ACFID Membership

Application Guidelines

# Contents

# Section One: Overview

### a. Scope of these guidelines

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

(a) Full Members;
(b) Affiliate Members; and
(c) 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.

### b. 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.

### c. 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.

- 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.

- ACFID only progresses completed applications through the assessment process. 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

- 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 types of organisational membership: Full Membership and Affiliate Membership.

### a. 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.

Note: An individual person may not be a Full Member or an Affiliate of ACFID.

To determine whether your organisation is eligible to apply for ACFID Full membership, please refer to the table below:

Table 1: ACFID Full Membership eligibility criteria

| Criteria for Full Membership | Elaboration of criteria |
|---|---|
| Organisation must be Australian | • Registered in Australia<br>• Governing body based in Australia<br>• A physical presence in Australia |
| Organisation must be Not for Profit | • Registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)<br>• An organization that is not carried on for the profit or gain of individual members<br>• The organization may make or retain a surplus provided that surplus is directed to carrying out the organisation's purposes<br>• The organization cannot distribute profits or assets for the benefit of members or other private persons both during operation and winding up. |
| Organisation must be Voluntary | • An organisation formed voluntarily by a group of interested people for a common purpose that serves a public benefit.<br>• Board members may or may not be remunerated but the majority must be non-executive<br>• This can – at Board's discretion - include organisations established by statute provided they serve a public benefit and meet the other eligibility criteria |
| Organisation must conduct activities in the fields of cooperation in international relief and development, development assistance, | • "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. |

| development education and/or related services in Australia that are consistent with and 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. | • For the purposes of assessing eligibility, "provision of technical and professional services and resources" includes, but is not restricted to, research, training and fundraising.<br>• 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. |
|---|---|

Organisations that are not eligible for Full Membership through the criteria above may be eligible for Affiliate Membership. For more information see Section 2b.

ACFID Full Members must:

- become signatories to the ACFID Code to Conduct and remain compliant with the Code by meeting compliance requirements (for more information on these requirements see *Appendix 4: Annual 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;
- pay Annual Fees (*See Appendix 3: 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;
- access the full range of member benefits, including participation in networking events and industry-focused training and development programs.

## b. 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 can choose whether to become signatories to the ACFID Code of Conduct. Those Affiliates who do choose to become signatories will need to prepare additional documents as part of the application process.

Affiliate Members must:

- consider becoming a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct and explain their decision on application. Those who choose to become signatories must complete Attachment A. Code Signatory organisations must remain Code compliant (for more information see *Appendix 4: Annual Compliance Requirements*);
- have knowledge and commitment to ACFID;
- accept the ACFID Communities of Practice Operational Guidelines;
- disclose any potential risk posed to ACFID by their membership;
- pay Annual Fees (*See Appendix 3: Annual Fees*).


In return, Affiliate Members can:

- attend the AGM;
- speak at the AGM, if invited by the Chair; and
- participate in committees and ACFID's Communities of Practice.

For further information on eligibility for Affiliate Membership, see *Section Four: Applying for ACFID Affiliate Membership*.

## c. 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.

The Research for Development Impact Network is a collaboration between ACFID 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 apply for Affiliate Membership should also read the separate document, ACFID Affiliate Membership Guidelines for Universities. This can be found on the ACFID website.

# Section Three: Applying for ACFID Full Membership

Before applying for ACFID Full Membership, please note the types of ACFID Membership and eligibility requirements in *Section Two: Membership Categories*, to determine which membership category your organisation should apply for.

The steps below explain the application process and requirements:

  a. Documents required on application
  b. Code compliance on application
  c. Risk assessment
  d. Submitting your application
  e. The application appraisal and assessment process
  f. Dates and timeframes

## a. Documents required on application

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

  1. A completed Full Membership Application Form;
  2. A certificate of registration issued by an Australian authority;
  3. A certificate of registration with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC);
  4. A diagram which demonstrates the governance structure of the organisation, 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;
  5. A governing instrument (Constitution) which is compliant with the requirements outlined in the Table 2;
  6. A list of current Board members which includes a short biography for each member, distinguishes between executive and non-executive members and identifies whether any Board member receives remuneration (if this is present in the annual report please indicate);
  7. Minutes of the most recent Annual General Meeting (AGM);
  8. An annual report that is compliant with the requirements outlined in Table 2;
  9. 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); and

10. Certificates indicating completion of the Code e-learning module by Board members and senior staff, including at a minimum the Chair and the CEO (see Appendix 2 for information on how to complete the Code e-learning) **and** a written commitment to incorporating the e-learning module in the induction of all new Board members and staff

Applicant organisations are required to be compliant with all areas of the Code of Conduct at the time of application, and at all times thereafter. The ACFID Secretariat may request any additional policies, tools, guidelines, process or framework documents referred to in the Code Self-Assessment or referenced in the applicant organisation's response during the application assessment process to assess Code compliance as needed.

## b. Code compliance on application

To quality for ACFID Full Membership, organisations must be compliant with the Code of Conduct on application. Applicants must complete the Code-Self-Assessment (CSA) through our online portal.

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. 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.

## c. Risk Assessment

As noted in *Section One: Overview of Membership Application Process*, 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;
- 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.

### d. Submitting your application

Applications for Full Membership must now be made online through ACFID's Online Compliance Portal. To register for this portal please contact ACFID's Member and Stakeholder Engagement Lead on 02 8123 2235 or membership@acfid.asn.au.

Once you have completed your full CSA online and uploaded all accompanying documents for application, you may submit your application.

You will receive an email notification that your application has been received by ACFID. If you encounter any issues during this process, please contact ACFID's Member and Stakeholder Engagement Lead.

Applications for Affiliate Membership or University Affiliate Membership can be sent my email. The completed application form and all accompanying documents should be scanned and sent to membership@acfid.asn.au. Before submitting your application please contact ACFID's Member & Stakeholder Engagement Lead on 02 8123 2235.

### e. The application appraisal and assessment process

Once received, applications for ACFID membership move through six key stages:
- ACFID internal assessment;
- Teleconference between ACFID and applicant to discuss remedial actions if required;
- 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

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 stage 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.

### f.  Dates and timeframes

ACFID accepts applications for Full Membership twice a year; these dates are generally in February/March and April/May. The dates are made available on the ACFID website.

**PLEASE BE AWARE:** It can take anywhere between 3 – 18 months between an organisation submitting an application for Full Membership and that organisation being granted Interim Membership by the ACFID Board.

## Section Four: Applying for ACFID Affiliate Membership

Before applying for ACFID Affiliate Membership, please note the types of ACFID Membership and eligibility requirements in *Section Two: Membership Categories*, to determine which membership category you should apply for.

The steps below explain the application process and requirements:

    a.  Documents required on application (non-university)
    b.  Documents required on application (university)
    c.  Code compliance on application
    d.  Other requirements on application
    e.  Submitting your application
    f.  The application appraisal and assessment process
    g.  Dates and timeframes

### a.  Documents required on application (Non-university)

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

- A completed Affiliate Membership application form;
- A certificate of registration issued by an Australian authority;
- A governing instrument;
- A list of current Board members which includes a short biography for each member, distinguishes between executive and non-executive members and identifies whether any Board member receives remuneration (if this is present in the annual report please indicate);
- 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)

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.

### b. Documents required on application (university)

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

- 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.

### c. 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.

These documents are outlined in *Section Three: Applying for ACFID Affiliate Membership* Parts a. and b. If you wish to apply for ACFID Affiliate Membership and Code signatory status, please contact ACFID for more information prior to submitting your application (see *Section Five: Contact ACFID*).

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

### d. Risk Assessment

As noted in *Section One: Overview of Membership Application Process*, 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.

### e. 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. (see *Section Five: Contact ACFID)*

### f. 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

### g. 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 (see *Section Five: Contact ACFID).*

## Section Five: Contact ACFID

We strongly encourage you to contact ACFID prior to submitting an application for membership. ACFID will be able to assist you in gathering the required documents and providing you with information relating to your eligibility for Full or Affiliate Membership. ACFID will also be able to provide you with an estimation of the time it will take for your application to move through the ACFID membership approval process.

The ACFID Engagement and Effectiveness Team (EET) is responsible for coordinating the membership application process.

For all general membership enquiries, contact the Member and Stakeholder Engagement Lead:

- E: membership@acfid.asn.au
- P: 02 8123 2235

For all Code compliance related enquiries, contact the Standards and Code lead:

- E: code@acfid.asn.au
- P: 02 8123 2222

For all other enquiries, contact the Support Services Administrator:

- main@acfid.asn.au
- P: 02 6285 1816

Information on how to submit an application for membership is available in *Section Three: Applying for ACFID Full Membership* and *Section Four: Applying for ACFID Affiliate Membership.*

## Appendix 1: Acronyms

ACFID – Australian Council for International Development

AGM – Annual General Meeting

ANCP – Australian NGO Cooperation Program

CCC – Code of Conduct Committee

CSA – Compliance Self-Assessment

Board – ACFID's Board of Directors

MAC – Membership Admissions Committee

NGO – Non-Government Organisation

## Appendix 2: Code of Conduct e-learning module

Certificates indicating completion of the Code e-learning module by Board members and senior staff, including at a minimum the Chair and the CEO, must be submitted by organisations applying for **ACFID Full Membership.**

The Code e-learning module is available on the ACFID website [here.](here.)

The module is a free, scenario-based, self-paced e-learning tool which offers an introduction to the ACFID Code of Conduct and assists staff and volunteers to meet the requirements of the Code.

The self-paced program can be undertaken at your computer (sound is required). The resource is free and online registration can be done at any time.

Upon completion of the module, individuals receive a certificate of completion, which should be saved and submitted as part of the application.

A commitment to incorporating the e-learning module in the induction of all new Board members and staff is also a requirement of applying for ACFID membership.

If you have any questions about the e-learning module or have problem logging in, contact ACFID (see *Section Five: Contact ACFID).*

# Appendix 3: Annual Fees

The ACFID Membership Fee is made up of three parts: the Base Fee, the Code Fee, and a fee based on the amount of funds disbursed to overseas projects, other project costs and community education as set down in the ACFID Implementation Guidance.

ACFID Membership Fees are payable annually for a 12-month period commencing 1 July; invoices are sent to members after the annual ACFID Council, usually in October or November.

ACFID Affiliate members are 75% of the Full Member base level fee.

### Annual fees

| Membership Category (Based on disbursements to international programs, program support costs and community education) | Membership Fees | | | Code Fees |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Base Fee | +$25 for every | Over | Add to Membership Fee |
| 1 ($100,000,000+) | $50,000 | $500,000 | $100,000,000 | $6,300 |
| 2 ($40,000,000 – $99,999,999) | $35,000 | $300,000 | $40,000,000 | $4,721 |
| 3 ($10,000,000 – $39,999,999) | $25,000 | $240,000 | $10,000,000 | $3,931 |
| 4 ($5,000,000 – $9,999,999) | $18,000 | $20,000 | $5,000,000 | $3,149 |
| 5 ($2,500,000 – $4,999,999) | $10,000 | $10,000 | $2,500,000 | $2,366 |
| 6 ($1,000,000 – $2,499,999) | $5,000 | $8,000 | $1,000,000 | $1,893 |
| 7 ($500,000 – $999,999) | $3,000 | $6,000 | $500,000 | $1,571 |
| 8 ($200,000 – $499,999) | $1,500 | $5,000 | $200,000 | $1,265 |
| 9 ($0 – $199,999) | A flat fee of $800 | | | $950 |
| Affiliates | A discounted fee of 75% of the Base Fee for their respective category (no other calculations required) | | | Full fee applies if organisation is a Code Signatory Organisation |

Note: Code fees are indexed as CPI +1.0% per annum

# Appendix 4: Ongoing Compliance Requirements

Code compliance is mandatory for all ACFID Full Members and ACFID Affiliate Members who have chosen to be signatories to the ACFID Code of Conduct. ACFID Members must provide information on an annual basis demonstrating their continued compliance with the Code.

### What do organisations need to provide for Code compliance?

Each year ACFID Members must submit **annual and financial reports**.

Members are required to submit a **Code Self-Assessment (CSA)** through the online portal at a minimum of one in every three years. Members are notified on June 1 of each year whether they will be required to submit a CSA in the coming financial year. Compliance reporting provides an opportunity for reflection and review by signatories and to maintain the credibility of the Code with both internal and external stakeholders.

All compliance assessment results are noted and endorsed by the signatory's body, and must be electronically signed by the CEO and Chair of the organisation. This ensures organisations know how the organisation is meeting the requirements of the Code and can take steps to rectify areas of concern.

On the years that members are not required to complete the CSA, they are required to submit a Code Compliance Exceptions report detailing any known instances of non-compliance with the Code that have occurred during the previous year.

Organisations that do not complete the compliance requirements satisfactorily are subject to remedial actions and sanctions through the Code of Conduct Committee (CCC).

### When do I need to provide compliance reports?

All compliance reports need to be provided within 5 months of the end of the organisations financial year:

| Member Financial Year End | CSA and annual report submission deadline |
| --- | --- |
| March | 31 August |
| April | 30 September |
| June | 30 November |
| September | 28 February |
| December | 31 May |

### Need help with compliance reporting?

Information on the ACFID Code Compliance can be found on the [ACFID website](#). The free self-paced [Code e-learning module](#) (See *Appendix 2*) offers an introduction to the ACFID Code of Conduct, and will assist staff and volunteers to understand how to meet the requirements of the Code.