



# DISCOVERY — PROJECTS

Guidelines for applicants

for funding commencing in

2002

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## Acronyms

The following acronyms are used throughout these guidelines.

<b>APA</b>	Australian Postgraduate Award
<b>APD</b>	Australian Postdoctoral Fellowship
<b>APF</b>	Australian Professorial Fellowship
<b>ARC</b>	Australian Research Council
<b>ARF</b>	Australian Research Fellowship
<b>EAC</b>	Expert Advisory Committee
<b>HECS</b>	Higher Education Contribution Scheme
<b>IAS</b>	Institute of Advanced Studies
<b>NCGP</b>	National Competitive Grants Programme
<b>NHMRC</b>	National Health and Medical Research Council
<b>QEII</b>	Queen Elizabeth II Fellowship
<b>SRC</b>	Special Research Centres

# Australian Research Council Discovery — Projects Guidelines for Funding Commencing in 2002

## 1 Introduction

The Australian Research Council's (ARC) Discovery—Projects is part of a new National Competitive Grants Programme (NCGP) being introduced in 2001 for funding commencing in 2002. The NCGP streamlines the grant allocation process into two elements, Discovery and Linkage.

Discovery—Projects is an application-based programme available for individual researchers or research teams.

These Guidelines are written on the basis that it is the researcher who is the applicant. However, grants from the ARC are made to institutions, not to the individual researchers.

Private researchers may apply directly to the ARC but must nominate the administering institution where funds are to be paid when receiving the award.

## 2 Objectives

Discovery—Projects aims to—

- support excellent fundamental research by individuals and teams
- assist researchers to undertake their research in conditions most conducive to achieving best results
- expand Australia's knowledge base and research capability
- encourage research training in high-quality research environments.

## 3 Description

Discovery—Projects recognises the importance of fundamental research to the national innovation system.

Discovery—Projects provides opportunities for a continuum of activities, from smaller single research projects to clusters of larger projects, in order to meet the varied needs of researchers in different disciplines and at different stages of their careers. Where appropriate, Discovery—Projects emphasises the need for collaboration, and the development of capacity-building partnerships to work on a cohesive research programme that will make a major contribution to generating knowledge. It also allows for single projects to be undertaken on an individual basis.

Research Grants and Research Fellowships are available under Discovery—Projects. Applicants who apply for a Research Fellowship but not for a Research Grant must demonstrate how their research will be supported. The ARC wishes to ensure that the research proposed by those appointed as Fellows, particularly those appointed at APF level, is amongst the highest quality supported by the ARC and that their proposed research is adequately funded.

There are three Research Fellowships categories and, within those categories, four types of Fellowship—

***Australian Postdoctoral Fellowship (APD)***

APDs provide opportunities for researchers at the postdoctoral level to undertake research of national and international significance, and to broaden their research experience.

***Australian Research Fellowship/Queen Elizabeth II Fellowship (ARF/QEII)***

ARFs and QEII provide opportunities for established researchers to undertake research of national and international significance. QEII encourage research in Australia by postdoctoral graduates of exceptional promise and proven capacity for original work.

***Australian Professorial Fellowship (APF)***

APFs provide opportunities for outstanding researchers with proven international reputations to undertake research that is both of major importance in its field and of significant benefit to Australia.

Details of eligibility and selection criteria for each Fellowship type appear at Appendix 1.

### 3.1 Type of research supported

Discovery—Projects supports excellent research including—

- *pure basic research* which is experimental and theoretical work undertaken to acquire new knowledge without looking for long-term benefits other than the advancement of knowledge.
- *strategic basic research* which is experimental and theoretical work undertaken to acquire new knowledge directed into specified broad areas that are expected to lead to useful discoveries. It provides the broad base of knowledge necessary to solve recognised practical problems.
- *applied research* which is original work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge with a specific application in view. It is undertaken either to determine possible uses for the findings of basic research or to determine new ways of achieving some specific and predetermined objectives.

### 3.2 Areas of investigation/work not supported

Discovery—Projects does **not** support the following work—

- medical research and training and public health research and training that are covered by the NHMRC
- scholarly investigations that, while important in themselves, do not lead to conceptual advances or discoveries, or to novel practical outcomes or applications. Projects such as uncritical biographical compilations and purely descriptive catalogues or editions that do not involve original research are not funded
- activities that lead solely to the creation or performance of a work of art, including visual art, musical compositions, drama, dance, designs and literary works. Commonwealth Government support for these activities is provided through the Australia Council for the Arts
- production of teaching materials, even though some research may be involved in their production
- compilation of data, unless an integral part of a project, in which case applicants must provide a statement indicating the research objectives to which the data would

contribute

- development of research aids and tools (including computer programs), unless they form an integral part of a project, in which case applicants must provide a statement indicating the research objectives to which these activities would contribute.

### 3.3 Budget items not supported

Discovery—Projects does **not** support the following budget items—

#### ***Salaries of Chief Investigators and Partner Investigators***

The Commonwealth will not provide support, in whole or in part, to meet the salaries of Chief Investigators or Partner Investigators under Discovery.

Discovery—Projects funding is not usually provided for Chief Investigators in order to gain substantial relief from normal duties. However, the Committee may consider a request for such funding for teaching relief for a period of not more than six months a year, if such a request is fully justified in terms of achieving a successful outcome for the project. If approved, the funding contribution is limited to the base rate of the Senior Research Associate scale, regardless of the level of appointment of the staff member.

#### ***Special Studies Programmes***

Funds are not provided for travel or other expenses for researchers when on a Special Studies Programme. Travel to special facilities away from the base where a researcher is conducting his/her study is seen as part of the normal costs of a Special Studies Programme. Only in exceptional cases will such costs be supported within a Discovery—Projects Grant. Subsistence funds will be provided only if an investigator can show that living expenses are not covered by a Special Studies Programme grant and that the research to be undertaken directly relates to the project.

#### ***Research support for investigators not resident in Australia***

Funding will not be provided for research assistance to an overseas Partner Investigator.

#### ***International students' fees and Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) liability***

Funds are not provided to pay the fees of international students or of HECS liabilities for Australian students.

#### ***Computer facilities for molecular analysis***

Applicants for projects involving molecular biology should be aware that the ARC supports the Australian National Genomic Information Service, which provides access to a range of databases and a large suite of analysis programs. As this service is available at modest cost, proposals seeking funding for computer facilities to undertake molecular analysis will have to justify such needs very thoroughly.

#### ***Basic facilities***

The host institution must certify its agreement to provide the following basic facilities, which will not be funded under Discovery—Projects—

- accommodation (eg. laboratory and office, suitably equipped and furnished in standard ways)
- access to workshop services (eg machine tools and qualified technicians available to each member of staff, according to need, for research)
- access to a basic library collection
- adequate computing time (excluding access to high-performance computers)
- standard reference materials or funds for abstracting services
- basic computing, word processing and microfilm reading facilities
- use of photocopiers, telephones, mail, fax, email and internet services.

### ***Publication costs***

Page costs for publications are not funded under Discovery—Projects.

### **3.4 Duration of Funding**

Discovery—Projects Grants may be awarded for one to five years, the normal duration being three years. APF, QEII and ARF Awards have a standard duration of five years. APD Awards have a standard duration of three years. A four-year research and teaching option is available for APDs. (Further details about the tenure of Fellowships are provided in Appendix 1).

Only a small number of five year project grants will be made available and these are intended for researchers with track records of sustained ARC funding. The final decision on the duration of the grants rests with the ARC's Expert Advisory Committees and they may recommend project grants for a duration different from that requested.

### **3.5 Level of Funding**

The minimum grant size is \$20,000 per annum and the maximum is \$500,000 per annum. These levels refer to the average annual amount that the ARC deems necessary for the project over the full period of the grant, not the average amount applied for, nor the amount sought in the first year. The ARC reserves the right to determine the level of funding allocated to the project.

The ARC will award very few grants at the higher end of the funding spectrum and these will normally be awarded only for an application that involves a collaborating team of outstanding investigators.

Applicants seeking a Fellowship under Discovery—Projects should include a request for a salary component in the budget. ARC Fellowships are awarded at levels equivalent to the Academic Salary Scale—

- APFs                    Level D or E
- ARFs/QEIIIs        Level B or C
- APDs                    Level A

Government-related entities do not pay GST on the funding transaction with the ARC. However, non government-related entities which are liable to pay GST on the transaction with the ARC will receive base-funding plus GST.

If the organisation is able to claim input tax credits for the GST component in the cost of goods and services purchased in the course of carrying out the Project, then the GST component of these costs should not be included in the Project cost.

Therefore the ARC will make GST adjustments to payments depending on whether the funding has been provided to a government-related or non-government-related entity.

Applicants are therefore requested to provide their budgets exclusive of GST.

## **4 Eligibility**

There are various applicant roles available under Discovery—Projects—

- Chief Investigator (CI)
- Partner Investigator (PI)

- Research Fellowships—
  - ARC Professorial Fellowship (APF)
  - ARC Research Fellowship/Queen Elizabeth II Fellowship (ARF/QEII)
  - ARC Postdoctoral Fellowship (APD).

The roles and eligibility requirements for each of these are described below. To be eligible for consideration, each application must have at least one Chief Investigator or Fellowship applicant.

The category of Associate Investigator, which was available under the Large Research Grants Scheme, is no longer available.

#### 4.1 Eligibility criteria for Chief Investigators

To be eligible to apply as a Chief Investigator, the applicant must meet the following criteria—

- He/she must be an active researcher who takes intellectual responsibility for the project, its conception, any strategic decisions called for in its pursuit and the communication of results. The applicant must have the capacity to make a serious commitment to the project and cannot assume the role of a supplier of resources for work that will largely be placed in other hands.
- He/she must reside predominantly in Australia for the full term of the grant. If the applicant does not have permanent resident status he/she must obtain temporary resident status from the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs before taking up the grant.
- He/she must meet **one** of the following three criteria—
  - be associated with, or employed by, a higher education institution or other organisation. The applicant must hold a substantive position at, and/or derive at least 50 per cent of his/her appropriated salary from, that institution or organisation; or
  - be a tenured or untenured adjunct professor or visiting Fellow, or equivalent, who does not have a substantive position or paid appointment elsewhere; or
  - be a private individual not associated in any formal capacity with an institution.

Notwithstanding his/her eligibility under the criteria above, researchers in the following categories are not eligible to apply as a Chief Investigator—

- a researcher who derives more than 50 per cent of appropriated salary from research organisations outside the higher education sector that is funded primarily for research from State or Commonwealth Government sources, for example—
  - Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO)
  - Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO)
  - Australian Geological Survey Organisation (AGSO)
  - State Research and Development (R&D) organisations
  - NHMRC block-funded institutions; or
- an undergraduate student, or
- a postgraduate student (unless eligible to be a CI because of employment but only for research which lies outside the scope of the postgraduate studies).

Chief Investigators must have fulfilled all obligations from previous ARC grants (including final

and progress reports).

#### 4.1.1 *Researchers from ARC funded Centres*

Any researcher associated with an ARC funded centre (Special Research Centre or Key Centre of Teaching and Research) including the Director is eligible to be a Chief Investigator so long as he/she satisfies these criteria—

- The proposed research is outside the core business of the centre (which has already been funded by the Commonwealth). This must be certified by the Centre Director and should be no longer than one page in length and must accompany the application

The ARC reserves the right to make the final decision on whether a proposal is outside the core business of an ARC Centre.

- Centre Directors spend 100 per cent of time on centre and related business. Centre Directors may apply for a Discovery—Projects grant if the proposed research is related and complementary to the centre, but outside its core business.
- The applicant meets all other Chief Investigator eligibility criteria.

#### 4.1.2 *Cooperative Research Centres (CRCs)*

The ARC will not fund projects already funded by a CRC, or which should reasonably be expected to be funded by a CRC given its core business. Researchers from CRCs may only apply as Chief Investigators providing they meet all the eligibility criteria for Chief Investigators (including the requirement to have 50 per cent of their salary from a higher education organisation). All other researchers associated with a CRC, including the Centre Director, who do not satisfy the eligibility criteria for Chief Investigators, may apply as Partner Investigators providing they meet all the Partner Investigator eligibility criteria.

Applicants who have an association with a CRC must justify, to the satisfaction of the ARC, why the project falls outside the core business of the CRC and therefore should not be funded by the CRC.

## 4.2 Eligibility criteria for Partner Investigators

Researchers who are not eligible to be Chief Investigators but who are providing significant commitment, intellectual input and relevant expertise to the project can apply as Partner Investigators. To be eligible to apply as a Partner Investigator, a researcher must—

- be ineligible to be a Chief Investigator, and
- demonstrate a significant contribution of funds or other resources (other than salary) from the researcher's institution for the proposed project (having regard to the total cost of the project and the relative contribution of each Chief Investigator).

## 4.3 Eligibility criteria for Fellowships

### 4.3.1 *General eligibility*

Research Fellowships are tenable only on a full-time basis at Australian higher education and other institutions. Researchers with both continuing and non-continuing appointments are eligible to apply for Fellowships.

- Researchers who have a non-continuing position or no position at the time of application may apply for 100 per cent salary from the ARC.
- Researchers who have a continuing position at the time of application may apply for

either:

- 50 per cent salary, or;
- 100 per cent salary.

In the case of 50 per cent–50 per cent salary option, the ARC would enter into a partnership with the Fellow’s host institution and each party would provide 50 per cent of the Fellow’s salary.

Applicants who hold a continuing research only position at any university are not eligible to apply for ARC 50 per cent–50 per cent Fellowships.

In the case of the 100 per cent salary option, successful Fellowship applicants with a continuing position must resign the existing continuing position before taking up the award.

Under both options, the Fellow would be expected to work full-time on research and research-related activities. Research-related activities could include supervision of postgraduate students. Research Fellows should note the information regarding limit on number of grants contained in paragraph 4.4.2.

Applicants for APF/ARF/QEII awards not holding a PhD would need to demonstrate that their research record is equivalent to a PhD, plus the required number of years of postdoctoral experience.

Applicants who apply for a Research Fellowship without applying for a Research Grant in conjunction must demonstrate how their research will be supported.

#### **4.3.2 Specific eligibility**

Each level of ARC Fellowship has specific eligibility criteria that are outlined in Appendix 1. Fellowships applicants must meet the eligibility criteria for their category of Fellowship unless granted an exemption (see 4.3.4).

#### **4.3.3 Host institutions for Fellows**

All ARC Research Fellowships are tenable on a full-time basis at Australian higher education and other institutions.

It is also possible to hold an APD or QEII Fellowship at a research organisation outside the higher education sector that is funded primarily for research from State or Commonwealth Government sources. However, researchers who apply for one of these Fellowships at such an organisation may not apply for a Research Grant in conjunction with their Fellowship.

Fellowship applicants must meet the eligibility criteria for Chief Investigators except for applicants for APD or QEII awards who intend to take up the Fellowship at a research organisation outside the higher education sector, which is funded for research primarily from State or Commonwealth Government sources. Researchers who fall into this category and who wish to apply for a Research Grant in conjunction with a Fellowship must apply with an eligible Chief Investigator.

#### **4.3.4 Request for eligibility exemption**

In some circumstances, an applicant who is seeking a Fellowship may not satisfy all the required eligibility criteria due to research career interruption (including working in industry). If this is the case, an applicant may apply for an exemption from the eligibility criteria.

If, after reading these guidelines, a researcher is unsure if he/she is eligible for a particular Fellowship, he/she must consult the institution's Research Office in the first instance.

If the applicant does require an eligibility exemption, a request must be lodged in writing, through the institution's Research Office, with the Director, Programme Management Section, at the ARC by 31 January 2001. The eligibility exemption request must include a statement justifying the applicant's special circumstances for an eligibility exemption. The applicant will be advised of the decision as soon as possible to allow time for a detailed application to be completed.

#### **4.4 Number of applications/grants**

##### **4.4.1 *Limit on the number of applications***

In any one year, the ARC will consider no more than two initial applications to Discovery—Projects from any one researcher. Applicants are able to submit a maximum of two applications as a Chief Investigator/Partner Investigator until the two grant limit is reached. If two applications are submitted by any one researcher as a Chief Investigator, at least one of these must involve collaboration with another Chief Investigator.

Submitting initial applications that contravene the above limits will result in the automatic exclusion of all applications involving that researcher as a Chief/Partner Investigator.

Only one application to Discovery—Projects may be submitted in respect of a single project in the same year, regardless of any variation in the proposed administering institution. Submitting similar or duplicate applications will result in automatic exclusion of all applications.

##### **4.4.2 *Limit on the number of grants***

###### **4.4.2.1 *Chief Investigators***

Researchers may hold a maximum of two Discovery—Projects grants at any one time as Chief Investigators. At least one of these grants must have more than one Chief Investigator.

###### **4.4.2.2 *Partner Investigators***

Researchers may be named as a Partner Investigator on a maximum of two Discovery—Projects grants at any one time, provide they meet the eligibility criteria for a PI.

###### **4.4.2.3 *ARC Research Fellows***

Researchers who hold an ARC Fellowship and an associated project grant may apply for a second Discovery—Projects grant only if the second grant involves collaboration with at least one other Chief Investigator (whether or not the project grant associated with the Fellowship involves collaboration with other Chief Investigators).

###### **4.4.2.4 *Transition from the Large Research Grants Scheme***

Special arrangements have been made for the transition from the former Large Research Grants and Research Fellowships Scheme. While the maximum two-grant rule will come into force in 2002, transitional arrangements from the old system into the new will allow researchers to see their existing grants through to their conclusion, even when they are actually over the new limit in 2002 (that is, they hold three ongoing Large Research Grants). After that they will need to adhere to the new two Discovery—Projects grant limit. Alternatively, researchers on or above the new grant limit may roll up existing funding into a new Discovery—Projects grant (refer to Part F *Existing ARC Funding* of the application form).

### 4.4.3 *Building on Large Research Grants*

If applicants wish to apply for a Discovery—Projects grant that builds on existing Large Research Grant(s), ensure that the restructured funding will comply with the maximum two-grant rule in 2002. To ensure that this occurs, if an applicant applies for a Discovery—Projects grant to build the scale of current research, the applicant must relinquish any relevant Large Research Grant funding if the Discovery—Projects application is successful. This policy also ensures that the ARC does not fund the same research via two separate grants.

Examples of building on research—

- If the applicant has **three** Large Research Grants funded for 2002, they may apply for a Discovery—Projects Grant to commence in 2002, and, if the application is successful, the applicant must relinquish at least two of the Large Research Grants.
- If the applicant has **two** Large Research Grants funded for 2002, they may apply for a Discovery—Projects Grant to commence in 2002, and, if successful, the applicant must relinquish at least one of the Large Research Grants.
- If the applicant has **one** Large Research Grant funded for 2002, they may apply for a Discovery—Projects grant to commence in 2002. If the proposed Discovery—Projects grant builds on the research for which the applicant is currently funded from the Large Research Grant, the applicant must relinquish the Large Research grant. If the applicant intends to relinquish the Large Research Grant they would be permitted to apply for two Discovery—Projects grants.

Include a list of all the Large Research Grants that will be relinquished if the Discovery—Projects application is successful. Ensure that all Chief Investigators and Partner Investigators involved in each of these grants are listed.

### 4.5 Certification

All Chief Investigators and Partner Investigators listed on each of the grants that are to be relinquished must agree to that relinquishment. Each of those investigators **must** sign the relevant page on the form. If all relevant signatures are not obtained, the application will be excluded from further consideration.

ARC Conditions of Grant for Large Research Grants and Research Fellowships stipulate that host institutions require Chief Investigators and Fellows to provide annual progress reports about each ongoing project and Fellowship by 31 March each year. In addition, host institutions are required to provide final reports for Large Research Grants and Research Fellowships within six months of their completion.

If applicants are applying to roll up existing Large Research Grant funding into a new Discovery—Projects grant, the application will **not** be considered if any of the named applicants have failed to submit any progress or final reports relating to Large Research Grants and/or Research Fellowships as required.

Proformas for these reports are available from the ARC web site ([www.arc.gov.au](http://www.arc.gov.au)).

Please forward any outstanding reports at the time of application.

### 4.6 Cross scheme eligibility

If a funding request for any project, salary or equipment is being submitted to any other funding body, each application must be cross-referenced. Applicants must indicate the level of funding

obtained, or being sought, from all other schemes and must list all existing research funding from all sources. If these processes are not observed, the Discovery—Projects application will be excluded.

The ARC may liaise with other funding agencies to discuss any overlap between applications in order to avoid duplication of funding.

#### **4.6.1 Funding under the ARC or the NHMRC**

In some instances, it may not be clear whether an application is more appropriately considered by the ARC or the NHMRC. In these cases, the applicant should forward a two-page summary outlining the proposal through their institution's Research Office to the ARC by 31 January 2001. A committee comprising representatives from the NHMRC and the ARC will use the summary to decide which agency is more appropriate for the application. Each applicant will be advised of the decision approximately two weeks after the due date for such requests.

If the applicant fails to meet the above deadline, he/she must submit cross-referenced applications, using the same title, to both the ARC and the NHMRC and must declare the submission on the ARC application form. The ARC will then consider which is the more appropriate granting agency. The applicant will be advised in mid-April, after which the proposal will proceed through only one granting agency.

If an application has potential clinical overlap and neither of the above processes are observed, the application will be excluded, regardless of whether or not it falls under the aegis of the ARC.

#### **4.6.2 Funding under Linkage—Infrastructure (Equipment and Facilities)**

Linkage—Infrastructure (Equipment and Facilities) encourages institutions to develop collaborative arrangements across the higher education sector as a whole and with organisations outside the sector. These grants are intended primarily to support large-scale cooperative initiatives involving two or more institutions. If funding is sought for major equipment under this scheme, the minimum level of support sought from the ARC must be \$100,000. In the case in which funding for an item of equipment of more than \$100,000 is made under Discovery—Projects, applicants must lodge a concurrent application for Linkage—Infrastructure (Equipment and Facilities). Further information about Linkage—Infrastructure (Equipment and Facilities) can be found on the ARC web site ([www.arc.gov.au](http://www.arc.gov.au)).

#### **4.7 Early Career Researchers**

The ARC has identified funds within Discovery—Projects specifically for Early Career Researchers (ECRs) applying individually or in collaboration with other ECRs for Research Grant support and/or APDs.

An ECR is defined as one who is currently within his/her first five years of academic or other research-related employment, allowing for uninterrupted and stable research development, following completion of postgraduate research training.

Under Discovery—Projects ECRs may apply for—

- salary costs (as an APD), and/or
- a Research Grant.

Applicants who apply for an APD but not a Research Grant must demonstrate how their research will be supported.

ECRs may apply via two routes—

- **Option 1**, as a single investigator or in collaboration with other ECRs (an ECR application)

OR

- **Option 2**, in collaboration with one or more experienced Chief Investigators (a normal application).

Option 1 applications will be considered separately from mainstream applications. To be eligible to apply under Option 1, all investigators (if there is more than one) on the single application must meet the criteria for an ECR. Option 2 applicants will be assessed along with mainstream applications. ECRs may apply via both routes only if they are applying for different projects.

Limits on number of applications for ECRs is the same as for all other researchers.

The assessment criteria and processes for Fellowship and Research Grant applications detailed at paragraph 6.1 also apply to ECR applicants.

## 5 Application process

As the application is the prime source of information available to the selection committee, applicants must submit their projects as mature research plans ready for implementation. The application must contain all the information necessary for assessment of the project without the need for further written or oral explanation, or reference to additional documentation, including the World Wide Web, unless requested by the selection committee. All details in the application, particularly concerning any successful grants, must be current.

Applications under Discovery—Projects consist of three parts—

- |   |                          |  |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| 1 | Application form         | to be completed in Grant Application Management System (GAMS) or in paper format |
| 2 | Additional text          | Section B10 and Part E of the application form                                   |
| 3 | Supporting documentation | Section D2 of the application form   |

It is the responsibility of the administering institution to obtain signatures of all participants named at Part B of the application form. These signatures are to be retained by the administering institution who must provide these certifications if requested. A proforma is available for this purpose on the ARC web site ([www.arc.gov.au](http://www.arc.gov.au)).

### 5.1 Submission of applications

#### 5.1.1 *Closing date for applications*

Applications for Discovery-Projects must be received by the ARC by close of business (AEST) **Friday 16 March 2001**. Replacement pages or late additional pages will not be accepted after submission. Applications received after close of business (AEST) 16 March 2001 will not be accepted.

#### 5.1.2 *How to submit applications*

Applicants applying through an institution should submit their applications through the research office of the administering institution by the institution's closing date. Applicants should check the preferred method with the research office. Applicants/institutions have the following two options:

**(1) Applicant entry of summary information directly into GAMS**

The GAMS system has been developed by the ARC to capture electronic summary information via the World Wide Web. Applicants may enter their data directly into GAMS, validate, print and then forward their completed paper applications to their university research office. The research offices will administer access to the GAMS system by issuing GAMS User IDs and passwords to applicants. On the ARC closing date, the research office will submit both the GAMS summary data and the full paper application to the ARC.

**(2) Applicant completes RTF, forwards to the Institution Research Office for data entry into GAMS**

Applicants complete an RTF template (available from [www.arc.gov.au](http://www.arc.gov.au)) of the application form, print and forward to the institution's research office. The research office will re-enter all mandatory data into the GAMS system, validate and submit both GAMS mandatory data and the full paper application to the ARC by the closing date.

Private researchers should submit applications directly to the ARC by **16 March 2001**.

Research Offices should send applications—

by **mail**, to

Director  
Programme Management Section  
Australian Research Council  
GPO Box 9880  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

by **courier**, to

Director  
Programme Management Section  
Australian Research Council  
AGSO Building  
cnr Jerrabomberra Drive and Hindmarsh  
Avenue  
SYMONSTON ACT 2609

**5.2 Number of copies**

An original and **one identical** copy only are required. The application must be clipped with NAL clips, not stapled, and submitted in the following order—

- 1 application form
- 2 additional text
- 3 supporting documentation.

**5.3 Application format**

All documents must be written in English and must comply strictly with the format and submission requirements.

All pages should be in black type, 12 point font size on white A4 paper, printed on one side only and unbound, with at least 2 cm margins on each side. As applications are scanned electronically, applicants must use a highly-legible font type, such as Arial, Courier, Palatino, Times New Roman and Helvetica. Variants such as mathematical typesetting languages may also be used. References may be reproduced in 10 point font size. Colour graphs or colour photographs may be included but they will be reproduced in black and white.

The pages of the additional text and supporting documentation must be numbered consecutively starting from page one of the additional text.

## 5.4 Application form and instructions to applicants

Applicants must use the application form available from the institution's Research Office or from the World Wide Web at [www.arc.gov.au](http://www.arc.gov.au).

The application form is organised into six modules—

- Part A Administrative summary
- Part B Personnel
- Part C Project cost
- Part D Research support
- Part E Project description
- Part F Existing ARC funding.

Applicants should note that a separate document, *Discovery—Projects Instructions to Applicants for Funding Commencing in 2002*, is available from [www.arc.gov.au](http://www.arc.gov.au) to assist in preparing applications.

## 6 Selection and approval process

### 6.1 Selection criteria

#### 6.1.1 *Projects*

The primary assessment criteria for projects are—

- Investigator(s) (40%)
- Project content
  - significance and innovation (30%)
  - approach (20%), and
  - national benefit (10%)

#### ***Investigator(s)***

- track record relative to opportunities

#### ***Project Content***

##### **Significance and innovation**

- does the research address an important problem?
- how will the anticipated outcomes advance the knowledge base of the discipline?
- are the project aims and concepts novel and innovative?
- will new methodologies or technologies be developed?

##### **Approach**

- are the conceptual framework, design, methods and analyses adequately developed, well integrated and appropriate to the aims of the project?

##### **National benefit**

- what is the potential of the research project to result in economic and/or social benefits for Australia from the expected results and outcomes of the project?

### 6.1.2 *Fellowship(s)*

The primary assessment criteria for Fellowships is the track record of individual applicants relative to opportunities. Fellowship applicants must also provide details, in the text of their application (at Section B10.6), of (a) their contribution to the project, and (b) the research environment of their host institution.

## 6.2 Selection procedure

Assessment of applications is undertaken by one or more Expert Advisory Committees, which may:

- assign independent readers/assessors to review the applications
- seek applicants' comments on assessors' reports
- rank each application relative to the others on the basis of the application, the assessors' reports and applicants' response to these assessments
- assess and recommend budgets
- prepare funding recommendations that are submitted to the ARC for endorsement and then to the Minister for approval.

Each application not initially excluded will be assessed by two Australian readers and one international expert assessor. There will be small groups of readers for each discipline. Readers will cover the range of ARC programmes.

The ARC has procedures for declaring conflicts of interest and for members to withdraw from considering particular applications. Readers for each discipline grouping will be drawn from a range of institutions to avoid potential conflict of interest problems.

Applicants may name any person whom they do not wish to assess the application. Detailed written justification, which will be considered by the relevant Expert Advisory Committee, must be submitted through the institution's research office, in a separate letter, and it **must not** accompany the application. The letter must be received by the closing date for applications and be sent to

Director  
Programme Management Section  
Australian Research Council  
GPO Box 9880  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

The Expert Advisory Committee will consider the justification put forward by an applicant to exclude any person as an assessor. However, the Committee reserves to itself the discretion not to give effect to an applicant's request.

### 6.2.1 *Assessment*

*Step 1* Exclusion of ineligible applications by the Expert Advisory Committee which may take place at any time during the selection process. Applications which contravene the guidelines in any way will be excluded, for instance:

- failing to submit the application through the appropriate Research Office/Chief Executive Officer for certification
- not meeting the funding threshold when inappropriate budget items are removed
- not meeting the eligibility criteria for a Chief Investigator or Partner Investigator
- exceeding the limits on the number of applications permissible

- not following procedures for ARC/NHMRC coordination
- providing incomplete or misleading information
- designating the application as ‘commercial-in-confidence’.

*Step 2* The Expert Advisory Committee will assign two Australian based readers and one international expert assessor to all remaining applications. Applications will then be sent for peer review. The readers and assessors will be asked to assess the project against the selection criteria and their reports must include written comment.

*Step 3* The readers and assessors’ textual comments will be provided to the applicant allowing the opportunity for a one-page rejoinder to the comments. To ensure impartiality, the readers and assessors’ names are not provided to the applicant. Although every effort will be made to obtain three assessments, the ARC reserves the right to make decisions based solely on expert assessment by the Expert Advisory Committee. Applicants have 2 weeks to submit a response to the ARC.

*Step 4* At the selection meeting, the Expert Advisory Committees rank the applications, taking into account readers and assessors’ reports and rejoinders from applicants. The Committee may make final checks on eligibility. A list of projects recommended for funding will then be prepared and submitted to the ARC for endorsement.

*Step 5* A recommendation from the ARC is sent to the Minister for his/her consideration. The Minister determines which applications will be offered funding.

### 6.3 Discovery—Projects cycle 2001

Month	Year	Event
31 January	2001	Due date for submission of two-page summaries relating to ARC/NHMRC overlap  Due date for eligibility exemptions for Fellowships
<b>16 March</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>Closing date for applications</b> <b>NOTE</b> Each institution may set its own closing date. Please consult with the institution’s research office.
27 March – 25 April	2001	Initial exclusion of ineligible applications. Applications assigned to readers and international expert assessors
1 June	2001	Due date for receipt of assessments
Early-mid July	2001	Assessments sent to applicants for written rejoinder
23 July	2001	Due date for applicants’ one-page rejoinders
August	2001	Expert Advisory Committees to review assessments and rejoinders

September	2001	Recommendations to the Minister for approval, announcement of Discovery—Projects grants and advice to applicants
28 days following date of advice to applicants	2001	Closing date for appeals
4-6 weeks after closing date for appeals		Appeals are considered and applicants advised

## 6.4 Offer of grant

Following the Minister’s approval, the ARC will inform the successful administering institution in a letter of offer that will indicate the funding to be provided and will include any special conditions.

A project may not begin, nor grant funds be expended, until the administering institution and each collaborating institution have entered into a written agreement. The agreement must cover the role of the Institutions in the project including—

- contributions by the institutions
- payment of salaries for ARC Fellows
- intellectual property arrangements
- an undertaking by the institutions to abide by the Conditions of Grant

## 6.5 Conditions of grant

Applicants should familiarise themselves with the Conditions of Grant. These will be available on the ARC website ([www.arc.gov.au](http://www.arc.gov.au)).

The grantee must accept the Conditions of Grant and the administering institution must sign the Conditions of Grant before grant payments can be made.

### 6.5.1 Commencement of projects

Projects must be commenced by 31 October in the first year of the grant. Failure to do so will result in termination of funding.

## 7 Appeals process

Appeals will be considered only against process issues and not against committee decisions or assessor ratings and comments. Appeals must be made on the appeals form available from the ARC website ([www.arc.gov.au](http://www.arc.gov.au)).

The form must be lodged through the institution’s Research Office and be received, **within 28 days** of the date on the letter notifying the outcome of applications, to:

The Appeals Officer  
Australian Research Council  
GPO Box 9880  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

## 8 Grant administration

### 8.1 Reporting requirements

Institutions are required to submit these documents to the ARC—

- an **Exceptions Report** on grants that have financial exceptions, by 1 November in the calendar year for which they were granted
- an **End-of-year Report** on the expenditure of grant funds, by 31 March in the year following the calendar year for which they were granted
- a **Progress Report** on the project, by 31 March in the year following the calendar year for which funds were granted
- a **Final Report** on the project, within six months of the completion of the grant
- an **Audited Financial Statement**, by 30 June of the year following the year of the grant, in accordance with the appropriate Act.

The ARC reserves the right to suspend payment of further instalments of any current grant until the appropriate reports have been received and assessed as satisfactory.

#### 8.1.1 *Failure to provide reports*

Where an institution fails to submit satisfactory reports, as required, the Minister may determine that funds have not been used in accordance with conditions applicable to the grant, and that all or part of the grant must be repaid. In this case, the ARC may withhold the remainder of the institution's payments under the Programme for the current year or initiate recovery of grant money.

### 8.2 Financial management — payments

Discovery—Projects operates on a calendar year basis. Subject to appropriations, payment of funds will be made to institutions in regular instalments, in accordance with approved payment arrangements made under the appropriate Act. Funds must be used only for purposes approved under Discovery—Projects, otherwise they must be returned through the usual payments system.

### 8.3 Privacy of individuals

Documents containing personal information are handled and protected in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy Act 1988*, which sets standards for the collection, storage, use and disclosure of, and access to, personal information. Personal information is disclosed only with permission of the individual to whom it relates or where the Act allows.

### 8.4 Confidentiality

Information contained in applications is regarded as confidential unless otherwise stated and will be received and treated as confidential by the ARC, institutions and assessors.

### 8.5 Intellectual property

The institution must adhere to an intellectual property policy, approved by the institution's governing body, which has as one of its aims the maximisation of national benefits arising from research.

## 8.6 Incomplete or misleading information

If an application is incomplete or contains information that is considered misleading, it will be excluded from any further consideration for funding.

If the ARC believes that omissions or inclusion of misleading information are intentional, or if there is evidence of malpractice, the ARC will refer the matter for appropriate legal advice. The Commonwealth Government is committed to protecting its revenue, expenditure and property from any attempt, either by members of the public, contractors, sub-contractors, agents, intermediaries or its own employees to gain financial or other benefits by deceit.

Examples of malpractice include, but are not restricted to—

- providing fictitious track records
- falsifying claims in publications records (such as describing a paper as accepted for publication when it has only been submitted).

## 8.7 Contact points

For further information, the institution's Research Office should be contacted in the first instance.

Enquiries about Discovery—Projects may be addressed to—

Director  
Programme Management Section  
Australian Research Council  
GPO Box 9880  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Fax: 02 6284 6638

Web [www.arc.gov.au](http://www.arc.gov.au)

# APPENDIX 1

## Applicant eligibility and selection criteria for each type of Research Fellowship

### Australian Postdoctoral Fellowship (APD)

#### Tenure details and support entitlements

There are two options for APD Fellowships—

- 100 per cent salary from the ARC for three years
- 75 per cent salary from the ARC and 25 per cent from the host university over four years (research and teaching option).

The four-year research and teaching option was introduced in 1999 and will continue into 2002. The Commonwealth contribution will be 75 per cent of the standard annual amount. In view of resource implications, any intending applicant must discuss the feasibility of this option with his/her Head of Department. Tenure will be continued, provided the ARC receives satisfactory annual progress reports, but will not be extended.

For each APD awarded, a sum in the range of Level A on the Academic Salary Scale will be provided by the Commonwealth as a contribution towards the salary of the Fellow. Remuneration levels are reviewed each year.

#### Eligibility

Australian and overseas researchers may apply for an APD to commence in 2002 if—

- they have been awarded a PhD since 1 March 1998, or
- they have not yet submitted their PhD thesis but are due to do so before the end of 2001.

If an APD Fellowship offer is made, it will be contingent upon receiving official confirmation that the thesis has been submitted by 31 December 2001. An APD Fellowship cannot be taken up until formal advice is received that the PhD thesis has been accepted, within a maximum time limit of six months, that is, by 30 June 2002. If these conditions have not been satisfied, the offer will be withdrawn.

APD Fellowships are categorised as training awards and, as such, are tenable at any eligible institution, the IAS at the Australian National University or at research organisations outside the higher education sector that are funded primarily for research from State or Commonwealth Government sources such as the Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO), Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), Australian Geological Survey Organisation (AGSO), State Research and Development (R&D) organisations and NHMRC block-funded institutions.

APD Fellowships must commence in the first year of the grant.

**Please note** APD Fellows are not eligible to apply for a second APD. However, they may apply for an ARF/QEII in the final year of their Research Fellowship.

## Eligibility exemption

Please refer to the information at paragraph 4.3.4 of these guidelines.

## Selection

The ARC may give preference to applicants who intend to move to an institution other than the one where their PhD was obtained, in order to take up the Fellowship, and/or who have had research experience at more than one institution. Applicants should provide a justification of their choice of institution, particularly if no change of institution is planned.

In this category, the ARC may give preference to Australian citizens and permanent residents. Overseas applicants will need to demonstrate a higher level of performance than their competitors or be able to offer special expertise, extensive skills or exceptionally high performance levels not available locally and of benefit to Australian research.

## Australian Research Fellowship/Queen Elizabeth II Fellowship (ARF/QEII)

### Tenure details and support entitlements

ARF/QEII Fellowships have a standard tenure of five years. A sum in the range of Levels B or C on the Academic Salary Scale will be provided by the Commonwealth as a contribution towards the salary of the Fellow.

### Eligibility

- Applicants must have an excellent academic record and have been awarded a PhD.
- At the time of application, applicants should have more than three years, but not more than eight years, professional experience since the award of their PhD unless they are a current ARC APD in the final year of their Fellowship.
- ARFs are not tenable at research organisations outside the higher education sector that are funded primarily for research from State or Commonwealth Government sources such as the Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO), Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), Australian Geological Survey Organisation (AGSO), State Research and Development (R&D) organisations and NHMRC block-funded institutions. Details regarding the Institute of Advanced Studies (IAS) will be released in a further appendix.
- QEII Fellowships are categorised as training awards and, as such, are tenable at any eligible institution, the IAS at the Australian National University or at research organisations outside the higher education sector that are funded primarily for research from State or Commonwealth Government sources such as the Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO), Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), Australian Geological Survey Organisation (AGSO), State Research and Development (R&D) organisations and NHMRC block-funded institutions.

**Please note** Fellows are not eligible to apply for a second ARF or a second QEII Fellowship, or to hold an ARF after a QEII Fellowship, or vice versa. They are, however, eligible to apply for an APF.

## Eligibility exemption

Please refer to the information at paragraph 4.3.4 of these guidelines.

## Selection

Preference may be given to Australian citizens and permanent residents in the ARF category. Overseas applicants will need to demonstrate a higher level of performance than their competitors or be able to offer special expertise, extensive skills or exceptionally high performance levels not available locally and of benefit to Australian research. The competition for QEII Fellowships is open.

The ARC may give preference to applicants who intend to move to an institution other than the one where their PhD was obtained, in order to take up the Fellowship, and/or who have had research experience at more than one institution. Applicants should provide a justification of their choice of institution, particularly if no change of institution is planned.

## Australian Professorial Fellowship (APF)

### Tenure details and support entitlements

APFs have a standard tenure of five years. Tenure will be continued, provided ARC receives satisfactory annual progress reports, but will not be extended. For each APF, a sum in the range of Levels D or E on the Academic Salary Scale will be provided by the Commonwealth as a contribution towards the salary of the Fellow.

### Eligibility

- Applicants must have more than eight years' professional experience since the award of their PhD (unless a current ARF/QEII in last year of Fellowship) and who are either;
  - Australian based researchers who have an internationally competitive research record, or
  - extremely high-profile expatriate Australian, or non-Australian, researchers who wish to pursue their research in Australia.
- Australian APFs are not tenable at research organisations outside the higher education sector that are funded primarily for research from State or Commonwealth Government sources such as the Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO), Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), Australian Geological Survey Organisation (AGSO), State Research and Development (R&D) organisations and NHMRC block-funded institutions. Details regarding the Institute of Advanced Studies (IAS) will be released in a further appendix.

### Eligibility exemption

Please refer to the information at paragraph 4.3.4 of these guidelines.

## Selection

Preference for APFs may be given to Australian citizens and permanent residents. Non-resident, non-Australian citizen applicants will need to demonstrate a higher level of performance than their competitors or be able to offer special expertise, extensive skills or exceptionally high performance levels not available locally and of benefit to Australian research.

The ARC may give preference to applicants who intend to move to an institution other than the one where their PhD was obtained, in order to take up the Fellowship, and/or who have had research experience at more than one institution. Applicants should provide a justification of their choice of institution, particularly if no change of institution is planned.