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# APPENDIX 1 PROGRAMS OF THE AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL

## ARC PROGRAMS FUNDED IN 2002

### National Competitive Grants Program

The National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP) is the ARC's umbrella research funding program. It provides funding under two main elements: *Discovery* and *Linkage*.

#### DISCOVERY

The Discovery program consists of three sub-elements:

- Discovery–Projects (including fellowships)
- Federation Fellowships.
- Discovery–Indigenous Researchers Development

**Discovery–Projects** provides opportunities for a continuum of activities, from smaller research projects to clusters of larger projects, in order to meet the varied needs of researchers in different disciplines and at different stages of their careers. Both research grants and fellowships are available under Discovery–Projects.

Fellowships are awarded in four categories:

- Australian Postdoctoral Fellowships (APDF)
- Australian Research Fellowships (ARF)
- Queen Elizabeth II (QEII) Fellowships
- Australian Professorial Fellowships (APF).

**Federation Fellowships** aim to:

- attract and retain leading Australian researchers in key positions
- support research that will result in economic, environmental and social benefits for Australia
- expand Australia's knowledge base and research capability
- support excellent, internationally competitive research by individuals
- build and sustain world-class research teams and linkages.

Up to 25 Federation Fellowships per year will be awarded for each of the five years commencing in 2002. The fellowships have a tenure of five years and the Commonwealth will provide Federation Fellows with a salary of approximately \$230,000 per year (plus on-costs). Host institutions are required to show their commitment to Federation Fellows by matching the financial contribution of the Commonwealth over the life of the fellowship. This matching contribution can include cash and in-kind support.

**Discovery–Indigenous Researchers Development** aims to develop the research expertise of Indigenous Australian researchers to a level that is competitive with other researchers applying for mainstream research funding. Funding is made available for research projects, training in research methodology and preparation of research applications.

Under the program, funding may be sought either as a Chief Investigator or as a Research Cadet–Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI). The cadetship provides a bridge for indigenous researchers who have completed a PhD to establish a research track record strong enough to compete for an Australian Postdoctoral Fellowship.

## LINKAGE

The Linkage program consists of six subelements:

- Linkage–Projects (including fellowships and postgraduate awards)
- Research Centres
- Linkage–Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities
- Linkage–International
- Linkage–Learned Academies Special Projects
- Special Research Initiatives.

**Linkage–Projects** supports collaborative research projects between higher education researchers and industry. Under this program, applicants can seek funding for project costs and the salary of an Australian Postdoctoral Fellowship (Industry) (APDI) and/or an Australian Postgraduate Award (Industry) (APAI). Proposals must contain an industry contribution, in cash and/or in kind, which matches the amount sought from the Commonwealth on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

The **Research Centres** program includes Special Research Centres and Key Centres of Teaching and Research. This program has been discontinued (to be replaced by ARC Centres of Excellence) but funding for the current centres will continue until their term expires (subject to meeting review requirements). **Special Research Centres** were established to support research of outstanding quality in fields that will contribute substantially to Australia’s development. They were funded for a maximum of nine years with funding usually in the range of \$600,000 to \$1 million annually. **Key Centres of Teaching and Research** were established to promote excellence in teaching and research activities in higher education institutions, particularly in areas of national importance, and to encourage interaction with industry and other user groups. Key Centres were funded for a maximum of six years with funding usually in the range of \$350,000 to \$450,000 annually.

Commencing in 2002, the ARC, together with the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC), is supporting the **Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics** which will be established at the Waite campus of The University of Adelaide. The ARC and GRDC will each commit \$10 million over five years to the Centre. In addition, the State Government of South Australia has committed additional funding of \$12 million and the contributing universities (The University of Adelaide, The University of Melbourne and The University of Queensland) have earmarked \$3.6 million. Additional support is also being provided by the Victorian Department of Natural Resources and Environment.

**Linkage–Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities** encourages institutions to develop collaborative arrangements across the higher education sector as a whole and with organisations outside the sector in order to develop research infrastructure. Funding is intended primarily to support large-scale cooperative initiatives involving two or more institutions. The minimum grant under Linkage–Infrastructure is \$100,000. Funding is normally for one year only, except where international agreements and national facilities are involved.

**Under Linkage–International**, funding is provided for the movement of researchers between Australian research institutions and centres of research excellence overseas. The program supports two types of awards:

- Fellowships—under international agreements for the reciprocal exchange of postdoctoral researchers (previously funded under the International Research Fellowships (IRF) Scheme and the Anglo-Australian Observatory (AAO) Fellowship Agreement)
- Awards—to build links between research centres of excellence in Australia and overseas by funding extended collaborations.

The **Linkage–Learned Academies Special Projects** promote excellence in research and learning and form an important link between government and research communities. The ARC provides annual funding to the Learned Academies on a competitive basis to support special projects that are expected to deliver broad benefits to the research and academic communities of Australia.

The *Special Research Initiatives (SRI)* program is aimed at encouraging greater collaboration among Australian researchers, including the development of international research linkages, as well as the cooperative development of high-quality research capacity in innovative areas. Funding under the program is available to support activities related to high-quality research endeavour in all fields. Activities may include one-off conferences, workshops, seminars and development of networks, where the purpose is to initiate collaboration that would not otherwise occur.

### NEW PROGRAM ELEMENTS TO BE FUNDED IN 2003

In 2003, the ARC will provide funding for research through two new program elements under *Linkage*: the Linkage–Australian Postdoctoral Award (CSIRO) and the ARC Centres of Excellence. In addition, the ARC will contribute to the establishment of two new centres of excellence in biotechnology and information and communications technology. The intention to establish these centres of excellence was announced in *Backing Australia's Ability*.

#### Linkage—Australian Postdoctoral Award (CSIRO)

Applications will be sought in 2002 for a new postdoctoral fellowship program, Linkage–Australian Postdoctoral Award (CSIRO), which will be jointly funded by the ARC and the CSIRO. The objectives of the new program are to:

- strengthen collaboration between universities and the CSIRO
- provide enhanced training opportunities for early career researchers by exposing them to the strategic research framework within which the CSIRO operates, and the fundamental research framework of university research.

The fellowships will have a standard tenure of three years. The funding rules require research teams to provide the research project with support that at least matches the fellowship funding.

#### ARC Centres of Excellence

The ARC is establishing Centres of Excellence to create the scale and focus necessary to maintain and develop Australia's international standing in designated areas of research priority. Through highly innovative research that addresses challenging and significant problems within the priority areas, the Centres will build national research capability and produce outcomes of economic, social and cultural benefit to Australia. It is proposed to spend a total of \$80 million over five years for approximately eight Centres of Excellence.

#### Biotechnology and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Centres of Excellence

ARC funding for the new Biotechnology Centre of Excellence will begin in 2003. The Centre for Stem Cells and Tissue Repair, which was announced in May 2002, will bring together Australia's expertise in embryonic and adult stem cell technology, both in the public and private sectors, and cement Australia's world standing in this field. The Centre has been assigned \$46.5 million over five years, with joint funding provided by the ARC and Biotechnology Australia.

ARC funding for the ICT Centre of Excellence, National ICT Australia (NICTA), will also begin in 2003. The Commonwealth's \$129.5 million contribution (over five years) to the Centre will be jointly funded by the ARC and the Communications, Information Technology and the Arts portfolio. In addition the main participants in NICTA will contribute almost \$100 million, in cash and in-kind, over the same period.