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Press Release

Adelaide

[For immediate release]

Australia Awards Fellowships Round 20: South Australia–Vietnam Partnership to Strengthen Water Management and Climate Resilience

The Goyder Institute for Water Research in partnership with the Vietnam Academy for Water Resources, has received funding from the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade through the Australia Awards Fellowship program to deliver a capacity-building initiative for Australian and Vietnamese water professionals in irrigation and integrated water resources management.

Australia Awards Fellowships aim to build networks of influence and leadership by strengthening partnerships between Australian organisations and partner organisations in the region. Fellowships target senior and mid-career officials and professionals who are in a position to advance development outcomes in priority areas and increase the institutional capacity of partner countries through their leadership.

The program will bring a delegation of 15 Vietnamese water officials and researchers to South Australia in November 2025 for an intensive 14-day training and knowledge exchange program. This will be followed in 2026 by two visits to Vietnam by six South Australian delegates from the Goyder Institute for Water Research partnership, who will participate in collaborative fieldwork and workshops with their Vietnamese counterparts.

The program will showcase South Australia's expertise in water management within the driest state on the driest continent, highlighting best practices in:

- Climate-smart irrigation and water efficiency
- Water pricing and licensing reforms
- Reuse and recycling of water for irrigation and urban supply
- Drought, saline intrusion and groundwater management
- Gender equality, disability equity and social inclusion (GEDSI) in water planning
- First Nations knowledge and cultural engagement in water decision-making.

The Vietnamese delegates will engage in a dynamic two-way learning exchange designed to foster deep collaboration and mutual knowledge sharing. Through a series of interactive workshops, presentations, government and industry showcases, and field visits, participants will explore key locations across South Australia, including the River Murray, the Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth, the Limestone Coast, and the Northern Adelaide Irrigation region. The program will encourage open dialogue and shared insights, incorporating

cultural values and First Nations water-related knowledge and engagement, recognising the importance of Indigenous expertise in sustainable water management.

As part of this reciprocal exchange, Goyder Institute partner representatives will undertake a return visit to Hai Phong and Tuyen Quang provinces in Vietnam in early 2026. This visit will provide an opportunity to deepen understanding of local contexts, strengthen partnerships, and further enable two-way learning. The South Australian experience will be shared to inform water reform and related initiatives at both provincial and national levels in Vietnam. Collaborative development of case studies and tools, co-designed with the Vietnamese fellows, will support the translation of shared knowledge into practical, context-sensitive solutions.

Announcing the program, Dr Alec Rolston, Director of the Goyder Institute, said:

“This Fellowship strengthens an already successful and ongoing partnership between Australia and Vietnam. It will create opportunities for two-way learning, showcasing South Australian expertise while drawing on the knowledge and innovations of our Vietnamese colleagues.”

This Fellowship also supports Australia’s diplomatic objectives in Southeast Asia and contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those relating to clean water and sanitation, climate action, sustainable cities, gender equality and international partnerships.

About the Goyder Institute for Water Research

The Goyder Institute for Water Research is a collaborative partnership of the South Australian Government through the Department for Environment and Water, Australia’s national science agency, CSIRO, Flinders University, the University of Adelaide and the University of South Australia.

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To learn more about Australia Awards Fellowships please visit:

<https://www.dfat.gov.au/people-people/australia-awards/australia-awards-fellowships>