



Australian Government

Australian Research Council

Freedom of Information

Application for access to documents

This information sheet provides you with the basic instructions on how to submit a request under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. Further detailed information can be found on the ARC's website at www.arc.gov.au or by contacting the ARC's FOI Coordinator on tel: (02) 62876622 or email foi@arc.gov.au.

Your rights to access information

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) entitles any person to:

- apply for access to Commonwealth government documents held by Australian Government departments and some statutory authorities;
- ask for an amendment to your personal information if it is out of date, incomplete, incorrect or misleading; and
- seek review by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) of a decision not to allow you access to a document you may have requested or your request to amend your personal record has not been granted.

How do I make an FOI request?

A request made under the FOI Act must be in writing. You may choose to complete the [application form](#) and post it to us, or write or email us stating clearly that it is an FOI request.

Please write to:

FOI Coordinator
Australian Research Council
GPO Box 2702
Canberra ACT 2601

How much will it cost?

The costs relating to an FOI request are:

Search and retrieval: time we spend searching for or retrieving a document	\$15.00 per hour
Decision making: time we spend in deciding to grant or refuse a request, including examining documents, consulting with other parties, and making deletions	First five hours: Nil Subsequent hours: \$20 per hour
Transcript: preparing a transcript from a sound recording, shorthand or similar medium	\$4.40 per page of transcript
Photocopy	\$0.10 per page
Inspection: supervision by an agency officer of your inspection of documents or hearing or viewing an audio or visual recording at our premises	\$6.25 per half hour (or part thereof)
Delivery: posting or delivering a copy of a document at your request	Cost of postage or delivery

What must the ARC do when it receives my request?

The ARC must:

- notify you within 14 days that your request has been received;
- deal with your request as soon as possible;
- talk to you about any difficulties that may arise;
- as soon as possible, give you an estimate of the charges if any are applicable; and

- within 30 days write to you and tell you of the decision on giving you access. (Where a document contains information about other people or organisations, the ARC has to consult with these third parties. The ARC may extend the time in which it is required to tell you its decision by another 30 days to give third parties an opportunity to raise any objections or give consent to releasing their details).

Are there documents I can see that do not require an FOI request?

A list of the rules, guidelines, interpretations and precedents that are used by the ARC to make recommendations and/or decisions are listed on the website at http://www.arc.gov.au/about_arc/foi_section9.htm and some documents can be downloaded for free or obtained by writing to the ARC. Note that photocopy charges at 10 cents per page may apply.

What decision can I appeal against?

When the ARC writes to you and informs you of its decision to allow/disallow or allow partial access to a document, we will also send you information about your rights to appeal or review a decision.

You can appeal against:

- Decisions not letting you see what you want, when you want it, or in the form you want it.
- Decisions relating to remission of an application fee.
- Decisions imposing a charge to see what you want.
- Decisions in respect of the amount of the charge imposed upon you.
- Decisions refusing to change or annotate documents about you which you think are incomplete, incorrect, out of date or misleading.
- Decisions letting others see documents which you say would unreasonably disclose:
 - your personal information;
 - your lawful business or professional affairs;
 - lawful business, commercial or financial affairs of your firm.
- Decisions to give you access to documents about your physical or mental health through a qualified person and not directly to you.

What kinds of appeal do you have?

You can:

- require the ARC to reconsider its decision ('internal review');
- seek an independent review of the decision by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal ('AAT review');
- complain to the Commonwealth Ombudsman about the ARC's decision or action ('Ombudsman review').
- seek an independent review of the decision by the Australian Information Commissioner (AIC review') and/or the Administrative Appeals Tribunal ('AAT review').

Further detailed information can be found on the ARC's website http://www.arc.gov.au/about_arc/freedom_information.htm or by contacting the FOI Coordinator:

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