



# Special Research Initiatives Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2008-2009 or 2009-2010

## *Australian Research Council Act 2001*

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I, KIM CARR, Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, having satisfied myself of the matters set out in section 59 of the *Australian Research Council Act 2001*, approve, in accordance with section 61 of the Act, variation of the *ARC Special Research Initiative Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2008-2009 or 2009-2010*.

Dated 29 May 2009

Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research

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## Acronyms

The following acronyms are used in ARC Funding Rules.

ACPGF	Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics
AEST	Australian Eastern Standard Time
AIMS	Australian Institute of Marine Science
AIATSIS	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
ANSTO	Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation
APD	Australian Postdoctoral Fellowship
APDI	Australian Postdoctoral Fellowship (Industry)
APF	Australian Professorial Fellowship
ARC	Australian Research Council
ARCIF	Australian Research Council International Fellowship
ARF	Australian Research Fellowship
ASCC	Australian Stem Cell Centre
AVCC	Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee
CE	<i>ARC Centres of Excellence</i> and <i>ARC Centres</i>
CoE	ARC College of Experts
CI	Chief Investigator
CRC	Cooperative Research Centre
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DSTO	Defence Science and Technology Organisation
DVC (R)	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)
GA	Geoscience Australia
GST	Goods and Services Tax
HECS	Higher Education Contribution Scheme
HELP	Higher Education Loan Programme
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IRF	Indigenous Researcher Fellowship
LIF	ARC Linkage Industry Fellowship
NCGP	National Competitive Grants Program
NCGRT	National Centre for Groundwater Research and Training
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
NICTA	National ICT Australia
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PI	Partner Investigator
QEII	Queen Elizabeth II Fellowship
SRI	<i>ARC Special Research Initiatives</i>
UA	Universities Australia

## Key Dates

Key dates may be specified in any call for proposals for funding issued by the Australian Research Council under the *Special Research Initiatives* scheme. A call for proposals for funding may be made at any time.

## Contacts

The ARC deals with thousands of Proposals each year. Persons should, therefore, direct requests for information to the Research Office within their organisation.

Where this is not possible, enquiries about the ARC *Special Research Initiatives* scheme may be sent:

by mail to:

*Special Research Initiatives* Coordinator  
Australian Research Council  
GPO Box 2702  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Email: [sri@arc.gov.au](mailto:sri@arc.gov.au)

Phone: 02 6287 6600

Fax: 02 6287 6638

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

by courier to:

*Special Research Initiatives* Coordinator  
Australian Research Council  
1st Floor, 8 Brindabella Circuit  
CANBERRA AIRPORT ACT 2609

Appeals must be addressed and sent:

by mail to:

The Appeals Officer  
Australian Research Council  
GPO Box 2702  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

by courier to:

The Appeals Officer  
Australian Research Council  
1st Floor, 8 Brindabella Circuit  
CANBERRA AIRPORT ACT 2609

Other:

Email: [sri@arc.gov.au](mailto:sri@arc.gov.au)

Phone: +61 02 6287 6600

Fax: +61 02 6287 6638

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

## 1. Name of Funding Rules

- 1.1.1 These Funding Rules are the Australian Research Council *Special Research Initiatives* Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2008-2009 or 2009-2010.

## 2. Commencement

- 2.1.1 The Funding Rules shall take effect upon registration on the Federal Register of Legislative Instruments.

## 3. Definitions

- 3.1.1 In these Funding Rules, unless the contrary intention appears:

**Adjunct or Emeritus Appointment** or equivalent means that an Eligible Organisation has a formal agreement in writing with a researcher establishes an ongoing association with the Eligible Organisation, of the nature of an emeritus or honorary academic or visiting fellow. The ARC may seek documentary evidence of such an association if it is considered necessary.

**Administering Organisation** means an Eligible Organisation which submits a Proposal for funding under the *Special Research Initiatives* scheme and which will be responsible for the administration of the funding if the proposed project is approved for funding.

**Applicant** means the Administering Organisation. Funding under the *Special Research Initiatives* scheme is provided to Administering Organisations, not to individual researchers.

**ARC** means the Australian Research Council, as established under the ARC Act.

**ARC Act** means the *Australian Research Council Act 2001*, or the Act.

**ARC Centre** means a research centre wholly or partly funded by the ARC and includes *ARC Centres of Excellence*, *ARC Centres*, *ARC Special Research Centres* and co-funded Centres of Excellence such as the Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics (ACPF), the Australian Stem Cell Centre (ASCC), the National Centre for Groundwater Research and Training (NCGRT) and National ICT Australia (NICTA).

**ARC Centre Fellowship** means an ARC Centre Fellowship awarded under the *ARC Centres of Excellence* Scheme.

**ARC Fellowship** means a position held by a researcher where the salary is funded wholly or partly by the ARC and where the researcher has been nominated in a Proposal to hold a Fellowship. An ARC Fellowship may be awarded at a number of levels and in various ARC schemes. ARC Fellowship includes Australian Postdoctoral Fellowship (APD), Australian Research Fellowship (ARF), Queen Elizabeth II Fellowship (QEII), Australian Professorial Fellowship (APF), Australian Postdoctoral Fellowship (Industry) (APDI), Linkage Industry

Fellowship (LIF), ARC Centre Fellowship, ARC International Fellowship (ARCIF), Federation Fellowship, Future Fellowship, Australian Laureate Fellowship and Indigenous Researcher Fellowship (IRF).

**ARC Web Site** is <http://www.arc.gov.au>.

**Australian Laureate Fellow** means a researcher whose salary is funded under the *ARC Australian Laureate Fellowships* scheme.

**Centre Director** means the person appointed to direct the programs of a Commonwealth-funded Research Centre.

**Chief Investigator** means a researcher who satisfies the eligibility criteria for a Chief Investigator.

**Collaborating Organisation** means an Eligible Organisation which is not the Administering Organisation but which is identified in the Proposal as a contributor to the project.

**Commonwealth** means the Commonwealth of Australia.

**Commonwealth-funded Research Centre** means a research centre substantially funded from Commonwealth funding sources and includes ARC Centres, CRCs and NHMRC Program Grants and Centres of Clinical Research Excellence. It does not include Research Networks funded by the ARC.

**Conflict of Interest** means an actual or perceived conflict between a person's public duty and their private or personal interest.

**Earnings** means the amount paid directly or indirectly as remuneration for work a person undertakes or services he/she performs. It includes amounts paid under employment and/or consultancy arrangements.

**Eligible Organisation** means an organisation which is eligible to apply for and receive funding under the *Special Research Initiatives* Funding Rules as specified in Section 7.1.

**Federation Fellow** means a researcher whose salary is funded under the *ARC Federation Fellowship* scheme.

**Funding Agreement** means the agreement entered into between the ARC and the Administering Organisation if the Administering Organisation's Proposal is approved for funding. This Agreement sets out the terms and conditions under which the Commonwealth is to provide funding and the Administering Organisation is to be responsible for administration of the funding and the conduct of the project.

**Funding Rules** means this document.

**Future Fellow** means a researcher whose salary is funded under the ARC *Future Fellowships* scheme.

**GST** has the meaning as given in section 195-1 of the *A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999*.

**Indigenous Researcher Fellow** means a researcher whose salary is wholly or partly funded under an IRF (under the *Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development* scheme).

**Medical and Dental Research** means research and/or training which, in the opinion of the ARC, has a significant focus on clinical medical (including dental) outcomes.

**Minister** means the Minister from time to time responsible for the administration of the ARC Act, or the Minister's delegate.

**National Research Priority** means a national research priority detailed in Appendix 4.

**Partner Investigator** means a researcher who satisfies the eligibility criteria for a Partner Investigator.

**Partner Organisation** means an organisation, other than an Eligible Organisation, which is to be a contributor to the project.

**Project Leader** means the first-named researcher nominated on a Proposal who is a CI.

**Proposal** means a request to the ARC for the provision of financial assistance for a research project which is submitted in accordance with Funding Rules approved by the Minister.

**Queen Elizabeth II Fellow** means a researcher whose salary is wholly or partly funded under a QEII (under the *Discovery Projects* scheme).

**Research Office** means a business unit within an organisation that is responsible for administrative contact with the ARC regarding Proposals and research projects.

**Special Condition** means a special condition specified in a Funding Agreement which governs the use of the funding provided by the ARC.

## **4. Introduction**

### **4.1 Overview and NCGP Objectives**

- 4.1.1 This document sets out the funding rules for the *Special Research Initiatives* scheme, a scheme funded under the Australian Research Council's National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP), which comply with the requirements of the ARC Act.
- 4.1.2 All parties involved in Proposals should read and understand the Funding Rules and the ARC's standard Funding Agreement (which is available at the ARC Web Site) before submitting a Proposal to the ARC. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their Proposals are complete and accurate.
- 4.1.3 Funding under *Special Research Initiatives* is provided to Administering Organisations, not to persons. That is, the ARC will accept a Proposal only from an Eligible Organisation and not from any individual researcher or researchers.
- 4.1.4 These Funding Rules are current as at May 2009 and have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the ARC Act in force then. These Funding Rules are subject to change at any time, for reasons including any subsequent amendment to, replacement of or supplementation of the ARC Act.
- 4.1.5 The ARC is an Australian Government statutory authority established under the ARC Act. The primary functions of the ARC, as specified by the ARC Act, are to make recommendations regarding the funding of research programs, to administer funding to support research programs, and to provide policy advice related to research.
- 4.1.6 The ARC has established a range of competitive funding schemes for the support of research and research training under the framework of the NCGP. A list of current NCGP funding schemes is available on the ARC Web Site.
- 4.1.7 By the operation of a range of funding schemes under the NCGP, the ARC aims to:
- a. maintain and build on existing research and research training;
  - b. build the scale and focus of research and research training;
  - c. encourage cross-disciplinary approaches to research and research training;
  - d. facilitate collaborative approaches to research and research training; and
  - e. support research and research training of national benefit, including in the following National Research Priorities:
    - i. An Environmentally Sustainable Australia;
    - ii. Promoting and Maintaining Good Health;
    - iii. Frontier Technologies for Building and Transforming Australian Industries; and
    - iv. Safeguarding Australia.

4.1.8 Descriptions of these National Research Priorities and their associated Priority Goals can be found in Appendix 4, and on the ARC Web Site.

## **4.2 Special Research Initiatives**

4.2.1 The ARC takes a proactive role in identifying specific initiatives to be undertaken in this scheme. Initiatives may be identified by the Minister or by the ARC, or arise from consultation with institutions, professional organisations and peak bodies representing higher education communities. They may also result from ARC Discipline Cluster Reviews or other discipline research strategies, from reviews of National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP) outcomes in a particular field, or from other reviews or reports of a similar nature. The ARC expects that some initiatives may be identified by the ARC College of Experts in the course of its work on other NCGP schemes. Furthermore, in providing advice to government on Australian research, the ARC may identify initiatives to be funded under the *Special Research Initiatives* scheme.

4.2.2 Individual *Special Research Initiatives* will be identified in Appendix 2 of the Funding Rules. The nature of supported activities is specified against the relevant initiatives in column 1 of the table in Appendix 2. After Ministerial approval has been obtained for the conduct and funding of any new initiative under the SRI scheme, Appendix 2 will be varied as required to provide details pertaining to the particular initiative. The ARC will issue a call for proposals for initiatives which accords with the Funding Rules.

4.2.3 Applications for *Special Research Initiatives* funding may be submitted only when invited by the ARC by means of a call for proposals for funding. The ARC may invite applications from one or more organisations (which may involve researchers, consultants or facilitators).

4.2.4 Funding under the *Special Research Initiatives* scheme is available to support activities related to high-quality research in all or any fields of research supported by the ARC.

4.2.5 The objective of the *Special Research Initiatives* scheme is to support high-quality research which will assist in advancing Australia's research excellence to be globally competitive and deliver benefits to the community. This extends, but is not limited, to supporting research-related activities which will respond to emerging opportunities or changing priorities.

4.2.6 Specifically, *Special Research Initiatives* scheme funding supports:

- a. co-operative activities among researchers;
- b. co-operative development of national and international linkages;
- c. co-operative development of innovative research areas;
- d. rapid response to contingencies, e.g. field work at an erupting volcano;
- e. activities aimed at building the scale and focus of research and research training;

- f. other activities which the ARC judges to be consistent with the scheme's objectives.

4.2.7 Activities funded under this scheme may include, but are not restricted to, one-off conferences, workshops, seminars and development of networks, where the purpose is to initiate collaboration that would be unlikely otherwise to occur and, where appropriate, the dissemination of the outcomes of the collaborative activities funded under the scheme.

### **4.3 Fundamental principles and requirements**

#### **4.3.1 Ethics and Research Practices**

4.3.1.1 The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) web site, <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au>, provides a series of publications which outline principles of ethical conduct in research. All Proposals and ARC-funded research projects must, unless otherwise approved by the ARC, conform to the principles outlined in the following and their successor documents:

- a. NHMRC/ARC/UA Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007);
- b. as applicable, the NHMRC/ARC/AVCC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007); and
- c. as applicable, codes on animal research promulgated by the NHMRC.

4.3.1.2 If there is any conflict between a successor document and its predecessor, then the successor document prevails to the extent of any inconsistency.

#### **4.3.2 Non-duplication**

4.3.2.1 The ARC will not provide financial assistance to meet the costs of a project to the extent that those costs have been, or are likely to be, met from other Commonwealth funding schemes. The ARC reserves the right to:

- a. determine if a Proposal includes such costs and deem a notional amount for them; and
- b. recommend a reduced amount of funding for the proposed project accordingly.

4.3.2.2 If such costs are, in the opinion of the ARC, a significant portion of the costs for a proposed project, the ARC may decide to recommend that the Proposal not be funded at all.

#### **4.3.3 Conflict of Interest**

4.3.3.1 All parties involved in or associated with Proposals and ARC-funded research projects are required to disclose to the ARC, and the other parties involved in the Proposal/project (including Collaborating and Partner Organisations), any conflict of interest which has the potential to influence, or appear to influence, the request for funding, or the research and activities, publications and media reports related to the Proposal/project. Such conflicts must be disclosed to the ARC at the time of the

submission of a Proposal, and in reporting on ARC-funded research projects, and notified to the other parties as soon as practicable after the conflict of interest is identified.

4.3.3.2 If, in the opinion of the ARC, any party involved in or associated with a Proposal has failed to disclose any such conflict of interest, the ARC may in its absolute discretion decide to not recommend for approval any or all Proposals involving that party.

4.3.3.3 If a conflict of interest exists or arises, the Administering Organisation must have processes in place and documented for managing the conflict of interest for the duration of the project. Such processes must comply with the NHMRC/ARC/UA *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007)* and any relevant successor document. In the event of any inconsistency between the original and any successor document, the latter document is to apply.

#### **4.3.4 Acknowledging ARC support**

4.3.4.1 The standard Funding Agreement requires that any ARC contribution to research and other activities funded by the ARC be appropriately acknowledged. When, at any time during or after completion of a project, the person or any other party publishes or produces material such as books, articles, newsletters or other literary or artistic works which relate to the research project, the Administering Organisation must ensure (wherever possible) that the ARC's contribution and support of the project is acknowledged in a prominent place and in an appropriate form. This acknowledgement should include the mention of the ARC as a funding body. Similar efforts should be made to acknowledge ARC support when participating in television and radio programs, when interviewed by the print media and when otherwise speaking publicly about the project.

4.3.4.2 Advice on acceptable forms of acknowledgement and use of the ARC logo is provided on the ARC Web Site.

#### **4.3.5 Dissemination of research outputs**

4.3.5.1 The Australian Government makes a major investment in research to support its essential role in improving the wellbeing of our society. To maximise the benefits from research, findings need to be disseminated as broadly as possible to allow access by other persons and the wider community.

4.3.5.2 The ARC acknowledges that researchers take into account a wide range of factors in deciding on the best outlets for publications arising from their research. Such considerations include the status and reputation of a journal or publisher, the peer review process of evaluating their research outputs, access by other stakeholders to their work, the likely impact of their work on users of research and the further dissemination and production of knowledge. Taking heed of these considerations, the ARC wants to ensure the widest possible dissemination of the research supported under its funding, in the most effective manner and at the earliest opportunity.

- 4.3.5.3 The ARC therefore encourages researchers to consider the benefits of depositing their data and any publications arising from a research project in an appropriate subject and/or institutional repository. If a researcher is not intending to deposit the data from a project in a repository within six months of the completion of the research, he/she should include the reasons in the project's Final Report. Any research outputs that have been or will be deposited in appropriate repositories should be identified in the Final Report.

## **5. Changes from last year**

- 5.1.1 Clarifications and revisions have been made in these Funding Rules. The significant changes from the previous set of *Special Research Initiatives* funding rules include the updating of acronyms and definitions for consistency.
- 5.1.2 The changes above are not comprehensive. Applicants and other parties involved in Proposals should read and understand the entire Funding Rules and standard Funding Agreement before a Proposal is submitted to the ARC.

## **6. Funding**

### **6.1 Level of funding**

- 6.1.1 All amounts referred to in these Funding Rules are to be read as exclusive of GST (if any), unless expressly stated otherwise.
- 6.1.2 Where applicable, the minimum and/or maximum levels of funding which will be provided by the ARC for a project are specified against the relevant initiatives in column 5 of the table in Appendix 2. If a Proposal requests less than the specified minimum level of funding, or more than the specified maximum level of funding, the ARC may in its absolute discretion decide to not recommend the Proposal for approval.
- 6.1.3 The ARC reserves the right to recommend levels of funding for a project at levels which may differ from those requested in the Proposal.

### **6.2 Period of funding**

- 6.2.1 Financial assistance may be payable under these Funding Rules for *Special Research Initiatives* projects in respect of the financial year 2008-09 or 2009-2010 and any subsequent years to which the ARC Act applies. Funding for approved projects will commence with effect from the date specified against the relevant initiatives in column 5 of the table in Appendix 2.
- 6.2.2 Funding may be provided for short- or long-term activities. The indicative duration and any funding thresholds for specific initiatives are specified against the relevant initiatives in column 5 of the table in Appendix 2. Any funding awarded will be subject to sufficient funds being available under the applicable funding cap(s) and funding split determinations(s).
- 6.2.3 Projects may be funded for the duration specified against the relevant initiatives in column 5 of the table in Appendix 2, subject to sufficient funding being available

for *Special Research Initiatives*, the provisions of the ARC Act, and continued satisfactory progress of the project.

- 6.2.4 The ARC may recommend funding for a project for a duration different from that requested in the Proposal.

### **6.3 Types of research supported**

- 6.3.1 Subject to Sections 6.4 and 6.5 and the nature of the supported activities specified against the relevant initiatives in column 1 of the table in Appendix 2, the *Special Research Initiatives* scheme supports all types of research, including:

- a. 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;
- b. 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. Such research provides the broad base of knowledge necessary to solve recognised practical problems; and
- c. applied research which is original work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge with a specific application in view. Such research 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.

- 6.3.2 Unless specified to the contrary in Appendix 2 for the relevant initiative, the following project costs may be supported under the *Special Research Initiatives* scheme:

- a. personnel (salaries and on-costs) for research associates, technicians and laboratory attendants, but excluding those items not permitted pursuant to subsections 6.4.2.b and e.
- b. teaching relief for Chief Investigators (CIs), but only where the request is justified to the satisfaction of the ARC (see subsection 6.4.2.c.);
- c. equipment;
- d. maintenance;
- e. the following travel costs:
  - i. domestic and international travel costs for CIs and research support personnel (excluding Partner Investigators (PIs)). Funding is permitted for domestic and international travel associated with the project, including to foster and strengthen collaborations between researchers in Australia and overseas; and
  - ii. domestic travel costs for PIs visiting from overseas as part of the short-term project support permitted under subsection 6.4.2.e for these investigators. (International travel costs are not permissible for PIs.).

## 6.4 Restrictions on budget items

6.4.1 The *Special Research Initiatives* scheme funds only those costs which directly support a research project. The ARC may in its absolute discretion determine whether any project costs meet this requirement.

6.4.2 Unless otherwise specified in Appendix 2 for the relevant initiative, the *Special Research Initiatives* scheme has restrictions on the following budget items:

- a. Capital works and general infrastructure.

Capital works and general infrastructure costs are not funded by the ARC, in whole or in part, under *Special Research Initiatives*.

- b. Salaries of CIs and PIs.

Unless specified to the contrary against the relevant initiative in column 3 of the table in Appendix 2, the Commonwealth will not provide support, in whole or in part, to meet the salaries of CIs or PIs under *Special Research Initiatives*. If a Proposal requests salary funding for a CI or PI, other than where it is permitted for the relevant initiative pursuant to column 3 of Appendix 2, the Proposal will not be recommended or approved for funding.

- c. Relief of CIs from Teaching or Other Duties.

*Special Research Initiatives* funding is not usually provided to fund teaching and/or teaching relief. Commonwealth funds may be used for teaching relief only if specifically approved for that purpose. The ARC may fund justified teaching relief for up to 6 months in each consecutive year. If approved, the funding contribution is limited to a maximum rate of \$65,944 per annum (2008\$) (or pro rata) per CI, and will be a Special Condition.

- d. Special Studies Programs.

Funds are not provided for travel or related expenses for persons when on a Special Studies Program. However, some specified expenses may be funded for CIs, if approved by the ARC as a Special Condition, and provided that the Proposal clearly demonstrates that such expenses are not covered by a Special Studies Program and that the research to be undertaken directly relates to the project.

- e. Research support for Partner Investigators.

Funds are not provided for PIs, apart from short-term project support for investigators visiting from overseas and funding for approved LIF Fellows. Short-term project support may include support for travel within Australia for investigators visiting from overseas but excludes the cost of their travel to and from Australia.

- f. International students' fees, Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) and Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP) liabilities.

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

- g. Basic facilities.

The Administering Organisation must agree to provide the following basic facilities (where relevant to the Proposal), which will not be funded under *Special Research Initiatives*:

- i. accommodation (e.g. laboratory and office, suitably equipped and furnished in standard ways);
- ii. access to workshop services (e.g. machine tools and qualified technicians available to each member of staff, according to need, for research);
- iii. access to film or music editing facilities;
- iv. access to a basic library collection;
- v. standard reference materials or funds for abstracting services;
- vi. provision of computers, including laptops (excluding access to high-performance computers or other specialised applications) and basic computing facilities such as printers, word processing and other standard software; and
- vii. use of photocopiers, telephones, mail, fax, email and internet services.

h. **Publication Costs.**

Publication costs, including printing and page costs, will not be funded under *Special Research Initiatives*.

i. **Costs not directly related to a project.**

Costs not directly related to a project will not be funded, for example costs of a personal nature.

## **6.5 Areas of investigation/work not supported**

### **6.5.1 Unless otherwise specified in Appendix 2 for the relevant initiative, the *Special Research Initiatives* scheme does not support:**

- a. activities leading solely to the creation or performance of a work of art, including visual art, musical compositions, drama, dance, film, broadcasts, designs and literary works. These areas are generally covered by other Commonwealth Government funding agencies;
- b. projects such as uncritical compilations and purely descriptive catalogues or editions that do not involve original research;
- c. production of teaching materials, even though some research may be involved in their production;
- d. compilation of data, unless this is an integral part of a project, in which case the Proposal must include a statement indicating the research objectives to which the data would contribute; and/or
- e. development of research aids and tools (including computer programs), unless they form an integral part of the Proposal, in which case the Proposal must include a statement indicating the research objectives to which these activities would contribute.

### **6.5.2 If the ARC considers that a Proposal seeks funding for a project that involves any of the items not permitted under Sections 6.4 or 6.5, then to that extent part or all of**

the Proposal will not be recommended or approved for funding. However, if the ARC considers that other parts of the proposed project remain worthy of support, the ARC may recommend that a reduced amount of funding be approved for the Proposal.

## **6.6 Number of Proposals and funded projects**

6.6.1 Proposals may be submitted only to the extent that, if all were successful, the persons nominated on those Proposals would not be involved in more than the maximum number of Proposals/projects permitted as specified against the relevant initiatives in column 8 of the table in Appendix 2. For the purposes of applying these limits, the number of Proposals and the number of projects on which a person is nominated, are evaluated as at the closing time for the submission of Proposals for the relevant initiative, regardless of any subsequent change in, or withdrawal of, Proposals. Submitting Proposals that exceed any or all of these limits may result in all Proposals involving the relevant person(s) not being recommended or approved for funding.

## **7. Organisational types, roles and eligibility**

### **7.1 Eligible Organisations**

7.1.1 A Proposal may be submitted only by an Eligible Organisation. Eligible Organisations for specific initiatives under *Special Research Initiatives* are specified against the relevant initiative in column 2 of the table in Appendix 2.

### **7.2 Partner Organisations**

7.2.1 If specified as a requirement in column 8 of Appendix 2 for a particular initiative, a Proposal must identify at least one Partner Organisation which:

7.2.2 will be involved in the proposed project. Interaction with a Partner Organisation is required for the whole period of the project; and

7.2.3 makes an agreed contribution to the project.

7.2.4 Proposals which fail to meet any of the requirements specified in Section 7.2 will not be recommended or approved for funding.

## **8. Roles and eligibility for researchers**

### **8.1 Researcher roles and general eligibility**

8.1.1 Roles that may be undertaken by persons under *Special Research Initiatives* are:

- a. Chief Investigator (CI); and
- b. Partner Investigator (PI).

8.1.2 Unless specified in Appendix 2 against the relevant initiative, each Proposal must nominate at least one CI.

- 8.1.3 The eligibility requirements for each of these roles are described in Section 8 and Appendix 3. In order to participate in a Project as a CI or PI, a person must satisfy the eligibility requirements specified for the relevant role.
- 8.1.4 The types of investigator roles for specific initiatives under *Special Research Initiatives* in this funding round are specified against the relevant initiative in column 3 of the table in Appendix 2.
- 8.1.5 All CIs and PIs nominated on a Proposal must satisfy the eligibility criteria for the role they are to perform as specified in Section 8 and Appendix 3.
- 8.1.6 Note: If a person has been nominated for an incorrect role on a Proposal (that is, for a role for which he/she does not satisfy the eligibility criteria), the Proposal may be funded only if, upon request by the ARC, the Administering Organisation provides the ARC with relevant certifications from the person, and evidence that he/she satisfies the eligibility criteria, for the role he/she is to perform.
- 8.1.7 The first-named person nominated on a Proposal who is a CI will be considered the 'Project Leader' of the project.
- 8.1.8 A person nominated as a CI or PI must take significant intellectual responsibility for the proposed project, any strategic decisions called for in its pursuit and the communication of results. The person 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 the hands of others. The ARC reserves the right to determine whether a person has the requisite capacity to perform the role.
- 8.1.9 At the time of the submission of a Proposal all obligations regarding previously funded projects involving the nominated CIs on the Proposal must have been fulfilled to the satisfaction of the ARC. Such obligations include the provision of satisfactory progress and final reports.
- 8.1.10 If the ARC considers that a person nominated in the Proposal as a CI or PI does not meet the eligibility criteria in this Section or Appendix 3 for the role which that person is to perform, the Proposal will not be recommended or approved for funding.

## **9. Cross-scheme issues**

### **9.1 Cross-scheme funding**

- 9.1.1 Unless otherwise specified for the relevant initiative, the ARC will not duplicate financial assistance for research already funded by the Commonwealth or which is likely to be funded from other Commonwealth funding sources (including under other ARC funding schemes). The ARC reserves the right to determine if a Proposal duplicates or is likely to duplicate research being funded by another Commonwealth source. In such circumstances, the ARC may in its absolute discretion decide to recommend that the Proposal not be approved for funding. However, if the ARC considers that parts of the proposed project remain worthy of support, the ARC may assess the Proposal in the usual way and the ARC may instead recommend that a reduced amount of funding be approved for the Proposal.

## **9.2 Cross-scheme eligibility**

- 9.2.1 If a person nominated as a CI, PI or ARC Fellow on a Proposal is involved in a funding request or requests for any proposed research project (including fellowship), salary or equipment that has been submitted under this or any other ARC scheme or to any other Commonwealth funding body, the Proposal must contain details of the request(s). Summary details of all other funding must be included in the Proposal. Proposals must indicate the level of funding obtained for approved projects (including fellowships), or being sought for current or future projects (including fellowships), from all Commonwealth funding sources and must list all existing research funding from all Commonwealth sources. If these processes are not observed or the ARC determines that incomplete, misleading or inaccurate details were included in the Proposal, the ARC may in its absolute discretion decide to not recommend the *Special Research Initiatives* Proposal for approval.
- 9.2.2 The ARC may liaise with other funding agencies to discuss any overlap between proposed or existing research projects (including fellowships) in order to avoid duplication of funding. The ARC may, for this purpose, disclose to such an agency any information in a Proposal.

## **9.3 Funding of Medical and Dental Research**

- 9.3.1 Unless specified to the contrary against the relevant initiative in column 1 of the table in Appendix 2, the ARC does not fund Medical and Dental Research under the *Special Research Initiatives* scheme. The ARC reserves the right to determine conclusively whether the proposed research involves Medical and Dental Research.
- 9.3.2 The NHMRC funds a range of Medical and Dental Research. Where relevant, the ARC may, but is under no obligation to, consult with the NHMRC in order to determine the likelihood of the NHMRC's funding proposed research in the relevant research area.
- 9.3.3 If the Administering Organisation submits, or is intending to submit, applications to the ARC and the NHMRC for similar research it must cross-reference the Proposals and must declare the dual submission on the ARC application form.
- 9.3.4 The ARC reserves the right to decide whether a proposed project, or elements of a project, falls within the area of Medical and Dental Research.

## **10. Application process**

### **10.1 Eligibility Exemption and Eligibility Ruling Process**

- 10.1.1 This item is not relevant to the *Special Research Initiatives* scheme as formal eligibility exemption and eligibility ruling request processes do not operate in this scheme.

## **10.2 Proposals**

- 10.2.1 A Proposal should be submitted as a mature research plan ready for implementation. The Proposal must contain all the information necessary for its assessment without the need for further written or oral explanation, or reference to additional documentation, unless requested by the ARC, including its College of Experts.
- 10.2.2 All details in the Proposal must be current at the time of submission.
- 10.2.3 In submitting a Proposal, the Administering Organisation and the CIs and PIs nominated in the Proposal are consenting to the Proposal's being assessed under the ARC's peer assessment procedures and agree to the release of the Proposal to third parties for assessment purposes.

## **10.3 Certification**

- 10.3.1 The Administering Organisation must obtain the agreement of all parties necessary to allow the proposed project to proceed. These agreements must be attested to by hand-written signatures and certification from all relevant persons and organisations involved in the Proposal. These agreements, certifications and signatures are to be retained by the Administering Organisation which must provide them if requested by the ARC. A form is available for this purpose on the ARC Web Site. If the Administering Organisation fails to provide this material upon request, the ARC may in its absolute discretion decide to not recommend the Proposal for approval.
- 10.3.2 A Proposal must be submitted through the appropriate Research Office. If a Proposal has not been submitted through the appropriate Research Office/Chief Executive Officer for certification, the Proposal will not be recommended or approved for funding.

## **10.4 Submission of Proposals**

- 10.4.1 When applications are invited they must be submitted on an application form provided by the ARC. The ARC will determine whether or not an on-line application form in the ARC's grants application management system, or another form of electronic document, must be used and any requirements for signed paper copies. For specific initiatives these details are shown in column 7 of the table in Appendix 2. Where application forms are to be submitted in the on-line grants application management system, or electronically, the full paper application and copy must, as far as possible, identically match the contents of the online application form.

### **10.4.2 Format**

- 10.4.2.1 All documents must be written in English and must comply strictly with the format, content and submission requirements as specified in these Funding Rules and the call for proposals for the relevant initiative and, where available, the 'Instructions to Applicant' document issued by the ARC for the relevant initiative. If a Proposal

fails to meet any format, content or submission requirements, the ARC may in its absolute discretion decide to not recommend the Proposal for approval.

10.4.2.2 Unless otherwise specified, all pages of text must be in black type, use a single column and 12-point font size on white A4 paper, be printed on one side only and unbound, with all margins being at least 2 cm. As Proposals may be scanned electronically, a highly legible font type must be used, 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 and the reproduction quality may not be optimal. Finely detailed graphics and greyscale may also not be precisely reproduced.

10.4.2.3 The pages of the Proposal must be numbered consecutively starting from page 1.

10.4.2.4 Proposals should be sent:

by mail to:

OR

by courier to:

Executive Director  
*Special Research Initiatives* Scheme  
Australian Research Council  
GPO Box 2702  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Executive Director  
*Special Research Initiatives* Scheme  
Australian Research Council  
1st Floor, 8 Brindabella Circuit  
CANBERRA AIRPORT ACT 2609

or by such other means and to such other address specified by the ARC.

### **10.4.3 Number of copies**

10.4.3.1 Unless otherwise specified in column 7 of Appendix 2 for the relevant initiative, an original paper application and one identical paper copy are required in addition to any requirement for an online or electronic application form. The application must be clipped, not stapled. Where applicable, the application form completed in the online grants application management system or electronic form should be submitted with any additional text, including supporting documentation, interleaved appropriately and the pages numbered sequentially starting at the beginning of the application (further information may be provided in the 'Instructions to Applicants' document for the relevant initiative).

### **10.4.4 Closing times for Proposals**

10.4.4.1 At the time of inviting applications the ARC will set and advise prospective applicants about the relevant timeframes for the submission of applications. For specific initiatives these details are shown in column 6 of the table in Appendix 2 against the relevant initiative. Subject to subsection 10.4.4.3, the paper parts of a Proposal must be received by the ARC, and the online or electronic form, if any, must be submitted to the ARC by the relevant times for the initiative specified in Appendix 2.

10.4.4.2 Applications may be withdrawn but may not be changed after submission. Additions, deletions and modifications to applications will not be accepted after submission. Subject to this subsection, applications received after the closing time will not be accepted.

- 10.4.4.3 If the required paper parts of a Proposal are not received by the ARC by the specified closing time, the ARC may in its absolute discretion decide to not recommend the Proposal for approval. In deciding whether to recommend or not recommend such a Proposal the ARC may take into account whether:
- a. in the opinion of the ARC, exceptional circumstances apply; or
  - b. the Administering Organisation is able to provide evidence to the satisfaction of the ARC that all the documents were despatched by the Administering Organisation sufficiently in advance of the closing time for the documents to have been delivered to the ARC by the closing time in the normal course of events.

## **11. Selection and approval process**

### **11.1 Selection criteria**

11.1.1 All *Special Research Initiatives* Proposals which meet the eligibility criteria will be assessed and merit ranked using the following selection criteria:

- a. nature and merit of the Proposal in relation to the objective of the *Special Research Initiatives* scheme and the additional objectives, if any, specified for the specific initiative as outlined in column 4 of the table in Appendix 2, taking into consideration:
  - i. the goals of the Proposal;
  - ii. the method and approach proposed to be adopted;
  - iii. expected results; and
  - iv. value for money and budget justification, including where appropriate any cash or in-kind financial contributions to be made from non-ARC sources;
- b. the parties who are to be involved in and associated with the Project, including their track record relative to opportunities and their capacity to undertake the proposed activities; and
- c. the relevance of the Proposal to issues of national significance and importance.

### **11.2 Assessment and selection procedure**

#### **11.2.1 Assessment and selection process**

11.2.1.1 Assessment of Proposals is undertaken by the ARC, which has the right to make recommendations solely on the basis of its expertise, and which may:

- a. consider if a Proposal satisfies the eligibility criteria set out in these Funding Rules;
- b. identify and consider any other matters that these Funding Rules state may result in the ARC's recommending that a Proposal not be approved for funding;
- c. assign assessors to review Proposals;

- d. seek comments on assessors' reports from the parties involved in the Proposal;
- e. short-list Proposals and interview representatives of the Applicants for those short-listed Proposals;
- f. rank each Proposal relative to the others on the basis of the Proposal, any assessors' reports, and any response to those assessment reports;
- g. assess and recommend the amount of funding to be made available for a Proposal; and/or
- h. prepare funding recommendations.

11.2.1.2 The ARC College of Experts may assist with the assessment of Proposals. The ARC has procedures for managing organisational and personal conflicts of interest experienced by members of the College of Experts, members of other ARC committees, ARC staff, and other assessors, and for enabling individuals to withdraw from the assessment process for particular Proposals where any actual or perceived conflict may exist.

## **11.2.2 Exclusion of Proposals**

- 11.2.2.1 The ARC will not recommend for approval, and the Minister will not approve for funding, any Proposal that fails to satisfy the "eligibility criteria" set out in these Funding Rules, including:
- a. if the ARC considers that the Proposal seeks funding for any of the items not permitted under Sections 6.4 or 6.5 and the ARC considers no other part of the proposed project remains worthy of support (subsection 6.5.2);
  - b. if the Proposal seeks salary funding for a CI or PI, other than where it is permitted for the relevant initiative pursuant to column 3 of Appendix 2 (subsection 6.4.2.b);
  - c. if the Proposal was not submitted by an Eligible Organisation (Section 7.1);
  - d. if the Proposal does not meet the requirements for involvement by or contributions from Partner Organisations or if the ARC considers that a Partner Organisation listed on the Proposal does not meet the eligibility requirements for a Partner Organisation (Section 7.2 and Appendix 2);
  - e. if the Proposal did not nominate at least one CI where required (subsection 8.1.2);
  - f. if the ARC considers that a person nominated in the Proposal as CI or PI does not meet the eligibility criteria as specified in Section 8 or Appendix 3 for the role which that person is to perform (subsection 8.1.9);
  - g. where relevant for the particular initiative, if the ARC determines that a proposed project would fall within the area of Medical and Dental Research (Section 9.3);
  - h. if a Proposal has not been submitted through the appropriate Research Office/Chief Executive Officer for certification (subsection 10.3.2); and
  - i. if the Proposal is not for a program of research, or a program that supports the conduct of a program of research.

- 11.2.2.2 The ARC may in its absolute discretion decide not to recommend for approval a Proposal if:
- a. in the opinion of the ARC, any person nominated in the Proposal as a CI or PI has caused or has significantly contributed to the failure of an organisation to meet its obligations under any current or previous funding agreement with the ARC (subsection 4.1.5);
  - b. in the opinion of the ARC, any party involved in or associated with a Proposal or ARC-funded research project has failed to disclose to the ARC, or any of the other parties involved in the Proposal, any conflict of interest which has the potential to influence, or appear to influence, the research and activities, publications and media reports, or requests for funding related to the Proposal (subsection 4.4.3.2);
  - c. if the Proposal has sought funding which is less than the minimum amount or more than the maximum amount of funding allowed (subsection 6.1.2);
  - d. the limits on the number of Proposals and projects permissible are exceeded (subsection 6.6.1);
  - e. in the opinion of the ARC, a Proposal duplicates or is likely to duplicate research already being funded, or which is likely to be funded, by the Commonwealth (subsections 4.4.2 and 9.1.1);
  - f. where required the Proposal does not include details of other funding or funding requests (subsection 9.2.1);
  - g. the ARC considers incomplete, inaccurate, false, or misleading material has been provided in relation to the Proposal or if the Administering Organisation and/or persons nominated in the Proposal as a CI or PI have provided the ARC with incomplete, unsatisfactory, inaccurate, or misleading information in relation to the provision of advice relating to, or in the reporting of progress of, a funded project (subsections 9.2.1, 14.5.2 and 14.5.3);
  - h. when requested, the Administering Organisation fails to provide the signed certifications and agreements of all parties necessary to allow the proposed project to proceed (subsection 10.3.1);
  - i. the online part of a Proposal is not submitted, or the paper part of the Proposal is not received by the ARC, by the closing time for the relevant round (subsection 10.4.4.3); or
  - j. the Proposal fails to meet any format and other submission requirements (Section 10.4).

### **11.2.3 Assessment**

- 11.2.3.1 In addition to assessment by the ARC, a Proposal may at the ARC's absolute discretion be assessed by external assessors. Assessors may be drawn from a range of organisations to reduce the potential for conflicts of interest. Proposals will be assessed against the criteria set out in these Funding Rules and the reports by the assessors may include written comment.

- 11.2.3.2 The ARC reserves the right to make recommendations for funding to the Minister based on any number of assessments or solely on the assessment of the ARC.
- 11.2.3.3 Administering Organisations may provide written notification to the ARC naming any person or persons whom they do not wish to assess a Proposal. A ‘Request not to Assess’ form is available from the ARC Web Site for this purpose. Such notifications must contain detailed justification and be submitted using the ‘Request not to Assess’ form through the Administering Organisation’s Research Office. This notification must not accompany the Proposal. The notification must be received by the ARC by the specified closing time for Proposals for the relevant initiative and be sent:
- |  |    |  |
|--|----|--|
| by mail to:                                | OR | by courier to:                             |
| Executive Director                         |    | Executive Director                         |
| <i>Special Research Initiatives Scheme</i> |    | <i>Special Research Initiatives Scheme</i> |
| Australian Research Council                |    | Australian Research Council                |
| GPO Box 2702                               |    | 1st Floor, 8 Brindabella Circuit           |
| CANBERRA ACT 2601                          |    | CANBERRA AIRPORT ACT 2609                  |
- 11.2.3.4 The ARC will consider the justification put forward to exclude any person as an assessor, but may choose not to give effect to such a request.

#### **11.2.4 Rejoinder**

- 11.2.4.1 Assessors’ written comments, if obtained, may be provided to allow the opportunity for a rejoinder to the comments. Names of assessors are not provided. At the same time, the ARC may add questions to the material sent for rejoinder. A period of up to 2 weeks may be given to submit a rejoinder to the ARC. Subject to subsection 11.2.4.2, rejoinders will not be accepted after the nominated closing time for rejoinder submissions. The ARC may limit the length of rejoinders which can be submitted.
- 11.2.4.2 The ARC may, in its absolute discretion, and only in exceptional circumstances, accept late rejoinders.

#### **11.2.5 Recommendations**

- 11.2.5.1 The ARC’s recommendations will be submitted in accordance with the ARC Act to the Minister for consideration. The Minister determines which Proposals will be approved and the amount and timing of financial assistance to be paid to Administering Organisations for approved Proposals.
- 11.2.5.2 Under the ARC Act, the Minister must not approve for funding any Proposal that fails to meet the eligibility criteria set out in these Funding Rules.

### **11.3 Offer of funding**

- 11.3.1 Administering Organisations whose Proposals are approved will be:
- a. notified in a letter of offer that will indicate the financial assistance to be offered; and
  - b. provided with a copy of a Funding Agreement for signing.

## **12. Appeals process**

- 12.1.1 Appeals will be considered only against administrative process issues and not, for example, against committee recommendations or assessor ratings and comments.
- 12.1.2 Appeals must be made on the appeals form available from the ARC Web Site. The form must be lodged by the Administering Organisation and must be authorised by a Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research), Chief Executive Officer or equivalent. Appeals must be received by the ARC within 28 days of the date on the letter notifying the outcome of Proposals.
- 12.1.3 Appeals must be addressed and sent:
- |                             |                                  |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| by mail to:                 | by courier to:                   |
| The Appeals Officer         | The Appeals Officer              |
| Australian Research Council | Australian Research Council      |
| GPO Box 2702                | 1st Floor, 8 Brindabella Circuit |
| CANBERRA ACT 2601           | CANBERRA AIRPORT ACT 2609        |

## **13. Administration of funding**

### **13.1 Funding Agreement**

- 13.1.1 All parties involved in a Proposal should familiarise themselves with the standard Funding Agreement, but only the Administering Organisation and the ARC will be parties to the Funding Agreement. Parties involved in a funded project must accept the terms of the Funding Agreement and the Administering Organisation must sign the Funding Agreement before the ARC will commence payments.
- 13.1.2 Projects must commence as required by the Funding Agreement. Failure to do so may result in termination of the Funding Agreement.
- 13.1.3 Administering Organisations should note that the Funding Agreement covers post-award management, including reporting requirements and financial management. The standard Funding Agreement can be viewed on the ARC Web Site.

### **13.2 Varying the Funding Agreement**

- 13.2.1 Requests to vary the Funding Agreement must be forwarded in writing by the Administering Organisation's Research Office to the ARC. Forms are available on the ARC Web Site. Amendment of any clauses of the Funding Agreement will be at the ARC's absolute discretion.

### **13.3 Varying the Funding Approval**

- 13.3.1 Requests to vary the funding approval must be forwarded in writing by the Administering Organisation's Research Office to the ARC.
- 13.3.2 The funding approval may be varied by varying the amount of financial assistance, the period of financial assistance, the name of the person leading the research project, and/or the name of the organisation receiving financial assistance.

- 13.3.3 The Minister may vary the funding approval if:
- a. any of the organisations involved in the project end, or substantially change, their involvement with the project;
  - b. the research project changes so that it is no longer consistent with the description in the funding approval as previously approved or as otherwise varied;
  - c. the desirable period of funding for a project is not consistent with the period in the funding approval as previously approved or as otherwise varied;
  - d. the person nominated in the funding approval as the person leading the research project, or any such replacement person approved by the Minister, ceases to lead the project; and/or
  - e. the ARC considers and recommends that the particular circumstances of the project warrant variation of the funding approval, providing such variation is reasonably justified upon the facts of the case and any variation or change to the project accords with the *Special Research Initiatives* objective.

## **13.4 Reports**

- 13.4.1 Administering Organisations are required to submit reports to the ARC concerning funded projects, in the format and by the due dates detailed in the Funding Agreement.

## **14. Other matters**

### **14.1 Applicable law**

- 14.1.1 The ARC is required to comply with the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1988* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

### **14.2 Confidentiality**

- 14.2.1 The ARC will treat information contained in a Proposal as confidential. However, the ARC may disclose information contained in a Proposal, or otherwise provided to the ARC, to the extent that the information:
- a. is disclosed by the ARC to its advisers (including external assessors), officers, employees or other third parties in order to assess, evaluate or verify the accuracy or completeness of a Proposal;
  - b. is disclosed to the ARC's personnel to enable effective management or auditing of the *Special Research Initiatives* scheme or any Funding Agreement;
  - c. is disclosed by the ARC to the Minister;
  - d. is shared by the ARC within the ARC's organisation, or with another Commonwealth Department or agency, where this serves the Commonwealth's legitimate interests;
  - e. is authorised or required by law to be disclosed;

- f. is disclosed in accordance with any other provision of these Funding Rules or the Funding Agreement; or
- g. is in the public domain otherwise than due to a breach by the ARC of any obligation of confidence.

14.2.2 Where information contained in a Proposal is made available to third parties for evaluation or assessment purposes the ARC will require the third parties to maintain the confidentiality of the material. Notwithstanding the above, and in addition to the exemptions listed at subsection 14.2.1, the ARC may publicise and report offers or awards of funding, including information about the proposed research; the name of nominated CIs or PIs and their organisations; the name of the Administering Organisation and any other parties involved in or associated with the project; the title and summary descriptions of the project and its intended outcomes (including the national/community benefits that are expected to arise from the research); and the level and nature of financial assistance from the ARC. Administering Organisations should ensure that information contained in the project title and summaries would not, if released, compromise their own requirements for confidentiality (such as future protection of intellectual property).

### **14.3 Project descriptions**

14.3.1 In making public information about a Proposal which has been approved for funding, the ARC may use a project description, including title and summary, which may differ from that provided in the Proposal.

### **14.4 Intellectual property**

14.4.1 The ARC does not claim ownership of any intellectual property in a Proposal or which is created or developed from the conduct of a project funded under the *Special Research Initiatives* scheme.

14.4.2 However, all Proposals become the property of the ARC on submission. Administering Organisations submit their Proposals on the basis that the ARC may copy, modify and otherwise deal with information contained in a Proposal (and allow any external assessor or other third party to do the same) for any purpose related to:

- a. the evaluation and assessment of Proposals;
- b. verifying the accuracy, consistency and adequacy of information contained in a Proposal, or otherwise provided to the ARC;
- c. the preparation and management of any Funding Agreement; or
- d. the administration or management of the NCGP.

14.4.3 If a Proposal contains information belonging to a third party, the Administering Organisation must ensure that it has in place all necessary consents to allow the ARC to deal with that information in accordance with these Funding Rules, prior to the Administering Organisation's submitting its Proposal.

14.4.4 Except with written approval from the ARC, all Proposals and ARC-funded research projects must comply with the *National Principles of Intellectual Property*

*Management for Publicly Funded Research* (available on the ARC Web Site) and accord with any intellectual property policies of the person's organisation.

## **14.5 Incomplete or misleading information**

- 14.5.1 It is a serious offence to provide false or misleading information to the Commonwealth.
- 14.5.2 If the ARC considers that a Proposal is incomplete, inaccurate or contains false or misleading information, the ARC may in its absolute discretion decide to recommend that the Proposal not be approved for funding.
- 14.5.3 If an Administering Organisation and/or person nominated in a Proposal as a CI or PI has provided the ARC with incomplete, unsatisfactory, inaccurate or misleading information in relation to any Proposal for, or in the provision of advice relating to, or reporting of progress of, a project funded by the Commonwealth, the ARC may in its absolute discretion decide to not recommend the Proposal for approval and/or terminate projects involving that organisation/person if funded and require the Administering Organisation to repay some or all of the funding.
- 14.5.4 If the ARC considers that omissions, or inclusion of misleading information, are intentional, or if there is evidence of misconduct, the ARC may refer the matter for investigation with a view to prosecution under Commonwealth criminal law. The Commonwealth is committed to protecting its revenue, expenditure and property from any attempt, by members of the public, contractors, sub-contractors, agents, intermediaries or its own employees, to gain financial or other benefits by deceit.
- 14.5.5 Examples of misleading information and misconduct are, but are not restricted to:
- a. providing fictitious track records;
  - b. making false claims in publications records (such as describing a paper as accepted for publication when it has only been submitted); or
  - c. failing to disclose to the ARC the existence, and nature, of actual or potential conflicts of interest of any of the parties involved in the Proposal/project (such as any affiliations or financial interest in any organisation that has a direct interest in the matter or outputs of the project).

## **14.6 Insurance and liabilities**

- 14.6.1 Administering Organisations are subject to the liability, indemnity and insurance provisions of the Funding Agreement. The standard Funding Agreement can be viewed on the ARC Web Site.

## **Appendix 1: Eligible Organisations**

### **Higher Education Organisations eligible to submit Proposals**

#### **New South Wales**

Charles Sturt University  
Macquarie University  
Southern Cross University  
The University of New England  
The University of New South Wales  
The University of Newcastle  
The University of Sydney  
University of Technology, Sydney  
University of Western Sydney  
University of Wollongong

#### **Victoria**

Deakin University  
La Trobe University  
Melbourne College of Divinity  
Monash University  
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT University)  
Swinburne University of Technology  
The University of Melbourne  
University of Ballarat  
Victoria University

#### **Queensland**

Bond University  
Central Queensland University  
Griffith University  
James Cook University  
Queensland University of Technology  
The University of Queensland  
The University of the Sunshine Coast  
University of Southern Queensland

#### **Western Australia**

Curtin University of Technology  
Edith Cowan University  
Murdoch University  
The University of Notre Dame Australia  
The University of Western Australia

#### **South Australia**

Flinders University  
The University of Adelaide

University of South Australia

**Tasmania**

University of Tasmania

**Northern Territory**

Charles Darwin University

Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education

**Australian Capital Territory**

The Australian National University

University of Canberra

**Multi-State**

Australian Catholic University

**Other Organisations eligible to submit Proposals**

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)

## Appendix 2: Particular SRI initiatives undertaken under these Funding Rules

Initiative being funded (column 1)	Eligible Organisation <sup>1</sup> (column 2)	Applicable Investigator types <sup>2</sup> (column 3)	Specific objectives (column 4)	Funding (column 5)	Closing date (column 6)	Application form requirements and signed copies (column 7)	Other requirements for submission of applications (column 8)
<p><b>Title:</b> <i>Research in Bionic Vision Science and Technology: towards the development of a bionic eye</i></p> <p>An initiative arising from the Australian Government's 2020 Summit, to fund a proposal to develop a functional bionic eye. The successful project will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>undertake highly innovative and internationally competitive research that produces outcomes of economic and social benefit to Australia;</li> <li>be characterised by significant collaboration involving the research resources of Australian and overseas institutions;</li> <li>pursue engagement with, and seek to secure financial contributions from government and business entities, publicly funded research institutes and other appropriate organisations; and</li> <li>offer a robust commercialisation strategy for the expected research outcomes.</li> </ol> <p>The Proposal may offer an integrated research program which draws on the expertise of researchers at a number of geographically separated research sites or nodes. The successful Project must have a prominent physical presence at all nodes.</p>	<p>Organisations listed in Appendix 1 of the <i>Special Research Initiatives Funding Rules</i> for funding commencing in 2008-2009 or 2009-2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chief Investigator (CI)</li> <li>Partner Investigator (PI)</li> <li>Each proposal must have at least one CI.</li> <li>The first-named CI on the Proposal will be considered the 'Project Leader' and must be an employee, or holder of an adjunct appointment, or equivalent, at the proponent Eligible Organisation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To deliver a program of activities that will support the development of a functional bionic eye in Australia: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake highly innovative and internationally competitive research through a pioneering and feasible research and development program;</li> <li>Undertake significant collaboration with experts in a broad range of relevant fields, including development of national and international networks and linkages with leading researchers and institutions;</li> <li>Develop outcomes with significant health and economic benefit for the Australian community in the short and longer term;</li> <li>Provide for potential spin-off innovation, with commercial applications to be pursued through a robust commercialisation strategy; and</li> <li>Build Australia's human capacity in this area by attracting, from within Australia and overseas, researchers of high international standing as well as the most promising research students.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total funds of up to \$50 million may be awarded over four years, commencing in the financial year 2009-10, subject to Parliamentary appropriations. Minimum funding will be \$1 million per year.</li> <li>Subject to Ministerial approval, project funding may be provided to PIs</li> <li>Subject to exceptional performance measured through reporting and review and availability of funding, the ARC may recommend an additional period of funding.</li> <li>The Proposal is expected to seek additional financial contributions from other sources, such as participating organisations, publicly funded research institutes, government agencies and the private sector.</li> </ul>	<p>5:00pm AEST Wednesday 29 July 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submission of electronic copy of SRI application form by email to <a href="mailto:sri@arc.gov.au">sri@arc.gov.au</a>, marked "Attention Executive Director, ARC SRI Scheme (Bionic Vision Science and Technology)".</li> <li>In addition to the above, a full paper application and one identical copy, which must, as far as possible, match the contents of the submitted electronic application form, must be submitted to the address specified in section 10.4.2.4 of the <i>Special Research Initiatives Funding Rules</i> for funding commencing in 2008-2009 or 2009-2010.</li> <li>The paper copies above must be signed by the CEO or DVC(R) of the Eligible Organisation proposing to administer the Project, or equivalent officer, who has the power to make and vary contracts on behalf of the Eligible Organisation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Eligible Organisation submitting the application is to obtain and retain signatures of all participants named on the application form indicating their agreement to participate in the Proposal and providing all necessary consents to allow the ARC to deal with information contained in the application form.</li> <li>Each Eligible Organisation may be the Administering Organisation on one application only.</li> <li>Each Proposal must identify at least one Partner Organisation which will be involved in the proposed project.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Note: Where the term HEO is used in this column it refers to those organisations listed in Appendix 1.

<sup>2</sup> Refer Section 8 and Appendix 3 for description of investigator types and their associated eligibility criteria.

## **Appendix 3: Investigator types, roles and eligibility**

### **A3.1 Available roles**

A3.1.1 There are two roles available for researchers under the *Special Research Initiatives* scheme. These are:

- a. Chief Investigator; or
- b. Partner Investigator.

### **A3.2 Eligibility criteria for Chief Investigators**

A3.2.1 To be eligible to be a CI, a researcher must meet the criteria stipulated in A3.2 and subsections 8.1.7 and 8.1.8.

A3.2.2 A researcher nominated on a Proposal as a CI must meet at least one of the following criteria as at the commencement date for funding of the proposal, and for the full term of her/his participation in the project:

- a. be an employee of an Eligible Organisation for the relevant initiative (as specified in column 2 of the table in Appendix 2) for at least 50 per cent of her/his time; or
- b. be a holder of an Emeritus, Adjunct or equivalent appointment at an Eligible Organisation for the relevant initiative (as specified in column 2 of the table in Appendix 2) and not be employed more than 50 per cent of her/his time in a position at another organisation that
  - i. is outside the higher education sector, and
  - ii. engages in research which is funded predominantly from State/Territory or Commonwealth Government funding sources. Such organisations include, but are not limited to, Commonwealth-funded Research Centres which are outside the higher education sector, AIMS, ANSTO, CSIRO, DSTO, GA, and State/Territory Research and Development organisations and research areas within a Government entity; or
- c. be a Federation Fellow; or
- d. be an Australian Laureate Fellow at an Eligible Organisation for the relevant initiative (as specified in column 2 of the table in Appendix 2).

A3.2.3 He/she must reside predominantly in Australia for the full term of her/his participation in the project. If the researcher does not have permanent resident status he/she must obtain temporary or permanent resident status from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship before he/she may commence on the project.

A3.2.4 Notwithstanding a researcher's eligibility under the other criteria in A3.2, a researcher in the following categories cannot be eligible to be CIs if:

- a. undertaking undergraduate studies; or
- b. undertaking postgraduate studies unless eligible to be a CI under A3.2.2..

- A3.2.5 If a Proposal has been approved for funding and any or all of the CIs are at any time during the project no longer able to work as proposed on the project, the project may be continued under replacement CIs provided that:
- a. approval is obtained from the Minister for the change in CI; and
  - b. a replacement CI meets the criteria stipulated in A3.2 and subsections 8.1.7 and 8.1.8 when he/she is nominated as a replacement and for the full term of her/his participation in the project.

### **A3.3 Eligibility criteria for Partner Investigators**

A3.3.1 To be eligible to be nominated as a PI on a Proposal, a researcher must:

- a. not meet the eligibility criteria specified in A3.2.2 for a CI;
- b. secure a significant contribution of cash, in-kind or other resources from the researcher's organisation for the proposed project (having regard to the total cost of the project and the relative contribution of other investigators); and
- c. take significant intellectual responsibility as outlined in subsection 8.1.7.

A3.3.2 If a Proposal has been approved for funding and any or all PIs are at any time during the project no longer able to work as proposed on the project, the project may be continued under replacement PIs provided that:

- a. approval is obtained from the Minister for the change in PI; and
- b. the replacement PI:
  - i. meets the eligibility criteria specified in A3.3 at the time of her/his nomination and for the full term of her/his participation in the project; and
  - ii. does not meet the eligibility criteria specified in A3.2.5 for a replacement CI.

## **Appendix 4: National Research Priorities and associated Priority Goals**

### **Research Priority 1: 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.*

Natural resources have traditionally fuelled our national and regional economies. They have the potential to generate further wealth and employment opportunities in the future. But our natural resources and biodiversity must be used on a sustainable basis so that the benefits continue to be enjoyed by future generations.

Australia faces significant environmental challenges:

- Efficient and sustainable water use is a critically important issue for our economic and social development;
- Significant land degradation issues, such as salinity, need to be arrested to underpin our agricultural production systems;
- Climate change can be expected to have complex, long-term consequences for the environment, for our agricultural and marine production systems and for communities; and
- The cleanliness and efficiency of our energy production systems should be enhanced.

There is substantial effort underway to develop more efficient water utilisation practices, to protect our rivers and groundwater resources, and to protect and remediate our fragile soils.

Our agricultural and mining industries are being transformed through the adoption of new technologies, and the development of new types of foods.

This will help to revitalise our regional communities and generate substantial export earnings for the nation over the coming decades.

Australia is well placed to take an international lead in developing new and improved energy technologies and in capturing and ‘sequestering’ carbon dioxide.

Other opportunities lie in managing and using our unique, rich land- and marine-based biodiversity, and in developing our deep earth resources.

Australia has a strong record of achievement in research in fields in the natural sciences, such as agriculture, natural resource management, climate change, horticulture, forestry, mining, energy, and marine sciences, as well as in the social sciences and humanities.

We must build on these strengths to improve our competitive advantages while enhancing our understanding of natural systems and the interplay of human activities.

In particular, there needs to be an increased understanding of the contributions of human behaviour to environmental and climate change, and on appropriate adaptive responses and strategies.

To understand and manage these complex interactions better will require significant collaboration within the research community and with other stakeholders.

Priority goals for research fall in the seven areas of water utilisation, transforming resource-based industries, overcoming land degradation, developing cleaner, more efficient fuels and

energy sources, managing biodiversity, deep earth resources and responding to climate change and variability.

## **Priority Goals**

- **Water – a critical resource**

*Sustainable ways of improving water productivity, using less water in agriculture and other industries, providing increased protection of rivers and groundwater and the re-use of urban and industrial waste waters.*

Australia is one of the driest continents and is dependent upon access to freshwater supplies for economic and social development. It has a complex geological structure, a highly variable climate, unique ecosystems, flora and fauna and a distinctive indigenous and settler history. Enhancing our understanding of the links between these factors and water availability will result in a better understanding of sustainable water management practices.

- **Transforming existing industries**

*New technologies for resource-based industries to deliver substantial increases in national wealth while minimising environmental impacts on land and sea.*

Resource-based industries underpin much of Australia's prosperity and have the potential to do so in the future. For example, Australia remains highly prospective for minerals discoveries and highly attractive for the development of new era foods from agricultural and marine sources. Our competitive advantage and national well being will depend on research and on the development and adoption of new technologies.

- **Overcoming soil loss, salinity and acidity**

*Identifying causes and solutions to land degradation using a multidisciplinary approach to restore land surfaces.*

The Australian landscape is fragile: soil salinity, acidity, and nutrient levels pose significant, long term challenges for agriculture and the environment. Research is helping to find solutions to these problems. For example, the National Land and Water Resources Audit shows the extent of salinity, soil erosion and soil acidification in the Australian environment and illustrates Australia's leading edge in national mapping of critical resource data. Further multidisciplinary effort is required to develop sustainable land management practices that are appropriate for Australian conditions and mitigate major land degradation processes and increase biodiversity.

- **Reducing and capturing emissions in transport and energy generation**

*Alternative transport technologies and clean combustion and efficient new power generation systems and capture and sequestration of carbon dioxide.*

Australia is well positioned to produce world class solutions to reduce and capture greenhouse gas emissions. We are also well placed to develop alternative energy technologies and ecologically sustainable transport and power generation systems.

- **Sustainable use of Australia's biodiversity**

*Managing and protecting Australia's terrestrial and marine biodiversity both for its own value and to develop long term use of ecosystem goods and services ranging from fisheries to ecotourism.*

Australia has a unique and rich flora and fauna. Many of our complex ecosystems – on which our agricultural, fisheries and tourism industries depend - have adapted to events such as drought and fire, and have been shaped by indigenous and settler management practices. There is a need for a more comprehensive understanding of these natural systems and the interplay with human activities, and the effects of management and protection measures.

- **Developing deep earth resources**

*Smart high-technology exploration methodologies, including imaging and mapping the deep earth and ocean floors, and novel efficient ways of commodity extraction and processing (examples include minerals, oil and gas) while minimising negative ecological and social impacts.*

Many of Australia's known mineral assets may be nearly exhausted within the next decade. New land-based deposits are believed to be buried deeper in the crust and the deep marine areas surrounding Australia are also largely unexplored. New technologies, such as remote sensing, indicate scientists are on the brink of being able to 'see' inside the earth and identify deeply buried deposits.

- **Responding to climate change and variability**

*Increasing our understanding of the impact of climate change and variability at the regional level across Australia, and addressing the consequences of these factors on the environment and on communities.*

Australia already has a highly variable climate, and climate change can be expected to have further significant impacts. It is important to enhance our understanding of the consequences of climate change and variability at the regional level across Australia, and the implications for the environment and for communities. It is also important to explore beneficial adaptation strategies to climate change and variability to ensure ongoing social, economic and environmental well being.

## **Research Priority 2: Promoting and Maintaining Good Health**

*Promoting good health and well being for all Australians*

Average life expectancies have increased markedly in recent decades. Australians also expect to lead longer and healthier lives in the future, and to remain productive and independent over an extended period.

Enabling individuals and families to make choices that lead to healthy, productive and fulfilling lives will yield economic and social benefits and add materially to national well being.

Australians expect that their children and grandchildren should have a healthy start to life.

Developing strategies to promote the healthy development of young Australians, and addressing the causes and reducing the impact of the genetic, social and environmental factors which diminish their life potential will be critical.

A revolution is also underway at the other end of the life cycle. Australia, like many other developed nations, is undergoing a major demographic shift involving significant growth in the aged population.

To meet this challenge, it will be important to promote healthy ageing by developing better social and medical strategies to ensure that older Australians enjoy healthy and productive lives.

Informed insights into the causes of disease and of mental and physical degeneration will contribute to the achievement of this goal.

All Australians stand to benefit from preventive healthcare through the adoption of healthier attitudes, habits and lifestyles.

Evidence-based preventive interventions may help reduce the incidence and severity of many diseases, including major health problems such as cardiovascular and neurodegenerative diseases, mental ill-health, obesity, diabetes, asthma and chronic inflammatory conditions. These could include interventions that reduce exposure to contamination of the physical environment (eg air pollution).

Improvements in the health and well being of the young, of older Australians and in preventive healthcare will be underpinned by research.

However, while Australia has an enviable record in health and medical research, the research effort is spread across the many universities, hospitals and health and medical research institutes, resulting in critical mass only in limited areas of research.

There is also a need to draw on multidisciplinary approaches that include research contributions from the social sciences and humanities.

This priority is designed to promote health and prevent disease through a more focused and collaborative effort.

Priority goals for research fall in the four areas of a healthy start to life, ageing well, ageing productively, preventive healthcare and strengthening Australia's social and economic fabric.

### **Priority Goals**

- **A healthy start to life**

*Counteracting the impact of genetic, social and environmental factors which predispose infants and children to ill health and reduce their well being and life potential.*

Human health in the developing foetus and in early childhood is critical to the future well being of the adult. Research shows that health and well being in early childhood is predictive of later positive outcomes, and that health in middle and late childhood is also crucial.

- **Ageing well, ageing productively**

*Developing better social, medical and population health strategies to improve the mental and physical capacities of ageing people.*

Australia's population is ageing, with a significant projected increase in the number of people aged over 65 and over 85. While Australia is relatively well-placed compared with many OECD nations, major shifts in cultural expectations and attitudes about ageing are necessary to respond constructively, at both an individual and population level. A healthy aged population will contribute actively to the life of the nation through participation in the labour market or through voluntary work.

- **Preventive healthcare**

*New ethical, evidence-based strategies to promote health and prevent disease through the adoption of healthier lifestyles and diet, and the development of health-promoting products.*

Preventive healthcare research will improve the prediction and prevention of disease and injury for all Australians through the adoption of healthier behaviours, lifestyles and environments. Research will generate an improvement in the design, delivery and uptake of programmes such as exercise-based rehabilitation. There are several major disease targets amenable to immediate study, such as cardiovascular health, neurodegenerative diseases, mental ill-health, obesity, diabetes, asthma and chronic inflammatory conditions. Research on prevention will emphasise interdisciplinary approaches, including research on ethics, drawing on contributions from the social sciences and humanities, as well as from the health and medical sciences. It will also focus on developing new health promoting foods and nutraceuticals.

- **Strengthening Australia's social and economic fabric**

*Understanding and strengthening key elements of Australia's social and economic fabric to help families and individuals live healthy, productive, and fulfilling lives.*

Living in today's society involves a complex web of choices, yet many of the traditional support structures are weaker than they have been in the past. Enabling people to make choices that lead to positive pathways to self reliance and supportive family structures is more important than ever. The interactions between the social safety net, social and economic participation, financial incentives and community and private sources of support are critical in helping people maximise their potential and achieve good, healthy, lifetime outcomes. In the decade ahead, it will be vital to understand and support the drivers for workforce participation and the broader social and economic trends influencing Australian families and communities. Research in this area will emphasise interdisciplinary approaches, drawing on contributions from the economic, behavioural and social sciences.

### **Research Priority 3: Frontier Technologies for Building and Transforming Australian Industries**

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

Progress and wealth often derive from the unforeseen application of new discoveries. Australia must be at the leading edge if it is to stay abreast of international developments and take advantage of opportunities.

Our national capabilities in emerging sciences and their underpinning disciplines determine our capacity to develop and implement new technologies. Australia has a strong base of expertise, skills and technological capacities in the fundamental sciences and key technologies.

Our strengths are in a wide range of areas such as biotechnology, material sciences, information and communications technology (ICT), photonics, nanotechnology and sensor technology.

ICT is currently the critical enabling technology and is a major contributor to national productivity and growth.

But breakthrough science underpins technological advancements in many areas and Australia needs to foster an environment that stimulates creativity and innovation.

Applications for frontier technologies are potentially very large. Australia has the capacity to exploit niche markets for new products and services.

Australia also has an enviable track record as an innovator and developer of advanced materials and must grasp the opportunity to stay ahead.

Smart information use involving improved data management, intelligent transport systems and digital media to develop creative applications for digital technologies provides huge opportunities to improve the performance of key Australian industries.

Australia needs to invest in this research area as it is fundamental to our future competitiveness and well being.

This priority will help to strengthen the capacity of Australian researchers to participate in new areas of research, enhance Australia's international scientific reputation, stimulate local expertise, and help create vibrant new industries.

A better understanding of the conditions that are conducive to innovation will ensure that Australia's investment in research will maximise the benefits for Australia.

Enhanced research effort will also be achieved through initiatives that develop a critical mass of researchers in key areas.

Priority goals for research fall in the five areas of breakthrough science, frontier technologies, advanced materials, smart information use, and promoting an innovation culture and economy.

## **Priority Goals**

- **Breakthrough science**

*Better understanding of the fundamental processes that will advance knowledge and facilitate the development of technological innovations.*

Breakthrough science underpins technological innovation across a range of industries critical to maintaining Australia's position as a developed country. Some examples include bio-, cultural- and geo-informatics, nano-assembly and quantum computing. Technological advances are often unexpected and a strong foundation in mathematics and the fundamental sciences will provide an environment that fosters creativity and innovation. Early participation in leading

edge areas of research will enable Australian researchers to benefit more fully from international developments.

- **Frontier technologies**

*Enhanced capacity in frontier technologies to power world-class industries of the future and build on Australia's strengths in research and innovation.*

The potential applications of frontier technologies across a range of industries in Australia are vast. Australia has significant capacity to exploit niche markets for new products and services emerging from frontier technologies. Australia has world-class research expertise in many such areas. Some examples include nanotechnology, biotechnology, ICT, photonics, genomics and phenomics. Also important are advanced frameworks such as complex systems in which these technologies are applied. Future directions in this priority area need to target the cutting-edge science critical for each emerging technology.

- **Advanced materials**

*Advanced materials for applications in construction, communications, transport, agriculture and medicine.*

The development of advanced materials will underpin growth in many areas of industrial and economic activity in Australia. Australia has substantial infrastructure in this area and an enviable track record as an innovator and developer of advanced materials. The era of advanced materials is just beginning, in spite of the tremendous progress in recent years. Substantial scientific and technological challenges remain ahead, including the development of more sophisticated and specialised materials. Some examples include ceramics, organics, biomaterials, smart materials and fabrics, composites, polymers, and light metals.

- **Smart information use**

*Improved data management for existing and new business applications and creative applications for digital technologies.*

ICT applications are providing huge opportunities to deliver new systems, products, business solutions, and to make more efficient use of infrastructure. Examples include e-finance, multi-media, content generation and imaging. Improved data management is central to the future competitiveness of key industries such as agriculture, biotechnology, finance, banking, education, transport, government, and health and 'info-tainment'. The ability of organisations to operate virtually and collaborate across huge distances in Australia and internationally hinges on our capabilities in this area. The media and creative industries are among the fastest growing sectors of the new economy. Research is needed to exploit the huge potential in the digital media industry.

- **Promoting an innovation culture and economy**

*Maximising Australia's creative and technological capability by understanding the factors conducive to innovation and its acceptance.*

Understanding the factors that lead to highly creative and innovative ideas and concepts, and the conditions that lead to their introduction, transfer and uptake is critical for any nation that aspires to lead the world in breakthrough science, frontier technologies, and in other forms of innovation. Promoting an innovation culture and economy requires research with a focus on

developing and fostering human talent, societal and cultural values favourable to creativity and innovation, and structures and processes for encouraging and managing innovation.

#### **Research Priority 4: 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.*

Australia has to be capable of anticipating and tackling critical threats to society, strategic areas of the national economy and the environment.

The threats can potentially come from within and outside Australia.

The world is now characterised by the widespread and rapid movements of people, digitally coded data, goods and services, and exotic biological agents.

Critical infrastructure in Australia is increasingly dependent on digital technology for its management and integration.

Information protection and the integrity of security systems are now more important than ever before.

It is also necessary to protect the status of Australia as a nation free of many of the diseases affecting primary production around the world.

Terrorism has emerged as a very real global threat and crime is taking a significant toll on Australian society and economy.

Maintaining the operational advantage of Australia's defence forces through superior capabilities is also fundamental to our national security.

Enhancing our nation's understanding of social, political and cultural issues will help Australia to engage with our neighbours and the wider global community and to respond to emerging issues.

Leading edge research in Australia is already yielding high dividends and as a national research priority will improve the effectiveness of that contribution.

Stronger research capabilities will ensure that solutions are tailored to Australia's unique circumstances, reflecting its geographic features and small population.

Greater collaboration within the research community and with other stakeholders will allow us to better understand and manage potential threats to Australia.

Harnessing the knowledge and capabilities across Australia offers us the best chance of developing innovative and rapid solutions to serious threats.

Australia's international relations and its regional influence will be strengthened through new collaborative approaches and new science and technologies that enhance security and safety.

The heightened interest in personal and electronic security across the world also provides opportunities for Australian solutions.

Priority goals for research fall in the five areas of critical infrastructure, understanding our region and the world, protecting Australia from invasive diseases and pests, protecting Australia from terrorism and crime, and transformational defence technologies.

## **Priority goals**

- **Critical infrastructure**

*Protecting Australia's critical infrastructure including our financial, energy, communications, and transport systems.*

Protecting our critical infrastructure is important to national security and to the social and economic well being of Australia. An important aspect of this priority goal is e-security which is an enabler of e-commerce. Maintaining a critical mass of research in e-security will be essential in providing Australia with the tools to protect our way of life.

- **Understanding our region and the world**

*Enhancing Australia's capacity to interpret and engage with its regional and global environment through a greater understanding of languages, societies, politics and cultures.*

Social, cultural and religious issues are of growing significance due to the insecurities of globalisation and the increasing role of non-state players in the security environment. Australia's capacity to interpret and engage with its regional and global environment will be substantially improved by enhancing its research base in apposite languages, societies and cultures. An approach that enhances Australia's capacity to interpret itself to the rest of the world is also needed.

- **Protecting Australia from invasive diseases and pests**

*Counteract the impact of invasive species through the application of new technologies and by integrating approaches across agencies and jurisdictions.*

Australia is free of many of the pests and diseases affecting primary production around the world. This status needs to be protected as the introduction of exotic species has the potential to adversely affect our exports and the environment. Australia already has strong skills and expertise in this area of research and further work will offer immediate benefits to the community. A greater level of coordination of our research effort will mean that Australia can more effectively develop innovative and rapid solutions to serious threats.

- **Protecting Australia from terrorism and crime**

*By promoting a healthy and diverse research and development system that anticipates threats and supports core competencies in modern and rapid identification techniques.*

This threat requires a more sophisticated response which should harness Australia's research capabilities, and which will focus on all phases of counter-terrorism; prevention, preparedness, detection, response and recovery. Crime takes a significant toll on Australian society and economy. Personal identification, information protection and the integrity of security systems are fundamental towards ensuring the national security of Australia. An effective solution will include building on Australia's existing strengths in rapid detection using new analytical technologies and managing significant data collections.

- **Transformational defence technologies**

*Transform military operations for the defence of Australia by providing superior technologies, better information and improved ways of operation.*

Australia has a small defence force to protect a large continent and a substantial maritime region of responsibility. Its operational advantage has been maintained through a superior capability which is dependent on leveraging innovative technologies. Although some benefits can be gained from overseas research, Australia has to conduct its own research to address uniquely Australian demands. A systems approach which harnesses the research capabilities of all stakeholders is essential to the successful development and introduction of innovative technologies.