

## **Australia-India Council (AIC) Strategic Plan 2015 - 2019**

The AIC is a non-statutory body located within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). It has a part-time external Board which makes recommendations to DFAT on projects to be funded in accordance with Annual Business Plans and which provides DFAT with advice on innovative ways to strengthen Australia-India relations.

The AIC provides project funds to qualified Australian organisations (educational, cultural and research institutions, professional and business groups and non-government bodies) through competitive grant rounds.

### Mission

The AIC's mission is to advance Australia's foreign and trade policy interests by building awareness and understanding between the peoples and institutions of Australia and India (Order Constituting the Australia-India Council, 6 May 2010).

### Objectives

Our objectives are to:

- raise awareness of Australia in India, and of India in Australia in a way that encourages further growth in relations between the two countries, including in the trade and investment relationship
- promote exchange and collaboration between Australian and Indian organisations in fields of relevance to the bilateral strategic partnership
- deliver high quality programs that demonstrate Australia's economic credentials and technical excellence to influential audiences in India
- seek community involvement in, and private sector support for, the Council's diplomacy efforts including by encouraging corporate investment in collaborations that advance Australia India relations
- publicise the Council's activities as a means of encouraging broad support for the Council's role and the bilateral relationship.

## Priority Areas

To achieve our objectives, the AIC will initiate and fund projects under the following five priority categories. Preference will be given to activities that foster ground-breaking and catalytic institutional collaborations:

### **1) Public Policy and Economics**

- the fostering of public policy exchange between Australia and India, including the sharing of experience in public sector governance and economic management. During the period of this strategic plan, we will prioritise partnerships and dialogue opportunities in: a) public sector reform, b) infrastructure policy and financing, and c) foreign and defence policy

### **2) Science**

Focusing on:

#### *a) Agriculture and Food Safety*

- collaborations in agricultural productivity (including water-efficient food growing) and safety in food production, storage and transport

#### *b) Resources and Energy*

- partnerships in low emission coal technologies and mining best practice

#### *c) Waste Management*

- activity relevant to the efficient recycling and disposal of waste

### **3) Education**

With emphasis on:

#### *a) New Colombo Plan*

- university and business linkages that complement the Australian Government's implementation of the New Colombo Plan in India including support for postgraduate student and postdoctoral academic exchanges in social science fields of relevance to the bilateral relationship

## b) *Skills Training*

- innovative work to develop learning and assessment materials relevant to India's vocational training needs and occupational standards

## **4) Sport**

- focusing on sports education including curriculum development in the sports sciences and sports leisure occupations, accreditation processes for sports training, teaching facility development and other academic exchanges

- and support for sports events linked to the promotion of tourism to Australia

## **5) Arts and Culture**

- activities that showcase Australian cultural products at India's largest festivals (for example the Jaipur Literature Festival and Kochi Muziris Biennale); support for Australian performance tours with wide public appeal in India and contributions to the hosting of major festivals of Indian art and culture in Australia.

## Our Approach

We will adopt the following approaches to our work:

- encourage increased corporate philanthropy for cultural diplomacy events and industry investments in science and education initiatives
- better harness the leadership of the Indian community in Australia and alumni groups in strengthening people-to-people and business links
- give greater emphasis to business leader exchanges through our established speakers program
- establish a new Australia India Media Program including the two-way visits of Australia's and India's most senior and influential journalists
- support bilateral policy dialogues hosted by the most highly regarded think tanks in Australia and India

- re-introduce a competitive post-doctoral Australia Studies Fellowships Program
- reduce the number, and increase the size and impact, of our project grants; and
- strengthen our on-line and social media presence.

### Performance

We will measure our performance through the key performance indicators included in all successful AIC grant applications and in the Council's Annual Business Plans. We will assess the level of our success through Annual Performance Reviews, making programming adjustments, as required, in our forward planning.

The outcomes of our programs and events will be published regularly on the AIC's website, through social media and will be included in DFAT's Annual Reports.