Overview

• ARC funding schemes (NCGP) – a bird’s eye view
• Discovery Programs, including new rules:
  – Discovery Projects
  – Discovery Indigenous
  – DECRA
  – Australian Laureate Fellowships
• Assessment process
• Questions and discussion
National Competitive Grants Program

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

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

**Discovery Program Funding**
2013-14 - $551.4 million

**Linkage Program Funding**
2013-14 - $332.4 million
Aims of the Discovery Program

- Fund excellent, internationally competitive research by individuals and teams that will produce high quality outcomes
- Build Australia’s research capacity through supporting and facilitating research training and career opportunities for excellent Australian and international researchers
- Support research in priority areas that will deliver national benefits
- Enhance research capacity and outcomes through support for international collaboration
Size of scheme and success rates (1)

*Discovery Projects 2008-2014: Success and Return Rates*

- **Success rates:**
  - 2008: 56.5%
  - 2009: 54.0%
  - 2010: 56.3%
  - 2011: 55.3%
  - 2012: 50.8%
  - 2013: 60.8%
  - 2014: 63.80%

- **Return rates:**
  - 2008: 21.4%
  - 2009: 20.4%
  - 2010: 22.7%
  - 2011: 22.0%
  - 2012: 22.0%
  - 2013: 21.4%
  - 2014: 19.9%
Size of scheme and success rates (2)

**DECRA 2012-2014: Success Rates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Proposals</th>
<th>Unsuccessful</th>
<th>Successful</th>
<th>Success Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1882</td>
<td>1565</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1081</td>
<td>981</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1268</td>
<td>1168</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>13.62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Size of scheme and success rates (3)

**Discovery Indigenous 2012-2014: Success Rates**

![Bar chart showing success rates for Discovery Indigenous from 2012 to 2014. The chart displays the number of proposals and their success rates for each year.](chart.png)

- **2012:**
  - Unsuccessful: 10
  - Successful: 19
  - Success rate: 34.5%

- **2013:**
  - Unsuccessful: 10
  - Successful: 22
  - Success rate: 31.3%

- **2014:**
  - Unsuccessful: 10
  - Successful: 16
  - Success rate: 38.50%
Size of scheme and success rates (4)

Australian Laureate Fellowships 2009-2013: Success Rates
Size of scheme and success rates (5)

*Future Fellowships 2009-2013: Success Rates*

- **2009**: 775 proposals, 20.5% success rate (200 successful)
- **2010**: 559 proposals, 26.4% success rate (200 successful)
- **2011**: 458 proposals, 30.7% success rate (203 successful)
- **2012**: 394 proposals, 34.7% success rate (209 successful)
- **2013**: 1033 proposals, 16.29% success rate (201 successful)
Key funding features of schemes

- Discovery Project and Discovery Indigenous schemes award project costs (travel, equipment, support staff, etc.)
- Discovery Indigenous scheme also provides opportunities for Indigenous researchers to apply for a Discovery Indigenous Award (DIA).
- DECRA primarily awards a salary for the awardee, with a small allocation of project costs
- Laureate Fellowships awards a salary top-up plus funding for a team of postdoctoral and postgraduate researchers
- Each scheme has different selection criteria, rules and funding limits, as each serves a different purpose
General budget items

- access to national and international research and infrastructure facilities;
- access to Workshop Services
- expenditure on Field Research
- expert services of a third party
- equipment (and its maintenance) and consumables
- personnel and higher degree by research stipends
- publication and dissemination of Project outputs & outreach activity costs
- specialised computer equipment and software
- teaching relief for CIs (not for recipients of ARC Awards or Fellowships)
- travel costs essential to the Project
- web hosting and web development specific to the Project
- workshops and conferences
Discovery Projects

• DP is the largest scheme, supporting excellent basic and applied research by individuals and teams
• Success rate typically 20% to 22% in recent years
• Selection criteria (more detail on each in Funding Rules):
  – Investigator (40%)
  – Project Quality and Innovation (25%)
  – Feasibility and Benefit (20%)
  – Research Environment (15%)
• Funding up to five years, up to $500,000 per year
• No salaries for CIs/PIs
**Discovery Indigenous**

- Supports fundamental research and research training by Indigenous Australian researchers as individuals and as teams
- Lead CI must be Indigenous
- Selection criteria (more detail on each in Funding Rules):
  - Investigator (40%)
  - Project Quality and Innovation (35%)
  - Research Environment (15%)
  - Feasibility and Benefit (10%)
- Funding up to three years, up to $500,000 per year
- No salaries for CIs/PIs (though note DIAs)
Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA)

- Support and advance promising early career researchers, and enable research and research training in high quality and supportive environments
- Highly competitive; 200 per round
- Eligibility: up to 5 years post-PhD (note ROPE)
- Selection criteria (more detail on each in Funding Rules):
  - Project Quality and Innovation (40%)
  - DECRA Candidate (35%)
  - Research Environment (15%)
  - Feasibility and Benefit (10%)
- Funding for up to three years
- DECRA salary plus up to $40,000 per year project costs
Key changes to rules (1)

• New format: one set covering all schemes in the Program
• One section dedicated to the Discovery Program covering:
  ✓ Level and Period of Funding
  ✓ Budget Items Supported and Not Supported
  ✓ Eligible Organisations
  ✓ Limits on Projects and Proposals
  ✓ Submission of proposals
  ✓ Selection and approval process
  ✓ Reporting requirements
  ✓ Fundamental principles of conducting research
Key changes to rules (2)

- Discovery Projects now available for 5 years – though note criteria about cost-effectiveness and value for money
- No DORAs in DP15
- Removal of restrictions on a number of budget items for all schemes (publication costs, web hosting, mobile phones, workshops)
- Increase in ICA $$ within DP to promote internationalisation
- Extension of career interruption time available in DECRA
- Harmonisation of cross-scheme eligibility rules for clarity and consistency
Proposal assessment – overview

• ARC staff and Executive Directors assess eligibility etc., but do not decide whether proposals should be funded

• All proposals are assessed against the selection criteria, and in accordance with the weightings for that scheme

• Proposals are generally assigned to **two** College of Experts members and at least **two** external assessors

• College of Experts meets to moderate judgments and to make final recommendations about fundable proposals and budgets

• Under the ARC Act all recommendations are just that, and must be approved by the Minister
Assessment Process (1)

- The peer review process designed to be fair, thorough and transparent
- The ARC relies on two types of assessors - **Detailed** and **General**
- Detailed assessors drawn from the Australian and international research community
- Detailed assessors complete in-depth assessments of proposals by providing scores and comments against the scheme specific selection criteria
- These assessments are then taken into consideration by General assessors (ie College or SAC members) in the later stages of the peer review process
Assessment Process (2)

- General assessors are members of the College of Experts or a Selection Advisory Committee

- General assessors take into consideration the ratings and comments provided by Detailed assessors and the applicant’s rejoinder, and assign their own ratings to the relevant scheme selection criteria

- Once all assessments have been finalised and submitted to the ARC, Detailed and General assessments and Rejoinders are considered by the panels at the final selection meeting
Rejoinder

• Where the ARC seeks external assessments, applicants are often given the opportunity to submit a Rejoinder

• The Rejoinder process allows applicants to respond to assessment comments made by external assessors

• Rejoinders are not viewed by external assessors but are considered by an ARC College of Experts Panel or SAC when deciding on the final recommendation for a Proposal

• Timeframes for applicants are typically up to ten working days
Selection Meeting

• The Selection Meeting is the final face-to-face meeting of the panel of General Assessors and is the conclusion of the peer review process

• The panels meet to consider which proposals to recommend to the ARC for funding, and recommended budgets for those proposals

• All recommendations are given to the ARC CEO, who then makes recommendations to the Minister

• All funding decisions are made by the Minister under the ARC Act
More information

• Your university Research Office is the essential first stop for information
• ARC staff are available to assist via email and phone
• Huge amount of valuable information on the ARC website
  – Funding rules and Instructions to Applicants
  – FAQs
  – Additional pages on various policies
  – Detailed outcomes for all schemes for recent years, arranged by institution and by discipline (FoR code)
Discussion/questions