INDIGENOUS RESEARCH EXCHANGE

RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR PROJECT GRANT OPPORTUNITIES
For projects commencing 2020
AIATSIS Indigenous Research Exchange Grant Opportunities

The Grant Program is designed to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led projects to contribute to the evidence base for decision making by communities and government.

**AIATSIS administers two project grant opportunities**

One opportunity is an annual competitive round open for all eligible organisations to apply (called the ‘Open Round’) and another is an occasional competitive grant opportunity whereby eligible organisations are invited to address a particular topic (called a ‘Targeted Round’). Grant opportunities are published on the AIATSIS website http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/exchange.

**You complete an application for a grant opportunity**

For the annual open round you follow the application link and fill out the form for the Open Round. For the targeted round you follow the application link and fill out the form for the Targeted Round.

**AIATSIS assesses all grant applications for eligibility and compliance**

We assess the application against the eligibility criteria and ensure you have completed all the requirements of the application. We notify you if you are not eligible.

**External assessment**

A panel of expert assessors rate applications against each of the selection criteria and makes recommendations to the AIATSIS CEO as to which grants should be funded, including any conditions that should be placed on the grant.

**Grant decisions are made**

AIATSIS CEO decides which grant applications are successful taking into account recommendations from the panel of experts.

**AIATSIS notifies you of the outcome**

We advise you if your application was successful or not. We may not notify unsuccessful applicants until successful applicants are publicly announced.

**AIATSIS enters into a grant funding agreement**

We will enter into a grant funding agreement (Contract). The type of agreement is based on the nature of the grant and the proportional risks involved.

**Delivery of project**

You undertake the grant activity as set out in your grant funding agreement and regularly report to us. We manage the grant by working with you, monitoring your progress and making milestone payments.

**Monitoring and evaluation of the research project**

We monitor and evaluate the report on outcomes and deliverables of the research project. The Indigenous Research Exchange team will use information you provide to us through your reports to inform the evaluation.
2020
Indigenous Research Exchange Grant
Funding Round Schedule

13 December 2019
Open grant round opens

28 February 2020
Open grant round closes

13 March 2020
Application assessment complete

27 March 2020
Notice to successful and unsuccessful applicants

On or before 6 April 2020
Negotiation and signing of grant agreements

PROJECT COMMENCEMENT
1. Introduction

1.1 About the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) is an independent statutory authority created by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Act 1989. AIATSIS is a world renowned research, collections and publishing organisation and for fifty five years we have occupied a unique place at the nexus between the academic and cultural sectors, government, and Indigenous communities. We promote knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and work towards a world in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and cultures are recognised, respected, celebrated and valued. To achieve this AIATSIS:

- tells the story of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia
- creates opportunities for people to encounter, engage with and be transformed by that story
- supports and facilitates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural resurgence
- shapes our national narrative.

AIATSIS is a custodian of the world’s largest and best contextualised collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage. In partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and other stakeholders we continue to build and make appropriately accessible this collection, including leveraging off digital and technological innovations.

AIATSIS provides leadership in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research, ethical standards in research, publishing, and management and use of collections of Indigenous knowledge and cultural heritage. AIATSIS provides advice to governments and others, on the situation and status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage, and in areas that enhance understanding and application of Indigenous peoples’ cultures and heritage.

1.2 About the Indigenous Research Exchange

AIATSIS is committed to ensuring greater involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in setting research priorities, leading research projects and determining the appropriate collection and use of data about communities. Moreover, there is currently an abundance of data and research that is not accessible nor translatable for use by communities.

At the same time, a number of reports on the state of Indigenous Affairs have also highlighted the need for better use of evidence to inform policy and program design and implementation and to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to identify priorities and design solutions. For this to work, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples require the tools to inform long term decision making and work more effectively with governments to achieve our aspirations.

In February 2017, the Prime Minister announced a whole-of-government research and evaluation strategy for policies and programs affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the 9th Closing the Gap Statement.

As part of this announcement, the Australian Government provisioned $10 million over three years for the establishment of an Indigenous Research Fund. AIATSIS will administer the Fund through the Indigenous Research Exchange.

Providing grant opportunities is the central pillar of the Exchange. The Grant Program will:

- support high quality impactful Indigenous led research
- improve the availability of quality robust research and evidenced based solutions
- know more about what works
- understand what and when something is not contributing to outcomes.
While AIATSIS is not bound by the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs), the grant program will be undertaken according to the principles of the CGRG and aspire to best practice in research grant administration.

2. The Indigenous Research Exchange Grant Opportunity

2.1 Program outcome

The intended outcome of the Indigenous Research Exchange Grants Program is to build the evidence base to support Indigenous decision making and policy design through system changing, impact driven Indigenous led projects.

2.2 Program objectives

AIATSIS will ensure that the Grant Program outcome is met by funding a diverse range of research projects that contribute towards the following Program objectives:

- All projects funded by the program will have strong Indigenous leadership.
- The projects will represent the highest quality in approach and ethics.
- Funded projects will have relevance and impact beyond the community or project.
- Outputs of the project will be translated into forms that can be used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and policy makers to inform decision making.
- Outputs of the project will add to the evidence and data available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and policy makers in accordance with the highest standards for recognition and protection of Indigenous cultural and intellectual property.

2.3 2020 Grants Program Priorities

The AIATSIS Indigenous Research Exchange Advisory Board (the Advisory Board) provides strategic guidance to the Grants Program and ensures the outcomes and objectives are achieved. Each year the Advisory Board will establish priorities for the Program based on consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders peoples.

Funding will only be provided to projects that are consistent with the published priorities for the particular year of funding or targeted round.

For projects commencing 2020, the program funding priorities are:

**Priority 1: Indigenous Governance and Prosperity**

The continued emergence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the governance of their traditional territories provides an opportunity for innovation in regional and local governance; while notions of Indigenous nationhood and relationships with the state continue to challenge our understanding of a reconciled Australia. Examples of projects under this Priority Area could include (although not limited to) the following themes:

- the economic, social, and cultural benefits that could be derived from effective governance arrangements coupled with ideas around regional autonomy
- realising the potential of Indigenous held land and waters, including models of Indigenous-led development and multi-faceted conceptions of wealth
- examination of local priority setting and best practice co-design principles of Indigenous research and evaluation, government policy-making, and economic and social investment
- the potential contribution of treaties or agreements to social fabric and economic security.
Priority 2: Cultural Resurgence and Resilience

Governments continue to struggle with how to measure cultural indicators of wellbeing and to understand the centrality of cultural strength to the enjoyment and fulfilment of life; yet this link is self-evident for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Examples of projects under this Priority Area could include (although not limited to) the following themes;

- examining the correlation between cultural strength and individual and community resilience and success, for example in the areas of education and employment, engagement with the criminal justice system, and social and political participation
- contemporary expressions of Indigenous identity and how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lives might change over time
- capturing innovation and world leading best practice programs in cultural revitalisation
- innovative use of existing data and archival material to shed light on contemporary issues and ideas.

2.4 Grant Opportunities

The total funds available for project grants commencing in 2020 through the AIATSIS Indigenous Research Exchange Grants Program will be up to $2,000,000.

Grants will be awarded up to $200,000. In the 2020 round, only single year projects will be considered.

To receive news about the Indigenous Research Exchange including grant opportunities subscribe to the AIATSIS newsletter here https://aiatsis.gov.au/form/subscribe

Funding under the Grants Program will be distributed through two grant opportunities:

2.4.1 Open Round grant opportunity

An annual open competitive grant round (called ‘the Open Round’) open to all eligible organisations wishing to submit applications for research projects under the open program research priorities.

The Open Round grant opportunity will open on 1 November 2019. Funding agreements for projects commencing 2020 will be executed on or before 1 April 2020.

2.4.2 Targeted Round grant opportunity

Occasional targeted competitive grant opportunities (called ‘Targeted Round’) for eligible organisations who can address a particular identified research need.

Targeted rounds will be advertised on the AIATSIS website and through other communication channels.

3. Grant eligibility criteria

3.1 Who should consider this grant opportunity

AIATSIS welcomes applications from organisations who wish to undertake projects that are aligned with the program objectives and priorities established by AIATSIS. Note that individuals must apply through an eligible organisation (see 3.2 below).

There is no requirement for formal research qualifications but you must demonstrate in your application that you have the ability to carry out the project described and present a clear outline of what you want to do.

It is a criterion of the Grant Program that funding can only be used to support and commission projects led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. As such, local Indigenous community organisations are encouraged to apply for funding themselves or in partnership with other organisations or institutions.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers and projects with strong Indigenous governance are also encouraged to apply.
3.2 Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

AIATSIS provides grants only to incorporated organisations and not to individuals. If you are a successful applicant you must enter into a legally binding funding agreement with AIATSIS.

Individuals or unincorporated associations must apply through an eligible organisation that agrees to manage the funding and take responsibility for the project for you (see 3.2.1 below).

Additionally, you must:

- have an Australian Business Number (ABN) or Indigenous Business Number (IBN)
- be registered for the purposes of GST if required by the Australian Tax Office
- have an account with an Australian financial institution
- have no outstanding reports, acquittals or serious breaches relating to any Australian Government funding (a serious breach might be one that has resulted in termination of a grant agreement).
- not be bankrupt or subject to insolvency proceedings.

3.2.1 Application through an eligible body

If you are not an eligible organisation then you must arrange for a legal entity that meets the eligibility criteria in section 3.2 to auspice your application. By doing so, you are agreeing to conduct all of the activities for the project with the support and approval of the auspice body.

Your auspice body will need to enter into a legally binding funding agreement with AIATSIS. They will be ultimately responsible for meeting the obligations set out in the agreement as well as managing, reporting on and acquitting the funding on your behalf.

3.2.2 Application by a group

Some organisations may apply as a group so that they can work together to combine their capabilities to deliver the project.

3.3 Who is not eligible to apply for a grant?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- a Commonwealth or State or Territory Government (including portfolio agencies)
- an individual or sole trader
- an unincorporated association
- an organisation based outside of Australia.

These eligibility criteria are subject to change or waiver by AIATSIS.

3.4 Eligible grant activities

Your eligibility for funding will be determined by AIATSIS. In the event that we determine part of your application comprises one or more ineligible activities, we may assess your application based only on the eligible components. In this instance, you may be offered partial funding for your project.

3.4.1 What can the grant money be used for?

The Grant Program will only provide funding for costs directly associated with the specified project. These activities include:

- the engagement of researchers, consultants, specialists, experts or contractors directly on the project
- project administration (a maximum of 20 per cent of total grant monies) for items such as project management, report-writing, book-keeping, audits and financial management
- Australian universities that are eligible for Commonwealth research block grants cannot charge an administration fee
- facilitation of workshops and/or community meetings
- travel for researchers to engage with community partners and key stakeholders for the project
- costs of communicating the results of research including seminars and conferences
- project specific resources and equipment.

3.4.2 What the grant money cannot be used for?

The Grant Program does not fund:
- Activities of the organisation that are already funded by governments or are part of their normal responsibilities.
- Activities for which other Commonwealth or State or Territory or Local Government bodies have primary responsibility (including program delivery, language revitalisation, native title claim research).
- Biomedical or clinical projects that do not include a significant Indigenous social or cultural research emphasis. These would normally be referred to the NHMRC for consideration.
- Descriptions or histories of institutions or programs carried out by the institutions/programs themselves or their staff. These projects may be eligible for funding if the research is to be carried out primarily as an evaluation by independent researchers.
- Capital works or capital purchases or purchase of land or buildings.
- Operational funding or ongoing administration of an organisation.
- Activities with a primarily commercial focus or intent.
- Activities with a political or lobbying focus or intent.
- Costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation.

4. The Grant Assessment process

4.1 Eligibility and compliance

AIATSIS will initially assess your application against the eligibility criteria and for compliance with the application requirements. Only eligible applications will move to the next stage of assessment.

It is important that you read these grant guidelines, the application form and the draft grant agreement before you submit an application.

You are responsible for ensuring that your application is complete and accurate. You must complete each section of the application form and make sure you provide the information we have requested.

If the eligibility and compliance check identifies unintentional errors in your application, you may be contacted to correct or explain the information. AIATSIS may consider information about you or your application that is available through the normal course of business. Giving false or misleading information will exclude your application from further consideration.

4.2 Independent assessment

Eligible applications will be considered through a competitive assessment process. AIATSIS will assess your application against the criteria set out below and against other applications. Your application will be considered on its merits, based on:

- how well it meets the criteria
- how it compares to other applications
- whether it provides value for money.

Each eligible application is assessed by a panel of expert assessors who must rate your application against each of the three assessment criteria and provide supporting comments (see assessment criteria at 4.5).
Members of the assessment panel must adhere to the AIATSIS Conflict of Interest policy and members must identify any perceived or actual conflicts. The AIATSIS Conflict of Interest Policy is established within the framework of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act (PGPA) 2013, PGPA Rules 2014 and the Public Service Act 1999. The policy includes specific guidelines and templates for declaring and managing interests by members of AIATSIS Council and committees, the CEO, Senior Executive and AIATSIS staff.

4.3 Recommendations for funding

Final ranking and recommendations for funding will take into account the overall program objectives. The assessment panel will rank the applications and provide recommendations to the AIATSIS CEO for funding and any conditions.

4.4 Approval

The assessment panel recommendations are reviewed by the AIATSIS CEO, who gives final approval of the funding outcomes.

4.5 The assessment criteria

The assessment criteria apply to both open round and targeted round applications.

You will need to demonstrate your claims against the assessment criteria in your application. The application form asks questions that will assist you to provide the right information.

The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your application should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount requested.

Applications will be assessed against three key criteria:

1. Indigenous leadership, governance and collaboration
2. Project quality
3. Impact and contribution

In applying these criteria, the following considerations must be taken into account:

4.5.1 Indigenous leadership, governance and collaboration

Does the application demonstrate:

- Indigenous leadership in the governance, design and conduct of the project
- collaboration and partnerships with Indigenous organisations and communities
- the potential for improvement in service delivery and/or policy development
- opportunities for capacity building and knowledge transfer
- a contribution to an ongoing body of Indigenous knowledge, including existing research translation
- the team has the capabilities and experience to undertake the project
- contribute to the overall strength in knowledge and/or capability in other organisations.

4.5.2 Project quality

Does the project description provide:

- clear objectives
- best practice project design and planning
- methods suited to the task
- innovative approaches and new ideas
- ethical management of data and intellectual property
- contributions from partners
- evidence of drawing on existing research and/or knowledge
- a reasonable budget that demonstrates value for money.

4.5.3 Impact and contribution

Can the project achieve outcomes that:

- align with one or more stated priorities
- influence systems, policy or practice
• address gaps in the evidence and knowledge base
• create a pathway to impacts that are ambitious and feasible
• extend relevance and benefit to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
• translate research for communities and policy makers.

4.6 Rating scale

A rating scale is used to rate applications against each of the selection criteria.

A rating scale of 0-5 is used to rank applications overall.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RATING SCALE</th>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>RECOMMENDATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Outstanding: Of the highest quality, compelling and will have significant impact</td>
<td>Supported for funding unconditionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Excellent: Of very high quality and strongly competitive</td>
<td>Strongly warrants support for funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Good: Interesting, sound and has potential to make a contribution</td>
<td>Could be funded with conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Satisfactory: Sound, but lacks a compelling element</td>
<td>Not supportive of funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Uncompetitive: Has significant weaknesses or more critical flaws</td>
<td>Not recommended for funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>The application did not meet eligibility requirements or address criteria</td>
<td>Not recommended for funding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. The grant application process

5.1 Completing the grant application

You must submit your grant application through the online grants system.

It is your responsibility to make sure that your application is complete and accurate and submitted in accordance with these guidelines and application form.

Applications must be submitted on or before the due date. No late applications will be considered.

AIATSIS may ask you for more information, as long as it does not change the substance of your application. AIATSIS does not have to accept any additional information that you provide, nor accept requests from you to correct applications after the closing time.

5.2 Attachments to the application

Supporting documentation to your application could include, but is not limited to:

- research support reference
- case studies or other qualitative evidence
- community support letters and/or
- partnership agreements.

The online grants system has the facility to upload these documents.

5.2.1 Supporting letters from auspice body and consortia

For both auspice body arrangements and applications on behalf of a group or consortia, the application must include a letter of support from each organisation involved in the grant.

Each letter of support should include:

- an overview of how the auspice body and applicant or the consortium will work together to complete the grant activity
- an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise of each organisation involved in the grant
- confirm the roles/responsibilities of members and the resources they will contribute (if any)
- provide details of a nominated management level contact officer
- confirm the agreed auspice body or lead consortium organisation.

5.3 Questions during the application process

If you have any questions during the application period, please contact exchangegrants@aiatsis.gov.au. We will aim to respond to emailed questions within three working days. If you are unsure about any of the rules or questions in the application, we strongly encourage you to speak to the Indigenous Research Exchange team about your research prior to submitting an application. This can help you to avoid common mistakes or shortcomings in your application that could prevent you from being recommended for funding.

5.4 Notification of application outcomes

You will be advised of the outcomes of your application in writing, following a decision by the CEO. If you are successful, you will also be advised about any specific conditions attached to the grant.

If you are unsuccessful, we will notify you in writing and give you an opportunity to discuss the outcome. You can submit a new application for the same project (or a similar project) in any future grant rounds. You should include new or more information to address any weaknesses that may have prevented your previous application from being successful.
5.5 Feedback on your application

If you are unsuccessful, you can ask for feedback from AIATSIS within one month of being advised of the outcome. We will give written feedback within one month of your request.

6. Successful grant applications

6.1 Announcement of grants

If successful, your grant, including a brief summary of the project will be listed on the AIATSIS website no later than 21 calendar days after the grant agreement takes effect.

6.2 The grant agreement

If you are successful, you must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with AIATSIS. AIATSIS will use a contract specifically designed for the Grant Program. This Agreement contains standard terms and conditions that cannot be changed. A schedule will be used to outline your specific grant requirements. Any conditions attached to the grant will be identified in the grant offer and discussed with you during the grant agreement negotiations.

You will be required to:
• meet key deliverables
• expend and acquit funds in accordance with the approved budget prior to the end of the funding period identified in the grant agreement
• submit progress and closure reports
• undertake risk management
• facilitate site visits by AIATSIS if requested.

You may be required to
• collect and supply data and deposit research materials with AIATSIS

• work with AIATSIS researchers on some components of the research.

AIATSIS will aim to negotiate agreements with successful applicants for the open round of the Exchange Grants Program before April 2020. If there are unreasonable delays in finalising a grant agreement, the grant offer may be withdrawn.

The terms and conditions set out in the grant agreement include conditions relating to the use of funds, acquittal and treatment of unspent program funds. Breach of an organisation’s grant agreement may result in a requirement to repay funding to AIATSIS.

6.3 How the grant will be paid

Grant funds will not be paid unless the grant agreement has been signed by all parties.

You should not make financial commitments until a grant agreement has been executed by AIATSIS and all the parties.

You must not undertake activities before the grant agreement is signed by all parties; note funding is not available for activities that have already occurred.

Before any payments are made, you must provide a tax invoice for the amount of the payment.

The grant agreement will state the maximum grant amount to be paid. We will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur extra eligible expenditure, you must pay it yourself.

Payments will be made against the agreed schedule set out in the grant agreement, following its execution. If applicable, payments will be GST inclusive.

Payments will not be processed where you have not met a condition or are in breach of the current grant agreement or any previous AIATSIS grant funding.

If your grant contract includes milestone or progress payments, AIATSIS will only release scheduled payments once we have received and accepted your progress reports, deliverables and acquittals for the previous stages.
If you receive a grant, you should consider speaking to a tax advisor about the effect of receiving a grant before you enter into a grant agreement. You can also visit the Australian Taxation Office website at www.ato.gov.au for more information.

6.4 Grant agreement variations

We recognise that unexpected events may affect the progress of a project. In these circumstances, you can request a project variation, including:

• changing project milestones
• extending the timeframe for completing the project.

The program does not allow for an increase to the agreed amount of grant funds.

If you want to propose changes to the grant agreement, you must put them in writing before the grant agreement end date. Contact exchangegrants@aiatsis.gov.au for the variation to agreement template. We will not consider changes after the grant agreement end date.

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on factors such as:

• how it affects the project outcome
• consistency with the program policy objective and any relevant policies of AIATSIS
• changes to the timing of grant payments
• availability of program funds.

7. Delivery of grant activities

7.1 Your responsibilities

You must submit reports in line with the timeframes in the grant agreement. We will expect you to report on:

• progress against agreed key deliverables
• achievement against performance indicators

• eligible expenditure of grant funds
• closure of the project
• impact of the project.

You will also be responsible for:

• obtaining and maintaining ethical clearance and reporting obligations to the AIATSIS REC (see 7.2).
• meeting the terms and conditions of the grant agreement and managing the activity efficiently and effectively
• complying with record keeping, reporting and acquittal requirements as set out in the grant agreement
• providing copies of all reports and project outputs to the Exchange
• managing data and deposit of materials in the AIATSIS collection.

7.2 Ethical and Responsible conduct

Compliance with the AIATSIS Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies (GERAIS), the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research, and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (the Code) is mandatory for all research funded or auspiced by AIATSIS.

All applications supported for funding will require ethical clearance approval by the AIATSIS Research Ethics Committee (REC) before the project begins. Release of funds will be dependent on ethical clearance.

GERAIS can be found at https://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/docs/research-and-guides/ethics/gerais.pdf. More information about the AIATSIS ethics process and the AIATSIS REC can be found at https://aiatsis.gov.au/research/ethical-research. The AIATSISREC is registered with the NHMRC.
7.3 AIATSIS’ responsibilities

AIATSIS will:

- meet the terms and conditions set out in the grant agreement
- provide timely administration of the grant
- evaluate the grantee’s performance.

We will monitor the progress of your project by assessing reports you submit and may conduct site visits to confirm details of your reports if necessary. Occasionally we may need to seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

AIATSIS will evaluate the program as a whole to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. Funding recipients may be required to participate in this evaluation. The evaluation will seek to identify and document the impact of activities. The evaluation may also include a survey of organisations who have received funding support. Grant agreements require grantees to provide information to assist AIATSIS with a possible evaluation.

7.4 Acknowledgement

Funded activities and outputs should acknowledge the support of the AIATSIS Indigenous Research Exchange. AIATSIS will provide an electronic version of the AIATSIS logo to be used on all materials related to grants under the program. Whenever the logo is used the publication must also acknowledge AIATSIS and the Commonwealth.

8. Probity

AIATSIS will make sure that the administration of the program is fair, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the published guidelines.

Note: These guidelines may be changed from time-to-time by AIATSIS. When this happens, the revised guidelines will be published on the AIATSIS website.

8.1 Complaints

Any complaints about the grants process must be lodged in writing. If you have a complaint, please contact exchangegrants@aiatsis.gov.au.

If you do not agree with the way that AIATSIS has handled your complaint, you may complain to the Commonwealth Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with AIATSIS.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072
Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au
Website: www.ombudsman.gov.au.

8.2 Conflict of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if AIATSIS 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 AIATSIS officer
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently
- has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives funding under the program.

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 that there is an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest or that one might arise in relation to a grant application, you must inform AIATSIS in writing immediately.

Where AIATSIS is made aware of any conflicts of interest we will handle them as set out in the AIATSIS Conflict of interest policies and procedures. Conflicts of interest for AIATSIS staff will be handled as set out in the Australian Public Service Code of Conduct (Section 13 (7)) of the Public Service Act 1999.

8.3 Privacy, confidentiality and protection of personal information

We treat your personal information according to the thirteen Australian Privacy Principles and the Privacy Act 1988. This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect
- why we collect your personal information
- who we give your personal information to.

You are required, as part of your application, to declare your ability to comply with the Privacy Act 1988, including the Australian Privacy Principles and impose the same privacy obligations on any subcontractors you engage to assist with the activity. You must ask for the Australian Government’s consent in writing before disclosing confidential information.

Your personal information can only be disclosed to someone else if you are given reasonable notice of the disclosure; where disclosure is authorised or required by law or is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law; if it will prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to a person’s life or health; or if you have consented to the disclosure.

The Australian Government may also use and disclose information about grant applicants and grant recipients under the program in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

We may reveal confidential information to:

- the Advisory Board and Expert Panel members to help us manage the program effectively
- employees and contractors of AIATSIS so we can 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
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

We may share the information you give us with other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes including government administration, research or service delivery and according to Australian laws, including the:

- Public Service Act 1999 (Cth)
- Public Service Regulations 1999 (Cth)
- Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (Cth)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Crimes Act 1914 (Cth)
- Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth)

We will treat the information you give us as sensitive and therefore confidential if it meets all of the four conditions below:

- you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential
- the information is commercially sensitive
- revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else
- you provide the information with an understanding that it will stay confidential.
The grant agreement will include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the grant agreement.

8.3.1 Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government are subject to the Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Cth).

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. This includes information about the Exchange. 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.