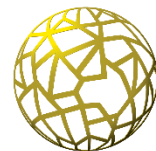


Australian Council for International Development

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION GUIDELINES



AUSTRALIAN
COUNCIL
FOR
INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

About ACFID

The Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) is the peak body for Australian non-government organisations involved in international development and humanitarian action.

Our vision

Our vision is Australia acting with compassion and fairness for a just, sustainable and equitable world.

Our shared purpose

Our purpose is to lead, unite and support international development and humanitarian organisations to realise our vision.

About ACFID

Founded in 1965, ACFID currently has 128 full members and 22 affiliate members operating in more than 65 developing countries. The total revenue raised by ACFID's membership from all sources amounts to \$1.83 billion (2020 - 21), \$721 million of which is raised from over 996,000 thousand Australians. ACFID's members range between large Australian multi-sectoral organisations that are linked to international federations of NGOs, to agencies with specialised thematic expertise, and smaller community-based groups, with a mix of secular and faith-based organisations.

ACFID members must comply with the ACFID Code of Conduct, a voluntary, self-regulatory sector code of good practice that aims to improve international development and humanitarian action outcomes and increase stakeholder trust by enhancing the transparency, accountability and effectiveness of signatory organisations. Covering 9 Quality Principles, 33 Commitments and 92 compliance indicators, the Code sets good standards for program effectiveness, fundraising, governance and financial reporting. Compliance includes annual reporting and checks. The Code has an independent complaint handling process.

ACFID's values

Integrity

We act with honesty and are guided by ethical and moral principles in all that we do.

Accountability

We take responsibility for our actions and are accountable to our stakeholders, and in particular primary stakeholders, for our performance and integrity.

Transparency

We openly share information about our organisations and our work with all our stakeholders and the public.

Respect

We recognise the value and diversity of all people and are committed to treating others with due regard for their rights, dignity, and integrity.

Effectiveness

We strive to deliver outcomes that bring about positive change in the lives of people living in poverty.

Equity

We are committed to overcoming prejudices and disadvantage and promoting fair and just access to resources and opportunities.

Cooperation

We work with and alongside others in a spirit of mutuality, respecting diversity and difference in the pursuit of common goals.

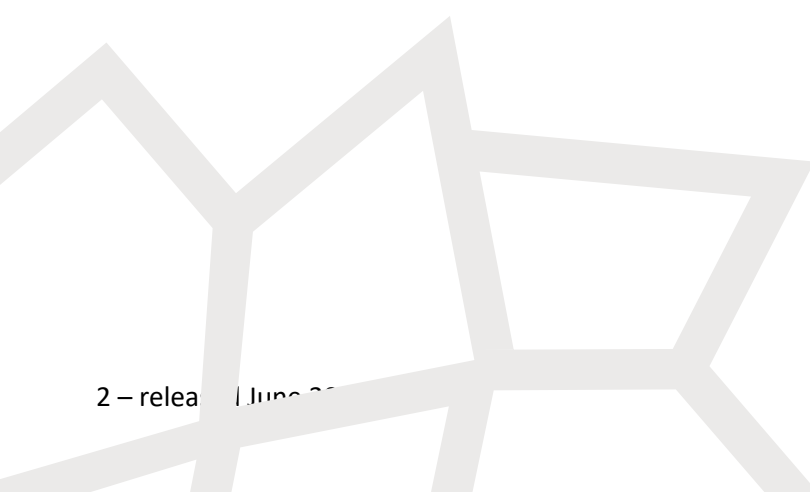
Front Cover Photo:

Children from marginalized backgrounds can struggle in school without solid foundations for learning. That's why Tearfund's partner, Ethiopian Kale Heywet Church Development Commission has worked with local churches to establish over 100 pre-schools, helping kids like 7 yr old Radiet enjoy a kickstart to education.

Candice Lassey – Tearfund Australia

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Section One: Overview

The Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) is the peak body for Australian non-government organisations involved in international development and humanitarian action.

Scope of Guidelines

As defined at Section 4.1 of the ACFID Constitution, there are three classes of membership of ACFID. These are:

- Full Members;
- Affiliate Members (including University Affiliates); and
- Honorary individual members

These guidelines outline the purpose, principles and process applied by ACFID in implementing and facilitating the Membership application process for Full Membership applications and Affiliate Membership applications. Honorary individual membership involves a nomination process undertaken by the ACFID Board alone and does not form part of these guidelines.

Purpose of the ACFID membership application process

The purpose of the ACFID membership application process is to enable applicants to make an informed decision about whether to join ACFID and for ACFID to make an informed and accountable decision about whether to accept an application.

The objectives of the process are to:

- introduce applicant organisations to the benefits of ACFID membership and the requirements of the ACFID Code of Conduct,
- determine applicant eligibility against the criteria for membership,
- determine appropriate response(s) to any risks to ACFID and its membership identified in the application process, and
- identify avenues for collaboration between the applicant organisation and ACFID subsequent to application approval.

Principles which inform the ACFID membership application process

ACFID is the peak council of Australian not-for-profit, non-government organisations engaging in international development work. ACFID aims to strengthen the collective impact of member organisations against poverty through effective and accountable international development practice. ACFID's membership eligibility criteria are designed to ensure that its membership base reflects its vision and mandate as articulated in the constitution and in the ACFID Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct is designed to encourage dialogue, reflection and change within signatory organisations in a way which enhances their transparency and accountability and contributes to improved developmental effectiveness. The assessment of compliance on application is designed to ensure that applicants reflect on their performance against the obligations outlined in the Code, identify areas for improvement and where necessary take action to ensure they meet the requirements on application.

As a membership organisation, ACFID has a responsibility to ensure that its members do not, by act or omission, engage in activities which are likely to be detrimental to the interests of ACFID. Such conduct need not be contrary to the Code of Conduct to be considered detrimental to the interests of ACFID or its members. The risk assessment on application is designed to assess and respond to such risks.

ACFID only progresses completed applications through the assessment process. All assessments are based on agreed criteria which are publicly available and to which ACFID is accountable. Each assessment considers the size and complexity of the organisation and their stage of organisational development.

Timelines for submission of applications are publicly available and allow sufficient time for review by the Membership Admissions Committee (MAC), Code of Conduct Committee (CCC) and ACFID's Board of Directors (the Board). Applicant organisations are given reasonable response timeframes for each stage of the application process. Organisations have a total of 18 months, from the time of submitting their application, to complete any remedial work based on feedback from ACFID. If the application process goes over this time, applicants will need to start again.

If an organisation is deemed unsuitable for membership, clear reasons will be given. Where applicant organisations require organisational changes and improvements to become eligible, the organisation will receive this feedback.

Section Two:

Membership Categories

ACFID has two main types of organisational membership: Full Membership and Affiliate Membership (which includes University Affiliates). An individual person may not be a Full Member or an Affiliate of ACFID.

Full Membership

Full Membership is open to Australian organisations actively working in the international aid and development sector and/or related services in Australia. Organisations must be signatories to the ACFID Code of Conduct, a process which forms part of the application.

Under rule 3.10 of the ACFID Constitution, to be eligible for Full membership of ACFID, an organisation must:

- Be Australian;
- Be voluntary;
- Be not-for-profit; and
- Conduct activities in the fields of cooperation in international relief and development, development assistance, development education and/or related services in Australia that are consistent with and supportive of the objectives and purposes of ACFID.

To determine whether your organisation is eligible to apply for ACFID Full membership, please refer to Annex A at the end of this document.

Organisations that are not eligible for Full Membership through the criteria above may be eligible for Affiliate Membership.

ACFID Full Members must:

- become signatories to the ACFID Code to Conduct and remain compliant with the Code by meeting compliance requirements;
- agree with the objectives and purpose of ACFID;
- read ACFID's Strategic Plan 2015 - 2020;
- accept ACFID's Community of Practice Operational Guidelines;
- disclose any potential risk posed to ACFID by their membership; and
- pay Annual Fees.

In return, Full Members can:

- attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM);
- vote at the AGM, providing they have paid their membership fees at the time of the meeting;
- nominate a person for election to the Board of Directors (Board) and other ACFID Standing Committees;
- participate ACFID's Communities of Practice;
- receive member only communication and updates; and
- access the full range of member benefits, including participation in networking events and industry-focused training and development programs

Affiliate Membership

Affiliate Membership is only open to organisations and institutions that are ineligible for Full Membership.

Eligibility under these criteria is at the discretion of the ACFID Board. **For-profit companies are ineligible to apply for either Full Membership or Affiliate Membership.**

Affiliate membership is open to Australian organisations/institutions that share the vision of ACFID and wish to work with Australian NGOs through joint advocacy, research, information provision, training, funding, or other services.

Affiliate Members must:

- have knowledge and commitment to ACFID;
- accept the ACFID Communities of Practice Operational Guidelines;
- disclose any potential risk posed to ACFID by their membership; and
- pay Annual Fees.

In return, Affiliate Members can:

- attend the AGM;
- speak at the AGM, if invited by the Chair;
- participate in committees and ACFID's Communities of Practice;
- receive member only communication and updates; and
- receive member discounts to events.

Affiliate Membership for Universities

For ACFID and ACFID Members, universities represent valuable partners with whom we can increase our collective impact against poverty and enhance the sector's capacity in development effectiveness and research.

For universities, ACFID offers a valuable platform to establish industry partners in the aid and development sector, increasing the impact and applicability of teaching and research conducted in the university.

Universities wishing to apply for Affiliate Membership should also read the information in Annex B.

Section Three: Applying for ACFID Membership

All applications for ACFID Membership are now done through our online portal. Details on how to find and access the portal are in the FAQs document on the ACFID website.

Applying for Full Membership

Organisations wishing to apply for Full Membership must go through an eligibility process first. This is done within the portal. During this process, you will need to complete some information on your organisation and upload a range of documents.

The documents required are:

- Copy of Business Registration or Certificate of Incorporation.
- Diagram of organisational structure, for example Board of Directors, committees, CEO, teams, staff and volunteers (this is not prescriptive nor limited). Where the organisation is part of a wider structure, please also supply a diagram which shows the relationships between parent, subsidiaries, trusts and foundations;
- A list of your Board Members, including name, location, short bio and whether they are executive or non-executive (i.e. – whether they are employed by your organisation or not). Please note that the majority of your Board must be non-executive.
- Minutes from your most recent Annual General Meeting
- A governing instrument (Constitution) which is compliant with the requirements outlined in the Code of Conduct 7.1.1, 7.4.1, and 7.4.2 (available on ACFID's website);
- A certificate of registration with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC);
- Annual Report
- Audited financial statements (if not included in your annual report)

Once submitted to ACFID, you will receive a response within 2 weeks and if eligible, will commence the second stage of the application.

Application Fee

Once eligible, and if you decide to progress, you will be required to pay an application fee of \$500 (plus gst). This fee will be deducted from your first annual membership fee if you successfully pass into membership. If you do not complete your application within 18 months, or you withdraw at any stage, this fee is forfeited.

Application Form and Code Self-Assessment

You will then be required to complete a full application form (through the portal) and Code of Conduct Self-Assessment (CSA).

The application form will ask a variety of questions about your organisation and requires you to upload some final documents. Details of these can be found at Annex A.

To qualify for ACFID Full Membership, organisations must be compliant with the Code of Conduct on application, with the exception of the following areas:

- Have an annual report or financial statements that is Code compliant (Commitment 8.3)
- Provide information about how to make a complaint to ACFID on their website or in their complaints policy (Commitment 7.3.3)
- Include a statement of adherence to the Code on your website (Commitment 7.3.4)

Those commitments must be fulfilled as soon as you become members.

The Code-Self-Assessment is a process by which applying organisations (and then ongoing members) systematically address all of the 9 Quality Principles and 33 Commitments within the Code of Conduct. When completing the CSA through the portal, you will be taken through the Code and asked to explain how your organisation is compliant with each Commitment. This includes explaining what your organisation has in place to address each of the Verifiers, commensurate with the size and scope of your organisation. Further detailed instructions on this process will be provided on application. If you haven't looked at the Code of Conduct yet, please visit our [website here](#).

At various times throughout the process, you will be asked to upload supporting documents. You can upload more than one document if required to demonstrate your compliance. The list of policies that we request to see can be found in Annex A.

Risk Assessment

ACFID has a responsibility to ensure that its members do not, by act or omission, engage in activities which are likely to be detrimental to the interests of ACFID.

The purpose of the risk assessment is to identify any risks which an applicant may pose to ACFID, to its members and to the Code and to assess whether or not such risks can be managed effectively.

This include but is not necessarily restricted to political, financial and reputational risks.

A preliminary risk assessment will be prepared by ACFID for consideration by relevant committees and may draw on, as appropriate:

- The statement of risk submitted by the applicant;
- The results of the assessment of compliance on application;
- A review of the applicant's past relationship – if any - with ACFID, particularly any lapses in membership and/or compliance issues;
- An internet search with a focus on third party commentary, particularly negative media comment;
- Phone calls to applicant's in-country program partners for the purpose of verifying the applicant's programs and disbursement of funds overseas for the purposes stated.

The application appraisal and assessment process

Once received, applications for ACFID membership move through six key stages:

- ACFID internal assessment (2-4 months);
- Remedial actions carried out by applicant if required (approx. 1-4 months);
- Membership Admissions Committee (MAC) assessment;
- Code of Conduct Committee assessment;
- Approval by the ACFID Board – granting Interim Full Membership; and
- ACFID Council ratification of membership at the ACFID Annual General Meeting – granting Full Membership

At each stage, applications for membership may be rejected or further information requested from the applicant organisation. Applicant organisations will be informed of the outcome at each stage of the assessment process. The ACFID Secretariat will work with applicant organisations to ensure Code compliance at the first two stages of the assessment process. This is often an iterative process, and applicant organisations may be required to adjust and re-submit policy and process documents to meet the requirements of the Code of Conduct.

Dates and timeframes

ACFID accepts applications for Full Membership twice a year; and can be found on our website.

PLEASE BE AWARE: It can take anywhere between 4 – 18 months between an organisation submitting an application for Full Membership and that organisation being granted Interim Membership by the ACFID Board.

We do not have internal capacity to speed up the process regardless of individual organisational circumstances.

Applying for ACFID Affiliate Membership

Both Affiliate and University Affiliate applications require completion of an online form through the portal. For Universities, please read the associated guidance on our website.

Documents required on application (Non-university)

Each new Affiliate Member applicant (excepting university applicants) is required to submit the documents listed below:

- A certificate of registration issued by an Australian authority;
- A governing instrument;
- Audited financial statements and an audit report;
- An annual report;
- A Statement of Risk (this is a statement by the applicant organisation pertaining to any perceived financial, reputational, legal, and political risks to ACFID. It should be signed by the Head of Agency/CEO)

Documents required on application (University)

Each new Affiliate University Member applicant is required to submit the documents listed below:

- A copy of university's latest annual report;
- A copy of university's Governing Instrument (Constitution, Act of Parliament or Memorandum and Articles of Association);
- A copy of the university's most recent audited financials (if not present in the Annual Report)
- A Statement of Risk (this is a statement by the applicant organisation pertaining to any perceived financial, reputational, legal, and political risks to ACFID. It should be signed by the Head of Agency/CEO)

Risk Assessment

ACFID has a responsibility to ensure that its members do not, by act or omission, engage in activities which are likely to be detrimental to the interests of ACFID.

The purpose of the risk assessment is to identify any risks which an applicant may pose to ACFID, to its members and to the Code and to assess whether or not such risks can be managed effectively. This includes but is not necessarily restricted to political, financial and reputational risks.

A preliminary risk assessment will be prepared by ACFID for consideration by relevant committees and may draw on, as appropriate:

- The statement of risk submitted by the applicant;
- The results of the assessment of compliance on application;
- A review of the applicant's past relationship – if any - with ACFID, particularly any lapses in membership and/or compliance issues;
- An internet search with a focus on third party commentary, particularly negative media comment.

The application appraisal and assessment process

Upon receipt, applications for ACFID membership move through four key stages:

- ACFID internal assessment;
- Membership Admissions Committee (MAC) assessment
- Approval by the ACFID Board – granting Interim Affiliate Membership
- ACFID Council ratification of membership at the ACFID Annual General Meeting – granting Full Affiliate Membership

Dates and Timeframes

ACFID accepts applications for Affiliate Membership at any time of the year. To ensure your application is processed in a timely manner, please email membership@acfid.asn.au when you have submitted through the portal.

It can take anywhere between 3 – 6 months between an organisation submitting an application for Affiliate Membership and that organisation being granted Interim Affiliate Membership by the ACFID Board.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Membership Application FAQs found on the ACFID website. At any time before applying, it is encouraged you contact membership@acfid.asn.au for a chat.

Photo credit: When Vanessa heard that Tropical Cyclone Harold was heading her way, she found shelter in a community nearby and stayed there through the night.

Photo: Valerie Fernandez/CARE Australia



Annex A: Supporting information for Full Member applications

ACFID Full Membership eligibility criteria

Criteria for Full Membership	Elaboration of criteria	Means of verification within documents we ask you to submit
Organisation must be Australian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registered in Australia Governing body based in Australia (in accordance with State and Territory requirements and ensuring at least two Directors are based in Australia) A physical presence in Australia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Certificate of registration. Governing instrument Minutes of meetings of the governing body Diagram of organisational structure. Where the organisation is part of a wider structure, please also supply a diagram which shows the relationships between parent, subsidiaries, trusts and foundations. List of Board members, their location and if remunerated (executive)
Organisation must be Not for Profit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)** An organisation that is not carried on for the profit or gain of individual members The organisation may make or retain a surplus provided that surplus is directed to carrying out the organisation’s purposes The organisation cannot distribute profits or assets for the benefit of members or other private persons both during operation and winding up. <p><i>**Organisations under 12 months old are ineligible</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACNC registration Relevant clauses in the governing instrument or constitution Minutes from most recent Annual General Meeting
Organisation must be Voluntary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An organisation formed voluntarily by a group of interested people for a common purpose that serves a public benefit. Board members may or may not be remunerated but the majority must be non-executive This can – at Board’s discretion - include organisations established by statute provided they serve a public benefit and meet the other eligibility criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant clauses in the governing instrument or constitution List of Board members, their location and if remunerated. **please note. Non-Executive means those Board members that are NOT employed staff within your organisation. It is a Code requirement for good governance that the majority are non-executive.
Organisation must conduct activities in the fields of cooperation in international relief and development, development assistance, development education and/or related services in Australia that are consistent with and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Activity” is defined as one or more of community projects, emergency management, community education, advocacy, volunteer sending, environmental protection and restoration, promotion and protection of human rights and the provision of technical and professional services and resources. For the purposes of assessing eligibility, “provision of technical and professional services and resources” includes, but is not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual report and audited financial statements Objects in governing instrument Activities listed in annual report

<p>supportive of the objectives and purposes of ACFID. This includes services to refugees and displaced persons in Australia and activities that serve the interests of indigenous Australians.</p>	<p>restricted to, research, training and fundraising.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisations that engage solely in fundraising in Australia for aid and development work, including work managed by an overseas-based entity, are eligible for ACFID membership provided they are Code compliant on application and they meet all other requirements for ACFID membership. 	
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List of documents/information required for Full Member Application form

The application form will ask for additional information about your organisation as follows:

1. Aim and purpose of entity
2. Brief history of entity, including the year in which your entity was established
3. Country or regional focus of program activities
4. Nature of aid and/or development program activities
5. Funding sources – list in order of proportion of funds received
6. What does your organisation hope to gain by becoming a member of ACFID?

It also requires you to complete and upload:

1. A Statement of Risk (this is a simple statement by the applicant organisation pertaining to any perceived financial, reputational, legal, or political risks to ACFID of the organisation becoming a member. It should be signed by the Head of Agency/CEO). You do not need to submit your organisation's risk matrix.
2. Certificate of Completion for the Introduction to the ACFID Code of Conduct e-course. This is required for your CEO and Board Chair. Access to the course is via <https://learnwithacfid.com/>. You are required to create your own login for this site. It does not take the same details as your MYACFID portal login.

List of policies required on Code Self-Assessment

1. Child Safeguarding policy, code of conduct and reporting procedures (Commitment 1.4)
2. Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Policy (Commitment 1.5)
3. Disability Inclusion Policy (Commitment 2.4)
4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning process or policy (Commitment 4.3)
5. Partnership Commitment Policy (Commitment 5.2)
6. Policy on separation of development from non-development activity (Commitment 7.3)
7. Complaints Handling Policy (Commitment 7.3)
8. Governing Instrument (Commitment 7.4)
9. Policies, procedures or other guidance documents that best show how the organisation manages its financial resources and risks (Commitment 8.2 -financial wrongdoing) (Commitment 5.1-partner due diligence).

Annex B: Additional information for University Affiliates

Guidelines for application

The guidelines for university applicants are as follows:

- The School (or department/centre/institute) of a university can only become an Affiliate Member via the legal entity through which it has been established (i.e. the university).
- For legal reasons, the university must name only one School (or department/centre/institute) to be the Primary Contact for the Affiliate Membership. Whilst there can only be one Primary Contact for the university; benefits apply across the whole legal entity (university).
- The legal entity (usually university name) and the Primary Contact will be listed as the ACFID member on ACFID publications.
- The determination of which part of the university is best placed to maintain ACFID Membership is at the discretion of the university (See example 1)
- ACFID has deemed that neither universities nor their nominated Primary Contact meet the requirements for Full Membership on the basis that they are not voluntary and not-for profit organisations. Rather, most Australian universities are established by an Act of Parliament thus establishing them as public-sector institutions. As such, universities are only eligible for Affiliate Membership, however:
 - If an organisation has a relationship to a university, but is itself a distinct legal entity eligible for Full Membership (i.e. it is Australian, not for profit, conducts aid and development work, and a voluntary organisation) **it is not eligible for Affiliate Membership**. Organisations that fit this description must apply for Full Membership. (See example 2)

Eligibility under these criteria is at the absolute discretion of the ACFID Board.

EXAMPLE 1

The La Trobe University Institute for Human Security and Social Change is a collaborative, interdisciplinary and University-wide research facility, centered in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. The Institute of Human Security and Social Change is not a legal entity distinct from the University. In this instance, the application for ACFID Affiliate Membership will be La Trobe University (legal entity). The delegated Primary Contact for membership will be the Institute of Human Security and Social Change. The membership will be recognised and listed on ACFID publications as “La Trobe University – The Institute of Human Security and Social Change”. All communication pertaining to membership with La Trobe University will go through the Institute of Human Security and Social Change.

EXAMPLE 2

A charitable foundation of an overseas university trust is established by alumni and supporters, residing in Australia, to provide financial support to a range of development and social justice programs managed by the overseas trust.

The Australian charity holds strong ties to overseas university trust and conducts most of its development work through the overseas trust. However, the Australian charity is a voluntary, not for profit organisation, and not established via an act of government. It is therefore eligible for Full Membership and cannot apply for Affiliate Membership.

Scope of Affiliate Membership

The Primary Contact will be the only ACFID contact point; all questions in the membership application will be directed towards the Primary Contact.

The Primary Contact refers to the School (or centre/department/institute) of the university and the academic staff of which it is comprised. It does not refer to students or volunteers within that centre/department/institute.

As ACFID membership communications extend only to the listed Primary Contact, the Primary Contact will be encouraged to collaborate and or garner input among other disciplines or schools of the university that may be relevant to or interested in ACFID and ACFID member activities.

The value of membership extends across the whole university, not just the Primary Contact (though it does not apply to students).

Code of Conduct

ACFID Affiliate University Members do not need to become signatories of the ACFID Code of Conduct (the Code). However, in their application, the applicant must acknowledge whether the Primary Contact carries out development and humanitarian initiatives overseas through disbursements to international programs, program support costs and community education. If they do, they will have the option to become signatories to the ACFID Code of Conduct.

Those Affiliates who do choose to become signatories to the ACFID Code of Conduct will be expected to prepare additional documents as part of the application process and should contact membership@acfid.asn.au for further information.

Fee Structure

If the applicant indicates that they do not conduct aid and development work overseas through disbursements to international programs, program support costs and community education, they will automatically fall into Membership Category 9. This Category comes with a flat Base Fee of \$800.

Affiliate members are charged a discounted fee of 75% of the Base Fee for their respective category; thus, if the applicant does not conduct any aid and development work, they will pay an annual fee of \$600 (75% of \$800). They will not be charged any further fees.

If the applicant indicates that they do conduct aid and development work overseas through disbursements to international programs, program support costs and community education, they will fall into a Membership Category based on those disbursements.

If an applicant indicates that they do conduct aid and development work as per the above, and wish to become Code of Conduct Signatories, they will be charged a discounted fee of 75% of the Base Fee for their respective category, and the full Code fee (Member rate) in that category. They will not be charged for any further fees.