ARC Medical Research Policy
The Psychology Foundation of Australia

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Overview

1. ARC funding
2. NCGP and assessment/eligibility
3. Medical Research definition update
National Competitive Grants Program

**Discovery Projects**

- Laureate Fellowships: 5%
- Future Fellowships: 16%
- DECRA: 3%
- Discovery Indigenous

**Linkage Projects**

- Centres of Excellence: 7%
- Co-funded & SRI
- ITRP
- Linkage Projects: 18%

5 year averages
NCGP Lifecycle

Development of Funding Rules
Eligibility Exemption Request
Proposal Submission
Request Not to Assess
Assessment Process
Rejoiner
Selection Meeting
Approval of Outcomes
Funding Agreements and Appeals
Post Award

Development of RMS
Eligibility
Announcement
End of Year and Progress Reports
Final Report
DP—Success and return rates

![Diagram showing success and return rates over years]
Eligibility

• 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
NCGP and Peer Review

- Under larger schemes, such as Discovery Projects (DP) and the Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA), all five panels of the ARC College convene for selection meetings. In other schemes, such as Australian Laureate Fellowships and Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities schemes, a single interdisciplinary Selection Advisory Committee (SAC) may be utilised. SAC members may be ARC College members and/or other eminent researchers.

- The five panels are: Biological Sciences and Biotechnology (BSB), Engineering, Mathematics and Informatics (EMI), Humanities and Creative Arts (HCA), Physics, Chemistry and Earth Sciences (PCE), and Social Behavioural and Economic Sciences (SBE).
Research Opportunity

• 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

• The new ROPE Statement (released Feb 2014) is online at: http://www.arc.gov.au/applicants/rope_statement.htm
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.
Assessment Process

• 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

• 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
ARC Medical Research Policy

The ARC does not consider ‘hypotheticals’ or provide pre-eligibility rulings as per the ARC Medical Research policy.

“If a proposal is deemed to be potentially ineligible, the proposal is sent for consideration by the ARC eligibility committee. The relevant administering organisation is advised when a proposal is identified as potentially ineligible. The administering organisation may provide further information if required. All proposals, regardless of their eligibility status, undergo the same peer review process.”

For more information visit the ARC website
‘Human health conditions’—Pertaining to diseases (as defined above), syndromes, pathological conditions, injuries, signs, symptoms, problems and/or conditions that generally lead to contact with, or utilisation of, health services.

**Intervention/al**—Includes interventions designed to understand and/or change human health conditions, such as: clinical or pre-clinical trials in human participants; the collection and/or use of body organs, tissues or fluids e.g. skin, blood, urine, saliva, hair, bones, tumour and other biopsy specimens or exhaled breath; behavioural interventions; or dietary interventions.’
Ineligible Research

• ‘research with human health and/or medical goals, including research on the understanding, aetiology, diagnosis, monitoring, management or treatment of physical or mental disease or other health conditions in humans; or,

• research involving the use or development of animal models of human health conditions, or the use of animals for the development or testing of therapeutic goods (including devices) or procedures, for the purpose of better understanding human health or developing treatments for human health conditions; or,

• interventional research in humans, particularly clinical or pre-clinical trials of therapeutic goods (including devices), or research aiming to modify the health of the human participants; or,

• the use or development of equipment, facilities, tools, games, devices, smart phone applications or other items to understand, diagnose, monitor, manage or treat human health conditions.’
Ineligible Research

‘If the ARC determines that a proposal is at risk of not being considered by either agency (ARC or NHMRC), the ARC reserves the right to deem such a proposal **eligible** for assessment.

Recognising that an integrated research project or programme may sometimes include a small element of research not supported under this policy, the ARC may, but is not obliged to, deem such a proposal **eligible** for assessment provided the proposal predominantly comprises **eligible** research as set out in this policy.

Proposals deemed **ineligible** cannot be recommended or approved for funding under the *Australian Research Council Act 2001*.’
Thank You