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Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme (MATES)

On 23 May 2023, Australia and India entered into a Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA). The MMPA is a bilateral framework that supports and promotes two-way migration and mobility between our two countries while addressing issues pertaining to illegal and irregular migration.

The Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme or 'MATES' is a new scheme, established under the MMPA, to enable the temporary mobility of Indian university graduates and early career professionals. MATES aims to encourage mutually-beneficial skills and knowledge transfer between Australia and India.

Who is eligible?

MATES will be open to Indian nationals who:

- are aged 30 or younger (inclusive) at the time of application;
- have not previously participated in MATES;
- have proficient English language skills (overall IELTS or equivalent score of at least 6, with a minimum score of 5 for each of the four parts);
- have graduated within 2 years from an eligible educational institution at the time of application; and
- hold a qualification (Bachelor's degree or higher) in one of the following:
 - renewable energy
 - mining
 - engineering
 - Information Communications Technology (ICT)
 - artificial intelligence (AI)
 - financial technology (FinTech)
 - agricultural technology (AgriTech).

Is there Australian employer sponsorship requirement?

There will be no requirement for sponsorship by an Australian employer to be eligible to apply for a visa as part of MATES.

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What are the permitted activities?

MATES participants will be able to live and work in Australia for up to 2 years. Whilst there is no strict requirement for visa holders to work in their nominated field of study, it is designed to support young professionals expand their skills and networks, particularly in the sectors listed above.

How many places are available?

MATES will commence as a pilot program with 3,000 places for primary applicants per program year.

Will MATES participants be able to bring their family to Australia?

Participants will be able to apply to bring dependants (spouses and dependent children). Dependants will have work rights in Australia, and will not count towards the annual cap.

How long can visa holders stay in Australia?

Visa holders will have 12 months to make their first entry into Australia, and may stay in Australia for 24 months from the date of first entry. The visa will allow multiple entries to Australia.

Will MATES visa holders be able to extend their stay?

Participants may extend their period of stay in Australia by applying for another visa permitting temporary or permanent residence, provided they meet all eligibility requirements for the visa.

MATES participants are not eligible to take part in the Scheme more than once.

How much will the visa cost?

More information about the visa subclass and associated application fees will be available soon.

There may be an additional fee to add subsequent dependent family members to the MATES application.

Applicants will be responsible for paying for other costs related to their application, including English language testing fees.

When will MATES commence?

An Implementation Protocol is being developed. It will define the modalities of MATES, ensure diversity, fairness and equity of access, and support the integrity of the Scheme. There is no set timeframe for implementation of MATES.