

# Building capacity: training and education

## Program management

Guidance on training priorities and awards is provided by a committee of senior staff, under the chairmanship of the Deputy CEO. The contact point for John Allwright (postgraduate) and John Dillon (research management) Fellowships is Mrs Sharon Harvey and for cross-program training, Ms Narelle McLaughlin

## Funding

	\$m
2006–07 actual	4.13
2007–08 estimate <sup>a</sup>	4.57 <sup>a</sup>
2008–09 budget	5.38

<sup>a</sup>A further \$1 million was received from AusAID in 2007–08 for a total of \$5.57 million

## Key performance indicators

- tracer surveys for the 2004–08 period demonstrate that at least 85% of ACIAR-funded postgraduate students studying in Australia successfully completed their awards and at least 75% use their training on return to their home countries
- at least 75% of the first group of postgraduate students in the new ACIAR–University of the South Pacific program successfully completed the 2008 study year
- six capacity-development courses delivered to targeted ‘lagging’ regions—including Aceh and Papua in Indonesia, and Cambodia and Laos

## Position and priorities

Building capacity of agricultural research institutes in partner countries is one of ACIAR’s key priorities. The main priority of the program is enhancement of the research capabilities of institutions and individuals involved in ACIAR projects. Much of this is done in conjunction with individual projects through ‘on-the-job’ training, where either developing-country scientists visit Australia or Australian specialists visit partner countries to present a training program.

ACIAR also offers several specialised training activities: John Allwright Fellowships, small grants for fellowship returnees, John Dillon Memorial Fellowships and short-term cross-program training courses.

## Postgraduate training

John Allwright Fellowships are awarded to partner-country scientists involved in ACIAR-supported collaborative research projects to undertake postgraduate training, usually at the Masters or PhD level, at Australian universities. Studies focus on areas related to the topic or theme of the ACIAR project in which the awardee is engaged, but do not directly form part of the project. Fellows are able to spend up to 50% of their project period on fieldwork in their home country. With increased recognition by the Australian aid program of the importance of capacity building to partner countries, and its impact on regional relationships, ACIAR will continue to support postgraduate

training, maintaining at least 110 scholars in the fellowship program in 2008–09.

In 2008–09 those eligible to apply for John Allwright Fellowships are ACIAR project staff who are citizens of Papua New Guinea, selected Pacific islands countries (Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu), Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, East Timor, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, western China and the Republic of South Africa.

During 2008–09, ACIAR will support up to 30 new awards. ACIAR also supports a limited number of in-country postgraduate diploma and Masters degree awards linked to ACIAR projects and priority areas in Papua New Guinea (program commenced in 2005) and in South Pacific countries (commencing in 2008).

Small grants are also available for John Allwright Fellows after they complete postgraduate studies and return to relevant employment in their home countries. The follow-on funding scheme provides grants of up to \$10,000 for an activity that continues, or is related to, the ACIAR project research and the Fellow’s associated postgraduate work. The funding is primarily for developing small-scale research projects in the returnee’s institution, with the intention of catalysing longer term support and ongoing international collaboration. Since 2000, more than 40 of these awards have been made.

## John Allwright Alumni Association

ACIAR maintains linkages with John Allwright Fellows after they return to their home countries through the John Allwright Alumni Association. Alumni continue their interaction with ACIAR in various ways, including leadership roles in ACIAR projects and delivery and tutor roles in in-country training courses. Alumni are also invited to in-country functions, including country consultations, training activities and impact assessment meetings. They receive an electronic newsletter three times annually, along with ACIAR corporate documents, *Partners Magazine* and technical publications.

## Research management training

John Dillon Fellowships provide career development opportunities in Australia for outstanding mid-career agricultural scientists and economists from ACIAR partner countries. The aim is to develop the leadership skills of Fellows in the area of agricultural research management, agricultural policy and/or extension technologies through exposure to Australian agriculture across a range of best-practice organisations involved in research, extension and/or policymaking. ACIAR has awarded 36 Fellowships since the program's inception in 2002, with 10 Fellows taking part in the program in 2008.

## Cross-program training

A limited number of short-term 'cross-program' training activities in partner countries (or occasionally Australia) for staff associated with active ACIAR projects are also provided. Most activities are directly managed by ACIAR, but some are managed by the ATSE Crawford Fund (<[www.crawfordfund.org](http://www.crawfordfund.org)>). The Crawford Fund also supports short technical training placements for developing-country scientists in Australia.

ACIAR's cross-program training courses are presented by both public- and private-sector providers. ACIAR welcomes proposals for training courses from both Australian and developing-country partners. Trainees in cross-program courses must be nationals of the partner countries in which the ACIAR projects are based.

Based on advice from senior officials in partner countries, ACIAR will give priority to the following areas for cross-program training courses:

- research management and priority setting
- research methodology, including experimental design and data analysis
- commercialisation of research results
- research communication and scientific writing in English
- economics and social science for biophysical agricultural scientists
- agricultural extension for researchers, including participatory action research
- research evaluation and monitoring.

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