AIATSIS Presentation: Introduction to ARC Schemes

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Presentation available at
http://www.arc.gov.au/media/ARC_Presentations.htm
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ARC Discipline Panels

1. Biological Sciences & Biotechnology (BSB)
2. Engineering & Environmental Science (EE)
3. Humanities & the Creative Arts (HCA)
5. Physics, Chemistry and Earth Sciences (PCE)
6. Social, Behavioural and Economic Sciences (SBE)

ARC does not award research grants in Medical and Dental disciplines – that is the NHMRC
Major ARC Schemes

- Discovery Projects –
  - Excellent fundamental research by individuals and teams
- Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development (DIRD) –
  - Develop research expertise of indigenous Australians
- Australian Laureate Fellows -
  - For outstanding researchers to stay in or return to Oz
- Future Fellows –
  - Rewards the best mid-career Australian researchers and outstanding international researchers

- Linkage Projects –
  - Collaborative research between universities and industry, government, and community organisations
- Centres of Excellence – Large research teams conducting focussed, sustained investigations of important challenging problems
- Linkage infrastructure, equipment and facilities (LIEF) –
  - Collaboration across universities & partner organisations to fund major infrastructure
Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development Scheme (DIRD)

Objectives

- Develop the research expertise of Indigenous Researchers who have not been a Chief Investigator on an ARC project or had an ARC Fellowship;
- Support fundamental research and research training by Indigenous Australian individuals and teams;
- Provide Indigenous Researchers with experience in the preparation of research funding proposals;
- Attract and retain established Indigenous Researchers;
- Expand Australia’s knowledge base & research capability.
DIRD Scheme

- One round per year, closes in May (eg 13th)
- Projects may be funded 1 to 3 years
- Research projects can:
  - (a) Lead to understanding of a particular subject or
  - (b) Meet requirements of a postgraduate research degree
- Minimum funding = $10,000 per calendar year to
  Maximum funding = $200,000, or $400,000 if project includes an Australian Research Fellow-Indigenous

Selection Criteria

- Investigator(s) – track record, capacity 40%
- Proposed project content – significance, approach, national benefit 40%
- Quality of the research environment and/or Mentor and/or Supervisor – support 20%
1. Indigenous Researcher Fellowship (IRF) are for:
   - For researchers at postdoctoral level ($\leq$ 3 years since PhD) to undertake significant research
   - Who have no prior ARC Fellowship or Chief Investigator role (other than DIRD)
   - Awards for 1 or 2 years at 100% or 50% salary
   This year have 5 applications

2. New!! Australian Research Fellowships–Indigenous (ARF-I) are for:
   - For established researchers or postdoctoral researchers with exceptional promise and capacity
   - Who have $\leq$ 8 years professional experience since PhD
   - Can be Chief Investigators or ARC Fellowship holders but cannot fellowship holders in *Discovery* scheme (ARF/QEII and APF)
   - Awards for 2 or 3 years at 100% salary
   Have 6 applications in the first year of application
3. Another 12 applications this year are for CIs conducting projects:

– Need not hold a PhD but must have a completed postgraduate research degree or equivalent
– Currently enrolled postgraduate research degree students may apply for funding and need supervisor associated with the proposal

**DIRD Assessment:**

– By 2 College of Expert members & 2 Oz Readers
– Formula uses selection criteria weights

*****Funding Rules

Currently ongoing projects in *DIRD*

- 45% in Social, Behavioural & Economic Sciences
- 35% in Humanities & Creative Arts
- 15% in Biological Sciences & Biotechnology
- 5% are in Mathematics, Information & Communication

**Project Areas** – Indigenous health, history, education, social issues (eg conflict/violence)

*DIRD* Success Rate:

- 2006: 62.5%, 2007: 71.4%,
- 2008: 39% , 2009: 34.6%
Examples of ongoing DIRD projects

- Solid Kids Solid Schools: conceptualising *bullying* in an Aboriginal context as reported by the Yamaji community

- A qualitative study of barriers to effective infectious and parasitic *disease interventions* in Aboriginal communities

- Digitisation and Indigenous communities: A study of the development of *online collections*. The interface between international institutions & Australian Indigenous communities

- The extent of competition between the native and introduced *herbivores* of Kangaroo Island.

- Evaluation of an instrument to assess the needs of indigenous patients with *cancer*

- Adoption and effective use of *information communication technologies* in Indigenous communities in Australia

- Conditions for success to enhance Aboriginal *education*

- Internecine conflict and *violence* in NSW Aboriginal communities: an historicised assessment of governance and social control
Major ARC grant Schemes

1. **Discovery Projects** – For funding excellent fundamental research by individuals and teams
   - To expand Oz knowledge base & research capability
   - To enhance *scale & focus* of research in National Research Priority Areas
   - To provide *research training* in high quality research environments ie PhDs, Postdocs (≤3 years)
   - To provide *fellowships* to build capacity

1. **Linkage Projects** – for collaborative research with a partner organisation
   - Private sector, industry
   - Private non-profit organisations
   - Government agency
**Discovery Applications**

- One round per year, closes in March (eg 4\textsuperscript{th})
- From $20,000-$500,000
  - On average, get 2/3s of what sought (eg $340,000 total)
- 1 to 5 years, but average funded application is for 3 years
- Can apply for project costs alone, or project costs and PhD costs and Fellowships, or just apply for a Fellowship
- On average, just over 2 Chief Investigators on each proposal
- Success rate is about 20%
  - ECR-only applications = 15-16% success rate
  - Applications with ECRs ($\leq$5 years since PhD) = 20%
- Average no. of assessors is 2 College of Experts, 2 Oz Readers, 1 International Reader $\rightarrow$ ranked total score
- Very small no. awarded at top end of funding & for 5 years for the very top researchers

## Selection Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Discovery</th>
<th>Linkage</th>
<th>Future Fellows</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Researcher Track Record</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Project Significance &amp; Innovation</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Project Quality</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Project Approach</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>• National Benefit</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>• National Research Priority</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Industry Partner Commitment</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Collaboration</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Strategy</td>
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<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Success Rate</strong></td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>35-50%</td>
<td>-%</td>
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Currently ongoing *Discovery Projects on Indigenous research*

- 69% in Humanities and Creative Arts
- 20% in Social, Behavioural and Economic Sciences
- **Research topics include:**
  - Indigenous languages
  - Aboriginal history and art
  - Social issues (eg housing, education and health)

**Funding Rules for Linkage Projects**

**Linkage Projects**

- ARC submission dates 2X a year: November (eg 18), May (eg 13)
- Can apply for project costs alone, or PhD costs alone, or project plus PhD or postdoc (≤3 years) costs
- On average, funded grants are for 3 years (range is 1 to 5 years)
- Normally can apply for $500K total maximum
  - Gain on average 70%
  - Av. funds gained for a total project are $330k
- $2million/year upper limit for a proposal in exceptional cases
- Tiny number given at high end of funding and for 5 years for top researchers
- Average no. of chief investigators per funded grant is 3
- About half of applications are for APAIs/PhD scholarships only - success rate is a third (except in IT, where it is ¾ to 90%)
- Success rate is 40-50%

**Last 7 Rounds:** 36.7%, 35.7%, 42.9%, 46.0%, 47.6%, 42.7%, 49.4%
Currently ongoing **Linkage Projects on Indigenous research**

- 42% in Social, Behavioural and Economic Sciences
- 38% in Humanities and Creative Arts
- Research topics include:
  - Aboriginal land use and management
  - Aboriginal history and culture
  - Social issues (eg housing, education, health, economic development)

**Funding Rules for *Linkage Projects***

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%
Future Fellowships

- $844m scheme – 2009-2013 – Can apply twice in the period
- 200, 4-year fellowships each year for next 5 years = 1000
- Mid-career researchers (5-15 years post-PhD)
- Open to Australian and international researchers
- Salaries up to $140K (3 levels) + $50K pa for some costs
- 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.
- Closed (first time) 16 October 2008
  - Indigenous health and wellbeing is a research priority
Australian Laureate Fellows

- Allocate $239 million over 5 years
- Up to 15 to be awarded each year
- Each worth around $3 million
- Are the most prestigious fellowships (Professor + $100K) and the top of the career path
- National and international applicants
- Emphasis on research leadership & mentoring
  - Funds also 2 postdoctoral and 2 postgraduate researchers and project funding (up to $300K).
- Success rate combining SBE and HCA has most often been about 20% in recent times
- Closed last time on 10 December 2008.
ARC Centres of Excellence

- **2003 Cohort runs out in December 2010**
- **Review of ARC Centres of Excellence – 2005 cohort**
  - Eleven Centres reviewed in 2008 and extended
- **New Groundwater Centre in operation (May 2008)**
- **Centres consultation paper** to be released soon
- **New ARC Centres of Excellence round for funding commencing July 2010 for 7 years**
  - Applications expected to open 3rd quarter 2009.
  - Assessment and selection processes to take place into early 2010 – will be extra competitive.
Conclusion: Opportunities

- For indigenous researchers - *DIRD*
- For indigenous research –
  - a research priority in Future Fellows
  - *Linkage Project* scheme has highest success rates

- Career opportunities for researchers:
  - *DIRD, Discovery, Linkage - PhD scholarships*
  - *DIRD Fellows* – early (postdocs) and mid career
  - *Discovery Project Fellows* – early, mid, and later career
  - *Linkage Project Fellows* – early and mid career
  - *Future Fellows* – mid career
  - *Australian Laureate Fellows* – mid and later career

- International collaboration – *DP & LP Projects, Future Fellows*
- Early career researchers – sole applications or with other CIs in *Discovery Projects*
- For top researcher groups, new *Centres* round
Contacts for schemes

**Discovery Projects or Discovery Indigenous Researchers schemes**
A/Assistant Director, Ms Claudia Grell  
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