

ARC Centres of Excellence Grant Guidelines

Key Changes

Consultation

Feedback from stakeholders was considered in the drafting of these grant guidelines. Key stakeholders have been engaged, particularly members of the Australasian Research Management Society (ARMS).

ASSESSMENT

1. Due Diligence Updates

There are several updates in the grant guidelines to clearly outline the due diligence activities undertaken through the assessment process, and the responsibilities of the applicant in ensuring appropriate due diligence has been undertaken ahead of submitting an application. Changes include:

Processes – Inclusion of any advice on national security risks in EOI stage and also ‘We make grant recommendations’ and ‘Grant decisions are made’.

7.2d How to apply clause amended to reference having regard to the *Guidelines to Counter Foreign Interference in the Australian University Sector*.

7.10 How to apply clause amended to note revisions to the application prior to approval may be invited by the ARC as this may occur to ameliorate security concerns.

8.3-8.4 The grant selection process added new clauses:

We may seek advice on national security or other matters from Commonwealth agencies in relation to the application.

We may seek information from You regarding due diligence activities in relation to the application.

8.15g EOI process clause amended to reference shortlist may be impacted by security issues: The recommended shortlist and any advice on national security issues will be considered by the CEO.

8.34 Who will approve grants clause amended to specify that: The CEO may seek advice on national security or other matters from Commonwealth agencies before making recommendations. The CEO will make recommendations for funding to the Minister based on any number of assessments and may take into account any advice received on national security or other matters from Commonwealth agencies.

12.22 Grant agreement variations amended clause to reflecting due diligence occurring in relation to changes that may occur following approval of a grant.

2. Assessment Criteria

Assessment criteria **a. Research program - Quality and Innovation** has been updated to include the ARC’s standard Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities section for consistency across the National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP).

Guidelines reference: 6.5

ELIGIBILITY

3. Personnel

Eligibility requirements for the Centre Director have been clarified to explicitly state that a person in this role must be employed by the Administering Organisation for at least 70 per cent of Full Time Equivalent (0.7 FTE).

Guidelines reference: 4.20.

Based on feedback identifying that the definition of an 'honorary academic appointment' was unclear, and being inconsistently applied across the sector, it has been moved from the glossary into the body of the document and changed to note that the researcher is not eligible to be a Chief Investigator using their honorary academic appointment if they are employed by an organisation other than an eligible organisation for more than 0.2 FTE.

Guidelines reference: 4.22.

4. Organisations

In order to reflect Whole of Government requirements, a clause has been included that states "to be eligible as a Partner Organisation, an organisation cannot be an organisation included on the National Redress Scheme's website on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme' (www.nationalredress.gov.au)".

Guidelines reference: 4.10.a.

5. Eligibility timing

Greater clarity has been provided about timing of named participants meeting eligibility criteria. Named participants must meet eligibility requirements at the grant commencement date, unless otherwise specified. If the application is successful, eligibility criteria must continue to be met for the project activity period and any changes, including those relating to employment, must be submitted as a post-award variation request.

Guidelines reference: 4.22 and 4.27.

OTHER

6. Timeframes

The timeframe to execute a Grant Agreement and the timeframe to make an appeal have both been changed from 28 days to 30 days, reflecting whole of government practice.