

# Grant Guidelines for the Linkage Program (2018)

Linkage Projects

For funding applied for in 2019

Opening date:	Available on <a href="#">GrantConnect</a>
Closing date and time:	Available on <a href="#">GrantConnect</a>
Enquiries:	Researchers are required to direct requests for information to the Research Office within the Administering Organisation.  ARC Contacts are on the <a href="#">ARC website</a> .
Type of grant opportunity:	Restricted competitive

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*Australian Research Council Act 2001*

I, Dan Tehan, Minister for Education, having satisfied myself of the matters set out in section 59 of the *Australian Research Council Act 2001*, approve these grant guidelines under section 60 of that Act.

Dated 2018

Dan Tehan

Minister for Education

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## 1. Linkage Program: Linkage Projects processes

**The Linkage Program is designed to achieve the Australian Government's objectives for research and innovation.**

This grant program contributes to the ARC's Outcome 1, which is to grow knowledge and innovation through managing research grants, measuring research excellence and providing advice.  
The following process flowchart applies to the Linkage Projects grant opportunity.



**The grant opportunity opens.**

We (the ARC) publish the grant guidelines and advertise on GrantConnect.



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



**We manage the assessment of all applications.**

We manage the assessment of applications against eligibility criteria and assessment criteria including an overall consideration of value for money.

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.



**We make grant recommendations.**

The SAC will collectively consider all applications and recommend to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) the applications to be funded, and the level and duration of funding for each project.

The CEO will then recommend to the Minister the applications to be funded, and the level and duration of funding for each grant.

In making recommendations to the Minister the CEO will consider the applicant's response to the National Interest Test. The CEO will seek information from Administering Organisations on applications where there is concern about how they meet the National Interest Test based on the information provided in the application form. The CEO will make grant recommendations to the Minister that satisfy the National Interest Test and which are eligible for funding.



**Grant decisions are made.**

The Minister decides which applications are approved, and the level of funding and duration of funding for each approved project. The Minister may consider the National Interest Test in determining which applications to approve.



**We notify You of the outcome.**

We advise You if Your application was successful or not through the ARC's Research Management System (RMS).



**We enter into a grant agreement with You.**

We will enter into a grant agreement with You through RMS.



**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 and making payments.



**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.

## 2. Introduction

- 2.1. These guidelines contain information for the Linkage Projects grant opportunity.
- 2.2. This document sets out:
  - a. the objectives of the Linkage Projects grant opportunity;
  - b. the eligibility and assessment criteria;
  - c. how grant 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 Linkage Projects grant opportunity.
- 2.3. In these grant guidelines:
  - a. an application refers to the completed documentation submitted to Us requesting a grant for a specific grant opportunity. If an application is successful, the grant activity is then referred to as a project.
  - b. the glossary provides a list of defined terms and the definitions that apply to these terms throughout this document.
- 2.4. You and the named participants must read this document before filling out an application for a Linkage Projects grant opportunity.

### 3. About the Linkage Program

- 3.1. These grant guidelines establish the rules which govern the administration of the Linkage Program including the application, eligibility, and selection processes to be followed and the selection criteria that will be used to recommend grant recipients.
- 3.2. The Linkage Program is one of two Programs under the ARC National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP).

#### Objectives

- 3.3. The Linkage Program supports the growth of research partnerships between university-based researchers and researchers in other sectors in Australia and overseas for projects that generate new knowledge, technologies and innovations.
- 3.4. The purpose of the Linkage Program is to promote national and international research partnerships between researchers and business, industry, community organisations and other publicly funded research agencies. By supporting the development of partnerships, the ARC encourages the transfer of skills, knowledge and ideas as a basis for securing commercial and other benefits of research.
- 3.5. The ARC's Linkage Program encourages and extends cooperative approaches to research and improve the use of research outcomes by strengthening links within Australia's innovation system and with innovation systems internationally.
- 3.6. The objectives of the Linkage Program are to deliver outcomes of benefit to Australia and build Australia's research and innovation capacity through support for:
  - a. collaborative research between university-based researchers and researchers in other sectors;
  - b. research training and career opportunities that enable Australian and international researchers and research students to work with industry and other end-users; and
  - c. research in priority areas.
- 3.7. The current grant opportunities available under the Linkage Program are:
  - a. Industrial Transformation Research Program (ITRP) comprising of:
    - Industrial Transformation Research Hubs (Research Hubs);
    - Industrial Transformation Training Centres (Training Centres);
  - b. Linkage Projects;
  - c. Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities (LIEF);
  - d. ARC Centres of Excellence;
  - e. Special Research Initiatives (SRI);
  - f. Learned Academies Special Projects, and
  - g. Supporting Responses to Commonwealth Science Council Priorities.

### **Intended outcome**

- 3.8. The intended outcome of the Linkage Program is to increase Australia's research and innovation capacity to generate new knowledge and result in the development of new technologies, products and ideas, the creation of jobs, economic growth and an enhanced quality of life in Australia.

### **Scope and timeframes**

- 3.9. Linkage Program grants are awarded on the basis of excellence through a competitive peer review processes for each opportunity.
- 3.10. Depending on the grant opportunity, grant applications may be accepted once a year, on a continuous basis, or as required.

### **Key performance indicators**

- 3.11. The key performance indicators (KPIs) for the Linkage Program are identified each year in the ARC Portfolio Budget Statements and the ARC corporate plan. Reporting is provided every year in Our annual report.
- 3.12. The KPIs focus on long-term outcomes as well as medium-term outcomes relating to building Australia's research capacity, for example, research careers and training, contributions in areas of national need and research collaboration.

### **Other relevant information**

- 3.13. The Linkage Program is undertaken according to the *Australian Research Council Act 2001* (ARC Act) and the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines* (CGRGs) 2017.
- 3.14. These grant guidelines are a legislative instrument current as at the date of signing by the Minister and have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the ARC Act in force at that date.



## 4. About the Linkage Projects grant opportunity

### Important dates

- 4.1. The grant commencement date for Linkage Projects for funding applied for in 2019 applications submitted by 30 June 2019 will be 1 July 2019.
- 4.2. The grant commencement date for Linkage Projects for funding applied for in 2019 applications submitted from 1 July 2019 will be 1 January 2020.
- 4.3. The active project assessment date for Linkage Projects for funding applied for in 2019 applications submitted by 30 June 2019 will be 1 January 2020.
- 4.4. The active project assessment date for Linkage Projects for funding applied for in 2019 applications submitted from 1 July 2019 will be 1 July 2020.

### Description

- 4.5. The Linkage Projects grant opportunity supports projects which initiate or develop long term strategic research alliances to apply advanced knowledge to problems, acquire new knowledge and as a basis for securing commercial and other benefits of research.
- 4.6. Applications for funding under the Linkage Projects grant opportunity must include at least one Partner Organisation. The Partner Organisation must make a contribution in cash and/or in kind and/or other material resources to the project. The combined Partner Organisation eligible contributions for an application (i.e. the total of the cash and in-kind eligible contributions of the Partner Organisations) must at least match the total funding requested from the ARC.
- 4.7. Linkage Projects grant applications are accepted on a continuous basis.

### Objectives

- 4.8. The objectives of the Linkage Projects grant opportunity are to:
  - a. support the initiation and/or development of long-term strategic research alliances between higher education organisations and industry and other research end-users, in order to apply advanced knowledge to problems to provide opportunities to achieve national economic, commercial, environmental, or social benefits;
  - b. provide opportunities for internationally competitive research projects to be conducted in collaboration with organisations outside the higher education sector;
  - c. encourage growth of a national pool of world-class researchers to meet the needs of the broader Australian innovation system; and
  - d. build the scale and focus of research in the Australian Government's Science and Research Priorities.

## 5. Grant amount and grant period

5.1. For the Linkage Projects grant opportunity, applications for the levels of funding listed in Table 1 will be considered.

5.2. Table 1: Details of funding and grant duration

Category	Details
Linkage Projects funding level	Between \$50,000 and \$300,000 per year.
Linkage Projects funding duration	Between two and five consecutive years.

5.3. We reserve the right to recommend funding levels which may be less than that requested in the application, and a project duration that may differ from that requested in the application.

5.4. All funding decisions regarding the Linkage Projects grant opportunity will be made by the Minister in accordance with the ARC Act.

5.5. If successful, You can only spend grant funds on eligible grant activities as defined in section 7 of these grant guidelines and the grant details in Your grant agreement.

## 6. Grant eligibility criteria

6.1. We cannot recommend Your application to the Minister for funding if it does not satisfy all grant eligibility criteria.

6.2. This section of the grant guidelines provides details of the eligibility requirements for:

- a. eligible applications; and
- b. eligible participants being:
  - Administering Organisations;
  - Other Eligible Organisations;
  - Other Organisations;
  - Partner Organisations; and
  - named participants.

## What are the eligibility requirements for applications?

- 6.3. To be eligible, Your application must:
- include at least one Partner Organisation. You may also include Other Eligible Organisations and Other Organisations;
  - nominate at least one Chief Investigator (CI) from Your organisation who will be the Project Leader;
  - include a commitment from Partner Organisation(s) to provide total eligible cash and/or in-kind contributions that at least match the total funding requested from Us; and
  - include a commitment from Partner Organisation(s) to provide total eligible cash contributions of at least 25 per cent of the total funding requested from Us. If all Your Partner Organisations are Exempt Partner Organisations<sup>1</sup>, You are not required to meet the 25 per cent minimum eligible cash contribution requirement.
- 6.4. You and each Other Eligible Organisation on an application must commit a significant contribution of cash and/or in-kind or other material resources to the application having regard to the total cost of the proposed project and the relative contribution of any Chief Investigators or Partner Investigator(s) at the organisation.
- 6.5. The application may nominate a Partner Investigator (PI) from each Partner Organisation. A PI who is representing a Partner Organisation on an application is required to have a role within that Partner Organisation.

## Who is eligible to apply for a grant?

- 6.6. We will only accept applications from the Eligible Organisations listed below.
- 6.7. The Eligible Organisation that submits the application will be the 'Administering Organisation' and is referred to as 'You'. All other Eligible Organisations listed on the application will be an 'Other Eligible Organisation'.
- 6.8. Eligible Organisations

### Australian Capital Territory

- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)
- The Australian National University
- University of Canberra

### New South Wales

- Australian Catholic University
- Charles Sturt University
- Macquarie University

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<sup>1</sup> Exempt Archive and Public Record Office; Exempt Charity; Exempt Herbarium; Exempt Museum and Collecting Organisation; Exempt Non-Profit Organisation; Exempt Small Business; and Exempt Start-up. See glossary for details.

- Southern Cross University
- The University of New England
- The University of New South Wales
- The University of Newcastle
- The University of Sydney
- University of Technology Sydney
- University of Wollongong
- Western Sydney University

#### **Northern Territory**

- Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education
- Charles Darwin University

#### **Queensland**

- Bond University
- Central Queensland University
- Griffith University
- James Cook University
- Queensland University of Technology
- The University of Queensland
- University of Southern Queensland
- University of the Sunshine Coast

#### **South Australia**

- Flinders University
- The University of Adelaide
- Torrens University Australia
- University of South Australia

#### **Tasmania**

- University of Tasmania

#### **Victoria**

- Deakin University
- Federation University Australia
- La Trobe University
- Monash University
- Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT University)
- Swinburne University of Technology

- The University of Melbourne
- University of Divinity
- Victoria University

#### **Western Australia**

- Curtin University
- Edith Cowan University
- Murdoch University
- The University of Notre Dame Australia
- The University of Western Australia

#### **Who is eligible to be a Partner Organisations?**

- 6.9. To be eligible as a Partner Organisation, an organisation cannot be:
- a. an Eligible Organisation;
  - b. a controlled entity of any Eligible Organisation; or
  - c. an entity (for example a joint venture) where more than 50 per cent is owned by one or more Eligible Organisations.
- 6.10. Each Partner Organisation must participate in the project for the project activity period unless otherwise approved by Us.
- 6.11. Each Partner Organisation must:
- a. provide evidence of new or on-going collaboration between the Partner Organisation either directly with You, and/or with an Other Eligible Organisation on the application; and
  - b. make a contribution of cash and/or in-kind and/or other material resources that is specific to the project, and having regard to the total cost of the project and not be part of a broader contribution to Your organisation.
- 6.12. Partner Organisation cash contributions cannot:
- a. be sourced from funds awarded or appropriated by the Commonwealth or an Australian State or Territory Government for the purposes of research, nor from funds previously used to leverage government research or research infrastructure funding; or
  - b. be a contribution to salaries for CIs and/or PIs on the application.
- 6.13. Partner Organisations whose funds are appropriated predominantly from Commonwealth or Australian State or Territory Government funding sources for the purposes of research are restricted in their capacity to contribute to the required Partner Organisation contribution. Cash and/or in-kind contributions from Partner Organisation(s) of this type are only eligible to make up a maximum of 25 per cent of the required Partner Organisation contribution. This maximum of 25 per cent is the combined eligible contribution from Partner Organisations of this type, and is not the maximum per individual Partner Organisation of this type.

- 6.14. Partner Organisation(s) whose funds are appropriated predominantly from Commonwealth or Australian State or Territory Government funding sources for the purposes of research can make combined contributions to the project over and above 25 per cent of the required Partner Organisation contribution, however these additional contributions are not eligible to make up part of the required Partner Organisation contribution.
- 6.15. The following types of Partner Organisations are exempt from the cash contribution requirements:
- a. Exempt Archive and Public Record Office;
  - b. Exempt Charity;
  - c. Exempt Herbarium;
  - d. Exempt Museum and Collecting Organisation;
  - e. Exempt Non-Profit Organisation;
  - f. Exempt Small Business; and
  - g. Exempt Start-up.
- 6.16. Applications in which all Partner Organisations are exempt from the cash contribution requirements do not have to meet the overall cash contribution requirement specified at 6.3.

### **Who is eligible to be an Other Organisation?**

- 6.17. Organisations that are not Eligible Organisations and not Partner Organisations but that are named as organisational participants on an application will be Other Organisations.
- 6.18. Other Organisations are not required to make a cash or in-kind contribution to the project, but must be relevant to and involved with the project.

### **Who is eligible to be a named participant?**

- 6.19. Named participants are those individual researchers who are nominated for the particular roles identified for each grant opportunity.
- 6.20. Roles that named participants may be nominated for under the Linkage Projects grant opportunity are:
- a. Chief Investigators (CIs); and
  - b. Partner Investigators (PIs);
- 6.21. All CIs and PIs named in an application must satisfy the eligibility criteria for the role they are to perform. Details of these eligibility criteria are provided in these grant guidelines.
- 6.22. All CIs and PIs named in an application must take responsibility for the authorship and intellectual content of the application, appropriately citing sources and acknowledging significant contributions, including from third parties.
- 6.23. A project cannot commence until all CIs and PIs meet the eligibility criteria in these grant guidelines.

### **Chief Investigator**

- 6.24. CIs are expected to:
- a. take significant intellectual responsibility for the conception and conduct of the project and for any strategic decisions called for in its pursuit and the communication of results;
  - b. ensure effective supervision, support and mentoring at all times of research personnel, including Higher Degree by Research (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.

### ***Eligibility to apply***

- 6.25. To be eligible as a CI, the individual nominated must, as at the date of application submission have met their obligations regarding previously funded projects, including submission to the ARC of satisfactory final reports.
- 6.26. An individual is not eligible to be nominated as a CI if, as at the grant commencement date, or during the project's activity period, the individual is undertaking an HDR. Individuals are eligible to be a CI if they are undertaking an HDR during the application period and the HDR is conferred prior to the grant commencement date.

### ***Eligibility to hold***

- 6.27. As at the grant commencement date, and for the project activity period when the CI is engaged in the project, the CI must meet at least one of the following criteria:
- 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.
- 6.28. A CI must 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.

### **Partner Investigator**

- 6.29. 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
  - d. provide effective supervision, support and mentoring of research personnel, as required.

***Eligibility to apply***

- 6.30. A PI may, or may not, be an employee of a Partner Organisation.
- 6.31. A PI must not be eligible to be a CI at the grant commencement date.
- 6.32. To be eligible as a PI, the individual nominated must, as at the application submission date, have met all obligations for previously funded projects, including submitting satisfactory final reports.

***Eligibility to hold***

- 6.33. A PI must not meet the eligibility criteria for a CI at any time during the project activity period.
- 6.34. You may name a participant as a PI, who would otherwise be a CI but who does not reside predominantly in Australia.

**What are the limits on the number of applications and projects per named participant?**

- 6.35. These limits do not apply to PIs or to unnamed participants on projects such as HDR students, postdoctoral researchers and research assistants.
- 6.36. A named participant can apply for and be concurrently funded through the Linkage Program (as defined in the glossary) for a maximum of four Linkage Program projects (not including LIEF) as a CI.
- 6.37. We will calculate limits of projects and applications as at the date of submission of applications, and may re-calculate this limit as other grant opportunity announcements are made, by totalling:
  - a. the number of Linkage Program (not including LIEF) CI and Director roles that the participant will hold as active projects as at the active project assessment date; and
  - b. the number of Linkage Projects applications We are currently assessing which include that participant as a CI.
- 6.38. It is Your responsibility to determine if applying for, or holding, a project under these guidelines will affect an individual researcher's eligibility for the other ARC grant opportunities as other ARC grant opportunities may have different project limits. We reserve the right to change project and application limits in future grant opportunities. All 2018 ARC grant guidelines are available on GrantConnect. For previous years, please visit the [ARC website](#).
- 6.39. We must approve the relinquishment of a project or role before the application is submitted. Any relinquishment made or approved after the application is submitted will not be taken into account for the purposes of calculating the number of projects and applications for limit considerations.



## 7. What the grant money can be used for

### Eligible grant activities

- 7.1. Research activities that meet the definition of 'research' as stated in the glossary of these grant guidelines are eligible to be supported under the Linkage Projects grant opportunity.

### Activities not supported

- 7.2. Unless the following activities meet the definition of research as stated in the glossary in these grant guidelines, the Linkage Program does not support production of:
- a. computer programs, research aids and tools;
  - b. data compilations, catalogues or bibliographies; or
  - c. teaching materials.
- 7.3. The Linkage Program does not support applications that involve medical research as detailed in the *ARC Medical Research Policy* on the [ARC website](#).
- 7.4. We will not consider applications for a grant where one or more Partner 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 deem such applications to be essentially contracted research or a consultancy arrangement and these are ineligible.

### Eligible expenditure

- 7.5. Grant money may be requested and used for budget items that directly support the research project contained in an application, including the following items:
- a. access to national and international research and infrastructure facilities including specialist archives, collections and databases;
  - b. access to technical workshop services linked to and justified explicitly against the project (for example, machine tools and qualified technicians);
  - c. expenditure on field research essential to the project, including technical and logistical support, travel expenses (including accommodation, meals and incidental costs);
  - d. 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:
    - i. language translation services, transcribing services;
    - ii. purchase of bibliographical or archival material (electronic or hard copy); and
    - iii. data collection and analysis services;
  - 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;
  - f. publication and dissemination of project research outputs and outreach activity costs;
  - g. specialised computer equipment and software essential to the project;

- h. travel costs essential to the project, including economy travel costs for domestic and/or international travel and accommodation, not exceeding an average of \$20,000 per year of the project. Funding is permitted for CIs, PIs, HDR candidates, postdoctoral researchers and research support personnel. Travel costs related to c. and i. are not counted towards the average of \$20,000 per year limit detailed here;
  - i. 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;
  - j. web hosting and web development specific to the project;
  - k. 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);
  - l. salary support for research associates and assistants, technicians and laboratory attendants at an appropriate salary level, including 30 per cent on-costs, at the employing organisation;
  - m. stipends for HDR students, in whole or in part, at an appropriate level for the Administering Organisation or the relevant industry sector; and
  - n. teaching relief for CIs up to a total value for the project of \$50,000 per year.
- 7.6. You must justify all items for which grant funds are sought in Your application to Our satisfaction.
- 7.7. You can only spend grant funds on eligible grant activities as defined in these grant guidelines and any additional expenditure conditions specified in the grant agreement.

### **What the grant money cannot be used for**

- 7.8. You cannot request or use grant money for the following activities:
- a. bench fees or similar laboratory access fees;
  - b. basic facilities that should normally be funded by an Administering Organisation, Eligible Organisation and/or Partner Organisation (including standard refurbishment costs of a laboratory);
  - c. capital works and general infrastructure costs;
  - d. 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, insurance, mobile phones (purchase or call charges) and other indirect costs;
  - e. fees for international students or the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) and Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) liabilities for students;
  - f. salaries and/or on-costs, in whole or in part, for CIs or PIs; and
  - g. salary top ups for personnel above any given stipend or salary levels specified in these grant guidelines.
- 7.9. The following basic facilities must be provided (where relevant) and funded by You, or the Other Eligible Organisations or Partner Organisations and are not funded by the ARC:

- a. access to a basic library collection;
- b. access to film or music editing facilities;
- c. work accommodation (for example, laboratory and office space, suitably equipped and furnished);
- d. basic computer facilities and standard software; and
- e. standard reference materials or funds for abstracting services.

## 8. The assessment criteria

- 8.1. You must address all of the relevant assessment criteria in Your application. Different weightings are assigned to individual criterion.
- 8.2. 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.
- 8.3. The Linkage Projects assessment criteria are:

**a. Investigator(s) 25%**

Describe the quality of the candidates' Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) including evidence of:

- potential to engage in collaborative research with end-users;
- research training, mentoring and supervision; and
- time and capacity to undertake and manage the proposed research in collaboration with the Partner Organisation(s).

**b. Project quality and innovation 25%**

Describe:

- The extent to which the project is significant and innovative including:
  - any new methods or technologies to be developed that address a specific market opportunity;
  - how the anticipated outcomes will advance the knowledge base to address an important problem and/or provide an end-user and/or industry advantage;
  - the project plan's business model for implementation;
  - how the project will address the Australian Government Science and Research Priorities;
  - how the project's aims and concepts are novel and innovative; and
  - how the project will significantly enhance links with industry and/or other organisations outside the Australian publicly-funded research and higher education sectors.
- The research approach and training including:

- the conceptual framework, design, methods and analyses, demonstrating these are adequately developed, well integrated and appropriate to the aims of the project; and
- the intellectual content and scale of the work proposed is appropriate to a higher degree by research student where relevant.

**c. Feasibility** **20%**

Describe:

- the existing, or developing, supportive and high quality environment for this research both within the Administering Organisation and in the Partner Organisation(s);
- the availability of the necessary facilities to conduct the research;
- how each Partner Organisation(s) is genuinely committed to, and prepared to collaborate in, the research project and has the capacity to implement the outcomes of the research; and
- how the budget, including cash and in-kind contributions is adequate.

**d. Benefit** **30%**

Describe:

- how the project will benefit Partner Organisation(s) and other relevant end-users;
- how the research encourages and develops strategic research alliances between the higher education organisation(s) and industry and/or other organisation(s);
- the anticipated economic, commercial, environmental, or social benefits to the relevant Australian research end-users (including relevant industry sectors);
- the strategies to encourage dissemination, commercialisation, and if appropriate, the promotion of research outcomes;
- where relevant the extent to which the applicants have identified the freedom to operate in the Intellectual Property and patent landscape to enable future benefits to industry and/or end-users ; and
- the extent to which the project represents value for money.

## 9. How to apply

- 9.1. Before You submit an application, You and the named participants must read these grant guidelines, the sample application form, the instructions to applicants, and the draft grant agreement. These documents may be found at GrantConnect. Any additional documents will be published on GrantConnect and by registering on this website You will be automatically notified of any changes.
- 9.2. To apply, You must:
  - a. complete the application form in the format We require;
  - b. address all of the eligibility and assessment criteria to be considered for a grant;
  - c. ensure the application contains all the information necessary for assessment, including eligibility assessment, without the need for further written or oral explanation, or reference to additional documentation. We may request additional information;
  - d. for each named participants list (i) all current grants and requested funding under any ARC grant program, and (ii) all current grants under any other Commonwealth grant program. Full details of any financial assistance received for, or in connection with, the research activities or project must be disclosed in the application and on an ongoing basis;
  - e. 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; and
  - f. certify that the application is compliant with these grant guidelines and all relevant laws and regulations.
- 9.3. An application may be submitted more than once for the same grant opportunity in accordance with 11.2. If applying in the same grant opportunity, you must identify how the current application differs from the previously unsuccessful application(s) submitted in this round.
- 9.4. Your application must include a letter of support from each Partner Organisation which must:
  - a. include the official letterhead;
  - b. be no more than two A4 pages;
  - c. include a brief profile of the organisation;
  - d. provide details of the cash and/or in-kind contributions;
  - e. explain the source of its cash contribution (if a cash contribution is being made);
  - f. certify that no part of its cash contribution is drawn from funds previously appropriated or awarded from Commonwealth or Australian State or Territory Government sources for the purposes of research (if a cash contribution is being made) nor from funds previously used to leverage government research or research infrastructure funding;

- g. state its expectations about industry outcomes/products and market value (where appropriate for the application);
  - h. provide details regarding how the application aligns with the Partner Organisation's strategic objectives;
  - i. certify that it will meet the requirements outlined in a standard ARC grant agreement, including the requirement to enter into arrangements regarding Intellectual Property which do not unreasonably prevent or delay academic outputs; and
  - j. be signed by the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate.
- 9.5. You must:
- a. submit Your application through Your Research Office;
  - b. submit Your application on the relevant application form available in the Research Management System (RMS) unless We advise You otherwise; and
  - c. certify Your application online in RMS. Research Offices must ensure that the person assigned the Research Office Delegate role in RMS is authorised to certify and submit applications.
- 9.6. Your application should include details of the proposed collaborative arrangements and governance processes to be implemented, including how:
- a. each Partner Organisation will be involved in the project;
  - b. the project fits into each Partner Organisation's overall strategic plan; and
  - c. the project is of value to each of the Partner Organisation(s) involved.
- 9.7. 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.
- 9.8. 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.
- 9.9. Your application cannot include cash or in-kind contributions in years beyond the project activity period.
- 9.10. We reserve the right to determine the value of Partner Organisation contributions and may, for the purposes of assessment, determine contributions to be at levels that may differ from those in Your application.
- 9.11. Partner Organisation contributions must be specified in Australian dollars and, subject to these grant guidelines, contributed at the specified level regardless of currency fluctuations.
- 9.12. You should only include in the application budget items of eligible expenditure as specified in the eligible expenditure section of these grant guidelines.
- 9.13. 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. Giving incomplete, false or misleading information will exclude Your application from further consideration.
- 9.14. You cannot change Your application (additions, deletions or modifications) after the application submission date and time.

- 9.15. We reserve the right at any point in the process to seek evidence from You to support the certification of applications. We are not obliged to accept any additional information, nor requests from You to correct or amend applications after the application submission date and time.
- 9.16. 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.
- 9.17. We cannot fund the same research activities, infrastructure or project previously funded or currently being funded through any other Commonwealth grant.
- 9.18. 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 [arc-systems@arc.gov.au](mailto:arc-systems@arc.gov.au).

### **Attachments to the application**

- 9.19. You must attach supporting documentation to the application form in line with the instructions provided in these grant guidelines, within the form or in the instructions to applicants. You should only attach requested documents. We will not consider information in attachments that We do not request.

### **Timing of the grant opportunities**

- 9.20. We publish information on GrantConnect for all Linkage Program grant opportunities and this includes the relevant timing for the submission of applications.
- 9.21. You must submit Your application to Us between the grant opportunity opening and closing date and time specified on GrantConnect.
- 9.22. Subject to the grant guidelines, a grant will commence on or after the grant commencement date for the grant opportunity, after Ministerial announcement, or other arrangements that are approved by the ARC.

### **Questions during the application period**

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

## **10. The grant selection process**

- 10.1. All applications will be considered through a competitive grant process.
- 10.2. Applications are accepted and assessed on a continuous basis.

### **Who will assess applications?**

- 10.3. Applications submitted for Linkage Projects grants will be assessed by Detailed Assessors and a SAC comprising General Assessors.
- 10.4. Detailed Assessors are discipline-specific and interdisciplinary experts in their knowledge fields drawn from the ARC assessor community. Detailed Assessors are assigned applications to review based on their specific expertise in one or more fields of research.
- 10.5. We appoint one SAC for the Linkage Projects grant opportunity. The SAC may consist of both eminent academic experts and/or ARC College of Expert members who are assigned applications to assess based on their discipline.

- 10.6. Any Detailed Assessors or General Assessors who are not Australian Public Servants must adhere to and uphold the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)*.
- 10.7. Any College of Experts or SAC members who are not an Australian Public Servant must uphold the Australian Public Service Values and Code of Conduct in accordance with Part 1, section 2.9 of the CGRGs.
- 10.8. We have procedures in place for managing organisational and personal Conflicts of Interest for Detailed Assessors, SAC members and ARC staff. Details of these procedures are in the relevant section of these grant guidelines and in the ARC's *Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy*.

## What is the grant assessment process?

### Eligibility process

- 10.9. We will review Your application against all the eligibility criteria contained in these grant guidelines.
- 10.10. We may determine whether an application meets the eligibility requirements in these grant guidelines at any stage during assessment of the application.
- 10.11. If We consider that an application is ineligible, the application may not be progressed through the assessment process.
- 10.12. If an application is ineligible, We must not recommend the application for funding.

### The assessment process

- 10.13. All applications which meet the eligibility criteria will be assessed and merit ranked using all the assessment criteria.
- 10.14. We manage the assessment of applications. Your application will be considered on its merits, based on:
  - a. how well it meets the assessment criteria;
  - b. how it is ranked against other applications; and
  - c. whether it provides value for money.<sup>2</sup>
- 10.15. The process that we will undertake 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).
  - c. Detailed Assessors provide assessments to Us with scores and written comments against assessment criteria for each application.
  - d. Applicants are provided with Detailed Assessors' comments and are invited to submit a rejoinder to the assessment text (see below for further information on this process).

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<sup>2</sup> See Glossary



- 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 relevant assessment criteria.
- f. The SAC meets to discuss the ranking of each application relative to other applications and determines funding recommendations.
- g. The SAC makes recommendations to the CEO on which applications should be approved for funding, which applications should not be approved for funding, and the level of funding and duration of each grant. The CEO will make recommendations for funding to the Minister based on any number of assessments.
- h. The CEO will make grant recommendations to the Minister who may make a decision on which applications are approved for funding.

#### **National interest test**

- 10.16. On the application form, applicants must provide a separate response on the national interest of the research proposal.
- 10.17. In making recommendations to the Minister, the CEO will:
  - a. consider the recommendations from the SAC;
  - b. consider the applicant's response to the National Interest Test;
  - c. seek information from Administering Organisations on applications where there is concern about how they meet the National Interest Test based on the information provided in the application form; and
  - d. make grant recommendations to the Minister that satisfy the National Interest Test and which are eligible for funding.

#### **Requests not to assess process**

- 10.18. You may name up to three persons whom You do not wish to assess an application by submitting a 'Request Not to Assess' form as detailed on GrantConnect and the [ARC website](#). For this grant opportunity, the form must be received by Us on or before the application submission date.
- 10.19. Only one request containing the names of up to three individual assessors may be submitted per application.
- 10.20. If You name a current ARC College of Experts member, as listed on the [ARC website](#) at the time of submitting the 'Request Not to Assess' 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.
- 10.21. You may submit a 'Request Not to Assess' form naming more than three persons whom You do not wish to assess an application. Any request containing more than three names must be accompanied by comprehensive evidence justifying the request for all persons listed. If We consider the evidence is not sufficient for one or more of the named people, We will reject part, or all, of the request.
- 10.22. 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

- 10.23. You will be given the opportunity to respond to assessors' written comments through a rejoinder, and to provide any additional information requested by Us. Names of assessors will not be provided. Further information on the rejoinder process is available on the [ARC website](#).

## Who will approve grants?

- 10.24. In accordance with the ARC Act, Our CEO will submit grant recommendations to the Minister for consideration.
- 10.25. The Minister will determine which grants to approve. In addition to the assessment criteria set out in Section 8, the Minister may consider the National Interest Test in determining which applications to approve. Under the ARC Act, the Minister may (but is not required to) rely solely on recommendations made by the CEO.
- 10.26. The Minister'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.
- 10.27. The ARC Act states that the Minister must not approve a grant for any application that fails to:
- a. meet the eligibility criteria;
  - b. comply with the assessment process; and
  - c. satisfy the requirements for financial assistance.
- 10.28. The CGRGs state that the Minister must consider the key principle of achieving value with money when approving a grant.
- 10.29. Any successful application awarded a grant will be subject to sufficient funds being available for the Program and the provisions of the ARC Act.

## 11. Notification of application outcomes

- 11.1. You will be notified of the outcome of Your application via RMS, following a decision by the Minister. The notification in RMS will include information on:
- a. successful and unsuccessful applications;
  - b. feedback on unsuccessful, eligible applications;
  - c. grant amounts;
  - d. any Special Conditions to be included in the grant agreement; and
  - e. the commencement of the grant period. This is usually the grant commencement date.

- 11.2. 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.
- 11.3. If your application is found to be ineligible, You will be notified of this through RMS.

### **Feedback on Your application**

- 11.4. If Your application was unsuccessful and found to be eligible, feedback will be provided through RMS.

## **12. Successful grant applications**

### **The grant agreement**

- 12.1. If You are successful, You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth represented by the ARC.
- 12.2. We use the ARC Linkage Program Linkage Projects grant agreement which contains standard terms and conditions that cannot be changed. A sample grant agreement is available on GrantConnect. Any additional conditions attached to the grant will be identified in the grant offer.
- 12.3. You will have 28 calendar days from the date of the grant offer to execute this grant agreement with the Commonwealth.
- 12.4. We must execute a grant agreement with You before We can make any payments. We are not responsible for any of Your project expenditure until a grant agreement is executed. You must not start any activities until all third party agreements are executed.
- 12.5. You must list the contributions of each organisation in the ensuing contractual agreements between Your organisation and the other organisations.
- 12.6. If the ARC approves grant funding varying from the amount requested, pro rata adjustments may be made to the Partner Organisation contributions.
- 12.7. If You enter an agreement for a Linkage Program grant, You cannot receive other grants for the same budgeted grant activities from other Commonwealth grant programs.
- 12.8. You will be required to conduct the project substantially in accordance with the 'Project Description' contained in the application for that project. Your application forms part of the grant agreement.
- 12.9. We will recover grant funds and terminate the project if You fail to meet the obligations of the grant agreement.

## Specific research policies and practices

- 12.10. You and each project research participant are required to be compliant with all relevant laws and regulations. In particular, You must certify in Your application that You comply with the following requirements.

## Ethics and Research Practices

- 12.11. All applications and ARC-funded research projects must comply with the requirements specified in the following and successor documents:
- a. the *ARC Research Integrity and Research Misconduct Policy* (2016);
  - b. the *National Principles of Intellectual Property Management for Publicly Funded Research* (2017);
  - c. the *ARC Open Access Policy* (2017);
  - d. the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (2018);
  - e. as applicable, the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2015);
  - f. as applicable, *Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders* (2018);
  - g. as applicable, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies *Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies* (2012);
  - h. as applicable, Australia Council for the Arts *Protocols for Producing Indigenous Australian Music; Writing; Visual Arts; Media Arts; and Performing Arts* (2007); and
  - i. as applicable, the *Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes* (2013).
- 12.12. If there is any conflict between a successor document and its predecessor, then the successor document prevails to the extent of any inconsistency. These documents are all available on the [ARC website](#).

## Misconduct, incomplete or misleading information

- 12.13. All research projects funded by Us must comply with the *ARC Research Integrity and Research Misconduct Policy*.
- 12.14. 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.
- 12.15. If We consider that an application is inaccurate or contains false or misleading information, or involves misconduct, We will in Our absolute discretion decide to recommend that the application not be approved for a grant.
- 12.16. Examples of misleading information and misconduct include:
- a. providing fictitious Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE);
  - b. plagiarism;
  - c. making false claims in relation to the authorship of the application;
  - d. failing to make adequate acknowledgement of intellectual, design or other significant contributions to the application;

- e. making false claims in publications records (such as describing a paper as accepted for publication when it has only been submitted);
- f. making false claims in relation to qualifications and/or appointments;
- g. making false certifications; and
- h. failing to disclose the existence, and nature, of actual or potential Conflicts of Interest of any of the parties involved in the application/project (such as any affiliations or financial interest in any organisation that has a direct interest in the matter or outputs of the project).

### Intellectual Property

- 12.17. We do not claim ownership of any intellectual property in an application or in any research arising from a project.
- 12.18. You must adhere to an intellectual property policy, approved by Your governing body, which has as one of its aims the maximisation of benefits to Australia arising from publicly funded research. You should ensure that individuals applying for ARC grants are familiar with the current intellectual property and patent landscape for the research areas included in the application. Unless otherwise approved by the Commonwealth, Your intellectual property policy must comply with the *National Principles of Intellectual Property Management for Publicly Funded Research* and/or any successor document(s). These document(s) are available on the [ARC website](#).

### Publication and dissemination of research outputs and research data

- 12.19. All research projects funded by Us must comply with the *ARC Open Access Policy* on the dissemination of research findings, which is on the [ARC website](#).
- 12.20. Participants and institutions have an obligation to collect and maintain research data in accordance with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (2018). We strongly encourage the depositing of data arising from a project in an appropriate publicly accessible discipline and/or institutional repository. Participants must outline briefly in their application how they plan to manage research data arising from a project.
- 12.21. We strongly encourage all participants applying for grants to have an Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID) in their RMS Profile.

### How We pay the grant

- 12.22. Payments will be made as set out in the grant agreement.
- 12.23. The grant offer will specify the approved amount for that project, or as otherwise varied by Us in accordance with the grant agreement.
- 12.24. Any project expenditure incurred by You for a project additional to the approved amount for that project specified in the grant offer, or as otherwise varied by Us, is Your responsibility. We will not reimburse You for such costs under any circumstances.
- 12.25. You are responsible for any and all financial and taxation implications associated with receiving funds. Grant funding may be indexed. Grant funding will typically be paid monthly through Our payment system.
- 12.26. Once the grant agreement is signed by the Commonwealth, payment will be made on the next available date for grant payments after the grant commencement date.

- 12.27. Any grant awarded will be subject to sufficient funds being available for the project, the provisions of the ARC Act and continued satisfactory progress of the project.
- 12.28. All amounts referred to in these grant guidelines are to be read as exclusive of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), unless expressly stated otherwise.

### **Grant agreement variations**

- 12.29. We recognise that unexpected events may affect the progress of a project. In these circumstances, You can request a variation to Your grant agreement, including:
  - a. changing a project's internal budget or research plan;
  - b. extending the timeframe for completing the project; and/or
  - c. changing participants or organisations named on the project.
- 12.30. You cannot request an increase to the agreed amount of grant funds.
- 12.31. If You want to propose changes to the grant agreement, You must submit a Variation of grant agreement (Variation) to Us in RMS.
- 12.32. If a CI is at any time no longer able to work as proposed on the project, the project may be continued, provided any replacement CI meets the CI eligibility criteria. We must approve these changes via a Variation.
- 12.33. If a PI is at any time no longer able to work as proposed on the project, the project may be continued, provided any replacement PI meets the PI eligibility criteria. We must approve these changes via a Variation.
- 12.34. A Variation must be approved by Us to be a valid part of the grant agreement. We will consider Your request based on factors such as:
  - a. how it affects the project outcome; and
  - b. consistency with the grant opportunity objectives, the project's aim and objectives and any relevant ARC policies.
- 12.35. We will notify You of the outcome of a Variation.

### **Keeping Us informed**

- 12.36. You should let Us know if anything is likely to affect Your project.
- 12.37. You must also inform Us of any changes to Your:
  - a. name;
  - b. address(es);
  - c. nominated contact details; and
  - d. bank account details.
- 12.38. If You become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the grant agreement, You must contact Us immediately.

## 13. Announcement of grants

- 13.1. If successful, Your grant will be listed on the GrantConnect website 21 calendar days after the date of effect as required by section 5.3 of the CGRGs.
- 13.2. We may 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 research project (the title and summary descriptions);
  - d. classifications and international collaboration country names; and
  - e. the ARC grant funding amount.
- 13.3. 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).
- 13.4. In making public information about a project that has been approved for a grant, We may use a project description, including title and summary, which differs from that provided in the application.

## 14. How We monitor Your grant activity

- 14.1. We will monitor the grant activities through the requirements of the grant agreements for You:
  - a. to submit end-of-year reports, progress reports by exception and final reports; and
  - b. to provide information, as requested, for program or grant opportunity evaluations.
- 14.2. You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement. Reports must be submitted to Us through RMS, unless otherwise advised by Us.
- 14.3. The amount of detail You provide in Your reports should be relative to the project's size, complexity and grant amount.
- 14.4. 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.

### End of Year Report

- 14.5. You must submit an end of year financial report by 31 March in the year following each calendar year for which the grant was awarded, in accordance with the instructions We provide each year. We will make the form for these reports available in RMS, with instructions on the [ARC website](#).

## Progress Reporting by Exception

- 14.6. A progress report by exception must be completed as part of the end of year report only if significant issues are affecting the progress of the project.
- 14.7. If We are not satisfied with the progress of any project, further payment of funds will not be made until satisfactory progress has been made on the project. If satisfactory progress is still not achieved within a reasonable period of time, the grant may be terminated and all outstanding monies will be recovered by us.

## Final Report

- 14.8. You must submit a final report for the project within 12 months of the final ARC approved project end date. We will make the form for this report available in RMS, with instructions on the [ARC website](#).
- 14.9. The final report must address compliance with the conditions on which funding was granted, as set out in the grant agreement.
- 14.10. You must ensure that all participants have completed all obligations for the final report.
- 14.11. If the final report is not submitted or is not satisfactory to Us this will be considered as an eligibility matter for future ARC applications for the named participants on the project.
- 14.12. We may also seek additional information about subsequent research outputs after submission of the final report.

## Compliance visits and record keeping

- 14.13. We may visit You during or at the completion of Your project to review Your compliance with the grant agreement. We may also inspect the records You are required to keep under the grant guidelines and grant agreement. We will provide You with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.
- 14.14. You must retain the evidence and paperwork relied upon to certify your application in RMS and make this available to Us if requested.

## Evaluation

- 14.15. We undertake evaluations of the performance and administration of the grant opportunities under the Linkage Program. Your grant agreement requires You to provide information to help with these evaluations.

## Acknowledgement

- 14.16. Subject to commercial sensitivities and intellectual property considerations, the outcomes of projects are expected to be communicated to the research community and to the community at large.
- 14.17. You must ensure that Our contribution and support of the project is acknowledged in a prominent place and a form acceptable to Us. This clause applies to any website established for a Linkage Project.
- 14.18. Advice of acceptable forms of acknowledgement and use of the ARC logo is provided on the [ARC website](#). Any published research output must include acknowledgement of ARC funding and the ARC Project ID.



## 15. Probity

- 15.1. We will make sure that the grant opportunity processes are fair, in accordance with the published grant guidelines, incorporate appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and are consistent with the ARC Act and the CGRGs.

### Appeals process

- 15.2. 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/legislative instrument clause, policy or procedure which they believe has been incorrectly applied.
- 15.3. You are able to submit an appeal against the administrative process used to assess applications. The appeals process is designed to ensure that the application has been treated fairly and consistently in the context of selection processes.
- 15.4. You must submit an appeal using the ARC Appeals Form on the [ARC website](#) and have it authorised by a Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or equivalent. Appeals must be received **within 28 days** of the date You receive notification of the outcome of Your application. We will not accept appeals later than 5.00pm (AEDT/AEST) on the appeals submission due date.
- 15.5. Appeals must be submitted to Us electronically to [ARC-NCGP@arc.gov.au](mailto:ARC-NCGP@arc.gov.au).
- 15.6. If You do not agree with the way We have handled Your appeal, You may complain to the Commonwealth Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will not usually look into a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with the ARC. The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:
- Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072
- Email: [ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au](mailto:ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au)
- Website: [ombudsman.gov.au](http://ombudsman.gov.au)
- 15.7. Applicants for funding may at any time seek to appeal Our decisions using available external appeal options. The Administrative Appeals Tribunal does not have general power to review Our decisions.

## Conflict of interest

- 15.8. Our purpose is to support the highest quality research and as such Our 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 Our processes. Management of conflicts of interest in this way is designed to maintain public confidence in Our business processes.
- 15.9. 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 ARC 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;
  - 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 NCGP.
- 15.10. 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 to the Administering Organisation at the date of submission any conflict of interest that exists or is likely to arise in relation to any aspect of the application or project.
- 15.11. 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), the *ARC Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy* and any relevant successor documents.
- 15.12. 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.
- 15.13. 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 including the decision maker must also certify any conflicts of interest.
- 15.14. We publish Our *Conflict of Interest Policy* on the [ARC website](#).

## Privacy: confidentiality and protection of personal information

- 15.15. We treat Your personal information according to the 13 Australian Privacy Principles and the *Privacy Act 1988*. This includes letting You know:
- what personal information We collect;
  - why We collect Your personal information; and
  - who We give Your personal information to.
- 15.16. 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.
- 15.17. Your personal information can only be disclosed to someone else:
- if You are given reasonable notice of the disclosure;
  - where disclosure is authorised or required by law or is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law;
  - if it will prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to a person's life or health; or
  - if You have consented to the disclosure.
- 15.18. The Australian Government may also use and disclose information about grant applicants and grant recipients under the NCGP in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.
- 15.19. We may reveal confidential information to:
- 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;
  - the Minister and their staff;
  - employees and contractors of Our entity so We can research, assess, monitor and analyse Our programs and activities;
  - employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery;
  - other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations;
  - the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner; and
  - a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

- 15.20. We may share the information You give with other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes including government administration, research or service delivery and according to Australian laws, including the:
- a. *Crimes Act 1914*;
  - b. *Criminal Code Act 1995*;
  - c. *Privacy Act 1988*;
  - d. *Public Service Act 1999*;
  - e. *Public Service Regulations 1999*; and
  - f. *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act (2013)*.
- 15.21. We will treat the information You give Us as sensitive and therefore 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 commercially sensitive;
  - 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.
- 15.22. The grant agreement will include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the grant agreement.

### **Freedom of information**

- 15.23. All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about the Linkage Program, are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act).
- 15.24. 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.
- 15.25. All Freedom of Information requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing.
- By mail:        Freedom of Information Coordinator  
                    Australian Research Council  
                    GPO Box 2702  
                    CANBERRA ACT 2601
- By email:       [foi@arc.gov.au](mailto:foi@arc.gov.au)

## **16. Consultation**

- 16.1. We may conduct a survey of Eligible Organisations after the outcomes of each selection round are announced. Outcomes of the survey will be considered in the development of subsequent grant guidelines.

## 17. Acronyms

ARC	Australian Research Council
ARC Act	<i>Australian Research Council Act 2001</i>
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CGRGs	<i>Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines</i>
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
NCGP	National Competitive Grants Program
LIEF	Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities
ORCID	Open Researcher and Contributor Identifier
PI	Partner Investigator
RMS	Research Management System
ROPE	Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence
SAC	Selection Advisory Committee

## 18. Glossary

For the purposes of the Linkage Program: Linkage Projects 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 the ARC, or an approved variation to the project end date.
Active project assessment date	the date on which active project eligibility will be considered for project and application limits per named participant.
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 an ARC 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 assessor community	the Australian and international assessors that assess applications submitted to the ARC that are within their areas of expertise.
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 Project ID	the identifier assigned through RMS when an application is commenced.
ARC website	the website accessed using <a href="http://www.arc.gov.au">www.arc.gov.au</a> .
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.
award of PhD date	the date of conferral of a PhD, not the date of submission of the thesis, nor the date the thesis was accepted by the examination board.
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.

Term	Definition
cash contribution	the cash from an organisation, which is transferred to and managed by the Administering Organisation.
Chief Executive Officer	means the person holding the position of ARC Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the ARC Act or any person acting in that position.
Chief Investigator	a participant who satisfies the eligibility criteria for a CI under these grant guidelines.
Commonwealth	the Commonwealth of Australia, as represented by the Australian Research Council specified in these grant guidelines and includes, where relevant, its officers, employees, contractors and agents.
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.
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 6.8 of these grant guidelines.
Exempt Archive and Public Record Office	means a non-profit organisation which holds a significant national, state or regional collection of data or documents for the purposes of public information and record-keeping and available for the purposes of research.
Exempt Charity	means an organisation which meets the definition of a charity under the <i>Charities Act 2013</i> .
Exempt Herbarium <sup>3</sup>	means a non-profit, established institution in the service of society, which acquires, conserves, and researches preserved and labelled plant specimens, arranged to allow easy access and archival storage with a mission to preserve and document the diversity of plants.

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<sup>3</sup> Adapted from: <http://herbarium.msu.edu/definition.html>



Term	Definition
Exempt Museum and Collecting Organisation <sup>4</sup>	means a non-profit, established institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.
Exempt Non-Profit Organisation	means an organisation which meets the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) definition of a non-profit organisation – an organisation that does not operate for the profit or gain of its individual members, either directly or indirectly. This applies both while the organisation is operating and when it winds up. This definition is available on the ATO website.
Exempt Small Business	means an organisation which has fewer than twenty full-time employees.
Exempt Start-up	means a company that is commercialising research and development (R&D) activities and has an average annual revenue over the previous two years of income that does not exceed \$5 million per year. The start-up must have a majority of its employees (by number) and assets (by value) inside Australia.
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. General 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 ARC and an Administering Organisation when an application from that organisation is approved for grant funding. This was previously referred to as a 'Funding Agreement'.
grant commencement date	the date on which grant funding may commence.
grant offer	the details listed in the ARC's RMS under 'Funding Offers' showing the project details and grant amount.

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<sup>4</sup> Adapted from: <http://icom.museum/the-vision/museum-definition/>

Term	Definition
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 <i>A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999</i> .
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 <i>Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research) 2017</i> .
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 ARC purposes 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 the ARC to assist applicants in completing the application form.
key performance indicators (KPIs)	a set of quantifiable measures that the ARC use to monitor and report on progress of research outcomes.
legislative instrument	a law on matters of detail made by a person or body authorised to do so by the relevant enabling legislation.

Term	Definition
Linkage Program	for the purposes of eligibility, the grant opportunities funded under the Linkage Program of the NCGP which consist of: ARC Centres of Excellence, Industrial Transformation Research Hubs, Industrial Transformation Training Centres, Linkage Projects, Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities, Learned Academies Special Projects, Supporting Responses to Commonwealth Science Council Priorities, Special Research Initiatives and other grant opportunities as announced from time to time under the Linkage Program.
medical research	medical research as defined in the <i>ARC Medical Research Policy</i> available on the ARC website.
Minister	the Minister responsible for the administration of the ARC Act, or the Minister's delegate.
named participants	individual researchers nominated for particular roles in an application.
national interest	the extent to which the research contributes to Australia's national interest through its potential to have economic, commercial, environmental, social or cultural benefits to the Australian community.
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).
ORCID Identifier	a persistent digital identifier for an individual researcher available on the ORCID website, <a href="http://www.orcid.org">www.orcid.org</a> .
Other Eligible Organisation	an organisation listed in section 6 of these grant guidelines which is not the Administering Organisation on an application.
other material resources	resources where a monetary value is not relevant or to which it is difficult to assign a monetary value, for example, access to restricted data, samples or documents.
Other Organisation	an organisation that is not an Eligible Organisation and not a Partner 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.
Partner Organisation	an Australian or overseas organisation, other than an Eligible Organisation, which satisfies the eligibility requirements for a Partner Organisation and is to be a cash and/or in-kind or other material resources contributor to the project.
PhD	a qualification that meets the level 10 criteria of the Australian Qualifications Framework Second Edition January 2013.

Term	Definition
project	an application approved by the Minister to receive funding from the ARC.
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 the grant spent by.
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 ARC.
research	<p>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.</p> <p>This definition of research is consistent with a broad notion of research and experimental development comprising “creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man [humankind], culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications” OECD (2002), <i>Frascati Manual: Proposed Standard Practice for Surveys on Research and Experimental Development</i>, Paris (Page 30).</p>
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 the ARC regarding applications and projects.
Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE)	an ARC 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.
Science and Research Priorities	those priority research areas identified by the Australian Government, and available on the Australian Government's Science website. <a href="http://www.science.gov.au/scienceGov/ScienceAndResearchPriorities">www.science.gov.au/scienceGov/ScienceAndResearchPriorities</a> .

Term	Definition
Selection Advisory Committee (SAC)	a group of experts from academia and industry appointed to assist the ARC to assess applications and to provide a recommendation for funding to the CEO. 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.
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 the ARC in RMS to agree a change in the grant agreement. This is also referred to as a ‘Variation of Funding Agreement’.
We	the Australian Research Council (ARC). ‘Us’ and ‘Our’ are also used in this context.
You	the Eligible Organisation that submitted the application. ‘Your’ is also used in this context.