio-economic status background, students from regional/remote areas, students who are first in their immediate family to attend university, students across genders, female students studying in non-traditional fields, students living with disability, and students from a non-English speaking background.

### 3. Grant amount and grant period

#### 3.1 Grants available

A total of \$40 million is available in NCP grant program funding for the 2023-24 financial year. This funding covers the NCP Scholarship Program and the Mobility Program.

DFAT may offer less funding for a successful project than the amount sought by a university in an application depending on, for example, available funding and the university's implementation of funding from previous NCP rounds.

An NCP Mobility grant provides funds for

- a) student grants to contribute to students' international travel and living costs to participate in the mobility project, and
- b) administration funding (see Section 5.2.2).

#### 3.2 Grant period

The minimum duration of a mobility project is 14 continuous days (from the date of departure to the host location to the date of return to Australia from that host location).

The maximum program duration is two consecutive semesters.

Participating students must commence travel during the mobility program term (1 January 2024 to 31 December 2025).

### 4. Eligibility criteria

DFAT will only consider applications that satisfy all eligibility requirements.

#### 4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

Only Australian universities are eligible to apply for funding through the NCP Mobility Program.

Australian universities may submit consortium applications (see Section 7.2). You must not apply for funding for the same project in the same round through both an individual and a consortium application.

#### 4.2 Student eligibility

You must ensure each student receiving a student grant:

- a) is an Australian citizen
- b) is not a citizen or permanent resident of the proposed host location/s
- c) is enrolled in an Australian onshore campus and undertaking an undergraduate course
- d) will receive credit for completion of the mobility project or have it count towards the requirements for the student's course (as in Section 5.1b) at an Australian university
- e) meets the age requirements set out in Section 4.3
- f) not be an employee of the branch of DFAT that administers the NCP, or the contractor
- g) does not
  - (i) receive more than one NCP student grant for the same mobility project, or
  - (ii) receive more than two NCP student grants during the course of their undergraduate study
  - (iii) participate in another offshore scholarship or mobility project while participating in an NCP mobility project unless otherwise approved by DFAT.



- h) agrees to comply with DFAT's [Child Protection Policy](#) and [Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy](#) including the reporting obligations under these policies (see Section 10.3), and has completed DFAT's online NCP pre-departure training modules,
- i) has signed an acknowledgement that they have read NCP Student Code of Conduct prior to their departure, and
- j) takes into account the [Guidelines to Counter Foreign Interference in the Australian University Sector](#)

### 4.3 Age requirements

You must ensure at least 70 per cent of students participating in a mobility project and receiving a student grant are aged between 18 and 28 years inclusive at the commencement of the mobility project.

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students do not need to be aged between 18 and 28, and for the purposes of calculating the 70 per cent of students, are to be counted as students aged under age 28, recognising that a high proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students are mature aged students.

If you cannot fill places on a mobility project due to these age requirements, you may apply to DFAT for an exemption to these age requirements prior to the project commencing. We will consider:

- the demonstrated inability to recruit students within the relevant age requirements
- the steps you have taken to meet this requirement, and
- whether the home university has a high proportion of mature age students.

## 5. What the grant money can be used for

### 5.1 Eligible grant activities

NCP Mobility Program funding may only be used for student grants and administration costs for an approved mobility project, as outlined in this Section.

Australian universities can apply for funding for mobility projects that meet the following criteria:

- a) include at least one of the following components:
  - (i) study
  - (ii) in-country face-to-face language study
  - (iii) internships (including clinical placements, practicums or artist residencies), or
  - (iv) research
- b) provide credit or otherwise count towards the course requirements for the student's undergraduate course (see Glossary for definition of 'undergraduate course')
- c) be undertaken in an eligible host location (see Section 5.5.1)
- d) must not be undertaken at an off-shore campus of an Australian university or of a country other than the host location, or at a university established or headquartered outside the host location, unless approved by DFAT under section 5.8, and
- e) must not breach DFAT's Safeguard Principles, as set out in section 5.9.

If a mobility project includes activities focused on scientific exchange or research, the home and host institutions/organisations should become familiar with Australia's export control regimes.

Similarly, the [Guidelines to Counter Foreign Interference in the Australian University Sector](#) are foundational elements essential for building resilience within a university in response to foreign interference and should be applied proportionate to the risk at each institution.

## 5.2 Eligible expenditure

### 5.2.1 Student grants

Eligible students participating in a mobility project will each receive a student grant as determined by you. The student grant is intended to contribute, in the first instance, to the cost of a student's international travel and in-country living expenses during the project. Off-shore language training may also be included. Preference will be given to semester-length projects, to create a stream of students with long-term immersive experiences in the Indo-Pacific.

In the Project Description of your application, you must provide a value-for-money justification for the proposed per-student funding.

The amount of a student grant should reflect actual costs at individual locations (for example, cost of living differences between host locations). We suggest the following as indicative student grant amounts:

- up to \$3,000 for participation in a mobility project of at least 2 weeks
- up to \$4,000 for participation in a mobility project of at least 4 weeks
- up to \$5,000 for participation in a mobility project of at least 6 weeks
- up to \$10,000 for participation in a mobility project of at least one semester
- up to \$20,000 for participation in a mobility project of two consecutive semesters

The actual amount of a student grant may vary depending on the relative costs of the host location, the nature of the mobility project and other considerations (for example additional travel expenses incurred by regional and remote students and/or increasing accessibility for students with disabilities).

Students participating in a mobility project for the same duration, at the same host location, undertaking the same activities at the same time should receive student grants of equal amounts for this activity. If a mobility project includes different options for overseas experiences, such as two-week and six-week options, you may provide student grants at different amounts.

The home university may provide a higher student grant to a student who incurs additional travel costs (for example, travel from a rural/remote location to join the departure point for international travel).

You may use funding for student grants to make group travel arrangements (and not pay all funding directly to students), where there is a benefit for the students (such as discounts through group bookings). In such cases, students must provide written consent to part of their mobility grant not being paid directly to them. You must retain evidence of this.

For grants of \$5,000 or more, the student may receive the grant in tranches, as determined by you.

You must not use funding provided for student grants for administration costs.

### 5.2.2 Administration funding

All recipients of NCP mobility funding will receive administration funding (ten per cent of total student grants for the project). Administration funding can be used for administration associated with NCP mobility project management, including but not limited to:

- a) additional support to increase diverse participation
- b) initiatives to raise the quality of mobility experiences (including risk management and critical incident planning for the mobility project)
- c) partnering with relevant Australian community groups to support quality project outcomes
- d) planning, arranging, and negotiating the mobility project
- e) supervising, monitoring and evaluating students' progress during the mobility project

- f) purchasing the services of third-party providers with relevant expertise and appropriate systems to support students to undertake the mobility project.

Universities must return unspent administration funding to DFAT (together with unspent mobility grant funding) once an NCP mobility project is completed and financially acquitted.

If a mobility project has been completed/expired without any student grants being expended, you must return all administration funding to DFAT. If not all students travelled as part of a project, you may retain administration funding equivalent to ten per cent of grants paid to students who did travel. Where extenuating circumstances prevented students travelling, DFAT will consider requests to retain additional administration funding, up to ten per cent of grant funding offered.

### 5.3 What the grant money cannot be used for

You cannot use the grant for the following activities:

- purchase of land
- wages
- major capital expenditure
- covering retrospective costs
- costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation
- subsidy of general ongoing administration of an organisation such as electricity, phone and rent
- major construction/capital works, and
- activities for which other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies have primary responsibility.

### 5.4 Mobility partnerships

We encourage you to develop mobility partnerships with organisations in Australia and the region to maximise opportunities for NCP-funded students and participating institutions to build linkages and develop lasting relationships that support the aims of the NCP. For example:

- financial sponsorship (a cash contribution) from a private sector organisation
- language training provided by community language schools in Australia prior to and/or after travel
- in-kind sponsorship through the provision of goods or services free of charge for use in the mobility project (that otherwise would have incurred a fee). This may include private sector organisations providing students access to resources or learning and development opportunities.

Mobility partnerships should contribute to achieving the NCP's strategic objective. They may not include contributions provided by Australian universities, host institutions, or service providers (paid a fee for supporting elements of a mobility project).

### 5.5 Eligible host locations

#### 5.5.1 Host locations

Mobility projects must be conducted only in the following host locations:

Bangladesh	French Polynesia	Maldives	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
Bhutan	Hong Kong	Marshall Islands	Palau	Taiwan
Brunei Darussalam	India	Mongolia	Papua New Guinea	Thailand

Cambodia	Indonesia	Myanmar	Philippines	Timor-Leste
China	Japan	Nauru	Republic of Korea	Tonga
Cook Islands	Kiribati	Nepal	Samoa	Tuvalu
Federated States of Micronesia	Laos	New Caledonia	Singapore	Vanuatu
Fiji	Malaysia	Niue	Solomon Islands	Vietnam

### 5.5.2 Primary host locations

A primary host location is the host location for which the mobility project is awarded. Most of the duration of a mobility project must be completed in the primary host location.

### 5.5.3 Secondary host locations

Components of a project may be undertaken in a secondary host location. For example:

- a) a research project in a primary host location and fieldwork in a secondary host location, or
- b) a study program in a primary host location with an internship in a secondary host location.

The rationale for including a secondary host location must be explained in the application.

## 5.6 Travel requirements

You (and participating students) are responsible for travel arrangements, including:

- a) accessing information about and addressing the risks of traveling (for example, obtaining comprehensive insurance that covers the host locations students will visit, their activities and pre-existing medical conditions)
- b) ensuring visa requirements are met
- c) reading and subscribing to relevant advice on [Smartraveller](#) and
- d) obtaining travel medical advice prior to commencing travel, including necessary vaccinations and advice on pre-existing medical conditions.

Participating students must not travel to or remain in a host location or region within a host location for which the Smartraveller advice is 'Do not travel' or 'Reconsider your need to travel'.

## 5.7 Travel risks

In designing your mobility project application, you must carefully consider the risks of travel to all proposed host locations and regions. You must ensure strategies and services are in place to support student welfare and safety (see Section 2.4). You should advise participating students to make their own enquiries about the risks involved in overseas travel, including to the host location, and to ensure they are fully informed about the risks at all times.

Home universities are responsible for student welfare and safety. Home universities must be aware of and comply with their obligations under any applicable workplace health and safety legislation. Similarly, organisations who provide NCP internships will likely incur work health and safety duty of care responsibilities. You must ensure that student travel risk assessment and risk management plans address all risks identified in the host location advisory published on Smartraveller.

## 5.8 Host institutions

Mobility projects must not be undertaken at an off-shore campus of an Australian university or a university established or headquartered outside the host location (for example, an off-shore campus of a third country university). DFAT may waive this requirement in exceptional circumstances where there is a strong demonstrated benefit to the overall NCP mobility program.

## 5.9 Safeguard Principles

Mobility projects must comply with DFAT's Safeguard Principles as outlined in DFAT's Environmental and Social [Safeguard Policy](#).

Mobility projects must not cause harm including injury or injustice to any person that a mobility project is intended to engage with or assist, or to their wider communities or environment.

## 6. Assessment criteria

In the Project Description of the application, the applicant should outline:

- the activities participating students will undertake
- how the project will be delivered (including any use of a third-party provider)
- justification for the proposed cost per student (value with money)
- whether/how the project addresses a priority theme (as outlined in the Advice to Applicants).

Applications must address each criterion to a satisfactory standard.

### Criterion 1: Ensuring a high-quality education experience

**Weighting: 30%**

**Describe the educational value of the mobility project, including learning outcomes relevant to the courses participating students are undertaking at their home university. What competencies will students develop through this mobility experience? Who will assess students' academic progress?**

Please outline how:

- the academic quality standards of the home university will be applied to the mobility project
- participation will contribute to core learning outcomes of participating students
- increased understanding of host location language (where applicable) and culture will be supported
- the home university will assess the academic performance of participating students.

### Criterion 2: Deepening people-to-people and institutional linkages with the Indo-Pacific

**Weighting: 40%**

**Describe how the proposed mobility project will:**

- (a) establish new and/or deepen people-to-people and institutional partnerships in the Indo-Pacific, and**
- (b) build and sustain these linkages over time.**

Please outline how the project will meet the NCP's strategic objectives by deepening and sustaining linkages in the region. You should provide practical examples of how the project will enable students, universities, the private sector, community groups, and other stakeholders to develop and sustain partnerships (for example through research collaborations, longer periods in the host location, a focus on language study, and/or advancing a thematic priority outlined in the Advice to Applicants).

Please outline how institutional and people-to-people linkages will continue and be sustained into the future (after any NCP funding ceases), including detailing any current or planned partnership agreements (such as MoUs).

### **Criterion 3: Broadening participation and promoting the New Colombo Plan**

**Describe how the mobility project will support increased participation by a diverse range of Australian students and promote the NCP in Australia and overseas**

**Weighting: 20%**

Please describe practical steps/initiatives to encourage and support the participation of a diverse range of students in the mobility project.

While your response may reference policies of your institution, it should also provide specific examples of how the project would support participation of students who may not otherwise participate in international mobility experiences.

### **Criterion 4: Ensuring sound student welfare management in mobility projects**

**Weighting: 10%**

**Describe how your institution will ensure the safety and welfare of participating students, and manage risks during any disruptive events during the project**

Please describe the offshore support available to participating students. Please outline risk management and safety planning and precautions, including the home university's policies and processes for monitoring and compliance with safeguards principles (including child protection, prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, and environmental and social safeguards) and managing critical incidents.

If third-party providers are to be used, how will the home university ensure that NCP policies relating to risk are adhered to?

## **7. How to apply**

You must apply for funding and accept or decline funding through ISEO. You can nominate multiple staff to access ISEO but only the nominated International Liaison Officer (ILO) can submit an application in ISEO.

Any alterations or addenda to these guidelines will be published on GrantConnect.<sup>3</sup> If you register on GrantConnect, you will be notified automatically of any changes. GrantConnect is the authoritative source for grants information.

### **7.1 Application process**

You must enter the following details for each mobility project into the application form in ISEO:

- a) host location and primary city, field of study, whether the mobility project is a new or existing project (and the existing project number if applicable), the length of study and whether the application is a consortium application

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<sup>3</sup> Alterations and addenda include but are not limited to: corrections to currently published documents, changes to close times for applications, Questions and Answers (Q&A) documents and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) documents

- b) title and description of the project (including whether the project involves travel to a secondary location), mobility project type, qualification level, indicative travel dates, project partner(s) and mobility partnerships details
- c) confirmation that the project meets the eligibility criteria
- d) a contact point for the mobility project (usually the academic or mobility officer leading the mobility project)
- e) responses to the assessment criteria
- f) total funding sought for student grants
- g) the number of students to participate in the mobility project
- h) declarations that:
  - the person submitting the application has the authority to do so
  - the application complies with the home university's quality assurance processes
  - all funded mobility projects will be implemented and funding will be expended and reported in accordance with these guidelines and the grant agreement
  - financial support received from the Australian Government will be acknowledged in all publications, promotional materials and activities
  - you have appropriate strategies and services in place to support student welfare and safety (see Section 2.4)
  - you can demonstrate an approach to increasing participation by diverse student groups including but not limited to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students, students from a low socio-economic status background, students from Regional/Remote areas, students who are first in their immediate family to attend university, students across genders, female students studying in non-traditional fields, students with a disability, and students from a non-English speaking background
  - if any personal details of a student or other third party are included in an application or otherwise provided to the Australian Government as part of the mobility project, the student or other third party has given written consent for the collection, use and disclosure of those details for this purpose, and
  - you acknowledge that giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth).

You are responsible for ensuring the application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information to the Commonwealth is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code 1995* (Cth). An application may be excluded from consideration, offers revoked or a mobility project terminated if DFAT reasonably believes that false or misleading information has formed a component of an application. Further terms relating to the termination or cancellation of a mobility project are set out in the Grant Agreement.

If you find an error in the application after submitting it, email DFAT immediately at [ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au](mailto:ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au). DFAT does not have to accept additional information.

If DFAT finds an error or that information is missing, it may seek additional information from you that will not change the nature of the application. DFAT will not accept additional information after the closing time.

ISEO will automatically generate an email to acknowledge receipt of an application. You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents.

## 7.2 Joint (consortia) applications

Universities may submit applications on behalf of a consortium of universities. Each consortium application must nominate an Australian university as the lead applicant. The lead applicant will be



required to enter into a grant agreement and will be accountable for meeting legal and reporting requirements on behalf of the consortium. The lead applicant must have a formal arrangement in place with all parties prior to execution of the grant agreement.

### 7.3 Timing of grant opportunity processes

Applications must be submitted between the opening and closing dates. Key dates in the selection and implementation of projects are outlined below. DFAT may amend these dates at any time by posting a notice on GrantConnect.

Opening date:	<b>30 June 2023</b>
Closing date:	<b>31 August 2023 (11.30pm AEST)</b>
Assessment and selection of applications:	<b>September – October 2023</b>
Funding offers to successful applicants will be made prior to the beginning of the project term	
Mobility project term:	<b>1 January 2024 to 31 December 2025</b>
Completion date for mobility projects:	<b>31 December 2025</b>

### 7.4 Questions during the application process

Please direct any questions during the application period to the NCP Secretariat at [ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au](mailto:ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au). Where relevant, responses will be posted on GrantConnect.

The NCP Secretariat will not respond to questions received after **5.00 pm (AEST)** 24 August 2023.

## 8. The grant selection process

### 8.1 Assessment of grant applications

DFAT will not accept late applications. DFAT (and/or the contractor) will review each application for compliance with eligibility requirements (Section 4 and 5.1).

Your application will be assessed on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the assessment criteria (Section 6),
- how it compares to other applications, and
- whether it provides value with relevant money.

### 8.2 Who will assess applications?

Each eligible application will be reviewed by at least two independent assessors who are experienced in assessing Commonwealth grant applications or similar processes managed by Commonwealth departments. All assessors will be required to perform their duties in accordance with the CGRGs.

The NCP Secretariat will moderate assessors' recommendations for consistency across panels and with the NCP strategic objective, taking into consideration:

- the range and diversity amongst host locations, fields of study, home universities and mobility partners
- the number of students expected to participate and the duration of the project
- Australian foreign policy considerations
- the applicant's track records in expending and reporting on previous NCP mobility projects.



The NCP Secretariat will present these recommendations to the program delegate (Section 8.3).

The selection process may be used to determine a merit list of suitable projects, which may be drawn from for future funding.

DFAT reserves the right to offer partial funding of a grant application.

### **8.3 Who will approve grants?**

The program delegate (DFAT's First Assistant Secretary responsible for the NCP), or their delegate, will decide which applications will be funded, taking into account recommendations of assessors and the NCP Secretariat, Australian foreign policy considerations and the availability of funds.

The program delegate's decision is final in all matters, including:

- approval of the grant
- funding to be awarded, and
- terms and conditions of the grant

## **9. Notification of application outcomes**

We will advise successful applicants via email, including any conditions attached to the project(s).

An offer, once made, is final. DFAT will not enter into negotiations about a funding offer.

### **9.1 Feedback on your application**

Individual feedback will not be provided to applicants. If your application is unsuccessful, you may submit a new application for the same (or similar) project in any subsequent NCP rounds. A subsequent application will be assessed on its merits, based on the guidelines for that round.

## **10. Successful grant applications**

### **10.1 Accepting an offer**

Your ILO must accept or decline the offer for funding through ISEO by the date specified in the offer. Following acceptance of the funding offer, and prior to commencing the mobility project, DFAT will enter into a grant agreement with you, in accordance with Section 10.2.

### **10.2 The grant agreement**

You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth of Australia, represented by DFAT. The grant agreement will cover all NCP grants awarded to you. The grant agreement has terms and conditions that cannot be changed and requires you to comply with these guidelines. The version of the guidelines in place when you submitted the application will apply to the mobility project. In the event of any inconsistency between the grant agreement and these guidelines, the grant agreement will prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

You are responsible for any expenditure you make before a grant agreement is executed. If you start a mobility project before you have an executed grant agreement, you do so at your own risk.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the grant agreement.

### **10.3 Specific legislation and policies**

You and NCP-supported students are required to comply with all relevant Australian and local laws and regulations, in Australia and in host locations when undertaking a mobility project. This

includes compliance with laws in relation to child protection and preventing sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

DFAT does not tolerate exploitation, abuse or harassment. This applies within DFAT and extends to those we work with. Universities and NCP participants must read and adhere to DFAT's [Child Protection](#) Policy and [Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment \(PSEAH\)](#) Policy, which set out expectations in relation to appropriate behaviours and reporting requirements. DFAT takes all allegations and reported incidents of exploitation, abuse and harassment seriously. NCP students also have an obligation to comply with their university's policies on child protection and PSEAH.

You must take into account the [Guidelines to Counter Foreign Interference in the Australian University Sector](#).

## 10.4 How DFAT pays the grant

The contractor will pay the grant in accordance with the grant agreement.

## 10.5 Grant payments and GST

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations or seek assistance from the [Australian Taxation Office](#). Neither DFAT nor its contractor provide taxation advice. Before any payments can be made you must submit to DFAT a valid tax invoice for the amount of the grant funding. The contractor may elect to issue a [Recipient Created Tax Invoice](#).

## 11. Announcement of grants

DFAT may publicly announce the approved NCP mobility projects including, but not limited to:

- the title of the mobility project, their Australian university and host institution(s)
- the description of study areas and internships/mentorships (and their timing), and
- the amount of funding awarded.

## 12. How we monitor your grant activity

### 12.1 Keeping us informed

You should advise us of any adverse circumstances affecting the implementation of the project.

### 12.2 Reporting

You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement. A completion report (following the template in ISEO) for each mobility project, must be submitted no later than four weeks after the return of the last student, and must include:

- a statement declaring that all funding has been spent in accordance with the grant agreement and, if applicable, any unspent amounts that will be returned to DFAT
- the number of students who participated in the project and the amount of funding paid to each student as a student grant
- the actual amount of administration funding used, including details of expenditure
- key achievements against the NCP strategic objective and outcomes, including linkages established
- student diversity groups, and

- a list of publicity materials used to promote the mobility project and the NCP and any media coverage.

You may also provide:

- feedback received about the mobility project, including from participants
- photographs and examples of promotional material (as attachments).

### **12.3 Variations to mobility projects**

After an offer is accepted, requests to vary a mobility project will be considered only in accordance with this Section. Before applying to vary a mobility project, you should consider information in the *NCP Mobility Program Variations Guide* available on ISEO.

DFAT will not approve variation requests it considers to constitute a new project proposal.

A request to vary a mobility project will only be considered if the variation is:

- consistent with the strategic objective and outcomes of the NCP and these guidelines
- as close as is reasonable to the original mobility project as in the application, and
- consistent with the requirements regarding use of Australian Government funding including the CGRGs, the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (Cth) ('PGPA Act') and any other relevant governing policies for the disbursement of Australian Government grants funding.

You will be liable for any financial commitments you make in relation to proposed changes to a project prior to receipt of formal advice of approval of a variation.

If you cannot proceed with a mobility project in accordance with the application, and no variation is agreed, DFAT may withdraw a funding offer and/or request that funding be returned.

### **12.4 Sharing NCP stories**

You should retain photographs, online articles and/or links and other media coverage documenting the project, to be provided on request to the NCP Secretariat. You may send material to the NCP Secretariat ([ncp.communications@dfat.gov.au](mailto:ncp.communications@dfat.gov.au)) at any time.

Before providing images or personal information to the Australian Government, you must advise students that the Australian Government may collect, use, disclose and publish a student's personal Information including in accordance with Sections 13.4.

### **12.5 Compliance visits**

We may visit you during or at the completion of your grant activity to review your compliance with the grant agreement. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

### **12.6 Evaluation**

We evaluate how well the NCP Mobility Program is achieving its objective and outcomes. We may use information from your application and reports for this purpose. We may also request information on the achievements of the project to inform evaluation of how effectively it contributed to the objective and outcomes of the NCP. Information may be used to create testimonials to promote the NCP.

Program stakeholders, including project partners and students, may be asked to participate in the evaluation of the NCP Mobility Program.

## 13. Probity

The Australian Government will ensure the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the CGRGs.

The Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme provides the public with visibility of the nature, level and extent of foreign influence on Australia's government and politics. It is recommended that you review obligations and responsibilities under the scheme at <https://www.ag.gov.au/integrity/foreign-influence-transparency-scheme> before establishing project partners.

DFAT may change these guidelines from time to time. When this happens, the revised guidelines will be published on GrantConnect. DFAT will advise home universities of any supplementary requirements relating to the implementation of approved NCP projects.

### 13.1 Enquiries and feedback

Please send any questions or complaints about grant decisions for this grant opportunity to [ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au](mailto:ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au).

If you do not agree with the way the DFAT has handled your complaint, you may refer the matter to the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#). The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the DFAT.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (toll free): 1300 362 072  
Email: [ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au)  
Website: [www.ombudsman.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au)

### 13.2 Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if DFAT/the contractor's staff, any member of a committee or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel has:

- a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer, employee of the contractor or member of an external assessment panel
- a relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict you from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently, or
- a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the grant program/grant opportunity.

You will be asked to declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later identify an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform DFAT in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff are handled as set out in the Australian [Public Service Code of Conduct \(Section 13\(7\)\)](#) of the [Public Service Act 1999](#). Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must declare any conflicts of interest.

### 13.3 Privacy

DFAT and its contractors are bound by the provisions of the [Privacy Act 1988](#) (Privacy Act), including the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) which prescribe rules for handling personal information.

DFAT and its contractors collect personal information in relation to mobility projects under the NCP Mobility Program. Types of personal information collected includes personal details (e.g. name, gender, date of birth and contact details) and diversity information.

The purpose of DFAT and its contractors collecting this information is for the management, administration, promotion and evaluation of the NCP Mobility Program including to:

- a) assess applications
- b) administer the NCP, including monitoring performance and following up with students about their experiences
- c) promote the NCP, including but not limited to using personal information in promotional material, testimonials and hardcopy and/or online publications, and
- d) invite NCP students and alumni to relevant functions and events held in Australia and overseas.

DFAT may disclose personal information in relation to mobility projects under the NCP Mobility Program for the purposes listed above, including to:

- a) other Australian Government departments and agencies, including the Department of Education and Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
- b) State and Territory Governments
- c) Australian Parliamentary members and committees of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
- d) contractors and agents of DFAT, the Department of Education and Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
- e) Australian Universities, including to the NCP Liaison Officers
- f) potential internship/mentorship host organisations and language training providers, host location governments/authorities or non-government organisations. These may be foreign organisations (noting that they may not be bound by Australian privacy legislation or equivalent privacy legislation in their own countries)
- g) media representatives, including foreign media representatives.

DFAT may also disclose personal information in relation to projects under the NCP Mobility Program to overseas recipients, including host institutions, potential internship/mentorship host organisations, language training providers, host location governments/authorities and non-government organisations. Applicants must ensure that individuals are aware and provide consent for their personal information to be disclosed to an overseas recipient. This includes ensuring students are aware that: (a) the overseas recipient will not be accountable under the Privacy Act; and (b) Students will not be able to seek redress under the Privacy Act, if the overseas recipient handles students' personal information in breach of the Privacy Act.

Without limitation, applicants must ensure appropriate consents are obtained from individuals, including in accordance with the scope of permitted use and disclosure under this Section.

As part of your application, you declare your ability to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988* and the APPs and impose the same privacy obligations on officers, employees, agents and subcontractors that you engage to assist with the activity, in respect of personal information you collect, use, store, or disclose in connection with the activity. Accordingly, you must not do anything, which if done by DFAT would breach an APP as defined in the Act.

DFAT's [Privacy Policy](#) contains information about DFAT's collection, use, disclosure and storage of personal information, including sensitive information, and how individuals may access and correct personal information that we hold.

### 13.4 Confidential information

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to disclose to any person, other than us, any confidential information relating to the grant application and/or agreement, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where you are required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

We may at any time, require you to arrange for you, or your employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to nondisclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

We will keep any information in connection with the grant agreement confidential to the extent that it meets one of the conditions below:

1. you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential
2. the information is commercially sensitive
3. revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else.

We will not be in breach of any confidentiality agreement if the information is disclosed to:

- the NCP Secretariat and other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help us manage the program effectively
- DFAT's employees and contractors so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities
- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery
- other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary, or
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

The grant agreement may also include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the grant agreement.

### 13.5 Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about this grant opportunity, are subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1982](#) (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

All FOI requests must be referred to DFAT's FOI Coordinator in writing.

By mail: The Director  
 Freedom of Information and Privacy Law Section  
 Legal Division  
 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
 R.G. Casey Building, John McEwen Crescent  
 BARTON ACT 0221

By email: [foi@dfat.gov.au](mailto:foi@dfat.gov.au)

## 14. Glossary

Term	Definition
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	a person of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander heritage who identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which they live, or formerly lived
Accountable authority	see subsection 12(2) of the <a href="#">Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</a>
Administering entity	the entity that is responsible for the administration of part or all of the grant administration processes
Assessment criteria	the principles or standards, against which applications will be judged, as set out in section 6.
Australian university	a registered higher education provider for the purposes of the <i>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011</i> (Cth) that is registered in an “Australian University” category
Closing date/time	the date and time beyond which applications will not be accepted, as specified in the Section 7.3
Commonwealth entity	as defined in subsections 10(1) and (2) of the PGPA Act
Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs)	Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs) establish the overarching Commonwealth grants policy framework and articulate the expectations for all non-corporate Commonwealth entities in relation to grants administration. Under this overarching framework, non-corporate Commonwealth entities undertake grants administration based on the mandatory requirements and key principles of grants administration.
Confidential information	information that satisfies criteria at Section 13.4, or that the Australian Government designates as confidential, or that either party knows or ought to know is confidential. Does not include information otherwise in the public domain.

Term	Definition
Conflict of interest	real, apparent or potential private or personal associations or interests (financial or non-financial) which improperly influence, or may improperly influence, an applicant's performance of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the NCP Mobility program.
Consortium	a group of Australian universities that has appointed a lead applicant to submit an application
Contractor (the contractor)	DFAT's Managed Administration and Support Services contractor for the NCP
Decision maker	the person who decides to award a grant
Disability	any limitation, restriction or impairment that restricts everyday activities or assistance is required and has lasted or is likely to last for at least six months.
Eligibility requirements	requirements which must be met to qualify for a grant. Assessment criteria apply in addition to eligibility requirements.
Foreign Arrangements Scheme	the <a href="#">Foreign Arrangements Scheme</a> is administered by DFAT to implement <i>Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act 2020</i>
Gender	part of a person's social and personal identity and may not necessarily be the same as the person's sex. When applying, individuals are given the option to select M (male), F (female) or X (Indeterminate/Intersex/Unspecified)
Grant	for the purposes of the CGRGs, a 'grant' is an arrangement for the provision of financial assistance by the Commonwealth or on behalf of the Commonwealth: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. under which relevant money<sup>4</sup> or other Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) money<sup>5</sup> is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth; and</li> <li>b. which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government's policy outcomes while assisting the grantee achieve its objectives.</li> </ul>
Grant activity/activities	the mobility project that the grantee is required to undertake
Grant agreement	sets out the relationship between the parties to the agreement, and specifies the details of the grant

<sup>4</sup> Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 8, Dictionary.

<sup>5</sup> Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money.



Term	Definition
<a href="#">GrantConnect</a>	is the Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs
Grant opportunity	the specific grant round or process where a Commonwealth grant is made available to potential grantees. Grant opportunities may be open or targeted and will reflect the relevant grant selection process
Grant program	a 'program' carries its natural meaning and is intended to cover a potentially wide range of related activities aimed at achieving government policy outcomes. A grant program is a group of one or more grant opportunities under a single DFAT Portfolio Budget Statement Program
Grantee	the individual/organisation which has been selected to receive a grant
Home university	the Australian university at which the relevant student is enrolled throughout the duration of the mobility project in which they are participating
Host institution	a university or other education provider where students are enrolled for study in the host location as part of an NCP mobility project
Host location	the geographic location in the Indo-Pacific, as listed in Section 5.5.1, in which students undertake mobility projects
Host organisation	any other organisation, besides the host institution that may host students for work, training, study or research in the host location as part of the mobility project
Internship	a work experience in which a student has learning goals relevant to their academic course and professional development. Internships can include clinical placements, practicums or artist residencies
ISEO or International Student Exchange Online	DFAT's online system for managing applications
Law	any applicable statute, regulation, by-law, ordinance or subordinate legislation in force from time to time in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="746 1780 1391 1848">(a) Australia, whether made by a State, Territory, the Commonwealth, or a local government; and</li> <li data-bbox="746 1870 1391 1937">(b) the country in which the mobility project is being undertaken</li> </ul>
Lead applicant	the Australian university submitting an application and meeting reporting requirements on behalf of a consortium

Term	Definition
Low Socio-Economic Status (SES)	students who are from a low SES background, as measured by the lowest quartile of the ABS Socio-Economic Index for Areas Index of Education and Occupation measured at Statistical Area 1 level
Mentorship	a developmental relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person, relevant to work, career, or professional development
Mobility Private Sector Partnership	a financial or in-kind arrangement between one or more home universities or consortium and at least one Private Sector Organisation that meets the requirements in Section 5.4
Mobility Program Term	1 January 2024 to 31 December 2025
Mobility Project	a project that meets the eligibility requirements at Section 5.1 for which you seek funding in accordance with these guidelines
New Colombo Plan (NCP)	the NCP Scholarship Program, NCP Mobility Program and NCP Alumni Program
New Colombo Plan website	<a href="http://www.dfat.gov.au/new-colombo-plan">www.dfat.gov.au/new-colombo-plan</a>
Off-shore campus	of an Australian university refers to a branch campus in a location outside Australia
PBS Program	described within the entity's <a href="#">Portfolio Budget Statement</a> , PBS programs each link to a single outcome and provide transparency for funding decisions. These high-level PBS programs often comprise a number of lower level, more publicly recognised programs, some of which will be Grant Programs. A PBS Program may have more than one Grant Program associated with it, and each of these may have one or more grant opportunities
Personal information	the meaning defined in the <i>Privacy Act</i> : “information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is readily identifiable: (a) whether the information or opinion is true or not; and (b) whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.”
Primary host location	the meaning in Section 5.5.2
Privacy Act	the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth)

Term	Definition
Private sector organisation	Australian, global and local commercial enterprises and non-profit organisations, ranging from those in the informal sector to large multinational organisations, which are not owned by or under the direct control of a government. This does not include host institutions
Project partner	the host institution(s), host organisation(s), and/or any other overseas or Australian partner organisation(s) involved in the delivery of a mobility project
Regional/remote	a region designated as Regional or Remote by the Australian Bureau of Statistics Australian Statistical Geography Standard
Secondary host location	the meaning in Section 5.5.3.
Semester	the meaning as published by the host institution, provided it is a minimum of 10 weeks. Where the host institution operates trimesters rather than semesters, the trimester will be a Semester and must also be a minimum of 10 weeks
Student	a student enrolled in an Australian university throughout the duration of the mobility project
Student Code of Conduct	the Student Code of Conduct outlines the expectations of students participating in NCP mobility projects in respect of personal and professional behaviour
Student grant	the meaning in Section 5.2
Undergraduate course	<p>As defined by the Department of Education in <a href="#">Higher Education Administrative Information for Providers</a>, an undergraduate course of study is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an undergraduate certificate</li> <li>• a diploma that is not accredited as a VET award</li> <li>• an advanced diploma that is not accredited as a VET award</li> <li>• an associate degree</li> <li>• a bachelor degree; or</li> <li>• an honours program</li> </ul>

Term	Definition
Value with money	<p>Refers to ‘value with relevant money’ which is a judgement based on the grant proposal representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources and determined from a variety of considerations.</p> <p>When administering a grant opportunity, an official should consider the relevant financial and non-financial costs and benefits of each proposal including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the quality of the project proposal and activities;</li> <li>• fitness for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives;</li> <li>• that the absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and government’s outcomes being achieved; and</li> <li>• the potential grantee’s relevant experience and performance history.</li> </ul>
We / our / us	The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
You / your	an Australian university applying for NCP Mobility Program funding and, in the case of a consortium, the lead applicant