



**Australia Awards**

# Australia Awards Cambodia Newsletter July 2017



*Australia Awards Alumni enjoying their welcome home event*

## **Intake 2018**

This year we received 711 applications compared with 511 last year. This was a record for our Program. This result was influenced by policy changes such as removal of focus areas, an increase in the stipend rates for pre-departure training and a more flexible approach to work experience requirements, as well as a longer and targeted marketing and promotional campaign that commenced in November 2016.

In December 2016, we conducted information session for last year's unsuccessful applicants and Equity Pathway Program participants. In addition, we partnered with key government ministries to undertake information sessions targeting women, people with disabilities and government officials including:

- Ministry of Education Youth and Sport
- Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA); and
- Disability Action Council

In cooperation with MOWA, Australia Awards Cambodia (AAKH) held its inaugural event in February 2017 "Linking Women to a World of Opportunity". The event promoted the role of inspirational Cambodian women and was an opportunity for potential applicants to meet Australia Awards women Alumni to find out about their experiences, the challenges they faced and the benefits of an Australia Award Scholarship. The event was attended by more than 200 men and women. To view the short video click here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r8LcK9jpug> AAKH also undertook:

- 15 information sessions in targeted Provinces (Battambang, Siem Reap and Kampong Cham); and
- an information session for applicants experiencing technical difficulties with the online applications process; and
- small group information sessions for women

## **How can Alumni help?**

We notice that applicants who attend an Information Session (or seek information directly from the AAKH Office) are more likely to ensure their application is eligible for consideration for a scholarship.

However, we also note some applicants receive advice regarding applications processes, eligibility and IELTS requirements from Alumni and sometimes this advice is based on information that is no longer current due to policy changes (or is inaccurate). This has the potential to disadvantage the applicant.

Please encourage your friends, colleagues and family members completing an application, to attend our Information Sessions and seek information about the requirements directly from our office.



### Getting help when you need it in Australia

This is a reminder that the Australian Government and the Program want Awardees in Australia to succeed and sometimes this means they need to ask for assistance.

If you are struggling with your studies (and this might be due to personal issues) do reach out to your student contact officer and lecturers as soon as possible. It is always better to ask for assistance as early as possible (rather than waiting until you fail a subject or miss a deadline for an assignment).

### Strengthening your networks

Your networks are a key part of your professional success. While you are in Australia please make time to:

- form lasting networks with Australians and Australian based agencies working in your field
- reach out to leaders and agencies in your field (don't be shy this is a once in a lifetime opportunity to connect with key people)
- keep in contact with, and follow the progress of, your colleagues in Cambodia and potential employer agencies on your return

### Returning to Cambodia

Many Alumni returning to Cambodia will be returning to their former employer or alternately be seeking work. To assist you AAKH offers:

- a workshop aimed at supporting your professional reintegration (all Alumni are expected to attend this one day workshop which will be held on a weekend in September/October 2017)
- tailored support for Alumni seeking work or wanting to advance their career (this is optional and involves some training and individual support)

### Women in Leadership Program:

#### Professional women reaching their potential together.

A pilot Women in Leadership Program recently commenced in Cambodia for targeted women alumni. The Program is unique to Cambodia, and will support women alumni as they progress their professional careers after study in Australia. The Program includes 4 workshops, mentoring and individual and group project work (over a six month period). The Program is designed to:

- build leadership skills
- support career planning; and
- create stronger networks of women across many different organizations and roles.

Information will be circulated to women Alumni via your personal email address in the coming month, so please make sure you keep us informed of any changes to your email address.

### Returning to Australia

Once you have returned to Cambodia there is a two (2) year exclusion period when you cannot return to Australia without a 'no objection letter' (NOL) from the Australian Embassy in Cambodia. This letter grants you permission to apply for a visa to return to Australia for your graduation, work meeting or similar. Note the issue of the NOL does not guarantee you will be issued a visa.

The key points you must remember are:

- Requests for NOL should be directed to AAKH info@australiaawardscambodia.org
- The NOL must be submitted with your visa application.
- It is your responsibility to ensure you apply for a visa in adequate time prior to your travel – so you should allow a minimum of five (5) weeks (i.e. three (3) working days for the issue of the NOL by DFAT and four (4) weeks for DIBP to consider your application for a visa).

If you fail to submit the visa application within the required timelines, appeals to DFAT or DIBP will not be considered.

Please refer to the policy in this link <http://www.australiaawardscambodia.org/index.php/faqs/returnee-faqs>