



Australian Government



NEW COLOMBO PLAN

Connect to Australia's future - study in the region

New Colombo Plan Scholarship Program 2027 Round Guidelines

Opening date:	9 June 2026
Closing date and time:	11 pm Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST) on 4 August 2026
Commonwealth policy and administering entity:	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Enquiries:	If you have any questions, contact ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au Questions should be sent no later than 5 pm AEST on 21 July 2026
Date grant opportunity guidelines released:	9 June 2026
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1 New Colombo Plan Scholarship Program: 2027 Round processes

The New Colombo Plan (NCP) Scholarship Program is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives

This opportunity is part of the NCP Scholarship Program which contributes to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)'s Portfolio Budget Statement Outcome 1 (The advancement of Australia's international strategic, security and economic interests including through bilateral, regional and multilateral engagement on Australian Government foreign, trade and international development policy priorities). DFAT works with stakeholders to plan, design and administer the grant program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles 2024 \(CGRPs\)](#).



The NCP Scholarship Program grant opportunity opens

We publish the NCP Scholarship Program Guidelines on [GrantConnect](#). Australian universities put forward all eligible students who submit an Expression of Interest (EOI).



Applicants complete and submit an application

We invite eligible students to apply for an NCP scholarship by completing the application form and addressing all eligibility requirements and assessment criteria.



Applications are assessed

We assess applications against eligibility requirements and assessment criteria, taking into account an overall consideration of value with relevant money, and compare them to other applications. DFAT invites shortlisted applicants to attend an interview.



Selection panels make recommendations

Selection panels interview shortlisted applicants and make recommendations to DFAT.



Scholarship decisions are made

The DFAT financial delegate decides which applicants are successful.



We notify applicants and their Australian university of the outcome



We enter into a scholarship agreement (a grant agreement) with successful applicants (scholars)



NCP scholars undertake their programs

Scholars undertake their scholarship program components as outlined their application and in accordance with their scholarship agreement. DFAT's Program Support Services provider (the services provider) works with scholars to prepare them for departure, monitor their progress and make payments. The CGRPs are applied throughout the program, including in assessing the validity of variations from the program set out in the scholar's application, which is the basis for a grant being awarded.



Evaluation of the NCP Scholarship Program

DFAT evaluates individual applications, and the NCP Scholarship Program as a whole, based on information provided to us by Australian universities and scholars, and that we collect from various sources.

1.1 Introduction

These guidelines apply to the 2027 Round of the NCP Scholarship Program, for the duration of the scholarships awarded through this Round. Scholarships awarded in previous rounds comply with guidelines of the round under which they were awarded.

Before applying, applicants must read these guidelines, which set out:

- the NCP strategic objective and outcomes of the NCP Scholarship Program and this grant opportunity
- the eligibility requirements and assessment criteria and how to apply
- how scholars are selected
- how applicants are notified of the outcome
- how scholars are supported, including payments and advice
- how monitoring and evaluation of the NCP Scholarship Program may be conducted, and
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the grant opportunity.

We administer the program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles 2024](#) (CGRPs).¹

For more information about the 2027 Round, see the NCP Scholarship Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the DFAT website.²

2 About the grant program

2.1 Strategic objective and outcomes of the NCP

The strategic objective of the NCP, as described in Program 1.5 of the DFAT Portfolio Budget Statement (PBS) is to advance Australia's interests and bilateral relationships through enduring people-to-people, institutional and business links with the Indo-Pacific region.

Through Program 1.5, the NCP contributes to DFAT PBS Outcome 1 – the advancement of Australia's international strategic, security and economic interests including through bilateral, regional and multilateral engagement on Australian Government foreign, trade and international development policy priorities.

The NCP provides opportunities for Australian undergraduate university students to develop their Indo-Pacific capability and Asia literacy through immersive, structured learning and internships in the Indo-Pacific region. The intended outcomes of the NCP are:

- for participants to acquire Indo-Pacific capability and Asia literacy
- to foster deeper people-to-people and education relationships between Australia and the Indo-Pacific, and

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2024L00854/latest/text>

² <https://www.dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/new-colombo-plan/new-colombo-plan-scholarship-program>

- to increase Australia's economic engagement with the region by supporting NCP participants to build job-ready skills, and supporting NCP alumni to maintain their ties to the Indo-Pacific.

In the 2027 Round, the NCP includes 3 programs:

- **Scholarship Program:** experiences of up to 19 months for students to strengthen their Indo-Pacific capability and Asia literacy, including through study, language learning and internships.
- **Semester Program:** leveraging Australian universities' partnership arrangements to support 1 to 2 semester-length experiences for students to develop Indo-Pacific capability, including language learning and internships.
- **Mobility Program:** short-term, credit-bearing experiences of 4–9 weeks to develop Indo-Pacific capability, including structured learning, internships, mentorships, practicums, and/or research.

To deepen Australia's Indo-Pacific capability and Asia literacy, the NCP has introduced a language learning target for the program. In the 2027 Round, the language target is 40 per cent for the NCP program as a whole. See Glossary (section 14) for more information on the language target criteria for the NCP Scholarship Program.

After their programs, NCP scholars and semester and mobility participants who have complied with all requirements of the NCP on completion of their award are invited to join the NCP alumni network. This network supports alumni to maintain connections to each other, the NCP and the Indo-Pacific as they progress in their careers.

2.1.1 NCP Scholarship Program objectives and outcomes

The objective of the NCP Scholarship Program is to provide opportunities for Australian undergraduate students to strengthen their Indo-Pacific capability and Asia literacy, including in priority Asian languages, through immersive, long-term structured learning and internships in the region, in areas of Australia's strategic and economic interests.

The intended outcomes of the NCP Scholarship Program include:

- scholars strengthen their Indo-Pacific capability and Asia literacy in areas of Australia's strategic interest, including in priority host locations, languages and sectors
- scholars are supported to engage with Australian business operating in the region, including through internships, to build the cohort of work-ready, Indo-Pacific capable Australians and to increase Australia's economic engagement with the region, and
- program alumni maintain their Indo-Pacific knowledge and capability, including language skills, and undertake continued engagement with the Indo-Pacific.

2.2 About the NCP Scholarship Program

The NCP Scholarship Program provides scholarships to Australian undergraduate students to undertake offshore programs including study, internships, mentorships and language training for up to 19 months in eligible Indo-Pacific host locations.

The 2027 NCP Scholarship Program will run from **1 January 2027 to 31 July 2029**.

2.3 Roles and responsibilities of the Australian Government

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

DFAT has contracted a Program Support Services provider (the services provider) to deliver administration and support services during the NCP scholarship lifecycle, including the application period, while scholars are on award, and when they participate in NCP alumni activities.

The services provider has delegated legal responsibility to act on behalf of the Commonwealth in implementing NCP services. This includes requirements to collect timely information, manage payments and benefits, and manage program risks, emergencies and safeguards.

DFAT and/or its services provider is not responsible for arranging program components or travel arrangements (including visas and accommodation) but will review the scholar's proposed arrangements for these matters to ensure compliance with these guidelines and risk management considerations.

2.4 Roles and responsibilities of Australian universities

Each participating Australian university:

- a) nominates an NCP International Liaison Officer (ILO) for Scholarships (and an alternative contact, where possible) to collect scholarship expressions of interest (EOI) from students, and receive updates during the selection process, and
- b) submits all eligible students who have expressed interest to apply for the NCP Scholarship Program 2027 Round.

Australian universities are expected to put forward all students who express interest and meet the NCP Scholarship Program's eligibility requirements.

In submitting EOIs for the NCP Scholarship Program, the Australian university agrees to:

- i. obtain the consent of each applicant to provide their personal details to DFAT (see section 4.2)
- ii. ensure all personal information, including email addresses, provided about each applicant is accurate and up-to-date
- iii. support applicants to arrange program components, including study, internships, mentorships and/or language training components (see section 5.2)
- iv. support the applicant to select the academic pathway (exchange vs fee-paying) that is best for their desired program objectives, and confirm the selected pathway is administratively supported by the university
- v. work with scholars to develop their NCP risk assessment and approve the risk assessments 6 weeks prior to the scholar's departure from Australia (see section 2.6)
- vi. where there are changes to the program, work with scholars to update their NCP risk assessment and approve the updated risk assessment 6 weeks prior to departure, or commencement of the new program component (see section 2.6)
- vii. approve internship and language training proposals that are credit-bearing to an applicant's home degree
- viii. ensure scholars are aware of DFAT's [Child Protection Policy](https://www.dfat.gov.au/international-relations/themes/child-protection/child-protection-policy),³ and [Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy](https://www.dfat.gov.au/international-relations/themes/protection-sexual-exploitation-abuse-and-harassment),⁴ including the reporting obligations under these policies, and

³ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/international-relations/themes/child-protection/child-protection-policy>

⁴ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/international-relations/themes/protection-sexual-exploitation-abuse-and-harassment>

- ix. ensure that applications are fully completed, comply with the NCP Scholarship Program Guidelines and include all supporting documentation.

Australian public universities have obligations 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 the NCP Scholarship Program. Information about the Foreign Arrangements Scheme is available at <https://www.foreignarrangements.gov.au/>.

2.5 Roles and responsibilities of applicants

This section covers all students seeking an NCP scholarship (applicants) including those who go on to become scholars.

Each applicant:

- a) must work with their university's nominated ILO to ensure that their application (including supporting documentation and referee details) is complete, correct, and submitted by the closing time
- b) is responsible for any costs associated with preparing and lodging their application
- c) is responsible for the decision to apply for and, if successful, accept a scholarship. The Australian Government will not be liable for any loss, damage, injury or harm that might be suffered during, or in connection with, the NCP Scholarship Program
- d) must independently research and remain fully informed about overseas travel risks relevant to their personal circumstances and scholarship program
- e) must read carefully the travel advice for their host location(s) and other relevant pages on the [Smartraveller](#) website for information about risks overseas and preparing for overseas travel⁵
- f) must read, understand and comply with the content of these guidelines and the NCP Scholar Code of Conduct
- g) must not be a direct relative of the DFAT financial delegate, any individual who is an employee of the branch of DFAT or the services provider that administers the NCP, or of an Australian university staff member in a role that directly manages, administers or oversees the NCP Scholarship program. For the purposes of this requirement, *direct relative* includes a spouse or partner, parent, child, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, or any person with whom the individual has a close familial, household or dependent relationship.
- h) must only propose programs in an eligible NCP host location (see section 5.6), and
- i) must exhibit professional behaviour throughout the selection process.

2.6 Roles and responsibilities of scholars

If an applicant is successful and is awarded a scholarship, they become a scholar. Scholars enter into individual grant agreements to implement the Guidelines.

Each scholar must:

⁵ <https://www.smartraveller.gov.au>

- a) carry out their approved scholarship program as described in their application, and where exceptional circumstances justify a variation, complete their scholarship as close to their original application as possible
- b) travel to, enter and depart from host location(s) under an Australian passport which must have 6 months' validity beyond the end date of the scholarship program
- c) subscribe to relevant travel advisories on Smartraveller, prior to commencing their scholarship
- d) obtain, pay for and comply with appropriate visas for the duration of their scholarship and maintain evidence of up-to-date and appropriate visas with the services provider at all times during their program
- e) not travel to a host location, or region within a host location, for which the Australian Government's Smartraveller advice is 'Do not travel' or 'Reconsider your need to travel', as outlined in section 5.7
- f) register on the crisis portal on the Smartraveller website related to their host location, that is activated during a major overseas incident during their program
- g) complete a **risk assessment** that demonstrates an up-to-date and full understanding of:
 - host location risks, including all risks identified on [Smartraveller](#)
 - personal/health risks
 - contextual risks linked to the proposed activities (for example, field research)
 - safeguarding risks (see (k) below)

Scholars must work with their home university in developing the risk assessment (see section 2.4) and have the risk assessment approved by their home university, and then the Scholar Support Services team, 6 weeks prior to departure from Australia.

- h) update their risk assessment to reflect any changes to host locations and/or program components, or changes to their personal risk levels (for example, an emerging health condition). Scholars must work with their home university in updating their risk assessment and obtain their approval 6 weeks prior to departure, or commencement of a new program component

Note: Approval to travel and/or start new components is contingent on approval of the up-to-date risk assessment.

- i) obtain approval from their Australian university for internship and language training proposals that are credit-bearing to their home degree
- j) comply with their scholarship agreement and its incorporated documents such as the NCP Scholar Code of Conduct and [NCP Scholarship Media and Publication Guidelines](#)⁶
- k) comply with DFAT's Child Protection Policy and Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy, including the reporting obligations under these policies (see section 10.2)
- l) complete all mandatory pre-departure training as notified on award by the services provider
- m) cooperate with, and comply with directions given by, DFAT and the services, including always communicating in a respectful and polite manner with both parties

⁶ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/new-colombo-plan/resources>

- n) not, while undertaking an NCP scholarship, participate in another scholarship, fellowship, or mobility project. After commencing their NCP scholarship program at the host location, NCP scholars are not permitted to pause their scholarship program to undertake another scholarship or mobility project unless it is in line with an Australian Government priority.
- o) not undertake another course of study (for example, an online unit offered by their home university) while on program, unless there are exceptional circumstances and the scholar seeks prior approval from DFAT
- p) arrange all scholarship program components by contacting the relevant host organisations and liaising with their home university and the Scholar Support Services team
- q) declare any conflict of interest, particularly in relation to their program (see section 13.3)
- r) attend all classes and complete all assessments in person, as required by their host institution, and meet the requirements of internship placements
- s) meet all requirements of language training (section 5.2.4)
- t) obtain and submit travel medical clearance in line with the requirements at section 5.7.2, and
- u) familiarise themselves with the travel and health insurance cover provided under the NCP, including exclusions under the policy and clauses concerning pre-existing conditions.

2.7 Roles and responsibilities of the Program Support Services provider

The services provider is the first point of contact for applicants and Australian universities on administrative matters, including eligibility for the NCP Scholarship Program, EOIs, applications and candidate interviews.

Services provided include:

- a) administration of EOIs, application and selection processes
- b) pre-departure support for scholars to obtain necessary approvals and complete all pre-departure training and checks
- c) a briefing pack of relevant information
- d) administering scholarship benefits
- e) advice and guidance on scholarship components, entitlements and responsibilities
- f) assistance with variation requests where exceptional circumstances exist, and when the varied program is as similar to the original program as possible
- g) coordinate responses to critical incidents/emergency services involving NCP scholars in conjunction with home and host universities, DFAT and emergency services and the NCP Program's emergency assistance provider, and
- h) reviewing scholar risk assessments (see subsection 2.6(g) above), in consultation with home university ILOs as necessary.

3 Grant amount and grant period

3.1 Scholarship grants available

The NCP has a total appropriation of \$203.732 million over 4 years from 2026-27 to 2029-30 (annual appropriation of \$50.933 million). A total of \$36.594 million is available in NCP grant

program funding for the 2026-27 financial year for the 2027 Round, with \$5.294 million in funding available for the NCP Scholarship Program. Expenditure related to the NCP Scholarship Program 2027 Round is expected to be expensed over 3 financial years to 2028-29 at a total of \$20.361 million, including up to 15 per cent program support and administration funding for Australian universities (see section 5.10), supporting around 400 scholarships.

Table 1: Available grant funding in the NCP 2027 Round

	Available Grant Funding		
	\$ million		
<i>2027 Round only</i>	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-28	FY 2028-29
NCP Mobility Program	7.800		
NCP Semester Program	23.500		
NCP Scholarship Program	5.294	14.049	1.018
Total	36.594		

The remaining funding in the NCP's annual budget appropriation will cover NCP scholars from previous rounds who continue their programs in 2026-27 (\$10.525 million), as well as administrative support expenses for program delivery.

The long-term average cost of an NCP scholarship is \$44,000, with a maximum total grant amount of \$107,000 in entitlements. Entitlements will be calculated based on the program proposed in the scholarship application and the actual program undertaken in line with the Guidelines.

See section 5.5 for scholarship benefits.

3.2 Scholarship grant period

The term of an applicant's proposed scholarship program must:

- a) have a duration between 3 and 19 months, and
- b) commence between 1 January 2027 and 31 December 2027.

4 Eligibility criteria

DFAT will only consider applications that satisfy all eligibility requirements.

4.1 Who is eligible to apply for a scholarship?

To be eligible for a scholarship, and to remain eligible during their scholarship program, an applicant must:

- a) be put forward for the NCP Scholarship Program by their home university (see section 4.2)
- b) be an Australian citizen
- c) not be a current citizen, permanent resident of their proposed host location(s), nor use a diaspora or family reunion type visa while on program
- d) be admitted into and undertaking an Australian undergraduate course for which the scholarship program will earn academic credit (see Glossary at section 14 for definition of 'undergraduate course')

Note: A scholar will be deemed to have completed their Australian degree on the date they finish their final exam/assessment or submit their final coursework. Eligibility as an NCP scholar stops at this point, independent of the time it takes the home university to release grades, administratively process the credit from overseas, or confer formal graduation.

- e) be between 18 and 30 years of age (inclusive) for non-First Nations applicants, or between 18 and 35 years of age (inclusive) for First Nations applicants, as at 1 January 2027
- f) not be a previous recipient of an NCP Scholarship

Note: previous NCP Mobility Program or Semester Program grant recipients are eligible to apply for a scholarship.

- g) not be an employee of the branch of DFAT or the services provider that administers the NCP.

Scholars must continue to meet these eligibility requirements during the term of their scholarship.

A student is **not eligible** to apply if they are at a home university which is included in the National Redress Scheme's website on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme' (www.nationalredress.gov.au).

4.2 Expressions of Interest

Australian universities are expected to put forward all eligible students who submit an EOI for the 2027 NCP Scholarship Program.

Only students put forward by their home university can apply for a scholarship. Students interested in applying for a scholarship should contact the NCP ILO for Scholarships or the international office of their home university.

There is no cap on the number of students put forward by universities.

Each Australian university may put forward students based on NCP eligibility requirements and assessment criteria (section 6), without ranking them.

DFAT strongly encourages Australian universities to ensure that their nominees are representative of the diversity of the Australian university student population.

DFAT will consider reasonable accommodation/funding to support participation of students with disability. Applicants with disability can share specific needs in their application, and DFAT or the services provider can progress further if they are awarded a scholarship, prior to departure.

Each participating Australian university must ensure they have appropriate policies in place to handle personal information, and have obtained each student's written consent to use and disclose their personal information to DFAT for the purpose of an EOI in accordance with these guidelines.

Applicants should be aware that the home university will be required to provide the following information about each student:

- a) name
- b) gender
- c) date of birth
- d) email address
- e) mobile phone

- f) residential address
- g) degree in which the student is enrolled
- h) confirmation that the student is in good academic standing
- i) intended primary host location, and
- j) confirmation that the student has been advised that the services provider will arrange a police check for each applicant who is shortlisted for interview.

All students who are put forward by their university will be invited to apply by DFAT. Each applicant must agree to the terms of use of their personal information (section 13.4) when submitting their application.

The services provider will arrange a police check for each applicant who is shortlisted for interview. Shortlisted applicants who do not complete a police check will be disqualified. An adverse finding does not automatically disqualify an applicant from receiving a scholarship. However, if a successful applicant is found to have a criminal record or conviction, DFAT may revoke or decline to offer a scholarship to the applicant.

5 What the grant money can be used for

5.1 Eligible scholarship program activities

To be eligible, an applicant's proposed scholarship program must:

- a) include at least one study component commencing within 6 months of the scholarship program commencement date
- b) be for a scholarship term:
 - of between 3 and 19 months in duration, and
 - commence on or between 1 January 2027 and 31 December 2027 inclusive, and
- c) at all times during the scholarship term, involve the scholar undertaking either:
 - a full-time study component
 - a full-time internship component
 - a full-time language training component, or
 - a permitted gap

Note: scholars should plan their program carefully to minimise gaps, noting limited leave allowances (see section 5.8).

In addition, scholarship programs may include:

- a) a part-time internship component (see section 5.2.2) undertaken concurrently with a full-time study component or full-time language training component
- b) a part-time mentorship (see section 5.2.3) undertaken concurrently with a full-time study component, full-time internship component or full-time language training, or
- c) a part-time language training component (see section 5.2.4) undertaken concurrently with a full-time study component or full-time internship component.

A scholar cannot undertake 2 full-time components concurrently. A scholar cannot undertake 2 part-time internships and/or language training components alongside a full-time component. A part-time component is only permitted alongside a full-time component, not on its own.

All program components will be subject to due diligence and a risk assessment to ensure alignment with relevant DFAT policies and must be approved prior to the scholar's departure from Australia and the commencement of any component while on program.

The award of an NCP scholarship does not represent automatic approval of proposed program components in the application. The NCP's eligibility checking process may identify compliance issues with proposed components, meaning the scholarship offer is made conditionally, requiring program updates prior to departure.

5.2 Eligible scholarship program components

5.2.1 Study component

All study components must:

- a) include at least one full-time study period, which is either a semester or trimester
Note: Summer/Winter school or short-term study programs are not eligible.
- b) be undertaken face-to-face, except via a research-based Honours program, on the host institution's campus or its official off-site locations (except in exceptional circumstances as approved by DFAT) and not via online, pre-recorded or other remote technology
- c) be a course which the applicant's home university will grant full-time academic credit towards the completion requirements of a Bachelor degree, Bachelor Honours Degree or eligible undergraduate language-focused course (see section 4.1). Courses that provide whole or partial credit towards a concurrent Diploma (in addition to full-time academic credit towards an eligible undergraduate language-focused course) are also permitted
- d) be for scholars studying an Honours research-based program, be supervised by an academic from their host institution (see section 7.1), and
- e) not exceed the maximum tuition fees payable in section 5.5.2 (for fee-paying students).

If an exchange agreement or partnership arrangement exists, the scholar must apply for study through this option in the first instance, if places are available.

Scholarship programs may include up to one academic year of study components. Each study period as part of the academic year, must be listed as a separate study component.

Scholars must obtain approval for a permitted gap to cover breaks between study components (see section 5.8). This applies if they are not undertaking a full-time internship or language training during the break.

Scholarship programs must not be undertaken at an offshore campus of a university established or headquartered outside the host location (for example, an offshore campus of a third location university) with the exception of Australian offshore campuses that are able to offer a genuinely immersive experience.

The host institution must provide the scholar with an academic transcript showing course dates and completion of all requirements. The scholar must provide the academic transcript to the Scholar Support Services team upon completion of the study component. All study components must be arranged directly with the local host institution (not through a third party provider), except where

students may choose to engage the services of non-profit university-led consortia to provide academic services (see section 5.3).

5.2.2 Internships

Internships enable scholars to have immersive work experiences with Indo-Pacific institutions and businesses, supporting their professional development. In addition, internships can include clinical placements, practicums or artist residencies. An internship component as part of an NCP scholarship program is optional, but must be undertaken:

- a) full-time (between 22 and 38 hours per week). The minimum duration of any full-time internship placement is 2 weeks. The total cumulative duration of all full-time internships undertaken during a scholarship program must not exceed 6 months, or
- b) part-time, concurrent with a full-time study component or a full-time language training component (there is no maximum duration).

Scholars must undertake internships face-to-face at the premises of the host organisation, or elsewhere in the host location where the host organisation conducts regular business. An internship must not be undertaken online or remotely.

Examples of appropriate internship host organisations include Australian businesses operating in the host location, local businesses, institutions, peak bodies, NGOs, civil society organisations, universities and research agencies that are headquartered in the region, and multilateral organisations.

Scholars may undertake either paid or unpaid internships. An internship must not incur any cost to the scholar, their home university or their host university, such as for training, program materials or delivery or staff wages. Attending courses or participating in conferences/seminars (informal or formal; free or involving payment) is not considered an internship.

While internships and mentorships do not need to be confirmed at the time of application, strong applications will demonstrate that they have researched achievable internship components that align with their program objectives.

All internships must be approved by DFAT through the services provider before commencement. An internship that is credit-bearing to a scholar's Australian degree must be approved by the home university, prior to DFAT's consideration and before commencement of the internship.

All internship components must be arranged directly with the local host organisation, not through a third-party provider.

When planning internships, scholars must research the appropriate visas for internships and allow sufficient time for visa processing by host location immigration authorities. This can often be a lengthy process.

If the internship involves direct, sustained or significant contact with children, the scholar must have a Working with Children Check (WWCC) from their Australian state or territory of residence.

5.2.3 Mentorships

A mentorship may only be undertaken concurrently with a full-time study component, full-time internship component, or full-time language training component and must not incur a cost to the scholar.

A mentorship is negotiated between the scholar and mentor and can be undertaken face-to-face or remotely. There is no minimum time commitment for a mentorship.

All mentorships must be approved by DFAT through the services provider before commencement.

5.2.4 Language training

Language Training refers to non-degree, supplemental language instruction provided by a suitable training provider. It is a distinct component from study with its own separate tuition allowance and compliance requirements.

Note: Applicants intending to complete language units at a host university for academic credit toward their Australian degree will form part of the study component of their application. Applicants proposing to undertake language units at their host institution are encouraged to undertake additional language training. These must be put forward as separate components in their scholarship application.

Language training must be:

- a) undertaken in the same host location as a study component or a full-time internship component
- b) in an official language, or a commonly spoken language or dialect (other than English), of the scholar's host location
- c) delivered face-to-face, and
- d) delivered by a suitable language training provider, as assessed by DFAT in its sole and absolute discretion (see below).

Language training does not need to be credit-bearing for the home degree. However, if it is credit-bearing, it must be approved by the home university before the scholar commences the component.

What is a suitable language training provider?

When assessing if a language training provider is suitable, DFAT will consider the following information (non-exhaustive):

- Does the language training provider have physical premises?
- Are the teaching staff appropriately qualified and experienced?
- Does the language training provider have policies for ensuring student welfare and managing risk?
- Does the language training provider monitor student attendance and achievement?
- Are there clear learning goals?
- Does the language training provider have an established process for assessing language proficiency after course completion?
- Does the course content and model of delivery align with the scholar's learning goals and current proficiency level, and is it realistic?

All language training must be approved by DFAT through the services provider before commencement. If an applicant is successful and onboarded as a scholar, they will be required to provide evidence on the above factors before they can be approved to commence their proposed language training.

All language training components must be arranged directly with the local language training provider, not through a third party provider. See section 5.5 for invoicing process.

On completion of language training, a scholar must submit in a timely manner a certificate of completion from the language school, indicating the attendance and the level of language competence achieved by the scholar. The language training tuition fee entitlement (see 5.5.2) may be used to cover the cost of language competence testing at the end of the language training.

Timing of language training components

Language training can be undertaken full-time or part-time.

- Full-time means at least 15 contact hours per week, plus 7 to 14 hours of personal language study/practice. The minimum duration of any full-time language training is 2 weeks. There is no maximum duration, noting the requirements about maximum scholarship duration in section 5.1 and the maximum amount payable for tuition fees in section 5.5.2.
- Part-time means language training that must be completed concurrently with a full-time study component or a full-time internship component. While there is no mandatory minimum for part-time contact hours, scholars must ensure the program is well-designed and meaningfully contributes to their Asia literacy.

Stronger applications would include language training early in the scholarship program (either before the study semester/trimester or part-time alongside the semester/trimester) as this supports a cohesive, immersive scholarship program (see section 6.2). Learning the local language supports the scholar to immerse themselves in their host location.

5.3 Organising scholarship components through non-profit university-led consortia

Scholars may use non-profit university-led consortia to arrange mandatory study components or language training in priority host locations. These providers typically facilitate specialised in-location academic programs.

A scholar must obtain written agreement from DFAT prior to engaging or making any financial commitment to a consortium. The Australian Government is not liable for any costs incurred before a scholarship agreement is executed and DFAT approval is obtained. Any services engaged without this prior agreement are entirely at the scholar's own cost. An applicant will not be reimbursed for payments made before they are awarded the scholarship.

Invoices must be strictly itemised. The NCP will only pay for costs defined as "payable" under the scholarship agreement (for example, tuition fees). The NCP will not pay for visa processing or insurance to a consortium arrangement.

5.4 What the scholarship grant money cannot be used for

The grant cannot be used for the following activities:

- purchase of land
- wages for core academic staff
- major capital expenditure
- the covering of retrospective costs
- costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application or related documentation
- subsidy of general ongoing administration costs of an organisation such as administration, electricity, phone and rent

- major construction/capital works, or
- activities for which other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies have primary responsibility.

5.5 Scholarship benefits

5.5.1 Overview

Scholars are responsible for their own financial circumstances while undertaking their NCP scholarship program.

Scholars may receive the scholarship benefits described in sections 5.5.2, 5.5.3 and 5.5.4 during the scholarship term, depending on their scholarship program and whether they continue to meet the requirements for each benefit in the scholarship agreement.

The scholarship benefits provided to scholars relate only to the scholarship round in which the scholar was awarded a scholarship.

The terms on which scholars will receive scholarship benefits are set out in the scholarship agreement and are based on the proposed program in the scholar's application.

All amounts in this section or the scholarship agreement are expressed in Australian dollars. Where amounts are converted into foreign currency (including where an invoice is paid on behalf of the scholar, or the scholar's eligibility for a reimbursement needs to be determined), the current exchange rate will be applied, as determined by DFAT.

Not all expenditure during a scholarship program is eligible for grant funding. The DFAT financial delegate makes the final decision on eligible expenditure.

5.5.2 Tuition fees

Tuition fees are payable directly to the relevant host institution and any language training provider, up to the maximum amount for each activity set out in the following table. Scholars must not pay these fees themselves. Payment by a scholar is only permitted in exceptional circumstances and with prior written agreement.

All invoices, must be issued by, and will be paid to, the host institution, except for those relating to programs delivered by non-profit university-led consortia arrangements (see section 5.3). A scholar is responsible for any tuition fees in excess of the maximum amount per approved activity.

Table 2: Expenses payable under the Tuition fees

Item	Activity	Length of activity	Expenses payable under the Tuition fees	Maximum amount of expenses payable as Tuition fees for the activity
1	Study component	As defined in section 5.2.1	<p>1. Course fees at the host institution where the scholar is a fee-paying international student.</p> <p>The tuition fees only cover course fees at the host institution if no current exchange agreement relevant to the scholar's field of study is available between the home university and the host institution.</p> <p>All study components must be arranged directly with the local host institution, not through a third party provider.</p> <p>2. Applicable student services and amenities fees at the host institution.</p> <p>3. Other amounts payable to the host institution where all of the following requirements are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the total of the costs is more than \$200 b) the costs are not covered under an applicable exchange agreement place c) the host institution certifies in writing that the costs are mandatory for completion of the study component d) an invoice for the relevant amount is issued by the host institution. <p>Examples of these costs may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compulsory course field trips within the host location • fieldwork research costs • compulsory materials or equipment (for example safety or personal protective equipment) • the use of the host institution's facilities by scholars undertaking a research-based study component ('bench fees'). 	Up to \$15,000 per semester or \$10,000 per trimester, up to a maximum of \$30,000 for the duration of the program

Item	Activity	Length of activity	Expenses payable under the Tuition fees	Maximum amount of funding payable for Tuition fees for the activity
2	Language training	As defined in section 5.2.4	Fees for the language training payable to the language training provider. All language training components must be arranged directly with the local language training provider, not through a third party provider. All invoices must be issued by, and will be paid to, the language training provider.	Up to \$10,000

5.5.3 Allowances

- a) **A one-off travel allowance** of \$3,000 paid to a scholar (\$1,500 paid prior to travel from Australia to the scholar's first host location, and \$1,500 paid upon return from the host location to Australia within 14 days of completing their scholarship), to contribute to costs associated with the scholar's travel to and from the host location, including domestic travel to an international airport for departure and visa costs.
- b) **A one-off establishment allowance** of \$3,000 paid to a scholar to contribute to the costs associated with the scholar settling in at their host location. These may cover expenses such as rental bonds, textbooks, study materials (including IT equipment) and additional medical insurance.
- c) **A scholarship allowance** of up to \$3,000 paid to a scholar as a monthly stipend during the scholarship term to contribute to the scholar's basic living costs in their host location, when on an approved scholarship program component and permitted leave. Scholars do not receive a stipend when on suspension or in Australia.
- d) **A one-off fellow allowance** of \$1,000 paid to fellows (see section 6.4) to purchase study materials for use during their scholarship and to contribute to costs associated with the fellow's promotion of the NCP.

5.5.4 Other scholarship benefits

Insurance

While overseas on program, travel and medical insurance – including 24/7 emergency assistance – is provided to scholars. The NCP insurance is the primary cover for scholars while overseas, taking precedence over home university insurance policies, and is subject to certain terms and exclusions.

Mental health support

Scholars may be reimbursed up to \$3,000 for professional mental health services delivered by qualified/registered psychologists/counsellors, subject to prior approval by the services provider. Scholars are only eligible for this allowance if they are accessing these services while undertaking their program in the host location.

5.5.5 Allocation of Scholar Support Services

The scholar will be supported by a Scholar Support Services team for the duration of their scholarship. Services provided include pre-departure engagement, advice on benefits and support (for example stipend, insurance etc) and guidance relating to the scholar's responsibilities and compliance with the terms of their scholarship agreement.

5.6 Eligible host locations

5.6.1 Host locations

Subject to sections 2.6(e) and 5.7, NCP scholarship programs must be conducted only in the following host locations:

Table 3: Eligible NCP host locations in the 2027 Round

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bangladesh• Bhutan• Brunei Darussalam• Cambodia• China (including Hong Kong and Macau)• Cook Islands• Federated States of Micronesia• Fiji• French Polynesia• India• Indonesia• Japan• Kiribati• Laos• Malaysia• Maldives• Marshall Islands• Mongolia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nauru• Nepal• New Caledonia• Niue• Palau• Papua New Guinea• The Philippines• Republic of Korea• Samoa• Singapore• Solomon Islands• Sri Lanka• Taiwan• Thailand• Timor-Leste• Tonga• Tuvalu• Vanuatu• Vietnam
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5.6.2 Primary host location

A primary host location is the host location for which the scholarship is awarded. Scholars must complete the most substantial study component and the majority of their program in the primary location for a genuinely immersive scholarship experience.

5.6.3 Secondary host location

In exceptional circumstances, a scholar may undertake their scholarship program in more than one host location and/or at more than one host institution or host organisations. Only one secondary host location can be proposed and it must be coherent with the objectives of the scholar's NCP program in the primary host location.

If an applicant plans to undertake part of their scholarship program in a secondary host location, the applicant must outline in their application the rationale for including the secondary host location. The proposed secondary host location should be proximate to the primary host location. For

example, a scholar undertaking their study component in Malaysia (primary host location) may seek to undertake their internship in Singapore (secondary host location).

The total time spent at the secondary host location should not exceed the total time spent at the primary host location. Inclusion of a secondary host location in a scholarship program does not entitle a scholar to any additional travel allowance or establishment allowance (see section 5.5.3).

5.7 Travel requirements

5.7.1 Overview

Scholars are responsible for making their own travel arrangements, including obtaining and complying with appropriate visas for each host location in which the scholar will undertake their approved scholarship program. Scholars must seek written visa advice directly from their host location's immigration authorities (not from any other source, including private visa agents). Scholars must provide these authorities with full and accurate information on their planned activities.

Scholars are responsible for the costs of applying for, or obtaining visas.

Applicants must carefully consider the risks of travel to the proposed host location(s) and regions before deciding whether to apply. Scholars must make their own independent enquiries about the risks involved in overseas travel and to the host location(s) and ensure they are fully informed about the risks at all times.

Scholars must not travel to a host location or region within a host location for which the Australian Government's [Smartraveller](#) advice is 'Do not travel' or 'Reconsider your need to travel'. Where the Smartraveller advice is raised to 'Do not travel' or 'Reconsider your need to travel' for a host location during the application process or while a scholar is on award, the Scholar Support Services team will work with the scholar on their return to Australia and to identify an alternate host location, if required.

Scholars are required to acknowledge in their scholarship agreement (see section 10.1) that they have considered the risks carefully and investigated all personal welfare, health, safety and security precautions before deciding to travel to any host location.

Scholars must work with their home university to address the issues identified in the risk assessment for all host locations undertaken in section 2.4.

5.7.2 Medical requirements to travel

Scholars are responsible for their own health while overseas. This includes staying up-to-date with vaccinations and accessing medical services or treatment, including for any pre-existing conditions or disabilities.

Travel Medical Clearance

Prior to travelling overseas, scholars must obtain a travel medical clearance from a clinic or General Practitioner specialising in travel medicine.

The travel medical clearance must confirm:

- the scholar is fit to travel and live overseas for the NCP Scholarship Program
- the scholar has all necessary vaccinations for their host location
- plans to manage pre-existing conditions, if applicable (for example, asthma or allergies).

Note: more complex pre-existing conditions may require separate advice from the scholar's regular medical practitioner (see below).

The scholar is responsible for the medical assessment costs.

Management of pre-existing conditions

Scholars with pre-existing conditions must explain in their risk assessment (see section 2.6) how they will manage their condition.

The risk assessment should consider how medical costs for prevention, management or treatment would be covered. This may include purchasing additional insurance, over and above that provided under the NCP (see section 5.5.4), at the scholar's own expense.

Note: DFAT will consider reasonable accommodation/funding to support participation of students with disability (see section 4.2).

Scholars should seek advice from their regular General Practitioner or medical specialist on how to manage their condition in the host location, with the advice summarised in the risk assessment.

5.8 Permitted gaps

Permitted gaps provide formal mechanisms for scholars to manage transitions between program components and/or to address personal requirements. A permitted gap is any period during the scholarship term where a scholar is not required to undertake full-time study, internships, or language training. Permitted gaps are covered by the program's insurance and count towards the scholarship program length.

A permitted gap may be either **gap leave** or **leave of absence**.

5.8.1 Gap leave

Gap leave is a period of leave used specifically to bridge the time between full-time components.

Note: each semester and trimester is a separate full-time component, meaning breaks between semesters/trimesters must be accounted for.

Scholars are entitled to 28 days of gap leave within the first 12 months of their scholarship program. Scholars whose programs exceed 12 months can access an additional 14 days of gap leave to bridge components. Gap leave is calculated in calendar days.

Scholarship benefits are unaffected by approved gap leave.

While gap leave is available for use from the commencement of the scholarship term, this entitlement is granted on the condition that the scholar fulfills their commitment to the approved program. If a scholar withdraws from the program, or their scholarship is terminated for non-compliance, DFAT reserves the right to reconciliation of any stipend payments made during gap leave. If a scholar takes an approved break and continues to receive their stipend during that time, they must then complete another program component that lasts at least as long as the break.

Scholars are expected to remain immersed in their host location at all times, including during gap leave. Travel outside their host location during gap leave is subject to approval by the Scholar Support Services team.

Gap leave is strictly subject to prior approval and will not be granted unless the subsequent full-time component has been formally confirmed.

5.8.2 Leave of absence

A leave of absence is a short-term, approved break from scholarship activities. Scholars may apply for a leave of absence during unexpected personal or professional circumstances. Leave of absence is calculated in calendar days. Scholarship benefits are unaffected by an approved leave of absence.

The NCP Program may approve a leave of absence for a maximum of:

- 14 days during the first 12 months of the scholarship
- 7 days for any subsequent period.

A leave of absence may be taken for:

- compassionate and compelling reasons (for example serious illness or injury, bereavement).
- issues relating to the scholar's safety and security (for example, temporary relocation due to a natural disaster warning).
- compliance with immigration and residency requirements (for example, travel to a nearby host location for 3 days to process a visa renewal that cannot be completed within the primary host location).

In rare instances, scholars may be permitted to take a leave of absence (subject to standard approval requirements) to attend an external activity that provides significant value to their field of study and/or Asia capability.

5.8.3 Suspension

If a scholar is not undertaking an approved full-time component or permitted gap, they will be placed on suspension. If a scholar travels to Australia after commencing their scholarship program, they will be considered on suspension for the duration that they are in Australia.

During any period of suspension, all scholarship benefits, including the monthly stipend and any supplemental allowances, cease immediately. The scholar is not covered by NCP travel insurance.

A scholar outside Australia on suspension must at all times:

- meet their visa requirements at section 2.6
- acquire personal insurance
- comply in a timely way with all information requests from the services provider.

The NCP Secretariat reserves the right to terminate a scholarship immediately if a scholar fails to provide evidence of these arrangements.

Suspension periods must only be used as a last resort, and kept to a minimum to ensure continuity and immersion of a scholar's program.

5.9 Community engagement and advocacy

We encourage scholars to engage with local community groups in their host location and to promote the NCP and the linkages it is creating between Australia and the Indo-Pacific.

The Australian Government, including through its overseas diplomatic missions and offices, may invite scholars to participate in events during their NCP scholarship program, in addition to the formal requirements of the scholarship program.

We encourage scholars to share the experiences of their scholarship program with the NCP Secretariat, other students and their community, including through engaging with the NCP alumni community and through appropriate use of social media. We encourage scholars to participate in activities that promote the NCP and to advocate for the NCP, including the benefits of studying and undertaking work placements in the Indo-Pacific.

5.10 Program support and administration funding for Australian universities

Australian universities with successful scholars in the 2027 Round will be entitled to program support and administration (PSA) funding per awarded scholar as follows:

- \$6,600 where the scholar is undertaking their NCP study component as a fee-paying student with a new host institution where their home university has no existing exchange or partnership arrangement (equivalent to 15 per cent of the long-term average cost for an NCP scholar) OR
- \$4,400 where the scholar is undertaking their NCP study component through an exchange agreement, or as fee-paying with a host institution where there is an existing partnership in place (equivalent to 10 per cent of the long-term average cost for an NCP scholar).

PSA funding may be used to assist universities in:

- developing and expanding Indo-Pacific course offerings, in particular those with a focus on Asian language learning
- expanding or creating partnership arrangements with host institutions in the region
- general administration costs to support NCP scholars.

Program support and administration may include, but is not limited to:

- a) activities to incentivise the offering of Asia capability-related courses, especially Asian languages
- b) partnership development, particularly in relation to developing new exchange/partnership arrangements in host locations
- c) administration relating to the expressions of interest and application stages, including the roles and responsibilities outlined at section 2.4
- d) contributions to learning abroad staffing costs, especially to support expertise to service new or expanded exchange/partnership arrangements
- e) ad hoc resourcing to maximise the university's participation in the NCP Scholarship Program, including to ensure scholars' programs are credit-bearing for their degree
- f) initiatives to promote the NCP Scholarship Program among eligible students
- g) development of new or sustaining consortium arrangements to maximise student participation in Indo-Pacific course offerings, especially in Asian languages
- h) additional support to increase diverse student participation
- i) initiatives to raise the quality of NCP Scholarship program experiences (including risk management and critical incident planning for NCP scholarships)
- j) in consultation with DFAT's services provider, assistance with the supervision, monitoring and evaluation of students' progress during the scholarship, noting that core academic staff salaries are not eligible costs

- k) purchasing the services of third party providers with relevant expertise and appropriate systems to support students to undertake NCP scholarships.

To receive PSA funding, eligible universities can submit a request for payment to the services provider for undertaking Program Support and Administration activities, once a scholar has signed their scholarship agreement. The requests can be combined into a single request for the university’s NCP Scholarship Program cohort for the relevant round, with submission no later than 28 February 2027. The services provider will confirm the scholar’s study arrangement based on the scholarship agreement and subsequently disburse funding within 30 days upon receipt of a correctly rendered request for payment. Universities which receive the PSA funding need to submit evidence of supporting activities through completion reporting (see section 12.2).

If a scholar changes their status from fee-paying with a new host institution (to study through an exchange agreement or fee-paying where there is an existing partnership in place) between signing the scholarship agreement and commencing their NCP scholarship program on location, the university will be required to return \$2,200 (the difference between the 2 categories of PSA funding above) of the PSA funding to DFAT.

6 The assessment criteria

6.1 Priority areas for selection

To support Australia’s capability in Asian languages, immersive experiences and enduring partnerships in the region, priority in the selection processes for the 2027 NCP Scholarship Program will be accorded to programs undertaken in the **priority host locations, languages and sectors** outlined in the table below.

These priority areas are consistent with Australia’s foreign policy priorities for the Indo-Pacific, including as outlined in [Invested: Australia’s Southeast Asia Economic Strategy to 2040](#)⁷ and [A New Roadmap for Australia’s Economic Engagement with India](#).⁸ These priorities are reviewed annually.

Table 4: Priority host locations, languages and sectors in the 2027 NCP Scholarship Program

Priority Host Locations	Of the eligible NCP host locations, applications to the following locations where Australia wishes to expand linkages will be prioritised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India • Indonesia • Vietnam • Timor-Leste 	
	Applications for the following host locations, where Australia wants to maintain its strong, existing engagement, will also be considered highly favourably: <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China (including Hong Kong and Macau) • Fiji • Japan • Republic of Korea • Malaysia </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singapore • The Philippines • Taiwan • Thailand </td> </tr> </table>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China (including Hong Kong and Macau) • Fiji • Japan • Republic of Korea • Malaysia
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China (including Hong Kong and Macau) • Fiji • Japan • Republic of Korea • Malaysia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singapore • The Philippines • Taiwan • Thailand 	

⁷ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/southeastasiaeconomicstrategy>

⁸ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/countries-economies-and-regions/india/new-roadmap-australias-economic-engagement-india>

Priority Asian Languages	<p>The Australian Government is committed to building Australia's Indo-Pacific capabilities and deepening Asia literacy, including in languages. Applications that demonstrate a focus on learning the following Asian languages will be prioritised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bahasa Indonesia • Chinese • Hindi • Japanese • Korean • Malay • Vietnamese
Priority Sectors	<p>Australia's prosperity, security and economic future is tied to the Indo-Pacific region. Applications demonstrating a relationship to the following sectors will be a priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economics and Business • Environment, Primary Industries and Natural Resources • Infrastructure, Climate and Energy • Law, Asian Studies, Culture, and Human Development • Technology and Innovation

Applicants may still submit applications for other NCP host locations (listed in section 5.6.1), language and sectors. Where eligible, these applications will be assessed on their merits in accordance with the assessment criteria at section 6.2.

6.2 Assessment criteria

Scholars must address the following assessment criteria, in both the written application and at interview. We will assess applications based on the weighting given to each criterion. See section 8.1 for further information on the assessment of applications. Responses will be limited to 300 words per criterion. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend an interview.

Criterion 1

Alignment of application with the Australian Government's geographic and sectoral priorities in the Indo-Pacific region

Weighting: 35 per cent

You should demonstrate this by:

- a) describing how your scholarship program aligns with and will contribute to Australian Government priorities, demonstrating a well-researched, cohesive scholarship program that provides an immersive experience, and
- b) describing the capability that you will develop while undertaking your NCP Scholarship, building on your demonstrated interest in, and knowledge of, the Indo-Pacific.

Criterion 2

Focus on Indo-Pacific languages, especially priority Asian languages

Weighting: 15 per cent

You should demonstrate this by:

- a) describing how you will incorporate the study of an Indo-Pacific language, especially a priority Asian language, into your NCP scholarship program and the level of proficiency you aim to achieve, and
- b) outlining how you will use and maintain the language proficiency obtained during your NCP Scholarship in your future studies, work or community engagement.

Priority in selection processes will be given to scholarship programs which meet the language target criteria, as per the definition in the Glossary (section 14).

Criterion 3

Personal attributes for successful completion of scholarship

Weighting: 30 per cent

You should demonstrate this by:

- a) describing the challenges and risks you might face in your host location and how you would respond to them – for example academic, cultural, personal – demonstrating a well-researched understanding of the host location, and
- b) describing why you consider you have attributes that will enable you to deal with these challenges and risks.

Criterion 4

Future impact of NCP experiences on you maintaining engagement with the Indo-Pacific

Weighting: 20 per cent

You should demonstrate this by:

- a) describing how you plan to use the capability you have developed on your NCP scholarship after you have completed your program, demonstrating a long-term forward plan, and
- b) describing how your scholarship experience will establish your Indo-Pacific links (personal and professional) and your plan for maintaining those links.

6.3 Other considerations

In addition to section 6.1 (priority areas for selection) and section 6.2 (assessment criteria), DFAT may accord priority to applications against the following factors:

- a) representation from 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 or universities
 - students who are first in their immediate family to attend university
 - students across the genders
 - women students studying in non-traditional fields
 - students with disability
 - students from a non-English speaking background.
- b) applicants proposing:

- longer periods of study components
 - an internship component or a mentorship that is complementary to their overall program
 - language training at the start of their program, maximising the impact of language learning to contribute to an immersive experience
- c) how the proposal contributes to value with relevant money.

6.4 Selection of fellows

Fellows are NCP scholars who are encouraged to play a strong leadership role in promoting the NCP and its objectives during their scholarship and afterwards as part of the NCP alumni network.

Following the scholarship interviews (see section 8.1), DFAT may select from among highly-ranked applicants:

- a) fellow(s) for the Priority Host Locations listed in section 6.1, particularly locations where Australia wishes to expand linkages
- b) one First Nations fellow who is encouraged to promote First Nations engagement and participation in the NCP
- c) one ASEAN fellow, one Climate Change fellow, one Asian Language fellow and one Business fellow, chosen from scholars whose proposed program closely aligns, and advances the NCP program's objectives, with the relevant organisation/subject.

DFAT's financial delegate decides which candidates are offered a fellowship. DFAT may establish further categories of fellows at its discretion.

Fellows receive additional benefits in the form of a fellow allowance (see section 5.5.3).

6.5 ASEAN-Australia Centre New Colombo Plan Scholars

DFAT may designate **New Colombo Plan ASEAN-Australia Centre Scholars** from select scholars pursuing programs in ASEAN countries in resources, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), and Centre priority sectors. NCP scholars who demonstrate interest in learning about Southeast Asia will be considered favourably. ASEAN-Australia Centre scholars may receive support to attend enrichment activities such as conferences, projects, seminars, courses, and events related to their studies.

7 How to apply

Before applying, each applicant must read and understand these grant opportunity guidelines. The guidelines can be found at [GrantConnect](#).⁹ Any alterations or addenda will be published on GrantConnect.¹⁰ By registering on GrantConnect, individuals will be automatically notified of any changes to these grant opportunity guidelines. A copy of the sample scholarship agreement can be found on the NCP Scholarship Program page on the [DFAT website](#).¹¹ DFAT and/or the services provider may organise industry briefings during the application period for potential applicants, including to answer questions on the 2027 Round.

⁹ <https://www.grants.gov.au/>

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/new-colombo-plan/new-colombo-plan-scholarship-program>

7.1 Overview

DFAT or the services provider will contact individuals put forward as part of an EOI process by Australian universities by email and provide application instructions.

Each applicant must:

- a) complete the online application available from a link provided to the applicant by DFAT
- b) provide all information requested in the required format
- c) address all eligibility requirements and assessment criteria
- d) include all necessary attachments
- e) ensure that their nominated referees have provided their referee reports by the requested date and time, and
- f) submit their application online by the closing date and time.

An applicant may only submit one scholarship application. An applicant cannot change their primary host location in their application once it has been submitted.

Each applicant is responsible for ensuring that their application is complete and accurate. All responses provided by an applicant must be in their own words. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth)*.¹² We will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude applications from further consideration. Further terms relating to the termination or cancellation of the scholarship program are in the scholarship agreement.

Applicants cannot change their application after the closing date and time.

DFAT will acknowledge receipt of a submitted application via an automatically generated email. Each applicant should keep a copy of their application and any supporting documents.

Applicants completing Honours without formal acceptance into their home university honours program should provide as much information on their proposed honours program as possible at the time of application, such as:

- a provisional offer for an honours program conditional on their Bachelor degree results
- a confirmed honours supervisor
- a proposed honours project
- confirmation from their home university that the proposed NCP study component will be credit bearing to their home honours degree.

7.2 Written applications

Applicants must provide written responses to the assessment criteria. An applicant must outline their proposed scholarship program, including the mandatory study component, any proposed internships, mentorships and language training, and the host location(s) in which they intend to undertake each component. Applicants must nominate a primary host location in their application.

Applicants should read the sample scholarship agreement on the NCP Scholarship Program page on the [DFAT website](#) before submitting their application.¹³

¹² <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A04868/latest/text>

¹³ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/new-colombo-plan/new-colombo-plan-scholarship-program>

7.3 Referee reports

A complete application must include details of at least one and up to 2 referees. Applicants must ensure they have given sufficient notice to their referee(s) to enable the completion of the reports by the requested date and time.

The referee(s) must:

- a) be able to comment substantively on the applicant's abilities, personal attributes and experience relevant to the assessment criteria
- b) hold a position that gives their comments credibility (for example, a position in the applicant's home university, workplace or community), and
- c) not be a close family member or friend.

7.4 Attachments to the application

Applicants must also submit the following documentation:

- a) evidence of Australian citizenship (for example, Australian passport bio page, Australian citizenship certificate or provide a statutory declaration)
- b) a letter from the home university that includes the following:
 - i. applicant's current enrolment status at the home university
 - ii. confirmation on whether the proposed study component will be delivered through a **fee-paying pathway** or through an **exchange** pathway, and confirmation that the home university advised the applicant of the financial and academic implications of this choice
 - iii. if the applicant is applying through an **exchange** pathway, confirmation that an exchange agreement is currently in place with the proposed host institution
 - iv. if the applicant is applying through a **fee-paying** place, confirmation from the home university that no current exchange agreement is in place between the home university and the host institution (as described in item 1 of the table at section 5.5.2)
 - v. if the applicant seeks to study at an Australian offshore campus, an explanation on how this offshore campus will offer a genuinely immersive experience.
- c) a letter from the applicant's home university faculty, co-signed (digital signatures accepted) by the home university's NCP ILO (or authorised delegate), that:
 - i. confirms the applicant is in good academic standing
 - ii. confirms that the applicant has sufficient space in their undergraduate degree to receive credit for the proposed program
 - iii. advises on the feasibility of the applicant's proposed study component, which may include (but is not limited to): alignment with the applicant's degree, suitability for their level of study, and the appropriateness of the course and institution
 - iv. provides in-principle support for credit recognition of the proposed study program

Note: At least 6 weeks prior to commencing their study component, scholars will be required to confirm home university credit recognition before they can commence. The scholar bears the risk if their home university does not recognise the credit.

Note: The above letters at (b)-(c) may be submitted as one combined letter. The letters at (b)-(c) are only required at the application stage, and any updates to these letters, for example due to a scholar changing their host institution or proposed units, can be made via email correspondence.

- d) a current CV, and
- e) photo identification, meaning a copy of a current and valid government-issued document that includes the applicant's photo and signature (for example, Australian passport bio page, driver's licence).

7.5 Timing of grant opportunity processes

Applicants must submit an application between the published opening and closing times and dates. We cannot accept late applications, including additional information about the application after the closing time and date.

Key dates in the selection and implementation of scholarship programs are outlined below. DFAT may amend these dates at any time by posting a notice on GrantConnect.

Table 5: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Indicative Timeframe
Applications open	9 June 2026
Australian universities put forward all eligible students who submit an Expression of Interest	9 June to 7 July 2026 (4 weeks)
Expressions of Interest close at 11 pm Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST)	7 July 2026
Eligible students who expressed interest receive an invitation to complete an online application. Applicants submit their application and supporting documentation.	8 July to 4 August 2026 (4 weeks)
Applications close at 11 pm AEST ('closing time')	4 August 2026
Referee report(s) due 11 pm AEST	18 August 2026
Applications are shortlisted. Shortlisted applicants are notified.	August to September 2026
Shortlisted applicants are interviewed	September to October 2026
Selections are finalised. Successful and unsuccessful applicants are notified of the outcome of their application.	November 2026
Scholarship agreements executed	November 2026
Scholars are announced and their details published on the DFAT (NCP) website	November 2026
Scholars commence their scholarship	1 January 2027 to 31 December 2027

Activity	Indicative Timeframe
2027 NCP Scholarship Program cohort completion date	31 July 2029

7.6 Questions during the application process

Please direct any questions during the application period to the NCP Secretariat at ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au. If applicable, answers to questions will be posted on GrantConnect to ensure information is shared with all applicants at the same time.

The NCP Secretariat will not respond to questions received after **5 pm (AEST) on 21 July 2026**.

8 The grant selection process

8.1 Assessment of grant applications and who will assess applications

DFAT assesses applications as follows:

Stage 1: Eligibility screening

We will firstly review applications against the eligibility criteria set out in sections 4 and 5. Applicants and ILOs may be contacted by the services provider to provide updated/corrected information if eligibility issues are identified. Only eligible applications will be considered further in Stage 2.

Stage 2: Assessment of written applications against assessment criteria

Eligible applications are assessed through a competitive process by a panel of experienced and independent assessors in accordance with the CGRPs.

Each eligible application is assessed against the assessment criteria (see section 6.2). The merits of each application are considered based on:

- a) how well it meets the assessment criteria
- b) how it compares to other applications
- c) whether it provides value with relevant money.¹⁴

Referee reports will be considered by assessors in the assessment process.

The assessors provide scores for each applicant to the NCP Secretariat, which determines which applications are shortlisted for interview based on the assessment panel's findings and considerations outlined in section 6.3.

Stage 3: Interviews

DFAT or the services provider invites shortlisted applicants to participate in an online interview in accordance with the timetable in section 7.5.

Members of selection panels have relevant expertise and are drawn from active and retired government officials, private sector representatives, experts on Indo-Pacific affairs and international education specialists.

¹⁴ See Glossary for an explanation of 'value with money'.

Panels rate each applicant on the basis of the assessment criteria (sections 6.1 and 6.2), performance at interview, the likelihood of success on an NCP scholarship program, and other considerations outlined in section 6.3. Panels provide scores to DFAT.

Applicants must not access AI during interviews.

8.2 Who will approve the award of scholarships?

DFAT's NCP Secretariat moderates the selection panel recommendations for consistency across panels and with the NCP strategic objective, taking into account assessment scores and interview performance. It then presents its findings to the DFAT financial delegate (First Assistant Secretary responsible for the NCP) who identifies who will be awarded a scholarship, taking into account the interview panels' recommendations, Australian foreign policy considerations, and NCP program funding availability.

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

- a) awarding of scholarships
- b) grant funding amount to be awarded, and
- c) terms and conditions of the scholarship.

There is no appeal mechanism for the DFAT financial delegate's decision to award or not award a scholarship.

DFAT will advise the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the outcome of the Round.

9 Notification of application outcomes

DFAT or the services provider will advise applicants of the outcome of their application in writing (via email). DFAT will advise successful applicants of any conditions attached to the scholarship. DFAT will also advise home universities of the successful applicants from their university.

9.1 Feedback on applications

Individual feedback will not be provided to applicants. Unsuccessful applicants may apply for future competitive NCP grant opportunities.

9.2 Offer and acceptance processes

Each offer of a scholarship is subject to the applicant accepting and signing a scholarship agreement and being able to obtain appropriate visas for their host location(s).

10 Successful grant applications

10.1 Scholarship agreement

A scholar must enter into a legally binding scholarship agreement with the Commonwealth before they commence their scholarship program. No scholarship benefits will be paid to the scholar, host institutions, or any third party before this agreement is executed. This agreement is based on the program proposed in the scholar's application.

Applicants should read the sample scholarship agreement on the NCP Scholarship Program page on the [DFAT website](#) before submitting their application.¹⁵ The Australian Government will not be

¹⁵ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/new-colombo-plan/new-colombo-plan-scholarship-program>

liable for any costs incurred by the scholar or a third party in relation to a scholarship program before a scholarship agreement is entered into.

The scholarship agreement will detail the scholar's responsibilities in relation to the scholarship program and the scholarship benefits payable by the Australian Government. It may have specific conditions determined by the assessment process or other considerations made by the DFAT financial delegate. DFAT will identify these in the scholarship agreement.

Scholars may appeal decisions made by the services provider and/or DFAT relating to implementation of their scholarship program using the process set out in the scholarship agreement.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the scholarship agreement and/or overpayment of scholarship benefits.

The version of the guidelines in place at the closing date/time of this Round will apply to the scholarship program.

10.2 Specific legislation, policies and industry standards

Scholars must comply with all relevant Australian laws, and the laws and regulations of their host locations, while in Australia and in host locations. This includes compliance with laws relating to child protection and protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH).

DFAT does not tolerate sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment. This applies within DFAT and extends to those we work with including students and partner universities. NCP scholars must read and adhere to DFAT's [Child Protection Policy](#)¹⁶ and [Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy](#),¹⁷ which set out expectations and standards in relation to appropriate behaviours and reporting requirements. DFAT takes all allegations and reported incidents of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment seriously. NCP scholars also have an obligation to comply with their university's policies on child protection and PSEAH.

Scholars must take into account the [Guidelines to Counter Foreign Interference in the Australian University Sector](#).¹⁸

10.3 How DFAT pays the grant

The scholarship agreement provides information on when and how scholarship benefits will be provided to scholars.

Some scholarship benefits will be paid directly to the scholar. Other scholarship benefits, such as tuition fees, will be paid directly to the host institution or language training provider, as relevant. All payments require supporting documentation as will be advised by the Scholar Support Services team.

10.4 Grants payments and GST

Payments will be GST Exclusive.

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. DFAT recommends scholars seek independent professional advice on their taxation obligations or seek

¹⁶ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/international-relations/themes/child-protection/child-protection-policy>

¹⁷ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/international-relations/themes/protection-sexual-exploitation-abuse-and-harassment>

¹⁸ <https://www.education.gov.au/countering-foreign-interference-australian-university-sector/resources/guidelines-counter-foreign-interference-australian-university-sector>

assistance from the [Australian Taxation Office](#).¹⁹ Neither DFAT nor its services provider provide advice on particular taxation circumstances.

11 Announcement of grants

DFAT may publicise details of individual scholarships and scholars including, but not limited to:

- names of successful scholars, their home university, host location(s), host institution, host organisation and language training provider
- description of scholarship programs being supported (including timing)
- the amount of funding awarded
- photographs of scholars, both provided by scholars or taken at DFAT and other events.

If successful, scholarship grants will be reported on the GrantConnect website.

12 How DFAT monitors your grant activity

Requirements and expectations for monitoring a scholar's scholarship program are set out in the scholarship agreement.

12.1 Keeping DFAT informed

Scholars must inform DFAT or the services provider if anything is likely to affect their ability to undertake their scholarship program, in line with the scholarship agreement.

Scholars must also inform us of any changes to:

- name
- home address
- nominated contact details
- bank account details
- university enrolment.

Scholars must contact us immediately if they become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the scholarship agreement.

12.2 Reporting

Scholars must complete progress and completion reporting in accordance with the scholarship agreement. This reporting should always be in scholars' own words.

Universities must retain adequate records of program support and administration (PSA) funding expenditure and be able to provide these on request. The services provider will seek one institutional Round report from each university (where relevant) on how they used PSA funding in the Round, in accordance with section 5.10. This report will be due at the end of September 2027.

12.3 Variations to scholarship programs

After an offer is accepted, scholars will not be permitted to vary their scholarship program as outlined in their application, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

¹⁹ <https://www.ato.gov.au>

Exceptional circumstances are those that could not have been predicted or avoided, and would prevent the scholar from completing their scholarship program as originally proposed.

Any request for a variation must be made on a program variation request form provided by the Scholar Support Services team at least one month in advance of the proposed variation commencing.

The decision to approve a variation to a scholarship program will be made on a case-by-case basis by DFAT or the services provider, in its sole and absolute discretion. Scholars should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider the request based on provisions in the grant agreement and the likely impact on achieving outcomes.

Without limitation, DFAT or the services provider, may consider:

- a) the merits of the request (and funding being available, if required) in respect of the scholarship agreement and achievement of the NCP strategic objective and outcomes
- b) demonstrated coherence across study components, any internship or mentorship components or any language training components of the scholarship program
- c) ensuring that the scholarship program remains consistent with the eligibility requirements.

Scholars are liable for any financial commitments made by them in relation to their proposed change of scholarship program where those commitments are made before receiving formal advice granting the scholarship program variation.

12.4 Compliance visits

We may visit scholars during or at the completion of their scholarship program to review their progress and compliance with the scholarship agreement. We will provide scholars with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

12.5 Record keeping

We may inspect the records that scholars are required to keep under the scholarship agreement.

12.6 Evaluation

The Australian Government reports on and evaluates the NCP Scholarship Program. DFAT and the services provider may use information about scholars and their scholarship program, home university, host institution, host organisation and language training provider for performance monitoring and management of the NCP. This information helps evaluate how effective the program is in achieving the NCP's strategic objective and outcomes. DFAT may also draw on information to create testimonials for NCP promotion.

DFAT and the services provider will monitor performance and manage scholarships through [SmartyGrants](#). Information about applicants, program outcomes and performance will also be collected.

Program stakeholders, including university representatives, interview panel members, applicants and scholars may be asked to participate in evaluating the NCP Scholarship Program.

NCP scholar alumni are expected to participate in surveys and other program monitoring and evaluation activities after completion of their scholarship program, as required by DFAT.

12.7 Acknowledgement

Where possible, the NCP program logo should be used on all materials related to grants under the program. Whenever the logo is used, the publication must also acknowledge the Commonwealth as follows: 'New Colombo Plan Scholarship Program – an Australian Government initiative'.

The NCP logo can be found in the NCP Brand Guidelines on the [DFAT website](#), and should be used in accordance with the Brand Guidelines.²⁰

If use of the NCP logo is not possible, use the following wording: 'This [name of grant activity or project/services] received grant funding from the Australian Government.'

13 Probity

The Australian Government will ensure the grant opportunity process is fair, is conducted in accordance with the published scholarship grant opportunity guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud and corruption, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct, and is consistent with the CGRPs.

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. The scheme requires registration of certain activities that are undertaken in Australia on behalf of a foreign principal, for the purpose of political or government influence. 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. Enquiries about the scheme should be sent to transparency@ag.gov.au.

DFAT may change these guidelines from time to time. When this happens, the revised guidelines will be published on [GrantConnect](#).²¹ By registering on this website, you will be automatically notified of any changes to these guidelines.

You should be aware of your obligations under the [National Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2022](#),²² noting that under the Act grantees will generally be considered 'contracted service providers' (see [NACC fact sheets](#)²³).

13.1 Enquiries and Feedback

Enquiries and feedback about this scholarship opportunity should be sent to ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au. All complaints about a grant process must be provided in writing.

If an applicant, or any other person, does not agree with the way DFAT has handled their feedback/complaint, they can refer the matter to the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#). The Ombudsman will not usually consider a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with DFAT.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072

Website: www.ombudsman.gov.au

²⁰ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/new-colombo-plan/resources>

²¹ <https://www.grants.gov.au/>

²² <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2022A00088/latest/text>

²³ <https://www.nacc.gov.au/resource-centre/nacc-fact-sheets>

The Australian Government is not responsible for any misunderstanding arising from the failure by an applicant to comply with these guidelines, or arising from any ambiguity, discrepancy or error contained in an application.

13.2 Fraud and Corruption

DFAT does not tolerate inaction to fraud or corruption. This applies within DFAT and extends to those DFAT works with. Australian universities must have appropriate fraud and corruption controls in place relating to the NCP Scholarship Program. Specific fraud and corruption obligations for Australian universities are set out in relevant agreements. Australian universities may also fall under the National Anti-Corruption Commission's jurisdiction. Further information for the services provider and Australian universities on developing strategies to meet DFAT's fraud and corruption control contractual requirements can be found in the DFAT [Fraud and Corruption Control Toolkit for Service Providers and Funding Recipients](#).²⁴

Australian universities, applicants and scholars, third party providers and partner organisations must report any fraud or corruption relating to the NCP Scholarship Program they become aware of to the relevant area within DFAT:

- For passport related fraud: passports.fraud@dfat.gov.au
- For fraud or corruption by DFAT staff: conduct@dfat.gov.au
- All other fraud or corruption in relation to the NCP Program: via [webform](#),²⁵ or fraud.corruption@dfat.gov.au.

To avoid any scams, applicants should obtain official information about the NCP from DFAT or its services provider or from DFAT's official website (<https://www.dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/new-colombo-plan>).

13.3 Conflict of interest

Any conflicts of interest, or perceived conflicts of interest, could affect the performance of the NCP program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if DFAT/the services provider's staff, any member of a committee or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel, including sub-contractors, have a:

- professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who can influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer, employee of the services provider, or member of an external assessment panel
- professional, commercial or personal relationship with an applicant or scholar which could impact the application selection process, or is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicant or scholar from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently
- 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, or
- relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the NCP Scholarship program.

An Australian university that submits an EOI must disclose any conflict of interest in relation to an EOI in writing to npc.secretariat@dfat.gov.au at the time of submitting the EOI, or when the conflict

²⁴ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/fraud-corruption/control-toolkit-service-providers-funding-recipients>

²⁵ <https://docs.dfat.gov.au/icms/external-fraud>

of interest arises or is likely to arise. Australian universities must take such steps as reasonably required by DFAT to resolve or otherwise deal with any conflict of interest.

Applicants must disclose any conflict of interest in relation to an application in writing to ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au at the time of submitting the application or when the conflict of interest arises or is likely to arise. Applicants must take such steps as DFAT is reasonably required to resolve or otherwise deal with any conflict of interest.

Scholars must disclose any conflict of interest while undertaking their program by writing to the Scholar Support Services team, or to ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au. If an Australian university, applicant or scholar later identifies an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, they must inform DFAT immediately in writing to ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au.

The services provider and stakeholders involved in assessment/selection processes will also be required to disclose conflict of interest and declare any conflicts to ncp.secretariat@dfat.gov.au.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff will be 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 also declare any conflicts of interest.

13.4 Privacy

DFAT manages the NCP Scholarship Program with the support of a services provider it engages to deliver the NCP. DFAT and its services provider are bound by the provisions of the [Privacy Act 1988](#) (Privacy Act) and the [Australian Privacy Principles](#) which regulate how personal information can be handled.²⁶

The below notice provides you with important information about how DFAT and its services provider will handle personal information through the NCP Scholarship Program.

Why might your personal information be collected?

If you apply for the NCP, your personal information will be collected by DFAT and its services provider for the purpose of managing, promoting and evaluating the NCP.

If your application is successful, your personal information may be used in media releases, publications and in public relations activities, including on the internet, to promote the NCP and other Australian Government programs or activities.

Your personal information may also be used to contact you after the completion of your NCP scholarship, to follow up on your experiences and achievements and how your participation in the NCP may have contributed to this.

What types of personal information and sensitive information will need to be collected?

Below are examples of the personal information (and sensitive information) DFAT or its services provider may collect about you:

- your name and contact details
- gender
- date of birth
- academic results

²⁶ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A03712/latest/text> and <https://oaic.gov.au/privacy/australian-privacy-principles>

- diversity information
- police checks, and
- the personal information (including sensitive information) set out in any of the documents required above at section 7 of these guidelines.

What happens if we do not collect this personal information?

If DFAT or its services provider request any of the information above, unless you provide it we may not be able to:

- contact students put forward in an EOI process to invite them to apply
- assess applications for the NCP Scholarship Program
- undertake administration and performance monitoring and evaluation of the NCP
- promote the NCP, including to scholarship recipients and to media representatives and in promotional material, information and publications in hardcopy and/or on the internet, and
- invite NCP scholars and alumni to relevant functions and events held in Australia and overseas.

Who will your personal information be disclosed to?

If you apply for, or are accepted into the, NCP, DFAT and its services provider may disclose your personal information to third parties for the purpose of managing, promoting or evaluating the NCP. For example, your personal information may be disclosed to:

- other Australian Government departments and agencies, including the Department of Education and Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
- state and territory governments
- other Commonwealth agencies, Ministers and their officers, members of Australian parliament and parliamentary committees
- law enforcement agencies, including the Australian Federal Police, the Department of Home Affairs or State and Territory law enforcement agencies
- agents, contractors or service providers, assessors or interviewers engaged by DFAT or the services provider to carry out or assist its functions and activities such as assessments and interviews, survey work, case studies or profiles for NCP scholars
- the government of your host location
- your current and past education institutions
- other individuals or entities involved in the delivery of your NCP, such as industry mentors
- medical professionals (in the case of a health or welfare incident)
- any other person, agency or organisation which may be able to contribute information relevant to your suitability to participate in the NCP
- your next of kin or authorised agent if you are involved in a critical incident
- Australian universities, including to the NCP ILOs for Scholarships
- potential internship/mentorship host organisations, 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 jurisdictions)

- scholarship host organisations, including but not limited to companies or professional bodies, and
- media representatives, including foreign media representatives.

DFAT may disclose your personal information to overseas recipients listed above – that is, individuals or entities who are not in Australia – for the purpose of managing, promoting or evaluating the NCP. If you provide your consent, you acknowledge and agree that Australian Privacy Principle 8.1 will not apply to the disclosure and that you understand DFAT will not take any steps to ensure that an overseas recipient does not breach an Australian Privacy Principle under the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) (Privacy Act).

DFAT's [Privacy Policy](#)²⁷ contains information about DFAT's collection, use, disclosure and storage of personal information, including sensitive information, and how individuals may

- access and seek correction of personal information that we hold, or
- complain about how DFAT has handled their personal information, and how DFAT will deal with such a complaint.

13.5 Confidential Information

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to disclose to any person, other than DFAT, any Confidential Information relating to the application and/or scholarship agreement, without DFAT's prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where the applicant or scholar is 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).

DFAT may at any time, require the applicant to give a written undertaking relating to non-disclosure of DFAT's Confidential Information in a form DFAT considers acceptable.

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

- a) the applicant/scholar clearly identifies the information as confidential and explains why DFAT should treat it as confidential
- b) the information is commercially sensitive
- c) revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to the applicant/scholar or someone else.

DFAT will not be in breach of confidentiality if the information is disclosed to:

- the NCP Secretariat and other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help us manage the NCP Scholarship Program effectively, including for an integrity purpose
- employees and contractors of DFAT so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse DFAT programs and activities
- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery

²⁷ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/corporate/privacy>

- other Australian Government agencies for law enforcement purposes, where the disclosure will serve the Australian Government's legitimate interests and, if necessary, to substantiate an applicant's claims
- other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government agencies in NCP Scholarship Program reports and consultations
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman, Privacy Commissioner or National Anti-Corruption Commissioner, or staff of their agencies
- the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary, or
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

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

13.6 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](#) (Cth) (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to documents 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 exemptions outlined in the FOI Act.

All FOI requests must be made to DFAT's FOI Director in writing.

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

By email: foi@dfat.gov.au

14 Glossary

Term	Definition
Aboriginal and 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.
Academic year	the annual period of study sessions of a home university and/or host institution.
Applicant	a person who is applying or has applied for an NCP scholarship.
Application	an application for a scholarship under the NCP Scholarship Program.
Assessment criteria	are the specified principles or standards, against which applications will be judged. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of proposals and, in the case of a competitive grant opportunity, to determine application rankings.
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.
Bachelor degree	Bachelor Level 7 as defined in the Australian Qualifications Framework.
Bachelor honours degree	Bachelor Honours Level 8 as defined in the Australian Qualifications Framework.
Closing date/time	the date and time beyond which applications will not be accepted, as specified at section 7.5.
Cohort completion date	the final date on which all 2027 NCP Scholarship Program cohort can complete is 31 July 2029.
Commencement date	the date in the scholarship application on which the scholar is required to commence the first component of the scholarship program.
Commonwealth entity	a Department of State, or a Parliamentary Department, or a listed entity or a body corporate established by a law of the Commonwealth. See subsections 10(1) and (2) of the <i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i> (PGPA Act). ²⁸

²⁸ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2013A00123/latest/text>

Term	Definition
Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles 2024 (CGRPs) ²⁹	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.
Concurrent diploma	undergraduate studies at a diploma level as defined in the Australian Qualifications Framework, undertaken concurrently with a Bachelor degree or Bachelor honours degree.
Confidential information	information which satisfies the criteria listed at section 13.5 or is designated by the Australian Government as confidential or that either party knows or ought to know is confidential. This does not include information that is otherwise in the public domain.
Conflict of interest	real, apparent, or potential private or personal associations or interests (financial or non-financial) which improperly influence, or may improperly influence, a person's performance of their role and responsibilities in relation to the NCP Scholarship Program.
Date of effect	can be the date on which a grant agreement is signed or a specified starting date. Where there is no grant agreement, entities must publish information on individual grants as soon as practicable.
Decision maker	the person who makes a decision to award a grant.
Disability	any limitation, restriction or impairment which restricts everyday activities or support is required and has lasted or is likely to last for at least 6 months.
Eligibility criteria	refer to the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant. Eligibility criteria should be developed to enable objective validation and are either 'met' or 'not met'. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria.
First Nations students	those students who self-identify as being of Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent.
Foreign Arrangements Scheme	the Foreign Arrangements Scheme is administered by DFAT to implement <i>Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act 2020</i> (Cth). ³⁰

²⁹ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2024L00854/latest/text>

³⁰ <https://www.foreignarrangements.gov.au>

Term	Definition
Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme	the Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme is administered by the Attorney-General's Department to implement the <i>Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act 2018 (Cth)</i> . ³¹
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 (Different term).
Grant	for the purposes of the CGRPs, 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"> a. under which relevant money,³² or other Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) money,³³ is to be paid to a grantee other than the Commonwealth; and b. which is intended to help address one or more of the Australian Government's policy outcomes while assisting the grantee achieve its objectives.
Grant activity/activities	refers to the project/tasks/services 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. The NCP Scholarship agreement is a grant agreement between DFAT and NCP scholars governed by the CGRPs.
GrantConnect ³⁴	is the Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRPs.
Grantee	the individual/organisation which has been selected to receive a grant.
Grant opportunity	refers to 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. NCP Scholarship Program grant opportunities are targeted at Australian undergraduates who are put forward by their home university through an EOI process and meet NCP eligibility criteria.

³¹ <https://www.ag.gov.au/integrity/foreign-influence-transparency-scheme>

³² Relevant money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 8, Dictionary.

³³ Other CRF money is defined in the PGPA Act. See section 105, Rules in relation to other CRF money.

³⁴ <https://www.grants.gov.au/>

Term	Definition
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.
Home university	the Australian university which put forward the applicant(s), at which an applicant or scholar is enrolled while applying for and undertaking their scholarship program and which will confer the student's degree upon completion.
Host institution	a university where the scholar undertakes their study component in the host location. Excludes offshore campuses of universities established or headquartered outside the host location, with the exception of Australian offshore campuses that are able to offer a genuinely immersive experience.
Host location	the geographic location(s) in the Indo-Pacific, as listed in section 5.6.1, in which the scholar undertakes their scholarship program.
Host organisation	any other organisation, besides the host institution, that may host scholars for language study, internships, mentorships, training, study or research in the host location. Excludes offshore campuses of universities established or headquartered outside the host location, with the exception of Australian offshore campuses that are able to offer a genuinely immersive experience.
Internship	a work experience in which a scholar has learning goals relevant to their academic course and professional development. Internships can include clinical placements, practicums or artist residencies.
Internship component	an internship undertaken as part of an NCP scholarship program that meets the eligibility requirements in section 5.2.2.

Term	Definition
Language target criteria	<p>for 2027 NCP scholars, the language learning target can be met through one of the following paths:</p> <p>1. Academic integration path</p> <p>Fifty per cent or more of the total credit from their study component (for example, 4 out of 8 units/courses) is language-related. This is achieved through any combination of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language Acquisition: units/courses specifically focusing on learning the language itself • In-Language Instruction: units/courses where the subject matter is delivered in the relevant language. <p>To count toward the target, the language must be an official or commonly spoken language (other than English) of the primary NCP host location, and instruction must be delivered face-to-face.</p> <p>2. Intensive training path</p> <p>A scholar meets the language training through full-time language training for at least 10 weeks, commenced in the first 3 months of the scholarship program.</p> <p>The language training must be a continuous block to meet the target, meaning it is not separated by another component or suspension (see permitted gaps at section 5.8). Shorter intensive courses can be aggregated to meet this target (for example, 6 weeks of a ‘Beginner Bahasa Indonesia’ course, followed by 6 weeks of an ‘Intermediate Bahasa Indonesia’ course).</p>
Language training component	<p>training in a language undertaken as part of an NCP scholarship program – separate from and/or additional to the credit-bearing study component (including language focused study components) that meets the eligibility requirements in section 5.2.4.</p>
Language training provider	<p>a registered training provider of language training at which a scholar undertakes language training in the host location.</p>
Law	<p>any applicable statute, regulation, by-law, ordinance or subordinate legislation in force from time to time in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Australia, whether made by a state, territory, the Commonwealth, or a local government; and b) the jurisdiction in which the scholarship is being undertaken.

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.
Mental health service	professional counselling to foster a state of well-being, in which the scholar realises their own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to their community. Does not include medical professionals providing support for serious/chronic mental health conditions or disabilities.
Mentorship	a developmental relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person guides a less experienced or less knowledgeable person, relevant to work, career, or professional development.
Mobility program	see the meaning of New Colombo Plan (NCP) Mobility Program below.
National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC)	the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) is an independent Commonwealth agency. It detects, investigates and reports on serious or systemic corruption in the Commonwealth public sector. The Commission operates under the National Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2022 . ³⁵
New Colombo Plan (NCP)	the NCP Scholarship Program, NCP Semester Program, and NCP Mobility Program.
New Colombo Plan International Liaison Officer for Scholarships	the person(s) designated by an Australian university to submit student Expressions of Interest (EOIs) and receive NCP Scholarship Program updates.
New Colombo Plan Mobility Program	the program of that name administered by DFAT.
New Colombo Plan Scholarship Program	the meaning in sections 2.1.1 and 2.2.
New Colombo Plan Semester Program	the program of that name administered by DFAT.
New Colombo Plan website	http://www.dfat.gov.au/new-colombo-plan
Non-profit consortia-based academic service provider	an association of organisations, not operating for the profit or personal gain of its members or individuals that provides academic services in an NCP host location.

³⁵ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2022A00088/latest/text>

Term	Definition
Offshore campus	of an Australian university refers to a branch campus in a location outside Australia.
PBS Program	described within the entity's Portfolio Budget Statement , ³⁶ 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 same meaning as in the Privacy Act, which defines Personal Information as “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.”
Privacy Act	the <i>Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</i> .
Private sector organisation	Australian, global and local commercial enterprises (businesses) 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.
Program	the NCP Scholarship Program.
Program Support Services provider (services provider)	DFAT's Program Support Services provider who provides administration and support services to the NCP program. a contracted service provider is a person who is a party to a Commonwealth contract or is a party to a subcontract with a contracted service provider and is responsible for the provision of goods or services under contract, either directly or indirectly.
Reasonable accommodation	the provision of support, modifications and/or adjustments that meet the individual needs of scholars with disability to enable their participation in the NCP on an equal basis with other scholars.
Regional/remote	a region designated as Regional or Remote by the Australian Bureau of Statistics Australian Statistical Geography Standard.
Scholar	an applicant awarded an NCP scholarship.
Scholar Code of Conduct	the NCP Scholar Code of Conduct outlines the expectations of students participating in the NCP Scholarship Program in respect of personal and professional behaviour.

³⁶ <https://budget.gov.au/content/pbs/index.htm>

Term	Definition
Scholarship	an award under the NCP Scholarship Program, including the relevant scholarship benefits.
Scholarship agreement	the agreement entered into between the Commonwealth and a scholar prior to the start of their scholarship program. The NCP Scholarship agreement is a grant agreement covered by the CGRPs.
Scholarship benefits	travel allowance, establishment allowance, fellow allowance (if applicable), scholarship allowance, tuition fees (if applicable), mental health allowance and insurance as described in section 5, and any other financial or other assistance that may be available to a scholar based on the individual circumstances of a scholar's scholarship program.
Scholarship program	the mandatory study component, and optional internship component, mentorship activities and language training that applicants propose in their application (subject to any approved variations under the scholarship agreement in accordance with the process in section 12.3).
Scholarship program completion date	the date in the scholarship application on which the scholar is required to complete the scholarship program or such other later date as agreed in writing by the parties. The completion date will be the final date of the scholar's last component which would be either the final date for assessment of a study component or language training component, or the final date of the internship.
Scholar Support Services	staff of the services provider responsible for providing scholars with information and support to undertake their scholarship program.
Scholarship term	from the scholarship program commencement date to the scholarship program completion date, including any period(s) of a permitted gap (including any approved suspensions).
Selection criteria	comprise eligibility criteria and assessment criteria.
Selection process	the method used to select potential scholars/grantees. This process may involve comparative assessment of applications or the assessment of applications against the eligibility criteria and/or the assessment criteria.
SmartyGrants	DFAT's online system for managing NCP Expressions of Interest (EOIs), applications and scholarships.
Study component	an approved course of study at a host institution as part of a scholar's scholarship program that meets the eligibility requirements in section 5.2.1.

Term	Definition
Undergraduate course	<p>as defined by the Department of Education in Higher Education Administrative Information for Providers,³⁷ an undergraduate course of study is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an undergraduate certificate • a diploma that is not accredited as a VET award • an advanced diploma that is not accredited as a VET award • an associate degree • a bachelor degree, or • an honours program. <p>A double degree is considered one course of study for the purpose of the NCP program.</p> <p>Note – as outlined in section 4.1, NCP scholars must be enrolled and undertaking a Bachelor or Bachelor Honours degree at an Australian university, unless they are studying an eligible undergraduate language-focused qualification.</p>
Value with money	<p>value with money in this document 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"> • the quality of the project proposal and activities • fitness for purpose of the proposal in contributing to government objectives • that the absence of a grant is likely to prevent the grantee and government’s outcomes being achieved, and • the potential grantee’s relevant experience and performance history.
We / our / us	The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

³⁷ <https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-publications/higher-education-administrative-information-providers>