ARC Centres of Excellence and Laureate Fellows information session
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Outline

• Context – ARC
• Centres of Excellence scheme
• Laureate Fellows scheme
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%
- Other Health: 1.00%
- Energy and the Environment: 2.39%
- Rural: 3.94%
- Multisector Science Support: 2.44%
- CSIRO: 8.76%
- DSTO: 4.94%
- Other Govt R&D: 7.41%
- Industry R&D Tax Measures: 19.44%

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

(Treasury omitted)
Trends in Government Investment in R&D $M 2004-14
(source: 2013-14 budget tables)
National Competitive Grants Program

Discovery Programs

- Future Fellowships
- DECRA
- Other Fellowships
- Discovery Projects

Linkage Programs

- Centres of Excellence
- Co-Funded & SRI
- ITRP (growing!)
- Linkage Projects
- LIEF

Area of box represents $$ awarded over the period 2008-2013. N.B. ITRP & DECRA running for less than five years.
Investment in excellence for the longer term

- ARC Centres of Excellence $1-4 m a year for up to seven years
- Industrial Transformation Research Program
  - Hubs $500K to $1m a year for five years
  - Centres $600K to $1m a year for three years
- Co-funded and Special Research Initiatives – various funding and duration
The ARC Centres of Excellence – Objectives

a. highly innovative and 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
What the Centres need to look like

- The Centres are the largest investments of the ARC Grants Program
- Centres foster frontier interdisciplinary research – with innovative and highly integrated Research Programs
- Centres are critical for the next generation of researchers – capacity building
- Leading the way – international reputation
- Building on important collaborations
- Public benefits and research impact
Key lessons learned from previous selection rounds – the best of the best

• Do:
  – The whole must be 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
  – Expect CIs to commit more than 1 day a week, i.e. >0.2 FTE
  – Allow plenty of time to prepare grant applications, organising reviews, and developing strategic and operational plans.
  – Aim to address all objectives of the scheme – workshop these with your senior team – vision is important – KPIs to support this
  – Think about and address all selection criteria. Focus on the end game as competition is fierce
  – Mentor your key staff as an inspiration to others
Key lessons learned from previous selection rounds – the best of the best

- Do (continued)
  - Know your competitors and collaborate as much as possible. Existing and new networks are highly valuable for future research.
  - Address good governance to enhance the business of your Centre – resource and support your business and operational staff.
  - Think about a diverse centre and how to communicate and manage it effectively.
  - Ensure the whole interview team is across the bid.
  - Ask for feedback from the ARC.
  - Acknowledge that Centre Directors are the superstars of the research community – we have high expectations of them being an inspiration as highly visible research leaders.
Key lessons learned from previous selection rounds – the best of the best

- Don’t:
  - Don’t rely on past success
  - Don’t assemble bids that appear to be a series of smaller projects with minimal integration fail
  - At interview, don't leave the Centre Director to answer everything nor to delegate everything
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 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
• 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
ARC Laureate Fellows – Objectives

a. support outstanding researchers and research leaders
b. strengthen Australia's international research standing
c. provide excellent research training environment and exemplary ECR mentorship
d. support ground-breaking, internationally competitive research
e. forge strong links among researchers, international research community, and/or industry
f. economic, environmental, social and cultural benefits to Australia
Laureate Fellows 2014
Success by discipline

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Source: 2014 Selection Report Table 5
Discussion/questions