



Australia Awards

Aspire Grant Guidelines 2026

Turning alumni ambition into action.

Australia Awards Fiji

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Aspire Grant Guidelines – Fiji

1 Introduction

The Australia Awards Aspire Grants (Aspire Grants) is an initiative of the Australia Awards Fiji program to support alumni in contributing to Fiji's sustainable development and strengthening people-to-people links between Fiji and Australia. These grants enable alumni to lead small-scale, high-impact projects that align with Australia Awards priorities and Fiji's national development goals.

1.1 Priority Sectors

- Agriculture
- Education
- Environment
- Governance and Public Policy
- Health
- Infrastructure

1.2 Thematic Areas

- Climate resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).
- Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) in particular:
 - Social inclusion which includes rural and remote locations.
 - Disability inclusion.
 - Women's empowerment.
 - Inclusion of individuals and communities with diverse Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics (SOGIESC).

2 Aspire Grant Objectives

Aspire Grants are a mechanism to enable Australia Awards alumni to contribute directly to Fiji's development. They aim to:

- Support alumni to apply their expertise in addressing real-world challenges in their professional and community contexts.
- Align with Fiji's national priorities and Australia Awards Fiji strategic focus areas.
- Promote innovation, knowledge-sharing, and collaboration to strengthen community and institutional capacity.
- Deepen bilateral connections between Fiji and Australia by fostering people-to-people links and professional partnerships.

Australia Awards Fiji Objectives		Aspire Grants Contribution
1.	Whole-of-Government alignment	Aspire Grants support national and sectoral priorities, aligning with broader Australian Government initiatives including those in health, education, governance, and climate resilience.
1.	Showcasing Australia and Fiji's education system	Grants illustrate how alumni use their Australian-acquired skills to lead local change.
2.	Equity and access	Initiatives funded by Aspire grants will be inclusive of rural, marginalised and underrepresented populations and focus on GEDSI as a central selection criterion.
3.	Enduring connections	Alumni projects often involve partnerships with Australian institutions or initiatives, fostering long-term professional relationships.

2.1 Purpose of Aspire Grants

Aspire Grants aim to support development-focused initiatives that:

- Transform skills and learning from Australia Awards into local impact.
- Address priority themes and sectors as defined in Section 1.
- Strengthen Fiji–Australia cooperation through shared action and leadership.
- Promote inclusive, locally driven solutions to social, environmental, and governance issues.
- Foster leadership and peer mentorship within the alumni network.

3 Applicant Eligibility

3.1 Eligibility

Aspire Grants are open to Australia Awards Fiji alumni who meet the following criteria:

- Residency - Applicants must be Fijian citizens and currently residing in Fiji.
- Alumni Status - Applicants must meet at least one of the following:
 1. Have completed their Australia Awards qualification in Australia or the Pacific region.
 2. Be alumni of Australia Awards or predecessor programs.

3.2 Application Type (Group or Individual)

Both individual and group applications are accepted. For group applications, a lead applicant must be nominated to represent the group. Each application may include no more than 10 individuals. All applicants in the group must be an eligible Australia Awards alumnus or alumna, as defined above.

4 Financial Management and Accountability

To ensure value for money, transparency and sustainability, in line with the AAF Alumni Engagement Strategy the following financial management and accountability requirements apply to all Aspire Grants:

Grant funds will be disbursed to grantees through tranche-based payments in accordance with the approved disbursement schedule set out in Section 7. Grantees are responsible for managing expenditure in line with the approved budget and the terms of the Grant Agreement.

4.1 Value for Money Principles

Aspire Grants must demonstrate value for money by ensuring that grant funds are used efficiently, effectively and ethically to achieve the intended development outcomes. Grantees are expected to:

- use cost-effective approaches appropriate to the scale and objectives of the activity
- avoid unnecessary or excessive expenditure
- seek competitive pricing where relevant
- prioritise local procurement where this supports community-level economic benefit

Value for money will be assessed during application review, implementation monitoring and financial acquittal.

4.2 Allowable and Ineligible Activities

While Aspire Grants encourage innovation and development-focused initiatives, certain activities are not eligible for funding under any grant category. The following activities will not be supported:

- partisan political activities including campaigning or political advocacy
- formal study costs including tuition, enrolment or course fees
- graduation-related expenses including gown hire, travel or celebration costs
- religious activities including events or materials that promote a specific religion
- activities already funded by the Australian Government unless clearly distinct and complementary
- activities that do not align with the objectives of the Aspire Grants (Section 2)
- repayment of loans or personal debts
- expenses incurred prior to grant approval
- procurement of plant, capital equipment or permanent infrastructure including building construction
- procurement of standard personal protective equipment unless essential to a training or outreach activity
- activities that contradict Fiji's national development priorities or do not contribute to Fiji–Australia cooperation
- activities that discriminate against individuals or groups on any basis

4.3 Expenditure Caps and Restrictions

All travel and procurement arrangements under Aspire Grants must represent value for money and adhere to the following limits:

- **Airfares** must be economy class and booked at the lowest reasonable fare. Costs above the allowable limit of FJD \$1,500 total per grant will require prior approval and justification.
- **Refreshments** must be supported by a quote, with preference given to small, local suppliers. Total costs must not exceed FJD 1,000 per grant.
- **Accommodation** is capped at FJD \$300 per night, with a maximum allowable total of FJD \$1,000 per grant.

The following expenditure caps apply:

Expense Type	Maximum Allowable Amount (FJD) per grant
Airfares	\$1,500
Accommodation	\$1,000
Refreshments	\$1,000

All expenditure must be clearly itemised and supported by appropriate documentation.

4.4 Costs Which are Not Eligible

The following costs are not eligible for Aspire Grant funding:

- salaries, stipends, allowances, per diems or honoraria
- office rent, utilities, fuel or transport allowances
- standard office equipment including computers, tablets, mobile phones or photocopiers
- general office supplies not directly related to approved training or outreach activities
- land acquisition or compensation payments

Activity-specific materials such as workshop stationery, printed training materials or educational aids may be supported where clearly justified and directly linked to approved activities.

4.5 Financial Acquittal and Documentation Requirements

Grantees are required to submit a financial acquittal in accordance with the Grant Agreement and reporting schedule.

Financial acquittal must include:

- a completed financial acquittal template

- a comparison of approved budget and actual expenditure
- copies of receipts, invoices or other supporting documentation for all expenditure

Submission of financial acquittal is a condition of grant compliance and future eligibility.

5 GEDSI Considerations

Australia Awards Fiji promotes inclusive development by supporting alumni-led activities that address barriers to participation and ensure that all individuals, regardless of gender, ability, geography, or background, are empowered to contribute to and benefit from Fiji's development.

Closing equity gaps for women and girls, persons with disabilities, and individuals from rural and maritime areas aligns with the Australia Awards Fiji Alumni Strategy and supports the Government of Fiji's broader commitments to inclusive education, equitable development, and gender equality.

5.1 Gender Equality

Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment is central to achieving Fiji's national development objectives and Australia's aid commitments. The Australian Government targets at least 80% of aid investments to effectively address gender equality¹, and Aspire Grants are expected to contribute to this goal.

Aspire Grant proposals must demonstrate how the project supports gender equality, either as a primary objective or a secondary benefit. This may include, but is not limited to, the following focus areas:

1. Women's Economic Empowerment.
2. Women in Leadership.
3. Women's Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) – aligned with DFAT's Gender Equality and Health Strategies, particularly access to SRH services and commodities.
4. Eliminating Violence Against Women and Children.
5. Enhancing Agency through the establishment or strengthening of women's groups and organisations.
6. Challenging Social Norms, for example, by empowering women to enter and thrive in traditionally male-dominated sectors.

Examples include:

Direct outcomes:

¹ Source: DFAT – Australia's development program: <https://www.dfat.gov.au/development/australias-development-program>

- A community initiative to reduce gender-based violence through awareness and support services.
- A project offering digital or science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) skills training specifically for young women.

Secondary outcomes:

- Health education initiatives that increase access to services for women in remote communities.
- Educational resource projects that enhance learning in mixed-gender classrooms.

Training activities funded through Aspire Grants should aim for 50% female participation, unless otherwise justified.

5.2 Disability Inclusion

Ensuring people with disabilities have equal opportunities to participate and thrive contributes to inclusive development, improves well-being, and supports stronger communities. While projects are not required to exclusively serve persons with disabilities, grant applications that include measures to increase disability access and participation, either directly or indirectly, are strongly encouraged. This includes the provision of reasonable accommodations to enable the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities. For tangible outcomes, grantees are encouraged to engage with the Ministry of Education (MOE), the Special and Inclusive Education (SIE) unit, and Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) to conduct disability access audits and design responsive actions based on identified needs. Examples include:

Direct outcomes:

- Installing ramps, handrails, or accessible toilets in schools or community centres.
- Providing assistive technologies or learning materials adapted for students with visual, hearing, or intellectual disabilities.
- Offering sign language interpretation or accessible transport to enable participation in program activities.

Secondary outcomes:

- Designing health, education, or livelihood initiatives to be inclusive of people with disabilities in target communities.
- Adapting training content and delivery methods to meet the diverse needs of participants.
- Supporting leadership, advocacy, or capacity-building opportunities for Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs).

Grantees may only become aware of disability inclusion entry points during implementation. In such cases, projects are encouraged to adapt where possible, and reporting should reflect any unanticipated inclusion outcomes.

5.3 Social Inclusion

Social inclusion means enabling all people, particularly those at risk of marginalisation, to participate fully in society, regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or other factors. In Fiji, this includes ensuring meaningful opportunities for youth, SOGIESC-diverse individuals (a standard and inclusive term encompassing diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and sex characteristics), people in outer islands, and minority communities.

Thematic areas may include:

1. Economic Empowerment.
2. Leadership and Innovation.
3. Access to Support Services – including health programs, counselling, legal aid, and social protection.
4. Eliminating Gender-Based Violence (GBV).
5. Challenging Social Norms, particularly those that restrict participation, mobility, or decision-making.

Aspire Grants should aim to reduce structural or cultural barriers that limit access, agency, or dignity for these groups. Projects are encouraged to be intentional in designing activities that promote inclusion and recognise the intersectionality of disadvantage.

Examples include:

Direct outcomes:

- A skills-building initiative that equips unemployed youth from informal settlements with practical competencies to start a small business or compete for formal employment opportunities.
- A mentorship program that supports leadership pathways for SOGIESC-diverse alumni or ethnic minority groups.
- An outreach initiative that supports social and economic participation for individuals with limited mobility or language barriers.

Secondary outcomes:

- A nutrition awareness campaign tailored for under-served communities experiencing food insecurity.
- Health outreach or mobile services in areas with low uptake due to stigma or discrimination.
- Inclusion of cultural or religious minority voices in local governance, planning, or service delivery.

While grant proposals are expected to integrate GEDSI, it is understood that new GEDSI entry points may emerge during implementation. Projects should be flexible to adapt to these new entry points and ensure positive impacts are included in the final report.

6 Climate Considerations

Climate change poses a significant threat to Fiji's development, environment, and communities, particularly in coastal and maritime areas. Australia Awards Fiji supports alumni-led initiatives that help build climate resilience, reduce environmental impacts, and enhance community adaptation, in line with the Government of Fiji's Climate Change Act 2021 and the National Adaptation Plan.

Applicants are encouraged to propose Aspire Grant activities that directly contribute to climate action, environmental sustainability, or disaster preparedness. Where climate change is not the primary focus, applicants should consider whether their activity could deliver secondary environmental benefits.

Examples include:

Direct outcome activities:

- Training for community leaders, youth, women, persons with disabilities and other minorities on disaster risk reduction and early warning systems.
- Introducing renewable energy or energy-efficient technologies in schools or health clinics.
- Participating in an environmental science conference or climate policy forum in Australia.
- Promoting climate-smart agricultural practices (e.g. composting, crop rotation, reduced burning).
- Replanting or conserving mangroves and coastal ecosystems to reduce erosion and support biodiversity.

Secondary outcome activities:

- Health or education initiatives that increase community resilience to extreme weather or climate-induced health risks (e.g. dengue or leptospirosis outbreaks).
- Enhancing water access and security in remote or drought-prone areas.
- Improving infrastructure or service delivery with sustainability in mind (e.g. reducing plastic use, encouraging recycling).

Applicants are also encouraged to integrate traditional ecological knowledge and locally appropriate adaptation solutions, where relevant.

For more information on the Australian Government's commitment to climate action, refer to the [Climate Change Action Strategy](#) (DFAT 2019), which guides climate-responsive investments across Australia's development program.

7 Grant Conditions and Disbursement

Financial management and accountability requirements are set out in Section 4.

Aspire Grants are designed to be accessible, alumni-friendly and proportionate to the size and risk profile of each grant category. Disbursement and reporting arrangements aim to minimise administrative burden while maintaining appropriate accountability. Grant funds will be fully disbursed before or during implementation, and alumni will not be required to pre-finance activities or incur out-of-pocket costs.

7.1 Grant Size and Disbursement Schedule

Grant Range: FJD 5,000 to 10,000 per approved project.

Disbursement Schedules:

Amount: 5,000 FJD		Aspire Action Grant Milestone (1)
1.	FJD 5,000 (Initial disbursement)	Upon signing of the Grant Agreement and submission of required documentation.

** A short completion report and financial acquittal are required as set out in the Grant Agreement. These requirements support accountability and learning.*

Amount: 10,000 FJD		Aspire Impact Grant Milestones (2)
1.	FJD 7,000 (Initial disbursement)	Upon signing of the Grant Agreement and submission of required documentation.
2.	FJD 3,000 (Second disbursement)	Upon acceptance of a satisfactory implementation progress report and financial update (at mid-point of project implementation).

**Final reporting and acquittal are required within the approved implementation period for all grants.*

7.2 Opportunity for Expansion Funding

High-impact projects that demonstrate strong outcomes, effective delivery, acquittal and alignment with program priorities may be considered for additional funding of up to FJD 10,000. Any expansion funding will be subject to a formal review of progress, submission of a revised proposal and budget, and approval by DFAT.

7.3 Conditions of Participation

To ensure the integrity and sustainability of Aspire Grants, the following conditions apply to all applicants and their nominated organisations:

- a. Alumni and/or their organisation must sign and adhere to all terms and conditions outlined in the Grant Agreement.
- b. Applicants who have not fulfilled reporting or financial obligations from previous Aspire Grants or disbursements are ineligible for funding.
- c. Projects must not duplicate activities or outcomes funded under a previous Aspire Grant.
- d. All grantees must comply with reporting, monitoring, and financial acquittal requirements as outlined in the Grant Agreement.

The Grant Agreement is a legally binding document. Failure to comply with its terms may lead to:

- Exclusion from future Australia Awards Fiji activities.
- Recovery of funds disbursed under the grant; and
- Legal action, if warranted, for serious breaches of contract.

8 Grant Activities: Aspire Grant Categories Fiji

Aspire Grants are available under two categories in 2026 based on the value and complexity of proposed activities. Each category has an application, approval process, and reporting requirements.

All activities must align with priority and thematic areas, and the objectives outlined in Sections 2. Applications should demonstrate a clear contribution to Fiji's development priorities in areas such as health, education, infrastructure, governance and public policy, agriculture, environment, and infrastructure.

8.1 Category 1: Aspire Action Grant (FJD 5,000)

Small-Scale Grant Activities

For short-term, practical activities that provide direct support to communities and alumni.

Examples include:

- Provision of teaching kits in rural or remote schools.
- Supply of medical or outreach kits for frontline health services.
- Small-scale community initiatives such as school clean-ups.
- Public awareness campaigns such as health awareness days or basic water hygiene campaigns.
- Support for alumni to attend a professional development activity (e.g. a symposium, conference or short course) within Fiji or Australia and engage in knowledge transfer upon completion.
Timeline: Activities must be completed and acquitted within 3 months.

8.2 Category 2: Aspire Impact Grant (FJD 10,000)

Medium-Scale Capacity Building and Outreach

Supports alumni-led initiatives that build skills, share knowledge, or strengthen institutional or community resilience. Examples include:

- Delivering training workshops or seminars in areas such as climate-smart agriculture, inclusive education, or small business development.
- Participating in or organising professional forums, research collaborations, or policy roundtables.
- Improving infrastructure or systems at a workplace or community institution (e.g. installing a water tank at a health clinic, digitising community health records).
- Collaborations with Australian organisations, Fijian institutions, or the Alumni Advisory Board are encouraged. Co-funding arrangements must be supported by written agreements at the time of application.

Timeline: *Projects must be completed within 6 months.*

9 Grant Activity Requirements Fiji

Regardless of category, all Aspire Grant activities must meet a core set of requirements to ensure alignment with the Australia Awards Alumni Engagement Strategy, support national development priorities, and deliver meaningful, inclusive, and sustainable results.

9.1 Demonstrate Purpose

All Aspire Grant activities must:

- Address at least one of the priority sectors or thematic areas of the Aspire Grants, as outlined in Sections 1.1 and 1.2 (e.g. Health, Education, Governance and Public Policy, Agriculture, Environment, Infrastructure Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Climate Resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)); and
- Contribute to at least one of the Aspire Grant Objectives described in Section 2 (e.g. alumni contribution to development, people-to-people links, strengthening public institutions).

9.2 Clear Implementation Plan with Outputs and Outcomes

All Aspire Grant proposals must:

- Present realistic, clearly defined activities that can be delivered within the timeframe and budget.
- Outline tangible outputs and measurable outcomes that demonstrate the expected benefit to a community, school, organisation, or professional network.
- Be innovative, sustainable, and make efficient use of resources.
- Include a clear costed work plan and timeline for delivery.

Definitions:	
Output	A tangible product or deliverable (e.g. a teacher training session delivered, a toolkit produced, a community workshop held, a solar panel installed).
Outcome	A change or benefit resulting from the activity (e.g. improved teaching practices, better access to maternal health services, increased knowledge about gender-based violence, improved water security in a rural school).

9.3 Ownership and Sustainability

All activities must demonstrate:

- Clear links between the project and the alumni's knowledge, skills, or networks gained through their Australian education.
- Support from the applicant's organisation or professional network to implement and sustain the project beyond the grant period.
- Preference will be given to activities that promote local ownership and capacity strengthening.

9.4 Complementarity

Grant-funded activities must:

- Complement existing efforts within the organisation, institution, or community.
- Avoid duplication of work already being funded or implemented by other donors, programs, or government initiatives.
- Strengthen or fill a clearly identified gap in service delivery, policy, or practice.

9.5 Financial Investment

All proposals must:

- Include an itemised budget.
- Demonstrate value-for-money in line with the scale and scope of the proposed activity.
- Where feasible, show evidence of co-investment by the applicant's organisation or partners.
- In-kind contributions (e.g. use of venues, voluntary labour, materials) from community members or stakeholders are strongly encouraged.

9.6 Equitable Access and Inclusion

All applications must demonstrate inclusive design and risk management to:

- Promote gender equality, disability inclusion, and social inclusion, particularly for those in rural, maritime, or marginalised communities.

- Ensure equitable access and meaningful participation for women, people with disabilities, and SOGIESC-diverse individuals in project activities and benefits.
- Apply Do No Harm principles to avoid unintentionally reinforcing existing inequalities or creating new vulnerabilities.

Intentionally reach and empower underrepresented or disadvantaged groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, and SOGIESC-diverse individuals

Grantees are strongly encouraged to consult with relevant agencies and organisations, such as women's groups, Rainbow Pride Foundation, and Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), during project design and implementation. These groups can provide critical support in areas such as counselling, community outreach, and sustaining project outcomes.

Applicants must also include a Risk Management Matrix that identifies potential risks, such as social backlash, exclusion, or implementation delays, and outlines how these will be mitigated. Risks should be categorised as high, medium, or low, with corresponding management strategies that reflect the context and stakeholder dynamics.

10 Photography and Public Diplomacy Guidelines

All potential applicants should be familiar with public diplomacy expectations associated with DFAT-funded initiatives. Aspire Grant recipients are expected to contribute to public diplomacy efforts in a way that upholds the integrity and reputation of Australia Awards and the Australian Government. These requirements include, but are not limited to:

- **Use of high-quality content:** Capture and share high-resolution images and, where possible, short videos that clearly demonstrate community engagement and project outcomes.
- **Consent and safeguarding:** Ensure all individuals featured in photos or videos provide informed written consent. Photos of children should only be used where explicit guardian consent has been obtained and safeguarding protocols are strictly followed. *Refer to **Annex 5** for the consent form.*
- **Visibility and branding:** Appropriately acknowledge Australian Government support by including DFAT and Australia Awards Fiji branding on relevant materials (e.g. banners, posters, reports, and digital content).
- **Review and approval:** Any media releases, public posts, or communications materials (including social media, radio, and news stories) that reference the Australian Government, DFAT, or the Australia Awards must be approved in advance by DFAT via the Australia Awards Fiji team.
- **Attribution and tone:** All communications must duly acknowledge the support of the Australian Government. Materials must not include political commentary, defamatory statements, or personal opinions that could compromise the impartiality or professionalism of the Australia Awards program.

- **Respect for local context:** Content should reflect the diversity and dignity of individuals and communities involved, avoiding any imagery or language that could be considered insensitive, exploitative, or misleading.

11 Conflict of Interest – Aspire Grants Fiji

Aspire Grant applicants and grantees are expected to uphold the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and accountability. A strict conflict of interest policy applies to all grant activities.

11.1 Restrictions on Financial Interest

Alumni listed as grantees or team members in the grant proposal must not receive personal payment or financial benefit for their involvement in the activity.

Grantees must not subcontract services to any business, organisation, or supplier in which they, or their immediate family members, have a direct financial interest.

For example, grant funds cannot be used to:

- Pay a business owned by the grantee or their family,
- To engage an organisation with which the grantee holds a formal financial stake
- Award contracts where impartiality could be compromised due to personal relationships or shared assets.

11.2 Declaration Requirements

All applicants must submit a **Conflict-of-Interest Declaration Form** (see Annex 2) as part of the application package. If a potential or actual conflict of interest arises at any stage, the grantee must immediately notify the Australia Awards Fiji team to discuss the issue.

11.3 Non-disclosure

Failure to declare a conflict of interest may be treated as fraud under DFAT's Fraud Control Policy. DFAT defines fraud as: *"Dishonestly obtaining a benefit, or causing a loss, by deception or other means."* Aspire Grant applicants and grantees are expected to uphold the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and accountability. A strict conflict of interest policy applies to all grant activities as part of broader risk management and fraud prevention measures.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Misappropriation of funds.
- Making false or misleading statements (including in grant applications or reports).
- Using grant funds for unauthorised or private purposes.

- Failing to disclose actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

If non-disclosure is identified:

- The grant agreement will be immediately terminated.
- The grantee may be required to return funds received under the grant.
- Further reporting to DFAT and relevant authorities may occur, and future eligibility for grant or alumni opportunities may be affected.

For more information see [DFAT's Fraud Control Toolkit](#).

12 Grant Duration – Aspire Grants Fiji

Aspire Grant activities must be implemented within clearly defined timeframes to ensure accountability and impact.

12.1 Commencement of Activities

Grantees are expected to commence implementation within one (1) month of receiving funding approval and the execution of the Grant Agreement. If commencement is delayed, the grantee will:

- Notify the Australia Awards Fiji (AAF) team, and
- Propose a revised start date, which must be no later than three (3) months from the original grant approval date, with an updated implementation timeline.

Failure to commence within this timeframe may result in withdrawal of the grant and reallocation of funds to other alumni initiatives.

12.2 Maximum Implementation Periods

Each grant category has a maximum timeframe for completion, calculated from the date the Grant Agreement is signed:

Grant Category	Maximum Duration
Category 1: Aspire Action Grant	3 months
Category 2: Aspire Impact Grant	6 months

Grantees are responsible for ensuring that all activities, deliverables, and reporting requirements are completed within the approved duration. Requests for extension must be provided in writing and are subject to approval by AAF.

12.3 Aspire Grant Tentative Timelines

12.3.1 Application

Action	Completion by:
Call for applications and information sessions.	16 January 2026
Screening and assessment.	1 February 2026
Grantees announced.	20 February 2026
Initial disbursements.	2 March 2026

12.3.2 Category 1: Aspire Action Grant (FJD 5,000)

Indicative Timeline: 3 months

Action	Completion by:
Disbursement (FJD 5,000) upon signing Grant Agreement	March 2026

12.3.3 Category 2: Aspire Impact Grant (FJD 10,000)

Indicative Timeline: 6 months

Action	Completion by:
Initial disbursement (FJD 7,000) upon signing Grant Agreement	March 2026
Mid-point progress disbursement FJD 3,000.	June 2026

13 Aspire Grant Application Assessment

All Aspire Grant applications will undergo a two-step assessment process:

13.1 Grant Eligibility Assessment

Before applications are scored, an initial eligibility screening will be conducted by the Australia Awards Fiji (AAF) team. Applications must meet the following minimum eligibility requirements:

- Applicant is a registered Australia Awards alumni who resides in Fiji.
- Proposed activity aligns with Aspire Grant objectives (see Section 2) and at least one thematic or sectoral priority (see Section 1).
- Application includes an itemised budget, work plan, and Conflict of Interest Declaration Form.
- The activity does not fall under the list of ineligible activities (see Section 4.2).

Eligible applications will progress to formal scoring.

13.2 Proposal Scoring

Eligible applications will be scored by an independent assessment panel using weighted selection criteria.

Each proposal will be assessed on:

Criteria	Description	Weighting
a. Relevance and feasibility	Alignment with Aspire Grant objectives and Fiji's development priorities without duplicating existing services.	30%
b. Potential for Development Impact	Anticipated benefit to the community, sector, or organisation. Alignment with the alumnus' qualifications and leadership potential. Demonstrated commitment to inclusion (e.g. gender, disability, social equity).	30%
c. Alignment with alumni's qualifications and leadership potential	Clear link between the proposed initiative and the alumni's area of study, experience, and/or professional expertise. Demonstrates leadership or potential to influence positive change.	20%
d. Sustainability and scalability (VfM)	The proposal uses creative, sustainable, and locally appropriate approaches, demonstrates efficiency and clear budget detail, includes potential for co-investment or in-kind contributions, and presents a timeline and delivery plan that are feasible for the project scope.	20%

**Final recommendations will be made based on scores, available funding, and alignment with AAF priorities.*

13.3 Grant Approval Procedures

Applications will be made to: alumni@fmsp.org.fj

Submitted applications will be assessed on a competitive basis, with oversight provided by the Aspire Grants Assessment Panel, comprising representatives from:

- Australia Awards Fiji (AAF)
- DFAT – Australian High Commission Suva
- AAF Alumni Advisory Board (AAB)

13.4 Assessment Process

Applications will be reviewed for eligibility, and eligible proposals will be assessed against the selection criteria (see Section 13). Applicants may be asked to:

- Provide clarifications or additional information.
- Resubmit their proposal with modifications, or
- Participate in an interview to discuss their project design and implementation plans.

The full assessment process is expected to be completed within one month of the application closing date.

13.5 Decision-Making

All decisions made by the Assessment Panel are final. The panel will make recommendations based on scoring, relevance to the Aspire Grant objectives, and available funding. All determinations made by the panel, are the sole discretion of the panel.

13.6 Grant Agreement

Successful applicants will be required to sign a Grant Agreement with Abt Global (as the managing contractor for AAF), which outlines:

- The terms and conditions of the grant.
- Reporting and financial acquittal obligations.
- Conditions for payment and implementation.

Failure to comply with the terms of the Grant Agreement may result in termination of the grant and recovery of funds.

14 Safeguarding

Australia Awards Fiji has zero-tolerance approach to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. It is committed to ensuring the safety, wellbeing, and dignity of all individuals participating in, or impacted by, Aspire Grant activities, especially children and vulnerable adults. All grant recipients will comply with [DFAT's Child Protection Policy](#), DFAT's Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment ([PSEAH](#)) Policy and DFAT's [Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy](#) ensuring that safeguarding risks are actively identified and mitigated. Any allegations or reports of misconduct will be taken seriously and acted on.

All grant activities must also adhere to DFAT's [Fraud and Corruption Control Framework](#) which maintains zero tolerance for inaction on fraud and corruption and requires proactive reporting and transparency from partners at all levels.

14.1 Minimum Standards

At the beginning of the implementation period, all Aspire Grant recipients must attend a mandatory training and briefing session facilitated by the Australia Awards Fiji team prior to commencing activities.

When implementing grant activities, all Aspire Grant recipients and implementing partners must:

- Commit to zero tolerance for acts of child exploitation, abuse and harm in all aspects of its work including zero tolerance for sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH). This commitment

is underpinned by a Do No Harm approach and guided by a victim-survivor-centred response to SEAH prevention and management.

- Promote inclusion and equity and recognise diversity.
- Prioritise the best interests of the child in all activities that involve or may affect children.
- Report any allegations or incidents related to Child Protection or SEAH. All recipients and implementing partners are mandatory reporters.
- Ensure that all photos, stories and media involving children are taken with informed guardian consent, uphold dignity, and do not expose children to harm (see Annex 5 for consent forms).
- Screen any staff or volunteers working directly with children, including ensuring they have no prior convictions relating to child harm.
- Not engage in any fraudulent or corrupt practice on the activity.
- Take appropriate measures to avoid or minimise negative impacts of the activity on the environment.

14.2 Risk Assessment

If a project involves direct work with children and vulnerable or at-risk adults, such as in schools, community outreach, health, or disability programs, and depending on the level of risk applicants must include a basic risk assessment as part of their proposal. This should outline:

- Potential safeguarding risks and ratings.
- Risk mitigation strategies.
- Confirmation of child-safe practices, including:
 - Staff or volunteer briefings.
 - Codes of conduct.
 - Appropriate supervision measures.

The proposal must include letters of support from two referees for the Grantee (or Lead in the case of a group application). These letters should address the Grantee's experience and capacity to achieve the objectives of the proposed activity.

14.3 Incidents and Breaches

Any actual or suspected incident, harm, or breach of safeguarding, child protection, fraud or environmental standards must be reported immediately to the Australia Awards Fiji Program Manager or FPSP Safeguarding Focal Point. DFAT takes all safeguarding concerns seriously. Grantees may be required to:

- Suspend project activities pending review.
- Cooperate fully with investigations.
- Implement remedial action plans or cease project operations where necessary.

Incidents or concerns may also be reported anonymously by any person to the Abt Global [Anonymous Helpline](#).

Annexes

Annex 1: Aspire Grant Proposal Form Template

Reporting is a condition of grant compliance and future eligibility.

Your proposal will include the following sections:

Applicant Details		
1.	Full Name/s	
2.	Gender	Male / Female / Prefer not to say
3.	Location (Town/City)	
4.	Phone number	
5.	Email address	
6.	Australia Awards Scholarship Scheme	Australia Awards Scholarship (AAS) Australia Awards Pacific Scholarship (AAPS)
7.	Australia Awards Institution	
8.	Australia Awards Qualification.	
9.	Australia Awards completion year	
Employment Details		
1.	Employer	
2.	Position and Title	
Project Summary		
1.	Grant Category (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Aspire Action Grant (FJD 5K) <input type="checkbox"/> Aspire Impact Grant (FJD 10K)
2.	Title of project	

3.	Duration	
4.	Total Funding Requested	
Project Description		
5.	Background and Rationale: <i>Describe the issue your project seeks to address (250 words).</i>	
6.	Project Objectives (3) <i>What are you hoping to achieve/ change as a result of your activities?</i>	1.
		2.
		3.
7.	Proposed Activities.	
8.	Target Beneficiaries. <i>Who will take part in your activities?</i>	
9.	Stakeholders involved. <i>Who will you work with/coordinate with to implement your activities?</i>	
10.	Relevance to Priority Sectors <i>Select priority sectors from drop down menu.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Health <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Governance and Public Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> Environment <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure
	Response <i>How does your proposed project align with the selected priority sector/s. (up to 250 words)</i>	
11.	Thematic Relevance Does the project address climate resilience and disaster risk reduction (DRR).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

	If yes state how in 250 words or less.	
12.	<p>Thematic Relevance</p> <p>Tick all applicable GEDSI entry points below that your project will address.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion including rural and remote locations. <input type="checkbox"/> Disability inclusion. <input type="checkbox"/> Women's empowerment. <input type="checkbox"/> Inclusion of individuals and communities with diverse SOGIESC. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)
	<p>Response (up to 250 words)</p> <p>Describe how your project promotes inclusion and addresses barriers faced by the selected group(s).</p>	
13.	Sustainability and Scalability (value for money)	
14.	Alignment with Alumni's Qualifications and Leadership Potential.	

Project Management
15. Budget: To be uploaded to Excel template Tab 1 with itemised costs.

16. Monitoring and evaluation: List your key objectives and how you will measure progress towards each.				
	Objective (What is the development impact?)	Indicator (What will you measure?)	Target (What result do you expect?)	Measure (How will you measure results?)
1.	<i>e.g. Raise awareness on GBV reporting pathways</i>	<i>No. of people with improved knowledge of GBV reporting pathways</i>	<i>100 people reporting improved knowledge of GBV reporting pathways</i>	<i>Pre and post intervention Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey.</i>
2.				
3.				

17. Timeline / Key Milestones:

Complete the table below to outline your main activities, expected outcomes, and timing.

Activity / Task		Expected Outcome	Timeframe (e.g. Month 1–3)	Responsible Person / Partner
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

18. Risks and Mitigation Strategies

Identify any major risks to successful implementation and your proposed strategies to manage them.

Potential Risk		Impact	Mitigation Strategy	Rating <i>(high, medium, low)</i>
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

19. Declaration – I confirm the above information is true and correct.

Date	
Signature	

Annex 2: Conflict of Interest Declaration Form

Aspire Grants Conflict of Interest Declaration Form for Grantees: As a recipient (or applicant) of a grant under the Australia Awards Fiji Small Grants Program, it is essential to uphold the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and accountability. This declaration ensures that any real, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest are disclosed and appropriately managed.

Instructions: This form must be completed, signed, and submitted with your application and prior to grant agreement finalisation. Failure to disclose a conflict of interest may result in the withdrawal of grant funding or other remedial actions.

Section 1: Grantee Information

- Full Name: _____
- Project Title: _____
- Organisation (if applicable): _____
- Partner organisation (if applicable): _____

Section 2: Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Please respond to the following:

1. Do you, your immediate family, or any associated individual/organisation have any personal, professional, or financial interests that could improperly influence, or be seen to influence, your responsibilities in managing the grant funds or project?
 Yes No
2. Have you or your organisation been involved in the assessment, selection, or decision-making process of this grant application?
 Yes No
3. Are there any current or past relationships (e.g. employment, partnerships, board membership, or consultancy) with DFAT, Abt Associates, or other stakeholders involved in the program that could present a conflict of interest?
 Yes No
4. If you answered “Yes” to any of the above, please provide details below:

Section 3: Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that the information provided above is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I undertake to promptly notify the Australia Awards Fiji team if any conflict of interest arises during the implementation of the grant.

- Signature: _____
- Name: _____
- Date: _____

Annex 3: Progress and Completion Reporting Templates

Annex 3.1: Progress Report

Progress Report Template (for mid-point review of Impact Grants):		
Aspire Grantee Details		
1.	Full Name	
2.	Grant reference number	
Project Summary		
3.	Project Title	
4.	Start Date	
5.	End Date	
6.	Total Grant Amount	
Project Update (<i>refer to proposal submitted and annexed in grant agreement to ensure the information below captures what was outlined in your proposal</i>)		
7.	Summary of activities undertaken (max 250 words)	
8.	Outputs achieved	
9.	Challenges and mitigations (max 250 words)	
10.	Financial summary	Upload Excel Template.
11.	Photos and supporting documentation	
12.	Story of change	

Annex 3.2: Grant Completion Report

Completion Report Template Summary of activities and outcomes:		
Aspire Grantee Details		
1.	Full Name	
2.	Grant reference number	
Project Summary		
3.	Project Title	
4.	Duration	
5.	Total Funding Awarded	
Project Update		
6.	Summary of activities undertaken (max 250 words)	
7.	Impact and reflections	
8.	Challenges and mitigations (max 250 words)	
9.	Lessons learned	
10.	Financial acquittal	Upload Excel Template
11.	Photos and supporting documentation	
12.	Story of change	

Annex 4: Financial Acquittal Template

Please see accompanying Excel Worksheet for templates to provide:

1. Itemised budget vs actual expenditure.
2. Supporting receipts and invoices.
3. Explanation of variance.
4. A declaration signed by applicant and partner organisation (if applicable).

Annex 5: Photography, Video, Audio, and Story Consent Form



The Australian Government's
Fiji Program Support Platform

I am giving consent for:

Myself

My child/ward

I, _____ [print name], of

_____ [address], give permission to the **Fiji Program Support Platform (FPSP)** to photograph, film, or record me and/or my child/ward, including using our quotes or opinions. I understand this content may be used in any media (print, digital, social) for promotional or other purposes in Fiji and overseas. I acknowledge FPSP is not responsible for how others may use this material once published. I grant full rights for FPSP to use the material without payment or further consent.

Signature of person/parent/guardian:	
Name of child:	
Age of child:	
Mobile contact:	
Date:	

Na fomu ni veivakadonui oqo e vakadeitaka ni o sa solia na nomu lewa me rawa ni tauri kina na nomu iyaloalo, itaba, se me katonu taki na domomu, kei na nomu vakasala, se rai, se na nei luvemu, se na gone o qarava tiko, me vakayagataka na Fiji Program Support Platform (FPSP) e Viti kei na veiyasai vuravura. E vakaraitaka talega ni o kila ni na rawa ni raica se vakayagataka tale eso na tamata na itukutuku oqo ni sa tabaki oti, ka sega ni lewa na FPSP na kena vakayagataki mai muri. E solia na fomu oqo na dodonu taucoko vei FPSP me ra vakayagataka na veika sa volai tiko i cake, ka na sega ni saumi vei iko se na gadrevi tale e dua na nomu veivakadonui ena gauna mai muri.

Yah sahmati form pushti karta hai ki aapne apne chitr, video ya awaaz, saath hi aapke bachche ya aapki dekhbhal mein bachche ke vicharon ko Fiji Program Support Platform (FPSP) dwara Fiji aur videshon mein istemaal kiye jaane ki anumati di hai. Aap yah bhi samajhte hain ki ek baar aapke chitr, video, awaaz ya kahani prakashit hone ke baad anya log ise dekh ya upyog kar sakte hain, aur FPSP iske aage ke upyog par niyantran nahin rakh payega. Yah form FPSP ko aapke chitr, video ya awaaz ke upyog ka poora adhikaar deta hai, jiske liye aapko paisa nahin diya jaayega aur na hi bhavishya mein aapki sahmati ki avashyakta hogi.