



Excellence in Research for Australia

Professor Margaret Sheil
Australian Research Council





- an update on the ERA Consultation paper and feedback from the sector
- update on the ERA policy
- the SEER pilot
- the path to developing indicators for ERA
- next steps





ERA Overview

- ERA will undertake evaluations of research in Australian institutions in each of eight clusters of disciplines.
- Disciplines are defined as four-digit Fields of Research (FoR) as identified in the Australian-New Zealand Standard Research Classification (ANZSRC).
- ERA will evaluate research excellence using a combination of indicators and expert review by committees comprising experienced, internationally-recognised experts.



ERA Consultation Paper





ERA Consultation Paper

The ARC received 103 submissions to the Consultation Paper

- 39 higher education institutions;
- 45 other organisations;
- seven academic units from various universities;
and
- seven individuals.





Big Issues

- Attribution of research outputs
- Evaluation of cross-disciplinary research
- Collection of measures related to scale and focus
- Inclusion of staff FTE
- Inclusion of non-salaried staff





ERA Consultation Paper - 1

- Support to collect data at 4-digit FoR;
- No clear consensus on the inclusion of non-salaried staff;
- Some concern over the use of an input (i.e. research income) as a measure of quality;
- Additional quality indicators should be kept to a minimum





ERA Consultation Paper - 2

- The proposed income categories were seen as useful;
- A 3 year evaluation period for research income and other non-publication data was favoured;
- Collection of grant numbers was favoured, particularly for those disciplines that do not typically have large grant amounts.



Draft Journal Ranking

- The ARC has received over 100 submissions to the draft journal ranking.
- We will begin the process of consolidating the feedback, with the aim to finalise the journal rankings by December.
- The ARC is investigating whether it is possible to get the list internationally peer reviewed.



ERA policy update





Established ERA indicator principles

- The unit of evaluation will be research disciplines (defined by four-digit FoR codes) by institution.
- All research publications will be assessed under ERA.
- Indicator profiles will be produced and passed to the Research Evaluation Committees (REC). RECs will use this information to assist with the development of public reports about the overall excellence of research disciplines.
- Indicators will provide the primary sources of information in the REC evaluation process. In their absence, expert review will be used.
- These decisions will be made on a discipline by discipline basis.





The Minister has agreed that:

- The attribution of publications will be determined based on the location of researchers as at a staff census date;
- Outputs from non-salaried staff will be included provided these staff meet specified criteria;
- All ERA data will be collected at the 4-digit level;
- Australian competitive grant information will be collected for all disciplines;
- All discipline clusters will use the same reference period for evaluation, rather than using a rolling evaluation cycle as proposed in the ERA Consultation paper;
- The ARC will undertake further consultation and policy exploration on the evaluation of interdisciplinary research and the collection of research income in categories other than Australian competitive grants.



The SEER Pilot





Purpose of the SEER pilot

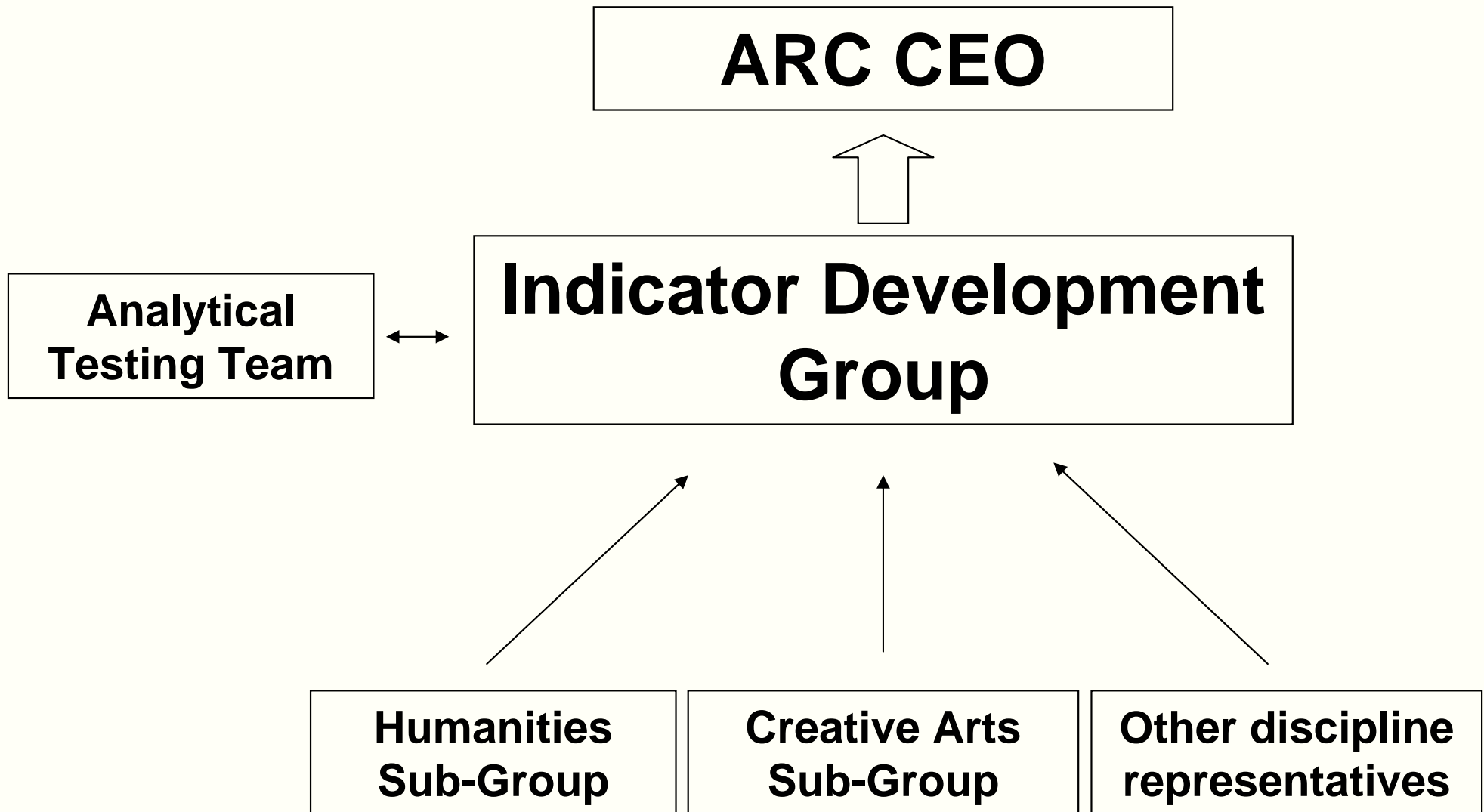
- facilitate the sector's feedback on an early draft of the ERA Submission Guidelines;
- ensure that institutions can successfully make submissions via the Pilot iteration of SEER; and
- test that the SEER technology works in terms of core submission functionality.
- Institutions participating in the ERA Pilot are able to submit data from Wednesday 1 October until Friday 14 November 2008.





ERA Indicator Development







Key Outputs of the IDG

The **ERA Indicator Principles** document will be a recommendation to the CEO based on the issues outlined in the *Research Assessment Indicator Principles* paper.

The **ERA Indicator Methodologies** will ensure international benchmarking, outline the calculations for each indicator and allow institutions to replicate calculations in-house.

The **Discipline Specific Indicator Matrix** will include details of the citation database supplier to be used for each discipline and any irregularities for specific disciplines.



Indicator Matrix (example)

	discipline 1	discipline 2	discipline 3	discipline 4	discipline 5	discipline 6	discipline 7	discipline 8	discipline 9	discipline 10	discipline 11	discipline 12
ranked journals	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded
ranked publishers			shaded						shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded
ranked conferences				shaded			shaded	shaded				
ranked venues											shaded	shaded
citation analysis	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded		shaded		shaded		
research income	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded
Patents			shaded	shaded	shaded							
Plant breeders rights			shaded									
Expert review						shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded	shaded





Analytical testing

- Examine the potential impact for interdisciplinary research
- Examine citation data supplier coverage.
- Examine a range of methods for deriving appropriate discipline specific citation benchmarks.
- The ability to assign books/chapters to a FoR based on library cataloguing
- An appropriate method to re-assign publications to 4-digit FoR codes where they are currently assigned to multidisciplinary or a 2-digit FoR.





Publications data request

- A voluntary data request has been made to the sector for publication data for the period 1 January 2002 – 31 December 2006.
- Publications data will be used for testing and development of indicators.
- The ARC will return all publications to institutions tagged with the unique article identifiers for both potential citation data suppliers.





Next Steps

- Release of ERA indicator principles
- Release of ERA citation data supplier tender
- Begin development of discipline specific indicators through the work of the sub-committees
- Indicator testing continues
- Finalise the journal rankings
- Continue SEER build