



**Australian Government**



Council for Australian-Arab Relations

مجلس العلاقات الأسترالية العربية

# STRATEGIC PLAN

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Bringing People Together

# EXECUTIVE BRIEF

In 2011-12, CAAR commissioned a review of its role to ensure it was relevant in the prevailing landscape of Australian- Arab engagement. The CAAR Strategic Plan is aimed at all Arab League countries from which countries and sectors will be chosen for particular focus from time to time to enable CAAR to achieve its stated Mission and Objectives.

CAAR is strategically placed to **CREATE** the conditions for productive partnerships and trade relationships and to **PROMOTE** cultural understanding and awareness for mutual value.

## **CAAR's Initial Sector Priorities are:**

1. Health Care
2. Food Security
3. Education
4. Infrastructure and ETM's
5. Resources and Energy

CAAR will achieve its strategic goals by allocating its resources to three key areas of activity:

1. **STIMULATE** opportunities to strengthen connections between government, business and community leaders in Australia and Arab countries through:
  - Flagship programs focused on priority sectors;
  - Originating flagship programs to promote Tertiary Education links;
  - Leveraging industry groups; and
  - Funding investigations that will allow development of targeted programs.
2. **EXECUTE** programs to increase mutual understanding and build bridges in Australia and the Arab world by:
  - Proactively allocating grant funding to programs that address opportunities in priority countries and sectors; and
  - Supporting activities that meet CAAR's strategic objectives.
3. **COMMUNICATE CAAR's core objectives**
  - Promoting opportunities for Australian engagement with the Arab world; and
  - Developing and promoting the CAAR brand.

# STRATEGIC DIRECTION

**CREATE** the conditions for productive partnerships and trade relationships.

**PROMOTE** cultural understanding and awareness for mutual value.

**ACHIEVE** this strategic direction by activities in three **key modalities**:

1. **STIMULATE** activities that strengthen the connections between government, business and community leaders in Australia and Arab countries. CAAR will direct 20% of its resources to stimulating opportunities for enhanced connections between Australia and Arab nations.
2. **EXECUTE** by directing 60% of its resources to supporting and funding programs that increase mutual understanding and build bridges between Australia and the Arab world.
3. **COMMUNICATE** by directing 20% of its resources to promoting CAAR'S core objectives.

## Sector Focus Areas 2012-2015

The most effective way to identify where CAAR can affect the greatest impact is through relationships developed as part of CAAR's three key modalities: stimulate, execute and communicate.

Initial programs will foster further opportunities and relationships leading to new programs and initiatives.

Sector focus areas are based on evidence of:

- A clear need in the Arab world
- A perception of Australian comparative advantage

<b>PRIORITY SECTOR</b> Education	Opportunity to enhance international students, sell curricula - especially in health education, but also in resources and energy.
Food security	Trade links are established. Good opportunity to work with Australian-Arab trade groups
Infrastructure and ETMs	Australian infrastructure operating widely in Arab world.
Resources and Energy	Australia has established regulatory systems and successful government initiatives to stimulate exploration for resources. Australia has well regarded educational facilities for resource professionals.
Health care	Strong Australian reputation, willing partners and supportive educational frameworks

# STIMULATE

There are significant opportunities for CAAR to stimulate flagship programs in health and education, and trade links in food-security, resources and energy, and infrastructure

CAAR will identify opportunities for connections between government, business and community leaders in Australia and Arab countries.

## DEVELOP FLAGSHIP PROGRAMS

The following example demonstrates how linked sector programs could involve people and organisations with a track record:

### Flagship Health Sector partnership between an Australian and Saudi hospital

This health sector partnership addresses Saudi need and offers a high profile vehicle to promote Australian-Saudi relations. This will link to educational sector involvement in health programs and further stimulate trade links.

CAAR will facilitate a flagship program between a leading Australian hospital and a leading Saudi hospital to improve the health of Saudi Arabians:

- The partnership will be endorsed by Australian and Saudi leaders
- There will be a public announcement or launch
- Goals and milestones will be celebrated as they occur
- Opportunities for (proactive) relationship building alongside the 'core' health-oriented program will be maximised.

### Tertiary Education program involving Australian Universities and Saudi Alumni

CAAR will encourage and assist the education sector to support the flagship health sector program and to enhance trade opportunities:

- Commensurate health-education programs will be developed for Saudi families and education institutions in support of the flagship health agenda (eg. early childhood development, trauma prevention, cancer awareness)
- Saudi alumni from Australia will be organised to support and publicise the value of the programs.
- In conjunction with Austrade, CAAR will support Australian tertiary institutions promote their degrees to Saudi international students, focusing on vocational sectors in support of trade initiatives (eg. health, food security/agribusiness, infrastructure)
- CAAR will, where possible, facilitate connections for Australian tertiary institutions to package and sell their curricula to Saudi tertiary institutions.

# STIMULATE (*continued*)

## FOSTER KNOWLEDGE SHARING

CAAR could invite grant submissions from Australian and Saudi tertiary institutions for programs that involve collaboration on shared areas of interest, such as food-security or water management to develop solutions to shared problems.

## SUPPORT A TRADE AGENDA

Australian Universities could promote their world-class curricula (eg. Health, Earth Sciences) to Saudi Universities.

Australian Universities could further promote their institutions to potential international students.

CAAR will assist Tertiary institutions to promote their curricula in sectors that have the potential to increase trade links in priority sectors such as health, food-security and infrastructure.

## Stimulate Embryonic Trade Opportunities

**CAAR could leverage relationships with industry and government to stimulate trade opportunities and grow Australian engagement.**

To the extent that resources allow, CAAR will support opportunities to expand trade links in the sectors of food-security and resources and energy in conjunction with the Australian Arab private sector as well as with Australian-Arab trade and industry groups (eg. AACCI, AGC etc...).

To the extent that resources allow, CAAR should encourage opportunities to expand infrastructure trade links in conjunction with Australian-Arab trade and industry groups (eg. AACCI, AGC etc...).

## Leverage Australian-Arab industry groups

CAAR should work with Australian-Arab industry groups to foster effective trade opportunities by:

- Providing connections between Australian and Saudi business
- Providing guidance on succeeding within the Saudi business environment
- Engaging with Australian-Arab business chambers and communities of interest, including but not limited to AGC, AACCI

## Stimulating trade opportunities across Arab nations

CAAR should assist Australian businesses and Saudi industry to migrate successful Australian business practices from other Arab nations into Saudi Arabia (and across to other Arab nations where opportunity exists)

## Investigating and analysing opportunities for targetted programs

Research is an important input to develop a targeted program to improve cultural relations.

CAAR will establish a panel of researchers to investigate five areas of perception between Australia and the Arab world:

- Perceptions of the Arab world among Australians of Arab-descent
- Perceptions of the Arab world among Australians without an Arab background
- Perceptions of Australia, in the Arab world
- Perceptions of Australia from Australians of various backgrounds
- Educational or exchange opportunities

The research should also assess the types of cultural activities and contact between groups that increase mutual understanding and knowledge between cultures.

A significant amount of research has been conducted to date that should be leveraged to address these areas.

## EXECUTE

**CAAR will develop programs to increase mutual understanding and build bridges in Australia and the Arab world.**

### **Proactively allocating grant funding to address opportunities within priority sectors and countries**

CAAR will develop a targeted grants program to fund projects that meet the needs identified through research for promoting relations between Australia and Arab countries and people.

For this approach to generate maximum impact, CAAR's reputation in this area must be promoted.

### **Supporting activities that meet CAAR's strategic objectives**

CAAR will provide in-kind support to organisations undertaking activities that align with CAAR's objectives.

In particular, CAAR will support Australian-Arab business chambers and associations.

### **Leadership Dialogue**

A Strategic Leadership Dialogue can develop long term connections between future Australian and Arab business, political and community leaders. The Leadership Dialogue will be:

- Based on the Australian-American Leadership Dialogue model
- Include a Youth Leadership Dialogue (such as the Australian-Chinese Youth Dialogue or the Australian-American Young Leadership Dialogue)
- Leverage established forums to build relationships
- Utilise input from the research and programs identified through CAAR grants can be used as topics for discussion.

## Student Alumni Groups

Student Alumni groups can strengthen Australian cultural familiarity and trade preference, and promote Australian tertiary institutions to Arab countries:

- Basis will be students currently studying in Australia (in addition to those who have previously done so)
- Could take the form of physical conferences, ideally as an adjunct to an existing bilateral forum and virtual forums and networks
- Partnerships for this alumni program could be sought from external government and NGO organisations.
- Alumni from Australian institutions could also support programs in Arab countries by working in institutions involved in flagship programs, and canvassing financial support within their countries for CAAR supported programs. CAAR could invite grant applications from alumni for activities that raise awareness in their countries and Australia.

# COMMUNICATE

**The Council should provide focused platforms for promoting Australian engagement with the Arab World.**

## Encouraging broader Australian engagement

CAAR should promote the value of increasing Australian government and industry engagement in the Arab world.