



Australian Government

Australian Research Council

Eligibility and Career Interruptions Statement

Context

The Australian Research Council (ARC) is committed to ensuring that all eligible researchers have fair and equitable access to competitive funding through the National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP).

The ARC promotes and encourages, within the NCGP, approaches to eligibility and assessment that take into account the diverse career and life experiences of researchers.

Purpose

This policy relates to the extension of eligibility periods for early and mid-career researchers under the ARC's *Discovery Early Career Researcher Award* (DECRA) and *Future Fellowships* schemes.

Principles

Under the DECRA and *Future Fellowships* schemes, the number of years between the conferral date of a PhD, or equivalent, and the submission closing date for an application, is a key element of eligibility.

Under the DECRA scheme, researchers are eligible to apply within five years of the conferral date of their PhD or equivalent research higher degree, as certified by the Administering Organisation.

Under the *Future Fellowships* scheme, researchers are eligible to apply within five to 15 years of the conferral date of their PhD, equivalent research higher degree or professional equivalent, as certified by the Administering Organisation.

The ARC recognises career interruptions can have a significant impact on the period between conferral of a researcher's PhD, or equivalent, and a subsequent application for ARC funding. The ARC, therefore, allows extension of the eligibility periods for the DECRA and *Future Fellowships* schemes for eligible career interruptions, which occur after the conferral of a researcher's PhD, or equivalent.

Eligible career interruptions

The following significant, and not overlapping, career interruptions can be included:

Eligible Career Interruptions	Period of time that can be claimed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disruption due to international relocation	A period of time commensurate with the interruption, not exceeding three months per international relocation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Caring responsibilities• Disability• Disaster management and recovery• Limited or no access to facilities and resources—such as through workplace interruptions	A period of time commensurate with the interruption.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical conditions • Non-research positions, not concurrent with research employment • Parental leave • Unemployment 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary carer of a dependent child 	<p>Up to two-years, inclusive of parental leave, for each dependent child. If required, an additional period of time commensurate with the interruption.</p>

Implementation

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) of the Eligible Organisation must certify that the researcher meets the career interruption eligibility criteria, under the relevant scheme, as set out in the [Grant Guidelines](#). The ARC reserves the right to request evidence relating to an application for extension of an eligibility period.

Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence

Researchers applying under either the DECRA or *Future Fellowships* schemes may utilise the Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) assessment criterion to describe the impact of any career interruption, including an eligible career interruption under this policy, in an application.

The ROPE criterion enables evaluation of a researcher's activities, outputs and achievements, in the context of career and life opportunities and experiences, including, where relevant, significant career interruptions.