



Australian Government
Department of Education

Strong Beginnings (Excellence) Fund Grant Round 2

Presented by the Department of Education



Background

- **Strong Beginnings Fund:** established to encourage providers to improve the quality of initial teacher education (ITE) programs.
- Two components:
 - **Transition Fund:** one-off grant funding to embed core content in ITE programs.
 - **Excellence Fund:** annual grant funding to encourage excellence in the delivery of ITE programs.



Excellence Fund: Objectives

1. Support select higher education providers to share best practice and foster improved performance in the delivery of ITE courses across the sector.
2. Build the capability of the higher education sector in the delivery of ITE courses and strengthen the overall quality of ITE programs in Australia.



Funding

Round 1 (Previous funding round)

- Total of \$1.56 million available.

Round 2 (Current funding round)

- Total of \$1.3 million available.

Round 3 onwards

- \$1 million per year.



Who can apply?

An ITE provider that:

- is a Table A provider, or body corporate specified in subsection 67(1) of the *Higher Education Support (Other Grants) Guidelines 2022*
- has met all conditions of the **Strong Beginnings (Transition) Fund**
- has met the requirements of the Accreditation Standards and Procedures with respect to **core content**
- is willing to participate in **quality assurance processes** for the implementation of core content.

Joint applications permitted.

There are no limitations on the number of applications in which an institution may be named as a consortium member.



Round 2 Priority Areas

Applications only need to address one Priority Area, but can address multiple if desired.

01



Improving provider-school relationships to support practical experience and transition into the classroom

02



Supporting targeted ITE strategies to attract and retain candidates from diverse cohorts and workforce priority areas

03



Supporting professional identity development for ITE candidates to improve retention and readiness for teaching

04



Supporting ITE students to develop and practice skills in Core Content, digital literacy, and/or strategies to support student wellbeing and respectful relationships

What will be funded?

Examples:

- course materials, guides and practical tools to share with ITE providers
 - seminars and workshops for ITE providers
 - data sharing platforms to track ITE student progress
 - resources and programs for schools to improve ITE student practicums
 - induction processes and mentoring programs.
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What will not be funded?

Examples:

- purchase of land
 - wage costs not related to direct delivery of the initiative
 - major construction or capital works
 - overseas travel
 - costs incurred in the preparation of a grant application
 - retrospective costs (i.e. for work undertaken prior to the grant)
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Examples of potential activities for each Priority Area





Priority Area 1: Improving provider-school relationships to support practical experience and transition into the classroom

Example activities:

- Establishing formal partnerships with schools.
- Training and support for supervising teachers and mentors.
- Integrated professional experience models.
- Transition-to-teaching initiatives.



Priority Area 2: Supporting targeted ITE strategies to attract and retain candidates from diverse cohorts and workforce priority areas

Example activities:

- Targeted outreach and recruitment.
- Supported entry pathways.
- Mentoring, academic and wellbeing support.
- Partnerships to deliver culturally responsive professional experience placements.



Priority Area 3: Supporting professional identity development for ITE candidates to improve retention and readiness for teaching.

Example activities:

- Mentoring and peer-support programs.
- Structured reflective practice and professional identity.
- Student engagement with professional networks.
- Transition-to-profession initiatives.



Priority Area 4: Supporting ITE students to develop and practice skills in Core Content, digital literacy, and/or strategies to support student wellbeing and respectful relationships

Example activities:

- Develop and practice teaching approaches aligned with Core Content.
- Training and practical learning experiences that build digital literacy capability.
- Opportunities to develop and apply strategies that support student wellbeing, inclusion and engagement.

Duration of project activities

- Activities funded in Round 2 are expected to be delivered in 2027.
- Activities can run beyond this period where justified.



Selection criteria

1. Alignment with Priority Areas
2. Organisational capability and risk management
3. Impact and Outcomes
4. Collaboration and Sector Sharing

Regard also given to:

- overall objective/s
 - evidence to demonstrate activities will contribute to meeting objectives
 - how grant activities will target the priority areas
 - relative value of the grant sought.
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Timing

- **Closing Date: Wednesday 4 November 2026, 5pm AEDT**
- Grants are expected to be offered to successful applicants in late 2026/early 2027.



How to apply

- Complete the 'Strong Beginnings (Excellence) Fund Grant application form'.
- Email completed applications, along with any attachments, to: StrongBeginnings@education.gov.au
- Use the subject line "Strong Beginnings (Excellence) Fund grants".



For more information

- *Administrative Information for Applicants* document
 - Available on the Department's website:
www.education.gov.au/quality-initial-teacher-education-review/teacher-education-expert-panel/strong-beginnings-fund
- Email queries to: StrongBeginnings@education.gov.au

