



AUS4SKILLS

Guidelines for Contracted Providers

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Table of Contents

Introduction	5
1 Background	5
1.1 Aus4Skills Components	6
1.2 Aus4Skills Toolbox	8
1.2.1 Formal Australia Awards	9
1.2.2 Complementary Assistance for Australia Awards participants	9
1.2.3 Informal Learning Opportunities	9
2 Aus4Skills Activities Design	10
2.1 Activity Design	10
2.1.1 Aus4Skills Activity Definition	10
2.1.2 Scope of Services	10
2.1.3 Activity Design and Delivery Plan	11
2.2 Prioritising gender equality, disability and social inclusion	11
2.3 Contextualisation of learning to the specific context	12
3 Short Courses	12
3.1 Australia Awards Short Courses	13
3.1.1 Course Contents	13
3.1.2 Course Delivery and Structure: the “sandwich” model	13
3.1.3 Participant Selection	15
3.1.4 Assessment and Certification	15
3.1.5 Branding and Communications	15
3.1.6 Australian Alumni	15
4 Other Informal Learning Opportunities	16
5 Participant Selection	16
5.1 Prioritising gender equality, disability and social inclusion	16
5.2 Participant selection process	17
5.3 English language requirements	17
5.4 Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment	18
5.5 Child protection	18
5.6 Participant personal information and privacy	18
6 Entitlements for Participants	19
6.1 Carers and dependants of participants	19
6.2 Travel	19
6.2.1 Travel costs	19
6.2.2 Reimbursed travel	19
6.2.3 Personal travel	19
6.2.4 Participants with disability	20
6.2.5 Excess baggage	20
6.2.6 Extensions of stay	20

6.3	Visas	20
6.3.1	Australian visas.....	20
6.4	Accommodation	21
6.4.1	In-Australia accommodation	21
6.4.2	In-Vietnam accommodation.....	21
6.4.3	Other accommodation	21
6.5	Travel and Medical Insurance	21
6.5.1	Travel and medical insurance in Australia.....	21
6.5.2	Welfare Officer support	22
6.6	Per Diems	22
6.6.1	In-Australia per diems	23
6.6.2	In-Vietnam per diems	23
6.6.3	Per diems in other countries	23
6.7	Pre-departure Briefing for International Travel	23
6.8	On Arrival Briefing	24
7	Contracted Provider Selection	25
7.1	Requests for Tender	25
7.1.1	Technical Proposal.....	25
7.1.2	Financial Proposal.....	28
7.2	Contracting.....	28
7.2.1	Budget	28
7.2.2	Activity Design and Delivery Plan/Program.....	28
8	Implementation Considerations	29
8.1	Delivering the logistical requirements of the contract	29
8.2	Pastoral care of participants	29
8.3	Professional Interpretation and Translation	30
8.4	Innovative approaches to delivery	30
8.5	Incident Management.....	30
8.6	Strategic Communications	31
8.7	Performance Management and Assessment	31
8.8	Environment.....	32
9	Provider Personnel Entitlements.....	32
9.1	Personnel fees	32
9.2	Per diems.....	32
9.3	Travel.....	32
9.4	Visas	33
9.5	Accommodation	33
9.6	Operating in provincial areas	33
10	Monitoring and Evaluation.....	33
10.1	Output Monitoring	33
10.2	Outcome Monitoring.....	34
10.3	Alumni Development Impact Survey (ADIS).....	34

11	Reporting	34
11.1	Completion reporting	35
11.2	Exception reporting	35
11.3	Financial reporting	35
12	Budget.....	36
12.1	Fixed costs	36
12.2	Reimbursable costs	36
12.3	Invoicing	37
13	Further Information	37

Abbreviations

AAF	Australia Awards Fellowship
AAS	Australia Awards Scholarships
AASC	Australia Awards Short Course
ADIS	Alumni Development Impact Survey
ARF	Aid Adviser Remuneration Framework
AWIL	Advancing Women in Leadership
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
GEDSI	Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
GoV	Government of Vietnam
HECB	Higher Education Capacity Building
HRD	Human Resource Development
ILO	Informal Learning Opportunity
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MC	Managing Contractor
PEC	Proposal Evaluation Committee
PPA	Partner Performance Assessment
RFP	Request for Proposal
RFT	Request for Tender
TEC	Tender Evaluation Committee
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VAC	Vietnam Australia Centre
WOPO	Whole of Program Outcome

Introduction

DFAT has contracted Tetra Tech International Development Pty Ltd (“Tetra Tech International development”) as Managing Contractor (MC), to deliver the Aus4Skills Program in Vietnam.

The MC will sub-contract Australian Universities or Registered Training Organisations (a “provider” or “providers”) to design and deliver the majority of Aus4Skills activities.

The purpose of these Guidelines is to provide Aus4Skills service providers with principles and a general operating framework for the procurement and implementation of Aus4Skills activities.

1 Background

Aus4Skills reflects the Australian Government’s continuing commitment to support Vietnam’s human resource development (HRD). Aus4Skills Phase 2 (or the Program, contracted as the ‘Australia-Vietnam Human Resource Development Partnership’) builds on Aus4Skills Phase 1 (February 2016 – June 2021) achievements in supporting Vietnam to access and use high-level professional and technical knowledge, skills and competencies to contribute to its sustainable socio-economic development and stability. The Program also aims to deepen and further benefit the reputation of Australia’s education and skills sector in Vietnam and the region and enhance public diplomacy and economic engagement between counterparts and institutions.

The Program’s Whole of Program Outcomes (WOPOs) are as follows:

WOPO 1: Inclusive alumni use new skills and knowledge to make positive contributions in targeted areas of Vietnam’s development **WOPO 2:** Selected Vietnamese government, private sector and civil organisations and other partners demonstrate organisational change through improved policies, practices or performance standards in targeted areas.

WOPO 3: Australia and Vietnam have stronger sustainable links and partnerships in selected agencies and sectors.

The Program also seeks to facilitate sector, cross-sector and national level changes that contribute to Australia’s role as a valued strategic partner.

Aus4Skills contributes to these outcomes through five components:

Component 1: Australia Awards Scholarships (AAS)

Component 2: Alumni Engagement

Component 3: Higher Education Capacity Building (HECB)

Component 4: Promoting Industry Linkages in Vocational Education and Training (VET)

Component 5: the Vietnam Australia Centre (VAC)

These component activities cover individual capacity building, organisational change and strengthening linkages between Australia and Vietnam to varying degrees.

Each component of Aus4Skills also has its own end-of-programs outcomes as further outlined below.

1.1 Aus4Skills Components

The Aus4Skills Program is designed around five main components:

1. *Australia Awards Scholarships*

Australia Awards Scholarships (AAS) are a valuable mechanism for Australia to assist Vietnam to address its human resource development needs. AAS provide scholars with tertiary qualifications, knowledge and skills in areas of priority development need. Scholars are expected to contribute to sustainable socio-economic development in Vietnam by using the skills, knowledge and leadership capabilities gained while also maintaining links with Australia and Australians. The success of AAS is contingent upon scholars gaining employment in relevant fields, and putting their new skills and knowledge to good use.

From 2016 – 2020, some 677 Vietnamese women and men have successfully completed their tertiary studies in Australia under an AAS.

The Australian Government encourages equity in access to opportunities and benefits for all, without discrimination. AAS have long supported successful study by people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and from rural disadvantaged areas, and they equip women to enhance their leadership and contribution to critical fields of the economy and development in Vietnam.

The two End-of-Program-Outcomes (EOPO) for AAS in Vietnam are that:

- (i) Male and female alumni contribute to socio-economic development priorities in Vietnam; and
- (ii) Male and female alumni contribute to cooperation between Australia and Vietnam.

2. *Alumni Engagement*

More than 70,000 Vietnamese women and men are part of Australia's global alumni network. Alumni engagement activities in Vietnam are part of Australia's global approach to alumni engagement, as set out in the Australia Global Alumni Engagement Strategy. All Australian alumni, including those privately funded and funded through GoV scholarships, are encouraged to participate in alumni engagement activities. Australia's support for alumni activities is well received by alumni and their organisations, and is a valuable part of Australia's efforts to contribute to Vietnam's future peace and prosperity, not only in business and trade, but also through long-term partnerships in economics, security and innovation.

Alumni engagement activities support male and female alumni of Australian education to enhance their skills and knowledge learnt in Australia to allow them to contribute to the development of their sector, community and more broadly Vietnam and strengthen their links with Australia. Alumni engagement activities are demand-driven and determined by the Australian Embassy in Hanoi and Aus4Skills in partnership with Australian alumni.

The four EOPOs for Alumni Engagement are:

- (i) Enhanced alumni contributions to Vietnam's socioeconomic development through strengthened application of leadership, skills and knowledge;
- (ii) Active and sustainable alumni networks led by leaders, advocates and influencers, based on professional interests and development needs of Vietnam;
- (iii) Enhanced alumni contributions to links and partnerships between Vietnamese and Australian people and institutions; and

- (iv) Australian alumni in Vietnam are viewed as making valuable contributions to Vietnam by the Vietnamese community.

3. Higher Education Capacity Building

Through Higher Education Capacity Building (HEBC) activities, Australia will support Vietnam to access knowledge, skills and competencies that support changes to higher education in Vietnam. Specific areas of support, as agreed between the Australian Embassy in Hanoi and the Ministry of Education and Training, align with Vietnam's Amended Law on Higher Education (Nov 2018), Decision No. 89/QD-TTg or Decision No. 69/QD-TTg.

The desired outcome is that selected male and female Vietnamese university leaders and administrators will gain new knowledge and skills on higher education leadership, governance and management.

Support activities include training, workshops, technical assistance, mentoring or coaching. Government officials and university rectors, managers and lecturers are expected to benefit from this discrete support. A balance will be sought in men and women's participation.

The two EOPOs for the HECB component are:

- (i) Participating universities demonstrate improved policy, practice or performance in governance and/or quality assurance approach; and
- (ii) The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) strengthens its higher education policy development and oversight in university governance and quality assurance.

4. Promoting Industry Linkages in Vocational Education and Training

The Promoting Industry Linkages in Vocational Education and Training (VET) component aims to contribute to vocational education and training policy refinement through the application of a sustainable and replicable, high quality, inclusive, industry-led skills development model that equips VET graduates with the competencies for working in the logistics and allied sectors.

An industry-led skills development model is one that sees industry reference council/s, training providers, business and enterprises, and broader government policy combining to set and implement a vision for skills and training needs for a workforce. The GoV has recognised the value of an industry-led skills development model in the logistics sector.

This component includes support for: advocacy for policy acceptance and for a formal legal framework for the Logistics Industry Reference Council (LIRC) which was established during Phase 1 of Aus4Skills, promotion of the industry-led model of skills development, enhancing LIRC processes, capabilities and functions; capacity and capability building support for VET colleges; further developing the nascent professional network of colleges; implementation of education quality frameworks and quality assurances processes; consistently promoting inclusive skills development and employment throughout the learning to employment cycle; and, consistently promoting participation by women, ethically diverse and people with disability in VET courses and the logistics industry and VET and sector leadership.

The four EOPOs for the VET component are:

- (i) The pilot Logistics Industry Reference Council (LIRC) is established and implements its activities effectively and sustainably;

- (ii) Targeted VET colleges and enterprises deliver training in logistics-related occupations based on the knowledge and requirements that learners need to acquire after graduating;
- (iii) Targeted VET colleges and enterprises implement education quality frameworks for skills development in the logistics and allied sectors; and
- (iv) Targeted VET colleges and enterprises promote inclusive skills development and employment in the logistics and allied sectors.

5. Vietnam Australia Centre including an Advancing Women in Leadership

The Vietnam Australia Centre (VAC) will draw on Australian expertise to support Vietnam's future leadership, while enabling Vietnam and Australia to pursue solutions to shared national and regional challenges and deepen people-to-people and institutional links. It will bring together influential Vietnamese and Australian leaders, government officials, experts and academics to train the future leaders of Vietnam.

The VAC will build on strong partnerships with the three specific Vietnamese institutions: the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and the Office of Government, with the HCMA taking a lead role in recognition of its important role in building the capacity of Vietnamese Government and Party officials.

The VAC coordinate and deliver training and capacity building activities for Vietnamese Government and Party officials in core domestic and international policy and decision-making competencies, bring Australian experts, academics, government officials and policy makers to Vietnam to share their knowledge and expertise, and bring Australian and Vietnamese officials together for learning, exploration and research on topics of mutual interest to improve shared understanding and foster collaboration.

The EOPOs for the VAC are:

- (i) Flagship leadership capability development program (including an elite certificate program), and policy advisory and research service, are established and favoured by the Vietnamese leadership; and
- (ii) Functional vibrant VAC attracts high level men and women leaders from both countries (government, academia, research and the private sector) and is seen as a centre of choice for engagement and discussions in areas that are priorities for both governments.

GEDSI specific activities, such as advancing women in leadership, and disability and social inclusion activities, will be programmed as part of the VACs activities. In addition, GEDSI elements and access and inclusion considerations will be mainstreamed into the establishment of offices and the development of products and all activities (e.g. a balance will be sought in men and women's participation in activities as well as the participation of PWD and DPOs).

1.2 Aus4Skills Toolbox

Aus4Skills uses a wide range of modalities or tools to achieve the Program Outcomes. They include:

1.2.1 Formal Australia Awards

Australia Awards consist of Australia Award Scholarships, Australia Awards Short Course Awards and Australia Awards Fellowships.

Australia Awards Scholarships (AAS) are long term development awards that provide opportunities for full-time postgraduate study (one to two years) at participating Australian institutions. They equip recipients with the skills and knowledge to drive change and contribute to the economic and social development of their own countries. Australia Awards Scholarships are available either directly, through targeted provision to an organisation as agreed with the Australian Embassy, or through 'open' application processes.

Australia Awards Short Courses (AASC) can be substantially more flexible and responsive than the long-term Australia Awards Scholarships, whilst still providing the option for recognised academic credit or statements of competency (to Australian Qualifications Framework standards) to participants who successfully complete the course requirements. They involve engaging an Australian university or Registered Training Organisation to conduct the short course. Short courses may be delivered in Vietnam or Australia, or a combination of both.

Australia Awards Fellowships (AAF) are available for current and future leaders and mid-career professionals from Vietnam. Australian sponsoring organisations in conjunction with relevant Vietnamese partner organisations and/or individuals submit proposals to DFAT for Fellowships.

1.2.2 Complementary Assistance for Australia Awards participants

Australia Awards Complementary Assistance is limited to forms of assistance that directly improve the ability of individuals to access, or maximise benefits from Australia Awards. This assistance may be preferentially provided to an organisation with agreement or direction from DFAT. For example, preferential access to English Language Training.

1.2.3 Informal Learning Opportunities

Informal Learning Opportunities (ILOs) are a highly flexible means of providing a wide range of HRD-related assistance to an organisation. They do not need to meet the definitions or standards set by formal Australia Awards and therefore allow for more flexible application. ILOs may be offered to individuals, organisations or cross-cutting thematic groupings of individuals.

ILOs may include, but are not limited to, the following pre-existing or tailor designed activities:

- Non-Australia Awards short courses of any form
- Seminars/workshops/conferences/study tours
- Technical assistance in any relevant field
- Agency visits with facilitated debriefing sessions
- Simulations
- Film and performance events with Q&A

- Guest speaker events including events in Ted Talk and lounge style formats
- Facilitated Communication for Development/advocacy opportunities
- Mentoring and coaching exercises
- Short work placements
- Communication events/retreat coalition building for partners
- Research assistance
- Identifying, negotiating and facilitating opportunities for linkages between Australian and Vietnamese organisations (unless contrary to Australian Commonwealth Procurement Rules).

It is important that all tools are deployed with clear targets, responsive to the context and strategic intents, so that the desired outcomes are likely to be achieved.

2 Aus4Skills Activities Design

Aus4Skills Activities will, in general, be agreed during the annual planning process. Some Activities may run on an annual cycle, being repeated over several years. However, it is likely there will be other Activities scoped, designed and implemented outside of this process. Under any Component, the Australian Embassy in Hanoi may request that Aus4Skills implement additional Activities according to different timeframes based on need and specific circumstances.

2.1 Activity Design

2.1.1 Aus4Skills Activity Definition

In Aus4Skills an “Activity” must:

Every ‘Activity’ must:

1. Be able to clearly demonstrate how it will contribute to one or more of the Program Outcomes;
2. Be able to clearly demonstrate that the intended contributions to the Program Outcomes can and will be measured; and
3. Must fall into one of the following Activity types:
 - Australia Awards Scholarship;
 - Australia Awards Short Course plus any complementary Informal Learning Opportunities (ILOs) that share a common and transparent logic (including any Activity management tasks); or
 - One or more ILO(s) that share a common and transparent logic (including any Activity management tasks).

2.1.2 Scope of Services

The Aus4Skills MC designs each Activity approved in the Annual Plan in the form of a Scope of Services, which will be approved by the Australian Embassy in Hanoi. The Scope of Services will include information about the i Activity purpose, objectives and learning outcomes, structure, duration, participant profile and selection process, communication and public relations requirements, monitoring of participant learning, reporting requirements, and any other information relevant to the services to be delivered. The approved Scope of Services

informs the Request for Tender (RFT), or in exceptional cases as approved by DFAT, a more targeted Request for Proposals (RFP) from specific providers.

2.1.3 Activity Design and Delivery Plan

Potential service providers will be responsible for developing a Draft Activity Design and Delivery Plan as part of their response to the Scope of Services in the RFT/RFP. During the contracting stage, the preferred provider will be responsible for finalising the Activity Design and Delivery Plan/Program submitted at tender based on feedback given by the Tender Evaluation Committee (TEC) and other Aus4Skills staff responsible for the relevant Program Component to which the Activity belongs.

2.2 Prioritising gender equality, disability and social inclusion

Through its activities, Aus4Skills seeks to empower and provide opportunities for: women; people with disability; and the rural disadvantaged, including disadvantaged Ethnic Minority peoples. Australia places very high priority on efforts to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment and to provide equal opportunity for other disadvantaged groups. Accordingly, Aus4Skills has been designed to ensure women, people with disability, and the rural disadvantaged, including disadvantaged ethnic minority people, in Vietnam benefit equally in this program.

Aus4Skills is committed to:

- GEDSI specific activities, actions and efforts with a dedicated primary purpose to tackle persistent challenges and barriers that are holding women, people with disabilities and people from disadvantaged rural locations, including disadvantaged minority peoples, back from achieving their full potential; and
- Mainstreaming GEDSI activities, actions and efforts across all of Aus4Skills activities because equality in human resource development cannot be achieved with only standalone GEDSI specific activities.

Aggregated across the whole Aus4Skills Program, the participant profile must conform to program targets for inclusion of at least 50% women, and the notional 20% target for people with a disability and the rural disadvantaged¹.

All Activities need to take into consideration how they can empower women and girls, promote gender equality and address barriers to women's participation. All Activities need to ensure that reasonable adjustments are put in place to enable people with disability to participate on an equal basis with all other participants.

Aus4Skills will ensure selection criteria for all procurement will require providers to demonstrate their approach to integrating GEDSI considerations throughout Activity design and delivery.

¹ In so far as actual populations of potential candidates allow these targets to be met. It is not expected that each Activity will meet these inclusion targets.

2.3 Contextualisation of learning to the specific context

For Aus4Skills activities to be effective, providers must understand the workplace context of participants. In practice, this means providers are expected to invest in gaining that understanding when they do not already have it.

At the tender/proposal stage, prospective providers are expected, as far as possible, to demonstrate their understanding of the Vietnamese context and target organisations or cohorts and relate their proposed approach to that context in their tender submissions. Contextual understanding will be considered in selecting providers.

At the contracting stage, the Aus4Skills MC will brief the preferred provider about the local context and existing knowledge and skills of a particular cohort of participants. This information is meant to assist preferred providers in finalising a detailed Activity Design and Delivery Plan prior to contracting.

3 Short Courses

Short courses may be an AASC or not (see Section 4.1). Aus4Skills short courses are usually customised so the timing and content are tailored to suit specified participant needs and the Vietnamese context. Content should be tailored in ways that allow the participants to apply the learnings to their workplace context in Vietnam.

Aus4Skills short courses normally support on-the-job learning because of the emphasis Aus4Skills places on *application* of skills and knowledge and may also include study tour components. Application of learning must be reported according to specified course learning outcomes in order to complete the requirements of the course and receive a certificate of completion. In other words, Aus4Skills short courses require actual demonstration of ability to apply skills and knowledge, not only demonstration of abstract understanding or ideal plans about what may be intended to be done. Providers must assess participants' application of new skills and learning in order for participants to successfully complete a short course.

Providers for Aus4Skills will ensure the provision of mentoring and/or coaching for on-the-job application, and this may be conducted online. Other parts of a short course may also be delivered online. Aus4Skills is keen to find ways to showcase Australian providers' expertise in contemporary, educationally sound delivery methods such as blended learning, project-based learning, flipped classroom and competency-based learning. Guided cycles of action planning and reflection and adjustment of plans and actions to apply lessons to each participant's working context in Vietnam are proven tools for optimising the benefits derived from training.

Given that some high-level Vietnamese professionals find it difficult to leave the job for even two weeks at a time, Aus4Skills encourages flexible delivery methods and approaches from providers and monitors their effectiveness on an ongoing basis.

Short courses constitute the majority of Aus4Skills Activities and RFTs/RFPs from potential service providers are most often for short course design and delivery.

3.1 Australia Awards Short Courses

AASCs are targeted programs of intensive training for selected cohorts to address specific technical or soft skills gaps. They are formal study or training opportunities, generally of less than three months' duration, delivered by an approved Australian higher education provider or an Australian Registered Training Organisation in Australia and/or in partner countries. AASCs are managed and administered by DFAT's overseas posts.

Whilst all Aus4Skills short courses are distinguished by the focus on demonstrated application of new skills and knowledge in the participants' workplaces (as detailed above), AASCs have specific features as detailed in this section.

3.1.1 Course Contents

The overarching topics of AASCs are always aligned with Aus4Skills Program Outcomes and the priorities of the Australian Embassy in Vietnam. In some cases, potential service providers will be able to tailor an existing accredited course or courses to fulfil the purposes of the AASC. The detailed design of AASCs will be customised by the provider around the participants' needs with the aim of maximising learning opportunities and outcomes.

The detailed contents are fleshed out based on agreed learning outcomes, consultation with the Aus4Skills partner organisations in Vietnam and the provider, and the time frame allowed for the course.

Every course will include content on gender awareness and social inclusion, and wherever appropriate, promote gender equitable leadership.

Every course will provide participants with the opportunity to meet Australian experts in the course topics, and where possible include relevant site visits and workplace observations.

As part of a course, each participant will also develop an individual Application Project (or where appropriate, a group Application Project or action plan) which will involve the application new skills and knowledge in the workplace.

Each AASC will include assessment of learning and reporting of the assessment outcomes for individual participants.

3.1.2 Course Delivery and Structure: the “sandwich” model

Most AASCs will include an in-Australia module, however this is not mandatory and certain AASCs may be based delivered entirely in Vietnam

AASCs will be delivered in all aspects to Australian quality standards and overseen by the selected Australian provider. Adult appropriate and diverse learning formats, including time for reflection, will be used.

Pre-core modules

Pre-core modules are included to ensure that the provider and participants are able to maximise the learning from the core and post-core modules. Pre-core modules will typically involve travel to Vietnam by trainers of the selected provider in order to conduct structured learning initiatives to engage participants in the practicalities of the topic and prime course participants for the in-Australia module.

The pre-core module should cover the key concepts that participants will apply or see applied in Australia. Participants have provided feedback that they do not want to spend

time in Australia focussed on abstract conceptual knowledge that can be just as well delivered in Vietnam.

As part of the pre-core module, the provider will organise and implement a pre-departure briefing (see Section 7.7).

At the end of the pre-core module participants will have clear intentions about what they will learn in Australia and how their learnings will be applicable to their work in Vietnam. Pre-core modules may sometimes result in changes to the content of the in-Australia core module/s based on learning and deeper understanding of the needs of participants, though the pre-core module cannot be primarily a needs-analysis exercise.

In-Australia core module

AASCs generally involve at least one week or more in Australia. They will usually be two to three weeks. The length of each module can vary according to the best way to address the identified need. These details will be specified in the Scope of Services in the RFT/RFP. In-Australia core modules are designed to deliver content and learning experiences in Australia that cannot readily be delivered to participants in Vietnam.

A number of different and integrated methods to stimulate learning are likely to be used. While solid content input is expected, time should also be allowed for participant reflection and discussion of the application of the content in Vietnam. Participants appreciate meeting counterparts who do similar work in Australian workplaces to the work they do in Vietnam. It is especially helpful when those counterparts are willing to share their experiences in overcoming challenges that are relevant to Vietnamese participants. Site visits in Australia are highly valued when the relevance is self-evident. Core modules must be designed with focus on practical application by the participants in their workplaces in Vietnam.

Post-core modules

Post-core modules serve the purpose of supporting participants to apply learning and capture additional learning from the experience of putting new skills and knowledge into practice in their workplace in Vietnam. The demonstrable application of enhanced knowledge, skills and networks and associated learning activities in this module should contribute substantially to the assessment for completion of AASCs.

As part of most AASCs, participants will plan and implement a work-based learning project or "Application Project". The purpose of the project is to demonstrate application of enhanced networks and skills. The topic of the project will be negotiated, approved and sponsored by the supervisor or appropriate manager in the participant's organisation. During the AASC, regular review and integration sessions ensure that the content and processes of the short course and the development and implementation of the Application Project are meeting the learning needs of the individual participant as well as the targeted organisations.

Participants will formally report back on the progress of their Application Project in a written report describing what has been achieved so far and any challenges faced. In addition, participants will present/exhibit the results of their Application Project in person at a final symposium in Vietnam. These activities will be assessable and contribute to successful completion of the AASC requirements.

The post-core module will typically involve ongoing contact between the provider and the participants to support a structured process of application of skills and knowledge in the workplace accompanied by reflection and capturing learning about the effectiveness of the application efforts. Participants should be encouraged to maintain contact with counterparts or others they have met in Australia.

Potential course providers will be expected to outline their strategy to support participants' application of skills in their Technical Proposal and Activity Design and Delivery Plan/Program (see Section 3). Should the provider choose to work with a nominated high-quality Vietnamese provider for this module, the arrangements should be made clear from the outset in the Technical Proposal and agreed to with the Aus4Skills MC.

3.1.3 Participant Selection

All participants nominated for AASCs must be approved by the Australian Embassy in Hanoi (see Section 6).

3.1.4 Assessment and Certification

Aus4Skills requires providers to assess the participants' learning based on reliable valid evidence and report the assessment outcomes and process. Normally, the provider will detail its intended assessment process as part of the Technical Proposal and Activity Design and Delivery Plan.

Wherever possible the provider should provide participants with a record of academic achievement that can be used for further study should any participant wish to pursue that. In the case of AASCs, the expectation is that a provider should be able to tailor existing accredited course design and assessment practices to fulfil the purposes of the AASC. This way of designing the course and assessment should make it straightforward for the provider to provide a record of assessment that will be evidence for credit (or recognition of prior learning, or advance standing) to continue academic studies with an Australian provider.

At the outset of the pre-core participants must be informed about expectations for assessment and requirements to earn academic credit if available. Additionally, participation requirements to receive a Certificate of Participation are to be made explicit.

At the end of the AASC, the provider will arrange an award ceremony where the participants are given a Certificate of Participation using the Australia Awards supplied format and, wherever possible, a certificate of academic achievement for those who have met academic requirements for such certification.

3.1.5 Branding and Communications

All providers must conform to specific AASC branding requirements. Aus4Skills will provide the contracted provider with branding guidelines, message banks and guidelines on use of social media to ensure compliance with these requirements (see Section 9.6).

3.1.6 Australian Alumni

Upon completion of an AASC, participants will become members of the Australia Global Alumni Network. Awardees' biographical information will be included in the Australia Alumni database and Alumni are strongly encouraged to take part in post-award monitoring and evaluation activities, in addition to other professional development and social activities arranged by and for Australia Alumni.

The contracted provider is required the latest contact information for participants in their Completion Report to Aus4Skills. This information will be recorded in the Australia Alumni database. The MC manages all Australia Alumni engagement.

Wherever possible a short course will be designed as an AASC. But in some cases a short course may be offered that does not need to meet all requirements to be defined as an AASC. In the lexicon of the Aus4Skills Toolbox (see Section 2.3), such courses are strictly speaking “Informal Learning Opportunities.”

The emphasis in these short courses will also be on application of skills and knowledge. The content, structure and delivery of these short courses will still be driven by specific learning outcomes (determined by the Aus4Skills MC in the Scope of Services) and need to be contextualised specifically for participants by the provider.

In such cases, Aus4Skills will still expect a detailed Activity Design and Delivery Plan and the assessment of participants’ learning as part of service delivery, but the expectations around formal assessment of learning will be less. The provider will be expected to give participants a Certificate of Participation but it will not be constrained by Australia Awards branding.

4 Other Informal Learning Opportunities

Aus4Skills may also design and require providers to deliver other informal learning opportunities such as seminars, workshops, or similar short events, technical assistance or other tailor designed Activities as agreed with DFAT.

Aus4Skills will contract providers for these Activities in accordance with Australian Commonwealth Procurement Rules as for all other Activities.

5 Participant Selection

Each Activity will be designed for a targeted group of participants, which will be detailed in the Scope of Services. For short courses (both AASC and non-AASC), the usual number of participants will be between 15 and 25, half of who will normally be women. Persons with disability and from other disadvantaged groups are encouraged to apply or be nominated.

Aus4Skills Activities may be designed for thematic target groups who are not part of only one targeted organisation or sector. For example: women in leadership; managers in selected VET colleges; or managers in various targeted organisations, when a common need for managerial skills development is identified.

Participants are selected transparently by explicit processes and criteria.

5.1 Prioritising gender equality, disability and social inclusion

Aggregated across the whole Aus4Skills program, the participant profile must conform to program targets for inclusion of at least 50% women, and the notional 20% target for people with a disability and people disadvantaged by rural isolation².

Women’s active participation is sought where women meet the criteria for the Activity. The same applies to persons with a disability or disadvantaged by rural isolation.

Applicants with disability and/or special needs are strongly encouraged to provide details of their disability and/or special needs at the earliest opportunity. Disclosure will not disadvantage an applicant from being considered, as Aus4Skills operates under a non-

² In so far as actual populations of potential candidates allow these targets to be met. It is not expected that each Activity will have these inclusion targets.

discrimination policy. Early notification will provide Aus4Skills with adequate time for the assessment of needs and preparations for reasonable support to be made. This information is bound by Australian confidentiality and privacy laws and will be shared only for the purpose of facilitating an accessible, barrier-free learning and living environment. Reasonable adjustments may include modifications to physical or learning environments and additional educational supports such as sign interpreters, captioning and personal care assistance depending on assessment of the individual's needs.

Participants with a disability will be assisted with the visa application requirements including, but not limited to, meeting the costs of obtaining medical reports if required.

5.2 Participant selection process

The methodology to be used for participant selection will vary based on the nature and specific requirements of each Activity and will be specified in the Scope of Services of the RFT. Participant selection will be merit based and adhere to the principles of transparency and accountability.

The following scenarios, among others, may be applied when conducting participant selection:

- Recipient agencies invited to nominate participants who meet the participant profile and selection criteria.
- Recipient agencies invited to nominate a long list of candidates (e.g. 40-50 applicants), and a selection panel selects the 20 best candidates plus 5 reserves (this process could be coordinated by the recipient agency or by Aus4Skills).
- Open application process within selected target agencies, and a selection panel selects as above.
- Open application process, target agencies not nominated (for mix participant courses open to a range of agencies). Applicants who meet the criteria send their applications directly to Aus4Skills, and a selection panel selects as above.

The MC is responsible for managing participant selection. In some circumstances this will be conducted with input from the provider. If this is the case it will be specified in the Scope of Services.

For AASCs DFAT will approve participant selection. This may also be the case in some non-AASC activities.

The MC will provide the provider with participant profiles as soon as they are available (preferably during contract negotiations so the provider can design the Activity appropriately for the participant cohort).

5.3 English language requirements

To ensure broad opportunity for participation, participants in AASCs and other Aus4Skills Activities may not speak English.

Translation and interpretation requirements for each activity will be detailed in the Scope of Services. It is expected most Activities will require translation and interpretation and the provider will need to arrange appropriate services suitable for the subject matter.

For certain Activities which do not include interpretation, participants may need to have functional English proficiency and may be required to sit an English test to undertake the course or Activity.

5.4 Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment

DFAT has clear and strict policies in relation to managing and reducing the risk of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. All providers and participants must act in accordance with the DFAT [Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment](#) Policy. Providers are responsible for ensuring compliance. DFAT takes a zero-tolerance approach to any infringement and is committed to acting on every allegation in a fair and reasonable way with due regard for procedural fairness. The MC reserves the right to conduct police checks and other screening procedures to ensure a harassment-free environment.

5.5 Child protection

DFAT has clear and strict policies in relation to managing and reducing risks of child abuse and exploitation. All providers and participants must act in accordance with the [DFAT Child Protection Policy](#) and sign a copy of the DFAT Child Protection – Professional Behaviours Code of Conduct (Attachment B of the DFAT Child Protection Policy). Providers are responsible for ensuring compliance. DFAT takes a zero-tolerance approach to any infringement. The MC reserves the right to conduct police checks and other screening procedures to ensure a child-safe environment.

5.6 Participant personal information and privacy

Personal information may be collected from applicants for the purpose of assessing applications and managing, promoting or evaluating Aus4Skills activities in accordance with [DFAT's Privacy Policy](#). Information collected may include personal details such as gender, date of birth, identification numbers and passport details, as well as prior academic qualifications (transcripts and history), current and previous employer details, professional memberships or associations, criminal history, banking information, residential and mailing addresses, English test scores, and medical assessments.

DFAT may disclose personal information to third parties for the purpose of managing, promoting or evaluating Aus4Skills activities. All AASC participants and participants of activities with an in-Australia component must consent to DFAT disclosing their personal information to overseas recipients, that is, individuals or entities who are not in Australia. Providers are responsible for ensuring that all participants sign a Material Consent Form (in the template provided by Aus4Skills prior to service delivery) and for returning the signed forms to the Aus4Skills Component Manager. Providers must acknowledge that they 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.

6 Entitlements for Participants

Participants in Aus4Skills Activities will usually be entitled to full logistical and financial support for all parts of the Activity (for example, pre- and post-core activities and the in-Australia core component, where there is one).

For Activities with an in-Australia or other overseas module, participants will also be provided with welfare support and all costs associated with travel, accommodation, visas, insurance, living costs and other entitlements as outlined in this Section 7.

6.1 Carers and dependants of participants

No entitlements will be made available for the dependants of participants. Due to the short time frame and intensive schedule of Aus4Skills Activities dependants are not permitted to accompany short course participants to Australia. Only in exceptional circumstances will consideration be made to approve dependents accompanying a course participant, which must be approved in writing by the Aus4Skills MC at the time of nomination of participants.

In approved cases entitlements may be made available for carers of participants.

6.2 Travel

6.2.1 Travel costs

Travel costs to/from and within Australia and Vietnam (if the training location is outside a participant's workplace city) incurred as part of the Activity are funded through the Activity (this will be specified in the Scope of Services in the RFT/RFP). Aus4Skills will organise and procure participants' flights. The provider will organise and procure all ground transport and accommodation unless otherwise instructed by Aus4Skills.

Participants are to travel by the most direct route and are entitled to the "best fare of the day" which is the economy class fare available during the period of travel. Air tickets will be booked from the regional or international airport closest to their workplace city and to the airport closest to their training destination.

The dates for the Activity have been set in advance and participants must ensure that they are available to travel on the prescribed dates. Unless unavoidable, stopovers are not permitted. If unavoidable, reasonable accommodation costs that have been pre-approved will be paid.

6.2.2 Reimbursed travel

Where it is not possible for the provider or Aus4Skills to make and pay for logistical arrangements, participants must obtain prior approval in advance of travel to incur a necessary expense in order to be reimbursed. Participants will be required to provide a receipt for the reimbursed expense.

6.2.3 Personal travel

During leisure time, participants may undertake activities of their choice provided the Provider is aware of their whereabouts and that they have provided the welfare officer

with a local contact number. It should, however, be noted that participants are discouraged from undertaking personal travel far from the Activity location/s.

For Activities with an in-Australia component, providers will include their rules for personal travel in their pre-core module and orientation briefing. All participants are bound to comply with the rules established by the provider and only travel within permitted areas during leisure time.

All other travel by participants outside of the permitted areas (e.g. to visit relatives or friends) is prohibited. **Aus4Skills does not fund reunion travel.**

6.2.4 Participants with disability

DFAT and training institutions provide reasonable support to allow participants with disability to participate in all Activities on an equal basis with all other participants. The support needs of each participant with disability will be different, as will the nature of the reasonable adjustments that are necessary and appropriate. The needs of each participant who disclose a disability will be assessed on a case-by-case basis well before they are mobilised.

6.2.5 Excess baggage

Participants are responsible for the cost of excess baggage. It is the participant's responsibility to ensure that they are aware of and comply with the airline baggage allowable for their flight, as stated in their e-ticket.

6.2.6 Extensions of stay

Participants are **prohibited from extending their stay** in Australia after the Activity has been completed. Participants are required to travel home on the dates of the issued e-ticket. In most cases, visas issued for Aus4Skills activities will have a 'no further stay' condition so the **visa cannot be extended.**

In exceptional circumstances participants may submit request for an extended visa period. These requests will only be considered **at the time of original visa application** and are subject to Aus4Skills and DFAT approval.

Providers should ensure these conditions are communicated clearly to participants during the pre-departure and orientation briefings.

6.3 Visas

6.3.1 Australian visas

For Activities with an in-Australia module, all participants must uphold their visa conditions while in Australia and must have satisfactory academic results for the duration of the course. Participants are required to attend every class and Activity. Personal travel during scheduled course times is prohibited.

All visa arrangements and payments will be made directly by Aus4Skills.

In most cases, participants will be travelling to Australia on the 500 Student Visa. Other visa types, such as the 600 Visitor Visa or the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Travel Card may be applicable in exceptional cases at DFAT's discretion. Aus4Skills will cover the visa processing costs and the medical examination (if required).

6.4 Accommodation

Accommodation will be paid at cost through reimbursement or in most cases direct to vendors by the provider, unless otherwise instructed by Aus4Skills.

6.4.1 In-Australia accommodation

Apartments with cooking facilities are preferred for stays in Australia of longer than two weeks. The standard is as follows:

- Shared apartment accommodation for two persons with two bedrooms and a fully equipped kitchen;
- Separate bathrooms where available and within budget.

6.4.2 In-Vietnam accommodation

Participants will stay in a twin shared room or single room (depending on availability) in a 3-star hotel when travelling in Vietnam for an Activity.

6.4.3 Other accommodation

Where an Activity requires travel to another country the accommodation entitlements and responsibilities of the provider will be specified in the Scope of Services in the RFT/RFP.

6.5 Travel and Medical Insurance

Where an Activity requires participants to travel to a country outside of Vietnam (usually to Australia), Aus4Skills will arrange for appropriate travel and medical insurance for all participants during their stay.

Family members or dependants are not permitted to accompany participants and therefore participants are not eligible for assistance with family entry or assistance with family OSHC insurance coverage.

Aus4Skills will organise and procure all travel insurance and deliver comprehensive briefings on the insurance policy and support arrangements with participants as part of their pre-departure briefing and upon arrival in the destination country.

6.5.1 Travel and medical insurance in Australia

Aus4Skills will arrange for a Certificate of Insurance to be issued to participants covering them from their time of arrival in Australia to their time of departure to support the Australian visa application process.

Support with access to medical assistance in Australia when a participant is ill will be arranged by the provider (e.g. through the Welfare Officer).

There are a number of background issues to consider when determining the appropriate level of support in facilitating health care service provision including:

- Australia has a high reputation in health care and participants may understandably want to take advantage of Australian health services; and

- OSHC Worldcare Standard policy excludes coverage for pre-existing medical conditions³.

6.5.2 Welfare Officer support

All providers must nominate a Welfare Officer as part of their delivery team in Australia. This officer is the key person involved in supporting participants who require medical or dental assistance in Australia. It is required that the Welfare Officer will:

- make arrangements for any participant who is ill to be seen at a general practice or a suitable clinic (e.g. university health centre);
- attend the clinic with the participant, and ensure the provision of interpretation services to support medical treatment, if required;
- explain the payment system and health insurance coverage applicable to the participant at the time of the doctor's visit;
- assist the participant to purchase prescribed medication from a local pharmacy;
- ensure the participant fully understands the dosage and frequency of any medication;
- support and monitor the participant while they are ill or under treatment; and
- keep the Aus4Skills Component Manager informed of the situation.

For activities delivered in a country other than Australia or Vietnam the provider should outline in their tender submission and Activity Design and Delivery Plan their approach to providing welfare support to participants.

6.6 Per Diems

The provider will make all necessary arrangements to pay per diems to participants for any day/s the participants spend away from their workplace city. This includes both in-Vietnam and in-Australia modules.

Per diems are intended to cover local transport, food, entertainment, stationary, incidentals and other personal needs.

If participants are provided meal(s) funded directly or indirectly by the Activity, they cannot also claim the per diem for that meal. For example, if breakfast is included in the accommodation tariff, this would be a meal funded by the Activity and per diems should be adjusted accordingly (aircraft meals do not count).

Per diems apply on travel days. Where travel exceeds 10 hours, including travel time and returning the same day and travelling overnight, the full amount of per diem is applicable.

For air travel requiring journeys to and from airport, the per diem is calculated from 2 hours before departure time and two hours after the arrival time.

If traveling by car, per diem is calculated from departure time (i.e. time of leaving home). Participants are entitled to a meal per diem if travel time falls: within the 6am to 9am period; within the 11am to 2pm period; or within the 5pm to 8pm period.

Incidentals include water, phone calls, laundry etc.

Per diems do not need to be acquitted by the provider.

³ Course providers should ensure full consideration is given to GEDSI needs when selecting the level of support in health care service provision, such as exclusions relating to pregnancy.

6.6.1 In-Australia per diems

For in-Australia modules all participants will be paid a per diem of AUD 94.60/day during their time in Australia. The provider pays the per diem on the basis of the formula: “number of nights in Australia plus one” (to allow for return travel).

Where adjustments need to be made for meals provided, the following rates should be used:

In-Australia rates (AUD)

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Incidentals	Total
\$18.90	\$28.40	\$28.40	\$18.90	\$94.60

6.6.2 In-Vietnam per diems

For participants travelling outside their normal workplace city per diems will usually be made available and this will be determined between Aus4Skills and the provider during contracting when a final budget is developed for the Activity. The rate for in-Vietnam per diems will depend on the activity location and will be calculated according to current [EU-UN Cost Norms 2022](#) (converted to AUD at the prevailing exchange rate).

Where adjustments need to be made for meals provided by the Activity, the EU-UN rates should be used.

6.6.3 Per diems in other countries

Where an Activity requires travel to another country the applicable per diem rates will be determined between Aus4Skills and the provider during contracting when a final budget is developed for the Activity. These will usually be calculated according to the [EU-UN Cost Norms 2022](#).

6.7 Pre-departure Briefing for International Travel

For all activities requiring participants to travel to another country the provider will organise and implement a pre-departure briefing 2-4 weeks prior to the participants leaving Vietnam.

Participants will be briefed on the program, as well as the logistical and support services to be delivered by the provider whilst participants are overseas.

In preparing for these sessions, the provider is responsible for developing the presentation content, as well as providing participants with a Pre-Departure Information Booklet. This can be the provider’s own material or the standard Aus4Skills Pre-Departure Information Booklet (provided by the Aus4Skills MC during contracting with the provider) to ensure it details all information relevant to the specific course.

The pre-departure briefing should ensure that:

- participants are well prepared for their departure;
- participants are “settled in” to their new environment for the duration of the international module;
- participants understand relevant short course and study tour policies and procedures;
- participants know how to access academic and welfare support while overseas;

- participants understand customs and quarantine policies and health care issues such as treatment of pre-existing medical conditions and health care assistance;
- participants are informed of recreational activities overseas; and
- participants have the opportunity to further their cross-cultural understanding of the foreign country context.

6.8 On Arrival Briefing

For all Activities requiring participants to travel to another country, the provider will provide a Safety Briefing and an Orientation Briefing upon arrival (these can be combined if delivered within 24 hours of arrival).

Safety Briefing

The provider will provide participants with a Safety Briefing on arrival (within 24 hours of arrival) which will involve:

- provision of emergency numbers;
- provision of important safety tips; and
- issuance of an information card (in Vietnamese) providing relevant information on medical emergency procedures and non-emergency process for seeing a doctor, Welfare Officer contact details, emergency numbers such as police, etc.

Orientation Briefing

Within 48 hours of arrival participants will receive a short follow-up Orientation Briefing. Recipients will be briefed by the provider on the program, as well as the logistical and support services to be delivered.

In preparation for these sessions, the provider is responsible for developing the presentation content, which should cover at a minimum:

- introduction to the provider team and explanation of roles and responsibilities.
- program venues, facilities, attendance and expectations;
- per diem amounts, payment processes and proper use;
- accommodation rules and policies, security arrangements and considerations, fire and emergency evacuation, and use of shared facilities;
- local orientation including nearby shops and public facilities;
- course and local transport including pick up points, payment methods, schedules and to/from the course venue;
- health insurance policy including: coverage and benefits, exclusions and treatment of pre-existing medical conditions, up-front payments and gap fees and insurance claims process and timing
- communications and IT including for example, SIM cards and credit, international phone cards, use of laptops and internet and email access;
- outline of academic and welfare support mechanisms available (e.g. what to do if they need medical assistance, out of hours support, etc.); and
- outline of visa requirements and restrictions.

7 Contracted Provider Selection

The selection of providers will be conducted in accordance with the Australian Government Commonwealth Procurement Rules and adhere to the standard and approach adopted by DFAT for the procurement of goods and services under the Australian Aid Program.

Aus4Skills will maintain a list of current and prospective providers and share information about the tender pipeline to all providers on an equal basis.

This information will also be made available at: [Tender opportunities - Tetra Tech International Development \(tetratechasiapacific.com\)](https://www.tetratechasiapacific.com).

7.1 Requests for Tender

Aus4Skills RFTs will usually be at the Activity level. In most cases Aus4Skills RFTs will be for the delivery of AASCs or high-value ILOs including non-AASCs.

Tender processes will commence with an RFT issued with a minimum four-week tender preparation deadline. The RFT will be accompanied by a Scope of Services detailing the specific services required for that Activity.

Tenders will be assessed by a Tender Evaluation Committee comprising members appointed based on the specific technical and institutional priorities of the course or ILO. Members may include staff from relevant sections of DFAT, the Australian Embassy in Hanoi, GoV agencies, key stakeholders, technical or academic specialists and Aus4Skills MC staff.

Tenders will comprise a technical and financial component, and will be assessed using a transparent scoring formula that takes both components into account.

7.1.1 Technical Proposal

Technical components will usually require tenderers to explain their strategy and approach to the delivery of the Activity, building upon the Scope of Services to address the selection criteria. The Technical Proposal will usually be worth 80% of the final score.

The Technical Proposal will require the provider to outline, at a minimum:

Prior performance and organisational experience demonstrating the tenderer's capability and expertise in the technical components of the Activity as outlined in the Scope of Services. This will usually include:

- Previous experience designing and delivering similar activities;
- Previous experience in Vietnam;
- Previous experience with Australian Government funded activities;
- Capacity to ensure that gender equality women's empowerment and disability and social inclusion are integrated appropriately and effectively throughout the design and delivery of the activity/s; and
- Public Relations and Communications capacity and resources to support the activity and to capture stories of impact and to mitigate risk.

Technical capacity and response to the Scope of Services demonstrating ability to deliver the Activity. The Tenderer must provide details of their approach to the design and delivery of the activity in to enable the achievement of program outcomes and the specific activity purpose and learning outcomes in the form of a Draft Activity Design and Delivery Plan/Program. This should include description of (as relevant to the scope of services):

- how gender equality, women’s empowerment and disability and social inclusion will be integrated into the activity/s;
- intended teaching and learning material;
- intended delivery modes;
- when applicable, intended assessment tasks, and any academic credit the participants will receive upon successful completion;
- how the activity/s will be appropriately contextualised for the skills and experiences of the Vietnamese participants;
- how the different modules or elements of the activity/s will be designed and delivered as a coherent whole;
- intended logistical and welfare arrangements (in both Australia and Vietnam);
- arrangements for professional interpretation and translation;
- approach to application of learning;
- approach and resources to effectively monitor and evaluate progress towards, and achievement of, individual participant learning outcomes, as well as the overall progress and success of the course against its outcomes and objectives; and
- risk management.

Nomination of core personnel demonstrating the core personnel have the appropriate qualifications and experience to design and implement the Activity/s (supported by CVs) and proposed remuneration level and number of input days. When preparing the RFT Technical Proposal tenderers will be required to propose a team structure which addresses their capacity to deliver the Scope of Services. All international positions must meet the requirements of the [DFAT’s Aid Adviser Remuneration Framework](#) (ARF) (see Section 10.1) which remains applicable to the Aus4Skills program. Premium rates may not be applied (see Section 10 for further information on core personnel entitlements). Providers tendering for an Aus4Skills Activity will need to nominate the key specialists identified and demonstrate they have the appropriate qualifications and experience to design and implement the Scope of Services.

Usually core personnel will include the following positions (however in some providers will be given the option to propose an alternative core team structure):

Designer / Leader (can be one or two people) - the technical expert who will work with the MC and other relevant stakeholders to design the course/Activity in detail, including liaising with Australian experts and organisations. The Designer will be responsible for developing the Activity Design and Delivery Plan.

The *Leader or Technical Adviser* is the technical expert who will lead the course/Activity full-time over the period that the participants are in Australia or in Vietnam. The Leader will provide the main technical, educational and academic input. He/she will conduct sessions, coordinate inputs from other expert presenters, and make final decisions about the program. He/she also has a major role in facilitating the learning of participants and

reviewing progress of the group and individuals. For AASCs, the Course Leader is expected to deliver the pre- and post-core sessions in Vietnam.

Coordinator - the key administrator responsible for the day-to-day management of the course/activity. S/he will make all the arrangements for the delivery of the Activity (including travel, accommodation and logistics, financial administration, and reporting coordination). The person undertaking this role needs to be a proven high-level administrator and coordinator. Where an Activity will take place predominantly in Vietnam, experience to date has indicated that engagement of a local coordinator who speaks Vietnamese, has familiarity with the local context, has local contacts etc., is critical to efficient and effective service delivery.

Gender Equity, Disability and Social Inclusion Adviser - the person responsible for ensuring the design and delivery of the course/Activity effectively and appropriately addresses gender equality, women's empowerment and disability and social inclusion issues. The GEDSI Adviser is a technical expert in gender equality, women's empowerment and disability and social inclusion. If another core personnel member has these skills and experience it can be the same person (this must be specified in the Technical Proposal).

Welfare Officer (only for activities with an in-Australia component) – the person responsible for the welfare of participants, who provides ongoing advice and welfare support for the participants while in Australia. The Welfare Officer needs to be available 24/7 in case of emergency and communicate with Aus4skills/MC about any incidents. The Welfare Officer liaises between the group and the delivery team, where issues or concerns arise. The Welfare Officer has a major responsibility directly the participants. It is preferable that the Welfare Officer has relevant background in pastoral care and Vietnamese language skills.

Other key Technical Advisers/Facilitators as specified as being required in the RFT.

Examples of innovation and value for money in the delivery of the Activity. This may include:

- delivery effectiveness, special approaches to empowerment/engagement of participants, capacity building partner institutions, progress mentoring, and sustainability;
- previous work with Aus4Skills Program partners; and
- existing delivery models, partnerships, industry connections, resources and materials that will contribute to effective course delivery.

Draft Design and Delivery Program/Plan outlining the tenderer's approach to the design and delivery of the Activity/course to enable the achievement of program outcomes and the Activity/course purpose and learning outcomes, including (as relevant to the scope of services):

- Short description of intended topics or activities;
- Intended teaching and learning material;
- Intended delivery modes;
- Indicative schedule and locations; and
- Who will likely facilitate each topic/session.

7.1.2 Financial Proposal

Tenderers must submit a Financial Proposal as a part of their RFT. The Financial Proposal should be submitted as a stand-alone, separate document using the Excel Spreadsheet Template provided in the RFT. Tenderers should keep in mind that the TEC will not normally see the Financial Proposal until after the technical scoring is complete and as such will not consider information in the Financial Proposal as part of the technical evaluation. The Financial Proposal will usually be worth 20% of the total assessment score.

A financial price assessment will only be undertaken for Tenders assessed as technically suitable by the TEC.

The final *Service Fees* for Aus4Skills short courses are negotiated with the preferred tenderer. The financial detail required for the Financial Proposal (i.e. price assessment) includes the tenderer's management fee and personnel costs (forming the Fixed Fees (non-reimbursable costs) component of the overall Budget):

Schedule 1	Core personnel course design cost
Schedule 2	Core personnel course delivery cost
Schedule 3	Fixed management fee
Schedule 4	Summary of Unit Costs for Tetra Tech Price Comparison

Reimbursable costs associated with the course delivery are required to be estimated in the Financial Proposal at tender, but do not form part of the financial price assessment at tender. These costs will be negotiated with the preferred tenderer at the contracting stage.

7.2 Contracting

Successful tenderers will be invited to negotiate a detailed services contract directly with the MC. The contract will contain standard conditions, and provisions specific to the Scope of Services. A copy of the standard contract terms and conditions will be available to tenderers as part of the RFT. Tenderers unable to comply with the standard terms and conditions are discouraged from tendering, as many of the conditions cannot be adjusted during contract negotiation.

The preferred provider will be required to build upon their tender during the contracting stage to develop a Final Budget and Activity Design and Delivery Plan OR an updated and detailed Program (further details of which will be specified in the RFT).

7.2.1 Budget

The budget will build upon the Financial Proposal submitted at tender to include all reimbursable costs for the delivery of the activity, unless otherwise advised and agreed by the MC. The Budget must be in the template provided by Aus4Skills. In certain instances, a maximum budget for an Activity will be specified in the Scope of Services. In such cases, the Financial Proposal submitted by potential providers at the RFT stage must not exceed the specified maximum budget.

7.2.2 Activity Design and Delivery Plan/Program

This will build upon the submitted Technical Proposal to detail specification of:

- syllabus;

- teaching and learning methods;
- schedule (including the plan for duration and contact time in each module);
- intended learning outcomes;
- delivery staff, including intended guest speakers (if any);
- details of the learning resources to be used;
- assessment methods;
- monitoring and evaluation approach (see Section 11); and
- strategic communications approach (for example, media content for offline and online publication, capturing of students' progress including quotations and impact stories, high quality photos and videos to support the communication of Aus4Skills Program activities and results to audiences in Vietnam and Australia). The approach will be developed in conjunction with the Aus4Skills Communications Manager.

A contract will be signed only once the final Budget and Activity Design and Delivery Plan/Program have been accepted by the Aus4Skills MC and DFAT.

8 Implementation Considerations

8.1 Delivering the logistical requirements of the contract

Aus4Skills sub-contracted activities, in most cases, require the provider to arrange and pay for all the logistical requirements of the delivery of the Activity. This includes Activities in Vietnam as well as Activities in Australia and any other country if applicable.

Logistical support usually includes all delivery team travel, delivery team and participant accommodation, delivery team and participant per diems, ground transport and transfers, venue bookings, translation and interpretation support and other logistics. The Aus4Skills MC will be responsible for arranging participants' travel, insurance and visas when travel to Australia is required, unless otherwise agreed with the preferred provider .

Aus4Skills has preferred provider arrangements and rates which will be provided to the preferred provider at the contracting stage. Aside from these arrangements, some Aus4Skills activities will require implementation in provincial areas outside Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

Providers may choose to partner with a high-quality Vietnamese organisation to support specific activities. This can be particularly beneficial to support in-Vietnam logistical requirements. Any proposed partnerships should be included in the Technical Proposal of the RFT submission, clearly nominating the partner organisation, and included in the approved Course/Activity Design and Delivery Plan.

8.2 Pastoral care of participants

Experience has shown that groups visiting Australia for the first time and only for short visits will have high pastoral needs. While not all groups will be first time visitors, the provider must demonstrate the capacity to attend to the pastoral needs of the participant group while they are in Australia. At a minimum this means having a suitably qualified and

experienced Welfare Officer appointed and accompanying the group at all times in Australia (see Section 8.1).

For all activities requiring participants to travel to another country, the provider must specify their approach to providing pastoral care to participants.

8.3 Professional Interpretation and Translation

Many participants in the target groups may not have high levels of English language competence and depend heavily on translation and interpretation, unless otherwise stated in the RFT. All interpretation and translation must be performed by professional, qualified personnel. The quality of interpretation and translation will affect the quality of engagement with participants and therefore their learning outcomes.

Translation of materials should be done as far as possible in advance. Experience has indicated that participants who need the support of translation want material in both English and Vietnamese. Failure to submit translated course materials by the deadlines stipulated in the contract may result in a weak Partner Performance Assessment (see Section 9.7).

Where possible, simultaneous interpretation is ideal (especially for modules in Vietnam), but often participants will still require time to discuss the interpretation as various concepts are new and/or not readily translatable into Vietnamese. Wherever interpretation is used for more than half a day there should be two interpreters available at all times. Consecutive translation can be used for in-Australia modules. Expected interpretation and translation services for an activity will be detailed in the Scope of Services at RFT.

Aus4Skills MC staff are not translators and should never be expected to perform translation or interpretation services. This includes during the delivery of course activities and translation of documents. Poor quality interpretation and translation services arranged by the provider may result in a weak Partner Performance Assessment.

8.4 Innovative approaches to delivery

Providers are encouraged to be innovative in their chosen delivery methods. Activity contents and reference material should draw on the growing number of published qualitative and quantitative studies of the practice environment and reform efforts and practices in Vietnam.

Where possible and appropriate, providers should involve relevant Vietnamese academics as contributors to the content of the learning program. The learning outcomes and assessment of the learning outcomes should be stated in terms that include the successful completion of the Application Project to demonstrate skills and identification of lessons learned through application.

8.5 Incident Management

From time to time an incident, or crisis, may occur with participants in Vietnam or overseas. The provider will maintain direct support responsibility for all participants whilst they remain part of the Activity or course. The MC may establish an incident or crisis management team, linked into DFAT, and advise or reinforce the provider of their legal, privacy, duty of care and communication obligations. Directions may be given by the MC

to the provider and any reasonable additional resources can be recognised and pre-approved.

8.6 Strategic Communications

Providers are expected to generate professional multimedia communications, to promote the outcomes of the Activity and Australia – Vietnam linkages to the Australian audience (including contributions to the Foreign Policy White Paper and the Strategic Partnership between Australia and Vietnam eg commercial opportunities that have developed), and promote outcomes of the Activity and share human interest and broader impact stories of Activity participants to the Vietnamese audience.

All communication products by providers should acknowledge support from the Australian Government for the activity, and ensure gender balance in all communication products whenever possible and/or appropriate.

Specifically, providers will be responsible for preparing a communications checklist (using the template provided by Aus4Skills) in accordance with Australian Government requirements for MC approval prior to contracting which outlines the provider's approach to: media content for offline and online publication; capturing of participants' progress including quotations and impact stories; and which includes high quality photos and videos to support the communication of Aus4Skills Program activities and results to audiences in Vietnam and Australia.

All photos and videos taken by providers during their delivery of the activity will be deemed to be the intellectual property of DFAT and may not be used without the written permission of the MC. However, the provider can use photos and videos about the activity for social media posts.

Providers have the authority to decide the content of social media posts and website articles which relate to the Activity, but they must convey the key messages provided by Aus4Skills. All media releases by providers must be approved by Aus4Skills before release.

Where Aus4Skills must approve a communications product such as a media release, at least one week notice should be allowed. Further details on Aus4Skills clearance of communications products will be included in the contract terms.

Providers are responsible for ensuring consent forms are signed for anyone subject to communications products (see Section 6.5).

8.7 Performance Management and Assessment

The relevant Aus4Skills Component Manager and Contracts and Services Director will maintain close communication with providers throughout the period of service delivery and provide regular feedback on service delivery issues as they arise.

If the services provided by the provider do not meet their intended purpose or are not in accordance with the contract, the MC may notify the provider accordingly and require the provider to re-deliver the services at no additional cost to the MC.

Following contract completion and as required by DFAT, providers will undergo a Partner Performance Assessment (PPA) to evaluate how well they delivered the Scope of Services specified in their contract with the MC. DFAT's standard [Partner Performance Assessment \(PPA\) template](#) will be used by the MC to complete this assessment. Information from PPAs will be used to inform future procurement evaluations, including Tender Evaluation Committees, and delivery partner selection decision making. Upon contract completion,

the relevant Aus4Skills Component Manager will complete the PPA and provide this to the provider for feedback and comment.

8.8 Environment

The MC and DFAT are committed to achieving sustainable development and in reducing the environmental footprint of Aus4Skills Program Activities. The MC encourages providers to take the following into consideration in organising events and Activities:

- limit the use of disposable, single use water bottles, bags, straws, utensils and plates;
- use paper rather than plastic folders for course and Activity materials; and
- use e-backdrops/banners rather than plastic coated banners.

These commitments extend to service organisations (i.e. hotels) contracted by the provider. Compliance of providers with these commitments will be taken into consideration during the PPA process (see Section 9.7).

9 Provider Personnel Entitlements

9.1 Personnel fees

All international personnel costs included in both the fixed and reimbursable components of the budget must be aligned with [ARF rates which remain applicable to the Aus4Skills Activities](#). Premium rates under this framework are not applicable to Aus4Skills Activities.

Vietnamese personnel costs included in both the fixed and reimbursable components of the budget must be aligned with the [EU-UN Cost Norms 2022](#).

Personnel fees apply to input days only and not travel days.

9.2 Per diems

All personnel are eligible for per diems for any delivery that takes place outside of the person's usual workplace city. Personnel are eligible for per diems on travel days.

International personnel per diems are prescribed by DFAT for Vietnam, in accordance with [ARF rates](#). The rates for Vietnam are as follows:

In-Vietnam rates (AUD)

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Incidentals	Total
\$17.00	\$23.00	\$44.00	\$24.00	\$107.00

Vietnamese personnel per diems will be calculated according to the [EU-UN Cost Norms 2022](#).

9.3 Travel

Personnel will only be eligible for reimbursement of economy class flight tickets.

9.4 Visas

The provider is responsible for ensuring all delivery personnel have the appropriate visas for any travel associated with the delivery of the services. The provider must manage all applications and payments associated with personnel visas.

If required, the Aus4Skills MC can provide a visa support letter for Vietnamese visas.

Providers are encouraged to obtain a letter from the Vietnamese Embassy in Australia confirming the visa type in case personnel are questioned in Vietnam (especially in non-urban areas).

9.5 Accommodation

All personnel are eligible for accommodation for any delivery that takes place outside of the person's usual workplace city.

International personnel accommodation rates in Vietnam will not exceed AUD 185 per night, as determined in accordance with the [ARF rates](#) and the cost of 4-star accommodation in Vietnam.

Vietnamese personnel accommodation rates will be calculated according to the [EU-UN Cost Norms 2022](#).

Accommodation for delivery personnel will be paid at cost through reimbursement or in most cases direct to vendors by the provider (unless otherwise specified in the Scope of Services).

9.6 Operating in provincial areas

Some Aus4Skills activities will require implementation in provincial areas outside Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. Hotel accommodation and conference facilities in these areas may be limited and difficult to book at short notice.

Providers should be aware of any special security requirements from local authorities for non-Vietnamese passport holders when travelling in provincial areas, especially those with large ethnic minority populations. It is a provider's obligation to understand and meet any applicable security requirements.

10 Monitoring and Evaluation

The provider will implement relevant monitoring and evaluation for any sub-contracted Activity.

10.1 Output Monitoring

As part of developing the Activity Design and Delivery Plan/Program, the provider will propose a means of capturing the basic output-level indicators required for all activities by the Program Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. If the context of the activity requires additional output-level indicators, these may be suggested by the provider for review and agreement. One mandatory requirement for all output indicators is that, insofar as they

pertain to participants, disaggregates for gender, disability, ethnicity, birthplace and current province of residence/work, and private sector/industry affiliation (if any) are included.

10.2 Outcome Monitoring

As part of the Activity Design and Delivery Plan/Program, providers must indicate how they will maximise contributions to one or more of the Aus4Skills Program Outcomes. These contributions must be stated in specific and measurable terms. For example, if an activity wishes to improve HRD practices, policies or performance standards, the specific changes to particular practices, policies or performance standards that may be expected as a result of the activity must be explicitly defined.

Aus4Skills uses an independent, third party agency to monitor these outcomes, using standardised tools (see Section 11.3) that focus on Program Outcomes and related cross-cutting issues. It is therefore in the interests of the provider to maintain a clear focus on agreed outcomes in both design and implementation of Activities.

Providers are free to obtain feedback about their Activities from participants, but this cannot be considered to be 'outcome' information in the context of the Aus4Skills Program. Consequently, such feedback should be sought in relation to means of improving activities or their sub-components in future and form part of the PPA process.

10.3 Alumni Development Impact Survey (ADIS)

Aus4Skills implements the Alumni Development Impact Survey (ADIS) across all Aus4Skills Activities. ADIS is a monitoring and evaluation tool that collects information on the contributions of Australia Alumni in Vietnam. ADIS identifies tasks alumni have achieved using the skills/knowledge or networks/connections gained from the relevant Activity in which they participated and records any constraints or challenges faced. This is done by telephone interview of a random sample of Australia Alumni at three to six months after course completion.

Providers will be required, as part of the Completion Report, to submit all necessary participant contact information required to support implementation of ADIS. Aus4Skills has contracted a Vietnam-based provider to implement ADIS for all applicable Aus4Skills Activities.

The MC will communicate regularly with the provider to discuss progress, address any issues and make any necessary forward plans or amendments.

The provider should ensure participants are aware of ADIS, understand its purpose and format, and understand they will be contacted by an ADIS interviewer.

11 Reporting

The Aus4Skills MC is responsible for reporting to DFAT on the management and progress of all Activities as part of its overall reporting obligations for the Aus4Skills Program. This is done in annual reports, as well as a final Activity Completion Report. These reports will cover all output and performance/risk measures. As such, all reporting from providers must align with Aus4Skill's reporting requirements.

Providers are responsible for reporting to the Aus4Skills Program on implementation of the Activities. Reporting requirements will be specified in the RFT and Scope of Services in the contract. Providers will usually be required to prepare a Progress Report during service

implementation. In all cases a Completion Report must be completed by the provider at the end of service delivery in the format provided by the relevant Aus4Skills Component Manager at contracting.

Providers will also be required to prepare regular financial reports outlining Activity spending in the format provided by the relevant Aus4Skills Component Manager at contracting and to submit supporting documentation (i.e invoices and receipts) where required.

11.1 Completion reporting

The Completion Report will usually be due within one month of course completion. The body of the report will usually be no more than 12 pages with annexes including relevant output-level analysis and communications products from the Activity. The purpose of the Completion Report is to:

- provide an overview of the Activity (including Activity's objectives, expected outputs, Activity participants).
- assess achievement of the Activity against its intended outputs (using both standard program output indicators and any additional ones required by the Activity), including testimonials of participants or beneficiaries, highlights of success stories, or any unintended outcomes (linkages occurred as result of Activity implementation) if possible;
- describe any issues, constraints and lessons learned, and make recommendations for future delivery of similar Activities; and
- provide a financial report on delivery detailing actual expenditure incurred. In the case of reimbursable costs, documentary evidence of payments made may be requested by the MC (except per diems).

11.2 Exception reporting

In addition to the above requirements, the provider will identify and report any current or potential events which may: 1) affect the delivery of the Activity or achievement of the Activity objectives or 2) be of significant interest to the Aus4Skills MC and/or DFAT (including Strategic Communications opportunities).

11.3 Financial reporting

Providers will be required to prepare regular financial reports outlining Activity spending as required by the MC and DFAT. Regular financial reporting will also serve to identify changes that may be required to the provider's approved Budget (see Section 13) throughout delivery of the Activity.

Financial reporting requirements for each Activity will be specified in the contract and may or may not be connected with a particular milestone payment to be made by the MC to the provider under the contract.

Providers are required report on actual spending (i.e. all fixed costs and reimbursable costs) against the approved Budget for the provider's activity. All fixed costs as stated in the Provider's financial reports should not differ from those stated in the approved budget

for the provider's activity, unless a written budget amendment request has been approved by the MC or a contract variation has been signed with the MC.

Invoices for fixed costs must be accompanied by a time sheet indicating the number of adviser days worked.

Payment for all reimbursable costs listed in the provider's financial reports will be for the actual, verified course/activity costs that have been incurred. In cases where reimbursable costs differ from the amounts stated in the approved Budget, the actual cost must be reflected in the provider's financial report.

Clear, self-explanatory descriptions of each reimbursable cost must be provided in the provider's financial reports. Electronic copies of supporting invoices/receipts for reimbursable costs (with the exception of per diems which do not need to be acquitted by the provider) must be provided in the same order as they appear in the provider's financial reports so that each reimbursable cost can be easily verified.

12 Budget

All Aus4Skills Activities are funded by the Australian Government through DFAT. The Aus4Skills MC is responsible for the development, management and reporting of the overall budget.

Providers budget and pay for all costs associated with completing the Activity Design and Delivery Plan/Program and implementation (including pre-core, core and post-core modules), and finalisation and delivery of the Completion Report.

During contract negotiations the Activity Budget is submitted to the Aus4Skills MC along with the Activity Design and Delivery Plan. Once finalised, the Budget and the Design and Delivery Plan form a part of the contract between the MC and the provider.

Providers should refer to other sections of these Guidelines when determining fixed and reimbursable budgets and cost norms.

The Activity Budget divides costs into fixed and reimbursable budget lines.

12.1 Fixed costs

Fixed costs are approved based on the Activity Design and Delivery Plan and, while they are subject to reporting and possible audit, these will not be varied unless through a further written budget request or a contract variation.

12.2 Reimbursable costs

Reimbursable costs are also approved on the basis of the Activity Design and Delivery Plan/Program, however they are more fluid and variable and can be difficult to accurately predict. Payment against the reimbursable budget lines will be for the actual, verified Activity costs that have been incurred. Providers will need to provide details of these costs periodically as specified in the contract. The MC may verify the provider's financial reports through an audit process.

12.3 Invoicing

All invoices for milestone payments to be made by the MC to the provider under contract should be directed to the relevant Aus4Skills Component Manager and the MC contact person, as indicated in the contract.

13 Further Information

Further information can be obtained from Aus4Skills at the address/website indicated below:

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