Each year, natural disasters cause devastation around the world, affecting millions of lives.

While UNSW has workplace giving arrangements in place to help provide financial support in the wake of natural disasters¹, our staff have a wide range of expertise that could be applied to assist regions affected by natural disasters to rebuild communities and infrastructure in the recovery phase.

In 2015 the President and Vice-Chancellor established an initiative that allows UNSW academic staff to seek seed funding for small projects designed to provide direct support to specific communities impacted by natural disasters around the world, both during the recovery and rebuilding phases. This is the Natural Disaster Recovery Initiative (NDRI).

WHAT IS THE NATURAL DISASTER RECOVERY INITIATIVE (NDRI)?
The NDRI provides seed funding to UNSW Australia staff for small academic projects designed to support and build the capacity of communities impacted by natural disasters around the world, during the recovery and rebuilding phases.

This initiative will provide up to $25,000 in total per year to be distributed in awards of up to $5,000 each. The funding is not for travel to the affected area, but rather for academic activities to support recovery. Any travel must be paid for from other funds. Applicants must apply competitively and the NDRI will disburse awards as long as funds are available until the $25,000 is exhausted each calendar year.

HOW DOES THE NDRI FIT WITH EXISTING WORKPLACE GIVING ARRANGEMENTS?
This Initiative is separate from UNSW Australia’s workplace giving arrangements and encourages academic staff to use their skills and expertise to support recovery efforts in relation to natural disasters.

HOW DO STAFF APPLY FOR NDRI FUNDING?
Interested staff may access the application form for NDRI funding from the President’s Website. The form must be endorsed by the applicant’s Head of School/Centre Director as well as by the Dean/Head of Division and then submitted to the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor for endorsement to present to the Core Team for final approval.

After the Core Team makes a decision, the Executive Officer in the Office of the President and Vice-Chancellor will advise applicants of the outcome.

¹ Information on workplace giving is available at https://www.hr.unsw.edu.au/forms/workplace-giving.pdf
WHAT CRITERIA WILL BE USED TO ASSESS APPLICATIONS?
Applications will be assessed against UNSW’s strategic objectives and the cogency of the proposal. The NDRI will consider applications for projects that:

- make a measurable, sustainable and positive impact on the community in question;
- have the capacity for development into a larger project with potential to deliver tangible outcomes in terms of capacity building and recovery;
- engage with local resources and communities and interact with aid agencies and redevelopment projects.

Funding will be granted if the application meets the assessment criteria.

Applications will be considered as and when they are received, if funds for the Initiative remain available and at the discretion at the Office of the President and Vice-Chancellor and/or delegate.

Grants will be distributed each year until the $25,000 fund is exhausted.

Guidelines

1. Applicants must complete the application form on this website and submit it to their Centre Director or Head of School for sign off.

2. The application must then be sent to the relevant Dean/Head of Division for signoff, who then will refer it to the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor for approval to present to the Core team.

3. Once an application is approved by the Core Team, the Office of the President and Vice-Chancellor will notify both successful and unsuccessful applicants and arrange for a transfer of funds to successful applicants.

4. All travel will require the usual approvals (travel approval and a completed and approved Risk Assessment for Field Work form once the project has been approved (ie Form HS018a on the Health and Safety procedures and forms website: https://safety.unsw.edu.au/procedures-forms).

5. Funds must be expended within one calendar year from the date of receipt of the funds. If funds are not fully expended by that date, the recipient must advise the Executive Office in the Office of the President and Vice-Chancellor who will seek approval to continue using the remaining funds.

6. A brief (one page) report summarising the project and its outcomes must be provided to the Executive Officer in the Office of the President and Vice-Chancellor at the conclusion of the project.

7. Funding of up to $5,000 will be provided for any given project. If a project application is for less than the maximum $5,000, applicants may re-apply for additional funds up to a combined total of $5,000 within one year from the date of receipt of initial funding, however, priority will be given to applications for new projects.