ARC funding: HCA update

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Australian Research Council

University of Newcastle
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More information


Themes

• Humanities funding in the national context
• How the ARC assesses: quality and benefit
• Interdisciplinarity and emergent fields
• The rhetoric of grant writing
• Linkage, LIEF and Centres of Excellence.
ARC funding in the national context
Commonwealth Investment in R&D 2013–14

- ARC: 10.2%
- NHMRC: 9.9%
- Other Higher Ed R&D Support: 0.9%
- Other Higher Ed: 0.9%
- Block Funding to Higher Ed: 21.9%
- CRCs: 1.7%
- Rural: 3.9%
- Energy and the Environment: 2.4%
- Multisector Science Support: 2.4%
- Energy and the Environment: 2.4%
- DSTO: 4.9%
- Other Govt R&D: 7.4%
- Industry R&D Tax Measures: 19.4%
- Other Industry R&D Support: 0.1%
- Other Innovation Support: 5.0%

Source: Budget 2013–2014 Industry and Innovation tables
This is us!

2014–15 Federal Budget

NHMRC
National Competitive Grants Program

**Discovery Projects**
- Laureate Fellowships
- Future Fellowships
- DECRA

**Linkage Projects**
- Centres of Excellence
- Co-Funded & SRI
- ITRP
- LIEF

Discovery Indigenous

5 year averages
How the ARC assesses: quality and benefit
The Grants Peer Review Process

All Disciplines

- Biological Sciences and Biotechnology (BSB)
- Engineering, Mathematics and Informatics (EMI)
- Humanities and Creative Arts (HCA)
- Physics, Chemistry and Earth Sciences (PCE)
- Social, Behavioural and Economic Sciences (SBE)
ARC Assignment Information

• The ARC has completely redesigned the way that potential assessors are matched to a proposal for assessment purposes

• Multiple areas of the proposal are mined for a set of keywords and presented to the person completing the assignments as a word cloud
ARC Assignment Information

• This information is then matched to information stored against a potential assessor’s profile and presented in a similar word cloud

• The most appropriate person is then selected and assigned to the proposal to assess.
The Grants Peer Review Process

External Reviewer -> Rank -> Committee Review -> Recommendation to CEO -> Minister Approval
ARC Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE)

• The ARC is committed to ensuring all eligible researchers have fair access to competitive funding through the National Competitive Grants Program.

• The ARC considers that Research Opportunity comprises two separate elements:
  – Career experiences (relative to opportunity)
  – Career interruptions

Discovery Projects Grants rankings 2013

Discipline

BSB
EMI
HCA
PCE
SBE

Funded Discovery Network = Go8

Each symbol represents up to 2 observations.

Normalised Rank

Discovery

Additional feedback

Discovery Projects Grants rankings 2013

Discipline

BSB
EMI
HCA
PCE
SBE

Funded Discovery Network = Go8

Each symbol represents up to 2 observations.
Success Rate: Comparison of Schemes

Success Rate in commencement year 2013

- Linkage - Infrastructure Equipment
- Linkage - Projects 39%
- Discovery Indigenous
- Industrial Transformation Training
- Discovery - Projects
- ARC Future Fellowships
- Discovery Early Career Researcher
- Australian Laureate Fellowships
Number of proposals received and funded by 2-digit FoR code

[past 4 years Discovery Projects and 5 years Linkage Projects]
Total ARC funding by major scheme and selected HCA/SBE disciplines (2002–14)
Case study 1: 2002 Cultural studies
Funding ($) for projects with primary 4-digit FoR in Cultural Studies by scheme (2011 to 2014)

No projects funded in LIEF scheme
Cultural Studies (2002) by 6-digit level FoR code (all schemes, regardless of primary classification code) (2010/11 to 2014)

Size of bubble indicates the total percentage of a 6-digit level code in all projects funded.
Percentage totals of 6-digit level code (2010/11–14) (DP and LP)

**DP**

- 2002 04 Cultural Theory
- 2002 03 Consumption and Everyday Life
- 2002 99 Cultural Studies not elsewhere classified
- 2002 12 Screen and Media Culture
- 2002 06 Globalisation and Culture
- 2002 02 Asian Cultural Studies
- 2002 05 Culture, Gender, Sexuality
- 2002 09 Multicultural, Intercultural and Cross-cultural Studies
- 2002 01 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural...
- 2002 11 Postcolonial Studies
- 2002 08 Migrant Cultural Studies

**LP**

- 2002 04 Cultural Theory
- 2002 03 Consumption and Everyday Life
- 2002 99 Cultural Studies not elsewhere classified
- 2002 12 Screen and Media Culture
- 2002 06 Globalisation and Culture
- 2002 02 Asian Cultural Studies
- 2002 05 Culture, Gender, Sexuality
- 2002 09 Multicultural, Intercultural and Cross-cultural Studies
- 2002 01 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural...
- 2002 11 Postcolonial Studies
- 2002 08 Migrant Cultural Studies
Case study 2:
2103 Historical studies
Total funding for Historical Studies (2010 to 2014)
By scheme

No funding awarded in Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities (LIEF) scheme
HISTORICAL STUDIES (2103) by 6-digit level FoR code (all schemes, regardless of primary classification code, years 2010/11-14)

Size of bubble indicates the total percentage of a 6-digit level code in all projects funded.
Non-primary 4-digit FoR components in projects with primary FoR in Historical Studies (2010/11 to 2014), all schemes

Number shown is for percentage totals of the FoR
Cross-disciplinary collaboration
Percentage totals of non-primary FoR codes in projects (2010/11 to 2014) all schemes

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<th>Built Environment and Design</th>
<th>Chemical Sciences</th>
<th>Commerce, Management, Tourism</th>
<th>Earth Sciences</th>
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<th>Information and Computing Sciences</th>
<th>Language, Communication and Culture</th>
<th>Law and Legal Studies</th>
<th>Mathematical Sciences</th>
<th>Medical and Health Sciences</th>
<th>Philosophy and Religious Studies</th>
<th>Physical Sciences</th>
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FOR Network mapping..
[Fruchterman reingold]

HASS disciplines highlighted

Source data:
http://www.arc.gov.au/general/searchable_data.htm
FOR Network mapping.. [Fruchterman reingold]

HASS - ZOOM
The art and rhetoric of grant writing
Stage 1 Preparation

- Read within your research field, at the international ‘cutting edge’.
- Develop a good research question which can be investigated in 3-5 years. Read and refine
- Consider the rules, ROPE, research environment and team members….then refine.
- Test the idea with peers and leaders in the field.
- Does the research question match your expertise? Can the research question be answered, and by you, by these means?
- Are you ready for this round? Get advice.
Stage 2 Planning

• Review existing rules, FAQs, eligibility
• Consider the scheme objectives and the selection criteria – plan to address every one
• Clarify the research question and improve its precision
• Check that the question on which you decide to focus is genuinely open-ended and capable of investigation
• Develop a detailed and mature research plan, using timelines and diagrams
• What do you really need funding for?
• Scrutinise and justify the budget
Stage 3 Drafting

Draft a plain English statement of your argument for funding:

– Research question and why it matters **now**
– Aims, stages and outcomes
– Background: why the research is needed within the research field, and how it stands to add to knowledge and understanding
– Why the research methodology and approach is both sound and interesting or innovative
– Potential risks in the method and plan and ways of averting them
– Who will do what, where, when, how and why

Seek peer review.
Stage 4 Editing

• Substitute non-technical for technical terms; where not, then explicate.
• Do not let densely theoretical references stand in for argument and clarification.
• Remind yourself: technical terms become jargon when you let the terms do the thinking.
• Peer review and further revision
Stage 5 Revision

- Clarify the research question and link it to aims and methods
- Have you established the knowledge gap and the new conceptual insights or questions?
- Have you referred to the key terms and authorities that have shaped the history of the question?
- Have you addressed each aims through an identified research stage and method, with outcomes?
- Is the benefit to scholarship and to the public clear?
- Peer review and further revision