



Australian Government
Australian Research Council

An Update on the Australian Research Council Changes, Priorities etc.

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**Presentation available at
http://www.arc.gov.au/media/ARC_Presentations.htm**



ARC Strategic Objectives

- To support excellence in **research**
- To build Australia's research **capacity**
- To provide informed high quality **policy** advice to government
- To enhance research outcomes through effective **evaluation**
- To raise the **profile** of Australia's research effort and be an effective advocate for its benefits
- But only have **9-10%** of Australia's research money for all research areas except clinical medical and dental
- Rural research supported elsewhere by about **4%** of Australian research funds





National Competitive Grants Program

(FY 08/09 \$596M)

Discovery (DP, DIRD, Future Fellows, Aust. Laureate Fellows)

Excellent research by individuals and teams

(FY \$333M)

Linkage (LP, LIEF)

Collaborative research and infrastructure use - national & international

(FY \$169M)

Centres

(Centres and Research Networks)

National centres of research excellence

(FY \$94M)



Major ARC Schemes



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- **Discovery Projects** –
 - excellent fundamental research by individuals and teams
 - **Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development** –
 - develop research expertise of indigenous Australians
 - **Australian Laureate Fellows** -
 - for outstanding researchers to stay in or return to Oz
 - **Future Fellows** –
 - rewards best mid-career Australian researchers and outstanding international researchers
-
- **Linkage Projects** –
 - collaborative research between universities and industry/government/community
 - **Centres of Excellence** – large research teams conducting focussed, sustained investigations on important challenging problems
 - **Linkage infrastructure, equipment and facilities (LIEF)** –
 - Collaboration across unis & partner orgs to fund major infrastructure

National Research Priorities



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An Environmentally Sustainable Australia

- *Transforming the way we utilise our land, water, mineral and energy resources through a better understanding of human and environmental systems and the use of new technologies*

Promoting and Maintaining Good Health

- *Promoting good health and well being for all Australians*

Frontier Technologies for Building and Transforming Australian Industries

- *Stimulating the growth of world-class Australian industries using innovative technologies developed from cutting-edge research*

Safeguarding Australia

- *Safeguarding Australia from terrorism, crime, invasive diseases and pests, strengthening our understanding of Australia's place in the region and the world, and securing our infrastructure, particularly with respect to our digital systems*

Desirables: Minister Carr



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- Applications build on university's research strengths, think strategically, play to strengths
- Collaboration needed between universities and business and public sector research agencies
- Develop PhDs, support research students
- Collaborate across universities especially international collaboration by researchers
- Collaboration across natural and human sciences

The Future



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- **ARC consolidating to fewer, larger schemes with maximum flexibility**
 - Will no longer have *ARC Networks scheme*
 - No longer have *Social Sciences Collaboration scheme & ARC International Fellowships scheme* dropped
- **Increased focus on outcomes**
 - Reporting of outcomes of prior grant funding
 - Excellence in Research in Australia evaluation
- **Federal budget in May – World financial crisis????**

2008-09 ARC Changes



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- **International collaboration**
 - *Discovery Projects* eg new international objective
- **New ways of building research capacity – 2008 for 2009**
 - *Future Fellows*
 - *Australian Laureate Fellows*
- **Enhancing research of Indigenous scholars:**
 - *Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development* scheme
 - New fellowship
 - *AIATSIS* added as an eligible organization
- **Centres likely to have a new round in 2009**
- ***Evaluation changes - ERA***

Changes to *Discovery Scheme* in 2009 for 2010



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- **New ‘International Collaboration Awards’**
 - 1 month minimum to 6 months maximum
 - For Oz CIs/Fellows & Overseas PIs to work together on project
 - Covers travel and subsistence up to \$40,000 - prorata
- **Travel for overseas PIs or other research personnel if directly justified against doing the project -**
 - 1 per annum return economy to and from Oz to work on project
- **Always have had:**
 - PhD stipends for overseas candidates
 - Fellows as overseas candidates - APDs, ARFs/QE11s/ APFs
 - PIs living overseas (but can now request travel to & from Oz)
- **AIATSIS – eligible Administering Organisation**



Successful Currently Held Rural and Regional Discovery Projects

- 60% are Social, Behavioural and Economic Sciences
- 30% are Humanities and Creative Arts
- Cover a range of areas:
 - Rural women
 - Water/sustainability, land use
 - Education, workforce/labour, migration
 - Economic development, local economies,
 - Governance, public policy

Linkage Projects



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To support *collaborative research*

- On issues of benefit to *regional and rural communities* - ARC to give about 20% of *Linkage Project* funding

Rural and Regional Proposals

- Partner Organisation is located, and/or operating, in a rural or regional community;
- A rural or regional community is involved in identifying the problem or issue to be addressed;
- A rural or regional community is involved in conducting the research;
- There is evidence of an existing relationship between the researchers and the rural or regional community; and/or
- Researchers with a strong track record in conducting research of benefit to rural or regional communities are involved.

Linkage Projects 2008/09/10

Changes to Funding Rules



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- Overseas higher education organisations eligible as Partner Organisations - need at least 1 Australian Partner Organisation
 - Could always have overseas organisations as partners
- Partner orgs – ‘matching’ contribution requirements
- Citizenship/residency requirements for APA-I (PhD scholarships) removed for 2008
- CIs, PIs, APDIs & research support personnel can have funds for domestic & international travel for the project
- \$ 2m/year Upper limit to each proposal in exceptional cases (LPs normally \$500K total maximum)
- AIATSIS – eligible Administering Organisation



Linkage Projects 2009 Rd 1



■ Partner Organization Contribution by sector

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| ■ Commonwealth Government | 5% |
| ■ State & Local Government | 29% |
| ■ International | 1% |
| ■ Nonprofit Australian | 12% |
| ■ Nonprofit International | 4% |
| ■ Private company Australian | 33% |
| ■ International company Australian | 18% |

Linkage Projects

Current Rural & Regional Successful Applications



- Social, Behavioural, & Economic Sciences 35%
- Biological Sciences & Biotechnology 34%
- Engineering & Environmental Sciences 28%
- Humanities & Creative Arts 9%
- Physics, Chemistry, & Earth Sciences 9%
- Mathematics & Information Sciences 8%

Future Fellowships



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- \$844m scheme – 2009-2013 – Can apply twice in the period
- 200, 4-year fellowships over next 5 years = 1000
- Mid-career researchers (5-15 years post-PhD)
- Open to Australian and international researchers- usually must reside predominantly in Australia
- Salaries up to \$140K (3 levels) + \$50K pa for infrastructure, equipment, travel & relocation costs directly related to the research
- Includes selection criteria 'Strategic Alignment' & 'Collaboration'.
 - List of Research Strengths submitted by Administering Org.
 - Candidates must demonstrate capacity to build collaboration across industry and/or research institutions and/or disciplines.

Australian Laureate Fellows



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- Allocate \$239 million over 5 years
- Up to 15 to be awarded
- Each worth around \$3 million
- Most prestigious fellowships (Professor + \$100K)
- National and international applicants
- Emphasis on research leadership & mentoring
 - Funds for 2 postdoctoral and 2 postgraduate researchers and project funding (up to \$300K). Will work with & mentor.
- Opened 2008 for funding 2009.



Discovery Indigenous Researchers' Development



- For applicants of Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, need not have a PhD
- **Success Rate 2009 34.6%, 2008 39%**
- *Most applications from SBE and HCA*
- Salary support to Indigenous Australian researchers and postgraduate research students
- Research Cadetship - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
- Changes in 2009 for 2010
 - Opening of ARC schemes to Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)
 - New Fellowship introduced:
 - *Australian Research Fellows – Indigenous*
 - Not developmental - for 2 or 3 years

ARC Centres of Excellence



- ❑ *Review of ARC Centres of Excellence – 2005 cohort*
 - Eleven Centres reviewed in 2008 and extended.
- ❑ *New Groundwater Centre*

- ❑ *Centres consultation paper*
 - Release delayed

- ❑ *New ARC Centres of Excellence round for funding commencing in 2010 for 3-year cycles*
 - New round for funding commencing in 2010.
 - Applications expected to open mid-2009.
 - Assessment and selection processes to take place into early 2010.
 - Funding to commence from 1 July 2010 for 7 years.

Conclusion



- Opportunities eg *Linkage Program*
 - State & Local Governments, Australian and International Private companies
- Career paths for researchers through
 - *DP Fellows (eg ≤ 3 years; 3-8 years; >8 years), LP Fellows,*
 - *Future Fellows (5-15 years),*
 - *Australian Laureate Fellows*
- Opportunities for groups through new *Centres* round
- Opportunities for international collaboration through *DP Projects, LP Projects, Future Fellows*
- Opportunities for Indigenous researchers
- Early career researchers – sole or with other CIs

Discovery Projects



- Av. duration of funded grants = **Just over 3 years**
- Av. 1st year funds gained: **\$116k = 67% of request**
 - **SBE \$88.9k = 66% of request**
- Av. funds gained for total project = **\$341k in 2009**
- ECR-only applications (ECR target = 15% of 1st year funds):
 - **2009 Overall Success Rate = 15.5%; For SBE = 20%**
 - **% of income overall = 10.2%; For SBE = 12.7%**
- Applications including ECRs
 - **2009 Success Rate Overall = 20%; For SBE = 24%**
- **Average no. assessments per proposal= 5 (2 CoE, 2 Oz Reader, 1 Int)**
 - **SBE Aver. No = 5.08, SD = 0.81**
- **Average no. Chief Investigators per funded grant= 2;**
 - **SBE = Just over 2 (eg 2.35)**

Linkage Projects



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- Av. duration of funded grants = **Just over 3 years**
- Av. 1st year funds gained 2009 Rd1: **\$110k - 71% of request**
 - **SBE \$88.9k: 66% of request**
- Av. funds gained for total project 2009 Rd1= **\$329k in 2009**
- *Average no. of chief investigators per funded grant = **Just under 3 (2.7/2.8); SBE Over 3.33/3.53***
- *Fellowships – Need top project scores and fellow score (TR)*
 - **APAI - 2009 Success Rate 34%/34%: SBE 36%/33%**
 - **APAI_IT (quota of 50)- 2009 Success Rate 74%/91%**
 - **Aust. Postdoc Fellows Industry -2009 Success Rate 43%/52%:
SBE 50%/87%**
 - Av. funding gained by Rural & Regional apps= **38.7%; SBE 36%**