

Call for Expressions of Interest: Development Futures Workshop Series

The Research for Development Impact Network (RDI Network) is calling for expressions of interest from international development and humanitarian practitioners to participate in our Development Futures Workshop Series in 2021.

Key Dates

EOI submissions open	4 December 2020
'Early bird' submissions close	15 January 2021
Second round submissions close	05 February 2021
Workshop series	Workshop Series 1: February – March 2021 Workshop Series 2: March – May 2021

Background

The RDI Network is a network of practitioners, researchers and evaluators working in international development. Working in close partnership with the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), the Network functions as a key cross-sector platform for shared learning and action in the international development sector. The Network is supported by the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

In the wake of significant challenge and disruption driven by the COVID-19 pandemic, the RDI Network aims to generate in-depth conversations about development effectiveness and the future of aid and development. The far-reaching effects of the pandemic have also compounded the effects of other recent changes in global aid and the Australian development industry. These changes include the rise of the private sector, climate change, growing instability, trust in institutions and renewed calls for genuine localisation processes.

What is the opportunity?

We understand that development and humanitarian practice do not take place in a vacuum – that they are informed and influenced by the context in which they occur. Yet the day-to-day lives and schedules of policy makers and implementers often leave little room to question and debate current development directions, or systematically explore ideas guiding programming.

Our 2021 *Development Futures Workshop Series* aims to create space for those working or teaching in international development and humanitarian aid to deconstruct, discuss, and debate potential trends, hazards and challenges affecting the sector, and reimagine future development solutions.

What will the workshop series cover?

The *Development Futures Workshop Series* will introduce participants to the field of foresight, providing an overview of the discipline and a base and context for thinking about the future.

Facilitators will guide participants through the six key steps of Foresight thinking, including:

- *Framing, scanning and forecasting* – understanding the scope of the work to be done, collecting information and scanning for hazards and trends, and starting to describe plausible alternative futures
- *Visioning, planning and acting* – choosing a preferred future, designing organisation; strategies, options and plans to achieve your vision, and planning for implementation

Upon completion of the workshop series, participants will:

- be familiar with foresight concepts, approaches, methods, and tools;
- be capable of applying foresight a tool to develop proactive strategies that are future-focussed and future-proof for their role and their organisation;
- be comfortable utilising foresight thinking and supporting others to think through alternative futures;
- have the tools, knowledge, and confidence to analyse and incorporate emerging issues, trends, impacts, and their implications into organisational strategy;
- have access to a suite of online teaching/learning tools to help them to engage effectively with their current and future stakeholders;
- be able to come out of a crisis not only surviving but also stronger – able to reimagine themselves and their career

Who should submit an expression of interest?

RDI Network is calling for interested organisations to nominate two to three individuals to attend one of our Development Futures Workshop Series. We encourage organisations to nominate a diverse mix of staff, board members and/or key stakeholders to apply for this workshop series. Individuals are also welcome to submit an expression of interest.

The RDI Network values the experience and contribution of people from all cultures, genders, bodies and abilities. Ideal participants will have an open-minded approach, a willingness to be challenged and a commitment to engaging with insights from outside their own perspectives and areas of expertise.

Flexibility, including a willingness to recognise, accept and analyse a rapidly changing environment will be key.

All participants will also require reliable internet access.

What commitment is required from participants?

Participants will commit to an approximate total of 36 hrs engagement over a period of 7-8 weeks. Required commitments for each of the available Workshop Series are noted below.

Participant Engagement	Workshop Series 1 - 2021	Workshop Series 2 - 2021
Workshop preparation (approx. 12 hours) online - readings, podcasts, videos as provided	2-15 February	17-30 March
Participation in three webinar sessions (12 hours) online – introduction to relevant foresight tools, training through pre-recorded and tailored visual materials using a range of software tools. These webinars are released prior to each of the live online workshops.	15 February - 16 March	30 March – 12 May
Participation in three ‘live’ online workshops (12 hours) online - these sessions will support participants to move from forecasting to foresight. They are capped at 30 participants each.	<i>Tuesday afternoons AEST</i> 16 February 2 March 16 March	<i>Wednesday afternoons AEST</i> 31 March 21 April 12 May
Optional Additional Support Participants have the option to develop an individual foresight plan with facilitator support following completion of the live online workshops.	Facilitator support provided in March 2021	Facilitator support provided in May 2021

What is the cost for participation?

Following receipt and review of Expressions of Interest, the RDI Secretariat will issue an invoice for participant registration costs, as follows:

Early bird registration costs, per participant (to be eligible EOIs must be submitted by 15 January 2021).

- General \$130, excluding GST
- Small ACFID member \$80, excluding GST

Standard registration costs (for second round EOIs, submitted by 5 February 2021)

- General \$170, excluding GST
- Small ACFID member \$110, excluding GST

A limited number of scholarships may be available for organisations that do not have access to funding to cover participation costs. Please contact Jen Branscombe (jbranscombe@acfid.asn.au) or Philippa Smales (psmales@acfid.asn.au) for further information.

To submit an expression of interest, please complete our [online form](#). To be eligible for early bird registration fees, participants must complete their application form by close of business Friday 15 January 2021.

For more information, please contact: Jen Branscombe (jbranscombe@acfid.asn.au) or Philippa Smales (psmales@acfid.asn.au)

The RDI Network acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land of which we work, play and live, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. The RDI Secretariat work on the land of the Kulin Nation; this land is, was, and always will be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land.