



Australian Government  
Australian Research Council

# Establishment Toolkit

## ARC Centres of Excellence for funding commencing in 2020



### Table of Contents

Execution of the Grant Agreement .....	3
Establishment Funds .....	3
Taskforce .....	4
Participating Organisation Agreements .....	5
Conduct of Research .....	6
Detailed Project Plans and Agreements .....	6
Transitioning Arrangements for Centres .....	7
Additional interest to join the Centre .....	8
Governance .....	10
Advisory Committees .....	10
Executive Management Committee .....	10
Governance Processes .....	11
Reporting lines .....	11
Financial delegations .....	12
Personnel .....	12
Change of Centre Director .....	12
Appointment of Chief Operating Officer .....	13
Change of Chief Operating Officer .....	13
Recruitment of Personnel .....	13
Initial Centre Meeting .....	14
Operational Plans .....	14
Strategic Plan .....	14
Gender Equality and Diversity Plan .....	15



Australian Government  
Australian Research Council

Governance Plan .....	15
Budget Plan .....	15
Strategic Funds .....	16
Mentoring Plan .....	16
Translation Plan .....	16
Creating a Centre as an entity .....	17
Website and social media.....	17
Centre Logo .....	17
Signage .....	17
Launch Event.....	17
Setting Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) .....	18
Reporting Tools .....	18
Annual Report.....	19
Reviews .....	19
Performance Review .....	19
Final Report.....	20



## Introduction

This document provides helpful information to Applicants and grant awardees on best practice administration requirements of the *ARC Centres of Excellence (Centres)*.

This document supports the *ARC Centres of Excellence Grant Agreement for funding commencing in 2020* (Grant Agreement). Where appropriate, this document will reference clauses within the Grant Agreement.

Applicants and grant awardees must use the Grant Guidelines and Grant Agreements as the authoritative documents.

Please note, all terms and definitions in this document align with the Grant Agreement such as:

- **'Centre'** refers to the awarded *ARC Centre of Excellence*
- **'You/Your'** refers to the Administering Organisation
- **'We/Us'** refers to the Australian Research Council (ARC)

In addition, 'senior leadership' refers to the Centre Director, Chief Operating Officer, Deputy Directors, and node leaders.

## Execution of the Grant Agreement

### Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- 5. Payment of the Grant

### Additional information

Grant Agreements and Grant Offers will be provided to your Research Office through the Research Management System (RMS) and accepted by a user with the role type 'Research Office Signatory'. The Grant Agreement and Grant Offer will then be counter-accepted by an ARC Delegate and the associated project will be created for payment of funding.

For more information on accepting a Grant Agreement in RMS, please visit 'RMS: How to use Funding Agreement functionality' page on the [ARC website](#).

Your first ARC payment is made in the next monthly pay run in the funded year. For more information regarding ARC payments, please visit the 'Grant Payments' page on the [ARC website](#).

## Establishment Funds

### Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- 7. Use of the Grant

### Additional information

Once the Grant Agreement has been executed and prior to commencement of the Centre, You can seek approval from the ARC to access up to \$100,000 in establishment funds.

A one-page request including a breakdown of proposed expenditure and rationale must be made via the Research Office to [ARC-Postaward@arc.gov.au](mailto:ARC-Postaward@arc.gov.au).



*Example of an establishment fund request:*

Request for Total \$X of ARC establishment funding to support the following activities:

- Salary for the Chief Operating Officer (COO) at HEW Level 9/10 or other senior administrative personnel to be employed by the Administering Organisation to directly assist in establishment activities \$X
- Recruitment costs including advertising: \$X (estimate only)
- Setting up of the website and KPI Reporting Tool plus logo, flyers, etc.: \$X
- Travel for the Centre Director and any other personnel to attend the meetings between universities and industry partners: \$X
  - Air fares and taxis (\$X each), accommodation (\$X each), travel allowance (\$x each)
- Cost of workshop including travel costs for inter-state participants: \$X
  - Air fares and taxis (\$X each), accommodation (\$X each), Venue hiring and expenses \$X

In the unlikely event that the Centre does not commence and ceases, establishment funds will not be recovered by the ARC.

Please note that **You** hold the risk for incurring any costs above and beyond the establishment funds before the Centre has officially commenced.

Access to the remaining project funds for eligible budget items will only be available once the Centre has officially commenced, following the execution of agreements with Participating Organisations.

## Taskforce

The senior leadership of the Centre needs early support from the university administration during the establishment process, especially to navigate complex policy and agreement challenges.

You are encouraged to establish a small temporary taskforce to support the Centre, potentially including representatives from:

- Human Resources
- Finance
- Research Office
- Communications
- Information and Communications Technology
- Legal office
- Commercialisation and IP/Business Development.

This taskforce can provide operational guidance and support for establishment matters including:

- recruitment and appointments arrangements
- budget management and financial delegation
- reporting requirements
- corporate identity and branding



- establishing key administration contacts
- legal agreements with the Participating Organisations.

It may also be valuable to include a taskforce member with experience in good governance processes for research entities.

Setting out the terms of the taskforce (through the creation of a short document) may assist in ensuring everyone is working toward the same goal.

Some universities have taskforce structures already in place, or You can help the Centre to create a temporary one.

**TIP: Documenting the operational guidance will allow You and the senior leadership to reference this material over the life of the Centre, regardless of any key university staff changes.**

## Participating Organisation Agreements

### Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- 10. Participating Organisation Agreements
- 19.5-7 Conduct of Research

### Additional information

Building on the discussions and draft agreements developed during the application phase, negotiating and executing agreements with Participating Organisations may require significant effort.

You may choose to enter into a single agreement with multiple organisations or a single agreement per institution, as appropriate. You may consider a simplified agreement in certain circumstances, i.e. with an overseas institution, or an organisation which is only making a small contribution. Please note that all agreements must include certain provisions as required under the Grant Agreement.

Provide clear guidance in your agreements about Conflicts of Interest arrangements. This should include the management of current relationships within the Centre and how potential future conflicts will be identified and managed.

Previous experience has shown executing agreements with some organisations from overseas can be challenging and time consuming. Some countries need to ensure that any research agreement does not contradict their own legal framework. Note that larger organisations often need to seek legal advice in other countries.

**TIP: Consider simplifying the agreement, such as term sheets outlining high level requirements during the application stage or use a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to manage expectations on participation.**

**TIP: It may be useful to workshop Your draft Participating Organisation Agreement by running it through a variety of tests using hypothetical scenarios, particularly around IP ownership and other potential disputes.**

**TIP: Develop an abridged version of the agreement which explains in clear language “what this means for me” which may be a useful tool to provide to all parties.**



**TIP: Some Centres have found it beneficial to use consistent plain language in the agreements with all Participating Organisations to enable a community of understanding.**

You can create additional policy and procedure documents that underpin the terms of the agreement. This will allow You flexibility to make any procedural changes over time without varying the agreements. For example, the agreement states parties must comply with Conflicts of Interest, but the detailed mechanisms are outlined in a procedural document.

In extenuating circumstances, where all agreements have been completed with the exception of one which is seriously delaying the commencement of the Centre, You may submit a Variation to temporarily remove that organisation subject to ARC approval. This allows the Centre to commence and the organisation may be re-added once the agreement has been finalised. You must ensure the Participating Organisation agrees to this Variation and continue to manage their expectations.

If You are experiencing difficulties in finalising any of the Participating Organisation agreements, please contact the ARC Major Investments Team for advice.

## Conduct of Research

### Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- 19. Conduct of Research

### Additional information

An ethics plan must be in place prior to commencing the Centre.

Consider the need for some flexibility should changes to the project scope be necessary.

**TIP: Carefully consider any other statutory or regulatory requirements with which the Centre must comply.**

## Detailed Project Plans and Agreements

Once the Centre is established, nodes will begin setting up project agreements/plans. This step requires more detailed negotiations with Participating Organisations and personnel involved. While the activity is Centre-wide, the oversight of the process is driven centrally by the senior leadership.

**TIP: Make sure the agreements are integrated within the research program to avoid it becoming a loose network of individual projects.**

**TIP: Consider outlining the key milestones, reporting requirements, and an escalation process for issues.**

**TIP: Document the project IP through an IP register: this can be a simple excel document list or something more technical to suit the needs of the Centre. Include information on the:**

- Background IP
- Expected Project IP
- Process for managing New/Emerging IP

Further information regarding the development of a translation plan is provided below.

Please be aware that in negotiating project plans/agreements, it must be implemented in accordance with the Centre's 'Project Description' and within the broad structure of the proposed 'Project Cost' contained in the application, as well as any Special Conditions.



There are examples where Centres seek scope changes for approval by the ARC that can either emerge during the early negotiations or during the lifespan of the agreement.

#### A. Examples of Variation Requests for Scope Change

##### ***Examples of scope changes that would be considered for approval by the ARC***

###### Example 1

A Centre had three themes and six sub projects in the application. However, after accepting the funding offer there was a return rate of 90% of ARC funds. It was decided that the grant would scale back and remove one of the sub projects from the research program. There is no major impact to the overall outcomes.

###### Example 2

A Centre had a partner withdraw from the Project and a new partner was interested in joining, however under a different/new research theme than the original partner was involved in. This new research direction is still within the intent of the Centre program and can be integrated easily into future research program activities. You request a variation to add a new organisation and scope change for approval by the ARC.

##### ***Examples of scope changes which would NOT be approved by the ARC***

###### Example 1

A Centre wishes to change a research theme due to changes in their partner organisation's priorities, which falls outside the objectives and aims of the research program or scheme objectives. In this case, a scope change variation would not be approved by the ARC.

## Transitioning Arrangements for Centres

### Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B8. Centres with a Grant in Previous ARC Centres of Excellence Funding Rounds

### Additional information

You may be awarded a new Centre before the end date of a previously funded Centre. To manage the transition arrangements, the ARC requires You and the senior leadership to submit a transition statement for consideration.

The transition statement must be provided to the [ARC-Postaward@arc.gov.au](mailto:ARC-Postaward@arc.gov.au) **within three months** of the new Centre Grant Offer being executed by the ARC.

An example statement is included below. See Clause B8 of the Agreement for a list of the required information for this statement.

**IMPORTANT:** Should the transition statement be unsatisfactory in outlining the transition arrangements, or if there is potential overlap of funding, the ARC may recover funds from either the new and/or old Centre.



## Examples of transitioning arrangements for Centres

There are three general options for transition:

### Option 1:

The old Centre will conclude and then the new Centre will commence. This arrangement may include requesting approval from the ARC to delay the start of the new Centre.

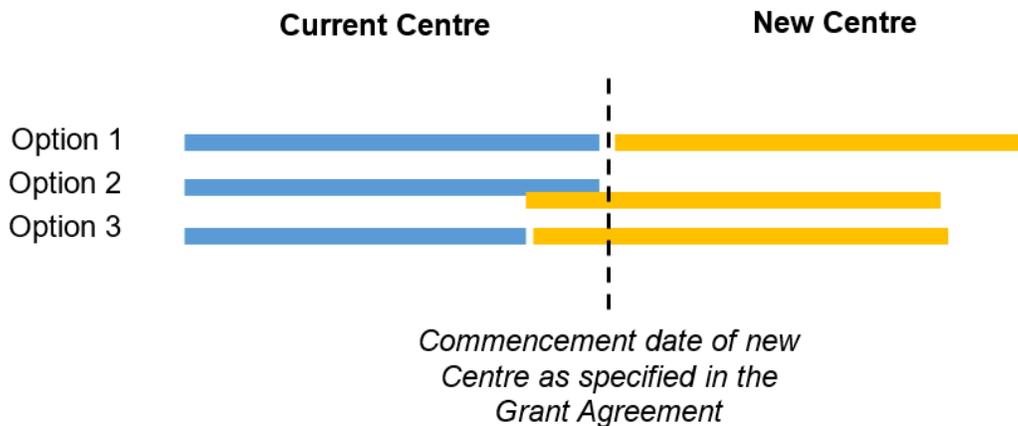
### Option 2:

The old Centre will continue with an acting Director while the new Centre will commence with the Director. This arrangement will need to carefully detail the movement of all personnel from the old to the new, where appropriate. You must seek approval from the ARC to appoint an acting Director to manage the old Centre.

### Option 3:

You can seek approval from the ARC to conclude the old Centre earlier (with or without a partial relinquishment of funds) and then commence the new Centre.

Figure 1: Transitioning arrangement examples



## Additional interest to join the Centre

As a newly established Centre, you will experience a surge of interest from other organisations that would like to be involved in the Centre. Ensure there is a clear strategy and criteria for managing such requests for adding new organisations, including a framework to consider the merits of the collaboration.

When obtaining cash from industry, there has to be ongoing engagement and monitoring of cash flow, particularly for investments over multiple years.



## Example criteria for considering new Participating Organisations

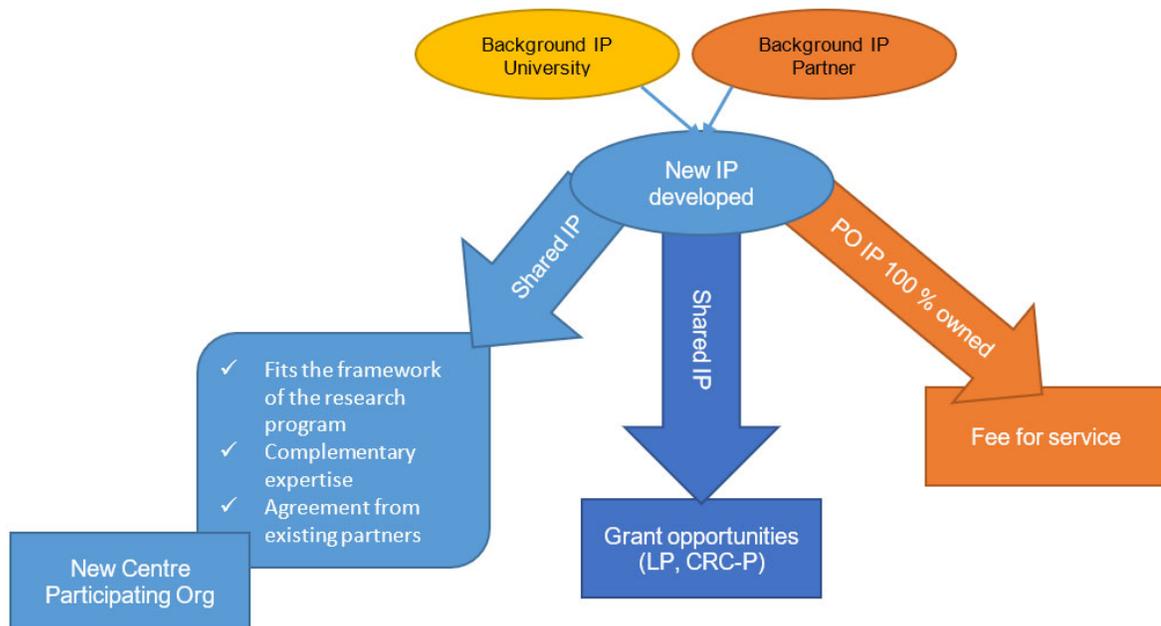
Have criteria to identify if the new partnership is more appropriate as:

- Fee for Service contract or consultancy direct with the university (for example when the partners are seeking 100% IP ownership)
- Separate grant opportunity (e.g. ARC Linkage Projects, ARC Discovery Projects or Cooperative Research Centres Projects [CRC-P]) (for example, shared IP and outside of the Centre)
- New Partner Organisation within the Centre, ensuring it fits in the research program and collaboration framework.

Appropriateness to add a new Participating Organisation?

- Consider the framework of the research program
- Consider the merits for adding a partner—does the new Participating Organisation enhance the capability and direction of the research program?
- Is this replacing a Participating Organisation that has been removed from the grant? Is this 'like for like', or not?
- What is the impact on the existing shared IP arrangements?
- Is there clear support from the current Participating Organisations to add the new organisation?

Figure 2: Example of business process flow for considering new partners



## Governance

This scheme is a large commonwealth investment with multiple organisations involved and is considered a research entity. As such, governance is an important consideration. Clear governance arrangements facilitate better program management and translation of outcomes.

### **Advisory Committees**

It is recommended that an **Advisory Committee** is established as early as possible. Membership of this committee will particularly help with strategic and translational planning and thinking ahead.

Membership should include unique strategic skills to advise on challenges that could lie ahead, not only current issues for the Centre. The committee can have national and international membership. Scientific, governance or operational expertise can be sought from members—whatever is needed to support the Centre.

Develop clear Terms of Reference including:

- quorum requirements
- gender equality and diversity
- Early Career Researcher (ECR) participation (as a part of professional development and mentoring)
- equitable organisational representation
- ensuring the membership gives advice, not directives
- clear requirements for refreshing membership every couple of years to continue developing and meeting new strategic directions.

Talk to other Centre Directors and look at other Centre annual reports—while the ARC does not give specific recommendations on governance structure, there are many examples that are available for you to consider.

Additionally, the senior leadership may consider establishing a Research Advisory Committee which would provide advice on international benchmarking of the research outcomes within the Centre.

Note that the ARC does not stipulate the number of members for this committee, only that it should have the right mix of expertise.

**TIP: The Advisory Committee(s) should be independent of the members of the Centre to enable them to consider strategic issues and provide appropriate advice to leadership.**

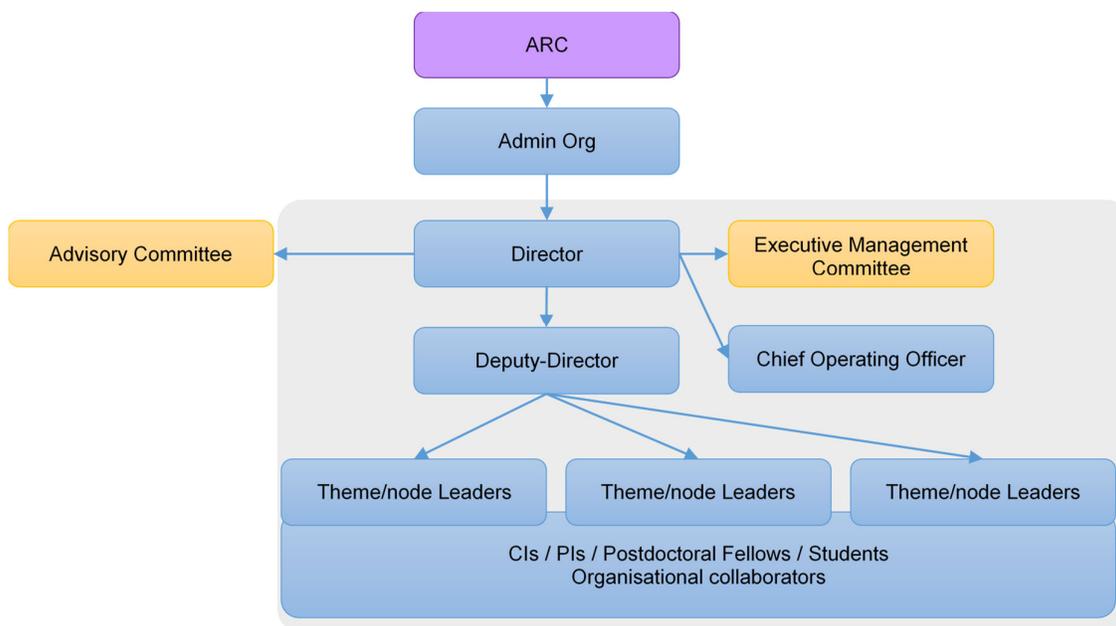
### **Executive Management Committee**

To operate as an entity in its own right, there must be adequate representation of senior leadership to manage the Centre. This can include Centre Director, Chief Operating Officer (COO), node Leaders, and on occasions University senior executive. The COO is important to include in this membership to ensure operational aspects of the Centre are present in discussions as context for the decision making structure. Also consider how best to include and engage with Partner Organisation representatives.

Additionally, the COO is an important role, ensuring operational aspects of the Centre are represented in discussions which is important context for decision making. Remember that members of the Executive Management Committee should be working together for the Centre's best interests (and not individual institutions).



Figure 3: Example of key elements of a governance framework



### **Governance Processes**

Change management and documented processes are very important for managing ARC Centres of Excellence.

In situations where major decisions need to be made in regards to changes with Investigators, the directions and performance of the Research Program, and budget variations, clear process should be defined and understood by the senior leadership. Have clear ground rules of who to consult for key decisions.

For example, the additional stipulation that the senior leadership will take on advice from the majority of Chief Investigators as a recommendation for change. Then each decision will be made on a consensus basis by the Executive Management Committee and failing consensus the Centre Director may call for a vote of Executive Management Committee members, who may pass resolutions on a simple majority basis.

If the Executive Management Committee cannot reach agreement after discussing a matter at two consecutive meetings, the resolution shall be decided by the Centre Director at her/his sole discretion. This can help to generate a sense of inclusion and ownership over decisions for the wider Chief Investigator community and can help to dispel impressions of top down governance. At the same time, it does not create a ‘decision by committee’ scenario.

### **Reporting lines**

Establish clear reporting lines for the Centre to ensure there is smooth and regular communication with the relevant parties.

You will need to consider reporting lines within the context of the governance structure of the Centre, including across the nodes. Note that administration staff within other nodes will often report to the lead Chief Investigator within that node rather than the central administration team.

Further to this, You will need to consider the reporting lines to the Administering Organisation senior executive.



In terms of the Centre Director, it is common to report to a Head of School, Dean, or directly to Deputy Vice Chancellor Research (DVC-R).

### ***Financial delegations***

You need to clearly determine the delegations early for Finance and HR related activities to allow for operational autonomy for the Director and COO.

Should a change to the structure of delegations inside the university be required, negotiate and allow for lead time to complete this negotiation process.

Senior leadership should clearly support the efforts of the COO and administrative team in managing operational requirements, and also intervene when necessary to ensure compliance by all Centre participants, people and organisations in expenditure and other reporting requirements.

**TIP: To obtain more ideas and to assist in engaging with other university's structures, contact the Research Office staff, and Chief Operating Officers from ARC Centres of Excellence from other nodes to understand administrative structures, identify key contacts and understand their financial and other delegations.**

## **Personnel**

Given the grant is seven years in duration, the ARC expects that there will be changes to personnel.

### ***Change of Centre Director***

#### Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- 15. Change of Specified Personnel

#### Additional information

You will need to work closely with the ARC to manage the request for a new Centre Director.

For a change of Centre Director these additional steps need to occur:

- You must **notify the ARC** via email to advise that a leadership change will take place including the rationale for this change.
- A competitive **recruitment process** should be undertaken by the Administering Organisation for an appropriately qualified person to lead the Centre.
- You must **advise the ARC** via email that a candidate has been selected and that the necessary preliminary approvals have been given by other Participating Organisations. The ARC should also be supplied with a copy of the CV for the proposed Centre Director (no more than two pages).
- A **meeting/interview is organised** with the ARC with the proposed Centre Director, the DVC-R or equivalent delegate from the Administering Organisation, the COO and the Director of the Research Office from the Administering Organisation.
- In some cases, the interview may involve a site visit to the Administering Organisation and a performance review.

At the meeting with the ARC, a **short presentation** must be given by the proposed Centre Director outlining:

- the expertise and skills he/she brings
- a summary of progress of the Centre
- potential opportunities and challenges which lie ahead



- activities in the next 12 months—including strategic funding options and wind down plans (if applicable).

Subject to the ARC assessment of the paperwork and meeting, the ARC will provide advice on whether the appointment of the new Director may progress, which may include follow up conditions required to support the new Centre Director taking on the role. If the appointment may proceed, You will submit a formal request into **RMS as a Variation** for final ARC approval of the Centre Director change.

### ***Appointment of Chief Operating Officer***

#### Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B2. Centre Senior Management

#### Additional information

ARC funds are allocated to appoint a highly qualified COO for the Centre. You and the senior leadership should follow an appropriate competitive recruitment process. The COO is a vital participant who leads the business and operational management of Centre administration, and is usually a HEW level 9 or 10.

As one of the first appointees, the COO will also play an important role in coordinating the negotiation and execution of the participating organisation agreements in collaboration with organisations.

Once the COO is appointed, please notify the ARC Major Investments Team, who will organise a videoconference or face-to-face meeting as a means for introduction and to facilitate an ongoing and productive working relationship.

We encourage new COOs to reach out to the regional COO network in their state (NSW, VIC and QLD only). If a network does not exist within your university contact the Major Investments team who can provide some other useful contacts.

It is also important that the COO liaises with You and other administrative support personnel at the nodes from the early stages of the Centre to build an operational network to support effective administration.

### ***Change of Chief Operating Officer***

At any point during the life of the Centre, You must notify the ARC if the COO has resigned and when a replacement has been appointed following a recruitment process. The Major Investments team will organise a videoconference or face-to-face meeting with the new COO as a way of introduction to the ARC.

### ***Recruitment of Personnel***

#### Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- 14. Specified Personnel

#### Additional information

Best practice university recruitment processes should be followed for the recruitment of staff to the Centre. We also encourage Centres to be innovative in their recruitment processes to attract the best candidates.

Recently some ARC Centres of Excellence have advertised female-only postdoctoral positions to meet their gender equality and diversity policy targets. There are also a number of toolkits which have been developed by ARC Centres of Excellence are available on their respective websites. For more information, contact the ARC Major Investments team.



Consider the timing of appointments for staff and students across the life of the Centre to ensure appropriate balance of resources and supervision of staff. Also plan for the final years of the Centre to ensure students are not left unsupported or unsupervised, or have research activities that extend beyond the project end date.

It is important to achieve a balance of senior positions and post-doctoral researchers (at levels A, B and C). This will create a strong foundation for effective succession planning in the Centre.

Following the recruitment of personnel, all staff should undergo an induction process. A plan for their professional development and mentoring should also be put in place. Be innovative in ideas for mentoring, supervision—the Centre is building the future research workforce.

## Initial Centre Meeting

It is recommended that an initial meeting or strategic planning day is held with the Centre team within the first few months of establishment. Include as many participants as possible, noting you can use the \$100,000 establishment funds to support this activity.

Some suggested topics to discuss at this meeting can include:

- use of strategic funds
- development of a framework for implementing operational requirements
- establishment of a communications strategy, which should address:
  - team cohesion
  - processes for management of expectations
  - performance reporting coordination of variations to the Grant Agreement
- revised budget plan (if required)
- development of detailed project plans
- establishment of good governance framework and reporting processes, and consider risk mitigation strategies
- clear reporting requirements for both industry and ARC

Also consider setting the Centre's Key Performance Indicator (KPI) targets.

## Operational Plans

### *Strategic Plan*

#### Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B6.1-2 Centre Administration and Operations

#### Additional information

You should put in place a strategic plan within six months of the Project Start Date.

**TIP: consider setting the KPIs prior to finalising the Strategic Plan. Circulate and consult in the development of the Strategic Plan, and provide copies of it to all Centre participants when they are appointed as part of their induction to the Centre. The ARC may ask questions relating to this at the mid-term review.**



## ***Gender Equality and Diversity Plan***

### Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B6.4 Centre Administration and Operation

### Additional information

You should put in place a Gender Equality and Diversity Plan within six months of the Project Start Date. This plan should:

- consider strategies to position the Centre as a **flexible and work/life balance-friendly environment**
- **support innovative recruitment processes and employment conditions** of post-doctoral researchers, students and other staff including committees
- encourage the **recruitment of and flexible employment** arrangements for research personnel and other staff with family or carer responsibilities
- be developed in conjunction with the **human resources areas** of the Participating Organisations.

## ***Governance Plan***

A robust governance framework for the Centre should include:

- key expert advice needed and structure of the committee with Terms of Reference, including reviewing membership regularly.
- reporting requirements and Terms of Reference
- management of risks and mitigation strategies
- identification of University regulatory frameworks and critical legislation requirements
- Communication strategy and how it should operate

## ***Budget Plan***

### Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- 5. Payment of the Grant

### Additional information

During the establishment phase of the Centre, it may be necessary to revisit the budget costings to the research program. If the Centre needs to make revisions make sure it is clearly documented. Include details on other changes in research direction or issues with equipment purchase or infrastructure access.

If there are major changes to the budget, which include funding being moved across line items, e.g. personnel, equipment or travel, then a budget Variation will need to be completed to obtain ARC approval. For more information, please see the Variations Guidelines on the [ARC Website](#).

Have clear arrangements on the distribution and in some cases recovery of funds across nodes. You, should administer the strategic funds with its distribution based on performance management of the research projects.

It is important to ensure that sufficient funds are allocated for administrative costs right to the end date of the Centre, or beyond with approved use of Administering Organisation funds, to ensure all final reporting requirements are met.



Carefully consider the eligible budget items which the ARC funds can support, and which items will need to be supported through other funding sources. See Clause 4 of the Grant Guidelines for more information.

**TIP: Items which are not eligible for ARC funding can be supported from University or partner funds.**

It is important to have clear documented rules within the plan for how the funds will be distributed across the Centre so there is transparency in the process, including strategic funds.

### ***Strategic Funds***

Consider setting aside a pool of funds for strategic purposes throughout the operation of the Centre. These funds can support opportunities as an incentive which can emerge (brand new or serendipitous). For example, an 'Innovation Award' that drives new directions, ideas or applications. You must ensure these emerging investments continue to be run in accordance with the research program in the application or subsequent approved project scope change. These strategic funds can be used for management of risk by funding mitigation plans if risks are realised.

Agreement on the use and distribution of these funds should be established early and the Executive Management Committee has oversight on the distribution of this initiative and performance of the research outcomes.

Some Administering Organisations set aside extra income from ARC indexation or bank interest to supplement strategic funds.

### ***Mentoring Plan***

#### Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B6.2.e Centre Administration and Operation
- B6.7 Centre Administration and Operation

#### Additional information

You should implement a Mentoring Plan within six months of the Project Start Date. This plan should:

- outline the implementation of a high quality supervision, mentoring and professional development program, encompassing students, post-doctoral researchers and mid-career researchers
- outline mechanisms through which students can be supervised including co-supervision by researchers both across nodes and across academic disciplines
- where appropriate, confirm that the Centre Directors, CIs and PIs must act as supervisors and mentors to assist less experienced personnel in developing research management and leadership skills and outline mechanisms through which this can occur.

### ***Translation Plan***

You should implement a Translation Plan within six months of the Project Start Date. This plan should include:

- identification of actual and potential end users and industry sectors
- a map of a clear pathway to research impact and how progress can be monitored and measured
- how the data will be effectively collected to undertake impact monitoring and evaluation
- an outline of the IP arrangements and commercialisation pathways.



Consider planning and mapping your translation of research outcomes early, and consider what impact and engagement measures can be used. Consider what does the key successes of the Centre look like, what is the measure for these successes, and have a strategic plan for capitalising on those opportunities.

Consult with your stakeholders and end-users of the research to ensure the impact measures are fit for purpose. See the [ARC Website](#) for more information on developing research impact.

## Creating a Centre as an entity

### *Website and social media*

#### Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- 27.2-3 Acknowledgments, Publications, Publicity

#### Additional information

Establishing an online presence is increasingly important as a Centre is considered to be a national research enterprise and its own entity. Websites and social media platforms facilitate greater engagement with the public, and have been used to great effect by existing Centres.

**TIP:** Share your Twitter handle with [ARC-Communications@arc.gov.au](mailto:ARC-Communications@arc.gov.au) and tag ARC in your posts (@arc\_gov\_au).

Notwithstanding this requirement of independent branding, the senior leadership can still reach out to the universities marketing/Public Relations staff who are experienced in setting up websites, and seek assistance where possible. Some Centres, however, pay for external consultants to assist with web design and branding.

It may be beneficial to have a placeholder website to ensure that there is a domain name and URL available. There is currently no specific guidance from the ARC around domain names and Centres have used .com, .org, and .edu.

**TIP:** Centres are multi-organisational grants and it may be beneficial to have a website and social media presence that does not lead Centre to be perceived as a sub department in a particular university.

### *Centre Logo*

The ARC does not state any specific requirements in the development of a Centre logo, however you must ensure that your name on branding material, such as banners and signs acknowledges the ARC.

Some Centres develop the logo as part of a team building exercise, or as an internal competition. Other Centres have sought the public or school groups to enter their designs for a logo.

### *Signage*

It is expected that the Centre is acknowledged in a prominent place within the Administering Organisation and nodes. Signage must include the ARC logo and full title of the Centre.

### *Launch Event*

All Centres are expected to hold a launch event within 12 months of commencing. The Federal Minister for Education and the ARC CEO must be invited.

Launches should be organised in consultation with the ARC, following protocols set out in the ARC's event advice documentation (available from ARC Stakeholder Relations).



The format of the event will be managed in conjunction with You and the senior leadership of the Centre.

**TIP: Read the ARC event advice before you commence planning your launch event.**

**TIP: The timing of the event should be chosen so that initial achievements of the Centre can be showcased, and attendance by Partner Organisation representatives is desirable.**

Some example formats are provided below:

- New building opened for the Centre
- New equipment and lab tours
- Unveiling of signage
- The functions can be held in or around lab facilities or within a general function area within the university or some are held at Parliament House.

In many cases, where interstate or international participants of the Centre are attending the launch, it is usually paired with a workshop, summer/winter school, or annual meeting to take advantage of their travel to the Administering Organisation.

**TIP: ARC Stakeholder Relations can assist with contact with the Federal Minister for Education. It may also be appropriate to consider inviting other Federal or State Parliamentarians.**

## Setting Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

### Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- Schedule D

### Additional information

Prior to commencement of the project, all Centres must set performance targets across a range of categories for each year of funding. These performance targets, or Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), are reported annually through the Annual Report.

Note that KPIs are only one measurement of the overall performance of the Centre.

It is important that adequate time and consideration is given to setting up KPI data collection processes.

Please refer to the KPI Guidance document which has been circulated to You and the Centre Director.

Consider KPIs early. KPIs should be aspirational targets to stretch Centre participants' performance. Excluding Year 1 performance where the Centre is still establishing, consider reviewing KPI targets each year to ensure they are fit for purpose.

**TIP: You can amend the KPI targets for the forward years at any time. You will need to seek approval from the ARC by emailing [ARC-Postaward@arc.gov.au](mailto:ARC-Postaward@arc.gov.au) and provide a short rationale for the changes. Once approved, the updated targets can be reported on in forward years.**

## Reporting Tools

### Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B6.3 Centre Administration and Operation



### Additional information

There are a number of reporting requirements as outlined in the Grant Agreement, which will require data collection within the Centre. When implementing internal reporting tools, consider how data is requested, collected and presented, and how it will be used over the forward years. The senior leadership will need to ensure that there is a robust and accurate mechanism to report and track against KPIs for their own purposes as well as reporting to the ARC.

**TIP: Report against KPIs monthly or quarterly over the life of the Centre. This information can be sent out for communications across the nodes and will be easier to collate data for the Annual Reports each year.**

**TIP: There is more than Excel—speak to existing COOs of Centres about the different systems that are being used. A number have either in-house custom built or externally commissioned online reporting databases.**

## ***Annual Report***

### Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- 31.3 Annual Report

### Additional information

As outlined in the Grant Agreement, Centres must submit an electronic Annual Report by 31 March the year following each full calendar year for which the grant was awarded. There is no set template, however the Annual Report must include details as specified in the Grant Agreement.

## **Reviews**

### Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B9. Reviews

## ***Performance Review***

### Additional information

In its fourth year of operation, a Centre must undergo a rigorous and comprehensive external performance review undertaken by the ARC. Performance reviews, otherwise known as Mid-Term reviews, involve the consideration of documentation submitted to the ARC and a site visit or interview. You, the Director, and COO will be provided with guidance material seeking information against specific Terms of Reference. The Review Panel, which may include members external to the ARC with relevant expertise, will review the submission material and attend the site visit or interview.

You and the senior leadership will be provided with a Terms of Reference which outlines the criteria for the review.

You must provide any reasonable assistance requested by the ARC to undertake the review, including the preparation of the agenda for the site visit, providing a venue to conduct the interviews and catering for the panel.

The Performance Review will assess the satisfactory progress or otherwise of the Centre, which affects the continued provision of Grant funding as per the Grant Guidelines.

Following the site visit, a Review Report including recommendations from the Review Panel will be provided to the Centre for response. Progress against implementing the recommendations will be monitored through the Progress Report and ongoing consultation with the Centre.



**TIP:** You can nominate a preferred month for the Performance Review during the fourth year of operation. Consider that the Review Report will take approximately 2-3 months after the site visit to be sent to the Centre.

**TIP:** Consider your preparations, including discussing the Performance Review at annual meetings, mock meetings, and reaching out to previous cohorts.

**TIP:** The ARC can visit the Centre and provide an overview of the expectations of the Performance Review.

## Final Report

### Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- 31.5 Final Report

### Additional information

The Final Report will be made available by the ARC in RMS well before the end date of the Centre to allow sufficient time to complete the report.

Guidelines for completing the Final Report for all ARC schemes including Centres is available on the 'Grants Administration' page on the [ARC website](#).

**TIP: Final Reports can take significant time to complete for Centres and it is recommended that You consider populating the form well before the end date, particularly with regards to Research Outputs.**

The ARC may also seek additional information about subsequent outputs and outcomes up to five years after submission of the Final Report.

If a Final Report is considered by the ARC to be inadequate, unsatisfactory or is not submitted on time, You will be contacted for further information.

**TIP: You will need to consider administrative staff support after the end date to complete and submit the Final Report. This may include continuing the COO or providing part-time resources from the Administering Organisation.**

**IMPORTANT:** Overdue Final Reports will impact eligibility for the Director and all named Chief Investigators for future applications of any ARC.

