



## **Namaste and welcome to the website of the Australian Embassy in Nepal.**

This is your gateway into the vibrant and expanding bilateral relationship between Australia and Nepal.

Formal diplomatic relations were established in 1960 and in 1984 Australia established a resident mission in Kathmandu, led by Charge d’Affaires Mr Adrian Sever. Australia’s first Ambassador to Nepal, Ms Di Johnstone, was appointed in 1986.

Since that time, the friendship between our countries has flourished through formal links such as high-level visits, our Bilateral Consultation Mechanism, an active development assistance program and trade and investment ties. Equally important are our rapidly expanding people to people links.

There are now around 130,000 Nepalis who have made Australia their home and are contributing to our countries’ close relations, including through growing business connections. Nepali is the third most commonly spoken language in Canberra, Hobart and Darwin - [Snapshot of Australia, 2021 | Australian Bureau of Statistics](#). Most Australian state capital cities enjoy annual Nepali community or Momo festivals, organised by our highly respected Nepali community groups. In addition, Australia is delighted to be providing a world class education to around 60,000 Nepali students.

Almost 40,000 Australians visited Nepal in the past year, enjoying the tourism offerings of Nepal’s rich and ancient culture, spiritual tourism and trekking through natural environments unparalleled in their beauty. And each year, groups of Australian undergraduate students thrive on their Australia Government funded study opportunities in Nepal through the [New Colombo Plan](#).

Australia deeply values its friendship with Nepal, evidenced through our close partnership to support Nepal’s development priorities. In 2023, our aid program totalled \$27.1 ([Australia’s development program to Nepal](#)), providing support for Nepal’s federalism agenda, climate resilience, social inclusion, disaster preparedness and capacity building under the Australia Awards program.

### **2023 in review**

2023 has been an important year in the bilateral relationship with a visit by Australia’s Assistant Foreign Minister Tim Watts in May, the first ever restitution of a Nepali artefact (a 13<sup>th</sup> Century temple strut) from [the Art Gallery of New South Wales \(AGNSW\)](#) to the Ratneshwor Temple community in Patan and a visit by a delegation of the Australian Parliament, led by Speaker the Hon Milton Dick in October [Home \(embassy.gov.au\)](#).

We have been pleased to welcome to Australia a delegation of Nepal’s federal and provincial parliamentary representatives, led by the Rt Hon Mr Ganesh Timilsina, Chair of the National Assembly in November. Deputy Mayor of Kathmandu Metropolitan City, Ms Sunita Dangol, visited Australia from November-December under our Special Visits Program.

We offered both our deep condolences and practical support to friends in Nepal affected by the Jajarkot Earthquake in November. Australia announced emergency humanitarian funding of \$600,000 to deliver emergency humanitarian supplies as well support early reconstruction efforts of damaged public infrastructure, including health care facilities ([Humanitarian assistance for Nepal earthquake | Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs](#)). Additional funding is providing essential sexual and reproductive health services.

We partnered AutismCare Nepal Society to host a free public concert, #EmbraceAutism, with one of Nepal's premier rock bands, 1974AD, promoting core values of social inclusion. We supported Australian saxophonist Nick Aggs to entertain audiences during the Jazzmandu Festival and are thrilled that AGNSW has acquired a major work by world renowned Nepali artist, Lok Chitrakar. His *Ganesha* painting is now on permanent display in the gallery's South Asian collection.

A big year and more to come in 2024! We look forward to your company in the year ahead.

Namaste!

Felicity Volk

Ambassador of Australia to Nepal