

Commonwealth of Australia

Nation-building Funds Act 2008

Education Investment Fund (EIF) Evaluation Criteria No. 1 of 2011

We, Chris Evans, Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations and Kim Carr, Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, hereby, pursuant to subsection 172(1) of the *Nation-building Funds Act 2008* (the Act), formulate in this Instrument, the EIF Evaluation Criteria to be applied by the EIF Advisory Board in giving advice under paragraph 171(1)(a) or (b) of the Act.

Dated 22nd September 2011

Chris Evans

Kim Carr

Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills,
Jobs and Workplace Relations

Minister for Innovation, Industry
Science and Research

1. Citation

This Instrument may be cited as the Education Investment Fund (EIF) Evaluation Criteria No. 1 of 2011.

2. Authority

This Instrument is made under subsection 172(1) of the *Nation-building Funds Act 2008*.

3. Date of Effect

This Instrument takes effect on the day after the day on which it is registered on the Federal Register of Legislative Instruments.

4. Revocation

The Education Investment Fund (EIF) Evaluation Criteria No. 2 of 2009, dated 31 July 2009, is revoked.

5. Transitional and Savings Arrangements

- (1) The revocation of the Education Investment Fund (EIF) Evaluation Criteria No. 2 of 2009, dated 31 July 2009, does not affect the validity of a decision made under that instrument.
- (2) A decision made under that instrument is taken to continue to have effect as if it were made under this Instrument.
- (3) The EIF Evaluation Criteria No. 2 of 2009 continues to apply to the following matters:
 - (a) any matter that has been referred to the EIF Advisory Board pursuant to paragraph 171(1)(a) or (b) before the date of this instrument;
 - (b) any matter which may be referred to the EIF Advisory Board under the Structural Adjustment Fund, the Carbon Capture and Storage Flagships component of the Clean Energy Initiative, Round 3 and the \$20 million in seed funding to be allocated for a multi-partner campus on the mid north coast of New South Wales application processes which have commenced prior to date of this instrument.
- (4) Decisions made by the EIF Advisory Board under subclause 5(3) have effect as if the decisions were made under this instrument.

ITEM 1

Revoke and substitute the EIF Evaluation criteria:

EDUCATION INVESTMENT FUND (EIF) EVALUATION CRITERIA NO. 1 OF 2011

Principle 1:

Address national infrastructure priorities

1. Extent to which the project will address National Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training (VET) Infrastructure Priorities

The Board must be satisfied that the project involves the creation or development of tertiary education infrastructure consistent with the Australian Government's priorities for tertiary education and/or research.

The Board must also be satisfied that the organisation has given due consideration to issues of social inclusion.

In assessing this criterion, the Board may consider the extent to which the proposed infrastructure project will contribute to the following relevant priorities:

Higher education (teaching and learning) priorities

- Increasing higher education participation and attainment rates (particularly for Indigenous and low socio-economic students) in regional, rural or remote areas of Australia and/or regional cities.
- Increasing access to world class higher education infrastructure in regional, rural or remote areas of Australia and regional cities.
- Contributing to the Australian Government's priorities for the higher education system as outlined in the publication Transforming Australia's Higher Education System, available at www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Pages/TransformingAustraliasHESystem.aspx.
- Contributing to economic growth and development.
- Building sustainable institutions and communities.
- Building human capital including meeting identified skills needs.
- Connecting regions to national and international teaching and learning opportunities.
- Contributing to the achievement of state and territory higher education priorities.
- Contributing to the achievement of higher education priorities identified by local communities evidenced through support from local and regional bodies such as Regional Development Australia (RDA) Committees and Local Government and/or alignment with the priorities or goals of the RDA regional plan.

VET priorities

- Increasing VET participation rates and access to world-class VET infrastructure in regional, rural or remote areas of Australia and regional cities.
- Attaining the targets of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) as set out in the VET National Skills and Workforce Development Agreement (the Skills Agreement), including to halve the proportion of 20-64 year olds without qualifications at Certificate III level and above by 2020, and to double the number of higher qualification completions (diploma and advanced diploma) by 2020.
- Delivering the outputs specified in the Skills Agreement including:
 - Increasing the number of course completions by Indigenous Australians in VET; and
 - Increasing the number of enrolments by Indigenous Australians in higher level VET qualifications.
- For the working age population, ensuring the attainment of an appropriate level of foundation skills and the depth and breadth of vocational skills and capabilities to enable effective labour market participation.
- Contributing to the achievement of COAG targets to Close the Gap in Indigenous disadvantage as agreed in the National Indigenous Reform Agreement.
- Improving responsiveness to demand for skills development and/or address skill shortages in regional Australia.
- Providing students with a stimulating and rewarding tertiary education experience.
- Engaging effectively with other training providers (such as Trade Training Centres) and other education sectors (such as higher education) to provide a continuum of high quality learning opportunities throughout an individual's life.
- Contributing to the achievement of state and territory training priorities.
- Contributing to the achievement of VET priorities identified by local communities evidenced through support from local and regional bodies such as Regional Development Australia (RDA) Committees and Local Government and/or alignment with the priorities or goals of the RDA regional plan.

Research priorities (to be addressed only if the teaching and learning project has a research-related component)

- Directly contributing to teaching and learning or VET activities.
- Playing a pivotal role in the national research and innovation system through the creation of world leading research capabilities.
- Progressively increasing the number of research groups performing at world-class levels.
- Developing greater domestic and international research collaborations and outcomes.
- Connecting regions with national or international research opportunities.
- Improving access to high quality research infrastructure.
- Supporting research in areas of regional and national importance.
- Enhancing or creating synergies between the research sector and communities, industry and commerce.
- Contributing to the:
 - National Research Priorities (www.innovation.gov.au/Section/AboutDIISR/FactSheets/Pages/NationalResearchPrioritiesFactSheet.aspx);
 - Priorities identified in the Strategic Roadmap for Australian Research Infrastructure (www.innovation.gov.au/ScienceAndResearch/Documents/Strategic%20Roadmap%20Aug%202008.pdf); and/or
 - National Innovation Priorities
 - (www.innovation.gov.au/innovationreview/Documents/PoweringIdeas_executivesummary.pdf).

2. Extent to which the project is clearly aligned with the organisation's priorities and strategic directions

The Board must be satisfied that the intended outcomes of the infrastructure are clearly aligned with the strategic directions and aspirations of the organisation.

In assessing this criterion, the Board may consider the extent to which:

- The infrastructure enhances existing strengths within the organisation or allows the organisation to develop new areas of expertise or develop strategic collaborations to deliver an expanded range of course offerings.
- The infrastructure supports a long term, strategic commitment to tertiary education.
- The infrastructure is consistent with the organisation's long term, strategic infrastructure planning.
- The infrastructure is consistent with the organisation's Mission-based Compact (for universities only).

Principle 2:

Demonstrate high benefits and effective use of resources

3. Extent to which there will be a positive impact on enhancing capacity

The Board must be satisfied that the project will deliver the Australian Government's objective of strategically enhancing the capacity of Australia's tertiary education system.

In assessing the project's impact on the capacity of the organisation, the Board may consider the relative degree to which the project will impact on:

- Access to tertiary education.
- Numbers of domestic students enrolled.
- The quality and breadth of the teaching, training, and/or research at the organisation.
- Advances in pedagogy and curriculum.
- Meeting skills needs.
- Developing linkages with local industry and organisations such as local government.

In assessing the project's impact on the capacity of the sector, the Board may consider the extent to which the project will:

- Improve collaborations and pathways between school, VET and higher education.
- Enhance the long term sustainability of tertiary education provision in the region.
- Provide increased access to significant educational infrastructure by those outside the organisation.
- Provide national or international leadership in teaching and/or training.
- Provide outreach and demonstration activities aimed at optimising the outcomes of the infrastructure.
- Improve links between institutions and other organisations in the region to provide pathways and meet skills needs.

Principle 3:

Efficiently address infrastructure needs

4. Extent to which the project will result in improvements consistent with the level of investment

The Board must be satisfied that projects represent good value for money, have a clear public benefit, and will deliver improvements that are both significant and strategic.

In assessing this criterion, the Board may consider the extent to which a project will result in improvements consistent with the level of investment through:

- Expected teaching and learning, research and/or training outcomes.
- Expected social and economic outcomes.
- Expected environmental outcomes.
- The nature, composition and usage of the proposed infrastructure and, where relevant, individual components of the infrastructure.

The Board may also consider whether funding from the EIF is required in order for the creation or development of this infrastructure to proceed.

5. Project determination

The Board must be satisfied that the project is a strategic and highly effective way of meeting the proposed outcomes and delivering long term, sustainable education and training solutions.

In assessing this criterion, the Board may consider the extent to which:

- The nature and location of the proposed infrastructure enables the most efficient and effective delivery of the intended tertiary education outcomes.
- Expanding course provision by linking with other providers has been considered.
- Enhanced distance and e-learning delivery or sharing / co-locating VET and higher education infrastructure has been considered.
- New information and communications technologies such as the National Broadband Network have been considered.
- Establishing partnerships to leverage existing infrastructure has been considered.
- Improved utilisation of an institution's existing infrastructure has been considered.
- A range of options for achieving the intended outcomes of the infrastructure investment has been explored.
- A compelling, evidence-based case has been made as to why this approach represents the most effective and strategic option.
- There is evidence that the type of infrastructure proposed makes a positive impact on teaching, research and/or training and outcomes.
- If funding for staff or student accommodation is sought, evidence that the accommodation cannot be funded from other sources (such as by partnering with private sector organisations or from the applicant's own funds).

6. Extent of collaboration

The Board must be satisfied with the nature and extent of any collaboration. Collaboration will be well-regarded where it is directly relevant to the project and where it clearly enhances the outcomes of the investment.

In assessing this criterion, the Board may consider the extent to which:

- The infrastructure will lead to new, sustainable collaborations and/or build on current collaborations in regions between higher education institutions, VET providers and other stakeholders such as industry and local government.
- The project will result in the creation or development of nationally significant infrastructure.
- The infrastructure will be shared between organisations.
- Reasonable access to the infrastructure is provided to other organisations.
- Organisations from more than one sector are involved.
- Organisations from more than one geographical location are involved.
- The governance structure of the collaboration(s) is clearly defined.

If no collaboration is proposed the Board may consider the extent to which:

- there is a satisfactory explanation for this, and
- the organisation has plans to seek collaborative partners as appropriate in the future, and
- the organisation has identified who else is active in this space in Australia (and, where relevant, internationally).

7. Extent of co-investment

The Board must be satisfied with the nature and extent of any co-investment. Co-investment, both cash and in-kind, will be well-regarded where it is relevant and where it increases the efficiency and effectiveness of the investment.

In assessing this criterion, the Board may consider the extent to which:

- Organisations from more than one sector are involved.
- Organisations from more than one geographical location are involved.

If no co-investment is proposed the Board may consider:

- whether there is a satisfactory explanation for this; and
- whether the organisation has plans to seek co-investment as appropriate in the future.

Principle 4:

Achieve established standards in implementation and management

8. Project readiness

The Board must be satisfied with the degree of readiness of the project. In assessing this criterion, the Board may consider the extent to which:

- The organisation has or can readily acquire the expertise to:
i) develop and ii) make best use of the proposed infrastructure.
- Implementation plans, construction timetables and risk management plans are satisfactory for projects of this scale.
- Key stakeholders have been consulted in relation to the proposed infrastructure.
- Relevant authorities have been consulted where planning/ building approvals will be required.

9. Capacity of the organisation to support, maintain and integrate new infrastructure into ongoing business operations

The Board must be satisfied that the organisation has the capacity to integrate the facilities funded into their ongoing business operations. The ability to maintain and operate the facilities beyond the period of EIF funding must be evident.

In assessing this criterion, the Board may consider:

- The financial viability of the organisation and the project.
- The governance structures relating to the proposed infrastructure.
- Capacity to fund to operation and facilities in an ongoing manner.
- Facilities management capabilities within the organisation.
- Previous experience in managing projects of this scale and scope.
- The application of environmentally sustainable building management practices.