

# 2021

**FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION  
GUIDELINES**

# **VET INTERNATIONAL PRACTITIONER FELLOWSHIP**

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN PARTNERSHIP  
WITH THE INTERNATIONAL SPECIALISED SKILLS INSTITUTE  
INTERNATIONAL PRACTITIONER FELLOWSHIP

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## Introduction

### 2021 VET International Practitioner Fellowship

**The Department of Education and Training (DET) in partnership with the International Specialised Skills Institute (ISS Institute) are offering ten (10) International Fellowships valued at \$13,000 each.<sup>1</sup>**

**Applications for round 1 open 1st February and close 4pm 26th March , 2021. (5 Fellowships)**

**Applications for round 2 open 26th July 2021 and close 4pm 17th September, 2021. (5 Fellowships)**

The Department of Education and Training works in partnership with the International Specialised Skills Institute by funding the VET International Practitioner Fellowships. The Fellowship program focuses on developing opportunities within the VET sector to assist in building an Education State in Victoria that produces excellence and reduces the impact of disadvantage. In addition, the program is funded to support the priorities of Skills First, including developing capacity and capability, innovative training practices and increasing teacher quality within the VET sector as well as building industry capability and developing Victoria's current and future workforce.

Ten (10) Fellowships are available to VET practitioners who are employed within Victorian Government contracted Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)<sup>2</sup>, including TAFEs, private RTOs and Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board registered Learn Local Providers (LL providers)<sup>3</sup>.

### About this Fellowship

Those eligible are invited to apply for a Fellowship that will support the continued development of VET delivery with a focus on one of the following priority areas:

1. Developing quality training with deep and meaningful connections to emerging or ongoing industry needs.
2. Developing educational approaches that address the gaps between disadvantaged learners and high quality education and training outcomes.

### Department of Education and Training (Victoria)

Higher Education and Skills supports and facilitates the delivery of quality training that meets current and future industry needs, grows employment and further education outcomes, promotes equity and addresses disadvantage.

[www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au) / [www.education.vic.gov.au/training/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/training/Pages/default.aspx)

### International Specialised Skills Institute (ISS Institute)

The ISS Institute was founded 29 years ago, by a small group of innovative leaders who had a vision of building a community of industry specialists who would lead the up skilling of the Australian workforce. Investing in the development of talented, passionate and innovative Australians to travel abroad to develop new skills and knowledge and return to Australia to disseminate their learnings has, and continues to create a 'better skilled Australia.' Our Fellows represent a broad cross-section of industries and our Fellowship program creates impact in many ways including economic benefits, skills preservation, the personal and professional advancement of our Fellows, new thinking, practice and increased innovation in the workforce.

[www.issinstitute.org.au](http://www.issinstitute.org.au)

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<sup>1</sup> Each successful applicant (Fellow) receives a maximum of \$13,000 towards his/her Fellowship costs. Any expenses in excess of this amount must be borne by the Fellow.

<sup>2</sup> Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) contracted as providers of Victorian Government subsidised Training in 2019. See list at: [www.education.vic.gov.au/training/learners/courses/Pages/rtolist.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/training/learners/courses/Pages/rtolist.aspx)

<sup>3</sup> Learn Local Providers (LLPs) that are registered with the Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board in 2019

## What is International Applied Research?

Applied Research is an approach used to solve practical problems. This type of study and research is often used in education, training and across industries with the intention of generating actionable knowledge, to find solutions or develop innovative practice that has direct application to the world. ISS Institute's Fellowship program invests in Australians to undertake applied research outside of Australia and apply their learnings in an Australian context on their return.

## How to apply for this Fellowship?

To apply for this Fellowship, you are required to:

- Complete the application form
- Provide a current curriculum vitae (resume)
- Provide two letters of support which indicate that your Fellowship field is relevant and will benefit the industry (e.g. peak industry bodies, government agencies, professional associations)
- Provide an Employer Endorsement Letter indicating that you will be supported to meet the obligations associated with this Fellowship (this letter should be from your current CEO, director or manager).

Email these documents to [applications@issinstitute.org.au](mailto:applications@issinstitute.org.au)

## What are the Fellowship Priority Areas?

Fellowship applications must focus on one of the priority areas described below:

Priority areas for the current round of VET International Practitioner Fellowships reflect the Department's primary focus, through the Education State reform agenda, in building a future where Victoria is recognised nationally and internationally for the skills, knowledge, and expertise of its people. Underpinning each area of focus is an explicit alignment to areas of reform that will benefit the whole Victorian community. As such each priority area is linked to relevant statements from the Education State agenda below:

### Who can apply?

- An Australian Permanent Resident over the age of 18.
- VET practitioners who are employed within Victorian Government contracted Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)<sup>2</sup>, including TAFEs, private RTOs and Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board registered Learn Local Providers (LL providers).

### Priority Area 1: Developing quality training with deep and meaningful connections to emerging or ongoing industry needs.

*ISS Institute's departmentally supported Fellowships seek to:*

- ensure emerging needs are met.
- ensure training leads to real jobs that benefit the economy.

*This will be achieved by providing:*

- high-quality training that students and industry can trust, aligned to industry and workforce needs.
- a real voice for industry in training.

## **Priority Area 2: Developing educational approaches that address the gaps between disadvantaged learners and high quality education and training outcomes.**

- *A great education system widens opportunities for all, reducing the impact of disadvantage, and empowers people with the skills, knowledge and experience they need to build healthy, happy and prosperous lives.*
- *Growing up in poverty, in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, or with complex social problems like mental health or disability, should not mean that a person's chances of succeeding in education are reduced. We are committed to breaking the link between disadvantage and educational achievement.*

### **What does a Fellowship involve?**

- Fellows must use their Fellowship payment to undertake applied international research overseas.
- Overseas Fellowship research may include meeting knowledgeable leaders, conducting interviews, observation, immersion in workplaces, undertaking specialised training or attending a specialist conference.
- Fellows must manage their Fellowship funds personally to arrange their travel and international activities.
- Fellows must prepare a formal Fellowship report documenting findings and recommendations for addressing the identified priority area within 18 months of receiving their Fellowship. ISS Institute will assist with the editing, design and publication of this Fellowship report.
- Fellows must participate in a Fellowship induction program and will be supported by ISS Institute staff throughout the Fellowship period (and beyond).
- Fellows must arrange for time off work with their employer to undertake the overseas applied research component of their Fellowship. While the Fellowship is being awarded to the individual and not their employer, it is important that the employer supports the individual's application and will support the individual to meet Fellowship obligations.
- Fellows will be supported throughout their Fellowship by the ISS Institute team.
- Fellows must develop local connections with the education sector in Victoria to ensure the knowledge being gained from the proposed Fellowship is being shared and/or applied within the education and training sector as well as relevant industries.
- The Fellow must complete a minimum three (3) dissemination sessions within three (3) months of their report being printed.
- The Fellow must agree (where practicable) to participate in speaking opportunities identified by the Department of Education and Training and/or the ISS Institute.

### **Selection Process**

- Each submission will be evaluated by the Department of Education and Training and ISS Institute team members, who may draw upon specialist experts when evaluating applications.
- Short-listed applicants will be interviewed by a selection panel, made up of Department of Education and Training representatives and ISS Institute team members.
- Interviews may be conducted in person or by teleconference / video-conference.
- Given the number of applications, individual applications will not receive feedback.
- Each applicant will be advised of the outcome of their application.

## Conditions of Entry

1. A Fellowship application, including the attachments (curriculum vitae, two (2) letters of support, one (1) employer endorsement letter) must be received by the ISS Institute by the closing date.
2. The duration of the overseas applied research component varies depending on the aims of the Fellowship (but generally Fellows spend between two (2) – four (4) weeks overseas).
3. Successful applicants will enter into a contractual agreement with ISS Institute to ensure that all Fellowship requirements are met.
4. Fellows must prepare a detailed Fellowship report outlining their international research, findings and recommendations.
5. The Fellowship, including publication of the final Fellowship report, must be completed within 18 months.
6. Fellows agree to disseminate their Fellowship learnings, findings and recommendations to peers, industry leaders and other relevant bodies and report back to the ISS Institute about these.
7. Our Fellows agree to be ambassadors of ISS Institute throughout their Fellowship and into the future.
8. Our Fellows agree to take part in periodic evaluation, generally via surveys, so we can capture the impact that a Fellowship has had at a personal, professional or industry level over time.
9. While Fellowship applicants can be undertaking tertiary studies, the Fellowship cannot be used to gain a tertiary qualification.
10. The selection panel's decision is final and binding.
11. Unsuccessful Fellowship applicants are welcome to apply for a Fellowship in the future.

## Preparing your Fellowship application

Before you complete your application form you may want to consider these tips and ideas:

### About the application form

- ISS Institute prefers that Fellowship application forms are typed in the writeable PDF provided. However, if you have difficulty doing so, hand-written or Word applications will be accepted.
- When preparing a Fellowship application form, it is a good idea to type it up as a Word document and save locally. Once completed you can then cut and paste it into the PDF Fellowship Application Form.
- When filling out your PDF Fellowship application form save it regularly to avoid losing content if you encounter a computer issue.
- When submitting your Fellowship application form please save the file as your surname and year (e.g. Jones2017) and then email it (along with the attachments) to [applications@issinstitute.org.au](mailto:applications@issinstitute.org.au)

### What are letters of support?

Letters of support indicate that your Fellowship field is relevant and will benefit your industry or sector. Letters of support can come from a peak industry body, industry/sector partner, government agencies, professional association or key partner. The best letters of support describe how they may support your Fellowship, convey enthusiasm and lends credibility to the need for your Fellowship topic and the outcomes of your research.

Before approaching individuals who could provide you with a letter of support, it is a good idea to make a list of potential supporters. Contact them, preferably over the phone or via email, and ask if they would be willing to provide you with a Letter of Support. It is a good idea to have a brief summary of your proposed Fellowship and explain how it will benefit your industry/sector/community when asking for a letter of support.

Ensure your letter of support has an appropriate letterhead and is signed and dated.

## What is an Employer Endorsement Letter?

An Employer Endorsement Letter shows that you have discussed your Fellowship application with your employer (e.g. CEO, director or senior manager).

While it is the Fellow, and not the Fellow's employer, who receives the Fellowship, it is important that your employer is aware that you are applying for a Fellowship. This ensures that your employer understands you will need to take leave from work (e.g. annual leave, professional leave etc.) to travel overseas, you will be completing a Fellowship report and seeking opportunities within and beyond your work place to disseminate your Fellowship learnings and findings.

Your employer may also want to assist you while you are developing your Fellowship application and the priority areas you want to investigate.

## About the Fellowship application questions

- Please avoid industry/sector jargon in your application and write in plain English
- Make sure your answers are succinct, clear and to the point – there are restricted word limits per question
- Consider having a friend or colleague who is not in the sector read your application form for clarity.

## Fellowship application questions guidance

You will be required to provide a short response (**min. 200 words – max. 300 words**) against each of the key selection criteria below:

### 1. Please provide a succinct description of your Fellowship? 150 words

By this stage in your Fellowship application you will have covered most aspects of your Fellowship topic and proposal. In this question you have a chance to pitch your Fellowship proposal in a clear and thoughtful way. In many respects this is how you will convey your proposed Fellowship to your employer, those you are seeking letter of support from, and your peers.

### 2. Priority Area. Please outline the aim of your Fellowship and which priority area your Fellowship will focus on?

In this question we want you to describe the aim of your Fellowship, how your proposed Fellowship aligns with one of the priority areas and how this will benefit you and your industry/sector now and into the future.

### 3. Research and evidence: Please identify the research you have conducted and the evidence you have collected to indicate the need for, or importance of, your proposed Fellowship?

In this question you have an opportunity to discuss research undertaken and/or the evidence you have collected which indicates how your Fellowship would assist in addressing the priority area you have selected. You may find that the evidence is a mix of formal research, action research or anecdotal evidence.

### 4. Outcome for education and training sector: In what ways do you think the education and training sector will benefit from your proposed Fellowship and how would you ensure this?

The Victorian Government is focused on building an Education State that produces excellence and reduces the impact of disadvantage. The Fellowships are intended to examine innovative approaches that demonstrate potential benefits for, and application in, Victoria. A desired outcome of each Fellowship is the development of effective approaches for student engagement and participation, quality teaching and learning and employment and industry productivity. While you may not have the answers now, you will have no doubt thought about the ways in which your Fellowship may have a positive influence in Victoria and this question is a chance to discuss that. In addition, this question provides you with a chance to discuss leading practice occurring overseas but which may not be evident or occurring in Victoria (or Australia).

**include presentations, conferences, forums, networks, professional development, articles, blogs, social media, workshops, mentoring and media.**

- 5. Local partnerships: What local connections have you formed with the education and training sector in Victoria -ones that will help to ensure the knowledge garnered from your proposed Fellowship will be shared and applied within the education, training and industry sectors? Please identify the VET Education Network/s that you are involved with and details of your relevant industry partnerships?**

A core component of any Fellowship is disseminating learnings and ideas with colleagues, peers and influential organisations/individuals. In this question we are interested in learning about who you believe would benefit from the outcomes of your Fellowship and the ways you might share that information. Some dissemination examples

- 6. International partnerships/connections: Which international institutions, organisations or centres of excellence will you be visiting and in order to develop connections during your proposed Fellowship and why have you selected these? Please provide details of the innovative work practices that the organisation/s have implemented which aren't currently evident in Australia.**

To answer this question we don't expect you to have organised a detailed itinerary or travel plan as yet. However, there is an expectation that you will have identified leading practice and skill enhancement opportunities, including where these are located, who you may wish to meet and/or the type of connections (e.g. shadowing, meetings, immersion, conferences).

- 7. Implementation and impact: List a minimum of three (3) strategies you could potentially implement upon returning from your proposed Fellowship that will create change and impact.**

The response to this question should include actions that you envision you could implement on returning from your Fellowship travels based on your Fellowship learnings. Be bold.

- 8. Professional capacity development: How will the proposed Fellowship benefit you in your professional capacity and development as a VET practitioner? How will it enhance your position as an expert in your field? How will you support peers' professional capacity? What is your plan in relation to influencing and leading innovation in your sector beyond your Fellowship?**

In this question, we are interested in learning about how this Fellowship might assist you in achieving career goals now and into the future. In addition, we are keen to learn about ways you might be able to assist and contribute to the professional development of colleagues and peers, and the broader sector.

- 9. Have you ever undertaken another Fellowship, awarded by another organisation, that was related to this Fellowship topic? If yes, please describe. 150 words**

While you may have undertaken a Fellowship provided by another organisation in the past, we prefer that it does not closely resemble this one. However, if this Fellowship application builds upon your previous one it will still be considered.

## Enquiries

ISS Institute welcomes applications from any individual who meets the conditions of entry. Whether you are familiar with preparing submissions or have never done so in the past, do feel free to contact us prior to or during the preparation of your Fellowship application.

If you have any questions please contact the ISS Institute team:

**Phone:** 03 9347 4583  
**Email:** [applications@issinstitute.org.au](mailto:applications@issinstitute.org.au)  
**Website:** [www.issinstitute.org.au](http://www.issinstitute.org.au)  
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/ISSInstitute](http://www.facebook.com/ISSInstitute)  
**Twitter:** [https://twitter.com/ISS\\_Institute](https://twitter.com/ISS_Institute)