Australian Research Council
Grant Processes

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Overview

1. ARC
2. National Competitive Grants
3. Tips for writing grants
4. The assessment process
5. Centres of Excellence and Laureate Fellows
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Commonwealth Investment in R&D 2013–14

- ARC: 10.23%
- NHMRC: 9.93%
- APA + RTS: 10.93%
- RIBG + JRE + SRE: 8.48%
- Other Higher Ed R&D Support: 3.39%
- CRCs: 1.67%
- Energy and the Environment: 2.39%
- Rural: 3.94%
- Multisector Science Support: 2.44%
- Other Innovation Support: 5.00%
- Other health: 1.00%
- Other Govt R&D: 7.41%
- DSTO: 4.94%
- CSIRO: 8.76%
- Industry R&D Tax Measures: 19.44%

Source: Budget 2013–2014 Industry and Innovation tables
2014–15 Federal Budget

(Treasury omitted)
ARC developments

- Recent schemes (DP, IN, DE, LE)
- Current schemes (LP, FL, ITRH, ITTC)
- Revision and harmonisation of funding rules
- Centres of Excellence
- Future Fellowships
- Medical Research policy
- New RMS
- ERA 2015
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National Competitive Grants Program

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

**Linkage Program**
- Centres of Excellence
- Co-Funded & SRI
- ITRP
- Linkage Projects
- LIEF
- 5 year averages
Key issues

• Success rates

• Opportunities for Early Career Researchers

• Research opportunity/Gender
Discovery Indigenous—success rates
DECRA—return and success rates
Future Fellows—return and success rates
Laureate Fellows—return and success rates

![Graph showing the number of proposals funded and not funded from 2009 to 2014, with a trend line indicating success rates% over the years.](image-url)
Linkage Projects—return and success rates
LIEF—return and success rates

LIEF - return and success rates

- proposals not funded
- proposals funded
- success rate %
- return rate %
Key issues

• Success rates

• Opportunities for Early Career Researchers

• Research opportunity/Gender
First-time awardees by scheme 2008-2014

The chart shows the number of first-time awardees (both DECRA and DP) from 2008 to 2014. The number of first-time awardees varies each year, with a peak in 2012. The percentage of first-time awardees also fluctuates, with a noticeable increase in 2012.
Average age of lead CIs in DP grants (±DECRA 2012–2014)

DECRA average age ~35
Key issues

• Success rates

• Opportunities for Early Career Researchers

• Research opportunity/Gender
DP13 - Submission and success rate by gender and career age

[Chart showing submission and success rates by gender and career age, with bars and lines indicating trends for different age groups.]
Participation and success of CIs in DP13 and DP14 by gender and career age
Participation and success of Chief Investigators (CIs) in DP15 by gender and career age
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## Important Dates

### Schemes under assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheme</th>
<th>Release of Funding Rules</th>
<th>Proposals Open</th>
<th>Request not to Assess Close</th>
<th>Proposals Close</th>
<th>Rejoinders</th>
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### Open Soon

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discovery Projects for funding commencing in 2016</td>
<td>13 October 2014</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>11 December 2014</td>
<td>11 February 2015</td>
<td>4 March 2015</td>
<td>June 2015</td>
<td>October / November 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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[http://www.arc.gov.au/media/important_dates.htm](http://www.arc.gov.au/media/important_dates.htm)
Important Information when writing application

• Funding Rules
  objectives
  selection criteria
  budget items
  eligibility

• Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

• Instructions to Applicants (ITAs)
Tips for writing grants

• Do:
  – read the funding rules, the FAQs, and the ITAs
  – write for the generalist in the 100 word summary
  – choose FoR codes carefully
  – write for the generalist in 1st page of project description
  – address the selection criteria in project description
  – have clear aims on the first page of project description
  – use the research environment to show that you have the right facilities, the support of other people not named as CIs and PIs, the right collaborators, an excellent strategic fit
  – use the research opportunity section to your advantage—two (2) years per child, three (3) months per international relocation, time spent in teaching, admin, industry—they all count; write it in a positive way
Tips for writing grants

• Do (cont):
  – demonstrate an appropriate track record (this is discipline and scheme specific)
  – demonstrate contribution to the field (how have you changed the way people think?)
  – have the right team
  – provide strong and positive progress reports
  – get the proposal read by several people from different disciplines
  – be realistic—less than 1/5 chance of getting funded
Tips for writing grants

• Overall:
  – why does this work need to be done? (what would happen if the application is not funded?)
  – why does the work need to be done now?
  – why are you the right person to do this work?
  – why is this the right place to do the work?

• Don’t:
  – expect to be funded just because you have a good idea and a reasonable track record (be determined, not disappointed)
DECRA Eligibility Process—new in DE16!

Open Soon

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Web: arc.gov.au  |  Email: info@arc.gov.au
# ARC Grant Lifecycle

| Funding Rules | • Approved by Minister  
|               | • Published on the ARC website  
|               | • Sector advised of availability  
| Proposals     | • Instructions to applicants, sample application form, FAQs published on website  
|               | • Applications submitted via RMS  
| Assessment    | • Proposals assessed by independent assessors  
|               | • Opportunity for rejoinder  
|               | • Proposals assessed by the ARC College of Experts  
| Selection meeting | • Panels consider all proposals, and recommend budgets for the highly ranked proposals  
| Approval of funding | • ARC CEO provides recommendations to the Minister  
|                 | • Minister considers recommendations and approves and announces funding outcomes  
|                 | • Post-award and reporting |
Number of Panels

**Discovery Program**

- Laureate Fellowships
- Future Fellowships
- DECRA
- Discovery Projects

**BSB, EMI, PCE, HCA, SBE**

**Linkage Program**

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

**BEM, ET, PMI, HSE**
The assessment process (for a panel member)

1. Assign external assessors (4 assigned + 4 reserves)
2. Read applications & determine provisional rating
3. Read assessor comments & applicant rejoinder
4. Discuss with other Carriage member, revise ratings where required
5. Submit ratings to RMS
6. Meeting: consider all ranked proposals, finalise recommendations of funding, assign budgets
Assignment of external assessors

• New RMS
• Please update your expertise text in your RMS profile
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The ARC Centres of Excellence – Objectives

a. potentially transformational research
b. interdisciplinary, collaborative approaches
c. develop relationships and build new networks
d. build Australia’s human capacity
e. postgraduate and postdoctoral training
f. large-scale problems over longer periods
g. points of interaction between unis, business, government, private sector
CE17 Timeline (tentative)

• October - December 2014
  – Consultation with sector on CE17 issues
• Late 2014 or early 2015
  – Scheme documentation released
• First half of 2015
  – CE17 application process begins
• June 2016
  – CE17 outcomes announced
• January 2017
  – CE17 funding commences
Centres of Excellence 2014
Success by discipline

*BSB = Biological Sciences and Biotechnology; EMI = Engineering, Mathematics and Informatics; HCA = Humanities and Creative Arts; PCE = Physics, Chemistry and Earth Sciences; SBE = Social, Behavioural and Economics Sciences

Source: 2014 Selection Report Table 1
Key lessons from previous selection rounds

• Do:
  – Make sure the whole is greater than the sum of the parts
  – Address a big question (or series of problems), not just a theme
  – If a re-bid, need to look forward not backward
  – Have all the right partners, and no obvious ones missing (know your competitors and collaborate as much as possible)
  – Expect CIs to commit more than one day a week, i.e. >0.2 FTE
  – Think about and address all selection criteria (including governance)
  – Think about a diverse centre and how to communicate and manage it effectively

• Don’t:
  – Rely on past success
  – Assemble bids that appear to be a series of smaller projects with minimal integration
Key features of a Centre Director

- Have a big vision
- Be outward looking
- Have a compelling research question
- Be able to explain this to a broad audience (get mock panels from broad disciplines to evaluate the proposal)
- Propose topical and practical research, but also blue sky with unexpected outcomes
- Be a mentor and a leader at the cutting edge of your field, able to take the research to an internationally outstanding level
- It is not about what you have done, but what you are going to do
- Teamwork is important: have the ability to pull together all the right people, in an effective manner
- Be a centre builder
- Not be at the end of your career; what is the legacy this proposal will leave to the next generation in terms of project outcomes and resources?
- If at regional university, demonstrate strong research commitment
Key features of a Laureate Fellow

• Have a big vision
• Be outward looking
• Have a compelling research question
• Be able to explain this to a broad audience (get mock panels from broad disciplines to evaluate the proposal)
• Propose topical and practical research, but also blue sky with unexpected outcomes
• Be a mentor and a leader at the cutting edge of your field, able to take the research to an internationally outstanding level
• It is not about what you have done, but what you are going to do
• Teamwork is important: have the ability to pull together all the right people, in an effective manner
• Be a centre builder
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Laureate Fellows 2014
Success by discipline

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Source: 2014 Selection Report Table 5
Overall

• All grants that are successful should provide exciting new outcomes and be an excellent investment

• Decisions align with Scheme Objectives

• But not all excellent proposals can get funding; most applicants will be disappointed