National Intelligence and Security Discovery Research Grants (NISDRG)

Opening date:	**Available on** GrantConnect
Closing date and time:	**Available on** GrantConnect
Commonwealth policy entity:	**Office of National Intelligence and** **Department of Defence**
Administering entity:	**Australian Research Council (ARC)**
Enquiries:	**Researchers are required to direct requests for information to the Research Office within the Administering Organisation.** **ARC Contacts are on the** ARC website**.**
Date guidelines released:	**13th of October 2020**
Type of grant opportunity:	**Restricted competitive**

Contents

1. National Intelligence and Security Discovery Research Grants Program processes

The National Intelligence and Security Discovery Research Grants Program is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives for research and innovation in national intelligence and security
The Office of National Intelligence (ONI) and
the Department of Defence National Security Science and Technology Centre (NSSTC)
works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the
Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRGs).

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The grant opportunity opens.
We (the ARC on behalf of ONI and NSSTC) publish the grant guidelines on GrantConnect.

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You (the Administering Organisation) complete and submit an application.

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We manage the assessment of all applications.
We manage the assessment of applications against selection criteria including an overall consideration of value for money, and alignment to Challenges under the National Security Science and Technology Priorities.

Your application will be assigned to Detailed Assessors to undertake in-depth assessments. You will have an opportunity to respond to Detailed Assessors' written comments through a rejoinder.

Selection Advisory Committee (SAC) members will then assess Your application, consider the Detailed Assessors' ratings and comments and Your rejoinder and assign a final score against the assessment criteria.

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The ARC provides outcomes of assessment to ONI and NSSTC.
The SAC will provide recommendations to the ARC on the applications that are fundable, and the proposed level of funding for each grant. The ARC will provide recommendations for each Challenge to the ONI and to the NSSTC on the eligible applications that are fundable, and the proposed level of funding for each grant.

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Grant decisions are made.
The ONI Delegate will decide which applications that address the Intelligence Challenges are approved, and the level of funding and duration of funding for each grant.

The NSSTC Delegate will decide which applications that address the National Security Challenges are approved, and the level of funding and duration of funding for each grant.

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We notify You of the outcome.
We advise You of the outcome.

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ONI or NSSTC enter into a grant agreement with You.
ONI or NSSTC will enter into a grant agreement with You if You are successful.

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Delivery of the grant.
You undertake the grant activity and report to Us as set out in Your grant agreement. We manage the grant by monitoring Your progress.
ONI or NSSTC makes payments on satisfactory progress of your project.

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Evaluation of the grant opportunity.
We evaluate the specific grant activity and the grant opportunity as a whole.
We will use information You provide to Us through Your reports to inform evaluations.

Introduction

1.1. These grant guidelines contain information on National Intelligence and Security Discovery Research Grants (NISDRG).

1.2. You and the named participants must read these guidelines before filling out an application.

1.3. This document sets out:

    a. the purpose of the grant opportunity;

    b. the eligibility and assessment criteria;

    c. how applications are considered and selected;

    d. how grantees are notified and receive grant payments;

    e. how grantees will be monitored and evaluated; and

    f. responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

1.4. This grant opportunity and process will be administered by the Australian Research Council (ARC) on behalf of the Office of National Intelligence (ONI) and the Department of Defence National Security Science and Technology Centre (NSSTC).

2. About the grant program

2.1. NISDRG supports excellent research that deepens understanding of emerging science and technology and addresses intelligence and national security interests. The grant program will facilitate innovation and develop national security and intelligence capacity. It will also enable Australia's National Intelligence and Security Communities to systematically engage with Australia's research and technology community.

2.2. NISDRG provides support to research that aligns with the priority research areas identified by the Australian Government. These research areas are outlined in the Intelligence Challenges, and the National Security Challenges developed under the broad National Security Science and Technology Priorities. More information on the Intelligence Challenges and National Security Challenges are available on the ARC website.

Objectives

2.3. The grant program objectives are to:

    a. support excellent research in areas identified in the Intelligence Challenges and National Security Challenges;

    b. build Australia's research capacity and capability in these areas by supporting researchers, fostering research trainees, and contributing to a greater body of open source research;

    c. enhance collaboration in the research, science and technology community that supports Australia's National Intelligence and Security Communities; and

    d. support systematic and coordinated engagement between the research, science and technology community and Australia's National Intelligence and Security Communities.

Intended outcomes

2.4. The intended outcomes of the grant program are:

    a.   increased scale of Australian research into emerging science and technology impacting Australia's national security, sovereignty and potential future intelligence capability;

    b.   strengthened relationships and greater interaction between the research, science and technology community and Australia's National intelligence and Security Communities; and

    c.   enhanced ability of Australia's National Intelligence and Security Communities to access and use relevant knowledge and research to inform policy development in intelligence and national security related science and technology.

Scope and timeframes

2.5. The grant commencement dates are available on the [ARC website](#).

2.6. Applications are accepted once a year.

Program performance measurement

2.7. The performance of the program will measure the outcomes and objectives through qualitative and quantitative Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as well as through engagement with Us, ONI and/or NSSTC through forums, networking, outreach and other activities.

Other relevant information

2.8. We administer the program according to the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017* (CGRGs).

3. Grant amount and grant period

3.1. The Australian Government has announced a total of $18 million over five years for NISDRG from 2021-22.

3.2. There will be three grant opportunities under NISDRG, opened once a year from 2020-21 to 2022-23, to support research that aligns with the Intelligence Challenges or the National Security Challenges.

3.3. For each grant opportunity, a total of $6 million is available from ONI ($3 million) and NSSTC ($3 million).

3.4. For each grant opportunity, applications for the levels of funding listed in Table 1 will be considered.

3.5. **Table 1:** Funding level and grant duration.

Category	Details
Funding level	Between $400,000 and $600,000 per grant.
Funding duration	Up to three years.

4. Eligibility criteria

What are the eligibility requirements for applications?

4.1. To be eligible your application must address one or more Intelligence Challenges or one or more National Security Challenges. Applications that target both the Intelligence and National Security Challenges will not be accepted.

4.2. You can only submit one application for the same project in any grant opportunity. This includes applications which fundamentally have the same research intent, approach and outcomes, regardless of any variations in the research, the named participants and/or organisations.

4.3. Applications under this grant opportunity must have:

   a. one or more Chief Investigators;

   b. none, one or more Partner Investigators;

   c. one or more Eligible Organisations (including the Administering Organisation); and

   d. none, one or more Other Organisations.

4.4. If an organisation is named on the application, a person representing that organisation must be named on the application.

Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

4.5. We will only accept applications from the Eligible Organisations in Table 2.

4.6. The Eligible Organisation that submits the application will be the 'Administering Organisation' and is referred to as 'You'. All Other Eligible Organisations named on the application will be an 'Other Eligible Organisation'.

4.7. **Table 2:** Eligible Organisations

Organisation Name	Organisation ABN
Australian Catholic University	15 050 192 660
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies	62 020 533 641
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education	32 039 179 166
Bond University	88 010 694 121
Central Queensland University	39 181 103 288
Charles Darwin University	54 093 513 649
Charles Sturt University	83 878 708 551
Curtin University	99 143 842 569
Deakin University	56 721 584 203

Organisation Name	Organisation ABN
Edith Cowan University	54 361 485 361
Federation University Australia	51 818 692 256
Flinders University	65 542 596 200
Griffith University	78 106 094 461
James Cook University	46 253 211 955
La Trobe University	64 804 735 113
Macquarie University	90 952 801 237
Monash University	12 377 614 012
Murdoch University	61 616 369 313
Queensland University of Technology	83 791 724 622
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT University)	49 781 030 034
Southern Cross University	41 995 651 524
Swinburne University of Technology	13 628 586 699
The Australian National University	52 234 063 906
The University of Adelaide	61 249 878 937
The University of Melbourne	84 002 705 224
The University of New England	75 792 454 315
The University of New South Wales	57 195 873 179
The University of Newcastle	15 736 576 735
The University of Notre Dame Australia	69 330 643 210
The University of Queensland	63 942 912 684
The University of Sydney	15 211 513 464
The University of Western Australia	37 882 817 280
Torrens University Australia	99 154 937 005
University of Canberra	81 633 873 422

Organisation Name	Organisation ABN
University of Divinity	95 290 912 141
University of South Australia	37 191 313 308
University of Southern Queensland	40 234 732 081
University of Tasmania	30 764 374 782
University of Technology Sydney	77 257 686 961
University of the Sunshine Coast	28 441 859 157
University of Wollongong	61 060 567 686
Victoria University	83 776 954 731
Western Sydney University	53 014 069 881

Who is eligible to be an Other Organisation?

4.8. Organisations that are not Eligible Organisations but that are named as organisational participants on an application will be Other Organisations.

4.9. Other Organisations must be Australian organisations.

4.10. Other Organisations are not required to make a cash and/or in-kind contribution to the project, but must be relevant to and involved with the project.

4.11. An Other Organisation named on an application must have a Partner Investigator (PI) listed.

Who is eligible to be a named participant?

4.12. Named participants are those individual researchers who are nominated for the particular roles identified for each grant opportunity.

4.13. Named participants under the NISDRG may be nominated under the following roles:

a. Chief Investigators (CIs); and

b. Partner Investigators (PIs).

4.14. All named participants in an application must:

a. satisfy the eligibility criteria for the role they are to perform; and

b. take responsibility for the authorship and intellectual content of the application, appropriately citing sources and acknowledging significant contributions, including from third parties.

4.15. A project cannot commence until all named participants meet the eligibility criteria in these grant guidelines.

Chief Investigators

4.16. CIs are expected to:

a. take significant intellectual responsibility for the conception and conduct of the project and for any strategic decisions required in its pursuit and the communication of results;

b. ensure effective supervision, support and mentoring at all times of research personnel, including HDR candidates and postdoctoral researchers for whom they are responsible; and

c. make a commitment to carrying out the project and not assume the role of a supplier of resources for work that will largely be undertaken by others.

4.17. The CI who is also the Project Leader must have a demonstrated capacity to manage the project.

4.18. CIs must meet at least one of the following criteria as at the grant commencement date and for the project activity period:

a. be an employee for at least 20 per cent of Full Time Equivalent (0.2 FTE) at an Eligible Organisation; or

b. be a holder of an honorary academic appointment (as defined in the Glossary) at an Eligible Organisation.

4.19. CIs must be Australian citizens or Australian residents and reside predominantly in Australia for the project activity period. Any significant absences including fieldwork or study leave directly related to the project must have approval from You and must not total more than half the project activity period. In extraordinary circumstances, changes must be approved via a Variation.

4.20. CIs must not undertake an HDR during the project activity period.

Partner Investigators

4.21. PIs are expected to:

a. take significant intellectual responsibility for the planning and conduct of the project and for any strategic decisions required in its pursuit and the communication of results;

b. have the relevant skills and experience to contribute to the project;

c. make a commitment to carrying out the project and not assume the role of a supplier of resources for work that will largely be undertaken by others; and/or

d. provide effective supervision, support and mentoring of research personnel, as required.

4.22. PIs must not meet the eligibility criteria for CIs at the grant commencement date or at any time during the project activity period.

4.23. PIs must be Australian citizens or Australian residents.

4.24. Researchers who do not meet all of the eligibility criteria for being a CI may be PIs.
For example, a participant may be a PI, if they would otherwise be a CI but will not reside predominantly in Australia for the project activity period.

5. What the grant money can be used for

Eligible grant activities

5.1. NISDRG supports research activities that meet the definition of 'research'.

Ineligible grant activities

5.2. We will not consider applications for a grant where one or more Organisation(s) is seeking expert external assistance, not available within their own organisation, in order to develop specific applications or outputs that involve little innovation or are low risk. We consider such applications to be contracted research or a consultancy arrangement and these are ineligible.

5.3. We cannot fund the same research activities, infrastructure or project previously funded or currently being funded through any other Commonwealth grant.

What grant funds can be used for

5.4. You can only spend the grant on eligible expenditure items that directly support the project and in accordance with any additional special conditions in the grant agreement.

5.5. Eligible expenditure items are:

    a. personnel, which may include:

        i. salary support for personnel, for example research associates and assistants, technicians and laboratory attendants at an appropriate salary level, including 30 per cent on-costs, at the employing organisation. Salary support may only be provided for Australian citizens or Australian residents;

        ii. stipends for HDR students, in whole or in part, at an appropriate level for the Administering Organisation or the relevant industry sector. Stipends may only be provided for students who are Australian citizens or Australian residents;

    b. teaching relief for CIs up to a total of $50,000 per CI per year;

    c. travel costs essential to the project, including economy travel costs for domestic and/or international travel and accommodation up to a total of $50,000 over the project activity period. Travel and accommodation costs related to carrying out field research or any carers' costs are not included in this $50,000 limit;

    d. expenditure on field research essential to the project, including technical and logistical support, travel expenses (including accommodation, meals and incidental costs);

    e. equipment (and its maintenance) and consumables essential for the project. Funding will not be provided for equipment or consumables that are considered to be for broad general use; and

    f. other, which may include:

        i. expert services of a third party if the services are directly related to and essential for the project. Such services include, but are not limited to:

           - language translation services, transcribing services; and

           - purchase of bibliographical or archival material (electronic or hard copy);

      ii.   access to national and international research and infrastructure facilities including specialist archives, collections and databases;

      iii.   access to technical workshop services linked to and justified explicitly against the project (for example, machine tools and qualified technicians);

      iv.   publication and dissemination of project research outputs and outreach activity costs;

      v.   specialised computer equipment and software essential to the project;

      vi.   web hosting and web development specific to the project;

      vii.   workshops, focus groups and conferences that are essential for the conduct of the project (including reasonable hospitality costs such as morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea); and

      viii.   reasonable essential costs to allow a participant who is a carer, or who personally requires care or assistance, to undertake travel essential to the project.

What grant funds cannot be used for

5.6. Unless the following activities meet the definition of 'research', the NISDRG does not support production of:

      a.   computer programs, research aids and tools;

      b.   data warehouses, catalogues or bibliographies; or

      c.   teaching materials.

5.7. You cannot request or use grant funds for the following activities:

      a.   basic facilities that should normally be funded by an Administering Organisation, Eligible Organisation and/or Other Organisation (including standard refurbishment costs of a laboratory);

      b.   capital works and general infrastructure costs;

      c.   costs not directly related to the project, including but not limited to professional membership fees, professional development courses, fees for patent application and maintenance, equipment for live music or drama performances, equipment for gallery and museum exhibitions, visas, relocation costs, entertainment costs, purchase of alcohol, insurance, mobile phones (purchase or call charges) and other indirect costs;

      d.   fees for international students or the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) and Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) liabilities for students; and

      e.   salaries and/or on-costs, in whole or in part, for CIs or PIs.

5.8. The following basic facilities must be provided (where relevant) and funded by You, or the Other Eligible Organisation(s) or Other Organisation(s) and are not funded by the ARC:

      a.   bench fees or similar laboratory access fees;

      b.   access to a basic library collection;

      c.   access to film or music editing facilities;

d.   work accommodation (for example, laboratory and office space, suitably equipped and furnished);

e.   basic computer facilities such as desktop computers, portable computer devices, printers, word processing, and other standard software; and

f.   standard reference materials or funds for abstracting services.

6.   The assessment criteria

6.1.   You must address all of the relevant assessment criteria in Your application. We will assess your application based on the weighting given to each criterion. Different weightings are assigned to individual criterion.

6.2.   The application form asks questions that relate to the assessment criteria. The amount of detail and supporting evidence You provide in Your application should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount requested. The application form includes character, word and page limits.

6.3.   The NISDRG assessment criteria are:

a.   Project quality and benefit   **60%**

Demonstrate this through identifying the:

-    contribution to an important gap in knowledge or significant problem;

-    novelty/originality and innovation of the proposed research (including any new methods, technologies, theories or ideas that will be developed);

-    clarity of the hypothesis, theories and research questions;

-    cohesiveness of the project design and implementation plan (including the appropriateness of the aim, conceptual framework, method, data and/or analyses);

-    new or advanced knowledge resulting from outcomes of the research;

-    extent to which the project would build research capacity; and

-    potential to enhance Australian intelligence and national security capabilities.

b.   Investigator(s)/Capability   **25%**

Demonstrate this through identifying:

-    Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE);

-    time and capacity to undertake the research;

-    evidence of experience in research training, mentoring and supervision (where appropriate); and

-    the capability of the investigator or team to build collaborations both within Australia and internationally.

       c.   **Feasibility and commitment**   **15%**

            Demonstrate this through identifying the:

- cost-effectiveness of the research and its value for money;

- suitability of the environment for the research team and their project, and for HDR students where appropriate;

- availability of the necessary facilities to complete the project; and

- extent to which the project's design, participants and requested budget create confidence in the successful completion of the proposed research on time.

7. How to apply

7.1. Before You submit an application, You and the named participants must read these grant guidelines, the instructions to applicants, and the draft grant agreement. These documents may be found on GrantConnect. Any alterations and addenda will be published on GrantConnect and by registering on this website you will be automatically notified of any changes.

7.2. To apply, You must:

    a.   complete the application form in the format We require;

    b.   address all of the eligibility and assessment criteria;

    c.   make sure that Your application is submitted in accordance with these grant guidelines, grant agreement, instructions to applicants and application form.
You must only submit an application if it and the named participants, will be eligible for the grant opportunity as per these grant guidelines;

    d.   certify that the application is compliant with these grant guidelines and all relevant laws and regulations;

    e.   submit Your application through Your Research Office; and

    f.   ensure that the person assigned the Research Office Delegate role in the Research Management System (RMS) is authorised to certify and submit applications.

7.3. There are no minimum cash or in-kind requirements for any organisations named on the application. If included in the application, in-kind contributions must be essential and central to the application. It is Your responsibility to establish the merit of the case for recognition of in-kind contributions.

7.4. In-kind contributions in the budget section of the application should not include basic salary for any Commonwealth Fellowships, unless it is salary over and above the Commonwealth component supported.

7.5. Your application cannot include cash or in-kind contributions in years beyond the project activity period.

7.6. You are responsible for ensuring that Your application is complete and all details in the application are accurate and current at the time of submission.

7.7. You cannot change Your application (additions, deletions or modifications) after the application submission date and time.

7.8. We reserve the right at any point in the process to seek evidence from You to support the certification of applications.

7.9. The application form includes help information and further information is in the instructions to applicants document on GrantConnect. If You have any technical difficulties, please contact RMSSupport@arc.gov.au.

Timing of the grant opportunities

7.10. We publish open and closing times for submission on GrantConnect.

7.11. You must submit Your application to Us between the grant opportunity opening and closing date and time specified on GrantConnect. We will not accept late applications, other than in exceptional circumstances (such as due to natural disasters) in which case We will discuss this with You, and if We agree, invite You to make a late application.

7.12. If You are successful, a grant will commence on the grant commencement date, after announcement, or in line with other arrangements that are approved by Us.

Questions during the application period

7.13. Questions during the application period should be directed to Your Research Office. Answers to frequently asked questions may also be posted on GrantConnect.

Withdrawing an application

7.14. We may approve the withdrawal of an application upon receipt of a written request with justification from You. We will only approve such a request in exceptional circumstances.

8. The grant selection process

8.1. All applications will be considered through a competitive peer review process.

8.2. We manage the assessment of applications.

What is the grant assessment process?

Eligibility criteria assessment

8.3. We will review Your application against the eligibility criteria.

8.4. We may determine whether an application meets the eligibility requirements in these grant guidelines at any stage during assessment of the application.

8.5. If an application is considered ineligible, You will be notified. You may submit an appeal against the administrative process in relation to this decision (eligibility appeal) within 30 days of the date of the eligibility decision notification, as specified in section 13 of these grant guidelines.

8.6. If an application is ineligible, the application may not be progressed through the assessment process and We will not recommend the application for funding.

The assessment process

8.7.　All applications which meet the eligibility criteria will be assessed and merit ranked using all the assessment criteria.

8.8.　If We consider that an application is incomplete We may in Our absolute discretion decide to recommend that the application not be approved for a grant.

8.9.　If We consider that an application is inaccurate or contains false or misleading information, or is otherwise a breach of the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*, We will in Our absolute discretion decide to recommend that the application not be approved for a grant.

8.10.　Your application will be considered on its merits, based on:

　　a.　how well it meets the assessment criteria;

　　b.　how well it addresses the Intelligence Challenges or National Security Challenges;

　　c.　how it is ranked against other applications; and

　　d.　whether it provides value for money (as defined in the Glossary).

8.11.　We may request additional information during the assessment process, which does not change the nature of your application.

8.12.　The assessment process includes the following steps.

　　a.　We assign applications to General Assessors.

　　b.　Applications are assigned to Detailed Assessors. In assigning assessors, We may take requests not to assess into account (see below for further information on this process).

　　c.　Detailed Assessors provide assessments to Us. Assessments include scores and written comments against assessment criteria and advice on the extent to which the application addresses one or more Challenge or Priority for each application.

　　d.　Applicants are provided with Detailed Assessors' comments and are invited to submit a rejoinder (see below for further information on this process).

　　e.　Applications, scores and comments provided in the detailed assessments and the applicant's rejoinder are provided to the General Assessors for consideration. General Assessors assign their own scores against the assessment criteria.

　　f.　The SAC meets to discuss the ranking of each application relative to other applications and determines funding recommendations including advice to the ARC on the extent to which the application addresses one or more Challenge or Priority.

　　g.　The ARC provides a ranked list of eligible applications against each of the Intelligence Challenges to ONI, with advice on the extent to which the application addresses the Intelligence Challenges, the level of funding, and duration of each fundable application.

　　h.　The ONI, in consultation with the Australian National Intelligence Community, reviews the ranked list of applications to determine which applications to fund based on the fit with the Intelligence Challenges, the National Intelligence Community's priority research needs, Australia's national interest, including national security, proposals already funded and available funding.

i. The ARC provides a ranked list of eligible applications against each of the National Security Challenges to the NSSTC, with advice on the extent to which the application addresses the National Security Challenges, the level of funding, and duration of each fundable application.

j. The NSSTC reviews the ranked list of applications to determine which applications to fund based on the fit with the National Security Challenges, NSSTC current program of research, Australia's national interest, including national security, proposals already funded and available funding.

Requests not to assess process

8.13. You may name up to three persons whom You do not wish to assess an application by submitting a Request Not to Assess (RNTA) form as detailed on GrantConnect and the ARC website. This form must be received by Us two weeks prior to the grant opportunity closing date.

8.14. Only one request containing the names of up to three individual assessors may be submitted per application.

8.15. If a request includes the name of a current ARC College of Experts member, as listed on the ARC website at the time of submitting the RNTA form, the request must be accompanied by comprehensive evidence justifying the request for the ARC College of Experts member or members named. If We consider the evidence is not sufficient for the named ARC College of Experts member or members, We will reject part, or all, of the request.

8.16. We will have absolute discretion about whether We accept or refuse a 'Request Not to Assess'. We will not notify you of the outcome.

Rejoinder process

8.17. You will be given the opportunity to respond to assessors' written comments through a rejoinder. Names of assessors will not be provided. Further information on the rejoinder process is available on the ARC website.

Who will assess applications?

8.18. Applications will be assessed by Detailed Assessors and a SAC comprising independent Assessors.

8.19. The extent to which the application addresses one or more Intelligence Challenge will be assessed by the ONI.

8.20. The extent to which the application addresses one or more National Security Challenge will be assessed by the NSSTC.

8.21. All assessors must adhere to and uphold the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018).

8.22. Any College of Experts or SAC members who are not a Commonwealth Official, will be required to perform their duties in accordance with the CGRGs.

8.23. We have procedures in place for managing organisational and personal Conflicts of Interest for Assessors, SAC members and ARC staff. Details of these procedures are in the relevant section of these grant guidelines.

Who will approve grants?

8.24.   The ONI Delegate will approve grants to be funded by the ONI.

8.25.   The Department of Defence Delegate will approve grants to be funded by the NSSTC.

8.26.   The relevant Delegate's decision is final in all matters, including:

       a.   the approval of the grant;

       b.   the grant funding amount to be awarded;

       c.   the duration of the grant; and

       d.   the terms and conditions of the grant.

8.27.   There is no ARC appeal mechanism for decisions to approve or not approve a grant. We will consider appeals against the administrative process as specified at section 13 of these grant guidelines.

9.   Notification of application outcomes

9.1.   We will advise You of the outcome of Your application, following a decision by the ONI Delegate or Department of Defence Delegate.

9.2.   If You are unsuccessful, You may submit a new application for the same, or similar, research in the same or future grant opportunities. This will depend on the specific provisions of the grant opportunity You are applying for. You should include new or more information to address any weaknesses that may have prevented Your previous application from being successful.

9.3.   If You are unsuccessful, the ARC may consider the application for funding under an ARC scheme.

9.4.   You will be notified if Your application is found to be ineligible.

Feedback on Your application

9.5.   Feedback will be provided on eligible applications.

10. Successful grant applications

The grant agreement

10.1.   If You are successful, You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth represented by the ONI or the NSSTC.

10.2.   The ONI and the NSSTC use the NISDRG grant agreement which contains standard terms and conditions that cannot be changed. A sample grant agreement is available on [GrantConnect](). Any special conditions attached to the grant will be identified in the grant offer.

10.3.   You will have 30 calendar days from the date of the grant offer to execute this grant agreement with the Commonwealth.

10.4.   The ONI or the NSSTC must execute a grant agreement with You before any payments can be made. The ONI, NSSTC and ARC are not responsible for any of Your project expenditure until a grant agreement is executed.

Specific research policies and practices

10.5.   You and each participant are required to be compliant with all relevant laws and regulations.

Ethics and Research Practices

10.6.   All applications and funded research projects must comply with the requirements specified in the ethics and research codes, practices and policies on the [ARC website](#).

Intellectual Property

10.7.   Neither the ARC, ONI nor NSSTC claim ownership of any intellectual property in an application or in any research arising from a project. All NISDRG research projects must comply with practices and policies on the [ARC website](#).

Publication and dissemination of research outputs and research data

10.8.   All NISDRG grants must comply with the *ARC Open Access Policy* on the dissemination of research findings, which is on the [ARC website](#). We strongly encourage:

    a.   the depositing of data arising from a project in an appropriate publicly accessible discipline and/or institutional repository; and

    b.   all participants applying for grants have a Persistent Identifier such as an Open Researcher and Contributor Identifier (ORCID ID) in their RMS Profile.

How the grant is paid

10.9.   Payments will be made as set out in the grant agreement. Grant funding will typically be paid biannually through the ONI's payment system or the Department of Defence payment system.

10.10.   The grant offer will specify the approved grant amount to be paid.

10.11.   You will not be paid more than the approved grant amount under any circumstances. If You incur extra costs, You must meet them.

10.12.   Grant funding may be subject to indexation.

10.13.   Once the grant agreement is executed by the Commonwealth, payment will be made on the next available date for grant payments after the grant commencement date.

10.14.   Any grant awarded will be subject to sufficient funds being available for the project and the continued satisfactory progress of the project.

Grant payments and GST

10.15.   All amounts referred to in these grant guidelines are exclusive of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), unless expressly stated otherwise.

10.16.   You are responsible for any and all financial and taxation implications associated with receiving funds.

11. Announcement of grants

11.1.   If successful, Your grant will be listed on [GrantConnect](#) 21 calendar days after the date of effect as required by section 5.3 of the CGRGs.

11.2. We will publicise and report offers and grants awarded, including the following information about the project:

    a. Your name and any other parties involved in or associated with the project;

    b. named participants and their organisations;

    c. the project description (the title and summary descriptions);

    d. classifications and international collaboration country names; and

    e. the grant funding amount.

11.3. You should ensure that information contained in the project title and summary descriptions will not compromise Your requirements for confidentiality (such as protection of intellectual property).

11.4. In making public information about a project that has been approved for a grant, We and/or ONI and/or NSSTC may use a project description, including title and summary, which differs from that provided in the application.

12. How We monitor Your grant activity

Keeping Us informed

12.1. You must let Us know if anything is likely to affect Your project.

12.2. You must also inform Us of any changes to Your:

    a. name;

    b. address(es);

    c. nominated contact details; and

    d. bank account details.

12.3. If You become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the grant agreement, You must contact Us immediately.

Reporting

12.4. You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement. Reports must be submitted to Us through RMS, unless otherwise advised by Us.

12.5. The amount of detail You provide in Your reports should be relative to the project's size, complexity and grant amount.

12.6. We will monitor progress by assessing reports You submit and may conduct site visits or request records to confirm details of Your reports if necessary. We may occasionally need to re-examine claims, seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

12.7. The form for these reports will be available in RMS, with instructions on the ARC website.

Progress report

12.8. You must submit a report on progress biannually during the project activity period in the format and by the due dates detailed in the grant agreement.

End of year report

12.9.   You must submit an end of year financial report annually during the project activity period in the format and by the due dates detailed in the grant agreement.

Final report

12.10.   You must submit a final report for the project within 6 months of the final approved project end date.

12.11.   The final report must address compliance with the conditions on which funding was granted, as set out in the grant agreement.

Grant agreement variations

12.12.   We recognise that unexpected events may affect the progress of a project. In these circumstances, You can request a variation to Your grant agreement by submitting a Variation to Us in RMS.

12.13.   You cannot request an increase to the approved grant amount.

12.14.   You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on provisions in the grant agreement and the likely impact on achieving outcomes.

Compliance visits and record keeping

12.15.   We and/or ONI and/or Defence may visit You during or at the completion of Your project to review Your compliance with the grant agreement. We and/or ONI and/or Defence may also inspect the records You are required to keep under the grant guidelines and grant agreement. We and/or ONI and/or Defence will provide You with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

12.16.   You must retain the evidence and paperwork relied upon to certify Your application in RMS and make this available to Us if requested.

Evaluation

12.17.   We will evaluate the grant opportunity to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. We will use information from your application and reports for this purpose. We may also interview you, or ask you for more information to help us understand how the grant impacted you and to evaluate how effective the program was in achieving its outcomes.

12.18.   We may contact you up to five years after You finish Your grant for more information to assist with this evaluation.

13. Probity

13.1.   The Australian Government will make sure that the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the CGRGs.

Appeals process

13.2. The appeals process is designed to ensure that the application has been treated fairly and consistently in the context of selection processes.

13.3. We will only consider appeals against the administrative process and not against committee decisions, assessor ratings and comments or the assessment outcome. Appellants must identify the specific guideline clause, policy or procedure which they believe has been incorrectly applied.

13.4. You must submit an appeal using the NISDRG Appeals Form on the ARC website and have it authorised by a Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or equivalent.

    a. For an eligibility appeal, a form must be received **within 30 days** of the date of the eligibility decision notification at section 8.5 of these grant guidelines.

    b. For other appeals against administrative process, a form must be received **within 30 days** of the date You receive notification of the outcome of Your application.

13.5. Appeals must be submitted to Us electronically to NISDRG@arc.gov.au.

13.6. If You do not agree with the way We have handled Your appeal, You may complain to the Commonwealth Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will not look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with Us. The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au

Website: ombudsman.gov.au

13.7. Applicants may at any time seek to appeal Our decisions using available external appeal options. Regarding available options for external appeal, the Administrative Appeals Tribunal does not have general power to review Our decisions.

Conflict of interest

13.8. The ARC *Conflict of Interest Policy* is designed to ensure that all material personal interests are disclosed. As a result, conflicts of interest are identified and managed in a rigorous and transparent way to ensure the integrity, legitimacy, impartiality and fairness of this assessment process. Management of conflicts of interest in this way is designed to maintain public confidence in Our business processes.

13.9. Any conflicts of interest could affect conduct of the selection processes and/or the performance of the grant. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if the relevant staff, an assessor, member of a committee or advisor and/or You or any of Your personnel:

   a. has a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer or SAC member;

   b. has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently; or

   c. has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the NISDRG.

13.10. You will be asked to certify, as part of Your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or that, to the best of Your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest. Each individual or organisation named in an application must declare any conflict of interest that exists or is likely to arise in relation to any aspect of the application or project to You at the date of submission.

13.11. If a Conflict of Interest exists or arises, You must have documented processes in place for managing the Conflict of Interest for the duration of the project. Such processes must comply with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (2018) and any relevant successor documents.

13.12. If You later identify that there is an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest or that one might arise in relation to an application, You must inform Us in writing immediately.

13.13. We will handle any conflicts of interest as set out in Australian Government policies and procedures. Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff will be handled as set out in the *Australian Public Service Code of Conduct* (Section 13(7)) of the *Public Service Act 1999*. Committee members and other officials must also declare any conflicts of interest.

13.14. The ARC *Conflict of Interest Policy* is published on the [ARC website](). The process for implementing the policy is available on the [ARC website]().

Privacy and protection of personal information

13.15. We treat your personal information according to the 13 Australian Privacy Principles and the *Privacy Act 1988*. This includes letting You know:

   a. what personal information We collect;

   b. why We collect Your personal information; and

   c. who We give Your personal information to.

13.16. You are required, as part of Your application, to certify Your compliance with the *Privacy Act 1988*, including the Australian Privacy Principles and impose the same privacy obligations on any subcontractors You engage to assist with the activity. You must ask for the Australian Government's consent in writing before disclosing confidential information.

13.17. Your personal information can only be disclosed to someone else:

    a.   if You are given reasonable notice of the disclosure;

    b.   where disclosure is authorised or required by law or is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law;

    c.   if it will prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to a person's life or health; or

    d.   if You have consented to the disclosure.

Confidential information

13.18. The Australian Government may use and disclose confidential information about grant applicants and grant recipients under the NCGP to any other Australian Government business or function. This includes giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

13.19. We may reveal confidential information to:

    a.   assessors, the SAC and other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help Us manage the program effectively and in accordance with any other provision of these grant guidelines or subsequent grant agreement;

    b.   the Minister and their staff;

    c.   employees and contractors of Our entity so We can research, assess, monitor and analyse grant programs and activities;

    d.   employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery;

    e.   other funding bodies for the purpose of obtaining funding from that body;

    f.   other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations;

    g.   the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner; and

    h.   a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

13.20. We will treat the information You give Us as confidential if it meets one of the four conditions below:

    a.   You clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why We should treat it as confidential;

    b.   the information is commercial in confidence;

    c.   revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to You or someone else; or

    d.   You provide the information with an understanding that it will stay confidential.

13.21. The grant agreement will include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the grant agreement.

Freedom of information

13.22. All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about National Intelligence and Security Discovery Research Grants, are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act).

13.23. The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

13.24. All Freedom of Information requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing.

13.25. By mail: Freedom of Information Coordinator
                     Australian Research Council
                     GPO Box 2702
                     CANBERRA ACT 2601

        By email: foi@arc.gov.au

14. Consultation

14.1.   We may conduct a survey of Eligible Organisations after the outcomes of each grant opportunity are announced. The Australian National Intelligence Community have been consulted in the development of these grant guidelines.

15. Glossary

15.1. For the purposes of the NISDRG grant guidelines, acronyms have the meanings defined below.

ARC	Australian Research Council
CGRGs	*Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017*
CI	Chief Investigator
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
FOI	Freedom of Information
GST	Goods and Services Tax
HDR	Higher Degree by Research
HECS	Higher Education Contribution Scheme
HELP	Higher Education Loan Program
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
NSSTC	Department of Defence, National Security Science and Technology Centre
ONI	Office of National Intelligence
ORCID ID	Open Researcher and Contributor Identifier
NISDRG	National Intelligence and Security Discovery Research Grants
PI	Partner Investigator
RMS	Research Management System
ROPE	Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence
SAC	Selection Advisory Committee

15.2.   For the purposes of the NISDRG grant guidelines, terms have the meanings defined below.

Term	Definition
active project	a project that is receiving funding according to the terms of an existing Funding Agreement or grant agreement, or has any carryover funds approved by Us, or an approved variation to the project end date.
Administering Organisation	an Eligible Organisation which submits an application for a grant and which will be responsible for the administration of the grant if the application is approved for funding.
applicant	the Administering Organisation.
application	a request for funding submitted through RMS by an Administering Organisation seeking grant funding under this grant program. It includes the specifics of a proposed grant activity as well as the administrative information required to determine the eligibility of the application.
ARC College of Experts	the body of experts of international standing appointed to assist the ARC to identify research excellence, moderate external assessments and recommend applications for funding. Its members are specialist and generalist experts in their knowledge fields drawn from the Australian research community. The ARC website provides information on who is a member of the College of Experts.
ARC website	the website accessed using www.arc.gov.au.
assessment criteria	the specified principles or standards, against which applications will be considered. These criteria are also used to assess the merits of applications and, in the case of a competitive grant opportunity, to determine application rankings.
Australian National Intelligence Community	comprises the six agencies that formerly made up the Australian Intelligence Community (AIC) — ONA, the Australian Signals Directorate (ASD), the Australian Geospatial-Intelligence Organisation (AGO), the Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS), the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) and the Defence Intelligence Organisation (DIO) — as well as the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) and the intelligence functions of the Australian Federal Police (AFP), Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC) and The Department of Home Affairs.
Australian National Security Community	comprises the Department of Defence, the Department of Home Affairs, Office of National Intelligence, Department of Home Affairs, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Prime Minister and Cabinet, and Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources.
Australian Organisation	an Organisation that has its headquarters in Australia, has a board with a majority of Australian citizens or Australian residents, and has an Australian Business Number (ABN).

Term	Definition
Australian resident	an Australian permanent resident or New Zealand Special Category Visa holder.
bench fees	fees that an organisation charges for an individual to use infrastructure which would normally be provided by the organisation for their employees. This infrastructure may vary and could include, for example, an office or laboratory space with appropriate equipment, or access to non-specialised equipment owned by the organisation.
Chief Investigator	a participant who satisfies the eligibility criteria for a CI under these grant guidelines.
Commonwealth	the Commonwealth of Australia.
Commonwealth Fellowship	a position held by a participant where the salary is funded wholly or partly by the Commonwealth.
Consultancy	the provision of specialist advice, analysis, assistance, services or products to another organisation(s), generally where the consultancy services are for the sole or preferred use of that other organisation(s).
date of effect	the date on which a grant agreement is signed or a specified starting date.
Detailed Assessors	assessors drawn from the ARC assessor community who are assigned applications to review for their specific expertise in a field of research.
Department of Defence Delegate	the Chief Defence Scientist or the Chief Defence Scientist's Delegate
eligibility criteria	the mandatory criteria which must be met to qualify for a grant. Assessment criteria may apply in addition to eligibility criteria.
Eligible Organisation	an organisation listed in section 4 of these grant guidelines.
field research	the collection of information integral to the project outside a laboratory, library or workplace setting and often in a location external to the individual's normal place of employment.
General Assessors	the members that make up a grant opportunity's Selection Advisory Committee. Assessors utilise knowledge of their disciplinary areas and a broad understanding of intellectual and methodological issues and good research planning. Each application has a lead General Assessor (known as Carriage 1) who is typically close to the academic field of the application, and one or more General Assessors (known as Other Carriages) with supplementary expertise.
grant activity	the project/tasks/services that the grantee is required to undertake. A project consists of a number of grant activities.
grant agreement	the agreement entered into by the ONI or the NSSTC and an Administering Organisation when an application from that organisation is approved for grant funding.

Term	Definition
grant commencement date	the date on which grant funding may commence.
grant offer	the details listed in the RMS under 'Grant Offers' showing the project details and grant amount.
GrantConnect	the Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs.
Grantee	the Administering Organisation which has been selected to receive a grant.
grant opportunity	the specific grant round or process where a Commonwealth grant is made available to potential grantees. Grant opportunities may be open or targeted, and will reflect the relevant grant selection process.
GST	the meaning as given in section 195-1 of the *A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999.*
Higher Degree by Research (HDR)	a 'Research Doctorate or Research Masters program, for which at least two-thirds of the student load for the program is required as research work' as defined by the *Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research)* 2017.
honorary academic appointment	any honorary position that gives full academic status, as certified by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) (or equivalent) in the application. For the purposes of this program, this relationship must include access to research support comparable to employees e.g. an emeritus appointment. The person would not be considered to hold an honorary academic appointment for the purposes of these grant guidelines if they hold a substantive, paid position elsewhere.
in-kind contribution	a contribution of goods, services, materials and/or time to the project from an individual, business or organisation. Values should be calculated based on the most likely actual cost, for example, current market, preferred provider or internal provider rates/valuations/rentals/charges (that is in the financial year of the date of the application) of the costs of labour, work spaces, equipment and databases. The calculations covering time and costs should be documented by the Administering Organisation. We may require these calculations to be audited.
instructions to applicants	a set of instructions prepared by Us to assist applicants in completing the application form.
Intelligence Challenges	those challenge areas aligned with the National Security Science and Technology Priorities identified by the Australian Government to be funded by the ONI, and available on the ARC website.
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	a set of quantitative and/or qualitative measures that We use to monitor and report on progress of research outcomes.
Minister	the Minister responsible for the administration of the ONI or NSSTC.

Term	Definition
named participants	individual researchers nominated for particular roles in an application.
National Security Science and Technology Centre (NSSTC)	the Department of Defence National Security Science and Technology Centre within the Defence Science and Technology (DST) Group that coordinates whole of government national security science and technology
National Security Challenges	those challenge areas aligned with the National Security Science and Technology Priorities identified by the Australian Government to be funded by the NSSTC, and available on the ARC website.
officials	officials of a Commonwealth entity. An official of a Commonwealth entity is an individual who is in, or forms part of the entity (see section 8 of the PGPA Act).
ONI Delegate	The Director-General of National Intelligence, or the Director-General's Delegate.
ORCID Identifier	a persistent digital identifier for an individual researcher available on the ORCID website, www.orcid.org.
Other Eligible Organisation	an organisation listed in section 4 of these grant guidelines which is not the Administering Organisation on an application.
Other Organisation	an organisation that is not an Eligible Organisation that contributes to the research project.
participants	all named participants on an application (i.e. CIs and PIs); and all unnamed researchers such as postdoctoral research associates and postgraduate researchers working on a project.
Partner Investigator	a named participant who satisfies the eligibility criteria for a PI under these grant guidelines.
project	an application approved by the ONI Delegate or the Department of Defence Delegate to receive funding.
project activity period	the period during which a project is receiving funding according to the original grant offer, or has any carryover funds approved by the ARC, or an approved variation to the project's end date. During this period, the project is known as an active project.
project end date	the expected date that the project activity is completed and by which all grant funding will be spent.
Project Leader	means the named participant from the Administering Organisation who is the first-named CI on an application.
recipient	an individual or organisation who has received grant funding from the ONI or NSSTC.

Term	Definition

Term	Definition
research	for the purposes of these grant guidelines, the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative. This definition of research is consistent with a broad notion of research and experimental development comprising "creative and systematic work undertaken in order to increase the stock of knowledge – including knowledge of humankind, culture and society – and to devise new applications of available knowledge" OECD (2015), *Frascati Manual 2015: Guidelines for Collecting and Reporting Data on Research and Experimental Development* (p.378).
research infrastructure	the assets, facilities, services, and coordinated access to major national and/or international research facilities or consortia which directly support research in higher education organisations and more broadly, and which maintain the capacity of researchers to undertake excellent research and deliver innovative outcomes.
Research Office	a business unit within an Eligible Organisation that is responsible for contact with Us regarding applications and projects.
Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE)	A Policy framework used to consider and assess the quality and research excellence of a named participant within the context of the participant's career and life experiences. One key element is that the assessment process takes into account the quality rather than simply the volume or size of the research contribution.
research output	all products of a research project.
Selection Advisory Committee (SAC)	a group of experts from academia and industry appointed to assist Us to assess applications and to provide a recommendation for funding. A SAC may be drawn from the ARC College of Experts.
selection criteria	the eligibility criteria and assessment criteria.
selection process	the method used to select potential grantees. This process may involve comparative assessment of applications or the assessment of applications against the eligibility criteria and/or the assessment criteria.
Special Condition	a condition specified in a grant offer which governs the use of the funding provided by the ARC.
technical workshop services	the specialised construction and maintenance activities carried out by a technician, often within a dedicated facility for working with materials such as wood, glass, metal, plastics or electronics.
travel costs	the domestic and international economy travel costs associated with the project, including to foster and strengthen collaboration between researchers in Australia and overseas.

Term	Definition
value for money	'value for money' is a judgement based on the application representing an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of public resources determined from a variety of considerations: merit of the application, risk, cost and expected contribution to outcome achievement.
Variation of grant agreement (Variation)	a request submitted to Us in RMS to agree a change in the grant agreement.
We	the Australian Research Council (ARC) on behalf of the Office of National Intelligence (ONI) and the Department of Defence National Security Science and Technology Centre (NSSTC). 'Us' and 'Our' are also used in this context.
You	the Eligible Organisation that submitted the application. 'Your' is also used in this context.