

GUIDELINES FOR DANISH PARTNER AUTHORITIES AND SECTOR COUNSELLORS



DFC LEARNING & NETWORK

supporting the Danish Strategic Sector Cooperation

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	2
2. DFC Learning & Network.....	2
2.1 Use of DFC in the formulation of new SSC projects or project phases.....	2
2.2 What does DFC offer?.....	2
2.3 Who is eligible for participating in learning programmes?.....	3
2.4 What are the selection criteria?.....	4
2.5 Considerations by Sector Counsellors in nominating candidates for DFC learning programmes.....	4
2.6 Network.....	5
3. Practical information.....	5
3.1 Application processes.....	5
3.2 Expectations to participants in DFC funded learning programmes.....	7
3.3 What does DFC cover?.....	7
4. Further DFC support to link and/or tailor DFC learning programmes with/to the SSC projects.....	8
4.1 Logistic support for extended stays to participate in SSC related activities.....	8
5. Review of the Guidelines.....	9
6. Annex: Outline of administrative procedures in connection with Danida Scholarships.....	10



DFC Learning & Network

1. Introduction

Danida Fellowship Centre (DFC) offers a wide range of learning activities in support of Danida funded development collaboration programmes in the Global South. At DFC, we believe individuals matter and as educators and learning professionals, our ultimate goal is to create learning experiences that truly engage participants, turn their knowledge into action and lead to positive change.

In these guidelines, we invite you to learn more about our offers, approaches and engagement in building capacity of individuals and their organisations. They are not solely operational procedures but also intended as a window to approach DFC for sharing new ideas and initiating a dialogue on needs and methodologies.

The annex on page 10 outlines the procedures and timelines related to a Danida scholarship.

2. DFC Learning & Network

2.1 Use of DFC in the formulation of new SSC projects or project phases

For learning programmes to be as integrated an element as possible in the individual Strategic Sector Cooperation (SSC) projects, the Danish Partner Authorities and Sector Counsellors are encouraged **to involve DFC's Capacity Development Advisors already during the formulation process of new projects or project phases.**

Support from DFC to the project could include:

- Advice and support in the assessment of capacity needs and competence development approaches.
- Optimising the combination of SSC project-driven capacity building activities and the DFC portfolio of learning programmes and activities.
- Suggestions for DFC supported learning initiatives for partner organisations to be included in the project and supported through the scholarship programme.
- Advice on project formulation, especially in relation to capacity development.
- Advice and support in the evaluation of capacity development results.

An early involvement of DFC in the project formulation may help to ensure that the project reaps the full benefits of the learning programme portfolio as a strategic and integrated element, and will also support early identification and development of educational opportunities for project partners.

2.2 What does DFC offer?

Learning is a transformative journey that goes beyond acquiring knowledge and skills. DFC provides holistic learning activities that empower individuals to become catalysts for positive change.

As a self-governing learning institution, DFC offers about 40 learning programmes per year to Danida's partners in development cooperation projects and programmes. Danida is here used as the term for Danish official development aid. Work-related relevance and applicability is at the centre of our learning programmes. The programmes are therefore designed in a way so that they build on needs assessment and demand. Exposure, adaptability, dialogue, collaboration, flexibility and creativity are always central elements. Our learning programmes target key professionals. We develop all learning programmes in line with the needs of the SSC thematic areas and programmes which we support. This is usually undertaken in dialogue with Danish Partner Authorities and Sector Counsellors engaged in SSC; as well as advisors and consultants at Danish supported development programmes; and our learning providers from Danish educational institutions, knowledge institutions and specialised consultants.



The educational institutions bring in-depth technical and sectoral expertise, as do the specialised consultants. The Danish Partner Authorities, Danish Embassies and Sector Counsellors bring an understanding of the specific contexts in which the participants operate. As for DFC, we contribute with several decades of experience in designing and implementing learning programmes that spark positive change beyond the building of capacity of the individual.

Based on prior needs identification, demand and budget availability, DFC typically supports and finances the learning programmes and scholarships mentioned below. Especially the tailored programmes and activities allow for a high degree of flexibility, and can come in many forms including in the form of workshops, where the focus is on sharing experiences and forming networks. The master scholarships and university summer courses are however rather fixed in terms of structure, contents, methodology and timing.

- **Integrated learning programmes tailored to cover thematic needs in SSC programmes;** organised as a combination of in-person and online learning sessions.
- **Integrated learning programmes of cross sectoral nature** addressing subject-wise new knowledge for candidates working with sustainable and just development; organised as a blend of in-person and online learning sessions.
- **Online tailored sessions and learning programmes** that are entirely online driven.
- **Master scholarships** for a full master education of relevance, offered by a Danish institution.
- **Summer courses** of relevance, offered by a Danish educational institution.

DFC also offers its experience in developing and managing learning programmes and undertakes full implementation of tailored learning activities for organisations and programmes supported by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). This may take multiple forms and structures and will be on a cost recovery base.

DFC welcomes ideas and inputs to innovative learning programmes and learning approaches and may engage in various relevant co-sharing capacity building engagements in MFA supported programmes.

Knowledge in Action via mandatory learning methodologies

In order to secure that knowledge gained is also applied in practice, DFC highly values that well-proven learning principles are integrated in all tailored activities:

- **Learning by seeing:** All tailored learning programmes should include exposures in the shape of visits to and knowledge sharing by institutions with experience in applying the knowledge and tools taught during the learning programme.
- **Learning by doing:** All tailored options should include case or project work, where participants are asked to apply their new knowledge and tools to a case relevant to their work context at home.
- **Learning by example:** Participants all have a wealth of knowledge and experience. All tailored activities should facilitate opportunities for structured peer learning, where participants learn from each other.
- **Translating learning into action:** DFC has for several years applied the Action Plan approach. The Action Plan, which is to be developed by each participant, has proven a useful tool in translating individual learning into organizational learning and positive change.
- **Passing on the learning:** The wider impact of a learning programme will bear on the participants ability to pass on learnings to others. All tailored learning programmes must therefore include approaches that enable participants to make a case for the new knowledge derived from the learning programme.

DFC is open for dialogues on how these mandatory elements can be balanced and best tailored to tackle the learning needs in any specific programme.

2.3 Who is eligible for participating in learning programmes?

Candidates must fulfil the following criteria to be eligible for a DFC learning programme:



- Be a **staff member of an SSC partner** relevant for the achievement of the SSC project targets.
- Be proficient in **written and spoken English** at an advanced level allowing for active participation in discussions and group work, and the completion of written assignments. In some cases a language test (IELTS/TOEFL) will be required.
- Fulfil the **requirements set by the DFC and the learning provider** for the particular learning activity.
- In general, candidates are to have at least a **bachelor degree**, as learning programmes and studies offered will be at or equivalent to Master's level.
- All candidates must preferably **be interviewed, reviewed and endorsed by the Sector Counsellor** for the particular SSC project for which their participation in the learning programme is deemed relevant. Applications for scholarships under the DFC Scholarship Programme must likewise be reviewed by the Sector Counsellors.

2.4 What are the selection criteria?

The selection criteria applied by DFC include the following:

- **Relevance of the candidate as a change agent** within his/her organisation and in terms of the SSC project targets.
- **Qualifications of the candidate vis-à-vis learning programme contents and requirements.** In the case of learning programmes developed and tailored exclusively for the SSC projects, criteria will be evaluated jointly by DFC and the study provider. In the case where the applicant is applying to a university or university college for existing courses/studies, DFC will only evaluate according to the listed criteria in this note, and pre-approve a scholarship on the basis of these, whereas the university exclusively will carry out an evaluation of the academic and language qualifications as part of the regular application and admission process. See section 3 below for further information on the application process.
- **The relevant Danish Partner Authorities may be consulted** in order to prioritise between the different SSC projects as well as their nominated candidates. Project leads may, therefore, be involved in the selection process in order to identify the most relevant candidates
- **Prioritisation expressed by the Sector Counsellor** in his/her nomination of candidates.

To the degree possible and relevant, DFC aims to ensure equitability in the distribution of participants among SSC projects over time.

2.5 Considerations by Sector Counsellors in nominating candidates for DFC learning programmes

Sector Counsellors are expected to conduct **individual assessments** of the nominated candidates. Sector Counsellors are encouraged to consider the following in nominating candidates:

- **Change agents:** Which candidates would be able to act as a change agent within their organization if provided with the further knowledge, skills, networks and motivation obtained through a DFC learning programme? Here it is also worth considering the age of the candidate. If they have recently joined the organization following their studies or if they are closing in on retirement, they may not be best positioned to become change agents.
- **Diversity:** Sector Counsellors are encouraged to consider ways to ensure a better gender balance in terms of nominated candidates.
- **Institutionalisation:** Sector Counsellors are encouraged to nominate at least two candidates from the same organisation, as this is likely to improve the likelihood that learning acquired is retained and results in organisational learning and change. Sector Counsellors are also encouraged to discuss with supervisors of nominated staff how they wish to use the new skills upon the staff members' return.
- **Linkages with the SSC project:** Sector Counsellors must consider in what ways the SSC project can benefit from and make use of the new knowledge and skills obtained by the participants upon their return.



- **Candidate's preparedness and English language proficiency:** Candidates are expected to conform to Danish learning customs, and should be prepared to adapt to Danish working hours and holidays. Sector Counsellors are highly advised to undertake interviews with the candidates prior to their endorsement, to assess whether they have the required level of English. Please note, it is mandatory for candidates to have good English language proficiency enabling them to actively follow and engage in the learning programme both orally and in writing. The interview could also be an opportunity to assess candidates' motivation, discuss expectations and have more strategic discussions on how the candidates plan to use their learnings.

In nominating candidates, the Sector Counsellor must state how the individual candidate's participation will contribute to the overall SSC programme.

2.6 Network

Danida Fellows Networks functions as the rest of DFC; needs based. The Danida Fellows Network brings together a wide range of stakeholders across public authorities, academia, private companies and civil society. Bringing these stakeholders together in dialogue and collaboration across sectors and countries adds value to each individual and organisation, providing them with a platform to share ideas, be inspired by new knowledge, draw on different perspectives and identify new partnership opportunities. Becoming a member requires no registration. Instead, a DFC partner or fellow is a member by affiliation. Through the different platforms under the Danida Fellows Network, members can meet around sectoral or country specific issues. Danida Fellowship Centre facilitates a number of thematic communities and supports independent Danida national alumni networks that draw together alumni within particular countries.

Danida Fellows Network supports 14 national networks with close linkages to the Embassy in country. Alumni experience and knowledge can serve as a great value for the SSC projects. Therefore DFC supports activities that promote knowledge sharing and transfer of knowledge.

Feel free to always reach out if you have good ideas or suggestions to activities for participants after completing the learning programme in Denmark. To learn more about DFC's many network activities, follow this link: <https://dfcentre.com/network/>

3. Practical information

3.1 Application processes

Once the learning needs identification has been completed and an agreement is reached on which learning programme(s)/study(ies) DFC will support, the below steps will apply in terms of the application process.

Application process for **tailored learning programmes**

The following steps will apply in terms of tailored options:

- DFC will send out an invitation to relevant Sector Counsellors to nominate candidates. The invitation will include the tentative course description(s) and programme(s). Twice a year, DFC will for each relevant thematic area send out one invitation for learning programmes. DFC will endeavour to allow Sector Counsellors **no less than 6 weeks** to identify candidates.
- The application process has three phases:
 1. Sector Counsellors and the Danish Partner Authorities identify candidates for the learning programme(s) from among partners or other stakeholders relevant to the particular SSC project. Please see section 2.5.
 2. DFC and the place(s) of study will evaluate the candidates based on the criteria for eligibility outlined in section 2.3. In case of discrepancies, the assessment of the place(s) of study will prevail unless additional information is provided by the Sector Counsellor/candidate to show that needed qualifications/requirements are fulfilled.



3. DFC will send a formal communication to the Sector Counsellor, the respective Danish Embassy and the respective focal point(s) from the Danish Partner Authority confirming the selected candidates. Sector Counsellors are expected to inform the candidates of their selection.
- DFC will send the selected candidates an official Letter of Acceptance for use in the visa application process, flight tickets and insurance papers as well as additional information on their stay in Denmark.
- In cases where a selected candidate proves unable to participate in the learning programme, Sector Counsellors may identify an alternate candidate. Applications for alternate candidates must be submitted by the Sector Counsellor as soon as possible giving **enough time to process alterations such as visa processing time (if applicable) and online pre-course activities**. Applications for alternate candidates must be submitted using the same application procedure described above.

Application process for **summer courses**

- Once a year, DFC will send out an invitation to submit nominations for pre-approval to summer courses at Danish universities. The invitation will include a list of courses for which DFC scholarships are available and the number of scholarships available for each course.
- The application process has four phases:
 1. Sector Counsellors invite relevant candidates to register and fill out details on the online application site: <https://dfcentre.smaply.io/>.
 2. Sector Counsellors review and nominate the candidates relevant for the scholarships.
 3. DFC and the place of study select candidates for the course, based on the prioritisation from Sector Counsellors, course criteria and availability.
 4. Selected candidates apply directly at the respective university.
- It is important to note, that the candidates have to apply **twice**: first for pre-approval from DFC and then at the place of study.
- DFC will confirm to the Sector Counsellor whether the candidate has been pre-approved for a DFC scholarship at least **1.5 months** before the application deadline.

Application process for a **master scholarship**

- Sector Counsellors may submit applications to DFC for pre-approval (advance pledge of scholarship) for full master programmes at Danish universities throughout the year. Only a limited number of scholarships for full master programmes will be supported each year. Applications for pre-approved scholarships must be submitted to DFC no later than **5 months** before the application deadline set by the university (refer to www.studyindenmark.dk).
- The application process has three phases:
 1. Sector Counsellors submit applications along with copies of diplomas to DFC for pre-approval of scholarship using the DFC Application Form.
 2. DFC reviews the applications and informs the Sector Counsellor whether the candidate has been pre-approved for a DFC scholarship (at least 3 month before the university's application deadline).
 3. The candidate applies directly through the respective university's online application portal.

Additional information applicable to **both summer courses and master scholarships**

- Candidates pre-approved for a DFC scholarship will need to submit their application for the course/study for which they have been pre-approved following university deadlines, requirements and procedures.
- Please note that pre-approval by DFC of a scholarship constitutes **no guarantee** that the candidate will be admitted by the university. Candidates will be admitted only if they fulfil the application and academic requirements set by the university. **DFC will not play any role in terms of the admission process and will have no influence over university requirements or whether a candidate is admitted or not.**



- Should the candidate be admitted, the candidate must immediately inform DFC and forward the admission letter and a copy of the candidate's passport to DFC. DFC will formally confirm the scholarship to the candidate and the respective Sector Counsellor only upon admission and once the university has confirmed that all requirements have been met by the candidate.
- DFC will cover any costs related to mandatory language test (DFC will reimburse 1 test only) and application fees (DFC will reimburse 1 application fee - even in case of application to more than one master study programme) in line with university requirements.
- DFC will contact the selected candidates to initiate the visa/resident permit and ticketing processes.
- DFC will send the selected candidates additional information on their stay in Denmark, an official Letter of Invitation for use in the visa/resident permit application process, flight tickets and insurance papers.

3.2 Expectations to participants in DFC funded learning programmes

Participation in the learning programmes is much in demand and very costly, and the process for obtaining them is highly competitive. Each participation and scholarship is an investment in improving individual learning, skills and competencies and in supporting organizational learning, strengthening and growth. Therefore, DFC learning programme participants are expected to:

- **Participate actively in all elements of the learning programme** for which they have been selected both prior to, during and after their stay in Denmark. Participation is **mandatory**. Should the participant be prevented from participating, he/she is expected to show due cause to both DFC and the place of study. Absence without due cause will result in reduction in per diems and, should the absence be of a longer duration, it may result in the termination of the participation or scholarship.
- If any, **undertake all private travel during their stay in Denmark outside the programme**. Should the participant be late for or absent from lectures, whether due to travel delays or otherwise, such absence will likewise result in reduction in per diems. All arrangements related to private travel will be the sole responsibility of the participant.
- Carry himself/herself in a professional manner and treat all fellow participants, facilitators and others involved in their study activity in a **respectful and courteous manner**, without prejudice as to race, gender, religion, sexual orientation or any other orientation.

3.3 What does DFC cover?

For a learning programme taking place in Denmark, DFC will cover the following:

- Application fees required by the place of study (where applicable). The fee will be paid by the candidate and refunded by DFC.
- Mandatory language tests (where applicable). The cost will be paid by the candidate and refunded by DFC.
- Basic visa fees (where applicable). The fee will be paid by the participant and refunded by DFC.
- Residence permit (where applicable). The fee will be paid directly by DFC.
- Study fee to the place of study. The fee will be paid directly by DFC.
- International travel (economy class) to and from Denmark for the learning programme. Tickets will be booked by DFC and sent directly to the participant.
- Per diems (according to Danish Government regulations). The per diems will be paid directly by DFC.
- Accommodation in Denmark. Accommodation will be booked by DFC and will be either at
 - DFC's own **student hostel at Hostrupsvej 22, 1950 Frederiksberg** or
 - at a **hotel as close as possible to the place of study**, depending on availability.
 - **Specifically for master students enrolled at a university located in the province**, students apply for accommodation through the university's website. DFC will approve and pay for the accommodation.



- Transportation to and from the place of study. Participants will receive a Travel Pass for transport with public transportation to and from the place of study in the Copenhagen area. This only applies to tailored learning programmes and summer courses, and **does not apply to master students**.
- Other transportation related to the learning programme. Transportation from the airport to the place of accommodation will be paid by the participant. The participant will receive a transport allowance of 250 DKK (fixed rate) as a supplement to this transport. For learning programmes outside of the Copenhagen area, participants may be provided with a prepaid train ticket. All costs of local transportation related to the learning programme, e.g. for visits at authorities and companies will be covered by DFC. The fare from the place of accommodation to the airport is **not** covered by DFC.
- Transportation in connection with obtaining visas will **not** be covered. **No** transportation in the participant's own country related to the travel will be covered, including transportation to and from the participants's residence/office and the airport. Such transportation costs are expected to be covered by the participant's organisation.

4. Further DFC support to link and/or tailor DFC learning programmes with/to the SSC projects

Whereas most learning programmes under the DFC scholarship programme will be tailored to the participants, the Sector Counsellor or Danish Partner Authorities may find it relevant to build on the learning programmes by organising additional learning opportunities, such as meetings, field trips, etc., for individual participants or groups of participants in continuation of the DFC learning programme.

Sector Counsellors or Danish Partner Authorities may also wish to use the fact that their partners are already in Denmark for a learning programme to arrange for additional activities as part of their SSC project.

DFC welcomes this and offers support to Sector Counsellors and Danish Partner Authorities who wish to further build on to a learning programme or wish to extend the stay in Denmark to cover other SSC project activities.

4.1 Logistic support for extended stays to participate in SSC related activities

Should the SSC project wish for participants in DFC learning programmes to be their professional guest hosted by the Danish Partner Authority in Denmark, the Sector Counsellor can choose to discuss and agree on this with the responsible Capacity Development Advisor. In the case of request for an extension of stay, the below requirements must be fulfilled:

- No more **than 4 working days** after receiving the email on "Confirmation on candidates granted a DFC Scholarship for the Learning Programme", the Sector Counsellor must reach out to the DFC Capacity Development Advisor on this matter.
- DFC will ensure that **Letter of Acceptance, flight tickets and insurance** of participants correspond with the extended period of stay. The Danish Partner Authority is expected to handle **all other** aspects of the extended stay and additional costs involved **must** be covered by the SSC project. This may include:
 - Letter of Invitation for extended stay
 - Accommodation
 - Transportation
 - Other expenses for the guest, including allowances
- The extension must be in connection with the learning programme.
- If the deadline of 4 working days is not met, DFC cannot assist in extensions of stays over and above the learning programme period.

Sector Counsellors and/or Danish Partner Authorities are **discouraged** from planning additional meetings with the participants while they are attending a learning programme as all **learning programmes are fulltime**



studies. In cases where Sector Counsellors and/or Danish Partner Authorities choose to arrange additional meetings during course weeks, DFC asks that the following be complied with:

- Meetings should not be confirmed until the final study programme is available to ensure that they do not conflict with the programme, and should not be scheduled during any DFC evening arrangements (e.g. debate nights).
- Additional activities must be scheduled only before or after the study programme, leaving enough time for the participant to arrive from or get back to scheduled learning programme activities.
- Additional activities should not be of a scope where the participant is unable to concentrate fully on their learning programme.

5. Review of the Guidelines

DFC will review the Guidelines regularly to ensure they continue to support optimal quality and agility of the DFC learning programmes. Comments and suggestions from Sector Counsellors, Danish Partner Authorities and places of study will be considered as part of the review.



6. Annex: Outline of administrative procedures in connection with Danida Scholarships

Below DFC has outlined procedures and timelines **from the invitation process begins to the physical arrival of scholars in Denmark:**

- **Invitation for you to nominate candidates** will be forwarded by e-mail about 4-6 months prior to start of the physical learning programme in Denmark. This e-mail will include information about deadlines and procedures.
- **The selection meeting will take place about 3 months prior to the physical learning programme in Denmark.** The selection committee mostly consists of a representative from the study place as well as the 1-2 members of the DFC learning team responsible for the particular learning programme/thematic area. Shortly after the selection meeting, you will receive an e-mail with information about the outcome of the selection. Thereafter it is your responsibility to inform the candidates and programmes/projects about the outcome of the selection. Should you **not** agree with the selection there is always a deadline of a few days for you to reach out to us about this.
- **Letter of Acceptance, Insurance and flight ticket** documents are forwarded directly to each of the selected candidates about 2 months prior to the physical learning programme in Denmark. With this information, they will also receive information about how to obtain visa (if applicable) and other relevant information. You will receive a copy of this mail.
Letter of Acceptance includes information about financing as well as the dates for the online and physical part of the learning programme etc.
As for the **insurance cover** DFC has entered into an agreement with *Europæiske ERV* for cover for health, theft, baggage, third-party liability etc.
- **Air tickets are booked via our travel agent Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CWT).** Many things are taken into consideration when purchasing flight tickets (price, distance, transit time, reasonable departure/arrival time in risk areas, few stopovers and same route for scholars from same country, etc.). For this reason, DFC does not accommodate changes to the tickets booked.
- **Schengen Visa is needed for citizens of most countries.** You can find a list of the countries [here](#). DFC is not able to apply on behalf of candidates nor interfere with the visa process. However, DFC informs the candidates to start their application process immediately after having received the relevant documents from DFC to leave ample time for the process.
- **A Travel and Accommodation mail** is forwarded directly to each candidate about 2 weeks prior to the arrival in Denmark. This contains information about the exact place of accommodation and other measures regarding travelling to and arriving in Denmark.