



Australian Government

**Community
Grants Hub**
Improving your grant experience



Destination Australia Program 2022 Round 3

Feedback for applicants

Overview

The objective of the Destination Australia (DA) grant opportunity is to attract and support domestic and international students to study in regional Australia, to grow and develop regional Australian tertiary education providers and to offer students a high quality learning experience.

The program will seek to:

- support higher education and Vocational Education and Training (VET) providers in regional Australia to provide scholarships to domestic and international students to study and live in regional Australia
- facilitate domestic and international students completing an Australian qualification at a higher education or VET provider in regional Australia.

The intended outcomes of the grant opportunity are:

- the sustainability and growth of tertiary education providers and communities in regional Australia
- scholarship students consider and decide to live and work in regional Australia post-study
- regions share in the social, cultural, and economic benefits of our international education sector.

The grant opportunity application period opened on 28 April 2021 and closed at 9:00 PM AEST on 15 June 2021.

The grant opportunity received 58 applications and 55 of them were eligible for assessment. Following the Delegate's decision, 28 applications were selected for funding, to a value of \$25.278 million (GST exclusive) over 4 years.

There was a strong interest in the program and successful applications were of a high standard and provided strong justifications in demonstrating the providers' capacity to meet the objectives of the program and administer the scholarships. Applications were assessed according to the procedures detailed in the Grant Opportunity Guidelines (the guidelines) and outlined in the selection process below.

This feedback is provided to assist grant applicants to understand what generally comprised a strong application and the content of quality responses to the assessment criteria for this grant opportunity.

Selection process

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment (the department) used a targeted competitive type selection process to select 28 providers to deliver the Destination Australia Program 2022 grant.

Applications were screened for eligibility and compliance against the requirements outlined in the guidelines. All eligible and compliant applications were assessed and moderated by the Community Grants Hub against the assessment criteria.

A Selection Advisory Panel (the panel) from the department, independent of the Community Grants Hub and with a mix of relevant policy, program and delivery expertise, made funding recommendations to the department's Delegate. The panel was assisted by an independent probity adviser. The recommendations were based on the strength of responses to the assessment criteria compared to other applications and the applicant's ability to meet the grant requirements outlined in the guidelines.

The panel considered all applications and their assessment results, and made recommendations on applications based on the following factors:

- how the application delivers on the strategic priorities of the program
- potential benefits the scholarships can bring to the region
- support the provider will offer to scholarship students
- the efficiency and effectiveness of the provider in administering and promoting the Destination Australia scholarships.

Preferred applicants were identified based on the strength of their responses to the selection criteria and their demonstrated ability to meet the grant requirements outlined in the guidelines.

General feedback

Applicants could have generally strengthened their applications by:

- ensuring they thoroughly read and understood the guidelines published on the department's website
- ensuring all aspects of the criteria were clearly addressed, including the specific requirements
- demonstrating their consideration of the grant program's objectives
- only including relevant and unambiguous information
- supporting claims with relevant, reliable and current evidence and examples
- clearly linking their claims back to the policy objectives and the project description/services to be delivered.



Criterion 1 – Strategic priorities

Describe how delivering Destination Australia scholarships will contribute to achieving your provider’s strategic priorities.

When addressing the criterion, strong applications described:

- how scholarship students completing courses at their regional campus will contribute to achieving the provider’s strategic priorities, with a focus on detail and value-add beyond their institution’s brand awareness
- the process to be used to select students who meet the criteria in section 5.1.1 to receive scholarships and requirements under section 5.3
- any additional characteristics required of scholarship students (for example, domestic students, international students, demonstrated financial need, high levels of academic achievement) or the course they study (for example, a particular Australian Standard Classification of Education field of education) or to help address skills shortages in their region or state/territory.

Strength	Feedback
<p>Strong applications clearly demonstrated how scholarship students completing their courses at regional campuses would contribute to achieving the provider’s strategic priorities, with a focus on detail and value-add beyond the institution’s brand awareness.</p> <p>Strong applications clearly outlined the processes used to select students who meet the selection criteria in sections 5.1.1 and 5.3 of the guidelines to receive scholarships.</p> <p>Strong applications clearly outlined the additional characteristics required of scholarship students (for example, domestic students, international students, demonstrated financial need, high levels of academic achievement) or the course they study (for example, a particular Australian Standard Classification of Education field of education), or to help address skills shortages in the region or state/territory.</p>	<p>Strong responses clearly described:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• how the award of a Destination Australia grant will enable the institution to grow student numbers• the type of courses the institution proposed to offer scholarships in, these details included field of study and qualification level upon graduation• relevant aspects of the institutions strategic plan or similar, and clearly linked the proposed scholarships to this plan• how the grant would enable students in regional areas to study locally rather than moving to city locations• how the provision of a scholarship makes moving to regional areas a more attractive proposition to domestic and international students.



Criterion 2

Describe how receiving Destination Australia scholarship funding will:

- facilitate growth in the number of enrolled students at your regional campus
- benefit your regional community.

When addressing the criterion, strong applications described:

- plans to leverage the award of Destination Australia scholarships to work towards increased enrolments at their regional campus
- links with the regional community and plans to leverage these to maximise the benefits of Destination Australia scholarships beyond their campus
- the metrics to be used to substantiate the claims above.

Strength	Feedback
<p>Strong applications clearly demonstrated how their plans to leverage the award of Destination Australia scholarships would work towards increased enrolments at regional campuses.</p> <p>Strong applications clearly demonstrated their links with regional community and plans to leverage links to maximise the benefits of Destination Australia scholarships beyond the campus.</p> <p>Strong applications provided relevant and clear metrics to substantiate their claims</p>	<p>Strong responses clearly described:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• how the Destination Australia grant will enable growth in the institution as a result of new scholarships (beyond increases in student numbers) either by building on existing delivery of quality education, research and training, or developing new education, research and training capacity• how the scholarships would attract students to specific fields of study, resulting in better industry and research partnerships to enhance the quality of education and delivery experience to the participants• the linkages the institution has with its regional community (for example, through local industry and community organisations) and how these would be leveraged to maximise the benefits of the Destination Australia Program to the community more broadly• the nature and scope of existing linkages with the community and industry• examples of how the existing community and industry linkages will be leveraged to generate benefits such as employment opportunities for local communities or tailoring of education to meet local industry needs• how linkages with local industry provides benefits to scholarship participants.



Criterion 3

Describe how you will support Destination Australia scholarship students to:

- **achieve academic success and complete their course**
- **become part of your regional community.**

When addressing the criterion, strong applications described:

- the support services they will make available to scholarship students, including any specifically designed for those students, and how they will support scholarship students to achieve academic success and course completion
- how they will encourage scholarship students to make use of support services
- how they facilitate engagement between scholarship students and their regional community
- the metrics used to substantiate their claims above.

Strength	Feedback
<p>Strong applications clearly outlined the support services offered to scholarship students to achieve academic success and ensure course completion.</p> <p>Strong applications clearly described how they will encourage scholarship students to make use of support services.</p> <p>Strong applications clearly demonstrated how they facilitate engagement between scholarship students and regional community.</p> <p>Strong applications included relevant metrics to substantiate their claims.</p>	<p>Strong responses clearly described:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• how the institution will ensure scholarship students will have access to adequate support services throughout the duration of their scholarship, including health and welfare services, career advice and accommodation support• quantifiable evidence of how the institution has provided support services to international and domestic students in the past• the results of internal and external surveys and comparative studies between institutions, which included current and previous provision of support services• other examples of the institution’s track record such as how it responded to student feedback by implementing improvements to services• clear access to the support services for example, a counsellor or accommodation officer as part of the welcoming team that are also available on an ongoing basis• how Destination Australia scholarship recipients would have access to support services over the life of the scholarship• the range of health of services available and the demonstration of how the applicant would ensure they continue to be accessible.



Criterion 4

Describe how you will administer scholarships and how you will promote the Destination Australia scholarship opportunity to prospective students.

When addressing the criterion, strong applications described:

- processes for effectively managing scholarships, including how they will ensure scholarship students continue to meet the eligibility requirements
- processes for ensuring that all reporting requirements in section 12.2 for this grant opportunity will be met in accordance with legislative requirements (such as privacy)
- how they will promote the Destination Australia scholarship opportunity to domestic students and to international students
- how their promotion will include the benefits of studying, living and working in regional Australia, with specific reference to your regional campus
- how they will measure the effectiveness of promotional activities.

Strength	Feedback
<p>Strong applications clearly demonstrated the processes for effectively managing scholarships, including how they will ensure scholarship students continue to meet the eligibility requirements.</p> <p>Strong applications clearly described the processes for ensuring all reporting requirements in section 12.2 of the guidelines will be met in accordance with legislative requirements (such as privacy).</p> <p>Strong applications clearly described how they will promote the Destination Australia scholarship opportunity to domestic students and to international students.</p> <p>Strong applications clearly described how their promotion will include the benefits of studying, living and working in regional Australia, with specific reference to regional campuses.</p> <p>Strong applications identified clearly how they will measure the effectiveness of promotional activities.</p>	<p>Strong responses clearly described:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• processes for how the institution will promote the scholarships in line with the funding agreement• the types and methods of activities the institution would undertake to promote the scholarships and where applicable, examples of how these activities have been effective in the past• the type of students the institution proposes to attract, and the planned strategies to attract domestic and international students• a proposed approach on how the institution plans to ensure students are maintaining their ongoing eligibility including, but not limited to their living circumstances• how students will be required to provide regular evidence of residing in the regional or remote area• the controls the institution has in place or would adopt to ensure the funds are appropriately used• relevant examples or details of how the institution will use the \$1,500 administration/promotions funding.