



Message from the General Manager

Welcome to *ERA News*. In this edition, you can find out what is happening with the ERA trial, which officially opened for submission to the Cluster One on 1 June.

I am pleased to say that the 2009 trial of Cluster One—Physical Chemical and Earth Sciences (PCE)—is going well with 27 institutions having submitted some or all of their data and 20 institutions verifying their submissions.

The current trial is important to ensure that ERA is a robust research evaluation system. The outcomes of the trial will inform the full ERA process in 2010.

You can also find out about a tender process we are undertaking to find suitable service providers to undertake a range of analyses, including the identification, development and testing of indicators of research quality and activity.

While this edition of *ERA News* is lighter than our last, the information is just as important and I hope you enjoy reading it.

“There is just one week left to submit, verify, finalise and certify your Cluster One trial submissions”

As mentioned previously, the ERA team and I appreciate feedback, so you can let us know what you think by emailing era@arc.gov.au or phoning 02 6287 6755.

I would like to remind institutions that there is just one week left to submit, verify, finalise and certify your Cluster One trial submissions before the submission period concludes on Friday 3 July. Congratulations to all institutions who have submitted their data for Cluster One.

The Cluster Two—Humanities and Creative Arts (HCA)—submission process will begin in August.

Thank you for your participation.

Leanne Harvey

Outreach

The ERA Outreach team are always available to help you and your university better understand ERA.

If you would like someone from the ERA team to give a presentation at your university, please email liz.visher@arc.gov.au or phone 02 6287 6665.

2009 trials

We have been assisting institutions with submitting their Physical, Chemical and Earth Sciences (PCE) data into the System to Evaluate the Excellence of Research (SEER).

We have also been responding to Cluster Two—Humanities and Creative Arts (HCA)—questions as institutions prepare for the trial of Cluster Two. Peer review will be used for all Field of Research (FoR) codes within Cluster Two. If a four-digit code exceeds the minimum threshold of 20 (equivalent journal articles) outputs or more it will be evaluated.

Institutions have been asked to identify 20 per cent of those outputs for the purposes of peer review. The 20 per cent should be determined on the total number of outputs not the weighted number. For four-digit codes, which do not reach the threshold of 20 (equivalent journal articles) outputs, institutions are also asked to identify 20 per cent of outputs for the purposes of peer review.

There is no restriction on the type of outputs eligible in ERA which might be submitted for peer review in the Cluster Two trial but there is an advantage, however, in testing peer review for a range of output types.

I encourage institutions to take the opportunity of the trial to include a range of eligible output types in their submission for peer review for the Cluster Two 2009 trial.

Testing of the procedures that allow the ARC to link to institutional repositories for the peer review process has begun. This is necessary to ensure the ARC has access to the repositories for the Cluster Two evaluation process.

ERA Liaison Officers were recently emailed updates to the *ERA–SEER Technical Specifications* and *ERA–SEER Technology Pack*; these updates can all be found on our website www.arc.gov.au > *research excellence*.

The SEER FAQ page at www.arc.gov.au > *research excellence* > *SEER* is an important source of information for ERA Liaison Officers. We will continue to update this page as required.

Additional key documents, including the *ERA–SEER Business Rules for PCE Submissions* and *ERA–SEER Application Help* are also being updated regularly.

Tender process

On 17 June, we released a request for tender seeking suitable service providers to undertake a range of analyses, including the identification, development and testing of indicators of research quality and activity. The resulting project will enable us to set up a fully integrated analytical database to model and test the range of ERA indicators.

The tender reference is ATM 45—Analysis, advice and integration of Excellence in Research for Australia indicator data. It is available on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au > *About ARC* > *Tenders & Contracts*.

Please note

We have been scrutinising ERA Cluster One submissions as they are lodged in SEER prior to the close of the submission process. We have identified some cases where institutions have inadvertently duplicated indexed journal articles, based on the unique identifier provided by Scopus. We have already contacted those institutions whose submissions have been certified with these duplications; however, we ask that institutions check their submissions to ensure that these duplicates don't occur before completing the certification process.

Your questions

We have had a number of questions about the requirement for 20 per cent of all outputs to be nominated for peer review in Cluster Two. The following points should be noted:

1. The 20 per cent is calculated from the total number of research outputs that are eligible for peer review—e.g. Field of Research (FoR) discipline codes 18 to 22 allow conference papers to form part of the submission but they are not eligible for peer review; the 20 per cent should be derived from the total number of research outputs excluding conference papers.
2. Peer review in ERA is undertaken on a representative sample of outputs rather than at the level of the individual outputs. For this reason, research outputs are nominated for peer review at the output level rather than the FoR level. Where an output is assigned to two or more FoR codes, it is not possible for institutions to choose for peer review to occur within one FoR but not another.
3. The ARC considers the 20 per cent figure as a guide. Institutions should not be concerned that the reassignment process for multidisciplinary research outputs will cause them to exceed the 20 per cent target.
4. Institutions should also nominate research outputs in low volume disciplines for peer review as these will contribute to evaluations made at the two-digit FoR level.

If you have a question about ERA, please email era@arc.gov.au or phone **02 6287 6755** and we will be happy to help you.