



Submission Cover Sheet

Submission:

UniProjects application for authorisation AA1000554
– interested party consultation

Lodged by:

MyStay International Pty Ltd

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MyStay International Pty Ltd

Student Quarantine Support Program (SQSP)

UniProjects application for authorisation AA1000554 – interested party consultation

Abstract

We write in response to UniProjects Pty Limited & Ors application to the ACCC for authorisation to collaborate in order to establish an international student travel corridor to facilitate the return of international students to NSW and ACT-based universities.

MyStay International Pty Ltd welcomes the initiative and supports its proposal, including the benefits and positive economic impact the measures would facilitate. MSI believes it has novel and specific technology solutions and methods of operations to assist in the implementation of the proposal, specifically:

b. collaborate to identify and implement solutions to establish the international student travel corridor to return students either via commercial or charter flights

and

e. communicate with travel services providers and with students seeking to avail themselves of the opportunity to return to Australia.

Additionally, MSI has designed a special package to connect arriving international students prior to their departure with an approved Australian Homestay Network (AHN) Host. The intent of the program is to offer a connection via Zoom (or equivalent), each day for up to one hour, both prior to their departure from their country of origin and during their potential quarantine in approved facilities. Once the student has completed the potential quarantine, the student is transferred to the same host the supported them for a minimum 4-week period, whilst the Host assists them in making long-term accommodation arrangements. The Host will be specially trained by AHN to assist with mentoring, connecting, orientation and welcoming the new student during this anxious and critical first 8 weeks. MSI will also be mandating that Hosts report any issues or concerns that they might have during the process to assist the industry with taking timely and appropriate action during this critical period.

MSI also owns and operates the HMS management system, a live data system that can be used to monitor bookings, arrivals, airport/location pickup and drop off, financials including tuitions and travel, insurances, and welfare reports. This program is used nationally and provides accurate and live data tracking on the status of booked, arriving, arrived and departing students.

Objectives of the proposal

To provide New South Wales (NSW) and Australian Capital Territory (ACT) with a centralised operating technology and operation that will allow the resumption of international student travel through the proposed travel corridor. MSI also wishes to offer a globally unique and competitive international student welcoming and support package designed to minimise issues and concerns pre-arrival as well as during and post quarantine. Additionally, the proposed package would aim to improve incoming students' mental health and English language skills whilst providing a baseline of orientation to study in NSW & ACT so that students feel prepared to make the most of their studies.

Method of approach

MyStay International (MSI) will work with the 14 UniProjects Pty Ltd providers to provide the complete, pre-departure and post arrival orientation, welcome, engagement, and settling in program for international students as part of the official travel corridor scheme. We will use our industry recognised online live data matching, booking system, as well as our 24/7 Helpline. Importantly, the student will have engagement with their future host before and during the potential quarantine period to assist with making the quarantine program as positive an experience as possible.

We propose the Student Quarantine Support Program (SQSP) package that provides the following items:

1. Host engagement daily with Student - 2 weeks prior to arrival (Pre-departure orientation)
 - a. Host -Student video conference "Check-in" and prep discussions.
 - b. Host video orientation to city of study and Australia, life in NSW and ACT.

2. Host engagement daily with Student while they are in quarantine (assessing welfare and preparation for hosted accommodation):
 - a. Access to the AHN 24/7 Helpline.
 - b. Host -Student video conference "Check-in" and prep discussions.
 - c. Host video orientation to city of study and Australia, life in NSW and ACT.

3. Post quarantine hosted accommodation:
 - a. Transfer from quarantine to the hosted accommodation.
 - b. Minimum 4 weeks hosted accommodation with the same host that supported the student through the quarantine period.
 - i. This arrangement can be extended beyond 4 weeks if both parties agree
 - c. Assistance in transition to commencement of study and moving to rental/other accommodation.

Nature and extent of anticipated outcomes

The Student Quarantine Support Program (SQSP) will take the pressure off quarantine as a perceived negative and package it into a well thought out strategy designed to orientate, engage, mentor, settle and support international students for the important pre-arrival, in quarantine and post quarantine period. It will also encourage future arrivals to NSW & ACT by assuring safe and standards based hosted accommodation to international students exiting a completed and successful quarantine. We anticipate much smoother entry, less stress and fewer mental health issues for international students who participate in this program. We also see this initiative providing NSW & ACT a strong competitive advantage both nationally and globally, post-COVID-19.

Benefits the proposal will bring to the States and Territories

MSI's solution offers a unique welcoming and arrival program that responds to arriving students post COVID-19 concerns in a positive and engaging way. This will attract more international student intakes throughout NSW & ACT and assist in NSW & ACT being recognised globally for an innovative packaged solution that has students' welfare and health at the forefront.

Assessment Criteria

1. Uniqueness
 - a. Ownership of software or technology offering a unique benefit
 - i. MSI owns a unique platform which was developed in-house called "Homestay Management System" (HMS). This platform features tailored live-data and was created especially for the operational and financial management of standards based hosted accommodation.
 - b. Unique financial arrangements
 - i. By packaging 4 weeks of hosted accommodation post-quarantine, students are able to connect with the same Australian based host during the all-important introduction phase of their journey to study in NSW, providing them with structure, support and engagement at a very low cost.
 - ii. Our estimate for the **4 weeks engagement** (i.e., Zoom calls of up to 1 hour per day in the 2 weeks prior to arrival and 2 weeks while in quarantine) and **transfer** from quarantine accommodation to the **4 weeks of welcoming hosted accommodation** (including 2 meals per day) would be \$2,270.00 per student
 - c. Unique ability to deliver strategic outcome
 - i. Our group has existing experience delivering hosted accommodation to asylum seekers and vulnerable international students, the latter of which was supplied through the "International Student Support Network" in partnership with Study NSW. We have the technology and networks to successfully deliver the strategic outcomes for this project.
 - d. Other demonstrably unique elements.
 - i. Our group is able to promote this unique initiative for NSW & ACT to our extensive global networks, including over 2,400 education agents we work

with. We are confident that the Student Quarantine Support Program will be welcomed by an industry looking for innovative solutions to entry for study

2. Value for money
 - a. Our proposed package offers holistic benefits as a complete support, mentoring, welcoming, orientation and quarantine program that also includes pre-arrival support, in- quarantine engagement and post-quarantine hosted accommodation. The package is equivalent in cost to a typical PBSA 4-week accommodation program but comes with necessary engagement and support services to minimise issues and maximise outcomes.
3. Whole of Government impact
 - a. NSW & ACT will be championed globally by adopting the unique approach offered by the SQSP which is also designed to reduce pressure on support services through our trained hosts' involvement in welfare for their student guests. We anticipate an increase in reputation for the NSW & ACT Governments in their appropriate management of international students entering the country.
4. Return on investment
 - a. The NSW & ACT Government will see a Return on Investment through an increased number of commencing students having a positive early experience of NSW & ACT (and Australia) through the SQSP approach as well as a reduction in support costs for students who have issues during and post quarantine.
5. Capability and capacity
 - a. MSI is able to offer this program throughout NSW & ACT as our networks, system and services are already established.
6. Affordability
 - a. The SQSP has been designed to offer tremendous value for international students as they will have a local support network that will provide engagement and reassurance before they arrive and when they are welcomed into hosted accommodation, post-quarantine. Student would normally have to pre-book new accommodation for when they complete quarantine, however students in the SQSP will have additional time and assistance from the host to locate suitable housing during their 4-week hosted accommodation placement.
7. Risk allocation
 - a. Our group has placed over 67,000 international students from over 185 countries around the world and offer the highest form of standards and insurances available for this service. MSI Group, and more specifically AHN, have an comprehensive [suite of policies](#), available publicly, addressing and minimising the risk relating to the services provided by our group and our hosts.
 - b. The 2-week quarantine program will be costed and provided to returning students as one of the UniProjects Pty Limited preferred suppliers.
 - c. We expect there is much less risk in packaging the SQSP with the travel corridor program compared to offering the travel corridor only with no appropriate support program.

Financial and commercial details

Our proposed fees per student are broken down below:

Pre-departure and quarantine	
24 days Host Engagement (up to 1 hour per day)	\$500
Transfer to Hosted Accommodation	\$160
Administration/Matching Fee	\$290
4 weeks Welcoming Hosted Accommodation Fee	\$1,320
Total cost per student	\$2,270

This amount is usually paid upfront so that we can put all of the necessary arrangements in place prior to implementation. Please note that the 4-weeks Welcoming Hosted Accommodation can be extended if both parties agree.

Costs and Requirements

We are usually paid by the student, the education provider or the education agent for our services. MSI are not expecting the NSW or ACT Government to fund these services. We prefer the applicants to adopt a commitment to standards based hosted accommodation for students on arrival or post-quarantine.

The SQSP should be viewed as a marketing and administrative initiative to facilitate the proposed solution.

Organisation

Please see provide a brief description of:

- i. Our organisation
 1. MyStay International (MSI) is recognised as a solutions-based accommodation provider specialising in the international student sector. MSI owns and operates the successful and industry acknowledged Australian Homestay Network (AHN).
 2. Feedback from hosted students over the years has confirmed to MSI that an international student who commences their stay in a new country with a properly managed, standards-based homestay organisation is better supported, orientated and settled than students that go straight into other types of accommodation.
- ii. Previous experience in delivery of similar project
 1. MSI has a proven record of providing innovative and affordable accommodation solutions, from assisting newly released asylum seekers to successfully assisting Study NSW in accommodating international students affected by the impacts of COVID-19.
- iii. Past performance operating similar project
 1. We successfully accommodated 1,182 students as part of the International Student Support Network through our partnership with Study NSW.
- iv. Facilities to be used (e.g., land owned by proponent or Government land)
 1. Not Applicable

Intellectual property

We operate off our unique Homestay Management System (HMS) but for the purpose of this project the question of intellectual property is not applicable.

Other statements

References for our work are available if required.

Preferred contractual arrangements

Approval as a preferred supplier to work with the 14 UniProjects Pty Ltd providers in a manner in which they can outsource to MSI (arranging travel bookings, 4-week engagement program pre-arrival and in-quarantine, and the 4-week welcoming homestay placement post-quarantine).

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