



Australian Government

Australian Research Council

Linkage International

Selection Report

Round 9

Awards for funding commencing in 2005

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Overview

Linkage International comprises two elements:

- Awards: to build links between researchers, research teams and research centres of excellence in Australia and overseas by funding extended collaborations; and
- Fellowships, comprising:
 - ARC International Fellowships funded under international agreements for the reciprocal exchange of postdoctoral researchers, including the Anglo-Australian Observatory Fellowship Agreement;
 - ARC International Fellowships to fund overseas researchers to work in Australia;
 - ARC International Fellowships to fund Australian researchers to work in overseas institutions; and
 - Australia-Israel Fellowships co-funded by the ARC and the Australia-Israel Scientific Exchange Foundation.

Round 9 consisted of applications for Awards only.

Objectives

Linkage International aims to:

- build strong ongoing collaborations between researchers, research teams or centres of excellence in Australia with those overseas;
- strengthen international research experience for early career researchers and generate opportunities for postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers to link into leading-edge international research networks;
- build Australian research capability by enhancing existing, and developing new, collaborations among experienced and senior researchers; and
- develop innovative modes of international collaboration and links into global innovation networks.

Internationally Coordinated projects

From time to time, the ARC may collaborate with overseas funding agencies to fund internationally coordinated collaborative Awards. Under the Materials World Network, the

ARC and the US National Science Foundation (NSF) have established a cooperative initiative to stimulate enhanced collaborations among materials science researchers and create networks linking individuals and centres in Australia with those in the USA.

The first call for proposals under this initiative closed on 22 October 2004. The ARC received five applications and these were assessed competitively alongside other applications for Awards.

The proposals to the NSF which were associated with these five applications to the ARC were assessed by the NSF and were unsuccessful. Two of the five applications to the ARC were recommended for funding. Considering that this was the first time that the ARC entered into an arrangement for coordinated projects, it is not surprising that there were few applications and none which were supported by the NSF. However, it is expected that this situation will change as the scheme becomes more widely known.

Selection process

Assessment of applications was undertaken by a Selection Advisory Committee drawn from members of the ARC's College of Experts. The Selection Advisory Committee:

- ranked each application relative to the others on the basis of the applications;
- assessed and recommended budgets; and
- prepared funding recommendations.

Selection criteria

Selection of *Linkage International* Awards is based on the following criteria and weightings:

- strength and benefits of the collaboration (as evidenced, for example, by ongoing research collaboration, reciprocal and matching funding contributions, and/or the participation of early career researchers) 40%
- Chief Investigator, including track record and research management skills 20%
- Overseas Investigator, including track record and research management skills 20%
- research proposed, in particular, aims, significance, research plan and methodology 20%

National Research Priorities

- Research Priority 1: An Environmentally Sustainable Australia
- Research Priority 2: Promoting and Maintaining Good Health
- Research Priority 3: Frontier Technologies for Building and Transforming Australian Industries
- Research Priority 4: Safeguarding Australia

National Research Priorities identified in applications submitted and applications recommended for funding are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: National Research Priorities identified in applications for Awards

National Research Priority	Award applications submitted	Award applications recommended
An Environmentally Sustainable Australia	17	6
Promoting and Maintaining Good Health	6	1
Frontier Technologies for Building and Transforming Australian Industries	40	14
Safeguarding Australia	4	0
None selected	18	3
TOTAL	85	24

Summary of outcomes

Eighty-five (85) applications were considered for *Linkage International Awards*, including 48 that were held over from the previous round (Round 8). Twenty-four (24) applications are recommended for funding in the current round, representing a total ARC commitment of \$983,458 over the financial years 2004-05 to 2007-08. One application was considered to be ineligible and another 43 applications are not recommended for funding.

Of the 37 applications considered for the first time in Round 9, 24 are recommended for funding. On the basis of these recommendations, this equates to a success rate of 28% if all 85 applications, including ‘hold-overs’ are considered, or 65% if only the 37 new applications are considered.

Award applications may remain ‘live’ for one year from the date of submission if requested by the Selection Advisory Committee. Thirty-one (31) applications expired at the end of Round 9 and 17 applications will be held over for consideration in the next round (Round 10). Numbers of applications considered and recommended and success rates, by discipline group, are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Numbers and success rates for applications for Awards, by discipline group

Discipline Group	Applications held over from Round 8	New applications	Recommended applications	Applications held over to Round 10	Expired or Ineligible and not funded	Discipline Success Rate %
BSB	7	1	0	3	5	0
EE	11	19	12	4	14*	40
HCA	2	2	1	1	2	25
MIC	8	4	2	3	7	17
PCG	11	10	9	2	10	43
SBE	9	1	0	4	6	0
Total	48	37*	24	17	44	28

*One application was deemed to be ineligible

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

The applications for Awards considered in the current round were submitted in 2004 for funding commencing in 2005. Awards may be funded for a period of up to three years. Total requested funding over the financial years 2004-05 to 2007-08 is \$4,285,539; total recommended funding is \$983,458 or 23% of total requested funding. Requested and recommended funding by discipline groups are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Amounts requested and recommended for Awards, by discipline group

Discipline Group	Total requested over project life	Total recommended over project life	Total recommended funding as % of requested funding
BSB	\$182,500	\$0	0
EE	\$1,905,069	\$356,720	19
HCA	\$107,458	\$14,358	13
MIC	\$423,037	\$50,600	12
PCG	\$1,312,102	\$561,780	43
SBE	\$355,373	\$0	0
Total	\$4,285,539	\$983,458	23

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International Collaboration

Linkage International applicants are asked to indicate which countries will be involved in the proposed collaborations. For the 24 recommended applications, 31 incidences of international collaboration were reported – the highest number being with the USA, followed by China and Canada as indicated in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Incidences of international collaboration

Country	Incidences
USA	8
China (including Hong Kong)	6
Canada	4
United Kingdom	3
France	2
Germany	2
Austria	1
Finland	1
Italy	1
Republic of Korea	1
New Zealand	1
Poland	1
Switzerland	1

Research training and postdoctoral researchers

In applications recommended for funding, participants in the projects include 35 postgraduate students and 17 postdoctoral researchers in Australian institutions, and 28 postgraduate students and 13 postdoctoral researchers in overseas institutions. This gives a total of 93 postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers who would be supported in developing international research experience and networks. The number of postgraduate and postdoctoral research positions in Australian and overseas institutions are shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Research training and postdoctoral researchers

	Australian institutions		Overseas institutions		Total	
	Applications	Recommended	Applications	Recommended	Applications	Recommended
Postgraduates	100	35	89	28	189	63
Postdoctoral researchers	64	17	41	13	105	30
Total	164	52	130	41	294	93

Funding by institution

Information about the number of applications considered and recommended, and funding requested and recommended, by institution, is shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Award applications by institution: total requested and recommended funding

	Applications considered in Round 9	Funding Requested	Applications Recommended	Success rate %	Funding recommended over project life
Charles Darwin University	1	\$18,500	0	0	0
Charles Sturt University	1	\$16,250	0	0	0
Curtin University of Technology	2	\$53,080	0	0	0
James Cook University	1	\$8,050	0	0	0
Macquarie University	1	\$63,000	1	100	\$63,000
Monash University	4	\$184,000	3	75	\$152,000
Queensland University of Technology	8	\$291,523	1	13	\$116,480
Swinburne University of Technology	2	\$63,089	1	50	\$16,000
The Australian National University	5	\$378,965	1	20	\$45,000
The University of Adelaide	3	\$119,765	1	33	\$30,000
The University of Melbourne	7	\$188,308	3	43	\$59,300
The University of New England	1	\$25,600	0	0	0
The University of New South Wales	9	\$317,724	4	44	\$104,900
The University of Newcastle	3	\$162,980	0	0	0
The University of Queensland	5	\$219,558	0	0	0
The University of Sydney	7	\$1,071,351	2	29	\$37,520
The University of Western Australia	5	\$190,108	2	40	\$44,358
University of South Australia	6	\$459,406	2	33	\$229,000
University of Tasmania	1	\$32,550	0	0	0
University of Technology, Sydney	4	\$91,680	1	25	\$16,000
University of Wollongong	9	\$330,052	2	22	\$69,900
TOTAL	85	\$4,285,539	24	28	\$983,458

Scheme Budget

The allocations from the *Linkage International* budget recommended for Awards to commence in 2005 are shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Allocations, by financial year

2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	TOTAL
\$398,658	\$316,910	\$267,890	\$983,458