

IEIF – ASEAN Research Collaboration Project

Host Supervisor Guidelines

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INTRODUCTION

The International Education Innovation Fund (IEIF) – ASEAN Research Collaboration Project provides early career researchers (ECRs) from ASEAN member states and Timor-Leste with the opportunity to undertake short-term research placements (1–3 months) in Australian research institutions.

This project is administered by the Australian Government Department of Education through the International Education Innovation Fund (IEIF), delivered in partnership with the RMIT Asia Hub, and designed to strengthen Australia–ASEAN research collaboration, build institutional linkages, and foster knowledge exchange in shared priority areas, including agriculture and food, resources and energy, infrastructure and the green economy.

This document outlines the expectations, responsibilities, and best practice guidelines for host supervisors at approved Australian host organisations.

ROLE OF HOST SUPERVISOR

The host supervisor is the primary academic and professional contact for the Early Career Researcher (ECR) during their internship period in Australia.

Responsibilities include:

- Designing and overseeing a suitable research project with achievable outcomes
- Providing mentorship and professional development guidance
- Ensuring compliance with institutional health, safety, and wellbeing (HSW) policies, including nominating a contact for health, safety and wellbeing (HSW) support/escalation
- Supporting ECR with the details of available support services, including providing assistance with obtaining a Working with Children's check (or seeking an exception from the Working with Children's Check – if required), as well as assist with seeking appropriate accommodation if needed
- Providing an orientation session upon commencement of the internship, including organising security access and induction to labs and other facilities within the host organisation
- Supporting the intern's integration into the host organisation and research community
- Confirming project milestones and reporting progress in line with program requirements
- Explore opportunities for long-term research partnerships and institutional linkages
- Foster ongoing relationships with ECR post-program completion

APPLICANT SPONSOR NOMINATION

- As part of the application process, host supervisors are required to fill in the “*Applicant Sponsor Nomination Form*” to confirm their support of the ECR’s application to the IEIF – ASEAN research Collaboration Project.
- Prepare a clear project outline with objectives, timeline, milestones, and key performance indicators (KPIs). Ensure the scope is realistic for a 1–3-month timeframe
- Confirm compliance with institutional policies regarding intellectual property, privacy, and HSW
- Verify the intern’s English language proficiency, if required
- Complete and sign the Sponsor Nomination Form and send back to the ECR to be sent together with their application documents. Please do not send this form directly to RMIT University Asia Hub.

PRE-ARRIVAL PREPARATION

If the sponsored ECR is selected as one of the recipients of the IEIF – ASEAN research Collaboration Project, host supervisors must complete the following steps before the ECR arrives:

- Sign off on the Internship Pack document, including “Detailed Project Outline and Materials Request” form, that will be sent to the selected ECRs
- Provide RMIT University Asia Hub with a \$1,000 (excl GST) invoice to cover potential research consumables such as laboratory equipment, subscriptions, service level agreement (SLA) fees for desks/IT access and field works costs for hosting the ECR
- Ensure workspace, IT access, and research facilities are prepared
- Liaise with relevant departments within host organisation (e.g. HR, Research Office, International Office) to support onboarding, including obtaining a Working with Children’s check (or seeking an exception from the Working with Children’s Check – if required)
- Provide the intern with copies of relevant HSW and welfare policies
- Provide ECR with the details of available support services, including accommodation information if necessary

ORIENTATION AND INDUCTION

On arrival, host supervisors are expected to:

- Conduct an orientation session covering:
 - Health, safety, and welfare protocols
 - Use of facilities and access arrangements (e.g., security access, lab induction, etc)
 - Institutional policies and other support services

- Introduce the ECR to colleagues, research groups, and networks
- Review and confirm the project plan, milestones, and reporting expectations

SUPERVISION DURING INTERNSHIP

Throughout the internship, supervisors should:

- Hold regular check-ins (weekly or fortnightly) to monitor progress and provide feedback
- Support both research and professional development, including opportunities to participate in seminars, workshops, or networking events
- Validate progress against milestones and sign off on reports required for stipend release
- Encourage integration into the academic and social community of the host organisation

REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE

Host supervisors are required to:

- Endorse ECR progress at agreed milestones (midpoint and conclusion)
- Report any incidents in line with institutional HSW procedures, as well as RMIT University Asia Hub Critical Incident Policy
- Assist the intern in completing final reporting requirements, if necessary
- Provide feedback to RMIT University Asia Hub or the Department of Education when requested

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- Intellectual property (IP) arrangements must be clarified at the outset in line with institutional policy
- Publication rights, authorship, and data sharing agreements should be discussed early and documented
- ECRs must be briefed on and adhere to confidentiality and data protection requirements, including compliance with the Privacy Act 1988

PASTORAL AND CULTURAL SUPPORT

- Supervisors should remain mindful that interns may be visiting Australia for the first time and may be needing a lot of support
- Provide support to ease cultural transition and encourage open communication about any personal or professional challenges

- Promote an inclusive, equitable, and supportive environment that enhances the ECR's overall experience

CONCLUSION AND WRAP-UP

At the conclusion of the placement, supervisors should:

- Conduct a final review meeting to reflect on project outcomes, achievements, and future collaboration opportunities
- Confirm completion of deliverables and reporting requirements
- Support the intern in planning next steps, such as publication or follow-on projects
- Explore opportunities for long-term research partnerships and institutional linkages
- Foster ongoing relationships with ECR post-program completion

SUPERVISOR CHECKLIST

To assist with compliance, supervisors should ensure the following:

- ☐ Sponsor Nomination Form submitted
- ☐ Internship Pack, including “*Detailed Project Outline and Materials Request*” form, signed
- ☐ Working with Children's check – if required
- ☐ Workspace, IT, and facilities arranged
- ☐ Orientation and safety induction completed
- ☐ Regular supervision and mentoring provided, including opportunities to participate in seminars, workshops, or networking events
- ☐ Midpoint and final milestone reports endorsed
- ☐ IP, publication, and confidentiality agreements clarified
- ☐ Final wrap-up meeting conducted, and reporting completed
- ☐ Post-program completion check-ins

For further guidance or clarification, supervisors should liaise with their institutional Research Office or RMIT University Asia Hub at ieif.asean@rmit.edu.au