FAQs for Applicants
MAP Alumni Regional Impact Grant Round 2026
Mekong-Australia Partnership | Support Unit

SN	Question	Answer
1	What is the purpose of the Mekong-Australia Partnership Alumni Regional Grants Fund?	The Mekong-Australia Partnership (MAP) Alumni Regional Impact Grants Round 2026 provide targeted funding to MAP alumni to design and implement collaborative, cross-country projects that address shared development challenges within the Mekong subregion. Grants will support practical, innovative solutions aligned with MAP thematic areas: • Water security • Climate resilience • Combatting transnational crime • Economic resilience and subregional integration • Gender equality, disability equity and social inclusion (GEDSI). Projects will be selected through a competitive selection process managed by the MAP Support Unit (MAP SU). By requiring cross-border collaboration and GEDSI mainstreaming, the grants strengthen alumni networks, foster inclusive leadership and reinforce Australia's role as a trusted and reliable partner in the Mekong subregion. Supported projects are expected to demonstrate sustainability and tangible contributions to regional development.
2	What is the maximum grant funding available and the maximum duration of the project?	Funding will be up to AUD 20,000 per project. Project implementation should be completed by 28 February 2027 or 9 months from the signing of the grant agreement. Please note that your project can have a higher total budget (for example AUD 25,000) as long as you can demonstrate that you can mobilise resources from other sources.
3	Who will support me with the activity implementation and fund disbursements?	MAP SU will provide you with targeted capacity building, financial/project management support, briefing on relevant DFAT policies and provide all grantees with ongoing project management support throughout the duration of the project.
4	Are there public diplomacy and communication activities planned?	Yes, MAP SU will work with successful applicants to determine fit-for-purpose external communications and public diplomacy activities. This may include, but not limited to, creating Stories of Change and social media campaigns. The focus of these activities is to highlight alumni leadership, collaboration to address shared development challenges in the Mekong subregion, and people-to-people and institutional links between Australia and countries in the Mekong subregion.

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5	Who is eligible to apply for the grants?	To qualify for an MAP Alumni Regional Impact Grant, proposed projects must meet all the following criteria: 1. *MAP alumni as lead*: the Project Leader must be a MAP alum who has completed an Australia Awards MAP scholarship, a MAP short course or masterclass and is from one of the five Mekong subregion countries (Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, or Myanmar). 2. *Regional collaboration:* The Project Leader must identify other team members from *at least one* other MAP country. These team members can be other MAP alumni, other Australian alumni or from other organisations. Collaboration with other MAP-funded projects is highly encouraged.
6	Where can grant activities be implemented?	The project must be implemented in at least one Mekong subregion country (Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, or Myanmar). Proposals including more than one Mekong country are highly encouraged. Activities can be also online, in this case, the participants have to come from at least one of the Mekong subregion countries.
7	I don't speak English very well and may need translation support in preparing grant application and grant implementation. Can I ask for support in this aspect?	Grant applications and subsequent documentation must be written in English. If a supporting document is not in English, a translation should be submitted together with the original. If you need support with translation, please contact **alumni@mapsupportunit.org** for further details.
8	Our team is not sure which type of activities can be eligible for grants. Please specify possible activities.	Activities that are possible for grant may include, but not limited to: 1. Training programs and other capacity building activities, e.g. training women entrepreneurs on proposal development. 2. Direct support to community-based organisations, e.g. working with Disability Partner Organisations on specific activities. 3. Advocacy campaigns, e.g. an activity to celebrate and promote action on World Environment Day in June or the International Day of People with Disabilities in December. 4. Collaborative or action research *(action research is a collaborative inquiry process that combines research and action to address specific problems in real-world settings.)* 5. Policy dialogue, development or implementation. All proposals must be eligible for Official Development Assistance or ODA funding.

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9	What are activities that are <u>not</u> eligible for funding?	The following types of proposals are <u>not</u> eligible for funding: 1. Proposals which will spend more than 50 per cent of the funds for stipends/ compensation/salaries for individuals or organisations supporting the implementation (not the team members). 2. Proposals which are entirely or primarily for the purchase of equipment. 3. Proposals that subsidise commercial activities of an individual or a company.
10	What are some examples of an "Action Research"?	**Example 1: Inclusive Economic Resilience in the Mekong** The project will test practical approaches that promote safer, more equitable, and more inclusive economic participation. These may include adjusting program design, strengthening local leadership roles, improving access to information, addressing gender norms, or tailoring livelihood models to different needs and capacities. Through cycles of testing, reflection, and adaptation, the action learning aims to identify what works in different country contexts and why. The overall goal is to develop simple, scalable, and evidence-based strategies that partners across the Mekong can use to ensure economic resilience initiatives are genuinely inclusive. **Example 2: Enhancing Inclusive Participation in Community Climate Resilience Planning** Action research looking into how to help more people take part in community climate planning in the Mekong subregion. It will work with local groups - like women, young people, and minority communities - to understand what stops them from joining planning activities. The project will test ideas, learns from what happens, and makes improvements in planning processes. The goal is to find simple, practical ways to make climate planning more fair, inclusive, and useful for everyone. These examples illustrate how action research can be effectively used to identify problems, implement solutions, and evaluate outcomes in real-world educational contexts, ultimately leading to meaningful improvements.
11	How are the alumni grant applications selected?	There are independent assessors assessing the applications on the 6 criteria listed below: 1. **Regional collaboration** – the extent to which the proposal encourages multi-country or regional cooperation, for example through collaboration with alumni and organisations from different MAP countries or other MAP projects. 2. **MAP alignment** – the extent to which the activity is aligned with MAP thematic areas. 3. **Development impact and innovation** – level of outputs and outcomes resulting from the proposal against the funding requested; using new ideas to address development issues; delivering broad-based results

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		(i.e. not only individual benefits for a small group of alumni) and ongoing benefits beyond project completion. 4. **Clarity and feasibility** - clear logical flow; well-defined roles among team members and partners; practical timeline/workplan; realistic budget. 5. **GEDSI promotion** - GEDSI promotion is required across all MAP thematic areas with GEDSI considerations required in grants implementation. This can include the engagement and leadership of diverse people, including people with disability, women, ethnic minority groups, those living in remote and rural areas. 6. **Adhere to all relevant DFAT policies including**: • Child Protection Policy (https://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/child-protection-policy) • Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy (dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/protection-sexual-exploitation-abuse-harassment-policy.pdf) • Environmental and Social Safeguards Policy (https://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/environmental-social-safeguard-policy) Shortlisted applications **may be** required to present their proposals to a panel. The final decisions will be made by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Mekong-Australia Partnership team.
12	Can you elaborate more on the eligibility criteria '*Project must consider issues of Gender Equality, Disability and Social inclusion (GEDSI) of marginalised groups*'	'Gender Equality, Disability Equity, and Social Inclusion' or GEDSI refers to a set of principles and practices aimed at ensuring fair treatment, full participation, and equitable access to opportunities and services for all individuals, regardless of gender, disability status, or social background. GEDSI is essential for effective development outcomes and is often used in analysis to inform development and humanitarian investments. For more information, please refer to: Australia's International Gender Equality Strategy, and Australia's International Disability Equity and Rights Strategy.
13	What may be example of Conflicts of Interest (COI)?	Here are some examples of conflict of interest: 1. A team leader/member is insisting to buy supplies/materials for project activities from their own business, without seeking quotations for other suppliers. 2. A team member hiring their family members/relatives to deliver project activities, without going through a fit-for-purpose selection process. 3. The project team deciding to only include their relatives and friends as project recipients.

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14	If there are potential Conflict of Interests, what should the grants applicants do?	The Project Leader declares the Conflict of Interests in the Grant Application Form, even when they are just potential. If the application is successful, MAP SU will work with the Project Team to address the COI.
15	Will grantees need to sign a Grant Agreement?	The Project Leader, who must be a MAP alum, will sign a grant agreement with MAP SU/Tetra Tech. The Grant Agreement will specify the conditions that must be followed by the Team in implementing the project, with the Project Leader having full accountability for the project.
16	What are risks that may involve for grants implementation?	Risks are events or factors that can prevent or affect your project's success. For example, if your project is about training women entrepreneurs and no one agreed to participate, then you will not be able to implement your project. In this case, non-participation of target participants is your risk factor/event. MAP SU will assist the grantees identify and manage risk factors. This will be covered in the training prior to the signing of the grant agreement.
17	What branding will the grants project use?	The MAP Alumni Regional Impact Grants will use the MAP branding. MAP SU will assist the successful applicants to comply with the guidelines. Branding and communications will be covered during the training for successful applicants/grantees.
18	What are "ODA eligible" activities?"	Official Development Assistance (ODA) refers to flows of official financing for the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries. Activities that are eligible for ODA funding must be directly related to the development challenges of developing countries.