



AUSTRALIAN
COUNCIL
FOR
INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

ACFID Affiliate Membership Guidelines for Universities

Background:

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.

[The Research for Development Impact Network](#) is a collaboration between ACFID Member NGOs and Australian universities. The network is based upon a collective desire to widen debate on international development and to strengthen collaboration between academics and members of ACFID.

Universities wishing to engage with ACFID through [The Research for Development Impact Network](#) are encouraged to consider Affiliate Membership as a way to strengthen their collaboration with ACFID Members.¹ University Affiliate Members are then able to be elected to the RDI Network Steering Committee.

The guidelines for university applicants are as follows:

1. Eligibility & Application:

- 1.1 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).
- 1.2 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).
- 1.3 The legal entity (usually university name) and the Primary Contact will be listed as the ACFID member on ACFID publications.
- 1.4 The determination of which part of the university is best placed to maintain ACFID Membership is at the discretion of the university.

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

¹ For more information about the additional benefits of ACFID Membership visit: <https://acfid.asn.au/get-involved/become-member>

Example 1:

The La Trobe University Institute for Human Security and Social Change is a collaborative, interdisciplinary and University-wide research facility, centred 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.

1.5 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.² 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:

- 1.5.1 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.

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.

2. Scope of Affiliate Membership

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

2.2 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.

2.3 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.

² This has been determined in line with Commitment 7.1 of the ACFID Code of Conduct.

2.4 All ACFID members must follow the [ACFID Community of Practice Operational Guidelines](#) which should be read prior to application.

3. Code of Conduct

3.1 ACFID Affiliate 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.³ If they do, they will have the option to become signatories to the ACFID Code of Conduct.

3.2 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.

4. Fee Structure

4.1 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.

4.2 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.

4.3 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.⁴

4.4 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.

5 Next Steps

5.1 If you wish to apply for ACFID Affiliate Membership, please complete the ACFID Affiliate Membership Application Form.

5.2 The steps below explain the application process and requirements:

5.2.1 Documents required on application.

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

³ **Development and humanitarian initiatives:** Activities undertaken in order to reduce poverty and address global justice issues. In the non-government organisation sector, this may occur through a range of engagements that includes community projects, humanitarian response and emergency management, community education, advocacy, volunteer sending, provision of technical and professional services and resources, environmental protection and restoration, and promotion and protection of human rights.

Aid and development activities are defined in the general definitions of the ACFID Code of Conduct Quality Assurance Framework.

⁴ See ACFID Fee Categories: <https://acfid.asn.au/content/membership-fees>

- A statement of risk;
- A completed University Affiliate Application Form;
- 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)
- Additional financial statements where relevant (non-audited) that indicate role and impact of Primary Contact in development work overseas through disbursements to international programs, program support costs and community education.

ACFID Secretariat staff may – at their discretion – request an applicant to provide additional documents which illustrate how the applicant qualifies for ACFID membership. This could include, for example, an agency strategic plan, project reports, project management tools etc.

Please ensure that you submit all the documents listed above, including all sections of the application form. Incomplete applications will not be assessed.

5.2.2 Code compliance on application

Affiliate Members can choose whether to become signatories to the ACFID Code of Conduct.

Those Affiliates who do choose to become signatories will be expected to prepare additional documents as part of the application process to meet Code compliance on application. If you wish to apply for ACFID Affiliate Membership and Code signatory status, please contact ACFID for more information prior to submitting your application.

Most applicants for Affiliate membership will not apply for Code signatory status.

5.2.3 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 the Effectiveness and Engagement Team at ACFID for consideration by relevant committees and will draw on:

- 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; and
- An internet search with a focus on third party commentary, particularly negative media comment.

5.2.4 Submitting your application

The completed application form and all accompanying documents should be scanned and sent to membership@acfid.asn.au. Please contact ACFID's Member & Stakeholder Engagement Lead prior to submission on 02 8123 2235.

You should contact ACFID prior to and after submitting your application to ensure the documents have been received.

5.2.5 The application appraisal and assessment process

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

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

5.2.6 Dates and timeframes

ACFID accepts applications for Affiliate Membership two times a year. The dates are made available on the ACFID website.

It can take anywhere between 3 – 12 months between an organisation submitting an application for Affiliate Membership and that organisation being granted Interim Affiliate Membership by the ACFID Board.

If you have any questions regarding due dates, please contact ACFID at membership@acfid.asn.au