

Australia Awards

Papua New Guinea

Professional Linkage Support for PNG Universities

(September 2024)

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# Introduction

Australia Awards PNG (AAPNG) will support PNG academics and professional staff to attend symposiums, conferences, and workshops in Australia in their area of specialisation, building their skills, knowledge and strengthening linkages between PNG and Australian universities. Attendance can be as a participant, though, preference will be given to applications with active engagement (e.g. presentation of a paper, member of a discussion panel).

Consideration can be given to additional time in Australia for a pre-arranged visit to an Australian university to deepen relationships with counterparts working in the same professional or academic area or field of study, strengthen research collaborations or build links with potential PhD candidature supervisors.

Applicants will be required to provide a well-structured justification for participation. This is to include with a clear outline for how the opportunity will improve quality of academic programs or institution and how it will contribute to professional development goals.

On return to PNG, Professional Linkage Support recipients will be required to complete a short report on the outcomes of the activity, and demonstrate within twelve months of return how their engagement has impacted academic program or organisational quality for example, through changes to teaching and learning approaches, curriculum revision, strengthen or new research linkages with Australia, or improved organisational policies, processes and practices.

## Objectives

The Professional Linkage Support will contribute to the strategic objectives of the recipient’s university by:

* Participating PNG academics contributing to improving the quality of academic programs by applying the specialist skills, knowledge and linkages gained in Australia to update course content and delivery approaches and contribute to their own and their colleague’s professional development.
* Participating PNG university academic and professional staff contributing to enhanced organisational quality by applying the specialist skills, knowledge and linkages gained in Australia to update policy, practice and institutional culture.

# Applicant eligibility

## Applicant Eligibility

The Professional Linkage Support is open to PNG university staff who meet one of the following criteria:

* are teaching and assessing academic programs for a university level qualification (Diploma or above) at a PNG university, college or institution
* are a member of a university/college/institution Executive Leadership Team or Head of a teaching/learning Department/Faculty including University Library;
* are a senior member of a university/college/institution administration department, who is responsible for developing and implementing organisational polices; or
* actively undertaking research, with a view to publishing their findings

Applicants must also:

* be a PNG citizen and be residing in PNG,
* hold (or able to obtain) a PNG passport, valid for at least six months after the proposed travel dates; and
* provide written approval and endorsement from their Head of Department **and** either Pro Vice Chancellor Academic or Vice Chancellor (or equivalents of these roles).

Applicants are not permitted to submit multiple Professional Linkage Support applications in any one round. Applicants will only be eligible for one Professional Linkages Support in a 12 month period.

## Symposium/Conference Workshop Eligibility

The proposed symposium/conference/workshop must:

* be held in Australia;
* be directly related to the applicant’s academic specialisation or duties; or
* be directly related to the program the applicant delivers in PNG; or
* be related to general teaching, learning and assessment at university level, including content development and research skills; or
* be directly related to a research project currently under development/ implementation (including the development of a PhD thesis proposal);
* can include leadership events where the applicant is a Head of Department, or part of a university/college/institution executive team, and can demonstrate they have significant leadership responsibilities.
* can be a higher education management symposium or conference where the applicant is a senior manager of an administration department; and
* can be an event related to improved administrative systems and policies that address organisational efficiency, transparency and inclusiveness.

**Example 1:** If an applicant requests to attend a conference for online content development, they must provide evidence of their current responsibilities in designing curriculum, lesson plans etc. for online delivery.

**Example 3:** A University Librarian can attend a conference relating to librarianship.

**Caution!** Please carefully review the conference or activity website to check for authenticity and quality. Please do not pay directly and, where possible, check with your network to ensure you are applying to attend a credible event. As part of eligibility and selection assessment, AAPNG will review the proposed conference to ensure the conference program and themes correlate to the intended professional development outcomes stated on application forms.

## Co-funding

If participation in the event is being subsidised by another organisation or you are receiving a payment such as an honorarium or professional fees for service, you must declare this. On a case-by-case basis AAPNG may agree to a co-funding arrangement where other sponsorship is in place or there is a professional service arrangement. Failure to disclose such arrangements is considered a conflict of interest and fraud.

If the application includes a proposal to visit an Australian university in a city other than the event host city, AAPNG will consider this on a case-by-case basis and may agree to fully or partly fund the additional costs involved.

# Entitlements

## What costs are covered

The Professional Linkage Support will cover the following costs up to a maximum of AUD7,000:

* Conference attendance fees
* Membership fee (one off) of the hosting organisation if required for attendance
* Economy airfares (international and domestic) between PNG and the Australian city hosting the conference (travel by the most direct route)
* Visa application costs including biometrics (if required)
* International travel insurance
* Transfer costs from and to the Australian airport and Australian accommodation
* Hotel accommodation for up to five nights in a standard room, based on the rates arranged by the event organisers or otherwise as applied by Tetra Tech International Development for the host city.
	+ Accommodation commences the evening prior to the conference opening and ceases the evening of the last day of the conference.
	+ On a case-by-case basis, additional accommodation can be provided where there is a **pre-arranged** meeting at an Australian university (must be agreed with AAPNG in advance).
	+ Transit accommodation in Port Moresby (if required).
* Per diem for the duration of the travel. Per diem will be calculated pro rata as per table 1 and table 2 below noting the following:
	+ Per diems will not cover meals provided at the conference
	+ Per diem calculation commences from the departure time of the first flight, and ceases at the departure time of the last flight
	+ Per diems will not be paid if already covered through a co-funding arrangement
	+ Per diems will not be paid if there is an extended stay in Port Moresby (either voluntary or due to aircraft disruption)
	+ Per diems will be paid in Kina (PGK), applying the current exchange rate at the time

Table 1: Australian Per diem (AUD)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Breakfast  | Lunch  | Dinner  | Incidentals  | Total |
| 32.10 | 36.10 | 61.5 | 23.00 | 152.70 |

Table 2: PNG Per diem (PGK)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Breakfast  | Lunch  | Dinner  | Incidentals  | Total; |
| 45.00 | 60.00 | 90.00 | 35.00 | 230.00 |

## What costs are not covered

The following costs will not be covered by Professional Linkage Support:

* Passport and NID applications
* Local transport to and from the applicant’s nearest domestic airport
* Excess baggage or cargo costs
* Local transport costs in Australia, except airport transfer to and from the Australian accommodation
* Health care costs in Australia which are excess to the costs covered by the international travel insurance (including pharmaceuticals or upfront payments which are reimbursable via the insurance provider)
* Personal items such as equipment, clothing, luggage or similar
* Communication costs such as a temporary Australian SIM card or international roaming costs for a PNG SIM
* Replacement of per diem lost or stolen during the travel; and
* Additional services at the Australian or PNG accommodation providers such as laundry, room service, mini bar etc. These costs are the responsibility of the individual.

Extended stays in Australia for personal/holiday purposes **are not permitted**.

# Application submissions & Selection

## Opening of Applications

Applications will open on 15 October 2024 and close on 15 November 2024 for attendance at conferences, symposium or workshops held between January to June 2025.

Proposals must be submitted online via SmartyGrants (See the hyperlink at the end of this document). Applicants will set up a SmartyGrants account to access the application form and submit an application.

To be eligible to apply, an applicant must have a passport which is valid for at least six months from the date of intended travel.

Applicants can create, save, and return to a draft application (it does not need to be completed in one session). It is recommended applicants first complete the assessment questions in a Word document and ensure they are is of a high standard before pasting into the SmartyGrants online application.

AAPNG aims to offer 24 Professional Linkage Support opportunities for events between January to June 2025.

**People with a disability are strongly encouraged to apply.**

## Funding Support approval process

Applications will be assessed on a merit basis by a Selection Panel comprising representatives of the governments of PNG and Australia.

### Application Quality

The Selection Panel will expect well-considered and written responses to assessment questions. Application responses must clearly demonstrate how participation in the event will address the objectives outlined in Section 1. Decisions by the Selection Panel are final.

### Climate Change

Where an applicant can demonstrate genuine academic engagement with Climate Change mitigation, resilience or adaptation, additional selection weight will be given. This consideration will not outweigh selection weightings based on the overall quality of the applicant’s responses to all application questions.

# Implementation Arrangements

## Funding Agreement

AAPNG will enter into a Recipient Agreement with the selected recipients outlining the total funding, agreed arrangements, and code of conduct. AAPNG will not provide additional funding or cover additional expenses above what is stated in the Agreement.

## Payments

The maximum funding provided per recipient will be AUD7,000. AAPNG will be responsible for the payments outlined in the Recipient Agreement.

For Conference payments, the invoice from the organiser **must** be made out to **Australia Awards PNG**, be inclusive of Australian GST, and must note the name of the recipient for whom the costs covers.

## Per diems

* AAPNG will pay per diems directly into the recipient’s nominated PNG bank account based on the exchange rate used by AAPNG for daily transactions
* Per diem will be paid three days prior to travel and **will not** be paid as cash
* It is the recipient’s responsibility to ensure the nominated account is accessible to the recipient only and does not have auto deductions which may cause depletion of per diems
* Ideally, the account will be linked to a bank card which is enabled for overseas transactions (e.g. visa debit card)
* If for any reason the recipient does not travel, per diem must be immediately repaid in full to AAPNG (failure to do so will be deemed as fraud)

## People with Disability

Where a recipient is a person with disability, AAPNG will support reasonable adjustment, and may incur additional expenses to those outlined in Section 3.

# Important Information

## Pre-existing Medical Conditions

Applicants with a pre-existing medical condition must declare any pre-existing medical conditions and should consider if travel to Australia is appropriate for them. International health insurance will not cover treatment for pre-existing medical conditions.

In the event of an emergency situation, and medical treatment is required, health cover will be on a reimbursable basis. AAPNG will **not** cover upfront medical expenses or pharmaceuticals, even if these are later reimbursable by the insurance company.

## Acknowledgement of funding

Australian Government funding should always be acknowledged. This includes acknowledging the source of funding in publications, reports, at training courses and workshops, and in presentations at conferences and other public events. Recipients should contact AAPNG for specific guidance regarding communication protocols prior to publication or public presentations.

During presentations, the grantee should make clear that they are solely responsible for the information provided in publications or presentations.

## Promotion

AAPNG may showcase the achievements and outcomes of Professional Linkage Support recipients via a range of media opportunities. Funding recipients will support AAPNG’s promotion goals by providing a variety of high-quality photos of their participation in activities.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

Recipients will be required to complete a report template on completion of their travel. AAPNG will undertake follow up surveys within 12 months of travel to collect further evidence on how the visit to Australia has contributed to professional development and improved academic program quality or university systems, procedures and processes. For funding opportunities such as this to continue, AAPNG must have evidence of the impact of the investment.

## Conflict of Interest and Fraud

AAPNG has a zero-tolerance policy on fraud and is committed to minimising the possibility of fraud for program activities. Fraud means dishonestly obtaining a benefit, or causing a loss, by deception or other means, and includes alleged, attempted, suspected, or detected fraud. Recipients must not engage in any fraudulent activities or behaviour, this includes, but not limited to:

* seeking funding or support from AAPNG and another sponsor such as your institution for the same benefit (e.g., double dipping)
* failing to declare additional sponsorship,
* providing false or misleading information on application forms or via correspondence.

AAPNG has strict conflict of interest expectations. Professional Linkage Support recipients should declare any direct financial, professional or personal interest in any organisation delivering a conference or workshop or where a professional fee is being paid for services provided by the recipient. Where an un-declared conflict of interest is discovered, this will be regarded as fraud by AAPNG. In these cases, the Professional Linkage Support agreement will be terminated, and the recipient will be asked to return funds to AAPNG.

## Termination of funding agreement

AAPNG may immediately withdraw the funding agreement if it reasonably believes the recipient has:

* Breached the terms and conditions of the Recipient Agreement; or
* Provided false or misleading statements in their application or correspondence; or
* Engaged in serious misconduct including acting illegally, negligently, or fraudulently;
* Act in a manner that brings bring disrepute to You, Your home country or the Australian Government; or
* Be unable to obtain an appropriate visa to visit Australia and must comply with all visa requirements of the Australian Department of Home Affairs (DHA), as set out on the DHA website and which may change during the course of the Award: [www.homeaffairs.gov.au](http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au);

## Child Protection

AAPNG has a zero-tolerance policy toward the exploitation of children and is committed to upholding and implementing the Australian Government’s mandatory child protection compliance standards aimed at protecting children from exploitation and abuse.

Recipients must understand their obligation for managing risks to children and act accordingly. Recipients must comply with Tetra Tech’s Code of Conduct which sets standards for personal behaviour, which will be provided in the draft Recipient Agreement.

AAPNG expects recipients to use common sense and avoid actions or behaviours that could be construed as child exploitation and abuse in the course of their linkage activity.

Where a Professional Linkage Support application is shortlisted AAPNG will conduct an assessment to determine if the activity is regarded as *working with children* or having *contact with children.*

* *Working with Children:* Means being engaged in an activity with a child, where the contact would reasonably be expected as a normal part of the activity and the contact is not incidental to the activity. Working includes volunteering or other unpaid works.
* *Contact with Children:* Working on an activity, or in a position, which involves or may involve contact with children, either under the position description or due to the nature of the work environment.

A criminal record check, in accordance with the DFAT Child Protection Policy, may be required to be provided by the applicant, where an activity involves *working with children, or contact with children*.

Where AAPNG deems it necessary, recipients maybe required to undertake a short training module on Child Protection.

## Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH)

AAPNG has a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment of any kind. This applies to our own staff and activities and extends to those activities conducted by our partners, including Professional Linkages Support recipients. AAPNG, alongside many other organisations in PNG, works to protect vulnerable people through safeguarding polices and approaches that enhance accountability, improve support, and drive cultural change through strong leadership.

Recipients **must** comply with DFAT’s Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy (available [here](https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/pseah-policy.docx)) which sets out expectations and requirements in this area. Recipients are responsible and accountable for immediately notifying AAPNG if any person engaged in Professional Linkage Support activity is accused of, charged with, arrested for, or convicted of criminal offences relating to sexual exploitation, abuse, or harassment.

**Recipients must sign a Child Protection and PSEAH Code of Conduct.**

## Australian Laws

In Australia, Federal and State laws are strictly enforced, including customs and quarantine requirements for entry at the border into Australia. Professional Linkages Support recipients are responsible for making themselves aware of and adhering to Australian laws at all times.

# For further information

Any queries in relation to the AAPNG Professional Linkage Support should be sent to the AAPNG Higher Education Partnerships Team:

Phone: 675 321 1766 or 73733800`

E-mail: linkagesupport@australiaawardspng.org

Website: [www.australiaawardspng.org](http://www.australiaawardspng.org)

Applications close at 11:59pm on 15 November 2024.

# How to Apply

<https://australiaawardspng.smartygrants.com.au/linkagesupport25>

