Strategic Information Management and Research Committee

22 February 2012

Professor Margaret Sheil
CEO, Australian Research Council
ARC Strategic Objectives

- To support excellence in research
- To build Australia’s research capacity
- To provide informed high quality policy advice to government
- To enhance research outcomes through effective evaluation
- To raise the profile of Australia’s research effort and be an effective advocate for its benefits
The ARC

National Competitive Grants Program
$810M in 11-12

Evaluation and Policy

Discovery & Fellowships
$502 M

Linkage & Centres
$308 M

Excellence in Research for Australia

- Statutory Agency established 2001
- Mission: *to deliver policy and programs that advance Australian research and innovation globally and benefit the community*
- Fund direct costs to Universities and partners
- All disciplines except clinical medicine and dentistry
The ARC does not...

- Employ researchers directly
- Aim to provide a complete externally funded career structure
- Commission research
- The ARC does use peer review to inform grant recommendations
Applications for ARC Grants 2009-2012 (incl.)

- Discovery Early Career Researcher Award
- Future Fellowships
- Linkage Projects
- Discovery Projects

Unsuccessful Successful
Linkage Projects

- Proposals for funding under Linkage Projects must involve a partner organisation from outside the higher education sector.
- For approved Round 1 Linkage Projects in 2012, Australian and State Government partner organisations provided $24.3m cash and in-kind contributions.
Future Fellowships

• National Priority Areas
• Targeted Research Areas e.g. in 2012:
  – bioinformatics;
  – computer system security;
  – Indigenous health and wellbeing;
  – managing innovation,
  – renewable energy …and others.
National Research Priorities

- An Environmentally Sustainable Australia
- Promoting and Maintaining Good Health
- Frontier Technologies for Building and Transforming Australian industries
- Safeguarding Australia

Currently undergoing consultation and review
Co-Funded Centres

- The ARC works collaboratively with other agencies to jointly fund high-quality research e.g.:
  - **Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics**, with the Grains Research and Development Corporation
  - **National Centre for Groundwater Research and Training**, with the National Water Commission
  - **National ICT Australia, (NICTA)** with the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy
Science of Learning

- In 2010, PMSEIC endorsed the report of the Expert Working Group on *Transforming Learning and the Transmission of Knowledge*.
- A key recommendation of the report was to establish a large science of learning program.
Excellence in Research Australia (ERA)

- 2010 ERA Report identified need for more research in Education
- Only 39% of units of evaluation achieved a rating of 3 (at world standard) or above
- ERA results have innumerable uses to the government in understanding the strengths within the higher education sector
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Australian Government
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