Australian Volunteers Program
Global Program Strategy
2018-2022
Australian volunteers make an extraordinary impact in communities overseas. The Australian Government’s Foreign Policy White Paper recognises the importance of Australian volunteers in creating links between communities and people in the region. Over the past 60 years, we have supported over 15,000 volunteers in almost 50 countries. Today, these volunteers continue to build deeper and stronger links with our partners and contribute to our commitment to implement an effective Australian aid program.

Australian volunteers directly contribute to DFAT’s vision to reduce global poverty, alleviate suffering and promote sustainable development. Our volunteers lend their expertise to local organisations and governments in our partner countries to promote social and economic development. These Australians use their skills to help build better businesses, civil society organisations, government departments, and education and health organisations in our partner countries.

Our volunteers work with partner organisations to improve equality and opportunity for people with disability, women and other marginalised groups. By donating their expertise, they are building more stable societies, creating economic opportunities and helping our partners to be less vulnerable to irregular migration, extremism and insecurity.

The effectiveness and impact of the Australian Volunteers Program will be measured. A dynamic monitoring, evaluation and learning framework will ensure it is effective, accountable and delivers results. The program will test innovative ways to volunteer through the Innovation Fund and partnering with the private sector. It will also expand the reach of the program to empower more Australians, including those from diverse backgrounds, to volunteer overseas.

This Global Program Strategy sets out the vision for the next chapter in the Australian Government’s Australian Volunteers Program. By supporting partner organisations to achieve their development objectives Australian volunteers can multiply the resources and impact of Australia’s aid program. The strategy also supports opportunities for Australians to improve themselves personally and professionally through volunteering. Finally, in this new chapter, the Australian Volunteers Program will promote the value of international volunteering both in Australia and overseas.

Frances Adamson
Secretary
We believe Australian volunteers make a significant contribution to international development. They bring unique experiences, networks and ideas to their volunteer assignments.
Introduction

For more than 60 years, the Australian Government has supported thousands of Australians to volunteer overseas as part of Australia’s aid program. The Australian Volunteers Program is the next chapter in this long and rich history.

The Australian Government values international volunteering as a valuable approach to capacity development and recognises volunteering as a powerful means to support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). International volunteering also promotes cultural understanding through connecting people and forming partnerships between communities and organisations.

The Australian Volunteers Program forms part of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade’s (DFAT) people-to-people program portfolio, connecting Australians to Australia’s aid program and the region.

Strategic focus for the program

This strategy sets out the strategic direction, policy context, guiding principles and priorities for the Australian Volunteers Program. It informs program plans, partnerships and volunteer assignments at the country level, which align with partner countries development objectives and Australia’s aid investment plans.

The strategy is framed by and contributes to Australia’s aid policy, the Foreign Policy White Paper and the SDGs. A comprehensive Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework and a range of program-level strategies support effective program implementation.
The Australian Volunteers Program matches a broad range of skilled Australians with organisations in developing countries to help these organisations to deliver on their own objectives.

Over the next five years, the Australian Volunteers Program aims to achieve the following outcomes:

» Partner organisations are supported by Australia to achieve their own development objectives
» Australian volunteers gain professionally and personally
» The public in Australia better appreciates the value of volunteering.

Program at a glance

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$190M</th>
<th>5000</th>
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<tr>
<td>A total budget of up to AUD$190M</td>
<td>Number of Australians volunteering over five years</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>97%</th>
<th>40%</th>
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<tr>
<td>Per cent of volunteers in the Indo-Pacific region</td>
<td>Per cent of assignments in the Pacific</td>
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<tr>
<th>26</th>
<th>&gt;700</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of countries participating</td>
<td>Partner organisations</td>
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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Australian volunteers and our partner organisations in Australia and the Indo-Pacific region contribute to achieving the SDGs
The sectors most commonly requested by partner organisations include:

- Health
- Education and training
- Community and social development
- Communications and media
- Business, marketing and tourism
- Disaster and emergency management
- Information technology

Sharing skills and knowledge

A wide range of professional skills are needed to contribute to sustainable development outcomes. Most partner organisations require volunteers with qualifications and demonstrated professional experience.

The sectors most commonly requested by partner organisations include:

- Agriculture, forestry and fisheries
- Law and justice
- Gender equality and child protection
- Public policy, economics and financial management
- Engineering
- Skilled trades
Guiding principles inform how we work

The Australian Volunteers Program is guided by a set of high-level principles. These principles underpin how the program works. They guide our collective efforts, inspire action and frame the results that the Australian Government seeks to achieve through the program. These principles ensure that we work in ways that:

Value volunteering

We value international volunteering as an important contribution to capacity development. We highly value volunteers who are committed to sustainably developing the capacity of partner organisations and to representing Australia with integrity.

The United Nations recognises volunteering as a powerful means to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).¹

Support locally-led capacity development

We know that local ownership is of paramount importance to effective development. Capacity development cannot be imposed but must be locally-driven.

Building on local, existing strengths and having realistic expectations are essential to developing capacity. Capacity development is a long-term, complex process that requires multiple inputs over time.

Build strong relationships and partnerships

We understand the role volunteers play in fostering people-to-people links and building diverse partnerships between individuals, communities and organisations, thereby strengthening Australia's relationships across the region and globally.

Establishing long-term, mutually respectful and valued partnerships with organisations is fundamental to our development approach.
Through professional, innovative, reflective and responsive management, the program is recognised as an international volunteer sector leader. We will continue to test and pilot new ideas, and bring successes to scale through the broader bilateral, thematic and global programs of the Australian Government.

Evolve best practice and embrace innovation

The program takes a strengths- and rights-based approach to ensure it is inclusive and accessible to a broad range of skilled Australians and partner organisations.

We promote diversity and inclusion to increase the participation of Indigenous Australians, youth, people living with disabilities, older Australians, rural and regional Australians, and Australians from different socio-economic, religious and cultural backgrounds and identities.

Enhance diversity and inclusion

The program is mutually accountable and promotes learning and reflection across and between all partners to ensure that the program delivers on its development and public diplomacy outcomes.

We are committed to operational and programmatic excellence, through continuous improvement in our ability to systematically document, analyse and measure results and our commitment to share evidence and learning with program stakeholders and the Australian public that promotes better practice.

Ensure accountability and value learning
Our approach

The Australian Volunteers Program matches skilled Australians with organisations in developing countries to help these organisations to deliver on their own objectives.

The program uses international volunteering as a people-centred approach to capacity development.

To achieve this vision, the program aims to deliver the following outcomes:

» **Partner organisations are supported by Australia to achieve their own development objectives.**

The Australian Volunteers Program partners with a range of organisations to help strengthen their capacity to deliver their development objectives.

The nature of partnership implies that the partner organisations and the Australian Volunteers Program have shared objectives and both parties benefit from, and contribute to, the relationship.
» **Australian volunteers gain professionally and personally.**

Well-supported and strategically placed volunteers are at the heart of a successful volunteering program. If the program supports a diverse range of volunteers who have the right skills, attitudes and attributes for the assignment, those volunteers will make a significant contribution to their partner organisation and have a positive experience.

While on assignment and afterwards, volunteers will promote greater cultural awareness and build strong connections between partner countries and Australia. This will result in the volunteers gaining both personally and professionally.

» **The public in Australia better appreciates the value of volunteering.**

The Australian Volunteers Program has a purposeful focus on promoting the value of volunteering.

If Australian organisations, partner organisations, volunteers (past and present) and DFAT promote the benefits of volunteering, then the public in Australia will better appreciate the value of volunteering and the contribution it makes to sustainable development.

By successfully achieving these outcomes, the Australian Volunteers Program will have contributed to the following broader development and public diplomacy goals:

» The Australian Government is achieving its development objectives.

» Australians are more globally literate and connected.

» Australian aid is perceived positively in Australia and internationally.
Since the 1960s, the Australian Government has supported more than 15,000 Australians to volunteer overseas, assisting hundreds of local organisations to progress their developmental goals.

The program is part of the Australian Government’s people-to-people program portfolio, connecting Australians to Australia’s aid program and the region.

Australia’s contribution to international volunteering

Australia’s commitment

The Australian Government’s 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper (the White Paper) sets out the government’s strategy for engaging with the world, and in particular the Indo-Pacific region, over the next decade. The Australian Volunteers Program supports the White Paper’s priorities by deepening and strengthening our relationship with the region and reinforcing our role as a major partner in the Indo-Pacific region.

In addition to supporting priorities in the White Paper, the Australian Volunteers Program will be implemented:

» in line with Australia’s aid policy: Promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability (2014)

» in ways that reflect Australia’s membership on the Human Rights Council

» in support of the SDGs

The White Paper articulates Australia’s strong commitment to the Pacific region and its people. In response to this commitment, the Australian Volunteers Program will increase its geographic footprint in the Pacific and Timor-Leste to support the critical development needs of our closest neighbours.
**Shared benefits**

We value the mutual benefits that can be gained through responsible international volunteering for development, including to individual volunteers, to Australia and to the partners we work with.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits to Australia</th>
<th>Benefits to volunteer</th>
<th>Benefits to our partners</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian volunteers help to deepen and strengthen Australia’s relationship with our neighbours in the Indo-Pacific region.</td>
<td>Australians are able to connect with Australia’s aid program and the Indo-Pacific region through volunteering.</td>
<td>The program supports partner organisations to achieve their own development objectives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteers bring a deep cultural understanding back to Australia to share with communities at home.</td>
<td>Australian volunteers gain a deep cultural understanding from living and working in a community overseas.</td>
<td>Long-term partnerships between organisations overseas and in Australia help to deliver sustainable development.</td>
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<tr>
<td>By supporting sustainable development, the program contributes to economic growth and stability in our region.</td>
<td>Australian volunteers develop lasting relationships and professional networks, and gain valuable career experience and skills through international volunteering.</td>
<td>The Australian Volunteers Program supports the SDGs and is aligned with partner country priorities.</td>
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The impact we can make

The Australian Volunteers Program enables the Australian Government to multiply the impact of its resources and places Australian aid at the forefront of global volunteering.

This strategy identifies three thematic impact areas that act as lenses, helping the program to demonstrate policy alignment with Australian Government priorities.

Our thematic impact areas are:

- **Inclusive economic growth**: The program will support inclusive economic growth to address inequalities through a range of channels to support good governance, boost productivity through education and training, women’s economic participation, youth engagement, and work with partner governments on strengthening legal/regulatory frameworks.

- **Human Rights**: The Australian Volunteers Program will make important contributions in supporting development objectives to promote and protect human rights, and support efforts to strengthen the international rules-based system.

- **Climate Change/Disaster Resilience/Food Security**: Acknowledging the rapidly changing and increasingly complex global humanitarian environment, the program will increase the number and focus of volunteer placements in climate change, disaster resilience and food security.

While the program is not limited to these three areas, they demonstrate how the program can multiply the impact of Australian aid.

Over five years, these thematic areas will influence activities across the program – from developing assignments and identifying partner organisations, to collecting data and sharing stories about program achievements.
The Australian Volunteers Program sees gender equality and women’s participation as central to inclusive economic growth in Timor-Leste.

Timor-Leste gained independence in 2002, and despite significant social and political developments, still faces barriers to achieving gender equality.

Achieving gender equality and providing greater opportunities for women to participate in society and business will ensure economic growth is inclusive and that the positive impacts are far-reaching.

In 2017, 14 Australian volunteers supported 10 organisations working to achieve more inclusive economic growth in Timor-Leste. Volunteers brought expertise in the fields of law, health, education, advocacy, employment and policy.

Australian volunteer Jude Finch worked as an Organisational Management Mentor with Fundasaun Alola, an organisation supporting women’s economic empowerment projects. Fundasaun Alola are led by the motto ‘Strong Women, Strong Nation’.

‘It was pleasing to have the opportunity to contribute to an organisation that was continually working collaboratively, internally and through combined efforts for change with other agencies, to deliver stronger community and national outcomes,’ Jude says, reflecting on her 20-month assignment.

Australian volunteer assignments in Timor-Leste have successfully improved communication between gender-focused organisations. More frequent and transparent exchanges between organisations have allowed for a greater distribution of knowledge, and encouraged resource and funding sharing in a collaborative, mutually beneficial way.

For example, Australian volunteers connected two peak gender rights bodies - CODIVA (Coalition for Diversity and Action) and Rede Feto - representing marginalized groups such as transgender men and lesbian and bisexual women. This connection enabled them to access better social and economic support networks. Australian volunteers supported these partners to collaboratively secure funding to undertake research into the lived experiences of the LGBTQ community, contributing to a more inclusive and participatory Timor-Leste.

Case study: Contributing to gender equality and inclusive economic growth

Timor-Leste

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Partnerships are at the core of the Australian Volunteers Program, driving locally-led, human rights development in the Indo-Pacific region.

A key principle guiding the Australian Volunteers Program is to “build strong relationships and partnerships”. These partnerships are critical to improving human rights and achieving sustainable development.

In Solomon Islands, strong partnerships across a range of sectors are helping to improve human rights. These relationships encourage reciprocal personal and professional development, building on local strengths and existing knowledge to achieve outcomes.

Australian volunteer Jake Marusich worked as a Criminal Unit Support Lawyer with the Public Solicitor’s Office (PSO) in the capital city, Honiara.

Jake mentored colleagues, helping strengthen the rule of law and increase the society’s access to justice. Jake also travelled to provincial legal offices in Gizo and Kirakira to build stronger relationships with lawyers there.

His assignment built on the work of two Australian volunteers previously assigned to work with the PSO. In the capital city, determined to strengthen his connection with local people, Jake also ran free jiu-jitsu classes for community members.

‘The biggest skill I’ve picked up is relationship building and management. Whether that’s offering a sports class and strengthening bonds, or developing confidence in the office so that staff ask for support, this assignment has shown me that building relationships is a necessity. It’s important in every part of the world.’

Australian volunteer Rachel Bartley works as a Media and Organisational Strengthening Mentor at Vois Blong Mere Solomon (VBMS), an organisation improving human rights by empowering local women through information sharing.

Rachel is responsible for mentoring staff and assisting with digital storytelling. She says that strong relationships with colleagues have been essential to progress.

‘Strong communication and partnership is key. I was clear with my counterparts about being frank and honest with me and treating me as an equal. I constantly ask for feedback…I love working with people and seeing colleagues or staff become better than me. That’s the best marker of success and efficacy.’

Rachel’s closest colleague, Josephine Taekani, Secretary of the Board and Director at VBMS commented on the importance of partnerships in strengthening the human rights sector of Solomon Islands.

‘The value is not just for us as one organisation, but for our networks. It is great for knowledge sharing and broader education.’

Case study: Working in partnership to improve human rights

Solomon Islands

Josephine Taekani, Secretary of the Board and Director at Vois Blong Mere Solomon

14
The Australian Volunteers Program helps partners achieve objectives determined by them. We work with partners on the basis of mutual respect to ensure development is locally-led.
Australian volunteers work with local organisations in FSM across a range of sectors to mitigate and reduce environmental challenges. FSM is made up of 607 islands spanning 2,500 kilometres in the Pacific Ocean. The four states—Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei and Yap—face pressing environmental challenges including waste management, declining fish populations, rising sea levels and increased pressure on natural resources.

To improve FSM’s capacity to manage these environmental challenges, Australian volunteers support partners and projects across the fields of law, policy, education and disaster prevention and preparedness. Since 2013, two Australian environmental lawyers have volunteered in FSM to help strengthen the country’s environmental management legal framework.

Australian volunteer Loren Atkins joined the Yap Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2013 as an Environmental Lawyer. Working with Yap EPA staff, their Board, the State Government and other partners, over two-and-a-half years Loren supported the review, development and enactment of several environmental regulations. Yap EPA’s Executive Director, Christine Fillmed, acknowledged Loren’s contribution.

‘It was through this volunteer assignment that the agency realised its goal of aligning and strengthening full regulatory scope in its mandate of environmental protection of air, land, and water resources. Loren has been responsible for over 35 legal instruments to improve regulation of environmental issues.’

In 2016, Australian volunteer Karen Hanson joined the EPA as a Compliance Program Development Advisor. She built on the success of Loren’s assignment, writing permits and providing guidance on organisational enforcement options.

Australian volunteer Aimee Hall also supported sustainable management of FSM’s environment and resources. She worked as the Watershed and Fire Planning Officer for Kosrae Island Resource Management Authority (KIRMA), drafting a Watershed Management Plan, Community Wildfire Protection Plan and introducing drone technology to support environmental monitoring activity.

Aimee reflected on the personal and professional development gained on assignment.

‘The vast, invaluable knowledge KIRMA and the community have of their local ecosystems, processes and pressures far exceeds the knowledge that could be learned in textbooks.

‘The residents of Kosrae taught me how to live a more relaxed life and how to slow down and appreciate the present.’

Case study: Creating environmentally sustainable and resilient communities

Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)

Federated States of Micronesia

An aerial view of Yap, one of four islands states that make up the country.
The Australian Volunteers Program is a unique opportunity for Australians and Australian organisations to work with partner organisations overseas to support sustainable development and poverty reduction in our region.

This strategy is guided by Australia’s commitment to developing strong, collaborative and sustainable partnerships with organisations in the Indo-Pacific region to support them to achieve their own development objectives.

This approach is at the heart of Australia’s volunteering program and builds on decades of experience that shows that the most effective development is locally-led and locally-driven.

Partner organisations: the core of our program

The selection of partner organisations which will receive an Australian volunteer is based on a range of factors including an assessment of how the objectives of the organisation align with the partner country’s development priorities, DFAT’s aid investment plans, the SDGs, and this strategy.

Supporting potential partner organisations to successfully host an Australian volunteer is an important part of our commitment. This involves a range of due diligence checks, including workplace health and safety, and child protection.

Collaboratively developing Partnership Plans with partner organisations is central to our approach. These plans ensure a shared understanding of the objectives of a partner organisation and identify areas where the Australian Volunteers Program will be of most assistance.

The Partnership Plans remain living documents and provide a platform to deepen engagement with partner organisations over time.

Opportunities and partnerships

Kiribati Finance and Operations Manager volunteer Julie Lamb at the Kiribati School and Centre for Children with Special Needs
Why become an Australian volunteer?

A broad range of Australians can connect with Australia’s aid program and the Indo-Pacific region through the Australian Volunteers Program.

Australian volunteers have the opportunity to use their knowledge, skills, compassion and humanity to make a difference to people’s lives.

Australian volunteers help develop the skills and expertise within the partner organisation so that they are better equipped to achieve their goals.

At the same time, volunteers develop personal and professional connections for ongoing collaboration and knowledge sharing between Australia and our neighbours.

Australian volunteers form enduring friendships with people in Australia’s region and develop a deeper understanding of how to work across cultures.

For younger volunteers, gaining international experience can develop new competencies and professional networks. For older Australians, volunteering can also present an opportunity for change within a long established career or a new direction in retirement.

The Australian Volunteers Program supports volunteers with:

» Return airfares and relevant visas

» Comprehensive insurance, medical assessments and vaccinations

» Pre-departure briefings, in-country orientation and language training

» Living and accommodation allowances

» Debriefing and financial support on return to Australia

In-country support

Australian volunteers are supported for the duration of their assignment by an experienced in-country management team.

Volunteer allowances

The allowances enable volunteers to obtain safe accommodation and transport arrangements while maintaining a modest lifestyle in their partner community. Living and accommodation allowances are country-specific.

Dependent support

Partners and children are welcome to accompany the Australian volunteer for the duration of their assignment. On longer assignments, financial support is available for dependents who are Australian citizens or permanent residents.

Volunteer security

Volunteer safety and security is of utmost importance to the Australian Volunteers Program. Volunteers receive comprehensive security information as part of their preparation as well as access to 24-hour emergency support arrangements.

Code of Conduct

The Australian Volunteers Program Code of Conduct sets out the standards of individual behaviour expected of all volunteers and dependents while on assignment.
The Returned Australian Volunteer Network

The Returned Australian Volunteer Network (RAVN) is the alumni program of the Australian Volunteers Program. Returned volunteers from all Australian Government-funded overseas volunteering programs are encouraged to join RAVN. RAVN offers returned Australian volunteers opportunities for connection, enrichment, and advocacy.

Connection
RAVN provides meaningful connections with fellow returned volunteers. Connections are made through inclusive social and networking events, and digital communications.

Enrichment
We value, develop and draw upon the professional and volunteer experience and expertise of returned volunteers to enrich the Australian Volunteers Program and RAVN. This includes developing new programs to engage with returned volunteers such as mentoring and communities of practice.

Advocacy
Returned volunteers are powerful and credible advocates for skilled international volunteering. We develop their storytelling skills and provide opportunities to share their experiences through media and other engagement activities.
Australian organisations can play an important role

Organisations in Australia can also become partners of the Australian Volunteers Program. From government departments to for-purpose organisations, industry groups, the private sector and associations — we know that Australian-based organisations contribute to positive social change in our region. By becoming a partner of the Australian Volunteers Program, Australian organisations can strengthen their existing efforts to support developing communities overseas or create new partnerships.

Australian organisations can be involved in the program in a range of ways, including:

» Working with overseas partners to develop volunteer assignments which will support locally-led development objectives

» Supporting professional mentoring opportunities between their staff, volunteers and overseas partners

» Assisting with the recruitment and selection of volunteers, by promoting assignments to existing networks and referring candidates to the program

» Promoting the program and the value of volunteering to their networks.

The benefits to Australian organisations of partnering with the Australian Volunteers Program can be many, including:

» Contributing to sustainable development outcomes in the Indo-Pacific region

» Developing existing networks or developing new partnerships with organisations in developing communities overseas

» Strengthening their organisation’s global literacy and influence in the Indo-Pacific region

Samoa WASH volunteer Gemma Arthuson (L) assesses sanitation devices
Diversity and Inclusion

The Australian Volunteers Program embraces Australians of diverse abilities, ages, cultures, gender identities and perspectives. The program seeks to broaden and diversify the range of organisations involved and the range of Australians able to undertake a volunteer assignment. We promote diversity and inclusion to increase the participation of Indigenous Australians, young people, people living with disabilities, older Australians, regional and rural Australians, and Australians from different professions, religious and cultural backgrounds and identities.

We are introducing greater flexibility in the length of a volunteer assignment to enable a broader range of Australians to participate in the program.

Assignments can now range in length from 1 month to 24 months depending on the role and the needs of the partner organisation.

We are also broadening the different types of organisations we work with, knowing that a broader range of assignments will appeal to a more diverse range of skilled Australians.

The Australian Volunteers Program now seeks to partner with a wide range of organisations in Australia and overseas including:

» private sector, including small and medium enterprises
» international non-government organisations
» international agencies
» local non-government organisations and community based organisations
» academic, research and education institutions
» government agencies (national, provincial and local)
» peak bodies

Over the life of this strategy, our approach will focus on ensuring the program is inclusive and accessible, both to a diverse range of Australians and in its overall focus.
Innovation and learning underpin our approach to the Australian Volunteers Program.

We will invest in innovation, in particular through a dedicated Innovation Fund which will be used to identify, develop and pilot new ideas and solutions to increase the impact of the program.

The introduction of a program-wide Innovation Fund creates the opportunity for us to discover and test new ways to create greater impact, as well as to scale innovations that have worked, or are working now, with the aim of multiplying the impact of Australian aid.

We define good innovation as something that is new to a particular context and creates better social outcomes or better outcomes at scale.

The Innovation Fund will support a portfolio of innovation activities that balance impact against risk. It will identify opportunities, facilitate the development of promising ideas into solutions and ensure that effective innovations create impact across the program.

Over the life of this strategy, we will also invest in learning. The Australian Volunteers Program will make a significant investment in monitoring and evaluation activities with a strong focus on learning and accountability.

Evidence will be generated and reflected on by a range of program stakeholders, with learnings identified for the benefit of improving program performance.

We will share our knowledge with partners and the Australian public. We will also share this knowledge with other international volunteering organisations to contribute to the global dialogue on the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of international volunteering for development.
Performance management

Consistent with the Australian aid program’s performance framework *Making Performance Count*, we are strengthening how we measure and improve the effectiveness of the Australian Volunteers Program. The Australian Volunteers Program has a comprehensive *Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework* which sets out how we assess the performance of the program.

The framework identifies the evidence that will be generated to enable:

- accountability to DFAT, program partners and the public
- program performance and management decision-making
- learning, continuous improvement and contribution to the volunteer community
- communications to promote the value of volunteering in Australia

In addition to regular monitoring, we are investing in evaluative activities to provide a deeper understanding of specific aspects of the program. Our approach also emphasises learning and using reflection to make sense of program evidence and to test whether we are on the right path to achieving our desired outcomes.

The *Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework* will be annually reviewed and updated to reflect changes as the program adapts and learns more about how to best monitor and evaluate the performance of the Australian Volunteers Program.

In addition to the program’s internal evaluative work, DFAT will commission an independent external evaluation of the program in its fourth year of implementation.
Glossary

Aid Investment Plans
An Aid Investment Plan (AIP) is a public document that details Australia’s development-related objectives in a partner country or region, how they will be achieved and how success will be measured.

Australian organisations
Australian organisations (AOs) are organisations that partner with the Australian Volunteers Program. AOs engagement in the program ranges from promoting the program to their networks, supporting volunteers on assignment, to working with partner organisations to develop assignments.

Innovation Fund
The Australian Volunteers Program’s Innovation Fund aims to identify, develop and pilot new ideas and solutions with the potential to make a significant contribution to one or more of the key outcomes of the program.

Partner organisations
The Australian Volunteers Program works with partner organisations (POs) in the Indo-Pacific region. Volunteers undertake assignments with partner organisations to help develop their capacity to achieve their own development goals.

People-to-people program portfolio
Australia’s aid programs that invest in links between people and communities in the region. The Australia Awards and the New Colombo Plan are also people-to-people programs.

Public diplomacy
Australia’s public diplomacy is raising awareness overseas of our country – as a great destination for tourism and education, an advocate for global trade liberalisation, and a trusted citizen of the Indo-Pacific region.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
The SDGs are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. Australia has joined all other United Nations member states in committing to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

References and citations

Endnotes
2. Program-level strategies include those relating to volunteer recruitment; public diplomacy and communications; the Returned Australian Volunteer Network; diversity and inclusion; and engagement with organisations overseas and in Australia.
3. Capacity development is ‘a process of increasing and maintaining the capabilities of individuals, teams, organisations and communities in order to achieve a range of positive sustainable outcomes’. (OECD DAC, 2006; Rhodes 2014).

References

2017 Foreign Policy White Paper

Australian aid: promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability (2014)
Photography

Photos in this strategy celebrate the diversity of Australian volunteers, partner organisation colleagues, and local communities where the Australian Volunteers Program operates.

Credits

Front cover and inside front cover: Harjono Djioyobisono
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