



Australian Government
Australian Research Council

**Welcome to the
ARC/NHMRC Research Administrators Seminar
in association with ARMS**

8-9 November 2010

Research



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Australian Research Council

**Welcome by ARC CEO
Professor Margaret Sheil**

Research

RESEARCH in the national interest - enabling the future



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Welcome and overview by the
President of the
Australasian Research Management Society
(ARMS)
Gillian Nicholson

Research

ARMS



The AUSTRALASIAN
RESEARCH MANAGEMENT
SOCIETY

Gillian Nicholson
ARMS President





The Annual ARC / NHMRC Research Administrators Seminar

**Canberra
November 2010**

www.researchmanagement.org.au

ARMS OBJECTIVES



- Strong and effective professional network
- Personal relationships
- Professional standards
- Interface between research and management

www.researchmanagement.org.au

- Standing Committees
- Workshops
- Chapter meetings
- SIG meetings
- Annual conference
- AGM
- Other Events



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Relationships

- Australian Research Council
- National Health and Medical Research Council
- HES – Higher Education Services
- Elsevier
- FASTS
- DIISR
- FEAST



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Special Projects



- Higher Education Services (HES)
- Elsevier
- ACU
- NHMRC

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FOCUS ON

- Building effective relationships between research managers and researchers and organisations supporting the research sector
- Creating and sustaining links across sectors

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Thank you
And
Welcome



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What's new in ARC

NCGP: direction & restructure

Schemes: key information

Research



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NCGP: direction & restructure

Dr David Christie, *Branch Manager*

Dr Liz Jazwinska, *Executive Director*

Dr Mary Kelly, *Director Program Operations*

Research



Discussion Points

- New Strategy & Programs Branch
- NCGP Staff & new contacts
- Communication of Funding Outcomes
- College of Experts 2011 nominations



ARC Strategy & Programs Branch

Strategy & Programs

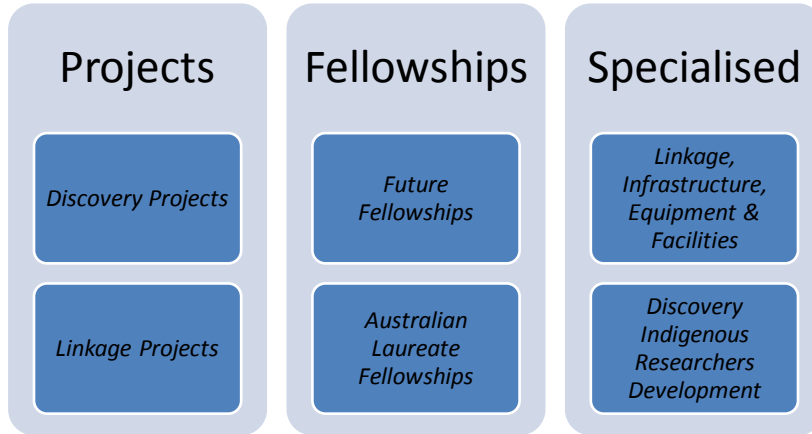
Program Evaluation

Program Operations

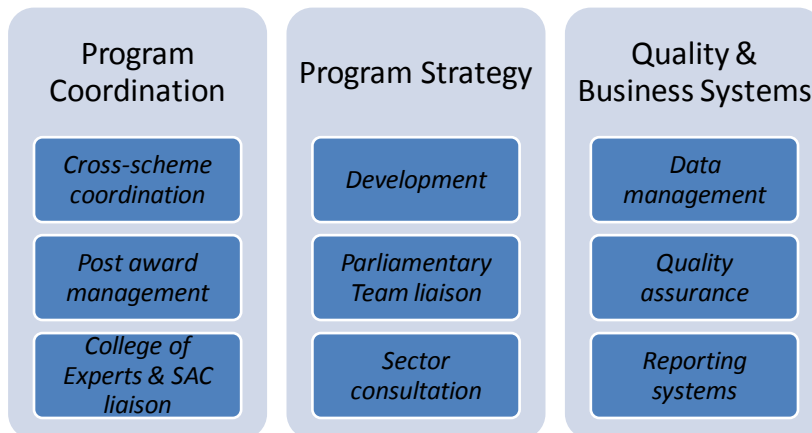
Policy Coordination & Governance



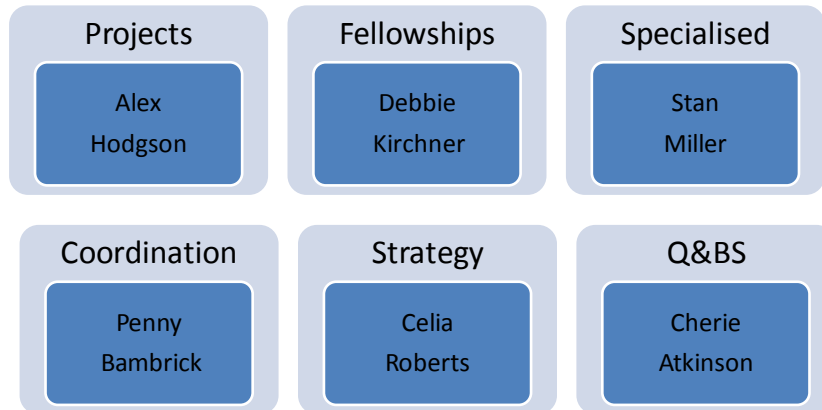
Program Operations



Program Operations



Program Operations



Communication of Funding Outcomes

- Single letter to Vice-Chancellor, copied to DVC(R) and Research Office
- Outcomes Spreadsheet indicating funding outcomes for all proposals submitted
- Letter from the Minister to each successful applicant
- No individual letters for unsuccessful, ineligible or withdrawn Proposals

CoE nominations for 2011

- Nominations closed 5 November
- Selection process will include a referee process
- ARC CEO appoints the College of Experts
- Appointees to be announced in November/December
- Induction session to be held in Canberra for new appointees in December/January

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Schemes: key information

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Discussion Points

- Scheme calendar into 2011
- Changes to scheme documentation
- Common errors in Proposals
- Eligibility Issues
- Scrutiny Committee
- *ARC Linkage Research Training Awards*
- *Linkage Projects* Evaluation



Scheme Calendar 2010/2011

- LP11 Rd2 remains unchanged
- Other schemes may be impacted by outcome of the Consultation Paper
- 'Important Dates' webpage will be updated online through December & January

Changes to scheme documentation

- Funding Rules
- Funding Agreement
- Instructions to Applicants
- Sample Application Form
- FAQs

Common Errors in Proposals

- Incomplete information, e.g. PhD dates, contact details, previous & current grants
- Inconsistent information, e.g. time commitment, Partner contributions
- CI, PI, Fellowship eligibility
- Rejoinders

Eligibility Issues

- Pre-submission Eligibility Exemption Request
- Proposal eligibility is monitored at every stage of the assessment process
- ARC Eligibility Committee meets multiple times during assessment period
- Final recommendation made to the Minister by the CEO

Scrutiny Committee

- Integral part of a rigorous assessment process in addition to management of Conflicts of Interest
- ARC Scrutiny Committee appointed to review assessment of member proposals
- Member proposals are proposals on which an applicant is also a member of the CoE or SAC
- Some SACs specifically exclude current applicants

Linkage Projects Evaluation

Terms of Reference:

- How effective is *Linkage Projects* in facilitating benefits to higher education institutions, researchers and Partner Organisations?
- How effective is *Linkage Projects* in supporting strategic aspirations and operational needs of higher education institutions, researchers and Partner Organisations?

Linkage Projects Evaluation

Activity	Timeframe
Interviews with and submissions from senior university research managers	Completed
Interviews with selected Chief Investigators (CIs)	Completed
Interviews with selected Partner Organisation representatives	Early November 2010
Surveys of 500 CIs and 500 Partner Organisation representatives	Completed
Final report	December 2010

Linkage Projects Evaluation

Outcomes:

- Accountability to stakeholders for program performance
- Program improvements for enhanced outcomes
- Policy development to meet evolving needs
- Promotion of program benefits to decision-makers

ARC Linkage Projects Program

Benefits

- Applying research to real world needs
- Understanding commercial/academic drivers
- Understanding needs and capabilities
- Developing long term strategic relationships

Challenges

- IP sharing and written agreements
- Changes to investigators and strategies
- Budget pressures

Keys to Successful Management of Linkage Projects

- Project Management & Steering Committee
- Agree purpose & scope
- Clarify participant expectations/project outcomes
- Clarify timelines
- Log of Issues/Risks
- Timely communication & reporting
- Completion on time and in budget

Research in Industry Training Awards (RITAs)

- Creating opportunities for young researchers to pursue internationally competitive research careers
- \$23.4 million investment over 6 years
- Up to 200 awards Research Training Awards for postgraduate researchers (2012 -100, 2014 – 100)
- Part of the Clean 21 Initiative
- Focus on emerging green industries and reducing environmental impact of existing industries
- Awards to institutions with research activity in key areas
- Industry partners and students can be identified after award of funding to provide greater certainty to industry partners

Questions & Answers

NCGP@arc.gov.au

ARC-DiscoveryProjects@arc.gov.au

ARC-LinkageProjects@arc.gov.au

ARC-Futurefellowships@arc.gov.au

ARC-Australianlaureatefellowships@arc.gov.au

ARC-LIEF@arc.gov.au

ARC-Centres@arc.gov.au



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The Assessment Process

The new Peer Review process

Prof Richard Coleman, *Executive Director*

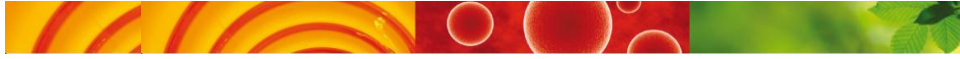
Research

Discussion Points

- Peer Review Consultation Paper
- Where are we going? Timelines
- College of Experts structure and role
- Assessment Issues

Peer Review Consultation Paper

- Released in Sept 2009, 5 week consultation
- Major elements
 - Panel structures
 - Assessor structure (hierarchy and database)
 - Assessment process
- Philosophy – from “expert review informed by peers” to ‘peer review informed by experts’



Elements of a good peer review system

1. Ease the workload of assessors
2. Facilitate the assignment of proposals to the most appropriate assessors (through matching of FOR codes and structured keywords)
3. Provide better support for interdisciplinary applications and applications involving research in emerging areas
4. Improve the quality of the process with the assessments from specialised reviewers receiving the highest weighting
5. Provision of useful & timely feedback for unsuccessful applications
6. Transparency of processes and confidence of researchers

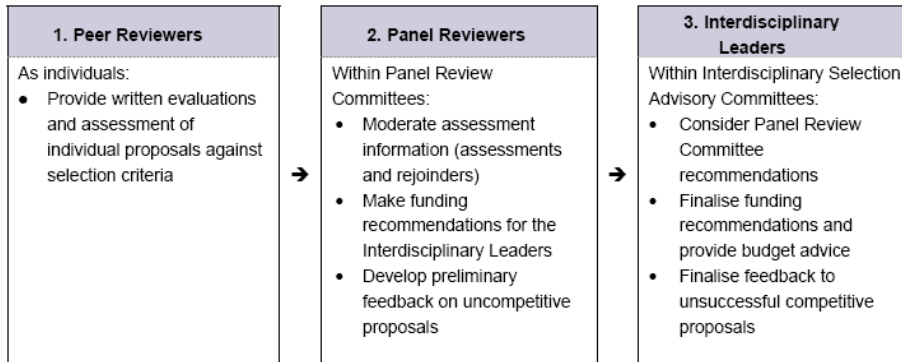


Panel structures

- Three Levels
 - Level 1 (Peer Reviewers)
 - Level 2 (Panel Reviewers)
 - Level 3 (Interdisciplinary Leaders)
- Varies with funding scheme
 - DP – Levels 1-3
 - Laureates, Futures, LP, DIRD – Levels 1,3
 - LIEF – Level 1



Proposed new assessor structure



Assessment of Proposals

- Qualitative assessment (grades (A-E) + comments by specialist assessors); rejoinders (not all schemes)
- Moderation and ordering at Panel Level (based on ~5 assessments, confirmation and recommendation of A-C ranking); ability to assess interdisciplinary projects across sub-Panels
- Comparative overview of all recommended proposals and final recommendations and funding at Level 3 Panel

Where are we going? Timelines

- Panel structure
 - From 6 to 5 Panels done, interdisciplinary assessment at Panels in 2010
- Assessor structure
 - Changes to Oz/Intreaders during 2011
 - Significant improvement of assessor database, still much more to do (e.g., grant holders)
 - Improve how assessors operate

Where are we going? Timelines (cont)

- Assessment structure
 - A-E system trialled for FT10
 - Move to A-E for DP11 and then for all other schemes using knowledge from FT10
 - New modules within RMS being built

College of Experts structure and role

- Current structure of College
- Current role of College in assessment process
- When will other changes occur?

Assessment Issues

- Selection criteria: seek to make these consistent with scheme objectives
- Feedback to assessors/Research Offices

Assessment Issues (cont)

- Use of FORs and keywords
 - Matching of applications and assessors
 - Current FOR distribution
 - Use of FORs in applications: proposal & assessors
 - Building structured keywords



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Post Award

Key features & processes

Prof. Andrew Wells, *Executive Director*

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Discussion Points

- Cross-scheme eligibility & requirements
- Supporting documentation & role of Partners
- Financial implications
- ARC Funding Rules & Funding Agreements
- End of Year Reports

Volume of post award matters

Scheme	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
LP	804	958	860	891	895
DP	530	556	460	435	437
CE, LASP, SRI	16	67	123	51	51
LIEF	12	18	37	35	41
DI	1	8	12	11	3
FT	-	-	-	-	24
FL	-	-	-	-	3
Sub Total	1,363	1,607	1,492	1,423	1,454

Range of considerations

- Requirements for legislation, financial management and auditing purposes
- How post award relates to Funding Rules and Funding Agreements
- Current paper-based process
- Scheme specific responses to variations
- Scheme specific issues, especially in LP

Consistency of process

- Parties to post-award variations
- **Changes** within a project covered by the Funding Agreement
- Administering Organisation capacity to manage dynamic research projects
- **Variations** that require ARC/Ministerial approval
- Cross-scheme consistency

Post Award is a complex process

- The conceptual problem: regulation, accountability and flexibility
- Request for a Variation: who needs to signoff, when should requests be made
- Approval process: who has authority, when is it needed
- Recording and communicating approvals
- Time, cost and benefit

Reporting issues

- Multiple reports: Progress Reports, EoY, Final Reports
- How reporting articulates with post award variations
- The purpose and aim of reporting
- Collecting publication data related to ARC funding
- Reviewing schemes
- Considering a simplified reporting process

Reform & timelines

- Reducing the volume and increasing the consistency
- Clarity within Funding Rules and Agreements
- Devolution and accountability
- An electronic system
- When will changes occur?

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Reviewing Schemes
Discovery Program

Prof. Andrew Wells, *Executive Director*

Research

Discussion Points

- Why change the *Discovery* Program?
- The underlying issues
- What is proposed?
- The current Consultation Process
- The main areas of debate
- The timeline for implementation

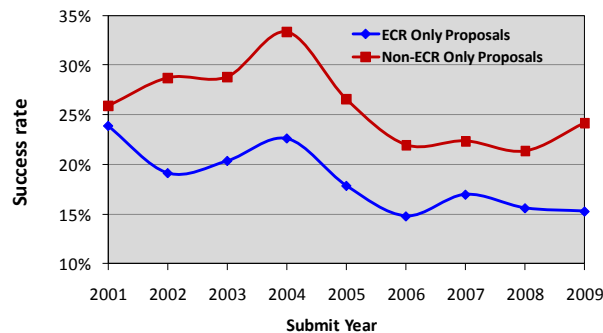
Why change the Discovery Program?

- A need for periodic review
- Feedback from the College, assessors and applicants
- Cross scheme and new scheme issues
- The volume and complexity of *Discovery Projects*
- The administrative burden: Research Offices & ARC

The underlying issues

- Range of diverse & overlapping Fellowships across NCGP
- Success rates and other issues related to ECRs within *Discovery Projects*
- Need for uniform selection criteria
- Gender disparities identified in *Discovery Projects*
- Need to build research capacity
- Need to simplify a complex scheme

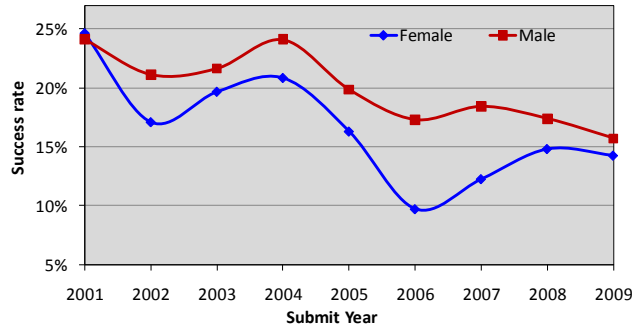
Current ECR-related success rates



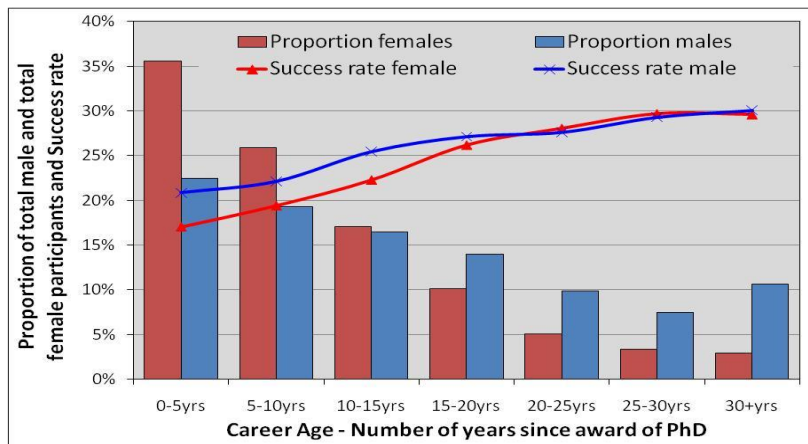


Current gender-related issues

2010 (for DP11): male and female success rates equal 24%



Discovery Projects - Overall Success Rate



Overlap of Fellowships

In 2008 for example:

- 15 % of all APFs applied for a Future Fellowship
- 30 % of all ARF/QEIs also applied for a Future Fellowship
- 6 % of all APFs applied for a Australian Laureate Fellowship

Proposed Revisions: ECR award

- A new stand-alone ECR award
- Up to 200 ECR awards per annum
- Salary support & up to \$25,000 project costs
- Simplification of Funding Rules, application & assessment processes
- Revision of the selection criteria
- Clarity of cross scheme inclusions & exclusions

Proposed Revisions: Discovery Projects

- A new senior career award within *Discovery Projects*
- Up to 70 awards per annum
- Simplification of Funding Rules, application & assessment processes
- Revision of the selection criteria
- International Collaboration Awards remain
- Funding for 3 years maximum in *Discovery Projects*

The Consultation Process

- Consultation Paper released last Wednesday
- 4-week period for comments and feedback:
Dec 1st
- Presentations to research administrators, DVC(R) and to a range of universities
- Consideration of feedback & revision of Funding Rules in December
- Communications about the timing of Funding Rules, scheme opening etc will occur

Issues for discussion

- Impact of delaying the *Discovery Projects* scheme
- Assessment process tailored for ECR
- Eligibility for ECR across other schemes
- Project & award funding in *Discovery Projects*
- Limitations on length of funding
- Overall fellowship numbers
- Administrative Organisation commitments
- Revised selection criteria & assessment process

Feedback to Consultation Paper

Deadline for submission is Dec 1 2010

Pro-forma available on ARC website

DiscoveryConsultation@arc.gov.au



Australia's research policy and program landscape – an update

ARC/NHMRC RESEARCH ADMINISTRATORS SEMINAR IN ASSOCIATION WITH ARMS

Dr Anne Byrne
Research Funding and Policy Branch, DIISR
8 November 2010



Themes for my presentation this afternoon

- Discussion of *Powering Ideas* from a research system perspective
- Update on key initiatives and programs
- How do they connect?
- Looking ahead





Powering Ideas - powering the economy

- Government's vision statement and 10-year reform agenda for Australia's national innovation system
- Innovation is the key to making Australia more productive and competitive
- This includes a research sector able to respond to issues and challenges facing the Australian community – economic, health, environmental, new industries etc



Powering Ideas – does a number of things

- Provides the policy framework that we all operate in
- Clearly states the Government's aspirations for what constitutes a world-class innovation system (7 National Innovation Priorities). The Priorities are framing statements
- Identifies specific policy actions and ambitions, which involve:
 - Setting national priorities and improving system coordination
 - Improving skills and expanding research capacity
 - Increasing innovation in business, government and the community
 - Boosting collaboration – domestic and international – across the system





Research-relevant policy ambitions

- Increased number of Australian research groups operating at world-class levels
- Greater international collaboration by Australian universities
- More students completing higher degree by research training
- Greater collaboration between businesses and public researchers



Actions underway

Expanding Australia's research capacity:

- 25% increase in Commonwealth funding for science, innovation and research (increased from \$6.9 billion to \$8.6 billion between 2008-09 and 2009-10 Budgets)
- New indexation arrangements (from 2012) to provide an additional \$2.6 billion for universities to help them meet the costs of quality teaching and research





Actions underway

Addressing the gap in funding for indirect research costs:

- Funding for universities will rise from \$85 million in 2010 to (an indexed) \$300 million by 2013 under the Sustainable Research Excellence (SRE) program
- SRE contains important innovation – a transparent costing (TC) process based on a calculation of indirect research costs in universities & from 2012, a performance measure based on Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA)
- DIISR is consulting with the university sector as we incorporate outcomes of this year's TC trial into the 2011 funding methodology, and ERA outcomes, expected to be included in the 2012 funding methodology



Actions underway

Supporting researchers who perform at world-class levels?

- SRE is key because it will be the first funding program to use ERA results
- TC will facilitate greater accountability for universities' use of public investment in university research
- SRE (through Threshold 2 funding) aims to strengthen Australia's research capacity by rewarding demonstrably world-class research activity





Actions underway

Boosting international research collaboration by Australian universities:

- International Science Linkages (ISL) program, established in 2002 as the Commonwealth's main mechanism for targeted and priority driven engagement agenda (gov to gov)
- ISL finishes in end June 2011 and DIISR is currently evaluating the program
 - Over 3,000 projects and activities have been supported
- House of Representatives Inquiry "*Australia's International Research Collaboration*" released in June 2010
- ISL evaluation and HoR report to guide the Government's consideration regarding a future international science engagement program



Actions underway

Improving skills and more students completing research training:

- Research Workforce Strategy (RWS) is under development, with completion date of end 2010
- Will look ahead to 2020 and aim to be the basis for how Australia will address expected shortfalls in the supply of research qualified people
- Concerns include the quality of the research training experience in Australian universities to prepare students for different careers in the economy
- RWS has three main themes: employer demand, research training experience and research career pathways





Actions underway

Improving skills and more students completing research training:

- A review of the Government's largest block grant, the Research Training Scheme, has to come into consideration
- In the meantime, the Government has increased the support available for higher degree by research training (i.e. doubling the Australian Postgraduate Awards by 2012 and increase in the APA stipend)



Actions underway

Lifting collaboration between businesses, universities and other public researchers:

- Joint Research Engagement (JRE) scheme
- Re-focus of performance metrics to better reward those universities able to attract funding from other sources
- New initiative, Collaborative Research Networks (CRN) scheme, underway
- Aimed at encouraging a 'hub and spokes' architecture; i.e. concentration of resources in the most appropriate centres, where they can be accessed by other researchers around the country





Actions underway

Improving system coordination, including enhancements to Higher Education Research Data Collection:

- Draft 2011 HERDC Specifications are now available for comment by universities and state audit offices
- Key changes include taking account of the Minister’s decisions in regards to the Category 2 Other Public Sector Research Income review, as well as amending definitions to ensure consistency between the HERDC and ERA
- Specifications to be finalised by end year and endorsed by Universities Australia
- National HERDC roundtable being organised for Feb/Mar 2011



PRIORITY 1: Public funding supports high quality research <i>More research groups at world class levels</i>	PRIORITY 2: Strong research skills base <i>More students completing HDR training</i>	PRIORITY 5: Culture of collaboration <i>More collaboration between domestic researchers & business</i>	PRIORITY 6: International R&D collaboration <i>More collaboration between researchers with counterparts</i>
Addressing funding gap for indirect research costs through SRE; use of ERA, high quality research contributes to vibrant training environment		International Science Linkages, S&T agreements	
RWS development			
Support for fellowships and scholarships			
Support for collaboration via programs; e.g. CRN, Cooperative Research Centres			
Research infrastructure support, Super Science			
Publicly funded research agencies – research performers, research trainers, infrastructure, collaborators			
Commonwealth funding for research and research training – competitive grant programs, block grants. Roles of Compacts and ERA?			



How do things connect?

Building blocks in place, but work-in-progress in regards to influencing/driving funding:

- Negotiation of mission-based compacts with universities next year
- Overarching statements, bringing together goals, actions and performance information covering the spectrum of university activity in teaching, learning, research, research training and innovation
- For research and research training, there is no 'at-risk' performance funding (yet)
- However, both the SRE (i.e. Threshold 2 funding allocations) and Collaborative Networks programs will be subject to the compact meetings in 2011



How do things connect?

- ERA is also unknown in respect of its utilisation in driving future funding, but will be key part of toolbox
- ERA will drive the Threshold 2 funding element under the SRE from 2012
- The precise details of the funding methodology will be worked out during next year, in consultation with the university sector





Looking ahead....

- Embedding of compacts
- Government consideration of RWS
- New funding methodologies in major Commonwealth research and research training programs (informed by SRE experience). How pervasive will ERA be?
- Need to reward the pockets of excellence in research and research training, no matter where they occur
- Balance will be critical
 - Key policy objectives will need to be weighed up, including ready access to research training, quality of environments, student equity and servicing regional communities



Update on Excellence in Research for Australia Initiative

Research

ERA: 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

Research

General ERA Principles

1. Unit of Evaluation is the four-digit ANZSRC Field of Research code (i.e. 157 possible **Units of Evaluation**); evaluation occurs at the two-digit level as well
2. Evaluation by **Research Evaluation Committees** in discipline clusters; eight clusters in total
3. There is a minimum level of output for a discipline to be considered '**research active**' for evaluation in ERA
4. Evaluations informed by a '**dashboard**' of discipline-specific indicators
5. Some **peer review of outputs** accessed through institutional **repositories** in some clusters

The ERA Clusters

Cluster 1	Physical, Chemical & Earth Sciences
Cluster 2	Humanities and Creative Arts
Cluster 3	Engineering and Environmental Sciences
Cluster 4	Social, Behavioural and Economic Sciences
Cluster 5	Mathematics, Information and Communication Sciences
Cluster 6	Biological Sciences and Biotechnology
Cluster 7	Biomedical and Clinical Research
Cluster 8	Public and Allied Health, and Health Sciences

The ERA 2010 Rating Scale

Rating	Descriptor
5	The Unit of Evaluation profile is characterised by evidence of outstanding performance well above world standard presented by the suite of indicators used for evaluation.
4	The Unit of Evaluation profile is characterised by evidence of performance above world standard presented by the suite of indicators used for evaluation.
3	The Unit of Evaluation profile is characterised by evidence of average performance at world standard presented by the suite of indicators used for evaluation.
2	The Unit of Evaluation profile is characterised by evidence of performance below world standard presented by the suite of indicators used for evaluation.
1	The Unit of Evaluation profile is characterised by evidence of performance well below world standard presented by the suite of indicators used for evaluation.
NA	Not assessed due to low volume. The number of research outputs does not meet the volume threshold standard for evaluation in ERA.

ERA 2010 Reference periods

- Research outputs reference period
1 January 2003 – 31 December 2008
- Non-output reference period (income, applied, esteem)
1 January 2006 – 31 December 2008
- Staff census date
31 March 2009
- Citation database cut off date
1 March 2010

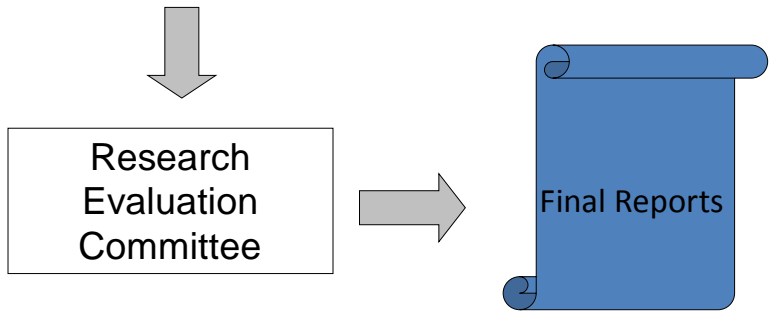
ERA Indicator suite

Research

ERA Process Overview

Volume & Activity	Ranked Outlets
Citation Analysis	Esteem
Research Income	Applied Measures
Peer Review (if applicable)	

**Please note –
no weightings**



ERA 2010

Background Statement



Why a matrix approach to indicators?

- Not all indicators are suitable for all disciplines
- Pick and choose what is right for each discipline
- The indicator suite must ensure comparable quality across a range of indicator types

Questions?

<http://www.arc.gov.au/era>

Email: era@arc.gov.au

Hotline: 02 6287 6755



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Information Technology Update

Research

Overview

- **IT in support of ERA**
 - SEER performance
 - SEER improvements
- **IT in support for NCGP**
 - Improvements to date
 - ❖ Application process
 - ❖ Assessment process
 - Reporting and Training
 - Planned RMS system enhancements
- **Questions**

IT in support of ERA

SEER Performance and Improvements

- Performance of application was as expected
- Improvements will be completed in first quarter of 2011 to:
 - Upgrade the known defects in priority order
 - Upgrade de-duplication process to allow improved processing through-out the submission process

IT in support for NCGP

Improvements to date - Application Process

- Improvements
 - Budget revision and simplification
 - Ability to “delete” draft proposals
 - Review and updated inactive accounts
 - Notification of changes to auto populated data (demo to follow)
 - PDF Performance improvements



IT in support for NCGP

Improvements to date - Assessment Process

- Trial of A-E for assessment scoring for FT-2010.
- Improvements to the user interface for Rejoinders



IT in support for NCGP

Training and Reporting

- Problems with CSVs reports fixed in October.
- Reporting Improvements.
 - New automated access for reporting by June 2011
- RMS training system



Planned RMS System Enhancements

- Dual sites for hardware by March 2011.
 - This will provide for shorter outages for major system upgrades.
 - Provide better DR capability.
- Upgrade of the database system. (assists in providing a more flexible reporting system). November 2010.



Demonstration

- Application process
 - Notification of auto populated data that is possibly out of date.



RMS Help Desk

rms@arc.gov.au

02 6287 6789
(9am-5pm Canberra)

Questions?