



THE CPA PARLIAMENTARY ACADEMY

A Centre of Excellence for Commonwealth Parliamentarians

ADVANCED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & SKILLS-BUILDING RESIDENCY PROGRAMME

DARWIN, NORTHERN TERRITORY,
AUSTRALIA

22 - 26 JUNE 2026

OFFICIAL INVITATION



Legislative
Assembly of
the Northern
Territory



ADVANCED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SKILLS-BUILDING RESIDENCY PROGRAMME

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I am pleased to announce that the CPA Headquarters Secretariat will be hosting the fifth round of the CPA Parliamentary Academy residency programmes. This year, we are thrilled to partner with the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory to deliver the **Advanced Professional Development and Skills-Building Residency Course**, scheduled to take place in **Darwin, Australia, from 21 to 27 June 2026** (inclusive of arrival and departure dates).

We invite CPA Branches to nominate up to two **Members of Parliament** for this immersive programme.

Since its establishment in 2021, the [CPA Parliamentary Academy](#) has offered online courses and external training designed for Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff across the Commonwealth. These residency courses are integral to our mission, providing an advanced, face-to-face platform for knowledge-sharing, interactive learning and professional development beyond the online experience.


To ensure your Branch's representation, please follow the application procedure outlined in the invitation and submit nominations by **MONDAY, 27 APRIL 2026**.

The 2026 Advanced Professional Development and Skills-Building Residency Course will be a five-day programme tailored specifically for Parliamentarians. The course aims to enhance participants' people and soft skills across critical areas such as leadership, strategic thinking, communications and team management. The skills developed through this programme are designed to be universally applicable within Parliaments and beyond.

Building on the success of the 2025 programmes, which welcomed over 100 Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from across the Commonwealth, participants have consistently reported enhanced skills and knowledge applicable to their roles. Several alumni have since taken on elevated responsibilities within their Parliaments, highlighting the programme's potential impact. We look forward to continuing this tradition of growth and development with the 2026 cohort.

For further inquiries, please reach out to Jael Rosa Dharamsingh, CPA Parliamentary Academy Manager at academy@cpahq.org.

Yours sincerely,



Stephen Twigg
Secretary-General
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

1. APPLICATION PROCESS

PLACES PER CPA BRANCH/LEGISLATURE

Each CPA Branch may nominate up to **TWO** Members for consideration. Approximately **30 spaces** are available for the programme.

Please note: Priority will be given to nominations from Members who have completed the *CPA Parliamentary Professional Development Certificate* (comprising four courses) on the [CPA Parliamentary Academy](#).

NOMINATION PROCESS

Should Members enquire directly with the CPA Secretariat for places, they will be instructed to formally apply through their respective Branch Secretary. To apply for a place on the Residency Programme, please complete the [NOMINATION FORM](#) and submit it to the CPA Headquarters Secretariat no later than **MONDAY, 27 APRIL 2026**. Due to high demand for limited places, any applications received after this deadline may be held as reserve.

Members enquiring directly with the CPA Secretariat will be directed to apply formally through their Branch Secretary.

Upon receipt and review of the Nomination Form, Branch Secretaries will be notified of accepted nominations. Accepted Branches will then receive instructions to complete the Event Registration Form, which includes submission of travel itineraries and biographical details. For any assistance with the online registration process, please contact the CPA Secretariat.

NOMINATION CRITERIA

When selecting participants for nomination, you are requested to consider the following criteria:

- a. **Completion of the CPA Parliamentary Professional Development Certificate:** Nominees must be Members of Parliament who have completed all four courses within this certification (Induction for New Parliamentarians; Legislative Process; Scrutiny, Accountability and Oversight; Representation, Advocacy and Education) on the [CPA Parliamentary Academy](#).
- b. **Subscription Status:** Only nominations from CPA Branches with paid-up subscriptions will be accepted.*
- c. **Diversity and Representation:** CPA policy encourages broad participation in its events. Branches are encouraged to nominate women and young Members of Parliament. For delegations of two, nominees **must not** represent the same political party, grouping, coalition, or caucus, and **must** be gender-balanced.
- d. **Parliamentary Term:** Preference will be given to Members in their first term of Parliament, though longer-serving nominees will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- e. **Full Participation:** Participants are expected to arrive at the start of the programme and to remain actively engaged until its conclusion. They should be prepared for the programme's intensive nature and willing to participate in all agenda elements.
- f. **Monitoring and Evaluation Participation:** Nominees must be open to engaging in all Monitoring and Evaluation activities, including follow-up.
- g. **Language Proficiency:** Nominees must be fluent in English.

Due to the limited places for the programme, there is a likelihood that it will be oversubscribed. Therefore, it is important to note that nominations that meet the above criteria are more likely to be selected. Furthermore, Branches whose nominations do not meet the stated criteria may be asked to reconsider.

*Unless existing arrangements have been made with the CPA Headquarters Secretariat.

2. ABOUT THE RESIDENCY PROGRAMME

WHAT WILL PARTICIPANTS GAIN?

At the conclusion of the programme, participants will develop essential skills and insights in:

- Leadership and Strategic Thinking;
- Confident Communication;
- Analytical and Management Skills;
- Application of Skills within Parliament and Beyond.

This programme offers a unique opportunity for participants to focus on their personal career aspirations, particularly in defining and pursuing their medium to long-term goals.

Beyond these skills, participants will establish a network of like-minded peers from across the Commonwealth, providing lasting support and guidance. Attending the programme also allows for valuable international inter-parliamentary engagement and insight into the political landscape of Australia and the broader Commonwealth.

See overleaf for a summary programme.

STUDY DAY AND ACCLIMATISATION

To support participants in settling in, **Monday, 22 June 2026**, has been designated as an acclimatisation day. Participants are encouraged to use this day for any personal arrangements, such as private tours, meetings or other activities, in preparation for the programme's start.



3. PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

<p>Day 0 - Sunday 21 June 2026</p>	<p>Official Arrival Day</p>			<p>Day 1 - Monday 22 June 2026</p>	<p>Study Day and Acclimatisation</p>			<p>Day 3 - Tuesday 23 June 2026</p>	<p>Housekeeping & Intros</p>	<p>Inspirational Presentation</p>	<p>Personal Goal Setting</p>	<p>Day 3 - Wednesday 24 June 2026</p>	<p>World Cafe</p>	<p>Diplomacy, Influencing and Negotiating</p>	<p>Day 4 - Thursday 25 June 2026</p>	<p>Speechwriting and Speechmaking</p>	<p>Project and People Management</p>	<p>Day 5 - Friday 26 June 2026</p>	<p>Exercise Briefing</p>	<p>Group Practical Leadership and Planning Exercises</p>	<p>Day 6 - Saturday 27 June 2026</p>	<p>Official Departure Day</p>
										<p>Campaigning, Messaging and Marketing</p>	<p>Media Engagement in a Digital Age</p>	<p>Research and Analysis</p>	<p>Feedback and Closing</p>									
										<p>Strategic Thinking and Planning</p>	<p>Cultural Intelligence and Stakeholder Engagement</p>	<p>Welcome Reception</p>										

4. PARTICIPATION COSTS

FUNDING

Branches (and or participants) will be responsible for the following:

- a. Costs and booking arrangements for return flights to Darwin, Australia
- b. Airport transfers in country of origin and in Darwin
- c. Visa arrangements fees (if applicable)
- d. Covid testing (pre-departure from home country and re-entry testing) (if applicable)
- e. Travel insurance
- f. Meals except those annotated as part of the official programme
- g. Personal expenses incurred by participants (laundry, telephone, room service, mini-bar, etc).

The CPA Headquarters Secretariat will cover **accommodation (standard room only) during the programme dates (21 June – 27 June 2026)** and programme-related materials for participants. Information on the designated hotel will be provided to participants once their places are confirmed.

Please note: Due to space constraints, accompanying officials are not permitted to attend.

Additionally, the CPA Headquarters Secretariat does not provide per diems or other allowances. Branches are strongly encouraged to provide financial support to their participants for the programme's duration.

FUNDING ASSISTANCE

Limited funding to cover flights may be available to Branches that do not have sufficient finances. Branches will be asked to contact the CPA Headquarters Secretariat in writing for funding support, outlining their circumstances and financial requirements.

5. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS

VISAS

To enter Australia, all delegates must hold a valid passport with at least six months' validity from the date of entry. **Most delegates will also require a visa or electronic travel authority (ETA) before arrival.** Participants should consult the Australian Government's official immigration website or their nearest Australian embassy or consulate to confirm the specific entry and visa requirements applicable to their nationality.

Participants are strongly encouraged to be fully vaccinated before traveling to ensure compliance with travel regulations and to support the safety and well-being of all participants and facilitators.

WITHDRAWALS / CANCELLATIONS

Branches are kindly asked to inform the CPA Headquarters Secretariat immediately if a participant cancels or is unable to arrive in Darwin as scheduled. The CPA Mitigating Circumstances Policy will apply to this programme, outlining acceptable and unacceptable reasons for last-minute withdrawals. Mitigating circumstances include serious and unforeseeable occurrences beyond the participant's or Branch's control, such as:

- a) Unforeseen visa issues, provided applications were submitted in good time and in accordance with requirements.
- b) Unexpectedly called general elections.
- c) Significant illness, accident, injury, or death of the participant.
- d) Sudden death or severe illness of an immediate family member.
- e) Victim of a serious crime.
- f) Severe impact from an unexpected natural disaster.

Participants must submit proof of the mitigating circumstance in writing, along with any necessary documentation, to the CPA Headquarters Secretariat. The CPA Secretary-General will review these requests, and all decisions are final. Unjustified last-minute withdrawals will result in the participant's Branch being invoiced for associated costs, such as accommodation.

ABSENTEEISM

Participants are expected to attend all scheduled programme sessions. Any brief absence for unavoidable engagements should be pre-approved by the CPA, with minimal time away from the programme. Unapproved absences may result in notification to the Branch Secretary and President and may impact the Branch's future participation eligibility. Where absences incur costs, reimbursement may be requested from the participant or Branch.

6. ABOUT THE CPA

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) connects, develops, promotes and supports parliamentarians and their staff to identify benchmarks of good governance and the implementation of the enduring values of the Commonwealth. The CPA collaborates with Parliaments and other organisations, including the intergovernmental community, to achieve its statement of purpose. It brings Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff together to exchange ideas among themselves and with experts in various fields, to identify benchmarks of good practices and new policy options they can adopt or adapt in the governance of their societies.

To learn more, visit our website here. www.cpahq.org

THE CPA NETWORKS

CPA Small Branches

Established in 1981, the network represents Commonwealth jurisdictions with populations under 1 million and operates within the framework of the CPA. The CPA Small Branches network seeks to “empower small Parliaments to overcome national and global challenges through cooperation, advocacy and the strengthening of parliamentary democracy and good governance”. Find out more here: <https://www.cpahq.org/our-networks/cpa-small-branches/>

Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians

The CWP) was founded in 1989 to increase the number of female elected representatives in Parliaments and legislatures across the Commonwealth and to ensure that women's issues are brought to the fore in parliamentary debate and legislation. The network provides a means of building the capacity of women elected to Parliament to be more effective in their roles; improving the awareness and ability of all Parliamentarians, male and female, and encouraging them to include a gender perspective in all aspects of their role - legislation, oversight and representation and helping Parliaments to become gender-sensitive institutions. Find out more here: <https://www.cpahq.org/our-networks/commonwealth-women-parliamentarians/>

Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities

Recognising the need to increase representation of persons with disabilities in political institutions, the Commonwealth Parliamentarians with Disabilities (CPwD) network has been established to facilitate activities and programmes to champion and increase representation of persons with disabilities in Commonwealth Parliaments and to work towards the mainstreaming of disability considerations in all CPA activities and programmes. Find out more here: <https://www.cpahq.org/our-networks/commonwealth-parliamentarians-with-disabilities/>





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