



Australia Awards

Australia Awards

South Asia

Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
Approach and Action Plan
2021–2022



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Abbreviations and acronyms

Term	Meaning
APO	Australian Professional Opportunity
CBM	An international Christian development organisation
CC	Closed captions
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DPO	Disabled people's organisation
GEDSI	Gender equality, disability and social inclusion
LGBTIQA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or questioning), intersex and asexual (or allies)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
PA	Public address
RAP	Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SOGIESC	Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics

Gender Equality, Disability & Social Inclusion (GEDSI) terminology

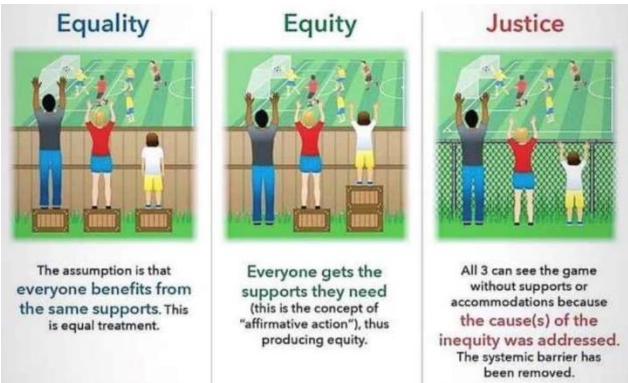
Term	Meaning
Cis/cisgender	A person who identifies with their gender assumed or sex assigned at birth. Someone who does not identify as trans or as non-binary. ¹
Disability	<p>Disability is an evolving concept. Disability results from the interaction between people with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.</p> <p>People with disability include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.²</p>
Equality	<p>Equality affirms that all human beings are born free and equal. Equality presupposes that all human beings have the same rights and deserve the same level of respect. All people have the right to be treated equally. This means that laws, policies and programs should not be discriminator. Non-discrimination is an integral part of the principle of equality. It ensures that no one is denied their rights because of factors such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property or birth. In addition to those grounds, discrimination on certain other grounds may also be prohibited. These grounds include age, nationality, marital status, disability, place of residence within a country and sexual orientation.</p> <p>Sometimes it may be necessary to treat people differently to achieve equality. This is because differences between people may make it difficult for them to enjoy their rights without support. Different treatment may not amount to prohibited discrimination if the criteria for the differentiation are reasonable and objective and if the aim is to achieve a purpose which is legitimate under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.³</p> <p>In recognition of this, the United Nations <i>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</i> (CEDAW) takes a three-dimensional view of gender equality that it calls ‘substantive equality’. Instead of considering equality only in formal and legalistic terms, and saying that laws and policies ensure equality between men and women simply by being gender-neutral, CEDAW requires that their actual impact and effect also be considered.</p> <p>The substantive model of equality therefore requires using the actual conditions of women’s lives, rather than the wording used in laws, as the true measure of whether equality has been achieved.⁴</p>

¹ Edge Effect (2020) [42 Degrees Glossary and Lexicon](https://www.42d.org/2020/07/21/42-degrees-glossary-and-lexicon-2/), 42 Degrees website, accessed 30 April 2021.

² United Nations General Assembly (2006) [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-2.html), United Nations, accessed 30 April 2021.

³ Attorney-General’s Department (n.d.), Australian Government [Rights of equality and non-discrimination](#), accessed on 18 May 2021

⁴ UN Women (n.d.) [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\) about CEDAW](https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/focus-areas/cedaw-human-rights/faq), UN Women, accessed 30 April 2021.

Term	Meaning
Equity	<p>Equity is the absence of avoidable or remediable differences among groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically or geographically. Equity is a process that aims to redress the unequal position of different individuals and groups.⁵</p>  <p>The image contains three panels illustrating the concepts of Equality, Equity, and Justice. Each panel shows three people of different heights (tall, medium, and short) standing on a grassy field, looking over a wooden fence to see a soccer game on the other side. In the 'Equality' panel, each person has a wooden crate of a height corresponding to their own height, so they can all see over the fence. Below it, the text reads: 'The assumption is that everyone benefits from the same supports. This is equal treatment.' In the 'Equity' panel, the tallest person's crate is removed, so they can see over the fence. Below it, the text reads: 'Everyone gets the supports they need (this is the concept of "affirmative action"), thus producing equity.' In the 'Justice' panel, the fence is removed entirely, so everyone can see the game without any supports. Below it, the text reads: 'All 3 can see the game without supports or accommodations because the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.'</p>
Gender expression	<p>Usually, but not always, the external presentation of someone's gender identity, expressed in many ways (including through clothing, haircut, voice, bodily movements, the ways one interacts with others and how one identifies). Gender expression can differ from that which is stereotypically associated with a person's sex assigned at birth and often changes over time.⁶</p>
Gender identity	<p>Each person's deeply felt internal and individual experiences of gender, which may or may not correspond with the gender assumed or sex assigned at birth, including their personal sense of their body and self. Gender identity is not fixed nor is it along binary lines, and a person's gender identity can change, shift or alter over time.⁷</p>
Impairment	<p><i>Impairment</i> can refer to any loss or abnormality of psychological, physiologic or anatomic structure or function.⁸</p>
Intersectionality	<p>Intersectionality refers to the ways in which different aspects of a person's identity can expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalisation.⁹</p>
Intersex	<p>A person born with physical sex characteristics (including genitalia, hormones or chromosomes) that do not align with medical definitions or societal expectations of female or male bodies. Intersex characteristics may be apparent at birth, may not be detected until later in life (e.g. when a person begins puberty or becomes pregnant) or may never be detected at all.¹⁰</p>

⁵ World Health Organization (WHO) (n.d.) [Equity](https://www.who.int/healthsystems/topics/equity/en/), WHO website, accessed 30 April 2021.

⁶ Edge Effect (2020) [42 Degrees Glossary and Lexicon](https://www.42d.org/2020/07/21/42-degrees-glossary-and-lexicon-2/), 42 Degrees website, accessed 30 April 2021.

⁷ Ibid

⁸ WHO (n.d.) [Disability](https://www.who.int/health-topics/disability#tab=tab_1), WHO website, accessed 30 April 2021.

⁹ Victorian Government (2021) [Understanding intersectionality](https://www.vic.gov.au/understanding-intersectionality), Victorian Government website, accessed 30 April 2021.

¹⁰ Edge Effect (2020) [42 Degrees Glossary and Lexicon](https://www.42d.org/2020/07/21/42-degrees-glossary-and-lexicon-2/), 42 Degrees website, accessed 30 April 2021.

Term	Meaning
Psychosocial disability	<i>Psychosocial disability</i> is an internationally recognised term under the United Nations <i>Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</i> , which is used to describe the experience of people with impairments and participation restrictions related to mental health conditions. ¹¹
Sex characteristics	Sex characteristics are the genetic, hormonal and anatomical characteristics used to classify physical sex at birth. ¹²
Sexual orientation	A person's capacity for profound emotional, romantic and sexual attraction to, and intimate and sexual relations with, individuals or people of a different gender, the same gender or more than one gender. ¹³
Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC)	All people have SOGIESC. 'Diverse SOGIESC' to refer to non-cis-gendered, non-heterosexual and intersex people (also known as the LGBTIQ+ community). Using 'diverse SOGIESC' (rather than 'LGBTIQ+') draws attention to the fact that the human experience of sexuality and gender cannot always be neatly labelled. The LGBTIQ+ acronym is rooted in certain understandings and assumptions of sexual orientation and gender identity and expression, and does not hold space for specific cultural third-gender groups. ¹⁴
Social exclusion	There is no universally agreed definition or benchmark for social exclusion. Lack of participation in society is at the heart of nearly all definitions put forth by scholars, government bodies and non-governmental organisations. Overall, social exclusion describes a state in which individuals are unable to participate fully in economic, social, political and cultural life, as well as the process leading to and sustaining such a state. ¹⁵
Social inclusion	Social inclusion is defined as the process of improving the terms of participation in society, particularly for people who are disadvantaged, through enhancing opportunities, access to resources, voice and respect for rights.

¹¹ World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry (2008) [Implementation Manual For The United Nations Convention On The Rights Of Persons With Disabilities](#), World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry.

¹² Edge Effect (2020) [42 Degrees Glossary and Lexicon](#), 42 Degrees website, accessed 30 April 2021. <https://www.42d.org/2020/07/21/42-degrees-glossary-and-lexicon-2/>

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2016) '[Identifying social inclusion and exclusion](#)' in [Leaving no one behind: the imperative of inclusive development. Report on the World Social Situation 2016](#), United Nations.

Term	Meaning
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	<p>The SDGs are a universal set of 17 goals launched by the United Nations in September 2015 with targets that all United Nations member states are expected to adhere to when setting national development policies and frameworks up until 2030.</p> <p>The SDGs, as outlined in the <i>2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</i>, place a strong emphasis on addressing inequity and exclusion and achieving social inclusion, by applying a human rights framework to development to promote universal access and equity in participation and benefit for all. Unlike the Millennium Development Goals (2000–2015) that focused on the world’s poorest economies, the SDGs apply to all countries—each has the responsibility to ensure that those on the margins participate in and benefit from national development.</p>



*Inequalities pervade not only the economic, but also the social and environmental pillars of development. Differences in religion, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and economic and migrant status are used to exclude and marginalize.*¹⁶

¹⁶ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2016) [Leaving no one behind: the imperative of inclusive development. Report on the World Social Situation 2016](#), United Nations.

1 Introduction

1.1 Australia Awards – South Asia

Australia Awards are provided to build the skills and knowledge of individuals so that they can contribute to their country's development, and to support the ongoing development of links between Australia and the countries to which it provides aid. Australia Awards are an important part of the Australian Government's focus on public and economic diplomacy, and provide Scholarships and Short Courses, supported by a range of other capacity-building and training modalities.

Australia Awards – South Asia (the Program) commenced on 1 February 2021, as the successor to Australia Awards – South and West Asia, which ran from January 2015 to January 2021.

1.2 Program goal

The goal of the Program is that country programs in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are meeting their development, relationship and public diplomacy objectives, in line with Australia's national interest.

1.3 Program outcomes

The four intended **End-of-Program Outcomes** are that:

- alumni are using their skills, knowledge and networks to contribute to sustainable development
- alumni are contributing to cooperation between Australia and partner countries
- effective, mutually advantageous partnerships are established between institutions and businesses in Australia and partner countries
- alumni view Australia, Australians and Australian expertise positively.

Each country program articulates its own specific set of objectives to promote these outcomes; these objectives are set out in Country Plans.

1.4 Gender Equality, Disability & Social Inclusion in Australia Awards

The Australian Government's commitment to social inclusion is strongly articulated in specific policies of its overseas aid program, particularly in the areas of women's empowerment and gender equality (which includes reference to people from LGBTIQ populations—referred to in this document as people with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics [SOGIESC]), disability inclusion, child protection, indigenous peoples' rights, and social protection. Inclusion is managed as a cross-cutting issue in all aspects of Australia's aid investments. Australia's trade agenda and economic development agenda in the Indo-Pacific Region are strongly aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). An explanation of key terminology we use in the Approach and Plan is provided on pages iiiii-vi.

The Program approach to Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) aligns with the following existing DFAT policies:

- *Gender equality and women's empowerment strategy* (February 2016)
- *Development for All 2015–2020: Strategy for strengthening disability-inclusive development in Australia's aid program* (May 2015)
- *South Asia COVID-19 Development Response Plan* (October 2020)
- *DFAT Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan May 2019 – June 2022* (May 2019).

To ensure equity and diversity of participation in the Program, women, people with disability, people from ethnic minorities, people living in rural and remote areas, and members of socially and economically disadvantaged groups are encouraged to apply. Appropriate interventions are put in place at all stages of the Program to address any barriers these groups face. The design of the Program provides guidance on steps that will be taken to promote and support inclusion.

1.5 Social inclusion/exclusion in the South Asia region

Home to approximately 25 percent of the world's population, the South Asia region is culturally, politically and economically diverse. Despite this diversity, the region shares common challenges: migration, increasing socio-economic disparities, a rise in catastrophic natural disasters, and diverse cultures with entrenched cultural norms that perpetuate gender-based discrimination and make combating violence against women a continued challenge.

The Program operates in a challenging environment. The World Economic Forum is now predicting it could take the region 195 years to reach gender equality—two generations (59 years) more than the global average. Worldwide, South Asia is the region that has regressed the most in the past year in terms of the gender gap, with a gender gap 3.4 percentage points wider than a year ago. One of the most pressing areas for advancement for South Asia is the gender gap in economic participation, where only 33.8 percent of the gender gap is closed: the lowest globally. Lack of progress on women's participation in the labour force hinders economic opportunities for women. Gender gaps in political empowerment are also stark across the region and have further widened this year. Only 28.1 percent of this gender gap has been bridged to date, down from 38.7 percent reported in the last Global Gender Gap report.^{17, 18}

This region is exposed to high levels of household, institutional and societal gender inequality:

- Males earn more than females across most countries where data is available.
- Females are under-represented in the parliaments and police forces of the region, limiting legislative and justice system responses for women and girls.
- While most women are able to make decisions about spending their own earnings, many women are not able to make decisions about healthcare, household purchases and access of social networks, indicating less control over household resources and bodily autonomy.
- One in four women in Bangladesh, and one in five in India and Pakistan, have experienced intimate partner violence in the past year.

¹⁷ World Economic Forum (2021) [Global Gender Gap Report 2021: Insight Report March 2021](#), World Economic Forum.

¹⁸ To understand how the index is constructed see World Economic Forum (2021) [Global Gender Gap Report 2021: Appendix B The Global Gender Gap Index: Methodology and Technical Notes](#), World Economic Forum.

- In most countries, marital rape is not criminalised.¹⁹
- Discrimination and abuse against the diverse SOGIESC community are still prevalent in the region. Even in India and Nepal, the decriminalisation of homosexuality is only the first step of many in the battle for civil rights and wider acceptance. Elsewhere in South Asia, colonial-era laws prohibiting same-sex relations are found in the penal codes of Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.²⁰
- South Asia struggles with the data on prevalence of disability. It is widely believed that the region under-reports disability. Social ostracism of people with disability remains rampant, leading to poverty. Although various countries have enacted several policies and laws, these have yet to translate into tangible outcomes for people with disability.²¹
- Two-thirds of the world's indigenous peoples are estimated to live in Asia. Whether they are called 'hill tribes', 'indigenous nationalities', 'tribal peoples', 'ethnic minorities' or 'natives', they continue to be among the poorest of the poor, even though sustained growth and poverty reduction efforts of the region have significantly contributed to declining poverty rates. Their existence and cultural heritage has been threatened by ongoing colonisation by national and international social, economic and political institutions. Economic hardships triggered by loss of lands traditionally occupied by the indigenous communities and depletion of natural resources on which their livelihoods once depended has caused many to abandon their traditional way of life. National laws in South Asia have attempted to protect the cultural heritage of—and in some cases have provided special protection to—indigenous communities.²²

The South Asia region has been significantly affected by COVID-19. While most countries in the region are now rolling out vaccination programs, the impact of the pandemic is likely to be profound, particularly on existing marginalised groups and women in all their diversity.

The rising levels of inequality are relevant to the Program because they:

- influence who is best placed to meet the selection criteria and access the professional development and academic opportunities offered by the Program
- provide a reason for ensuring that the Program—as part of its purpose to support the development of future leaders—promotes social inclusion and equality:
 - by creating opportunities for all participants to share information and develop understanding about the factors that create inequity and different types of exclusion and marginalisation
 - through strategies that impart knowledge and develop skills of alumni to contribute to achieving equitable and inclusive development.

¹⁹ Bhutan and Nepal are two exceptions.

²⁰ Burnet Institute (2019) [Gender Counts: South Asia. A quantitative assessment of gender inequality and its impact on children and adolescents](#), UNICEF.

²¹ Kalyanwala S, Singh S, Iqbal M (2019) [Review of Evidence on Disability Programmes in South Asia](#), UK Government.

²² Stefania Errico (2017) [The Rights of indigenous peoples in Asia](#), International Labour Organization.

2 The Gender Equality, Disability & Social Inclusion Approach

This *Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion Approach and Action Plan* (henceforth Approach and Action Plan) for Australia Awards – South Asia builds on the experiences and achievements of the previous phase of the Program.

The Approach and Action Plan will ensure that all Program participants have the same opportunities to contribute and benefit fairly and equitably, and are cognisant of how to promote inclusion, equality, equity and fairness in their professional and personal lives.

The understanding of social inclusion that informs the Approach and Action Plan reflects current international concepts and trends, particularly the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. It aligns with and supports Australia's international development assistance policy and program priorities globally, as well as specifically for the South Asia region and Australia Awards.

The Approach and Action Plan is grounded in the principle of intersectionality. Rather than naming and identifying different aspects of a person's identity, this Approach and Action Plan recognises that there are common barriers faced by diverse women and men that need to be addressed and that there are specific barriers resulting from intersecting identities that also need to be considered. For example, gendered social norms affect women's access to leadership. These gendered norms intersect with norms around disability, exacerbating challenges faced by women with disability in accessing leadership positions. There is an increased focus on providing all Program participants with strategies to promote inclusion. This information will be included in promotional and communications materials, and in any Program-related professional development and learning opportunities.

Language matters—so, in keeping with an intersectional lens, this Approach and Action Plan uses the term SOGIESC. All people have SOGIESC. We use 'diverse SOGIESC' to refer to non-cisgendered, non-heterosexual and intersex people (also known as the LGBTIQ+ community). We use 'diverse SOGIESC' rather than 'LGBTIQ+' because we understand that the human experience of sexuality and of gender cannot always be neatly labelled. 'Diverse SOGIESC' is more inclusive of specific third-gender groups who do not necessarily identify as transgender. We will explore partnering with Edge Effect to support us to work in genuine partnerships with diverse SOGIESC communities.

In delivering on the disability inclusion aspects of this Approach and Action Plan, we will be partnering with Maven. Maven is Scope Global's in-house disability inclusion consultancy service. Maven consultants—all people with disability—are specialists in providing tailored services to enable government, civil society and private sector organisations to fulfil their access and inclusion goals. Internally, Maven provides access and inclusion support to Scope Global at an organisational and program level. Maven services include tailored disability awareness training; accessibility reviews of physical premises; user-testing of website, digital content and social media accessibility; creating Easy Read text; support with developing disability action plans, risk analysis and reasonable adjustment plans for people with disability; and mentoring support for employees and/or program participants with disability.

Adopting an incremental approach to indigenous inclusion, this Approach and Action Plan aligns with DFAT's *Indigenous Procurement Policy* and *DFAT Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan May 2019 – June 2022* and Scope Global's *Indigenous Participation Plan* (see Annex E) and *Reconciliation Action Plan* (to be launched in August 2021). The Approach and Action Plan will ensure that the Program, over its lifecycle:

- engages with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and experts to work with Indigenous alumni and partners in the South Asia region to develop Australian Professional Opportunities (APOs)
- provides opportunities and employment to attract and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander talent
- engages with Indigenous-owned businesses, suppliers and subcontractors to provide education and training services.

In the first year of the Approach and Action Plan, the induction program will be revised to include topics on indigeneity and information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. In this first year, we will explore the possibility of organising an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Study Tour for new and existing scholars.

Additionally, all in-Australia Program-related events will promote Indigenous catering. At the corporate level, we will explore partnering with an Indigenous organisation to conduct 'challenging racism' training for Program staff and all efforts will be made to engage Indigenous speakers at scholar and alumni events organised as part of the Program. At the country program level, the focus will be on building links with indigenous peoples organisations.

2.1 Objectives

The objectives of this Approach and Action Plan are:

- to enable all to participate, contribute and benefit fairly and equitably, particularly focusing on people who experience intersecting forms of marginalisation and exclusion
- to strengthen the awareness and knowledge of participants and staff about social exclusion issues and inclusion strategies, through professional learning opportunities and Program communication
- to improve the capacity and commitment to applying inclusive and non-discriminatory practices throughout the Program
- to enhance knowledge and understanding about GEDSI issues and high-quality practice, through effective Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL).

2.2 Key principles

The **key principles** that guide implementation are:

- **Commitment to intersectionality:** Intersectionality is a critical framework that provides us with the mindset and language for examining interconnections and interdependencies between various social identities. Intersectionality helps us to understand why heterogeneous members of specific groups (such as women) might experience disadvantage and exclusion differently depending on social locations. Sensitivity to such differences enhances insight into issues of inequality, thus maximising the opportunity for the Program to be more inclusive. The work that we do and how we promote it explicitly foregrounds gender equality and social inclusion.

- **Voice and participation:** Through working in a genuinely participatory and culturally-located way, the views and perspectives of those that the Approach and Action Plan aims to include will inform the way that strategies and priorities are set and implemented, and will contribute to the measurement and interpretation of results and lessons learnt.
- **Localisation to the country context:** Each country program will interpret the region-wide strategy by setting their priorities and implementation plans for GEDSI as appropriate to their setting, while consistently applying a social inclusion framework in all aspects of their activities, in alignment with global Australia Awards policies.
- **Whole of organisation approach:** Implementation must be embedded into the organisation's culture, structure and attitudes of staff—through policies and systems and ensuring accountability.
- **Accessibility:** Practical access is a critical enabler of participation and must be planned for and also resourced with a dedicated budget.
- **Ongoing improvement:** The planning and implementation of high-quality inclusive practice will be underpinned by evidence and based on robust context-specific research and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) data.
- **Do no harm:** The 'do no harm' approach ensures that strategies to promote inclusion will not adversely affect those that the Approach and Action Plan aims to include, other Program participants, or the quality and reputation of the Program. The Program recognises that exclusion has negative effects and therefore inaction is not an option. In order to do no harm, we overlook nothing and proactively address disadvantage that leads to exclusion.

2.3 Approach

The approach to implementation will be to:

1. **Apply a broader concept of social inclusion**
Instead of specifically targeting certain identity groups to be included in the scope of the Program, we will remove barriers that prevent their fair and equal participation— noting that these barriers will differ between each of the seven countries in the Program, as will the legislation, cultural sensitivities and risks in each country.
2. **Employ a twin-track approach to inclusion**
The twin-track approach involves ensuring that the Program is GEDSI-inclusive (by mainstreaming GEDSI in all aspects of delivery) and that it offers GEDSI-specific initiatives (by implementing specific affirmative actions to improve the participation of people from marginalised groups).
3. **Enhance learning opportunities**
Learning opportunities related to social inclusion will be incorporated into Program activities and events, including the Short Courses, pre-departure briefings, reintegration workshops, and alumni events and activities.
4. **Strengthen capacity**
We will build the capacity of Scope Global staff, DFAT staff and subcontractors to consistently and effectively implement inclusive practices.
5. **Implement the Approach and Action Plan incrementally**
This will ensure there are sufficient levels of knowledge, skills and experience for effective practice, and will minimise risks related to quality of the Program and to Australia Awards recipients.

2.4 Expected outcomes

The expected outcomes of the Approach and Action Plan are that:

- scholars and alumni apply knowledge gained on issues of social inclusion in their professional and personal lives to positively affect the lives of marginalised and excluded groups
- high-quality inclusive practice is implemented in all aspects of the Program
- the Program is recognised and respected for its high-quality inclusive practices
- staff have knowledge about issues of intersectional gender equality that they apply in their professional and personal lives.

3 The Gender Equality, Disability & Social Inclusion Action Plan (Year 1)

3.1 Program area promotion

Activity	Inputs/capacity
Update/revise Program-wide (Short Courses, Scholarships, alumni) communication materials about GEDSI and ensure consistent use of positive language and images in online and printed materials and other media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communications and Public Diplomacy Manager ▪ Inputs of GEDSI Short-Term Adviser ▪ Selective inputs may be sought from experts (Maven for disability—to provide training on accessible social media posts, videos, PDF documents, creation of Easy Read text; Edge Effect for diverse SOGIESC rights)
Each country program to strengthen links and working relationships with organisations and individuals, with a particular focus on disabled people’s organisations (DPOs), indigenous organisations, diverse SOGIESC organisations and women-led organisations. The country program will partner with these to plan tailored promotional activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff time to research/map and make contact with organisations ▪ Staff time to meet with representatives of certain targeted organisations ▪ Staff time, travel and costs to host events with organisations to share promotional materials ▪ Budget to enable accessible adjustments for promotional events
Forward planning to support scholars with disability, starting with technical support with accessible advertising/ communication of Scholarships and mentoring opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maven

3.2 Pre-departure for Scholarships

Activity	Inputs/capacity
Develop and deliver pre-departure training sessions on GEDSI and Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment. This half-day training will cover issues related to gender, disability and indigeneity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GEDSI Short-Term Adviser ▪ Maven ▪ Indigenous peoples organisation
Develop factsheets on SOGIESC; Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment; and Indigenous Australians (Oct/Nov 2021).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GEDSI Short-Term Adviser ▪ GEDSI Working Group (see Annex A for Terms of Reference)
Request that Australian universities provide information in their briefing materials on services and activities (such as networking, social opportunities and other assistance) available on campus for different identity groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Country program staff ▪ Scholar Engagement and Internships Coordinator ▪ GEDSI Short-Term Adviser can provide additional inputs

3.3 On-Award enhancement

Activity	Inputs/capacity
Improve the content on topics relating to social inclusion/exclusion and the SDGs, and strengthen the use of participatory, peer-sharing and learning processes in Program workshops and activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scholar Engagement and Internships Coordinator GEDSI Short-Term Adviser inputs Engage inputs from relevant Australian-based organisations with expertise and skills, including Australian international NGOs
One-day virtual GEDSI workshop for scholars (Nov 2021) as part of the 16 days of activism, to upskill participants on key GEDSI concepts and approaches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scholarship Engagement team Other working groups Regional Team GEDSI Short-Term Adviser Maven GEDSI Working Group
Thinking Environment webinars for scholars on two topics: <i>Women's Economic Empowerment</i> and <i>Intersectionality</i> (3 sessions per topic x 1.5 hours each, Mar 2022).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scholarship Engagement team GEDSI Short-Term Adviser
Map out the scholars Program Cycle and identify where inputs will be needed to ensure forward planning to support scholars with disabilities (e.g. mentoring opportunities).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maven Scholar Engagement and Internships Coordinator Coordinator – GEDSI (pre-Award)
Engage with the Scholarship Engagement team to discuss inputs into the internships and volunteering aspects of the Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maven
Allocate time and resources to recognise Indigenous people in Australia—for example, through Welcome to and Acknowledgement of Country by traditional owners who can share information and experiences relevant to social inclusion/exclusion issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scholar Engagement and Internships Coordinator

3.4 Alumni

Activity	Inputs/capacity
One-day virtual GEDSI workshop for alumni (Nov 2021) as part of the 16 days of activism, to upskill participants on key GEDSI concepts and approaches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Country program staff and manager for alumni activities GEDSI Short-Term Adviser GEDSI Working Group
Thinking Environment webinars for alumni on two topics: <i>Women's Economic Empowerment</i> and <i>Intersectionality</i> (3 sessions per topic x 1.5 hours each, Mar 2022).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Country program staff and manager for alumni activities GEDSI Short-Term Adviser GEDSI Working Group

Activity	Inputs/capacity
Reinvigorate the Women in Leadership Network to be more proactive in promoting diverse young women's leadership in Program countries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Country program staff and manager for alumni activities GEDSI Short-Term Adviser (support) GEDSI Working Group (support)
Ensure that in the planning of alumni activities, consideration and adjustments are made to enable fair and equal participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Country program staff and manager for alumni activities Maven Budget made available for adjustments and assistance
Establish and convene the first meeting of the Alumni Disability Advisory Group to support and improve disability-inclusive practice in the Program; highlight contributions and leadership stories of people with disability that can inspire all Australia Awards alumni; and discuss key issues on disability inclusion that Australia Awards alumni can help address.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GEDSI Short-Term Adviser Coordinator – GEDSI (pre-Award) Maven Alumni program officer

3.5 Short Courses and Australian Professional Opportunities

Activity	Inputs/capacity
Review Short Course procurement requirements to ensure clear articulation of GEDSI requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing Professional Development Solution team Inputs from GEDSI Short-Term Adviser and Coordinator – GEDSI (pre-Award) Short-Term Activities Team
Support Continuing Professional Development Solutions team to review design and implementation of Short Courses (including evaluation) with a GEDSI lens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing Professional Development Solutions team Inputs from GEDSI Short-Term Adviser and Coordinator – GEDSI (pre-Award)
Support the development of two concept outlines of GEDSI-focused APOs, including a Regional APO.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing Professional Development Solution team Inputs from GEDSI Short-Term Adviser and Coordinator – GEDSI (pre-Award) Short-Term Activities Team

3.6 Adjustments for people with disability

Activity	Inputs/capacity
Participate in the DFAT Australia Awards Disability Working Group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GEDSI Short-Term Adviser represents the Program

Activity	Inputs/capacity
Assessment of accessibility of venues for in-country and in-Australia Program activities and events (see Annex C and Annex D).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Country program, Adelaide-based Scope Global staff and Maven ▪ GEDSI Short-Term Adviser and Coordinator – GEDSI to provide inputs into guidelines ▪ Work with DPOs or disability service provider with experience and expertise in accessibility audits ▪ Disability Advisory Group to provide advice
Assessment of accessibility and availability of English Language Testing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Country program staff ▪ GEDSI Short-Term Adviser and Coordinator – GEDSI to provide inputs into guidelines for top three providers ▪ Work with DPOs or disability service provider with experience and expertise in accessibility audits
Assessment of airlines commonly used for Australia Awards recipients' travel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Country program staff (optional) ▪ GEDSI Short-Term Adviser to provide inputs into guidelines ▪ Work with DPOs or disability service provider with expertise in accessibility audits ▪ Maven to provide advice (e.g. the types of information required from travellers with disability for airline bookings) (see Annex B)
Update directory of disability service providers with expertise in sign language, Braille, psychosocial/mental health and physical access audits that can be contracted for inputs as needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Country program teams ▪ Involve local DPOs and service providers ▪ Disability Advisory Group to provide advice ▪ Coordinator – GEDSI

3.7 Staff capacity—knowledge, skills development and performance

Activity	Inputs/capacity
Continue to convene the GEDSI Working Group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GEDSI Short-Term Adviser ▪ GEDSI Working Group members
Develop a Program staff induction module on GEDSI.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GEDSI Short-Term Adviser ▪ Maven ▪ GEDSI Working Group
Review and update Human Resources and procurement policies to reflect and support inclusion, equality and fairness in the Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Team Leader ▪ Program Manager ▪ Scope Global Head Office ▪ Inputs of GEDSI Short-Term Adviser ▪ GEDSI Working Group

3.8 Thought leadership

Activity	Inputs/capacity
Develop two thought leadership pieces to be shared with staff and DFAT on GEDSI issues relevant to improving the Program (<i>What does 'Do No Harm' mean in practice?</i> and <i>What does 'Intersectionality' mean in practice?</i>).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ GEDSI Short-Term Adviser▪ Maven

4 Risks and risk management

The Program has identified the following key risks—and associated prevention and mitigation measures—relating specifically to the Approach and Action Plan and its implementation.

Risks	Prevention and mitigation measures
<p>Risk #1: Strategic risk Targeting participation by people from more marginalised groups may reduce the overall quality of applicants to the Program and lower the academic and professional standards achieved by Australia Awards recipients. This could adversely affect the overall Program goal and outcomes. It may also create the perception that Australia Awards are less prestigious than other international scholarships being offered in Program countries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to use the current objective of at least 50% participation by women, and actively seek and encourage applicants from the broader range of identity groups without setting specific targets. ▪ Ensure there is adequate staff capacity and resources to effectively and safely manage the targeting, promotion and inclusion adjustments in Program activities in ways that are likely to ensure quality participation and success of individuals. ▪ Carefully manage the equity measures and affirmative actions taken during the selection process, ensuring that the adjustments are realistic and that the individual, through appropriate affirmative action, will succeed and benefit from participating in the Program. ▪ Support Australia Awards recipients in Australia to ensure that they receive the necessary adjustments and support available from their university or Short Course provider. ▪ Profile successful Australia Awards recipients and alumni from socially excluded and marginalised identity groups in Program public communications, ensuring that this does not increase risk of exposure to negative feedback.
<p>Risk #2: Capacity risk The Program may not be able to provide appropriate staff levels, resources, or systems and processes necessary to support high-quality inclusive practices. This may lead to Australia Awards applicants, recipients and alumni feeling disappointed, excluded or discriminated against. Staff may also feel under pressure and unable to meet their responsibilities, which could contribute to reduced quality and effectiveness of their practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide staff with professional development opportunities on social inclusion to ensure they have sufficient levels of knowledge and skills. ▪ Ensure external local resources and technical capacity are available for staff to refer to and use to assist them in their work. ▪ Ensure the budget and personnel available are sufficient to implement activities that align with the Approach and Action Plan. ▪ Invest in research, enquiry, analysis and learning to inform and improve practice. ▪ Ensure that the GEDSI Working Group meets regularly so that the experience and advice of Group members is applied in the Program. Ensure that there is scope to draw on advice from outside the Group (e.g. other DFAT staff, Australia Awards recipients and alumni, Scope Global's Connect group on Diversity and Inclusion, and other Scope Global staff).

Risks	Prevention and mitigation measures
<p>Risk #3: Reputational risk</p> <p>The Program may not be able to consistently provide high-quality, inclusive and non-discriminatory practices in all areas of the Program. This could lead to Australia Awards applicants, recipients and alumni having negative experiences with the Program, and could reinforce feelings of marginalisation and discrimination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure all staff have sufficient knowledge, technical and information resources to apply consistent inclusive practices in their areas of responsibility. ▪ Ensure subcontractors and those contracted to implement selection and interview processes understand the issues related to social inclusion and have the skills and knowledge to apply them in their practice. ▪ Review the Program’s communication media and update as needed to ensure appropriate language is used and all formats are accessible. ▪ Ensure the corporate policies relating to recruitment, employment and procurement reflect and support social inclusion and non-discrimination.
<p>Risk #4: Development risk</p> <p>In some countries, national legislation and cultural and religious sensitivities may mean that seeking to target and include certain identity groups may be difficult, dangerous or not possible. If care is not taken, how inclusion is communicated and implemented may reduce the commitment of government and particular civil society organisations or private sector partners to participate in the Program. It may also create personal risk for individual Australia Awards recipients and Program staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement the Approach and Action Plan in a localised way, working within legal frameworks and respecting the religious and cultural sensitivities of each country. ▪ Ensure appropriate standard operating procedures are in place with regard to disclosure (e.g. of SOGIESC, HIV/AIDS or psychosocial disability status, which may be known to Program staff but not to fellow Australia Awards recipients). ▪ Focus on the situation and social inclusion of some identity groups in Australia in the information available on the website and in other public promotional and communication materials. ▪ Aim to broaden participation from a wider range of identity groups but only set participation targets that are in line with DFAT’s own policy priorities (e.g. 50% participation for women and increasing participation rates by people with disability and from certain geographical areas).

5 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

5.1 Overview

The Program-level MEL framework already captures disaggregated data on the processes used, and outputs and outcomes relating to the participation and success of people from particular identity groups: women, people with disability (using the Washington Group questions), people living in geographically isolated areas and people from particular tribal/ethnic groups. There is no intention to further disaggregate quantitative output data for the additional identity groups included in the Approach and Action Plan. This is because there will be no specific targets set for participation by these groups in the different activities, and because participants will not be requested or required to declare (e.g. on application forms) whether they identify with these identity groups. However, applicants will be encouraged to disclose any factors that they feel are relevant to help ensure the Program delivers on the Approach and Action Plan.

Outcome qualitative data (case studies, 'Most Significant Change' stories, etc.) that represents the range of diverse identity groups participating in the Program will be collected and shared. In doing so, the confidentiality of participants will be carefully managed and respected.

The Program will monitor progress towards achievement of the four planned outcomes of this Approach and Action Plan. This information will help demonstrate the effectiveness of the strategies used, and will highlight positive results and/or challenges.

Risk will be monitored through an up-to-date risks register, and mitigation and prevention strategies will be revised as necessary in response to findings from the monitoring data.

The bimonthly meetings of the GEDSI Working Group will provide an important opportunity for analysis, reflection and learning regarding the quality and effectiveness of the processes used to implement the Approach and Action Plan, and the results being achieved. The findings and advice from this Group will inform Program management, staff and DFAT, and will support the annual Program planning and budget.

5.2 Key indicators and data sources

This section summarises the key M&E data specific to the Approach and Action Plan that will be collected and analysed. Wherever possible, this process will use existing MEL data sources, collection and analysis processes, and resources.

Outcome 1: High-quality inclusive practice is implemented in all aspects of the Program

Indicators	Data sources
Participation rates disaggregated for women, people with disability and people living in particular geographically isolated areas in each activity area of the Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current output participation monitoring data
Completion rates disaggregated for women, people with disability and people living in particular geographically isolated areas in each activity area of the Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current output participation monitoring data

Indicators	Data sources
Satisfaction at completion of participants who identify with target inclusion groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Activity evaluations ▪ Interviews ▪ Focus group discussions
Personal achievements of alumni from target inclusion groups and range of different Australia Awards activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Success stories and case studies
Design of new policies and processes, and changes made to existing ones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minutes of the GEDSI Working Group ▪ Program reports
Satisfaction of participants at each stage and activity of the Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Activity evaluations ▪ Interviews ▪ Focus group discussions

Outcome 2: Scholars and alumni apply knowledge gained on issues of social inclusion in their professional and personal lives to positively affect the lives of marginalised and excluded groups

Indicators	Data sources
Changes in scholars' and alumni's knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes towards issues of social exclusion and inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reintegration workshop (discussions and evaluation) ▪ Short Course follow-up workshops ▪ Return-to-Work plan ▪ Tracer surveys of Scholarship and Short Course alumni ▪ Success stories and case studies ▪ Alumni return survey ▪ Existing surveys of scholars

Outcome 3: Staff have knowledge about issues of intersectional gender equality that they apply in their professional and personal lives

Indicators	Data sources
Confidence and capacity reported by staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff survey ▪ Evaluation of GEDSI training for staff ▪ Annual professional performance review

Outcome 4: The Program is recognised and respected for its high-quality inclusive practice

Indicators	Data sources
DFAT's assessment of quality of GEDSI in the Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ratings and comments in the Annual Partner Performance Assessment ▪ Ratings and comments in the Annual Program Performance Report
Perspectives of Australia Awards applicants, recipients and alumni	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interviews ▪ Focus group discussions
Independent assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ End-of-Program review

Annex A GEDSI Working Group Terms of Reference

A.1 Purpose

To provide oversight, guidance and support in the design, implementation and ongoing improvement of the Australia Awards – South Asia *GEDSI Approach and Action Plan*.

A.2 Key responsibilities

The Working Group will:

- provide guidance and support to the GEDSI Short-Term Adviser responsible for the revision and redesign of the GEDSI Approach by providing inputs and support (via email, Skype/Zoom conference calls and some individual face-to-face meetings) for the consultation, analysis and drafting of the revised Approach document taking place between February and May 2021
- provide ongoing guidance and monitoring inputs to implementation of the GEDSI Approach and activities through a minimum of six-monthly review and planning meetings that will be facilitated by the GEDSI Short-Term Adviser via Skype conference calls
- identify and communicate key lessons learnt in relation to the implementation of GEDSI in the Program, by working with the GEDSI Short-Term Adviser and MEL Short-Term Adviser, ensuring that the issues identified assist colleagues to make improvements for the Program overall, and—as appropriate—are shared more widely with partners, stakeholders and DFAT
- advocate for GEDSI practices to be continuously embedded in core Program activities and day-to-day operations by way of guidance, advice and input to Program team activities
- identify gaps and risks relating to the GEDSI Approach and activities and (as part of responsibilities on guidance and quality) provide advice to management and the GEDSI Short-Term Adviser on areas to improve
- develop, promote and use creative ways of engaging other Working Groups in the pursuit of gender equality and social inclusion
- develop GEDSI-related material as required
- continuously review and update the GEDSI Activity Plan, ensuring it is in line with the Program's GEDSI objectives and strategy
- provide a report of operations and activities every two months to the Team Leader
- provide support for specific milestone events such as International Women's Day, International Day of Persons with Disability and others as applicable in achieving public diplomacy objectives
- contribute to developing/updating GEDSI Professional Development Resources, including linkages with Scope Global's Connect group on Diversity and Inclusion. This includes encouraging regular learning and knowledge management on GEDSI through sharing activities, holding forums, and periodically monitoring and evaluating programs for GEDSI results against the goals
- develop and employ good practice guidelines and indicators to access, analyse and document GEDSI outcomes.

A.3 Membership

The Working Group was initiated in January 2020 under Australia Awards – South and West Asia. Members were sought through a call for volunteers representing various country programs. With the changes brought about by the transition to the current Program in February 2021, the table below lists the current Working Group members (as of May 2021).

Membership will be reviewed annually to ensure the right mix and representation.

Group member	Role / Portfolio	Location
Anuradha Mundkur	GEDSI Short-Term Adviser, Australia Awards – South Asia	Practice Leader Australia
Kushmin Perera	Program Officer Sri Lanka and Maldives / Program Coordinator – GEDSI	Coordinator – GEDSI Working Group Sri Lanka
Angela Jeganathan	Regional Finance and Administration Manager	Sri Lanka
Sonam Tshomo	Program Officer, Australia Awards – Bhutan & India	Bhutan
Poroma Kanya	Scholar Engagement and Internship Coordinator,	Australia
Andrea David	Program Officer – Sri Lanka and Maldives	Sri Lanka
Dulani Atapattu	Senior Finance and Administration Officer	Sri Lanka
TinNandar Khine	Finance and Administration Officer, Australia Awards – Myanmar	Myanmar
Hridita Dewan	Program Officer, Australia Awards – Bangladesh	Bangladesh
Shweta Joshi	Program Officer, Australia Awards – Nepal	Nepal
Lucy Delahunty	Program Coordinator, Continuous Professional Development Solutions	Australia
Dilhari Pathirana	Senior Program Officer, DFAT	Sri Lanka
Sunita Gurung	Program Manager, DFAT	Nepal

A.4 Management and coordination

The Working Group will meet every two months, during the first or second week of the relevant month. Meetings will be chaired by the GEDSI Short-Term Adviser. The meeting link and agenda will be circulated by the Coordinator – GEDSI Working Group before each meeting. Members are free to add agenda items and observers are free to join.

The Working Group is a resource that the Team Leader may call upon to provide specific advice and support.

A.5 Reporting

Meeting minutes will be shared with the Working Group following each meeting, and Management reports will be shared with the Team Leader every two months. All documentation will be regularly uploaded to SharePoint.

Annex B Guideline: enquiring about air travel accessibility/adjustments

B.1 Purpose

To guide enquiry with airlines about their policies and practices for making adjustments for passengers with disability.

B.2 Suggested enquiry process

1. Review airline websites to conduct initial research into the accessibility of their platform, and their accessibility policies and procedures.
2. Arrange meetings (by phone or in person) with airline staff in-country to discuss the following (selecting the airlines that are used most frequently for Scholarship recipients travelling to Australia and also within the region for Short Course and APO participants):
 - specific adjustments that can be made at departure airport, in transit and on arrival at the final destination
 - accessibility features on the plane (e.g. in relation to safety procedures, embarking and disembarking at airports, accessing seats, toilets and washrooms)
 - processes for ensuring adjustments are made (e.g. any medical certificates required, information to be provided at time of booking and/or flight confirmation)
 - timeframes for making adjustments
 - carriage of passengers' wheelchairs or other mobility devices in relation to luggage allowance.
3. Communicate with domestic airlines in Australia (with assistance of Scope Global staff in Adelaide) to discuss the following:
 - what type of adjustments can be made by domestic airlines for passengers transiting from international to domestic flights and on arrival at final destination
 - accessibility features on the plane (e.g. in relation to safety procedures, embarking and disembarking at airports, accessing seats, toilets and washrooms)
 - processes for ensuring adjustments are made (e.g. any medical certificates required, information to be provided at time of booking and/or flight confirmation)
 - timeframes for making adjustments
 - carriage of passengers' wheelchairs or other mobility devices in relation to luggage allowance.

B.3 Summary of key findings

Name of airline:

Address:

Contact details:

Date assessment completed:

Name and contact details of Australia Awards – South Asia staff who assessed:

a) Complete summary for each airline assessed and also the domestic carrier

Area assessed	Rating (0 = not at all; 1 = limited; 2 = satisfactory; 3 = excellent)	Description
Policy and procedures for passengers with disability requiring adjustments		<i>(Reference/attach document.)</i>
Ability to make appropriate adjustments (even if limited prior experience)		<i>(Note any particular areas where the airline is willing to assist and/or any concerns.)</i>
Other comments		<i>(Note any specific issues or advice for applicants, Australia Awards recipients and/or Program staff, e.g. processes, time or resources needed to enable adjustments.)</i>

b) Any other comments or actions to follow up

Annex C Accessible meetings and events

C.1 Goal

To ensure that people with disability have a voice, it is important that they are able to have their say at every meeting and event. Accessibility to every meeting and event provides this opportunity for people with disability. DFAT is committed to extending the benefits of development to *all*, and to promoting the dignity and wellbeing of people with disability. Australia is also part of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, a longstanding commitment to uphold and safeguard the rights of people with disability.

C.2 Outcome

Every DFAT meeting and event enables full participation to every person attending, especially those with disability. Accessibility refers to both physical structures and communication methods. Thinking through accessibility is a process that benefits everyone—older people, pregnant women, people from different language groups or from different educational backgrounds, and children.

C.3 Method

For outreach and accessibility, every venue must be prepared to meet the needs of people with disability. It is essential that consideration is given to the venue and how participants will get to and from every event.

C.4 How you identify and invite people with disability and their representative organisations

- Before meetings or events, it is recommended to contact local DPOs for (paid) advice. The DPO may be in a position to help in the planning stages of meetings/events when considering the inclusion of people with disability to ensure that the best possible access is arranged.
- Proactively invite disability stakeholders, as you would other civil society stakeholders, to ensure they are not left out.
- It should be standard practice to ask people whether they have any particular requirements, such as accessibility or communication requirements.
- If you promote your event on a website, ensure the information is accessible and compatible with the range of assistive hardware and software that people with disability may use to access electronic information.
- Use appropriate language in your promotional material when communicating information to people with disability. For example, talk about 'accessible toilets and parking' rather than 'disabled toilet or parking', talk about 'access for people with disability' rather than 'disabled access', talk about 'people who use wheelchairs' rather than 'people confined to wheelchairs', talk about 'a person who is blind' rather than 'a person who suffers blindness'.

- To ensure that appropriate access is arranged, it is important to involve people with disability in the planning process. The best way to identify any access issues is to ask the person themselves (if possible) what their access requirements/needs are.

C.5 Accessibility to be aware of

- Determine requirements for written information, e.g. Braille (what form of Braille), large print (and what size) or audio.
- Consider language for translation where time permits—it may be necessary to arrange a translator. The person may have a preferred translator, in which case it is recommended that this translator be engaged for the meeting/consultation.
- Determine whether a sign language interpreter or other interpreter is required.
- Carers/assistants will often come, and may need support with travel/transport.

C.6 Choosing a venue for a meeting

Get advice from local DPOs about good accessible venues. Take a checklist with you.

Is your building physically accessible, including the toilets, corridors and eating area for people with disability?

If not, consider:

- asking the venue whether there are temporary ramps. This can be done easily for just one or two steps. But be aware of security and safety
- finding another venue, such as a place where people with disability more frequently meet.

Identify and list accessible accommodation available in the vicinity of the venue.

C.7 During the meeting/consultation

If using an interpreter (for example, a sign language interpreter), ensure that the interpreter understands the discussion and is being understood by the participants of the meeting. Encourage the person/people to let you know if any problems arise in understanding/communication as the meeting progresses.

The following are some examples of what to do on a practical level to ensure accessibility and comfort:

- Use signs with large print to direct people to meeting locations.
- If a lift needs to be used to get to a meeting room, ensure the lift is big enough to fit a wheelchair. If it is not, an alternative venue may need to be used.
- If directing a person with vision impairment or blindness to a room, ask them how they wish to be directed. (It is common for you to walk beside and a little in front of the person while s/he holds your elbow. Then talk her/him through the directions, letting her/him know whether they are approaching stairs, turning left or right etc.)
- If pushing a person in a wheelchair, always guide the wheelchair down stairs backwards to ensure that the person does not fall forward out of the chair.
- In your written material, use a clear sans serif font such as Arial in a large type size and ensure a strong contrast between text and background.

C.8 How people will get to the event

- It may be impossible to get to the event by public transport; consider reimbursing taxi costs or organising transport with the advice/assistance of a local DPO.
- Include access costs into budget line to be able to set aside the funds to ensure there are no financial barriers to accommodating access needs.
- Provide information on the venue, details of how to get there and what support will be available (including reimbursement if applicable).

C.9 Further reading

For further reading on accessible meetings or events, see:

- *Creating Accessible Events*, a checklist developed by the Government of Western Australia's Disability Services Commission:
www.disability.wa.gov.au/Global/Publications/Understanding%20disability/Built%20environment/Creating%20accessible%20events.pdf
- *Accessible Events: A good practice guide for staff organising events in Higher Education*, written by Tina Elliott, Lawrie Phipps and Sue Harrison:
www.tcd.ie/disability/assets/doc/pdf/Accessible_Events.pdf

The following sites provide quick-reference guides to interacting and communicating effectively with people with disability:

- *Showing Respect by Being Direct* (Mobility International USA):
www.miusa.org/resource/tipsheet/respect
- *Interacting With Students Who Have Disabilities* (Austin Community College District):
www.austincc.edu/spcourse/interacting.htm

These guidelines are based on the CBM accessible meeting and event tool.

Annex D Event checklist

D.1 How to use these checklists

These checklists should be completed for any Australia Awards – South Asia event. They are intended as guides and further factors may need to be considered, dependent on the nature of the event. The checklists to be completed are:

1. COVID-19 Health and Safety
2. Carbon footprint minimisation
3. Gender equality, disability and social inclusion
4. Monitoring and evaluation

Program personnel should be flexible in the design of any event and ensure that all team members are aware of the importance of completing these checklists.

A copy of the completed checklists is to be saved on SharePoint and shared with the relevant Country Program Manager or Event Manager.

1. COVID -19 Health & Safety

- Ensure national health and safety guidelines are adhered to.** This may include:
 - Total number of participants
 - Use of face masks
 - Temperature checks.

- Consider additional and/or different support that may be required by people with disability. This may include:**
 - having access to personal protective equipment (like gloves and face masks) that can be worn when supporting a person with disability who is not able to be socially distanced. For example, a person who is blind who requires sighted guidance around the event venue, or a person in a wheelchair who requires assistance with accessing meals and drinks
 - providing alternative options for people with disability to participate in events if they cannot physically attend—for example, a person with a disability who has secondary illnesses that increase their vulnerability and ability to safely be in a public space.
Note: Alternatives could include providing them with online options, filming the event or providing them with digital information.

National guidelines:

(Note all known national guidelines regarding COVID-19 here.)

2. Carbon footprint minimisation

Reducing the negative environmental impacts that larger events can have

Venue

- Give priority to venues that follow environmentally friendly policies.**
- Request venue to implement environmentally friendly measures.** These may include:
 - turning off lights and equipment when not in use
 - setting air conditioning to seasonal requirements and turning off during breaks
 - providing waste segregation options with clear instructions
 - using whiteboards instead of flip charts
 - not providing writing pads or plastic pens / pencils.

Catering

- Ensure at least one meal is entirely vegetarian.** Also consider using all local products/ingredients where possible or for one or more meals.
- Provide exact numbers for catering to avoid food waste.** Where possible, also provide conference venue with dietary requirements of participants ahead of time.
- Minimise use of non-biodegradable and non-recyclable materials.** This may include aluminium foil, plastic utensils and plastic water bottles.
- Use glass water bottles or jugs only.**

Materials

- Use digital displays only or print backdrops on reusable/biodegradable material.** Donate used materials to a recycling facility.
- Avoid the use of Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) plastics.**
- Avoid printing any handouts for participants.** Electronic documents should be made available in advance of the event.
- Use paperless collaboration platforms.** For example, Poll Everywhere, Candor, MeetingWords.
- Advise participants to bring a laptop or tablet for notetaking.**
- Remind participants to follow simple steps for conserving water and energy.** For example, turning off the lights when they are the last one to leave a room, ensuring taps are turned off fully after washing hands.
- Provide clear instructions for transport, emphasising the importance of carpooling or public transport where possible.**

Travel

- Where possible, arrange direct flights.**
- Where possible, arrange group transport** (e.g. airport transfers). Encourage participants to carpool or take public transport.
- Ask the accommodation provider to inform participants upon check-in of measures to minimise carbon footprint** (e.g. towels placed on hangers when they can be reused).

Optional considerations

- Pay 'carbon dues' by contributing to carbon offsetting initiatives like Journeys to Climate Justice.** If there are local organisations doing similar work, support/donate to these when making carbon offsetting contributions.
- Use mostly locally made providers when event collateral is deemed essential** (i.e. bags, document folders).
- Ask for the venue to minimise the use of meat and dairy products and have more vegetarian items in the menu.**
- Advise participants to leave name tags in a designated box at the end of the event so they can be reused.**
- Where possible, ensure accommodation and venue are within walking distance.** Ask participants to bring appropriate walking shoes.
- Where possible, use one venue for both the event and accommodation.**
- Consider online options to minimise travel** (e.g. for some speakers or participants).

Other

(Note all other event-specific carbon footprint minimisation considerations here.)

3. Gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI)

Please remember that individual attendees may require unique considerations and support and the barriers experienced by different social identities are not homogenous

Venue

- Give priority to venues that have accessibility policies and standard operating procedures in place.**
 - All venues must be inspected by a staff member prior to the event to confirm accessibility.
- Choose an accessible venue.** This includes:
 - requiring accessible ramps or lifts for people who use wheelchairs and/or people with mobility difficulties
 - selecting a venue on the ground level
 - ensuring the room is well lit
 - ensuring the entrance to the venue is accessible, with no obvious tripping hazards
 - ensuring there is adequate and accessible signage at the venue
 - ensuring the toilets are accessible and at the same level/floor as the event room.
- Ensure venue is close to accessible public transport and parking facilities.**
- Ensure provisions are made for any service animals that may need to be in attendance.**
- Ensure there are parent-friendly facilities, e.g. breastfeeding-friendly spaces.**
- Enquire about venue staff training and awareness on disability inclusion and discuss requirements prior to the event.**
- For meal breaks, ensure that the height of tables, overall layout of dining room/allocated area and labelling is accessible to all.**

For example, ensure that labelling of food is appropriate for partially sighted individuals.
- Ensure that venue staff have been briefed regarding participants that require reasonable adjustments, ensuring that risks are mitigated,** e.g. electrical cords on the ground that could be a tripping risk, narrow space between tables that could obscure pathway for a person using a wheelchair.

Room layout

- Ensure that the emcee / event organisers provide a verbal explanation of the layout of the room, including directions to toilets, emergency exits, etc.**
- Ensure clear directional signage of entry/exit points.**
- If a sign language interpreter is present, ensure that:**
 - seats are reserved at the front of the room for hearing impaired guests, with a direct line of vision to the sign language interpreter
 - the sign language interpreter has a plain and still background behind them
 - there are no bright lights or sun beaming behind the sign language interpreter.
- For standing events, ensure there is access to chairs for participants who may require them.**

Invitations

- Ensure that all invitations ask participants if they have any accessibility requirements to participate in the event** (e.g. "If you have any access or support requirements to participate fully, please let us know when you RSVP").
- Ensure that event invitations adhere to minimum accessibility standards:** size 12 font, Arial bolded headings and simple colour contrasts. Alternative invitations can be offered to invitees, including Easy English and screen reader accessible.
- If PDF invitation is circulated, ensure Word/HTML format is also distributed electronically.**
Ensure text and graphics have alt text embedded.
- Provide information about the accessibility of the venue to the attendees,** e.g. parking facilities, public transport and drop-off points.
- Include dress code if required.**

Assistive services

- Ensure sign language interpreters have been arranged, and/or any assistive learning and reading devices, if required.**
Keep in mind that some participants may require this support without indicating their need for it in advance.
 - Ask participants who have requested a sign language interpreter if they have a preferred interpreter or agency.
 - Start the booking process for the sign language interpreter at least one month before the event (this is due to the severe shortage worldwide).
 - Provide the sign language interpreter with as much information as possible prior to the event, e.g. speaking notes, schedule etc.
 - Ensure the sign language interpreter(s) are qualified in line with international and national standards and are employed.
 - Ensure interpreters meet specific language needs in country as well as for regional events.
 - Depending on the event's duration and format, ensure that sufficient interpreters are available to accommodate any small break-out group discussions. As a good practice, two interpreters will be required for an event of 1 hour or longer.
- If the event is a large public meeting where invitees do not need to RSVP or it is highly likely that people will attend without RSVPing, ensure a sign language interpreter is booked in advance where possible.**
- Prior to the event, inform the event's speakers that interpreting will be used and provide simple guidance regarding protocols.**

PA and other systems

- Organise a functioning hearing loop if required.**
- Organise a PA system (microphone and speakers) and ensure that external noise is minimised.**
 - Include adjustable height microphones or clip-on microphones.
 - Avoid strobes or flashing lights.
- Ensure there is adequate wifi connectivity.**
- Provide phone/laptop charging stations.**
- Ensure the speakers' platform is accessible for people who use wheelchairs or have other mobility requirements** (e.g. accessible ramps).

- Prior to the meeting/event, ensure all participants are familiar with and able to access all features.**

Materials

- Ensure all documents adhere to minimum accessibility standards:** size 12 font, Arial bolded headings and simple colour contrasts. Alternative documents can be offered to invitees, including Easy English and screen reader accessible.
- Ensure that inclusive language is used in all documentation and presentations,** i.e. care should be made to use positive, non-discriminatory language that respects the rights of all individuals and celebrates diversity.
- Ensure that presenters and participants can seek advice from representatives of different identity groups who may be presenters/participants at the event if required.**
- If documents are circulated prior to, or at, the event, ensure that accessible formats—depending on the specific needs of those attending—are circulated concurrently or arrangements made for accessible formats** (accessible formats include large print, Braille and Word or text versions of documents on CD, memory stick or by email).

Presentations

- Ensure specific accessibility needs are considered for people with visual and hearing disabilities if the event is delivered through digital platforms.**
 - Prior to event, ensure all accessibility features are reviewed on relevant platforms.
 - For example, ensure that live captioning can be embedded into presentations delivered via Zoom.
- Ensure all videos have closed captions embedded within them and the CC button is activated prior to playing.**
- Ensure that the presenters have been reminded that if the video contains any text that is not accompanied by voice over, the text will be read by the presenter.**
- Ensure that any images/photos/graphs/tables included in presentations will be described by all presenters.**
- Ensure signage and presentations use simple colour contrasts for ease of viewing.**
- Ensure that person-first language is used when referring to people with disability.**

Group activities

- If group activities (including icebreakers) are planned, ensure the needs of people with disability are considered and addressed so full participation of all participants is guaranteed.** This may include briefing the group facilitators or other members in the group about accessibility requirements.

Scheduling

- Ensure sufficient event intervals are in place to meet the needs of all individuals.** More frequent or longer breaks may be needed for people in wheelchairs to relieve pressure or attend to personal hygiene requirements, for parents breastfeeding children, or to accommodate religious prayer times.

Accommodation

- If accommodation is not already provided to all participants, present accessible options to make it easier for those with disability where possible.**

Optional

Other

(Note all other event-specific GEDSI considerations here.)

4. Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)

- Ensure Registration Lists capturing key data are in place.** This should include the following questions at minimum:

1. Which of the following describes how you think of yourself?

- Female
 Male
 Other
 I prefer not to say

2. The following questions ask about difficulties you may have doing certain activities because of a health concern. If you answer 'c' or 'd' for any question, you may contact the event organiser directly to discuss your requirements.

Questions	a. No – no difficulty	b. Yes – some difficulty	c. Yes – a lot of difficulty	d. Cannot do at all
Do you have difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses?				
Do you have difficulty hearing, even if using a hearing aid?				
Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps?				
Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating?				
Do you have difficulty with self-care such as washing all over or dressing?				
Using your usual (customary) language, do you have difficulty communicating, for example understanding or being understood?				

- Ensure workshop/event evaluations are in place.** Include evaluation questions to seek feedback on how accessible and inclusive the event was.
- Arrange for an event photographer, if appropriate.**
- Capture participant quotes about their participation and experience.**

Other

(Note all other event-specific M&E considerations here.)

Annex E Indigenous Participation Plan

Strengthening Indigenous participation at Scope Global: In 2018, we reviewed our *Indigenous Participation Plan* and began translating it into a new corporate strategy to meet (and wherever possible exceed) the minimum requirements of ‘Indigenous participation’ set out by our core clients and our shareholder. With a commitment to supporting the Indigenous economy in Australia and creating opportunities to elevate Indigenous talent, we aimed to develop a whole-of-company approach to strengthen Indigenous partnership and participation. The strategy built on our existing corporate knowledge and was aligned to our *Strategic Plan*. It also included inputs from employees across various roles and levels within the company.

We aim to launch our first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) by August 2021. Our RAP seeks to link strategically with our portfolio sectors, and frame procurement, partnership and recruitment activities in keeping with Reconciliation Australia’s pillars of reconciliation. The RAP will support the growth of total spend on Indigenous-owned businesses, attract and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander talent, and ensure that Scope Global is visibly and genuinely active in Indigenous participation efforts. Throughout our journey of developing our RAP, we will seek guidance and leadership from Indigenous professionals and experts.

Commitment to Reconciliation in the Program: Scope Global is committed to implementing DFAT’s commitments under the *Indigenous Procurement Policy* and the *DFAT Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan May 2019 – June 2022*. To increase Indigenous procurement, participation and employment, Scope Global will, over the lifecycle of the Program:

- engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and experts to work with Indigenous alumni and partners in the South Asia region to develop APOs
- provide opportunities and employment to attract and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander talent
- engage with Indigenous-owned businesses, suppliers and subcontractors to provide education and training services.

Since the inception of Australia Awards – South and West Asia, Scope Global has prepared scholars with information regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and relevant issues at pre-departure briefings. In the current Program, this activity will be formalised to be an essential part of pre-departure briefings, and Indigenous leaders will be engaged to provide cultural sensitivity and awareness training to new scholars.

In January 2020, we provided Aboriginal cultural awareness and sensitivity training to scholars during their study in Australia. The training was led by Haydyn Bromley, CEO and expert facilitator of Bookabee Australia. In the current Program, we will expand our program of Indigenous cultural training activities, which will include opportunities for scholars to meet with Indigenous community leaders in each state.

As part of our *Scholar and Alumni Engagement and Communications Strategy*, we will promote and host events and activities for and with scholars in observance of significant dates such as NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week, to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We will organise these activities in partnership with Indigenous experts and employ Indigenous-owned businesses.

Partners and suppliers: Where possible, Scope Global procures goods and services from businesses that are verified by Supply Nation, Australia's largest national directory of verified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-owned businesses. Since 2018, Scope Global has actively identified Indigenous technical consultants, suppliers and other organisations by attending the Supply Nation Trade Fairs in Sydney and Adelaide. During NAIDOC Week 2020, we released our *Indigenous Procurement Guide*, an internal Scope Global resource that serves as a guide for purchasing from or contracting Indigenous-owned businesses to meet corporate needs. Scope Global supports the Indigenous economy by exclusively purchasing everyday office supplies and procuring several other products and services from Indigenous-owned businesses. We have purchased from a total of 12 Indigenous-owned suppliers and reconciliation advisory services since the 2017–18 financial year.

Training and development: Scope Global is a certified member of the Diversity Council of Australia. Our inaugural RAP will strengthen our ongoing long-term commitment to supporting social and economic prosperity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Training and awareness-building activities for all staff members will be integrated into the RAP. Early in the process of developing our RAP, we identified that, as an organisation, we were limited in our knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture and of the process of developing a RAP. Consequently, the internal Reconciliation Working Group organised two trainings for the Scope Global team: one delivered by Haydyn Bromley of Bookabee Australia and another provided by the engagement team of the South Australian Department of Innovation and Skills. Additionally, two members of the Working Group attended a starter workshop in RAP development delivered by Reconciliation Australia. We will also utilise the Diversity Council of Australia's resources and advisory services in our Reconciliation journey.

People and culture: Scope Global continues to implement additional initiatives to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment and retention. These initiatives include:

- ensuring sound internal policies are in place for engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and supporting Indigenous participation
- maintaining a safe and welcoming work culture
- encouraging staff-led delivery of Acknowledgements of Country at all meetings and organising appropriate Welcomes to Country for all public-facing programs and events
- exploring targeted recruitment. To date, we have recruited three employees who identify as Indigenous, using a specialist recruitment agency based in South Australia and using targeted media pathways.

Scope Global's commitment: We will launch our Reflect RAP by June 2021. We will continue to track the value of Indigenous enterprises in our supply chain against baselines established in FY2018–19 and increase where appropriate. Our annual expenditure contribution to the Indigenous economy has so far tripled since planning for the RAP began. We will continue to develop our Indigenous partnership, recruitment and retention strategies.

