



Australian Government

Australian Research Council

Australian Laureate Fellowships

**Selection Report
(for funding commencing in 2010)**

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Overview

The Australian Research Council's *Australian Laureate Fellowships* scheme reflects the Australian Government's commitment to support excellence in research by attracting world-class researchers and research leaders to key positions in Australia.

Objectives

The objectives of the *Australian Laureate Fellowships* scheme are to:

- a. attract and retain outstanding researchers and research leaders of international repute;
- b. build and strengthen world-class research capability in Australia;
- c. provide an excellent research training environment and exemplary mentorship to nurture early-career researchers;
- d. expand Australia's knowledge base by supporting ground-breaking, internationally competitive research;
- e. forge strong links among researchers, industry and the international research community; and
- f. support research that will result in economic, environmental, social or cultural benefits for Australia.

Selection Process

The closing date for proposals was 2 December 2009. Proposals were submitted through the ARC online application system.

Proposals were reviewed by an ARC Selection Advisory Committee (SAC). The SAC was informed and advised by assessments provided by readers who had relevant expertise. Those readers were members of the ARC College of Experts, Australian Readers and International Readers. The SAC:

- reviewed each proposal;
- ranked each proposal relative to others on the basis of the proposal and the assessor reports; and
- prepared funding recommendations, including recommended budgets.

Selection Criteria

The selection criteria are:

- Investigator (40%);
- Project/Program of research activity (30%)
- Mentoring/Capacity Building (30%)

Funding Levels and Duration

Australian Laureate Fellowships projects are funded for five years on a full-time basis, subject to sufficient funding being available for the *Australian Laureate Fellowships* scheme, the provisions of the *Australian Research Council Act 2001* (the ARC Act), and continued satisfactory progress of the *Australian Laureate Fellowships* project.

In addition to the Australian Laureate Fellowship salary supplement and salary-related (on-cost) support, the ARC may provide Australian Laureate Fellows with:

- a. additional funding for up to two postdoctoral research associates for five years each and up to two postgraduate researchers for four years each; and
- b. for Eligible Organisations listed in Appendix C1.1 of the *Australia Laureate Fellowships Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2010*, project funding of up to \$300,000 per annum.

Of the 15 approved Australian Laureate Fellows, the average amount of approved funding is \$2,369,404 in total over 5 years. In addition to the total Australian Laureate Fellowship salary support of \$9,794,400, a total of \$14,425,760 is approved for postdoctoral research associates and postgraduate researchers and a further \$11,320,893 for general project funding.

While funding is awarded for *Australian Laureate Fellowships* proposals for five years, the ARC Act applies limits in relation to the amount and years for which the Minister may approve funding. At the time of award, funding is approved only up to and including the 2012-2013 financial year. Subsequent years and associated funding limits are added by amendment to the Act, following which funding for the additional years may be made available. Accordingly, the term "indicative funding" is used throughout this report to denote the total level of funding which it is proposed to be made available, once all years to which funding proposals relate have been legislated.

The following table shows indicative funds for approved *Australian Laureate Fellowships* proposals for commencement in 2010.

Table 1. Indicative funds for approved *Australian Laureate Fellowships* proposals for funding commencing in 2010

Budget item	2010-11 \$	2011-12 \$	2012-13 \$	2013-14 \$	2014-15 \$	TOTAL \$
FL Salary support + on-costs	1,958,880	1,958,880	1,958,880	1,958,880	1,958,880	9,794,400
ARC Postdoctoral Researchers	2,245,096	2,245,096	2,245,096	2,245,096	2,245,096	11,225,480
ARC Postgraduate Researchers	453,373	800,070	800,070	800,070	346,697	3,200,280
Project Funding	2,463,153	2,430,012	2,364,360	2,282,041	1,781,327	11,320,893
TOTAL	7,120,502	7,434,058	7,368,406	7,286,087	6,332,000	35,541,053

Summary of Outcomes

A total of 98 proposals were submitted to the ARC. One of the submitted proposals was subsequently withdrawn by the Administering Organisation and, consequently, 97 proposals were considered for funding. Of the 97 proposals considered, 15 proposals are approved for funding. The overall success rate for the *Australian Laureate Fellowships scheme for funding commencing in 2010* is 15.5%.

In addition, eight proposals are approved as “reserves”, to be funded subject to the availability of ARC funds. The “reserve” proposals are not included in figures relating to approved proposals in the following statistics.

Eighty-two proposals are not approved for funding (including the eight reserves).

The following overview summarises the characteristics of the considered and the approved *Australian Laureate Fellowship* candidates.

Attracting and Retaining Outstanding Researchers

Proposals were open to Eligible Organisations to nominate candidates who are outstanding researchers of international repute, resident either within Australia or overseas. The *Australian Laureate Fellowships* scheme encourages proposals involving Australian or non-Australian researchers.

Of the 97 proposals considered, seven were for Australians intending to return to Australia – of these, one is approved for funding. Ten proposals were for foreign nationals – of these, one is approved for funding. Eighty were for resident Australians – of these, 13 are approved for funding.

The following table shows the citizenship/residency status of *Australian Laureate Fellowship* candidates and approved Australian Laureate Fellows.

Table 2: Citizenship/residency status

	Commencing in 2010-11			
Citizenship/ residency status	No. of considered proposals	% of considered proposals	No. of approved proposals	% of approved proposals
Returning Australians	7	7.2	1	6.7
Foreign Nationals	10	10.3	1	6.7
Resident Australians	80	82.5	13	86.6
TOTAL	97	100	15	100

Approved Australian Laureate Fellows: Returning Australians

There is one *Australian Laureate Fellowship* candidate approved for funding in this category.

Table 3: Returning Australian approved for funding - Current Organisation and Administering Organisation

Fellowship candidate	Current Organisation	Administering Organisation
Prof C Turney	University of Exeter	The University of New South Wales

Approved Australian Laureate Fellows: Foreign Nationals

There is one *Australian Laureate Fellowship* candidate approved for funding in this category.

Table 4: Foreign nationals approved for funding – Citizenship, Current Organisation and Administering Organisation

Fellowship candidate	Country of citizenship	Current Organisation	Administering Organisation
Prof H Kokko	Finland	University of Helsinki/The Australian National University	The Australian National University

Approved Australian Laureate Fellows: Resident Australians

There are 13 *Australian Laureate Fellowship* candidates approved for funding in this category.

Table 5: Resident Australians approved for funding - Current Organisation and Administering Organisation

Fellowship candidate	Current Organisation	Administering Organisation
Prof M Bradford	The University of New South Wales	The University of New South Wales
Prof H Charlesworth	The Australian National University	The Australian National University
Prof M England	The University of New South Wales	The University of New South Wales
Prof B Gaensler	The University of Sydney	The University of Sydney
Prof P Goodyear	The University of Sydney	The University of Sydney
Prof M Gu	Swinburne University	Swinburne University
Prof A Hoffman	The University of Melbourne	The University of Melbourne
Prof M Jolly	The Australian National University	The Australian National University
Prof W Laurance	James Cook University	James Cook University
Prof L Mazerolle	The University of Queensland	The University of Queensland
Prof P Mulvaney	The University of Melbourne	The University of Melbourne
Prof A Neeman	The Australian National University	The Australian National University
Prof M Westoby	Macquarie University	Macquarie University

Administering Organisation

It is a requirement of the *Australian Laureate Fellowships Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2010* for the Administering Organisation to provide a salary of Level E professorial appointment (or equivalent) to the successful candidate, with the ARC providing the salary supplement of \$A102,025 per annum plus 28 per cent on-costs.

The Administering Organisations of the 15 proposals approved for funding are:

The University of New South Wales (3)

The Australian National University (4)

The University of Sydney (2)

Swinburne University (1)

The University of Melbourne (2)

James Cook University (1)

The University of Queensland (1)

Macquarie University (1)

National Research Priorities

All approved proposals fall under a National Research Priority, with total funding approved over five years as follows:

- An Environmentally Sustainable Australia (7) \$15,542,872
- Promoting and Maintaining Good Health (0) \$0
- Frontier Technologies for Building and Transforming Australian Industries (5) \$12,451,015
- Safeguarding Australia (3) \$7,547,166

ARC Discipline Clusters

The following table summarises the distribution of proposals within disciplines.

Table 6: Disciplines of all proposals

	Commencing in 2010-11			
ARC Discipline Grouping *	No. of considered proposals	% of considered proposals	No. of approved proposals	% of approved proposals
BSB	21	21.7	3	20.0
EE	12	12.4	3	20.0
HCA	13	13.4	2	13.3
MIC	10	10.3	1	6.7
PCE	30	30.9	4	26.7
SBE	11	11.3	2	13.3
TOTAL	97	100	15	100

* BSB = Biological Sciences and Biotechnology; EE = Engineering and Environmental Sciences; HCA = Humanities and Creative Arts; MIC = Mathematics, Information and Communication Sciences; PCE = Physics, Chemistry and Earth Sciences; SBE = Social, Behavioural and Economic Sciences

Stage in Career

As shown in Table 7, at the time of application, 24.7% of all *Australian Laureate Fellowship* candidates in this round are within 15 years of the award of their PhD. Of the approved Australian Laureate Fellows, 20.0% are within 15 years of the award of their PhD.

Table 7: Years since the award of PhD (at time of submission)

	Commencing in 2010-11			
Years since award of PhD	No. of considered proposals	% of considered proposals	No. of approved proposals	% of approved proposals
0-15 years	24	24.7	3	20.0
16-20 years	26	26.8	4	26.7
21/+ years	46	47.4	8	53.3
No PhD	1	1.1	0	0
TOTAL	97	100	15	100

Age and Gender

As Table 8 shows, at the time of application, seven (46.7%) approved Australian Laureate Fellows are under the age of 50.

Table 8: Age distribution of candidates (at time of submission)

	Commencing in 2010-2011			
Age cohort	No. of considered proposals	% of considered proposals	No. of approved proposals	% of approved proposals
< 40 years	10	10.3	3	20
40-49 years	38	39.2	4	26.7
50-59 years	33	34.0	6	40
60 / + years	15	15.5	2	13.3
Undisclosed	1	1.0	0	0
TOTAL	97	100	15	100

Seventeen (17.5%) of all *Australian Laureate Fellowship* candidates in this round are female, and of the approved Australian Laureate Fellows, four (26.7%) are female.