



2017

International Fellowship for Agribusiness

Fellowship Application Guidelines



International
Specialised
Skills
Institute

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Introduction

The International Specialised Skills Institute (ISS Institute) is offering two international Fellowships in the area of Agribusiness in the amount of \$10,000 each.

The *2017 International Agribusiness Fellowships* provide an opportunity for individuals working within the area of agribusiness to enhance their current skills through an international applied research program.

This Fellowship is intended to support individuals in their own career development as well as provide an opportunity to drive leading practice and innovation within the Australian agribusiness industry. It is expected that the applicant is currently engaged in an agribusiness area in Australia.

Applications close at 4:00pm on Friday 28 April, 2017.

About this Fellowship

The ISS Institute is seeking candidates for this Fellowship who are interested in exploring new and leading practice, innovation and leadership opportunities in Skill Enhancement areas within any of the varied agribusiness industries and sectors.

The agribusiness industry encompasses agriculture, horticulture, conservation and land management, animal care and management, food processing (including beverages, wine and pharmaceuticals), meat, seafood and racing industries. These sectors generate significant contributions to the Australian economy with these Fellowships aimed at assisting members of the industry to seek potential growth and innovation opportunities.

Fellowship Investor

Funding for these International Agribusiness Fellowships was generously provided by the former Food and Agribusiness Solutions organisation. ISS Institute will uphold the legacy of the investment made by this organisation through these International Agribusiness Fellowship opportunities.

International Specialised Skills Institute (ISS Institute)

The ISS Institute is a not-for-profit, independent, national organisation that for over 25 years has worked with Australian governments, industry and education institutions to enable individuals to gain enhanced skills and experience in traditional trades, professions, leading edge technologies and, education and training.

What is International Applied Research?

Applied research is an approach used to solve practical problems. The study and research is often used in education, training and across industries with the intention to generate actionable knowledge, to find solutions or develop innovative practice that has direct applications to the world. ISS Institute's Fellowship Program invests in Australians undertaking a form of applied research outside of Australia.

What are Skill Enhancements?

Skill enhancements are opportunities to develop skills, advance knowledge and identify innovation. Fellowships allow individuals to travel overseas and enhance their skills for the benefit of organisations and industries in Australia. Fellowships provide opportunities to identify problems or skill gaps in Australia, enable Fellows to travel overseas to identify best-practice ways of addressing these and provide detailed recommendations so that innovative or new approaches can be implemented in industry.

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 2 x Letters of Support which indicate that your Fellowship field is relevant and will benefit the industry (eg. peak industry bodies, government agencies, professional associations)
- Provide 1 x Employer Endorsement Letter (unless you are self-employed) indicating that you will be supported to meet the obligations associated with this Fellowship (this letter should be from your CEO, Director or Manager).

Email these documents to applications@issinstitute.org.au

Who can apply?

- Australian residents 18 years of age and over.
- Individuals working within the agribusiness sector/s.

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 specialist conferences.
- 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 industry/skills enhancement in Australia within 12 months of receiving their Fellowship. ISS Institute will assist with the editing, design and publication of this Fellowship Report.
- Fellows participate in a Fellowship Induction Program and are proudly 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 enable to individual to meet Fellowship obligations.
- Fellows will be supported throughout their Fellowship by the ISS Institute team.

Selection Process

- Each submission will be evaluated by agribusiness experts and ISS Institute team members.
- Short-listed applicants are then interviewed by a Selection Panel, including an industry representative and members of ISS Institute's team.
- Interviews may be conducted in person or by tele-conference / video-conference.
- The Selection Panel's decision is final and binding, and given the number of applications we receive we are unable to provide feedback on individual applications.
- Each applicant will be advised of the outcome of their application.

Conditions of Entry

1. Fellowship Application (including the attachments – Curriculum Vitae, 2 x Letters of Support, 1 x 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 2 – 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 12 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 fill in 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 applications will be accepted.
- When preparing a Fellowship Application Form it is a good idea to type it up as a word document first as this will allow you to check for spelling errors or mistakes. Make sure you save the word document with your responses. 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 (eg. Jones2017) and then email it (along with the attachments) to 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 partner, government agencies, professional associations 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.

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 when asking for a Letter of Support.

Don't forget to ask the person to put their Letter of Support on letterhead, then sign and date it.

What is an Employer Endorsement Letter?

An Employer Endorsement Letter shows that you have discussed your Fellowship Application with your employer (eg. CEO, Director or Senior Manager).

While it is the Fellow, and not the Fellow's employer, who receive 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 (eg. Annual Leave, professional leave etc) to travel overseas, you will be completing a Fellowship Report and seeking opportunities to disseminate your Fellowship learnings and findings.

Your employer may also want to assist you while you are developing your Fellowship Application and the skill enhancement areas you want to investigate.

About the Fellowship Application questions

- While industry experts will be part of the Selection Panel, it also has members who are not part of the industry. Therefore, so all members of the Selection Panel can best evaluate your Fellowship Application, it is a good idea to avoid industry jargon.
- Make sure your answers are succinct, clear and to the point – there are restricted word limits per each question so it is best to be as concise as possible.
- Consider having a friend or colleague review your Application Form to make sure there are no mistakes and that it can be easily understood.

Fellowship Application questions guidance

You may want to consider the following tips when preparing responses to each of the Fellowship Application questions.

1. *Please describe the area of agribusiness you are involved in (including any links you may have to industry bodies if relevant)? 200 words*

In this question we are looking to understand your current role/job and how it relates to your Fellowship proposal.

2. *Please describe two or more skill enhancement areas within the agribusiness industry you would like to investigate and why? 300 - 500 words*

In this question we want to understand the areas that you have identified as needed skill enhancements and how these will benefit you and your industry now and into the future. See the Fellowship Guidelines document for more information about skill enhancements.

3. *Please discuss the evidence which indicates the need for applied research and investigation into the proposed skill enhancement areas? 300 - 500 words*

In this question you have an opportunity to discuss research undertaken and/or the evidence you have collected which indicates the need for your proposed skill enhancement areas.

4. *In what ways do you anticipate that your overseas investigations and findings will positively benefit and have impact on your industry/sector? 300 - 500 words*

While we know 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 Australia 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 Australia.

5. How will taking part in this Fellowship benefit you at personal and/or professional levels? 300 - 500 words

In this question we are interested in learning about how this Fellowship might assist you in achieving career goals now and into the future.

6. How do you intend sharing your Fellowship findings and recommendations with the relevant industry, sector and/or other influential areas (such as education, training or government) upon completion of your Fellowship? 200 words

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 include: presentations; conferences; articles; workshops; mentoring; and, media etc.

7. Which overseas organisations/training programs/conferences/other do you aim to visit and develop connections with and why have you selected these? 200 words

In 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 and who is offering them.

8. 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 Letters of Support from, and your peers.

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

Website: www.issinstitute.org.au

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ISSInstitute

Twitter: https://twitter.com/ISS_Institute