

CAAR Strategic Plan 2016-2020

Mission

To strengthen Australian-Arab relations by advancing areas of shared political, economic and social interest and building a greater awareness and appreciation of each other's cultures and values.

Objectives

The objectives of the Council for Australian-Arab Relations (CAAR) are to:

- empower the peoples of Australia and the Arab world to develop a holistic and contemporary mutual understanding;
- support positive and collaborative relationships between Australia's Arab diaspora communities and the broader Australian community; and
- support activities that encourage increased trade and investment between the two regions.

Operating Environment

The CAAR is a non-statutory, regional council in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). Established in 2003, its purpose is to broaden and strengthen the relationship between Australia and the Arab world, by encouraging and supporting greater mutual understanding and cooperation between the peoples of Australia and the Arab world. The CAAR Board is appointed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs (with the agreement of the Minister for Trade). Board Members are eminent Australians, bringing expertise from areas such as business, government and the academic community. The Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Managing Director of Austrade (or their nominated representatives) are *ex officio* CAAR Board Members. The CAAR Secretariat is located in DFAT's Middle East Branch. The Minister for Foreign Affairs may from time to time issue directives to the Council, to which the Council will be bound.

The CAAR allocates funds in accordance with the annual Business Plan, through publicly advertised grants rounds administered under DFAT's International Relations Grants Program. Grants recipients are suitably qualified individuals and organisations in Australia and in Arab countries. Individual applicants must be Australian citizens or permanent residents. However, joint applications are accepted whereby individuals or organisations in the Arab world are working in partnership with an Australian citizen, permanent resident or Australian organisation. The CAAR supports activities that deliver medium to longer term outcomes and have the potential to become self-sustaining. The CAAR aims to allocate grants that reflect the diversity of Australia's linkages with the Arab world. Applicants are encouraged to apply under the 'strategic priorities' listed in the relevant Business Plan, and the four Flagship Programs: International Speakers, Residencies, Study Tours and Women in Leadership.

Strategies

In order to achieve its objectives over 2016-2020, the CAAR Board Members will identify, in each annual Business Plan, the priority sectors and geographical areas for the relevant grants round, based on key anniversaries, events and Public Diplomacy opportunities. Each grants round will also call for applications that align with the following CAAR Flagship Programs¹

- *CAAR Speakers* – provides opportunities for influential Australians to visit the Arab world (or vice versa) to share their expertise on a particular issue. The host institution (not the Speaker themselves) would receive **\$10,000** (excluding GST) in CAAR funding to cover costs associated with economy class

international flights, domestic transport, accommodation and per diem expenses. The Speaker would visit for a week, visiting at least two cities, and undertaking at least one public (free) speaking event. The grantee must arrange for the Speaker to carry out media interviews and hold targeted meetings (with diplomats, relevant government agencies and community groups). Both the Speaker and the host institution are responsible for promotion of the CAAR's support of the project, including through the use of social media.

- *CAAR Visitors* – provides opportunities for Australian or Arab experts (in disciplines as diverse as political science, theatre, sport, science, visual arts or start-up incubators) to collaborate with their counterparts in the alternate region. The host institution (not the Visitor themselves) would receive **\$30,000** (excluding GST) in CAAR funding to cover costs associated with business class international flights, domestic transport, accommodation and per diem expenses. The Visitor would visit for **five to twelve weeks**, and would achieve a demonstrable outcome, such as: an academic research paper, a theatre play script, a radio documentary, or an album. The grantee must arrange for the Visitor to carry out media interviews and hold targeted meetings (with diplomats, relevant government agencies and community groups). Both the Visitor and the host institution are responsible for appropriate promotion of the CAAR's support of the project, including through the use of social media.
- *CAAR Exchanges* – provides funding to universities and professional organisations to arrange for Australian groups to travel to the Arab world (or vice versa) to undertake activities related to their studies or professions. For example, journalism students could attend a professional tour of local media agencies, or a sporting team could engage in a 'train-the-trainer' program. The students and the grantee are responsible for appropriate promotion of the CAAR's support of the project, including through the use of social media.
- *Women in Leadership* – gives a platform to Arab women known for their leadership and innovation, and to foster stronger links between Australian and Arab women, organisations and businesses. Projects funded under this Flagship must centre around an event (held in either Australia or the Arab world), and have a lasting impact (such as by creating professional networks). The organisation would be expected to carry out media interviews and hold targeted meetings (with diplomats, relevant government agencies and community groups). The organisation is responsible for appropriate promotion of the CAAR's support of the project, including through the use of social media.