



Refugee Council
of Australia

AUSCO EXCHANGE PROGRAM 2011 EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

The Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) is seeking expressions of interest from Australian agencies providing settlement services (including post-arrival orientation to newly arrived refugees) to participate in the Australian Cultural Orientation (AUSCO) Exchange Program 2011. The program is an initiative emerging from the AUSCO Guest Trainer and Visiting Settlement Adviser programs implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and RCOA since 2008.

This EOI process seeks to identify two Australian agencies and two Guest Trainers from within the selected agencies currently designing and delivering settlement services, including orientation activities for refugees, to participate in a short-term exchange with IOM AUSCO training teams in two priority locations, probably in the Middle East region. The background, purpose, objectives and details of the exchange program are outlined below.

Expressions of interest close at 5 p.m.(Eastern Standard Time) on Friday 11 March 2011 and should be addressed to the Chief Executive Officer, Refugee Council of Australia and emailed to projects@refugeecouncil.org.au or posted to Suite 4A6, 410 Elizabeth St. Surry Hills NSW 2010. All applications should be clearly identified "Expression of Interest – AUSCO Exchange Program 2011". The application process is detailed below.

1. Background to the Exchange Program

IOM is contracted by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) to conduct the five-day AUSCO Program for refugees and humanitarian entrants awaiting resettlement in Australia. Each year approximately 300 courses are organised by IOM for groups of 25 to 30 people. The courses are held in refugee camps and urban centres at various locations in Asia, Africa and the Middle East (and elsewhere as required). The training, delivered prior to departure to Australia based on a DIAC-approved curriculum, is conducted by skilled trainers recruited by IOM in each region in which AUSCO is conducted.

As part of the AUSCO contract, IOM was asked by DIAC to develop a short-term deployment program to involve suitably qualified people in providing AUSCO trainers with relevant and current information on settlement services and issues in Australia. Since 2008, RCOA has assisted IOM's AUSCO Global Coordinator with the recruitment of people from Australia for this deployment program. In 2008 and 2009, eight trainers were recruited by RCOA to provide input and feedback to AUSCO trainers in Malaysia, Thailand, Jordan, Kenya and Ghana.

In 2009-10, this Guest Trainer program evolved into a two-way exchange – sending skilled people from Australia to provide input to a regional AUSCO training team and sending a member of that AUSCO training team to Australia to see settlement services and issues first-hand. This revised program would build deeper links with post-arrival settlement services. Between May 2010 and February 2011, four two-way exchanges took place. These involved settlement specialists from Centrecare WA, AMES Victoria, Centre for Multicultural Youth (Victoria) and STARTTS (NSW) and AUSCO trainers from Thailand, Nepal, Malaysia and Kenya.

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The Refugee Council of Australia represents
non-government organisations and
individuals working with and for refugees
in Australia and around the world

The 2010 reviews of the AUSCO program and what was then the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy highlighted the value and importance of building stronger connections between pre-arrival orientation through AUSCO and post-arrival orientation through a number of settlement programs funded by DIAC. From the start of the new contracts in 2011, services providing Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) will be required to build an enhanced post-arrival orientation process to complement the pre-departure orientation through AUSCO.

The aim of this next phase of the AUSCO Exchange Program (April to June 2011) is to build stronger links between AUSCO and post-arrival orientation processes for refugees and humanitarian entrants. The exchange will be open to HSS services and also to agencies involved in other programs with a strong focus on orientation (including the Settlement Grants Program and Adult Migrant English Program). It is expected that this exchange will focus on the Middle East region and will give AUSCO trainers a first hand understanding of settlement issues faced by refugees from the Middle East, enabling them to refine the offshore curriculum to take account of those issues and services available in Australia to address them.

2. Purpose and objectives of the Exchange Program

2.1 Purpose of the Exchange Program

To continue to strengthen the links between pre-departure and post-arrival programs of orientation of refugees through targeted exchange of relevant personnel.

2.2 Program objectives

- a) To develop stronger links between AUSCO trainers and Australian service providers involved in post-arrival orientation for refugees and humanitarian entrants.
- b) To increase the level of understanding among relevant stakeholders about the objectives and content of orientation programs for refugees before and after arrival in Australia.
- c) To refine the AUSCO program to better reflect the issues faced after arrival by refugees from the Middle East.
- d) To meet identified training needs of AUSCO trainers in the Middle East.

2.3 Expected results

- Development of complementary approaches to pre-departure and post-arrival orientation.
- Enhanced understanding of the AUSCO program by Australian settlement services.
- Better insight into orientation and settlement issues for specific ethnic groups and strategies to address those issues.
- Input to the AUSCO program which contributes to improved preparation of refugees and humanitarian entrants from the Middle East for life in Australia.
- Meeting AUSCO trainers' specific training needs.

3. Program description

The AUSCO Exchange Program allows for an exchange for a period of 10 to 12 days per deployment between personnel from two Australian agencies with responsibility for development and delivery of orientation and settlement programs for refugees and two of IOM's AUSCO training teams. Australian agencies will, as part of this EOI process, identify a Guest Trainer from within their organisation, who will be deployed to the region served by the AUSCO training team.. IOM has decided to focus the April-June 2011 exchanges on the Middle East region. Specific locations are yet to be determined.

3.1 Briefing and orientation of selected Australian Guest Trainers

A telephone briefing will be organised for the two Guest Trainers within one month of their selection. The aim of the briefing will be to introduce participants to the AUSCO Exchange Program and to provide additional information about the AUSCO Program itself. The briefing will include direct contact with IOM personnel responsible for AUSCO program delivery and the AUSCO trainers selected to participate in the exchange. DIAC will provide input on the purpose of the AUSCO Program. Guest Trainers who have previously participated in the AUSCO Exchange Program may provide input to the briefing.

Participants will be briefed on the purpose and content of the current AUSCO program and, specifically, the current orientation program in the country to which they will be deployed. Guest Trainers will be provided with relevant background material used in the selected regional AUSCO programs, a sample profile of AUSCO refugee participants to the program, previous Exchange Program reports and other relevant documents.

3.2 Information collection and exchange prior to deployment

Guest Trainers, AUSCO trainers and IOM will confirm a communication protocol and timetable to exchange information prior to the departure of the Guest Trainer to the target location. The trainers will exchange CVs and communicate on issues such as the specific AUSCO training environment, profiles of the refugee target groups, priority issues for refugees awaiting departure, settlement issues on arrival, AUSCO curriculum materials and delivery techniques, specific training needs and other inputs required to develop the AUSCO program in the country being visited.

3.3 Australian Guest Trainers provide input to AUSCO Program in selected regions

The two Guest Trainers will be deployed for a period of 10-12 days to the locations chosen by IOM for participation in the exchange programs. During their deployment, Guest Trainers will: brief the AUSCO team about on-arrival orientation programs, settlement issues for the target population and services to address those issues; and provide input and support as required to refine the AUSCO curriculum and related materials to complement post-arrival orientation. Guest Trainers will also work with the AUSCO trainer chosen for the exchange visit to Australia to identify suitable training materials and training methodologies to deliver the AUSCO curriculum. The Guest Trainers may be required to co-deliver AUSCO sessions to refugees during the deployment.

In summary, Guest Trainers will be involved in the following:

- Briefing the AUSCO team on settlement issues facing refugees from the target population;
- Providing support, as required, to update (if necessary) the AUSCO curriculum and related materials;
- Working with the AUSCO trainers to develop suitable training schedules and methodologies to deliver the curriculum and
- Co-delivering AUSCO sessions during the deployment, as required by the local AUSCO training team.

3.4 Design of the attachment program and workshops in Australia.

The Guest Trainers will work with the AUSCO trainers and IOM staff to identify specific activities suited to the needs of the AUSCO trainers visiting Australia. This may include exposure to specific settlement services and/or a training course or one-on-one training which will serve to address an identified training need of the trainer. This may include for example, exposure to information on specific cultural issues and adjustment strategies or familiarisation with training material produced in Australia for refugees from the Middle East. The trainers will also discuss timing, content and target agencies of a workshop for settlement workers during the AUSCO Trainer's visit to Australia. The Guest Trainer, the AUSCO Trainers selected for the exchange and the AUSCO Global Coordinator will compile a draft schedule of activities for the Australian leg of the exchange.

3.5 AUSCO trainers undertake an attachment program in Australia

Two AUSCO trainers will undertake a 10-12 day exchange visit to Australia planned and hosted by the agencies with which the Guest Trainers work. The purpose of the visit to Australia will be to

upgrade the AUSCO Trainers' knowledge of post-arrival orientation processes and to provide them with a first hand understanding of settlement issues facing refugees from their region. The visit may also include days of specific training to upgrade the AUSCO trainer's skills in areas jointly identified by the trainer and IOM. The Guest Trainer will arrange training as required with relevant bodies in Australia. The program could include the AUSCO Trainer working alongside a settlement worker providing service in a particular area of need (e.g. an agency providing financial management advice).

3.6 Workshops in Australia on AUSCO for Australian settlement service providers

During the visit to Australia, the AUSCO trainer will present at least one workshop on the AUSCO Program to representatives of settlement service agencies and other organisations in Australia which have some connection with the settlement process for refugees and humanitarian entrants.

The workshops could include discussion of pre-departure and post-arrival orientation, living conditions in countries of first asylum, cultural practices of specific refugee groups and specific settlement issues. Additional presenters to these sessions will be identified, as appropriate, and may include DIAC representatives. These briefings will be organised by the settlement service agencies selected for the exchange.

3.7 Debriefing of AUSCO and Guest Trainers on completion of the attachment

A debriefing teleconference will be organised between representatives of DIAC's Humanitarian Branch (which manages the AUSCO Program), IOM's AUSCO Global Coordinator, RCOA, Guest Trainers and the participating AUSCO trainers in the week following the return of AUSCO trainers to their offices. Participants will provide feedback on all aspects of the Exchange Program, making suggestions to be considered in the planning of future exchanges.

3.8 Reporting

Guest Trainers will be required to prepare a comprehensive report following completion of the visit of AUSCO trainers to Australia. This report will detail: activities undertaken during the overseas and Australian stages of the exchange; technical and organisational issues which may have arisen during the exchange; and recommendations for future exchanges. This feedback will be incorporated into a "lessons learned" and recommendations section of the RCOA report to DIAC.

4. Responsibilities of agencies involved in the Exchange Program

4.1 Responsibilities of the selected Australian settlement service agencies

The selected agency will:

- Release the Guest Trainer for a full-day telephone briefing and for the period of the deployment of the Trainer to the IOM site where AUSCO training is delivered.
- In consultation with the Guest Trainer, prepare a detailed draft program of activities to RCOA and IOM for the visit to Australia of the AUSCO trainer. The program will expose AUSCO trainers to post-arrival orientation processes and classes, to organisations which develop and deliver settlement services and training programs for newly arrived refugees in Australia. The program will be directly relevant to the specific needs of refugees coming from the selected region and take into account the prior experience of the visiting AUSCO trainer. It will also provide specific training opportunities to the AUSCO trainer as required.
- Be responsible for the logistics of the AUSCO trainer's visit – including arranging suitably priced and located accommodation, a work space for the trainer and any local travel required – and for liaison with RCOA regarding reimbursements for the overseas deployment of the Guest Trainer (see section 6) and any costs related to workshops held during the AUSCO trainer's visit to Australia. (see section 3.6). Agencies should be aware that there is no provision within the program for the agencies' costs related to the hosting of the attachment. However, the AUSCO Trainer will receive a subsistence allowance during the program which will cover accommodation, personal expenses and limited local travel in Australia.

- Organise at least one workshop for settlement service agencies in its region as outlined in Section 3.6 above.

4.2 Roles of IOM and RCOA

The AUSCO Global Coordinator (based at the IOM office in Bangkok) will be responsible for the selection of the two AUSCO Trainers. Following recruitment, IOM will:

- brief the AUSCO trainers on their role within the Exchange Program; and
- brief Guest Trainers on conditions of employment and on specific needs and areas of training required for AUSCO courses in the IOM region to which they will be deployed.

IOM will provide Guest Trainers with background materials in preparation for the overseas deployment and will prepare a schedule for the Guest Trainers' respective assignments while overseas. IOM is also responsible for the contracts, clearances and mobilisation of Guest Trainers, including visas and arrangements for international travel and local travel overseas.

RCOA, in collaboration with IOM, is responsible for overall coordination of the Exchange Program and will be responsible for selection of the Australian host agencies and of the two Guest Trainers nominated by the selected agencies to participate in the program. RCOA will organise the stakeholder briefings prior to the deployment of trainers overseas and debriefing on completion of the Exchange. RCOA will monitor the Exchange Program overall, particularly the components within Australia. It is expected that RCOA will meet Guest Trainers and AUSCO trainers during the Australian section of the exchange attachment and participate in the workshops as appropriate.

5. Proposed dates, duration and schedule of the assignment

It is expected that the Guest Trainers' field assignments will be for approximately 10 to 12 days and that AUSCO Trainers will be attached to the selected agency in Australia for 10 to 12 days. The briefing of Guest Trainers is tentatively scheduled for early April 2011. Guest Trainers will be deployed to the two identified locations and these deployments will be complete by the end of May 2011. Dates of deployment of Guest Trainers will be determined by the schedules of AUSCO classes (which are, in turn, determined by the flow of planned refugee departures to Australia). The two AUSCO trainers will undertake their attachments in Australia simultaneously in June 2011.

The proposed schedule for is as follows:

<i>April 2011</i>	Teleconference briefing with Australian Guest Trainers, AUSCO trainers, IOM, RCOA and DIAC to plan schedule of activities, including Guest Trainer's work with the AUSCO team overseas and the program for AUSCO trainers visiting Australia.
<i>April/May 2011</i>	Deployment Guest Trainer no.1 (10-12 days)
<i>May 2011</i>	Deployment Guest Trainer no. 2 (10-12 days)
<i>June 2011</i>	AUSCO trainers undertake attachment in Australia, and conduct workshops with settlement agencies
<i>June 2011</i>	Telephone debriefing of Guest Trainers and compilation of reports by Guest Trainers, AUSCO trainers, IOM and RCOA to DIAC

6. Salary and disbursements

Overseas travel and accommodation costs will be covered. The Guest Trainers will receive payment of \$205 per day for:

- one day of pre-mobilisation briefing;
- 10-12 days on assignment overseas;
- two days of report writing.

Reimbursable expenses (on presentation of agency invoice) will include travel and health insurance, the Guest Trainer's travel within Australia and workshop-related expenses;

7. Application and selection process

The application and selection process is a dual process, which aims to find:

- Two settlement service agencies with the capacity and commitment to meet its responsibilities as part of the AUSCO Exchange Program.
- Two skilled workers representing their respective agencies and able to fulfil the duties of the Guest Trainer role.

Agencies may nominate more than one candidate for the Guest Trainer position. However, no more than one candidate will be chosen from a single agency.

In response to this Expression of Interest, each settlement service Agency applying to participate in the program should submit a three-part application:

1. An application from the settlement service agency, responding to the criteria set for agencies hosting the Australian leg of the AUSCO Exchange Program (authorised by a senior officer of the agency);
2. An individual application by the nominated Guest Trainer, responding to the criteria for the Guest Trainer position.
3. A copy of the current curriculum vitae of the Guest Trainer including two referees for the position.

To be considered for the position, applicants **MUST**:

- i. directly address each of the criteria below in their letters of application;
- ii. provide a current curriculum vitae
- iii. provide the names and contact details of two referees to support the application.

Applications which do not address the selection criteria and do not reach the RCOA by the due date will not be considered. Given the limited time between selection of Guest Trainers and their deployment overseas, short-listed applicants will be asked to draft a communication schedule between key stakeholders as part of the interview process.

Following the initial selection process, agency representatives and nominated Guest Trainers will be interviewed by a selection panel at the RCOA office in Sydney. Travel and accommodation costs for the interview process will be covered by IOM.

7.1 Selection Criteria for Guest Trainers

Essential

- a) Demonstrated skills and current experience in the development and delivery of interactive training programs for refugees;
- b) Experience in provision of post-arrival orientation programs;
- c) Knowledge of on-arrival settlement services and processes related to accommodation, health, education and employment available for refugees in Australia;
- d) Experience in working with refugees from the target group in Australia;
- e) Knowledge of settlement issues for new arrivals from a range of ethnic backgrounds and strategies to address them;
- f) Excellent communication skills including report writing and listening skills;
- g) Knowledge and experience in working with interpreters;
- h) Experience and preferably qualifications in training and specifically best practice adult learning methods;

- i) Experience in curriculum development and preparation of training materials, preferably relating to refugee settlement; and
- j) Understanding of the AUSCO) program.

Desirable:

- k) First-hand experience of resettlement in Australia, preferably as a refugee or humanitarian entrant;
- l) A working knowledge of the culture and one or more of the languages of the refugees and humanitarian entrants who participate in AUSCO Programs in the Middle East region.

7.2 Settlement Service Agencies must demonstrate in their response:

- a) Experience in the development and delivery of orientation programs for refugees;
- b) Experience in the development and delivery in Australia of successful activities for refugees resettled from the Middle East region.
- c) Capacity to host a two week program designed to expose AUSCO trainers to Australian settlement programs and issues.
- d) Outreach to other agencies in the area which also provide orientation and settlement services for refugees and humanitarian entrants.
- e) Capacity (including resources) to organise and support interactive workshops and briefing activities.

Any queries regarding this position should be directed to the RCOA through the e-mail address below or by phone on (02) 9211 9333.

Applications are be submitted by:

E-mail to: Chief Executive Officer
Refugee Council of Australia
projects@refugeecouncil.org.au

Or by mail to: Suite 4A6, 410 Elizabeth Street
Surry Hills NSW 2010

All applications should be clearly identified "Expression of Interest – AUSCO Exchange Program".

Applications close at 5 p.m.(Eastern Standard Time) on Friday 11 March 2011.