



Processes and Timetable for Establishment of the ARC/NWC Centre for Groundwater Research and Training

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Matching the Missions

The Australian Research Council advances Australia's **research excellence, global competitiveness** and delivers **benefits to the community**.

The National Water Commission delivers water reform in order to achieve the **sustainable management of Australia's water resources**.



Background to the Centre

“... groundwater readily fits under the National Research Priority theme of an Environmentally Sustainable Australia, specifically

– Priority Goal 1: Water – a critical resource”

“... unless we can improve knowledge and understanding of this key resource, we are at risk of seriously overexploiting it ...

... (which) could have serious impacts on the Australian economy.”

Background to the Centre

“(The) Centre (will) both increase effort in hydrogeological and possibly groundwater policy research and development, and build capacity in a new generation of hydrogeologists and groundwater experts.”

Key functions

- Leading edge research and development in hydrogeological R&D
- Training of students at postgraduate level

ARC Programs & '07-08 Budgets

<i>Program</i>	<i>\$mill</i>
• Discovery	282
• Federation Fellows	37
• Linkage	120
• Linkage Infrastructure	32
• Centres	106
<i>Total</i>	<u>577</u>

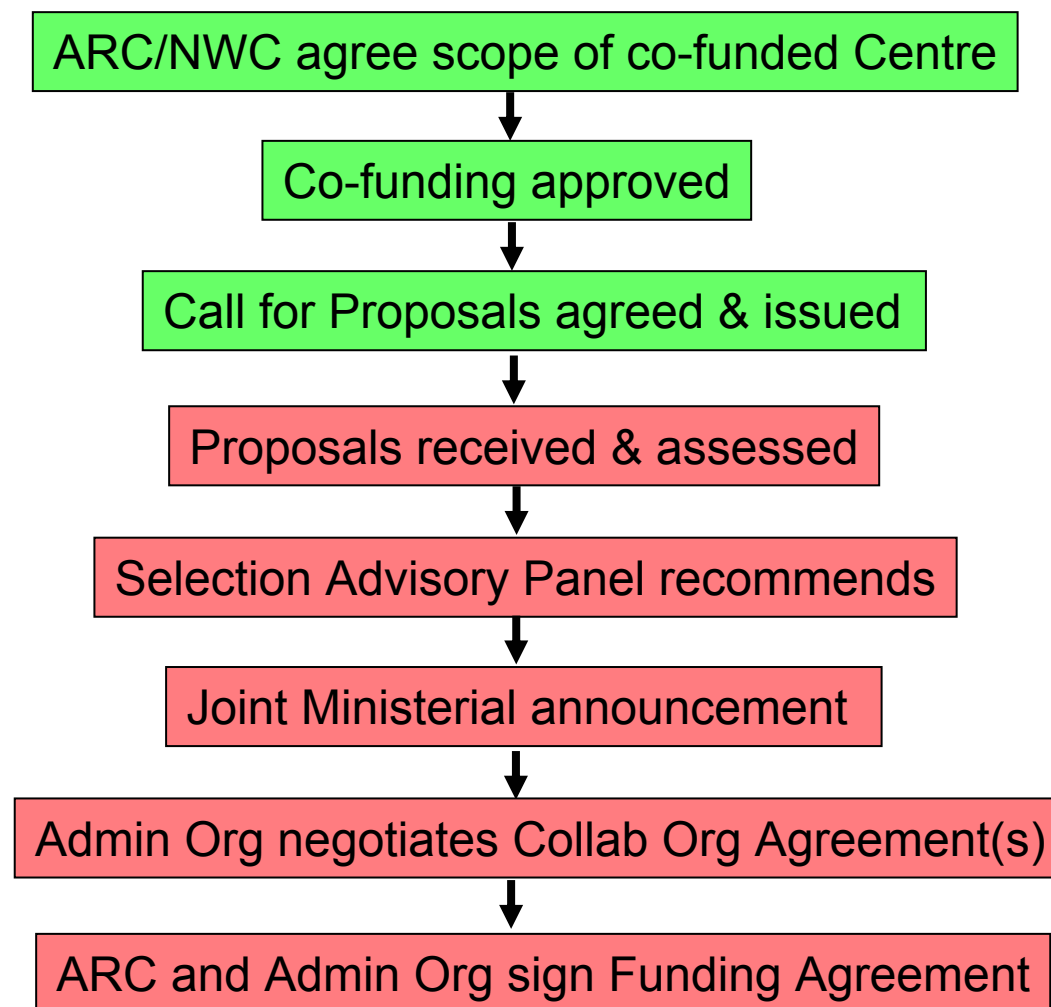
Co-funding; with outcomes emphasis

Where We Are Now

- Both Ministers have approved Centre funding for 5 years from FY2008-09
 - Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research has approved Funding Rules
- Call for Proposals was released on 5 March
- Applications close on 30 May
 - to be submitted to ARC in electronic and hard copies



Overview of the Process



Summary of the Funding Rules

- The Lead, or Administering Organisation, must be a university
 - *aspiring Admin. Orgs. must ensure that their one Proposal is complete and accurate prior to submission*
 - ARC/NWC funding goes to the Admin. Org. for allocation (not to researchers)
- Collaborating Organisations are other participating universities → *Chief Investigators*
- Partner Organisations are contributing research establishments → *Partner Investigators*

Summary of the Funding Rules

- The Call identifies the role and function of *both* the ARC and the NWC, and
 - *National Research Priority Area of ‘An Environmentally Sustainable Australia’, and*
 - *framework for water reform in the National Water Initiative*
- However, funding from ARC cannot meet the costs of a project that are, **or are likely to be**, met from other Commonwealth funding schemes, including other NWC or ARC projects
 - *funding from ARC for the Centre requires relinquishment of other duplicate funding!*

Summary of the Funding Rules

- The Centre will:
 - *undertake highly innovative and competitive research that ... produces **outcomes** of economic, social and cultural benefit to Australia;*
 - *be characterised by significant **collaboration**; and*
 - *pursue **engagement** with, and secure financial contributions from, research institutes and government and business entities.*
- The Centre may consist of separate research sites (nodes) but with an **integrated research program**.
 - *The Centre must have a prominent **identity** and presence at all nodes, and on the Web.*

Summary of the Funding Rules

The Centre will carry out novel, innovative and cross-disciplinary research and training in groundwater, *broadly* in:

- 3D aquifer characterisation
- Groundwater monitoring
- Groundwater resource assessments and modelling
- 3D digital groundwater resource database development
- Development of decision support systems and public access to data and information
- Training a new generation of hydrogeologists, groundwater engineers and managers
- Assessment of community, social and economic factors

Selection Criteria

- The merit of the Proposal, in meeting:
 - *the generic scheme objectives;*
 - *the specific objectives of the Centre;*
 - *the method and approach adopted;*
 - *expected results; and*
 - *value for money (external funding) & budget justification.*
- The track record of the parties and capacity to undertake the research; and
- The relevance of the Proposal to issues of national significance, incl. NRPs and the NWI.

The Process from Here (1)

Assessment:

- ARC will assign at least three members of the ARC College of Experts, one from each of the
 - *Physics, Chemistry and Geoscience Panel;*
 - *Engineering and Environmental Sciences Panel; and*
 - *Social, Behavioural and Economics Panel.*
- ARC will also assign at least three specialist International Readers, in consultation with the NWC
 - *including, but not exclusively from the ARC database*

The Process from Here (2)

Selection:

- A Selection Advisory Committee (SAC) will be established
- Two members will be ARC Executive Directors
 - *Physics, Chemistry and Geoscience; and*
 - *Engineering & Environmental Sciences*
- One member will represent the NWC
- The Chair and up to three other SAC members will be individuals selected for their expertise and the absence of any conceivable conflict of interest
 - *this may include one or more members from overseas*

The Process from Here (3)

Decision:

- The CEOs of the ARC and NWC will be asked to agree to the SAC's recommendation
- The ARC CEO will request for funding approval from the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research
- Joint Ministerial announcement
- Outcome letters to successful and unsuccessful applicants dispatched
- Draft Funding Agreement dispatched to successful applicant

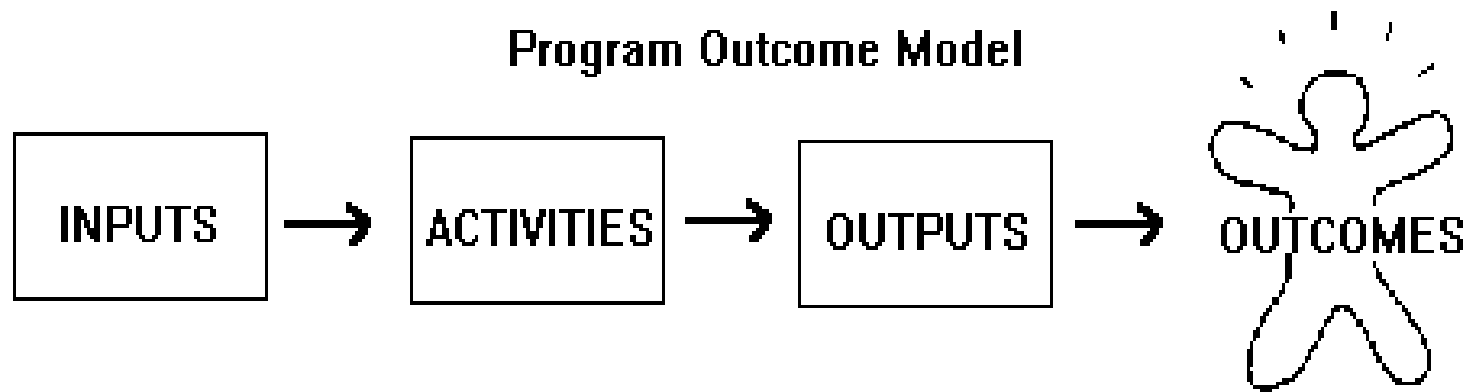
Characteristics Expected in a Successful Proposal

- Technical correctness balanced with clear, accessible English
- Show clear grasp of *groundwater* issues and show how they will be addressed
- Show how research and training in Australia fits into wider picture (national priorities; global fit)
- Ambitious, goals with plausible approaches
 - *break from “business-as-usual”*

Characteristics Expected in a Successful Proposal

- Develop outreach and collaborator engagement
 - *links to end-users; outcome driven*
- Evidence of strong past performance in the field
- Select the best and most appropriate people, regardless of their location
 - *a network of, and collaboration amongst, a viable coalition of Chief Investigators (CIs)*
- Show how a strong, cross-node Program will function and produce tangible outcomes
 - *eg, projects shared between nodes*

Where and Why “Outcomes”?



Real and tangible outcomes from this ARC/NWC funded research Centre are a reasonable expectation of Government and the tax-payer

Final message for proponents:

***.... read and
understand the
Funding Rules!***

Because ineligibilities will kill!