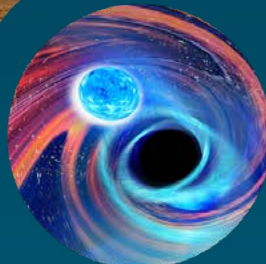




Australian Government
Australian Research Council

ARC

Annual Report 2022–23



Australian Research Council Annual Report

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Cover images

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Credit: Professor Meghan Miller, Australian National University, Future Fellow and Chief Investigator at the ARC Centre of Excellence in Optical Microcombs for Breakthrough Science and Professor Louis Moresi, Australian National University. **Description:** The image shows a birds-eye view of digital elevation around the Yarra Ranges and Alpine National Parks with colours representing how high the mountains are above sea level.

13 September 2023

The Hon Jason Clare MP
Minister for Education
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

It is with great pleasure that I present the *Australian Research Council Annual Report 2022–23*. This report has been prepared for the purposes of:

- section 46 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, which requires that an annual report be given to the entity's responsible Minister for presentation to the Parliament
- section 46 of the *Australian Research Council Act 2001* (ARC Act), which requires that the report given to you must deal with:
 - any matters required by other provisions of the ARC Act to be dealt with in the report (Ministerial directions)
 - any other matters that the Minister, by notice in writing to the CEO, requires to be dealt with in the report
- all other enabling legislation that specifies requirements in relation to the report.

There were no relevant matters to be dealt with in the *Annual Report 2022–23* as required under section 46 of the ARC Act.

As the accountable authority of the ARC, I certify that:

- fraud risk assessments and fraud control plans have been prepared
- appropriate mechanisms for preventing, detecting incidents of, investigating or otherwise dealing with, and recording or reporting fraud that meet the specific needs of the ARC are in place
- all reasonable measures have been taken to deal appropriately with fraud relating to the ARC.

Yours sincerely



Judi Zielke PSM
Chief Executive Officer

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The Australian Research Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connections to lands, waters and community. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and to Elders past, present and emerging.

A guide to this report

Style conventions

The following style conventions are used in this report:

- acronyms are spelt out for their first use in each part, except for the acronym for the Australian Research Council – ARC, and the acronym for the Chief Executive Officer – CEO, which are used throughout
- n/a means not applicable.

ARC snapshot

Vision: World-class research and innovation for the advancement of Australian society



For every \$1 of research funded through the NCGP (from 2002–21),

\$3.32 is generated for the Australian economy

13,136 assessors taking part in peer review processes, providing

19,291

assessments, with the number of assessors increasing by over 2,000 since last year



Administer over

5,900

new and ongoing grants under the NCGP

Over

1,100

research projects funded in 2022–23



In 2022–23

2,396

partner organisations (companies, not-for-profits and government agencies) participated in research projects

Provide grant opportunities through

14 schemes, including industry fellowships program



Investing over

\$895m

in research in 2023–24, an additional \$40 million from 2022–23



We have added over 50 members to our College of Experts and now have

269 members

147 ARC staff



Over



5,800

applications submitted each year

29 ARC Centres of Excellence currently being funded, including 11 new centres that were awarded funding in 2022–23



Over



79% of the ARC's 2022–23 research projects involved international collaboration

PART 01



Review by the accountable authority

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1.1 From the Chief Executive Officer

Introduction

This is my second Annual Report as the CEO of the Australian Research Council, and what a pleasure it is to be able to capture here the many achievements and milestones of the agency over 2022–23.

It is, and will continue to be for some time, an exciting period of renewal for the agency. The achievements highlighted throughout this annual report exemplify the resilient and committed nature of our people, and I thank them for their ongoing work to achieve our vision.

It has been over 21 years since the ARC was established as an independent body under the *Australian Research Council Act 2001* (ARC Act).

We have a proud history in supporting amazing research in Australia by our great researchers.

The ARC is critical to the national research system achieving excellent research and plays a leading role in supporting Australia's highest-quality fundamental and applied research, research training and infrastructure.

Among the many research highlights over the year, I am particularly proud that the ARC has completed the first round of the new Industry Fellowships Program. Co-designed with the research sector, this is an innovative program designed to tackle critical challenges in industry. It will provide \$215 million over 4 years to support up to 332 Industry Fellows in early, mid, and senior career roles, to explore opportunities in both industry and academia for research collaboration, translation, and commercialisation. There are many exciting projects now under way and I encourage you to find out about them through our ARC Data Portal.

An agenda of improvement and reform

Since early 2022, the ARC has been engaging in a comprehensive reform agenda to ensure we can meet the needs and expectations of the Australian Government, the research sector, and the Australian community. This reform agenda has been guided by the *ARC Strategy 2022–2025* (ARC Strategy).

The ARC Strategy lays out the vision for the agency to 2030 and provides the key strategic priorities over 3 years to enable that vision. Under the ARC Strategy, we will deliver a refreshed approach to help shape the Australian research system and deliver better outcomes for the Australian research sector, government, and broader community.



Ms Judi Zielke PSM, Chief Executive Officer

The 3 ARC strategic priorities between 2022–2025 are:

- World-class advice and engagement: our expertise and knowledge of the research system is shared, recognised, and sought out nationally and internationally, enabled by trusted, mutually beneficial relationships with a wide and influential network
- Research system excellence: our streamlined grants programs and processes, world-class data assets and national assessments enable the research system to continuously improve, and ensure Australia remains a leader in research quality, excellence, and impact
- Empowered people: our workforce has the skills and capabilities essential for the future and operates within a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement with a strong focus on excellent service delivery.

In August 2022, the Minister for Education, the Hon Jason Clare MP, issued a Statement of Expectations to the ARC, which set out his immediate expectations for the agency and a range of priorities.

As CEO, I responded to the Minister’s Statement of Expectations in December 2022 with my Statement of Intent. This represents the ARC’s commitment to respond to the Minister’s directions, outlining our work program across funding programs, research integrity and quality measurement, research policy advice and support for Australia’s national research system. The commitments made in the Statement of Intent are consistent with the goals of the Strategy, and both are being delivered through our comprehensive reform agenda.

More than a year on from the release of the ARC Strategy in August 2022, we have been delivering on our priorities to provide world-class advice and engagement, support research system excellence, and empower our people. In particular, we have made significant improvements in our engagement with universities, researchers and industry, and as a result, achieved substantial streamlining of our programs, which greatly benefits researchers.

World-class advice and engagement

Providing advice on research matters

To enable sector leadership on key issues and support effective program delivery, the ARC engages in a range of research policy development activities. In 2022–23, this included:

- measuring the impact of the ARC’s National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP) grants through the commission of an independent assessment
- participation in cross-government committees on key sector issues such as the Australian Universities Accord, the Chief Scientist’s Open Access Advisory Group, the refreshing of Australia’s National Science and Research Priorities and the revitalisation of the National Science Statement
- ongoing development of a National Persistent Identifier Strategy and Roadmap for Australia, including through our membership in the Australian Persistent Identifier Taskforce

- contributing to the Australian Government's National Quantum Strategy, highlighting the ARC's role in the early development of Quantum computing in Australia
- engaging in the Australian Universities Accord process, to provide advice on possibilities for reform to the university sector to ensure it meets Australia's future challenges.

Communicating the national interest in Australian research

Consistent with our drive to constantly improve our grant processes, and as part of our response to Minister Clare's Statement of Expectations and concerns in the sector, the ARC made significant changes to the National Interest Test (NIT) in 2022–23.

The Minister committed to keeping the NIT as a requirement in all applications for funding under the NCGP, to demonstrate in plain English the societal benefits (economic, commercial, environmental, social, or cultural) of the proposed research beyond the academic community, but asked that it be simpler, clearer and more easily understood.

The ARC sought feedback on the NIT between May and October 2022 to test how researchers were finding the additional guidance on NIT statements provided in March 2022. Then, following widespread consultation across the sector, the ARC made several key changes. These included that NIT statements be provided to assessors as an input to the peer review process; that they be certified by the relevant Deputy Vice Chancellors of Research (DVCs); and the removal of final vetting by the ARC.

The introduction of these changes was received very positively by the research sector. I am pleased that we have met the concerns of the sector, and that the NIT will continue as a useful mechanism for explaining to the community, in clear language, why public money is being invested in each research project.

Research integrity

The Australian community expects research to be conducted responsibly, ethically and with integrity and the ARC continued to play a vital leadership role in maintaining and promoting the responsible conduct of research throughout 2022–23, both through our support for the Australian Research Integrity Committee (ARIC) and ensuring all ARC business and funded research was undertaken with the highest standards of integrity.

Research system excellence

Funding the highest quality research

The ARC remains committed to funding nationally and internationally competitive research. We recognise the importance of ensuring the funding we administer delivers outcomes that benefit the Australian community. The value of the ARC's NCGP is reflected in the benefits delivered through individual research projects and the underlying support it provides to the Australian research and innovation system. Our research grants balance funding for 'blue sky' fundamental research which shapes the long-term future of Australia and applied collaborative research which promotes Australia's research innovation capacity, supporting research projects, infrastructure, hubs, and collaboration between researchers and research users.

As the only Commonwealth research funding body that supports basic non-medical research, we will continue to highlight the importance of basic research to the start of the innovation pipeline. Without a strong flow of fundamental research, ideas and knowledge are not able to be progressed to applied research that can be translated to achieve impact for Australia.

In 2022–23, the NCGP provided \$845 million in grants to excellent fundamental and applied research. This is consistent with previous years and reflects ongoing strong demand for the range of schemes available under the NCGP.

These grants support researchers at all career stages and provide research training and mentoring opportunities. Our schemes invest in the people, infrastructure, equipment, and facilities underpinning Australia's international research competitiveness and we encourage university researchers to productively partner with commercial, government, community, and international stakeholders.

In 2022–23 the:

- NCGP supported more than 1,100 new research projects, with over 12,500 researchers involved in the research
- ARC collaborated with stakeholders to design new schemes that support researchers in industry and academia to solve industry defined problems in the form of the Industry Fellowships Program
- ARC actively recruited for academics and specialists in their fields to join the College of Experts, which undertakes assessments of ARC's grant applications and provides funding recommendations to the CEO.

Engaging with the research sector to improve grant processes

One of our priorities is to provide research system excellence, including the delivery of streamlined grants programs and processes. In response to feedback from the sector, in October 2022 the ARC published a grants calendar to provide greater clarity and confidence for applicants in the timing of competitive grant rounds and the announcement of grant outcomes. The new calendar specifies the fortnight in which an announcement is expected, a much more specific timeframe than the quarterly timeframes used previously. The calendar provides this new certainty for all ARC programs under the NCGP for up to 12 months ahead, and since April 2023, 18 months ahead. Since the calendar was issued, all grant rounds have been delivered on time or in the majority of occasions earlier than expected. This reflects our commitment to improving our service provision to better meet the needs of researchers and universities.

Another of our ongoing priorities in the ARC Strategy is to build new opportunities for engagement with researchers. We listened when the sector expressed a desire for more information about the assessment process. As part of the funding announcement for the 3 Industry Fellowships Program schemes, the ARC piloted a new practice of providing unsuccessful applicants with more detail about their assessment scores and rankings. Initial feedback has been very positive and we have moved to provide this information for all subsequent grant rounds.

At each stage of consultation and review, the ARC has looked for opportunities to improve the efficiency of our processes and to reduce the administrative burden placed on ourselves, applicants, and the broader sector. To this end we have reduced administrative requirements on applicants and taken advantage of technological and data-based solutions to streamline our processes.

Improving peer review

Aligned to our work in streamlining the grant program experience for applicants and universities, the ARC commenced a project to review grant assessment practices and determine quality peer review reforms.

During this year, the ARC completed a major desktop review of national and international peer review practices across 12 major research granting agencies, and an evaluation of the ARC's current peer review processes for grant applications and research evaluation. The ARC also conducted a targeted consultation of ARC College of Experts and hundreds of external peer reviewers through a survey and then hosted several consultation workshops to explore the survey findings. We received 155 responses to the survey and 122 assessors attended the ARC virtual consultation workshops.

This review will inform the implementation of several peer review reforms in 2023–24 including improvements to recruiting, engaging, supporting, recognising, retaining and managing the peer reviewer community.

Assessing the quality, engagement, and impact of research

Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) and Engagement and Impact (EI) assessments are national research assessments that the ARC has carried out to evaluate Australian universities' achievements in producing quality internationally competitive research, with engagement and impact beyond the research sector to realise real world benefits.

However, there were concerns in the research sector about the administrative burden of this benchmarking process. In August 2022 the Minister for Education's Statement of Expectations reflected those concerns, asking the ARC to pause this work to develop a new, modern data-driven approach, informed by expert review.

The agency delivered the ERA Transition Plan to the Minister in December 2022, which was developed with a working group of leading sector representatives including DVCRs, peak bodies, senior researchers and administrators, and the Department of Education.

The ARC has also finalised a collaboration with the Department of Education to integrate our own research income data collection process with the Department's Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC). This will reduce the amount of data that universities have to provide to government.

Separate to the ERA and EI processes, in 2022–23 the ARC facilitated a significant assessment of impact of ARC-funded research. We engaged ACIL Allen to examine the impact and estimate the economic returns of research funded through the NCGP.

The resulting report, *Impact Assessment of ARC-funded Research* (NCGP Impact Assessment Report), employed economy-wide modelling, survey and administrative data, in-depth case studies, and consultations with Australia's university and research peak bodies and international funding agencies. It confirmed the value to Australians of the research we fund: every \$1 of research funded by the ARC generates \$3.32 in economic output for the Australian community.

The report estimates that ARC-funded research from 2002–21 will:

- increase economic output for Australia by \$184.3 billion
- increase the real income of Australians by \$152.5 billion
- create 6,570 jobs per year across Australia.

Beyond the measurable economic impacts of the NCGP, the report highlights how ARC-funded research has built Australia's research capability and produced broad and substantial social, cultural, and environmental benefits. These are highlighted in the report's 7 case studies, including improved outcomes for critical technology and communications, environmental sustainability, food supply chains, social policy and First Nations peoples.

The NCGP Impact Assessment Report included a case study on the work of the ARC Centre of Excellence for Quantum Computation and Communications Technology which is an example of our long-term investment in quantum technology research. That investment has led to significant breakthroughs in this potentially transformative technology, and is paying dividends in terms of investment and international engagement in Australia as the world leader in this field.

Empowered people

Building and sustaining a strong organisational capacity

Our workforce remains our most important asset and we have worked to strengthen the skills and knowledge of our people, to create an environment that attracts specialist and diverse talent, and to develop a collaborative and service culture mindset that supports our staff, partners and stakeholders to succeed.

We have strengthened the ARC's senior leadership structure, first through the appointment of a Deputy CEO, Dr Richard Johnson, in September 2022, and then through the appointment of our inaugural Chief Research Officer (CRO), Professor Christina Twomey, in January 2023. This team, together with our Branch Managers and Executive Directors, have been strongly positioned to lead and support our staff in delivering on our strategic priorities and working with the sector to produce important research outcomes for Australia.

During the year we have conducted a detailed review into the broad suite of general and specialist capabilities that our workforce needs now and into the future. The review has identified opportunities to enhance the strong capability set within our staff to position us to meet emerging challenges and remain resilient and flexible to change.

This year we had a particular focus on workforce capabilities related to data usage, including Information and Communications Technology (ICT) data expertise, data visualisation and the development of data products. These enhanced capabilities, supported by the implementation of data systems, enables us to identify, analyse and share the value from ARC and other data sets across government.

Significant developments

In August 2022 the Minister announced an independent review of *the Australian Research Council Act 2001* (Review of the ARC Act), the first such review since the introduction of the legislation and the creation of the agency. This review was to consider the role and purpose of the ARC within the Australian research system, so that the agency can meet current and future needs.

The Minister appointed a Review Panel consisting of Professor Margaret Sheil AO (Panel Chair), Professor Susan Dodds and Professor Mark Hutchinson, with secretariat support from the Department of Education. The review considered 223 submissions from stakeholders and consulted with stakeholders through meetings and focus groups.

The Review of the ARC Act was finalised in April 2023 and the final report, *Trusting Australia's Ability: Review of the ARC Act 2001*, is a strong endorsement of the role and positive impact the ARC has had on Australia's research capability over the last 20 years. It affirms the broader reform schedule we are already undertaking to restore stakeholder trust and drive excellent research for the advancement of all Australians, and the Government's response to the recommendations will further these objectives.

The ARC conducted an internal financial sustainability review for consideration by the Minister in conjunction with the final report of the Review of the ARC Act, the ERA Transition Plan, and the NCGP Impact Assessment Report. In the second half of 2023–24, the ARC will work with the Department of Education on a policy review of the NCGP, to ensure these programs meet Australia's future needs for a strong and vibrant research sector.

In November 2022, Minister Clare announced the Australian Universities Accord, which seeks to build a long-term plan for Australia's Education system to ensure it meets the needs of the nation. The ARC provided a submission in response to the Panel's Discussion Paper in April 2023, highlighting how the government could consider boosting university and industry collaboration through lessons from the new ARC Industry Fellowships Program and leveraging existing mechanisms such as the ARC Linkage Program. We also noted importance of the ARC's contribution to supporting the integrity of research, across the Australian university research sector.

The broader context

One issue notable by its lack of prominence in this year's annual report, but significant in the previous 2 reports, is COVID-19 (COVID). Travel restrictions and lockdowns were largely left behind as Australia transitioned to living with COVID in the first half of 2022. The pandemic's impositions on research, reflecting those on the broader community, were also left behind. The ARC's Research Hubs, Training Centres and ARC Centres of Excellence that had received grant funding in 2020 and 2021 rounds

were finally able to officially launch, and most importantly, their research was now able to proceed unhindered by COVID in 2022–23. For me as CEO, and the ARC as an agency, it means we have been able to build back up to the level of in-person engagement needed to build and maintain relationships with our stakeholders, as we have important conversations in a time of significant change for research in Australia.

The last year has seen the largest rise in inflation in decades. While this impacts us, we were, and remain, conscious of the impact it has on the sector. Industry partners are experiencing higher costs, universities have tightened budgets, and applicants and assessors are dealing with the cost-of-living pressures in their own lives. These challenges further reinforce the importance of our streamlining and burden reducing efforts, particularly in relation to our grants programs.

In late 2023, the Government reaffirmed their commitment to seek a change to the Constitution to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice. The national conversation on the referendum and the Voice draws attention to the disparity in outcomes First Nations people face when compared to non-Indigenous Australians, including in education and research. The ARC strives to increase the representation of First Nations people through the Discovery Indigenous scheme, and increased participation by First Nations people in other Discovery and Linkage schemes and in Fellowships. And we continue to acknowledge the amazing scientific teachings that First Nations people so graciously share with us, and the contributions they have made and continue to make to our community.

The past year also saw the design and implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Commission. This work highlighted the integral and privileged position that we in the public service hold, and how important it is that, as individuals and as an agency, we act with integrity, transparency and accountability. I am proud of the conduct of the ARC and of their service to the Australian public.

Outlook for 2023–24

The Government's response to the final report of the Review of the ARC Act, released by the Minister for Education in August 2023, has set a strong agenda of governance, process and engagement reform and we will work with the Minister and the Department of Education on implementing the actions. These actions are extensive and include:

- legislative change that will clarify the purpose of the ARC and the breadth of its role in underpinning and shaping the national research landscape, including broadening ARC's role in research integrity and research evaluation
- establishing fresh governance arrangements through a new ARC Board
- continuing to deliver a range of programs and services that improve our investment in research excellence, the experience of researchers, partners and assessors, and take into account the evolving environment in which we and the research sector operate.

As well, the ARC will continue our strategic reform priorities in 2023–24, including those in the 2022 Statement of Expectations from the Minister:

- working with the Department of Education on a policy review of the NCGP
- providing support to the Australian Universities Accord review, introduced by the Government to establish a new long-term plan for Australia's higher education sector
- continuing to work towards establishing a new research evaluation system which is a modern data driven approach supported by expert review.

Additionally, the ACIL Allen report, *Impact assessment of ARC-funded research*, was a confirmation of the value of the core business of the ARC. Administering the allocation of research grant funding through the NCGP, through a rigorous peer reviewed process, will remain a key pillar of the service the ARC provides to the research sector and the Australian public.

Conclusion

The achievements in this annual report are those of an agency driving a comprehensive reform agenda to ensure the agency can meet the needs and expectations of the government, the research sector, and the Australian community.

Guided by the ARC Strategy and the Minister's Statement of Expectations, this reform agenda has been central to our activities, and will remain so over the coming year.

I am proud of our record in 2022–23. The ARC has met all the reform challenges head-on. We have made significant improvements in our engagement with universities, researchers, and industry, and as a result, achieved substantial improvements to our programs and services.

The key message I trust is conveyed in this annual report is that the agency has shown the determination and drive to energetically engage with partners, including the research community and industry partners, and make the reforms needed to be the best agency possible for fostering research excellence in Australia and maximising the outcomes for all Australians.

1.2 Highlights of 2022–23

Grant opportunities

First rounds of the new Industry Fellowships Program schemes announced

In 2022–23, the ARC announced the outcomes of the first rounds of the new Industry Fellowships Program schemes. These schemes operate under the Linkage Program and comprise 3 levels: Early Career Industry Fellowships, Mid-Career Industry Fellowships, and Industry Laureate Fellowships. A total of \$73.8 million has been awarded across the 3 schemes, including 50 Early Career Fellowships, 25 Mid-Career Fellowships and 8 Industry Laureate Fellowships. The schemes have attracted considerable interest from industry with a total investment of \$47.9 million across the schemes.

The Industry Fellowships Program was announced in 2022 under the *University Research Commercialisation Action Plan*, a \$2.2 billion investment to place university innovation and industry collaboration front and centre of Australia’s economic recovery. The Industry Fellowships create pathways to support academic researchers in establishing careers in industry, and industry-based researchers to work in university settings, increasing two-way mobility and providing industry with increased access to individuals with strong technical skills, knowledge, and research capacity.

The 3 Industry Fellowship schemes operate under simpler guidelines and application forms, designed to provide faster outcomes and more flexible settings, including in relation to applicant’s career stage and qualifications.

Centres of Excellence

ARC Centres of Excellence allow the complementary research resources of universities, publicly funded research organisations, other research bodies, governments, and businesses to collaborate and deliver research that benefits Australia. These largescale Commonwealth investments are funded for a period of up to 7 years, for up to \$5 million per year, and attract significant co-investment from industry and other partners.

ARC Centres of Excellence selection rounds are conducted every 3 years. The ARC Centres of Excellence commencing 2023 (CE23) were announced in November 2022. Eleven projects were funded to a value of \$385 million over 7 years. The ARC Centres of Excellence represent world class research and some of the peak projects in the Australian research sector, tackling issues from indigenous studies, and violence against women, to biotechnology and astrophysics.

Partnerships with collaborating organisations from across the spheres of research, business and government form a key part of the ARC Centres of Excellence and they attract significant co-investment. At the point of application for CE23, partner organisations had committed to over \$304 million in cash and in-kind funding to the funded projects, with a further \$375 million in contributions from both administering and partnering universities involved in the Centres. That totals over \$1 billion invested in the CE23.

Research Grants Services (RGS)

In 2022–23, the ARC continued to provide research grants administration services to other Australian Government entities for grant programs focused on the research sector.

The ARC, through RGS, is working with the Office of National Intelligence (ONI) and the Department of Defence's National Security Science and Technology Centre (NSSTC), to manage the National Intelligence and Security Discovery Research Grants (NISDRG) program. ONI and NSSTC maintain policy and funding responsibilities for the program and ARC undertake the majority of the grants administration activities, including facilitating expert peer review. During the reporting period, over \$5.85 million was awarded to research grants under Round 2 of the NISDRG program. The ARC will continue to provide Post Award support to both Round 1 and Round 2.

Through RGS, the ARC continued to provide software-as-a-service support for Post Award grants administration activities for the Department of Education's National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS). In addition, the ARC commenced development of end-to-end grants administration functionality for the Department of Education's Australia's Economic Accelerator initiative (AEA). Through this service, ARC is providing support for AEA Seed Grants which commenced in February 2023, as well as for AEA Ignite and AEA Innovate which are expected to open later in 2023. The Department of Education retains all policy and funding responsibility for this program.

Policy environment

Universities Accord

Through the Australian Universities Accord, the Government is aiming to ensure that Australia's higher education system meets the needs of the nation. It is a wide-ranging review that includes setting up a system of university research that delivers for Australia, and securing the future of the Australian research pipeline, from basic and translational research to commercialisation.

The ARC is an integral part of Australia's research system. We have had significant involvement with the Accord Panel including by providing a submission in response to the Panel's Discussion Paper in April 2023.

NCGP Process Review

The ARC continued its work on the NCGP Process Review to design and implement a best-practice approach that considers and responds to the changing environment in which we and the research sector operate. The NCGP Process Review identified opportunities for improvements, increased transparency in the grants process and improved experience for researchers, industry and assessors.

In line with the findings of the review, the ARC has been working with research sector stakeholders to streamline the NCGP arrangements. This commenced with the development of the Industry Fellowships Program in August 2022, continued through the refresh of the Linkage Projects guidelines and work continues on the consultation and co-design on the Discovery Program guidelines.

Data visualisation

The ARC continued to develop interactive data displays and other data products to improve information accessibility for internal and external users. The ARC is committed to improving the way our data can be viewed and used, while upholding high standards of privacy and security.

Foreign interference

Consistent with recommendations contained within the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security (PJCIS) Inquiry into national security risks affecting the Australian higher education and research sector, in late 2022 the ARC undertook an internal audit to review the ARC's performance in assessing foreign interference and national security risks since the launch of the University Foreign Interference Taskforce Guidelines in 2019. A copy of the findings was shared with the Minister of Education, PJCIS Committee and a summary was also published on the ARC website.

The internal audit found that the ARC has taken proactive steps to manage risk relating to foreign interference and national security in relation to each phase of the NCGP, including:

- establishing specific and appropriate criteria for conducting checks
- improved documentation and record-keeping
- establishing a due diligence committee
- providing administering organisations with the opportunity to respond to risks identified during the due diligence process on applications.

The internal audit report made some practical suggestions on opportunities for improvement relating to procedures and policies, which the ARC is actioning in consultation with stakeholders. The ARC is continuing to work with the Department of Education and the Department of Home Affairs to ensure our foreign interference processes are robust and promote best practice.

National research assessment

The ERA Transition Plan

Following the Minister for Education's Statement of Expectations in August 2022, the ARC, in conjunction with a working group of leading sector representatives including DVCRs, peak bodies, research leaders and administrators, and the Department of Education, developed the ERA Transition Plan.

On 22 August 2023, Minister Clare announced the Government's response to *Trusting Australia's Ability: Review of the ARC Act 2001*, the final report of the Review of the ARC Act, and stated that ERA and EI would not continue in their current form and that evaluation of excellence, impact and research capability within Australian universities needs reform.

Research remains a key element of all Australian universities, and reform of the performance measurement and management of university research is critical to ensure that the future contribution of universities is driven effectively. As such, the Minister for Education has requested the Australian

Universities Accord Panel consider the recommendation on measuring impact and engagement in university research. Recommendations on a new model are to be provided to the Minister for Education for consideration alongside the Panel's Final report.

Supporting Indigenous studies assessment

The ARC has continued to build a strong foundation of engagement with Indigenous researchers and stakeholders, who have provided valuable advice on research evaluation since the 2020 updates to the Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classification codes, belonging to the Australia Bureau of Statistics, and a new inclusion of the Indigenous studies discipline. In 2022, the ARC conducted a series of webinars to ensure Indigenous stakeholders were engaged and remained informed of the developments occurring during the formulation of the ERA Transition Plan. Further consultation and ongoing engagement with Indigenous researchers and stakeholders will be central to any development and implementation of a first-time research assessment of Indigenous studies.

Our people

Our people's diversity, deep expertise, and commitment is one of the ARC's unique strengths. The achievement of our strategic priorities depends on our ability to attract, develop and retain highly engaged, skilled and professional people.

We have broadened our recruitment approach to capture the best talent from across Australia, inviting applications from around the country to work with us in a hybrid work environment. Some ARC staff are now based in locations other than Canberra, where our main office is located. Our hybrid work environment and continued support of diversity and workplace flexibility formed part of our recruitment strategy to attract and retain the best talent.

As at 30 June, the ARC had 167 staff, 14% of whom are working part-time, 75% regularly working from home, 9% utilising compressed hours, and 4% who have been on non-maternity leave without pay.

In the 2022 Australian Public Service (APS) Employee Census, 84% of staff reported the ARC supports and actively promotes an inclusive workplace culture.

ARC key media announcements

July 2022

Minister for Education Jason Clare announced the independent review in the ARC and its enabling legislation.

The ARC announced:

- Professor Susan Dodds appointed to the ARC Advisory Committee.
- \$17.7 million to develop 4 new Industrial Transformation Research Hubs. \$29.3 million funding to train Australia's next generation of research professionals at 6 new Industrial Transformation Training Centres.

August 2022

The ARC announced:

- \$48.6 million over 5 years for 16 new Australian Laureate Fellowships, for pioneering research across a range of fields.
- More than \$29 million for 61 grants for Linkage Projects over the next 5 years, which promote national and international research partnerships between researchers and business, industry, community organisations and other publicly funded research agencies.
- The introduction of Industry Fellowships Program, a \$215 million package to support researchers moving between industry and academic research settings an innovative program to tackle critical challenges in industry.

Launched:

- The ARC Research Hub to Combat Antimicrobial Resistance, which aims to take on the global challenge of antimicrobial resistance through a world-first partnership between Australia's best researchers, industry, international research institutes and end users.
- The ARC Centre of Excellence for Plant Success in Nature and Agriculture, whose work will be vital to helping secure a sustainable and productive future for plants, in Australia and around the world.
- The ARC Training Centre for Facilitated Advancement of Australia's Bioactives, which will train the next generation of biotechnology researchers to harness economic opportunities in the expanding bioactives industry.
- The ARC Centre of Excellence for Innovations in Peptide and Protein Science, which will position Australia as an international hub for peptide and protein science to drive new Australian industries.

September 2022

The ARC announced:

- \$94 million for 100 mid-career researchers under the ARC Future Fellowships scheme.
- \$85 million in 200 new research projects under the Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA) scheme.

Launch of the ARC Centre of Excellence for Transformative Meta-Optical Systems, whose work will revolutionise optics – the study of sight and the behaviour of light.

October 2022

Minister for Education Jason Clare opened the ARC Research Hub for Australian Steel Innovation, which is developing new, value-added products and more advanced manufacturing processes to strengthen Australia's steel industry.

The ARC announced \$7.5 million for 10 new projects and 2 Discovery Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Awards under the ARC's Discovery Indigenous scheme.

Launched:

- The Australian Centre for Excellence in Antarctic Science, an ARC Special Research Initiative that is helping form a better understanding of global warming tipping points in the Antarctic region.
- Securing Antarctica's Environmental Future, a world leading Antarctic research program that is investigating the effect of climate change on climate and biodiversity taking place across the Antarctic region.
- The ARC Research Hub for Smart Fertilisers, which is developing the next generation of 'smart' fertilisers that will support sustainable agricultural intensification, farm profitability, and the health of soils and the environment.
- Launch by the Minister for Industry and Science, the Hon Ed Husic MP, of the ARC Centre of Excellence for Synthetic Biology, which is pioneering new microbes to turn biological waste to biofuels, bioplastics and other useful products.

November 2022

The ARC announced:

- \$384.9 million in research funding for 11 ARC Centres of Excellence to conduct research in areas of national priority over a 7-year period.
- More than \$39 million in research funding under the Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities (LIEF) scheme, to ensure Australian scientists continue to have access to world-class infrastructure to support cutting-edge research across a wide range of disciplines.
- More than \$221 million in funding for 478 new projects through the Discovery Projects scheme, supporting individual researchers and research teams to innovate and build the 'new' knowledge essential for a knowledge-based economy.

Launched:

- The ARC Research Hub for Transformation for Reclaimed Waste Resources to Engineered Materials and Solutions for a Circular Economy, which will explore new ways to engineer construction and other high value materials from recycled household, commercial and industrial waste.
- The ARC Research Hub for Supercharging Tropical Aquaculture through Genetic Solutions, which is driving genetic solutions for improving aquaculture industry breeding outcomes and lowering risks from disease, for 5 species: pearl oysters, barramundi, prawns, seaweed, and grouper.
- The ARC Research Hub for Safe and Reliable Energy, which will develop real-world solutions to battery products for industry usage and everyday applications.
- The ARC Training Centre for Optimisation Technologies, Integrated Methodologies, and Applications, which is helping companies and organisations of all types to address large-scale and complex challenges and giving industry decision-making tools to grow Australia's business competitiveness.

- The ARC Research Hub for Nutrients in a Circular Economy, which is commercialising nutrient recovery processing technologies by demonstrating uses of the liquid fertiliser produced from industrial and sewerage wastewater.
- The ARC Research Hub for Transforming Energy Infrastructure through Digital Engineering which through digital engineering and new technologies will support the transformation of the operation of Australia's offshore energy infrastructure, making it more reliable and cost-effective.
- The ARC Training Centre for Multiscale 3D Imaging, Modelling and Manufacturing, which is conducting research in the emerging field of digital materials, to build a deeper understanding of the 3D composition of materials, with applications including medical devices, natural resources, and heritage studies.
- The ARC Training Centre for Information Resilience, which will play a vital part in ensuring digital security for all Australians through advances in data technology and building workforce capacity for Australian businesses and organisations, to protect and sustain effective data pipelines.

December 2022

Senator the Hon Anthony Chisholm launched the ARC Training Centre for the Global Hydrogen Economy, which aims to support Australia's transformation into a world-leading hydrogen powerhouse through industry collaboration and developing new research-based engineering and business skills.

The ARC appointed Professor Christina Twomey as the ARC's inaugural CRO, commencing in January 2023.

Launch of the ARC Training Centre for Collaborative Robotics in Advanced Manufacturing, which is working closely with Australian businesses to shape the innovative use of collaborative robots, or 'cobotics', to combine the strengths of humans and robots in shared work environments.

February 2023

The ARC announced:

- The appointment of 94 new members to the ARC College of Experts for 2023.
- More than \$40 million for 81 new projects under the ARC's Linkage Projects scheme 2022 Round 1, which encourage the transfer of skills, knowledge, and ideas as a basis for achieving social, commercial, and other benefits of research.

The Assistant Minister for Trade and Assistant Minister for Manufacturing, Senator the Hon Tim Ayres, launched the ARC Research Hub for Connected Sensors for Health, which will drive innovation in wearable health sensors to achieve better health outcomes for Australians.

April 2023

The Minister for Education, the Hon Jason Clare MP, released the final report of the Review of the ARC Act.

The ARC announced \$24 million for 25 Mid-Career Industry Fellowships under the Industry Fellowships Program.

Launch of the ARC Research Hub for Microrecycling of Battery and Consumer Wastes, which is researching the recovery of valuable materials from waste batteries and other wastes to manufacture new and innovative materials, while accelerating efforts to reduce emissions and decarbonise for the future.

May 2023

The ARC announced:

- \$22 million in research grants to 50 Early Career Industry Fellowships under the Industry Fellowships Program, which bring industry together with Australia's outstanding researchers.
- \$27 million for 8 Industry Laureate Fellowships.

Launched:

- The ARC Research Hub for Resilient and Intelligent Infrastructure Systems, which aims to deliver sustainable technologies for real-time performance analysis and life-management of Australia's critical infrastructure that will contribute to the nation's prosperity and well-being.
- The ARC Training Centre for Future Crops Development, which aims to create a nationwide industrial capability that will accelerate crop genetic improvement to transform the agricultural industry's growth and capability.
- The ARC Training Centre for Next-Gen Technologies in Biomedical Analysis, which will deliver a workforce trained in the development of transformative technologies that will rapidly expand the Australian pharmaceutical, diagnostic and defence sector.
- The ARC Training Centre for Behavioural Insights for Technology Adoption, which will build the capacity of students, researchers, and partner organisations to foster the adoption of innovation in Australia, particularly in the vital areas of health, agriculture, and cybersecurity.

June 2023

The ARC announced 57 Linkage Projects, with projects including finding innovative ways to develop resilient supply chains to better assist the Australian economy and reconnecting Warlpiri communities with past documentation and recordings of their cultural heritage.

The ARC launched the ARC Research Hub for Digital Bioprocess Development in Melbourne. Led by The University of Melbourne, the Research Hub aims to transform biopharmaceutical manufacturing and unlock growth opportunities to establish Australia's international standing and competitiveness in the Biopharma sector.

PART 02



Australian Research Council overview

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2.1 Role and functions

Legislation

The ARC was established under the [Australian Research Council Act 2001](#) (ARC Act). The ARC Act provides detail in relation to:

- the functions of the ARC
- the establishment of designated committees by the responsible Minister
- the CEO and ARC staff
- reporting requirements
- the funding of research, including the funding cap, funding assistance, funding rules and the ARC research endowment fund.

The funding caps in the ARC Act are regularly updated, through an amendment bill, to allow continued funding under the National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP). The ARC Act was last amended in June 2023.

On 30 August 2022, the Minister for Education, the Hon Jason Clare MP, announced an independent review of the ARC Act. Professor Margaret Sheil AO (Panel Chair), Professor Susan Dodds and Professor Mark Hutchinson were appointed to manage the review process.

The final report, *Trusting Australia's Ability: Review of the Australian Research Council Act 2001*, was released in April 2023, providing 10 recommendations focused on enhancing trust in the ARC by the Government and the research community. The Government announced its response to the Review on 22 August 2023.

Role and functions

The ARC is a vital component of Australia's innovation and research system. We play an integral role in supporting the research sector to produce high-quality and impactful research through the delivery of the NCGP.

Our broader remit includes the provision of high-quality research policy advice to the Australian Government, overseeing the Australian research ethics and integrity framework, the national university research assessment system that promotes excellence in research and its engagement and impact, powerful data assets, and our role in fostering research quality, translation and impact. The ARC also brokers partnerships between researchers and industry, government, community organisations and the international community.

Our purpose and strategy

The ARC's role within our operating environment is broader than funding research, and continues to evolve as we deliver high-quality grants administration, research policy advice, and foster research quality, translation, impact, and integrity. Further details are provided in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Our purpose and strategy

Our Vision	World-class research and innovation for the advancement of Australian society.
Our Purpose	To help shape the Australian research system for the benefit of the nation by enabling world-leading research, fostering research quality, impact and translation, and safeguarding research integrity.
Our Outcome	Outcome 1: Growth of knowledge and innovation through managing research funding schemes, measuring research excellence and providing advice.
Our Programs	<p>NCGP – Discovery Program Building Australia’s research capacity by supporting excellent, internationally competitive research projects, fellowships and awards.</p> <p>NCGP – Linkage Program Building Australia’s research and innovation capacity by supporting excellent, internationally competitive research projects, infrastructure, fellowships, and centres of excellence that involve collaboration among researchers within and beyond the research sector.</p> <p>Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA)⁽¹⁾ Improving Australia’s research capacity by evaluating research at eligible Australian higher education institutions against international benchmarks and identifying excellence across the full spectrum of research activities.</p>
Our Key Activities	<p>Fund high quality, impactful research We fund research through the NCGP based on rigorous peer review assessment of grant applications.</p> <p>Assess research quality, engagement, and impact We assess the quality, engagement and impact of Australia’s university research through our ERA and Engagement and Impact (EI) assessments.⁽¹⁾</p> <p>Safeguard research integrity We safeguard the ethics, integrity, and credibility of Australian research, including through a framework of policies, processes and reviews.</p> <p>Provide grant services to government entities We provide advice and support on program design and deliver research grants administration to other government entities through our Research Grants Services.</p> <p>Provide research policy advice We use our datasets, stakeholder relationships, and rigorous processes to position us to advise government and other stakeholders on the Australian research system.</p>
Our Strategic Priorities	<p>World-class advice and engagement Our expertise and knowledge of the research system is shared, recognised, and sought out nationally and internationally, enabled by trusted, mutually beneficial relationships with a wide and influential network.</p> <p>Research system excellence Our streamlined grants programs and processes, world-class data assets and national assessments enable the research system to continuously improve, and ensure Australia remains a leader in research quality, excellence and impact.</p> <p>Empowered people Our expert workforce has the skills and capabilities essential for the future and operates within a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement with a strong focus on excellent service delivery.</p>

(1) The 2023 ERA round was discontinued and the ARC has developed a transition plan for the development of a modern data-driven approach to research evaluation, informed by expert review. Depending on the outcome of this work and the Review of the ARC Act, the program is subject to amendment.

Funding the highest quality research

The ARC delivers around \$830 million per year to the most dynamic researchers in Australia – a significant component of Australia’s investment in research and development.

The grants are competitively awarded to universities, research teams and large-scale centres through 2 programs under the NCGP: the Discovery Program, which provides support of fundamental ‘blue sky’ research to Australia and supports research by individuals and teams, and the Linkage Program, which creates links between universities, industry, and other partners to strengthen links within the innovation system. Once awarded the ARC works with grant recipients to monitor performance, integrity and delivery of the proposed research and outcomes.

Assessing the quality, engagement, and impact of research

The ARC previously administered 2 national assessments of Australian university research performance, ERA and EI. The Minister requested that the ARC discontinue preparations for the 2023 ERA round and commence work to develop a transition plan, in consultation with the sector and the Department of Education, to establish a modern data driven approach informed by expert review. This transition plan was provided to the Minister in December 2022. The Minister also asked that the ARC work with the Department of Education on developing research engagement and impact indicators to inform the EI assessments.

ERA assessed research quality and provided a national stocktake, by research discipline, against international benchmarks. The ARC conducted ERA evaluations in 2010, 2012, 2015 and 2018. EI evaluated the engagement of researchers with research end-users and showed how universities are translating their research into economic, social, environmental, cultural and other impacts. The first EI assessment took place in 2018.

Providing advice and support on research matters

The ARC advises the responsible Minister on research matters, including research training, research partnerships, and the quality, engagement and impact of university research in Australia.

The ARC provides grants administration services to support other Australian Government entities’ research grant programs.

In 2022–23, the ARC supported the:

- Department of Education’s [Australia’s Economic Accelerator \(AEA\)](#), [National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy \(NCRIS\)](#), and the National Industry PhD Program
- Office of National Intelligence (ONI) and the Department of Defence – National Security Science and Technology Centre’s [National Intelligence and Security Discovery Research Grants \(NISDRG\) Program](#)
- Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry’s Future Drought Fund: Long-Term Trials of Drought Resilient Farming Practices.

Resources

In 2022–23 the ARC:

- managed a budget of \$867.6 million of which \$830.6 million supported research through the NCGP
- had an average staffing level of 147 employees.

Stakeholders

In addition to serving the Minister for Education, we work with a broad range of stakeholders across government, the research and higher education sector, industry, not-for-profit, and Australian and international communities to help shape Australian research. Organisations and stakeholders that play a significant role towards helping us achieve our purpose include:

Australian universities

Universities are our key stakeholders, as NCGP funding is predominantly awarded to Australian universities, and we evaluate the quality and impact of research for this same group. We work closely with university leaders, such as Vice Chancellors, Deputy Vice Chancellors, and with university research offices to ensure we are informed by sector knowledge, and that there is awareness and understanding of our policies, grants processes and compliance with the funding requirements and full participation in our national research assessments.

Department of Education

We sit within the Education Portfolio and regularly engage with our portfolio agency the Department of Education to ensure our policy and priority outcomes are aligned with Government activities.

Industry, not-for-profit organisations, and other research end-users

Industry, not-for-profit organisations, and other research end-users help to maximise the research benefit of ARC-funded research by collaborating and participating in ARC-funded research. These partnerships can include cash and/or in-kind contributions and can lead to better outcomes for research and research translation across sectors.

International collaborators

We are committed to creating and boosting international research collaboration opportunities. Encouraging global research linkages through our schemes is key to ensuring Australian researchers are able to connect and partner with outstanding international researchers to produce world leading research outcomes.

Other government departments and agencies

We work across government to ensure our activities align with strategic Government priorities and that we comply with cross-government legislative requirements. We collaborate closely with the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) to align grant administration practices where possible, and for oversight of the Australian Research Integrity Committee (ARIC). Similarly, we collaborate with the Department of Industry, Science and Resources and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) to enable research commercialisation and translation opportunities. We also provide grants administration services to other government entities that fund research grant programs such as the Department of Education, the Office of National Intelligence, and the Department of Defence.

Researchers

Researchers play an important role across the NCGP and our national research assessments, by delivering excellent research and research outcomes, peer reviewing applications for the NCGP, and participating in our national research assessments. Australian researchers of international repute form the ARC College of Experts and play a central role in identifying and recommending research excellence for funding.

Research peak bodies

We collaborate and consult closely with research peak bodies to ensure our policies and programs are fit for purpose and meet the needs of the Australian research sector given the broad range of research we fund and evaluate.

2.2 Organisational structure

Figure 1: Structure of the ARC, June 2023

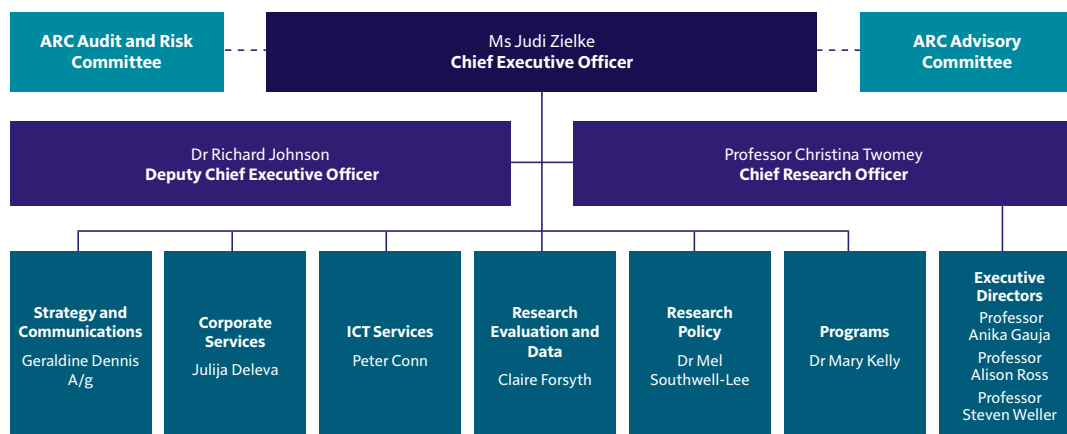


Table 2: Details of the accountable authority during the reporting period 2022–23

Period as the accountable authority or member within the reporting period			
Name	Position title/Position held	Date of commencement	Date of cessation
Ms Judi Zielke	Chief Executive Officer	9 April 2022	–

2.3 Performance framework

A key objective of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) is the implementation of an enhanced Commonwealth performance framework. Commonwealth entities must report on its performance, how it achieves its purposes, and how performance will be measured and assessed.

The ARC's Planning and Reporting Framework (**Section 4.1**) encompasses our requirements under the *Commonwealth Performance Framework* and the ARC's annual planning and reporting activities. It outlines how our performance will be measured, and the results of that measurement. This allows an assessment of our progress towards achieving the objectives set by government for the funds received.

It also ensures alignment of the performance criteria published in the ARC's portfolio budget statements and corporate plans, to the performance outcomes documented in the annual performance statements in **Section 3.1**.

The ARC's Planning and Reporting Framework is consistent with the requirements of the PGPA Act, *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014* (PGPA Rule) and the *Commonwealth Performance Framework*.

Portfolio budget statements

In the October *ARC Portfolio Budget Statements 2022–23* (PBS) the ARC had one outcome and 3 programs with a total of \$867.6m allocated to administered and departmental expenses as outlined in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Allocation of funds towards our outcome and programs

Outcome 1		
Growth of knowledge and innovation through managing research funding schemes, measuring research excellence and providing advice.		
Program 1.1	Program 1.2	Program 1.3
Discovery – Research and Research Training	Linkage – Cross sector research partnerships	Excellence in Research for Australia
Administered expenses \$512.3m	Administered expenses \$321.4m	Administered expenses \$6.1m
Departmental		
Departmental expenses \$27.8m		

Note: Budgeted expenses are as published in the PBS October 2022–23 Education Portfolio.

Corporate plans

The ARC corporate plans, which align with the ARC Strategy, set out the purpose of the ARC and the key activities we will undertake to achieve our purpose.

The *ARC Corporate Plan 2022–23* was published on 30 August 2022 and is available on the ARC website.

The ARC's purpose as outlined in the *ARC Corporate Plan 2022–23* is:

To help shape the Australian research system for the benefit of the nation by enabling world-leading research, fostering research quality, translation and impact, and safeguarding research integrity.

Annual performance statements

The 2022–23 Annual Performance Statements in **Section 3.1** document the ARC's achievements against its purpose in the *ARC Corporate Plan 2022–23*, and outcome and programs in the PBS.

The annual performance statements report against the full set of performance measures outlined in the corporate plan, and PBS which is available on the ARC website, www.arc.gov.au > Home > About the ARC > Our Organisation > [Budget](#).

PART 03



Report on performance

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3.1 Annual performance statements

Statement by the accountable authority

I, as the accountable authority of the Australian Research Council (ARC), present the 2022–23 Annual Performance Statements of the ARC, as required under paragraph 39(1)(a) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and the *Australian Research Council Act 2001*. In my opinion, these annual performance statements are based on properly maintained records, accurately reflect the performance of the entity in the reporting period and comply with subsection 39(2) of the PGPA Act (section 16F of the [PGPA Rule](#)).



Judi Zielke PSM

Chief Executive Officer

13 September 2023

Purpose

As outlined in the [ARC Corporate Plan 2022–23](#), the ARC's purpose is to shape the Australian research system for the benefit of the Australian community by enabling world-leading research and capability, fostering research quality, translation and impact, and safeguarding research integrity.

In support of this purpose, the ARC is responsible for delivering 3 programs, as described in the [ARC Portfolio Budget Statements 2022–23](#) (PBS) – the National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP), Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) and Engagement and Impact (EI).

In the 2022 Statement of Expectations, the Minister for Education asked that the ARC discontinue preparations for the 2023 ERA round. The ARC has since developed a transition plan, in consultation with the sector and the Department of Education, to a modern, data-driven approach informed by expert review. The ARC will continue working with the Department of Education to develop research engagement and impact indicators to inform the assessment of quality and impact.

We have 5 key activities that align with the ARC's purpose and assist us in meeting the objectives of our programs and our purpose:

1. Fund high quality, impactful research
2. Assess research quality, engagement, and impact
3. Safeguard research integrity
4. Provide grant services to government entities
5. Provide research policy advice.

The 2022–23 Annual Performance Statements (statements) outline the ARC's performance for 2022–23. The statements align with key activities (1, 2 and 3) that directly link to the programs outlined in the PBS and provide a summary of the agency's effectiveness in achieving its purpose.

As the outcomes from research are often realised over a longer-term, highlights of ARC-funded research are included in **Section 3.2** to demonstrate the excellence of ARC-funded research, and the significant ways in which it can, and continues to, benefit the Australian public. Furthermore, during 2022–23, the ARC commissioned ACIL Allen to evaluate the outcomes and impacts of ARC-funded research over the past 2 decades and consider the potential future benefits delivered from the funding. Findings from this assessment are published on the ARC's website, www.arc.gov.au > Home > News > [Publications](#) > [Impact assessment of ARC-funded research](#).

The ARC's programs as outlined in the PBS, as well as a summary of results against performance measures is provided in **Table 4**.

Approach

For each of the 3 relevant activities, the statements include:

- a description of the activity, including alignment to programs where applicable
- priorities related to the activity
- a detailed analysis of performance for each performance measure
- a performance summary or overall analysis of performance against the activity.

Summary of performance

The ARC has 8 performance measures reportable in 2022–23.

In 2022–23, of the 8 measures, the ARC achieved 4, assessed 2 as no longer applicable, and did not achieve 2.

A summary of results is provided in **Table 4** and a detailed analysis on the ARC's performance against each performance measure is provided later in this section (performance measure **tables 1 to 8**).

Table 4: Summary of results against performance measures

NCGP – Funding Excellent Basic and Applied Research and Research Training Program 1.1 Discovery – Research and Research Training Program 1.2 Linkage – Cross sector research partnerships ERA – Assessing the Quality, Engagement and Impact of Research Program 1.3 – Excellence in Research for Australia		
Performance measures		Result
1	The percentage of ARC schemes completed in time to meet ARC published timeframes	Not Achieved
2	The percentage of submitted progress, End of Year and final reports reviewed on time	Achieved
3	The percentage of appeals upheld against NCGP application assessment processes for all applications submitted	Achieved
4	The percentage of ARC-funded research projects involving international collaboration for all ARC-funded research projects	Achieved
5	The total contribution from partner organisations for all research projects funded under the Linkage Projects scheme	Achieved
6	Use of ERA program data to inform and support the needs of Australian universities and the Australian Government	Not Applicable ⁽¹⁾
7	Use of EI program data to inform and support the needs of Australian universities and the Australian Government	Not Applicable ⁽²⁾
8	The percentage of research integrity investigation outcomes actioned on time ⁽³⁾	Not Achieved

(1) A result for performance measure 6 is not applicable for this reporting period due to the Government's decision to pause the 2023 ERA round.

(2) A result for performance measure 7 is not applicable for this reporting period due to the Government's decision to pause the 2024 EI round.

(3) Performance measure 8 is not listed in the PBS as it is not directly linked to Program 1.1, 1.2 or 1.3. It is listed in the *ARC Corporate Plan 2022–23* as a performance measure.

Fund high quality and impactful research

Description

The ARC is responsible for administering the NCGP, assessing the quality, engagement, and impact of research, overseeing the Australian research ethics and integrity framework, and providing advice and support on research matters.

Through the NCGP, the ARC supports excellent research, research training and research infrastructure for the benefit of Australians, across all disciplines (excluding pre-clinical, clinical medical or health research), awarding funding based on a competitive peer review process. The NCGP comprises 2 programs, Discovery and Linkage, which fund a range of complementary schemes that provide funding for basic and applied research, research training, research collaboration and research infrastructure.

Descriptions of the ARC's NCGP schemes, under Program 1.1 and 1.2, are listed in **Appendix 1**.

Deliverables

To support our function of funding high quality and impactful research, under Program 1.1 and 1.2, the ARC's priorities as stated in the PBS are:

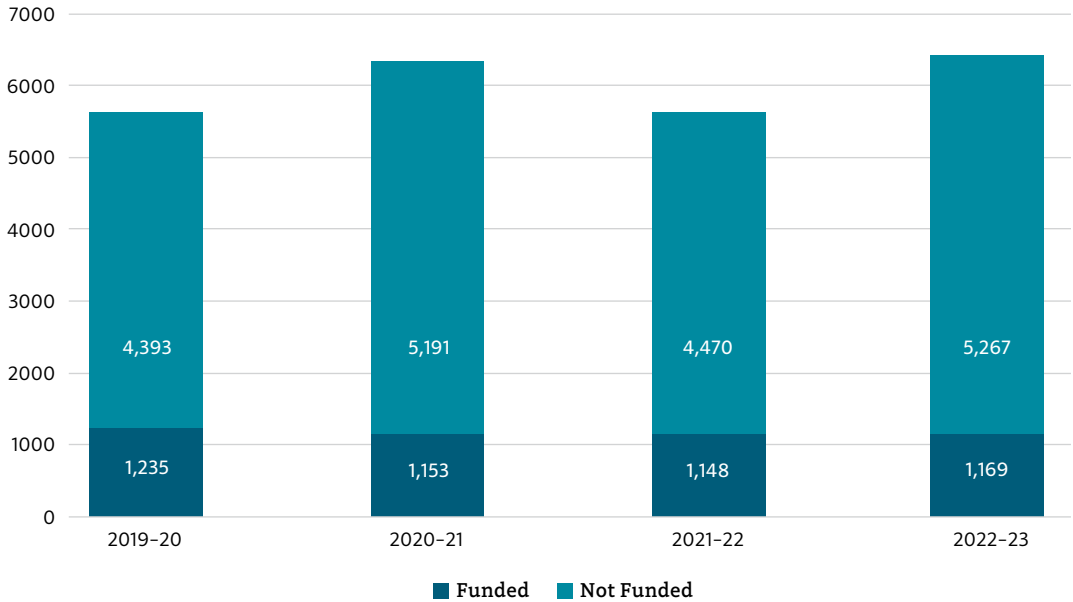
- delivering the NCGP effectively and efficiently to support excellent research in the national interest
- completing the NCGP Process Review, and working with the research sector to design and implement enhanced processes and procedures
- collaborating with the research sector to strengthen understanding of the value and processes relating to the National Interest Test
- delivering the new Industry Fellowships Program
- providing high quality advice to the Minister, and engaging strategically across government, and with the research sector, including universities, researchers, industry, and other research users
- promoting the ARC's research grants administration expertise and services, including through the provision of Research Grant Services.

In 2022–23, the Minister for Education awarded 1,169 grants for research projects from 6,436 applications (**Figure 2**). The funded projects involved 3,329 researchers (Chief Investigators), worth \$1.15 billion (where outcomes were finalised in the reporting period).

Also in 2022–23, the ARC:

- administered 5,925 new and ongoing grants under the NCGP, providing \$783 million to the administering organisations (based on projects as at the end of the reporting period)
- announced the launch of the new Industry Fellowships Program in August 2022, which is a \$215 million package made up of 3 schemes – Early Career Industry Fellowships, Mid-Career Industry Fellowships, and Industry Laureate Fellowships
- undertook an NCGP Process Review of its application and assessment processes, in consultation with the research sector.

Figure 2: Applications received, and projects funded, 2019–20 to 2022–23



A breakdown of NCGP funding by scheme round is included in **Appendix 2**.

Assess research quality, engagement, and impact

Description

The ARC administers ERA, which evaluates the quality of research by discipline, against international benchmarks. The ARC is also responsible for administering the EI assessment, which examines the translation of university research into appreciable outcomes beyond academia, determining what economic, social, environmental, and cultural benefits arise from Australian research.

In August 2022, as part of his Statement of Expectations, the Minister for Education asked the ARC to discontinue preparations for the 2023 ERA round and commence work to develop a transition plan, in consultation with the sector and Department, to establish a modern data driven approach informed by expert review. In addition, he asked that the ARC continue to work with the Department on developing research engagement and impact indicators to inform the EI assessments. A transition plan was delivered to the Minister on 14 December 2022.

The ARC is focused on driving world-class research and innovation for the advancement of Australian society. The ARC plays a critical role in providing ongoing investment in university research and encouraging the adoption and translation of that knowledge, to increase its impact and achieve greater national benefit for Australia.

Deliverables

To support our function of assessing research quality, engagement, and impact, under Program 1.3, the ARC's priorities as stated in the PBS are:

- implementing outcomes of the review of ERA and EI by transitioning ERA to a more modern, data driven approach informed by expert review
- developing research engagement and impact indicators to inform the EI assessments
- ensuring ARC grant activities and research assessments, and data obtained from these activities, support the participation by all researchers, including First Nations researchers, women researchers, and early and mid-career researchers
- establishing a data strategy and service unit to identify, analyse and share the value from ARC and other data sets across government and with the research community.

In 2022–23 the ARC:

- collected ERA voluntary submission data from universities, to leverage the valuable work already undertaken by universities to collect research outputs, and to help inform methods of automating data collection in the future
- became a member of the *Research on Research Institute* to better leverage international understanding and practices in the development of new research quality and impact and engagement metrics
- commissioned an evaluation of the outcomes and impacts of ARC-funded research, which will help inform a more integrated approach to assessing research impact across the ARC
- collaborated with the Department of Education to streamline the Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) – a rich source of information on Australia's research income
- worked with citation providers to understand how technology can be better used to automate some of the current processes that are most burdensome for universities.

Safeguard research integrity

Description

The ARC expects the highest standards of integrity among those who conduct ARC business, including individuals who assess grant applications and evaluate research excellence. Research must be developed, undertaken and reported according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards in a research environment underpinned by a culture of integrity.

Management of research integrity in Australia is a shared responsibility that involves the ARC, the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and a range of other institutions and entities. There is no single Commonwealth agency with regulatory powers for the management or oversight of research integrity in Australia. Responsibility for the various aspects of research integrity is shared among institutions that conduct research, funding agencies, agencies such as Ombudsman Offices, Crime and Corruption Commissions and the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency.

The [ARC Research Integrity Policy](#) in **Section 4.1** promotes and supports research integrity and safeguards confidence in the value of publicly funded research by:

- making transparent the ARC's role in ensuring research integrity and addressing breaches of the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018](#) (Code)
- establishing a framework to support the integrity of the ARC's grant application, peer review, grant selection and research evaluation processes, funding decisions and research
- raising awareness of the importance of research integrity and the possible consequences for research institutions and individuals if appropriate standards are not maintained.

Deliverables

To support this key activity, the ARC's priority as stated in the PBS is:

- continuing to work with universities and other stakeholders to safeguard the integrity and credibility of Australian research.

In 2022–23 the ARC:

- commissioned an evaluation of the operation of the Australian Research Integrity Committee (ARIC)
- supported ARIC in its reviews of institutional processes for considering potential breaches of the Code
- continued to contribute as a co-author to the ongoing review of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (National Statement)
- participated in the development of the Australian and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching (ANZCCART) Openness Agreement on Animal Research and Teaching in Australia.

Data notes

- The 2022–23 reporting period is based on the financial year (1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023), inclusive of start and end dates.
- All data results have been rounded to one decimal place for consistency, except where required to clearly show a result.
- The specific methodologies for calculating the results for each performance measure are denoted with each measure.
- Figures used in **Section 3.1** to assess performance outcomes reflect data collected on the basis of grants awarded, and do not directly correspond to financial statement information provided elsewhere in this report.
- The following scheme rounds were finalised (i.e. a ministerial decision occurred) in 2022–23:
 - Discovery Program: FL 2022, FT 2022, DE 2023, IN 2023, DP 2023
 - Linkage Program: IH 2022, IC 2022, LP 2021 Round 3, CE 2023, LIEF 2023, LP 2022 Rounds 1 and 2, IM 2023, IE 2023, IL 2023.

Performance measures

Performance measure 1

The percentage of ARC schemes completed in time to meet ARC published timeframes				
Outcome	NCGP application assessment processes are conducted in an efficient and timely manner			
Methodology	Quantitative, efficiency The number of ARC schemes where outcomes were announced within the published timeframes on the ARC website against all ARC schemes where outcomes were announced, for the reporting period Where a significant event occurs (e.g. a Federal Election) that is beyond the control of the ARC, timeframes for impacted schemes will be recalculated			
Related key activities	The ARC will fund high quality and impactful research			
Data source	Data extracted from the ARC NCGP administrative database			
Measure source	CP 2022–23 page 21, PBS 2022–23 pages 155 & 157			
Target	100%			
Results	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23⁽¹⁾
	N/A	N/A	N/A	93.3% (not achieved)

(1) This is a revised measure and 2022–23 is the first period it has been measured and reported.

Analysis of results

The ARC did not achieve performance measure one. While we did not meet the target for 100% of ARC schemes to be completed in time to meet ARC published timeframes, our result of 14 of 15 (93.3%) scheme rounds announced on time, reflected the significant work the ARC has done to improve the timeliness of grants processes. By comparison, in 2021–22, we reported for a similar measure that only 50% of recommendations from our schemes rounds were made to the Minister within the set timeframe.

When broken down by program: 5 of 5 (100.0%) schemes were published on time for the Discovery Program; and 9 of 10 (90.0%) schemes were published on time for the Linkage Program.

Of the schemes announced between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023, outcomes for 8 schemes were announced on time and 4 schemes were announced earlier than the published date. Two schemes were announced in July 2022 as the first announcements under the current government – Industrial Transformations Research Hubs and Industrial Transformation Training Centres – with the Federal Election and subsequent change in government having some impact on the final stages of the process. For the purposes of this measure, these schemes are considered as being delivered on time.

The announcement of one scheme round, Linkage Projects 2021 Round 3, was late due to internal delays. The announcement of outcomes from this scheme round was planned for June 2022 however, the actual announcement was in August 2022. During 2022–23 the ARC made changes to its processes, following widespread consultation with the research sector. These changes, which have been well received by the sector, have had a positive impact on our timeframes.

We place great importance on the timeliness of our peer review assessment processes and announcements. Timeliness is an indicator of efficiency within the ARC and assists researchers and partner organisations to strategically plan. Adherence to stated timelines also removes uncertainty for researchers and partner organisations on expected announcement of outcomes.

With the conclusion of the NCGP Process Review and implementation of streamlining arrangements based on consultation with the research sector, we anticipate achieving this target for 2023–24.

Performance measure 2

The percentage of submitted progress, End of Year and final reports reviewed on time ⁽¹⁾				
Outcome	The ARC reviews completed final grant reports and submitted End of Year Reports, Progress / Annual Reports in a timely manner (within 90 days of submission) to ensure researchers are not impeded in applying for additional grants			
Methodology	Quantitative, efficiency Percentage of reports processed within the reporting period i.e. finalised (approved/waived) or desubmitted back to the Research Office for action. 90 days calculated from the last date of submission			
Related key activities	The ARC will fund high quality and impactful research			
Data source	Data extracted from the ARC NCGP administrative database and GrantConnect			
Measure source	CP 2022–23 page 21, PBS 2022–23 pages 155 & 157			
Target	> 90%			
Results	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
	N/A	N/A	97.0% ⁽²⁾	97.0% (achieved)

(1) This 2022–23 measure is a consolidation of 2 separate measures for 2021–22.

(2) This result is a combination of the results from the 2 separate measures we had in 2021–22.

Analysis of results

The ARC achieved performance measure 2. Our target was to have over 90% of completed Final Report and submitted End of Year reports (EOYR), Progress/Annual Reports reviewed in a timely manner (within 90 calendar days of submission). In 2022–23, we reviewed and processed 6,910 (97.0%) of the 7,126 submitted reports within 90 days.

When broken down by program: 5,114 of 5,302 (96.5%) submitted progress, End of Year and final reports reviewed on time for the Discovery Programs; 1,796 of 1,824 (98.5%) submitted progress, End of Year and final reports reviewed on time for the Linkage Program.

The purpose of the EOYR is to collect information regarding the expenditure activity relating to ARC funding received during the calendar year and reconcile it against the ARC's records. The EOYR also collects information regarding any significant issues affecting the progress of a project during the calendar year, from an administrative perspective. The EOYR must be submitted to the ARC through the Research Management System (RMS) by 31 March the following year.

Through achieving this measure, the ARC has demonstrated it is accountable in maintaining good management practices and compliance monitoring for the research funds it administers. Achieving this measure also benefits researchers by ensuring they are not impeded in applying for additional

grants as there are limits on the number of funded projects a researcher can be involved on as a Chief Investigator; this requires all commitments on previous funded projects to be met, potentially including the submission of final reports.

Meeting this measure has also assisted in alerting both the ARC and Administering Organisations to potential issues that researchers may have faced in completing their funded research and facilitated appropriate follow up action where required. This awareness ensures that researchers can be better supported to maximise their research outcomes.

Performance measure 3

The percentage of appeals upheld against NCGP application assessment processes for all applications submitted

Outcome	ARC manages NCGP application and assessment processes fairly and in accordance with Grant Guidelines			
Methodology	Quantitative, effectiveness Number of appeals upheld in the specified reporting period against all applications where the appeals decision was made in the reporting period			
Related key activities	The ARC will fund high quality and impactful research			
Data source	Data extracted from the ARC NCGP administrative database			
Measure source	CP 2022–23 page 22, PBS 2022–23 pages 155 & 157			
Target	<1%			
Results	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
	N/A	0.02%	1.5%	0.0% (achieved)

Analysis of results

The ARC achieved performance measure 3. Our target was for less than one percent of appeals against NCGP application assessment processes being upheld. Of the 7,817 applications for scheme rounds in 2022–23, a total of 17 appeals were submitted, however none were upheld. Fourteen of these appeals were for schemes under the Discovery Program, and 3 were for Linkage Program schemes.

This result is a significant improvement compared to our 2021–22 result of 1.48% which consisted of 2,158 applications for scheme rounds, 35 appeals submitted and 32 being upheld.

Our improved result was achieved, at least in part, through improvements in the transparency, consistency and integrity of the NCGP peer review process resulting from increased sector outreach by ARC Executive Directors and other ARC staff, and significantly improved ‘Instructions to Applicants’.

The improved result can also be attributed to the ARC’s revised requirements regarding the inclusion of preprints in scheme round applications, following lessons learned in 2021–22.

Performance measure 4

The percentage of ARC-funded research projects involving international collaboration for all ARC-funded research projects				
Outcome	The ARC funds a high proportion of projects involving international collaboration			
Methodology	Quantitative, effectiveness The number of research projects indicating actual international collaboration divided by the total number of research projects displayed as a percentage. Data based on collaboration with nominated country/ countries as per final reports approved within the reporting period			
Related key activities	The ARC will fund high quality and impactful research			
Data source	Data extracted from the ARC NCGP administrative database			
Measure source	CP 2022-23 page 22, PBS 2022-23 pages 155 & 157			
Target	> 70%			
Results	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
	N/A	78.7%	79.3%	79.4% (achieved)

Analysis of results

The ARC achieved performance measure 4. Our target is that more than 70% of funded projects involved international collaboration. In 2022-23, researchers supported by ARC funding reported an increase in the proportion of collaborations with research partners overseas. Of the 786 final reports submitted in 2022-23, 624 (79.4%) involved international collaboration.

Our result for this performance measure has improved each year since its introduction in 2020-21.

When broken down by program: 516 of 617 (83.6%) projects reported international collaboration in their final reports for Discovery Program schemes; 108 of 169 (63.9%) projects reported international collaboration in their final reports for Linkage Program schemes.

During 2022-23 we continued to provide support for international collaboration through all NCGP schemes, including funding to support international collaboration visits where justified.

The ARC is committed to international research collaboration through all its grant schemes and acknowledges the importance of encouraging and supporting international engagement to leverage international expertise and address issues of global importance. Both researchers and end users benefit from the increased exchange of ideas, access to facilities and capacity building opportunities gained through collaborations with international peers which can improve the quality and maximise the impact of research outcomes.

Performance measure 5

The total contribution from partner organisations for all research projects funded under the Linkage Projects scheme				
Outcome	The ARC fosters an environment for collaboration between researchers and partner organisations. Total contribution from partner organisations for every ARC dollar is equal to or higher than the previous year			
Methodology	<p>Quantitative, efficiency</p> <p>Total partner organisation contribution (cash and in-kind funding) divided by total ARC funding for the same scheme round. Includes all funded Linkage Projects where outcomes were finalised within the reporting period</p>			
Related key activities	The ARC will fund high quality and impactful research			
Data source	Data extracted from the ARC NCGP administrative database			
Measure source	CP 2022–23 page 23, PBS 2022–23 page 157			
Target	≥ average dollar contribution than the previous year ⁽¹⁾			
Results	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
	N/A	\$1.49	\$1.59	\$1.65 (achieved)

(1) The target for this measure changed in 2022–23 from ≥ \$1 to ≥ average dollar contribution than the previous year.

Analysis of results

The ARC achieved performance measure 5. Our target was for the average dollar contribution from partner organisations, within the Linkage Projects scheme, to be greater than or equal to the previous year. In 2022–23, our result was \$1.65 which is an increase from the 2021–22 result of \$1.59 (3.8%).

The average dollar contribution has improved each year since this measure was introduced in 2020–21. The continued improvement suggests a positive reflection of broader economic circumstances for partner organisations, importance of research and development, and an ongoing support for high quality, peer reviewed, university-based research.

A partner organisation’s commitment of funding and other resources to a research project generally indicates an expectation of a return from that investment. Therefore, improved levels of partner financial commitments in 2022–23 may suggest increased confidence in partner organisations realising benefit from their investment in ARC-funded research.

Under the Linkage Projects scheme, the combined cash and in-kind contributions pledged by partner organisations are required to match, at least, the funding sought from the ARC. This engagement with partner organisations can also facilitate important pathways to translation and commercialisation opportunities for ARC-funded research and researchers.

Performance measure 6

Use of ERA program data to inform and support the needs of Australian universities and the Australian Government ⁽¹⁾				
Outcome	ERA program reports and activities assist in the development of Australian Government policies and the strategic planning of Australian universities			
Methodology	Qualitative, effectiveness and output Desktop review and analysis of Australian university planning and reporting documents, requests for information from Government, and relevant feedback captured from outreach activities			
Related key activities	The ARC will assess research quality, engagement, and impact			
Data source	Surveys of Australian universities and Australian university planning and reporting documents			
Measure source	CP 2022–23 page 23, PBS 2022–23 page 158			
Target	Met			
Results	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
	N/A	Achieved	Achieved	N/A

(1) This 2022–23 measure is a consolidation of 2 separate performance measures from 2021–22.

Analysis of results

Performance measure 6 is not applicable for this reporting period due to Government’s decision to pause the 2023 ERA round.

In August 2022, the Minister for Education provided the ARC with a Statement of Expectations which requested the 2023 round of ERA be placed on pause. Instead, the ARC was to provide a transition plan by the end of 2022 in consultation with the sector and the Department of Education, to establish a modern data driven approach informed by expert review.

The ARC delivered the ERA Transition Plan on 14 December 2022. The Plan was developed with an expert ERA Transition Working Group consisting of members from across the university research sector and with experience of the research evaluation system.

Given that ERA has been discontinued, we have replaced this measure in the 2023–24 Corporate Plan.

Performance measure 7

Use of EI program data to inform and support the needs of Australian universities and the Australian Government⁽¹⁾

Outcome	EI program reports and activities assist in the development of Australian Government policies and the strategic planning of Australian universities			
Methodology	Qualitative, effectiveness and output Desktop review and analysis of Australian university planning and reporting documents, and requests for information from Government, and relevant feedback captured from outreach activities			
Related key activities	The ARC will assess research quality, engagement, and impact			
Data source	Surveys of Australian universities and Australian university planning and reporting documents			
Measure source	CP 2022–23 page 24, PBS 2022–23 page 158			
Target	Met			
Results	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

(1) This is a new performance measure for 2022–23.

Analysis of results

Performance measure 7 is not applicable for this reporting period due to the pause of the 2023 ERA round and subsequent pause of the 2024 EI round.

In August 2022, the Minister for Education provided the ARC with a Statement of Expectations. In the Statement of Expectations, it was asked that the ARC work with the Department of Education to develop research engagement and impact indicators to inform the EI assessments. The Minister also paused the 2023 round of ERA and the 2024 EI round and asked the ARC to develop a transition plan, in consultation with the sector and the Department of Education, to establish a modern data driven approach informed by expert review. This was delivered on 14 December 2022 and included a plan for transitioning ERA and EI to a modern, data driven approach.

Given that EI has been discontinued, we have replaced this measure in the 2023–24 Corporate Plan.

Performance measure 8

The percentage of research integrity investigation outcomes actioned on time				
Outcome	ARC-funded research is undertaken with integrity and complies with national codes on research ethics and the ARC Research Integrity Policy			
Methodology	Quantitative, output			
	The percentage of outcomes from investigations notified to the ARC under its Research Integrity Policy considered and actioned by the ARC within 6 weeks			
Related key activities	The ARC will safeguard research integrity			
Data source	Data extracted from the ARC Research Integrity administrative register			
Measure source	CP 2022–23 page 24			
Target	> 90%			
Results	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
	N/A	N/A	N/A	57.5% (not achieved)

Analysis of results

The ARC did not achieve performance measure 8. Our target was for more than 90% of outcomes from investigations reported to the ARC Research Integrity Office being considered and actioned by the ARC within 6 weeks (42 calendar days) of receipt. There were 40 matters considered by the Research Integrity Review Committee during 2022–23, and of these matters 23 (57.5%) were actioned withing the targeted timeline.

The average time to process all matters during 2022–23 was 42.3 calendar days, only 0.3 days past our target.

Recognising our target timeframes were not being met, in mid-2022–23 we introduced improvements to internal processes which enabled the Research Integrity Review Committee to consider matters more promptly – including by conducting out-of-session reviews.

Since implementing these changes in January 2023, 90.9% of notifications to the ARC have been considered and actioned within the 6-week timeline, taking an average of 27 calendar days and exceeding the performance measure target.

The ARC developed this performance measure for the 2022–23 Corporate Plan. As this was a new measure, it did not have a benchmark for the initial target. It became clear throughout the year that the target set did not consider factors such as increasing resource constraints across the agency, availability of key staff and Research Integrity Review Committee members, public holidays and Christmas shutdown periods. After reviewing this performance measure ahead of inclusion in the 2023–24 Corporate Plan, it was decided a more appropriate target is, less than or equal to an average of 30 working days, which will be reported on in the 2023–24 Annual Performance Statements.

Performance indicators

The ARC NCGP aims to support a diverse workforce. The following indicators (**Table 5**) are included within the annual performance statements to provide trend data across multiple years. This information contributes to informing policy at the ARC. While the ARC has minimal control over these indicators, we actively promote our policies to the research sector to ensure that ARC-funded research contributes positively to the sustainability of Australia's research workforce.

Table 5: Performance indicators

Indicator ⁽¹⁾	Methodology ⁽²⁾⁽³⁾⁽⁴⁾⁽⁵⁾	Year/Number/ Percentage
A Number of researchers (individuals) on ARC-funded research projects	Each individual researcher is counted only once for total NCGP	2022-23: 2,543 2021-22: 2,505 2020-21: 2,195 2019-20: 2,763
B Proportion of researchers (individuals) on ARC-funded research projects who are women	Number of Chief Investigators who identify as female, to the total number of individuals (including those who do not identify and those who identify as other, as indicated on the application form)	2022-23: 902 / 35.5% 2021-22: 863 / 34.5% 2020-21: 797 / 36.3% 2019-20: 924 / 33.4%
C Proportion of researchers (individuals) on ARC-funded research projects who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	Number of Chief Investigators who self-identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, to total number of individuals	2022-23: 73 / 2.9% 2021-22: 44 / 1.8% 2020-21: 41 / 1.9% 2019-20: 26 / 0.9%
D Proportion of researchers (individuals) on ARC-funded research projects who are early career researchers (ECR)	Number of new and ongoing ECRs, to total number of individuals ECR status is defined as 0-5 years post-PhD at close of scheme round and is calculated on the basis of PhD data provided by individual researchers	2022-23: 301 / 11.8% 2021-22: 303 / 12.1% 2020-21: 292 / 13.3% (new indicator for 2020-21)
E Number of researchers on ARC-funded research projects who are fellows or awardees	Each individual researcher is counted only once for total NCGP	2022-23: 418 / 16.4% ⁽⁶⁾ 2021-22: 305 / 12.2% 2020-21: 320 / 14.6% 2019-20: 319 / 11.5%

(1) These indicators only count researchers who have a Chief Investigator or equivalent role in the funded applications.

(2) All data is sourced from the ARC NCGP administrative database.

(3) Data is collated based on all applications where outcomes were finalised (i.e. ministerial decision occurred) within the specified reporting period.

(4) The LIEF scheme is excluded for performance indicators A to E.

(5) Each individual researcher is counted only once.

(6) Data includes the 3 new Industry Fellowships Program schemes which commenced in 2022-23.



3.2 Research highlights

Outcomes of ARC supported research



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers, please be advised that the following section may contain images and names of deceased persons.

Research highlights demonstrate how research funded through the NCGP is making a real difference to Australia, and the world. The following case studies reflect a selection of the research projects which demonstrate the economic, environmental, social, health and/or cultural benefits arising from ARC-funded research.

Drive-by bridge inspection technology

Primary Researcher: Dr Mehrisadat Makki Alamdari.

Institution: The University of New South Wales (UNSW).





ARC-funded research is developing a vehicle equipped with sensors that could revolutionise structural assessment of the condition of thousands of bridges across Australia.

Through an ARC Discovery Early Career Researcher Award, Dr Makki Alamdari is working with her team at UNSW and partners at Kyoto University in Japan to develop a vehicle-mounted sensing system that can build a snapshot of a bridge's structural condition.

'I am aiming to develop a low-cost and robust bridge monitoring framework through advanced data analytics, solely based on the response of a moving vehicle passing over the bridge,' Dr Alamdari said.

Checking the structural integrity of Australian bridges, almost three-quarters of which were constructed before 1976, currently requires a regular visual inspection. This is expensive, time-consuming and subjective.

Large bridges such as the Sydney Harbour Bridge use structural health monitoring technology. The large number of sensors installed on the bridge, provide a continuous stream of data that engineers use to identify any emerging structural issues.

However, the cost for similar deployment on most of the thousands of bridges around the country, many of which are short-span bridges in rural areas, would be prohibitive.

'The need to make reliable assessments of bridge safety has grown as higher traffic volumes and larger and heavier vehicles have increased the loads on bridges,' Dr Alamdari said.

In collaboration with her partners at Kyoto University, Dr Alamdari and her colleagues have developed a custom-built prototype vehicle that travels over bridges.

The vehicle is equipped with multiple accelerometers and load cells to measure the dynamic response of the vehicle once it is moving, and it also measures the interaction force between the vehicle and the bridge. A data-acquisition system on the vehicle logs data in real-time.

'In the laboratory, we have proven that we can monitor the health status of the bridge using this technology,' Dr Alamdari says.

'But in the field, it's always a different story because, from my experience working on the Sydney Harbour Bridge, I know there are a lot of unexpected challenges.

'To get it to the required level involves a lot of work in terms of advancing and tuning the parameters of your algorithm and increasing the sensitivity of your sensors. All those things need to be just right to ensure the technology works in the way we intend.

'But we are definitely on the right track.'

Image: iStock.



Bush foods bring health, cultural and economic benefits for Indigenous Australians

Primary Researcher: Professor Yasmina Sultanbawa.

Institution: The University of Queensland.





The ARC Training Centre for Uniquely Australian Foods, led by the University of Queensland, is transforming the native food and agribusiness sector, with economic and health benefits for First Nations peoples.

One of the Centre's projects involves researchers working to produce a low sugar soft drink from native Kakadu plums to reduce the consumption of full sugar beverages in Indigenous communities. The project has the twin goals of reducing high sugar intakes and creating employment opportunities for First Nations people.

'Our focus is working with Indigenous communities to improve their health and, from anecdotal evidence, we know that including native ingredients will draw them to the product as it fosters connection to Country,' said PhD candidate Jessica Cartwright, who helped develop the drink at the Centre.

The Kakadu plum drink has been developed as a cordial that can be mixed with carbonated water to create a low-calorie, vitamin C-rich soft drink with up to 80% less sugar than a standard soft drink.

'This beverage has the potential to tackle the high rates of chronic diseases such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, kidney disease and dental issues we see in remote communities.'

The wild harvesting of the plums also offers people in the most remote regions of Northern Australia an opportunity to earn a living, with a strong cultural dimension.

Crucially, the Centre is also supported by several native food enterprises, led by a First Nations Enterprise Group, and advised in best-practice collaboration by a First Nations Advisory Group.

In February 2023, PhD candidate Sukirtha Srivarathan published research that found edible halophytes, a group of plants used by First Nations Australians for 65,000 years as food, animal fodder and medicine, could be a nutritious alternative to salt.

'They're a good source of protein and most of them are a good source of fibre, minerals and trace elements, especially calcium, iron, potassium and zinc, while some also have considerable amounts of folate (vitamin B9) and vitamin C,' Ms Srivarathan said.

The Centre's Director, Professor Yasmina Sultanbawa, said the purpose of the research was to ensure all economic and social benefits go back to First Nations communities and enterprises.

'That will happen through the creation of First Nations-owned and led native food value chains,' she said.

'Providing access to healthy native food products such as the Kakadu plum drink, and halophytes which can be consumed as a fresh vegetable or a dried product, empowers communities to improve their health through nutritious foods,' said Professor Sultanbawa.

Image: Supplied by ARC Training Centre for Uniquely Australian Foods.



Staying the course – improving Indigenous students' support

Primary Researcher: Professor Martin Nakata.

Institution: James Cook University.



One of the 19 outcomes sought in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieve their full learning potential. Professor Martin Nakata has conducted ARC-funded research on Indigenous education that has directly contributed to the Closing the Gap education targets.

Professor Nakata has collaborated with many colleagues and institutions over the years and has been funded through several ARC research grants over almost 2 decades.

Between 2012 and 2017, Professor Nakata's ARC-funded Discovery Indigenous project, *Indigenous persistence in formal learning*, sought to expand understanding of Indigenous students' experience when transitioning from schools to higher education, and using that knowledge to improve support, learning experiences, and outcomes.

The Indigenous learning model Professor Nakata built, known as the TAPS strategy (Transitional, Academic, Pastoral, Support) can be readily adopted by universities through the support services provided by their Indigenous Centres, rather than requiring changes to teaching or curriculum. TAPS has been adopted by 3 universities, with much wider adoption likely as awareness grows.



In July, Professor Nakata hosted 100 Indigenous professional support staff across Australia's universities at the inaugural National Conference on Indigenous Learning Support Services to share the accumulated knowledge on how to better support academic success in higher education studies.

Professor Nakata is a Chief Investigator at both the ARC Centre of Excellence for Australian Biodiversity and Heritage (CABAH) and the ARC Centre of Excellence for Indigenous and Environmental Histories and Futures. At both centres, Professor Nakata leads their education and engagement plans.

Since CABAH launched in 2017, Professor Nakata and his team have sought to improve the math and science performance of students in regional and remote areas. They have also provided many presentations, workshops, seminars etc., to stakeholders – educators, regional and remote community members, and government officials.

The ARC Centre of Excellence for Indigenous and Environmental Histories and Futures – with ARC funding of a 7-year program commencing in 2023 – aims to generate a new direction in knowledge creation based on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led approaches to managing Land and Sea Country.

Professor Nakata is one of many researchers who focus their studies on exploring ways to overcome the disadvantages First Nations people still face today. Their research will continue to benefit First Nations people and in turn, the entire outlook of Australia.

Image: Delegates from 27 Australian universities attending the National Conference on Indigenous Learning Support Services in 2023, supplied by Professor Nakata.



Climate warnings from Antarctica

Primary Researchers: Professor Matt King and Professor Nerilie Abram.

Institutions: University of Tasmania, The Australian National University (ANU), UNSW, Curtin University, University of Canberra, The University of Melbourne, The University of Western Australia and University of South Australia.





As governments around the world grapple with the challenge of global warming, researchers at the Australian Centre for Excellence in Antarctic Science (ACEAS) are discovering new evidence that underlines the importance of reducing carbon emissions to limit temperature rises.

A study published in August 2022 by an international team of climate scientists, including experts from ACEAS, found that allowing global temperatures to rise above 2 degrees Celsius could lead to further melting of the East Antarctic Ice Sheet – the ‘sleeping giant’ – with a dire impact on sea levels.

‘Earth’s largest ice sheet, the East Antarctic Ice Sheet, contains the equivalent of 52 metres of sea level,’ said co-author Professor Nerilie Abram, Deputy Director of ACEAS at ANU.

Professor Abram said the ice sheet could remain mostly stable over coming centuries, adding less than half a metre to sea-level rise by the year 2500, if urgent action is taken now to limit global warming.

‘But, if temperatures rise above 2 degrees Celsius, sustained by high greenhouse gas emissions in the coming decades, we lose our chance to keep that ice sheet dormant,’ Professor Abram said.

‘The melting of the East Antarctic Ice Sheet could contribute around 1 to 3 metres to sea levels by 2300 and around 2 to 5 metres by 2500,’ she said.

ACEAS is an ARC Special Research Initiative. Founded in 2020, with \$20 million of ARC funding, ACEAS brings together 8 Australian universities along with other partner organisations from around the world. The Centre focuses on research that uncovers the effects of climate change on East Antarctica and the Southern Ocean.

During 2022–23 ACEAS played a key role in many significant research findings.

A study led by ACEAS researchers, published in March 2023, found that the deep ocean circulation around Antarctica could be headed for collapse. A further study published in May confirmed the modelling through a new method of ocean observations – the circulation has already slowed by 30% since the 1990s.

In April 2023, ACEAS researchers teamed with the Australian Antarctic Program Partnership to release a briefing paper for policy makers, *On Thin Ice*. The paper notes that while the volume of Antarctic sea ice is highly variable – a ‘heartbeat’ of expansion and contraction – there is less sea ice than usual for almost all of the past 7 years.

‘If you noticed a change in your heartbeat, you’d likely see a doctor,’ the report notes.

‘Just as doctors run tests and gather information, climate scientists undertake fieldwork, gather observations, and run simulations to better understand the health of our planet,’ says ACEAS Director, Professor Matt King.

‘Antarctica’s health heavily depends on humanity’s actions from now.’

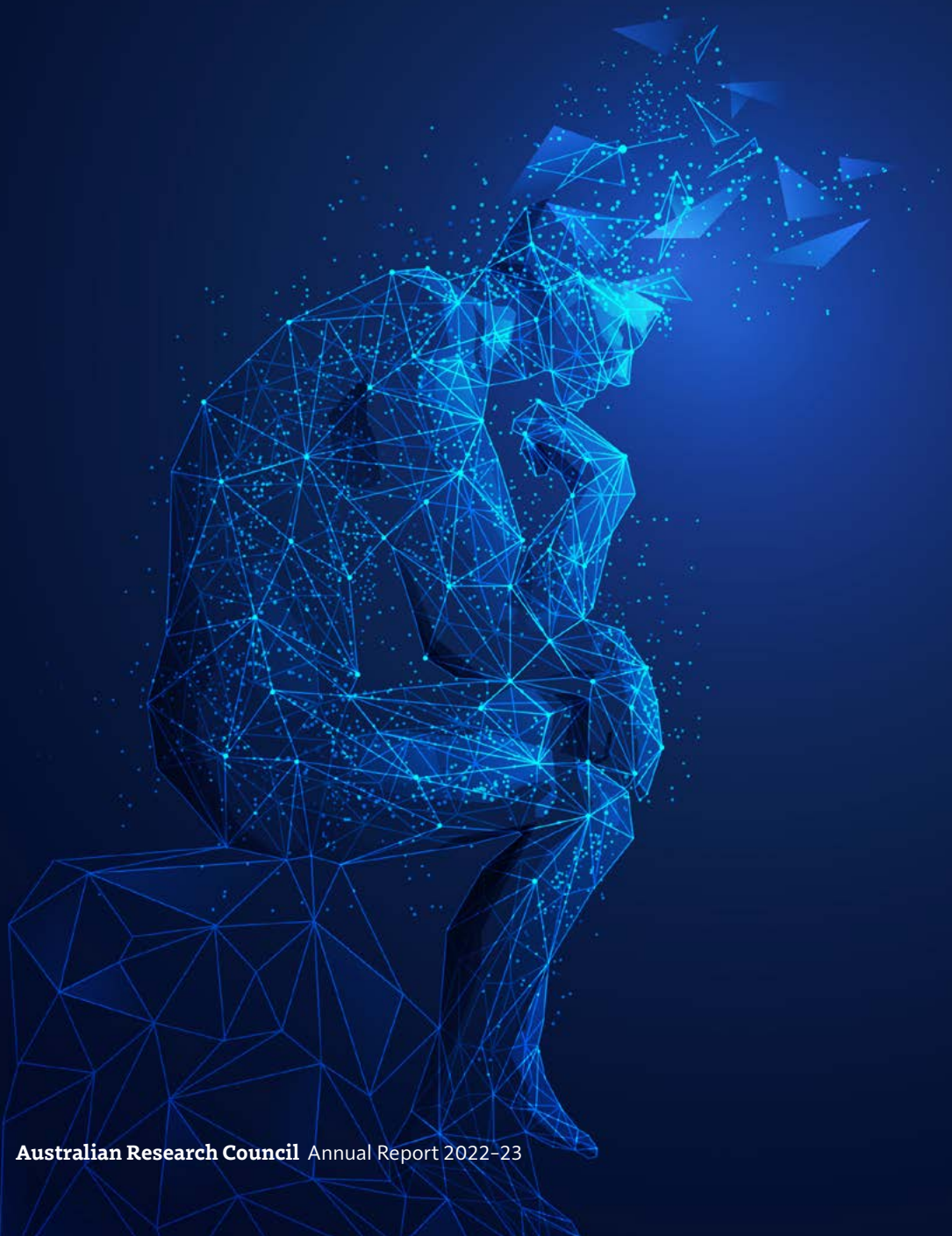
Image: Fieldwork in Queen Mary Land collecting geophysical and geological data, Tobias Stål.



Socially responsible insurance in the age of artificial intelligence

Primary Researcher: Professor Seth Lazar and Professor Kimberlee Weatherall.

Institution: ANU and the University of Sydney.





As artificial intelligence (AI) increasingly becomes part of our lives, the debate about its potential for both positive and negative impacts has come to the fore in Australia. ANU Professor of Philosophy Seth Lazar is leading a multidisciplinary team researching how to maximise the potential benefits of using AI as a tool in insurance while also ensuring that it avoids unintended social costs.

Professor Lazar's ARC Linkage Project acknowledges that AI enables people to make inexpensive, reliable predictions, and is therefore a powerful tool to help society manage risk more efficiently. At the heart of the research is the concern that without appropriate safeguards the use of AI in insurance carries considerable risks.

'The appeal of using machine learning to enable more individualised risk predictions is undeniable, but without careful attention it is likely to lead to new forms of discrimination and troubling privacy violations, and potentially threaten the social function of insurance,' Professor Lazar said.

Why insurance? In a presentation on the project at the 2023 International Congress of Actuaries, Professor Lazar's collaborators, Chris Dolman and Kimberlee Weatherall, noted that insurance was 'not just another industry'. It is treated differently in policy and law because of the vital role it plays in society – for underwriting homes, cars, workers compensation, and public liability, for example.

The project aims to design practical interventions – responsible design workshops, practical guidance, regulatory proposals, new algorithmic tools – that realise the benefits of using AI while mitigating the costs. Ultimately, the researchers believe AI and machine learning can be deployed to promote and even enhance the role insurance plays in society.

'We are at a critical juncture in the development and societal adoption of AI, as major progress in Machine Learning research is leading to widespread adoption throughout the economy,' Professor Lazar said.

'Only by situating these new technologies in their social context will we be able to safely harness those opportunities – as well as responsibly decide when AI is not the answer.'

Image: iStock.



Unlocking the secrets of earliest human evolution

Primary Researcher: Associate Professor Renaud Joannes-Boyau.

Institution: Southern Cross University.

Biomimics



Mass Spectrometer



An ARC-supported project is using geochemical analysis on fossilised teeth of early humans from South Africa to highlight the adaptive strategies that allowed our human ancestors to outcompete other species in a time of climate variability.

Lead investigator of this ARC Discovery Project, Associate Professor Renaud Joannes-Boyau from Southern Cross University's Faculty of Science and Engineering, said that these teeth date as far back as 2 million years, and can be used as a roadmap to the behaviour of early human species, such as diet, breastfeeding habits, migration and seasonal behaviour, and ageing.

'Teeth's continuous layering process from birth to early adulthood makes them invaluable for reconstructing early life events and preserving precise records of temporal changes and elemental composition from food, water, and environment,' Associate Professor Joannes-Boyau said.

Little is known about the behaviour of these species, such as whether they were co-habiting or whether they were competing for the same resources. The results from observing the distribution of trace-elements and isotopes archived in fossil teeth will provide key insights into our origins, our unique adaptation, and our unmatched evolutionary success.



Associate Professor Joannes-Boyau said, 'This project has the potential to completely transform our understanding of early human evolution in South Africa. By unravelling how our genus, outshined and outlasted other hominin species that coexisted in the region for hundreds of thousands to millions of years prior to our arrival.'

Associate Professor Joannes-Boyau flew to South Africa in early 2022 to personally escort the invaluable human remains to the unique Southern Cross University Geoarchaeology and Archaeometry Research Group facility. The samples, usually kept behind the 500kg reinforced door of the Phillip V Tobias Fossil Hominid vault at the University of Witwatersrand, were on loan for this unique project.

Associate Professor Joannes-Boyau is working alongside Associate Professor Gary Schwartz from partner organisation Arizona State University, and other colleagues associated with the excavation in South Africa.

Image: Supplied by Associate Professor Joannes-Boyau.



Navigating children's use of digital technology in a post-lockdown era

Primary Researcher: Professor Susan Danby and Professor Julian Sefton-Green.

Institution: Queensland University of Technology, Deakin University, University of Wollongong, Curtin University, Edith Cowan University and The University of Queensland.





The ARC Centre of Excellence for the Digital Child is a consortium of 6 Australian universities, led by Queensland University of Technology (QUT), which is partnering with international academic and industry organisations. The collaboration aims to conduct a world-first longitudinal study of children's experiences with digital technologies and investigate the ways that children are growing up in digital worlds through 3 research programs focused on health, education, and connection.

The Centre's longitudinal study – the Australian of the Digital Age – aims to provide a holistic viewpoint of children's experience with digital technology during their formative early years – from birth to 8 years of age.

Led by Professor Julian Sefton-Green and the Centre research team at Deakin University, one of these Connected Child studies investigated parents' changing attitudes towards screentime in response to pandemic-induced social restrictions.

Professor Rebekah Willett, Partner Investigator from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, said, 'During the pandemic, when children's lives became even more digital by default, parents were forced to rethink their ideas about children's media practices. We are excited to bring together data from different countries and to explore new analytical frameworks to understand ever-evolving family media practices.'

Families from Australia, China, USA, South Korea, Canada, United Kingdom, and Colombia completed surveys and participated in interviews. The team found that, in countries like Australia, families became reliant on digital screen technologies to cope with extended lockdowns – they used them for home schooling, entertainment, connecting with family and friends, and to avoid boredom.

Research Fellow Dr Xinyu (Andy) Zhao said, 'We found that parents today were put in a difficult position to always make the "right" decisions for their children's everyday media activities, which created much parental anxiety and guilt during the pandemic.'

'This was particularly the case when children's media practices were only benchmarked against the time they spent on screens, rather than the quality or context of what they do with media in the home,' said Dr Zhao.

Professor Sefton-Green said this international comparative project showed how immature the notion of 'screen time' was for making sense of a wide range of digital media experiences.

'It's an unhelpful lens for families to view what might be good or useful about changing sites of learning,' Professor Sefton-Green said.

During the study, some parents mentioned their optimism about the possibilities afforded by digital media. They were open to continuing its use for more productive activities, such as for learning and communicating with family members.

A book on the findings from the project titled '*Children, Media and Parenting in the COVID-19 Pandemic*' will be published in 2024.

Image: iStock.



Revolutionising lobster aquaculture

Primary Researchers: Professor Greg Smith.

Institutions: University of Tasmania and University of the Sunshine Coast in collaboration with The University of Auckland, NZ.



The ARC Research Hub for Sustainable Onshore Lobster Aquaculture is delivering transformational change to the Australian aquaculture industry. The research will establish a sustainable lobster aquaculture sector that is expected to grow to a \$150 million industry by 2036.

Led by the University of Tasmania, the Research Hub is delivering significant outcomes through its focus on developing commercial, sustainable, and socially acceptable lobster production from hatchery to market.

In Australia, capturing wild seedstock to grow lobsters is not viable due to low and unreliable supply, the presence of established fisheries with strict regulations and environmental degradation concerns. The Research Hub's challenge has been to develop commercial hatchery infrastructure, grow-out technology and commercial feeds that will support the development of an Australian aquaculture industry for lobsters.



Research Hub Director, Professor Greg Smith, said the Hub's research had led to breakthrough technology for hatching, raising, and growing out of tropical rock lobsters.

'The ability to rear commercial quantities of lobsters through a hatchery phase and subsequently to market size has long been an elusive goal for many research institutes around the world,' Professor Smith said.

'With the support of successive ARC funding through the Industrial Transformation Research Hubs, we have been able to successfully bring together cutting-edge research and commercial expertise to make significant advances towards this goal.'

One significant feature of the project has been the opportunity to collaborate with a diverse range of commercial industries including aquaculture companies, industrial plastic fabricators and specialist feed manufacturers.

'Through this ARC Research Hub, we're building the knowledge to establish the world's first sustainable onshore lobster aquaculture industry, with our research outcomes targeted at positioning Australia at the forefront of onshore lobster aquaculture,' Professor Smith said.

The Research Hub was established through a \$5 million ARC grant awarded in 2019. The Hub builds on an earlier ARC-funded project, and already, they can reflect on significant outcomes. Their hatchery technology has been licenced by a new firm, Ornatas Pty Ltd, specifically established to commercialise and use the technology to develop and operate a commercial lobster aquaculture facility. Ornatas' commitment to the new technology is reflected in not just a \$5 million contribution to the ARC Research Hub, but also its own employment of 25 scientists – out of 30 staff – and, to date, a \$30 million investment into commercialisation of the technology.

Ornatas CEO, Scott Parkinson, said the technology pioneered through the Research Hub was revolutionary for the industry.

'The UTAS technology is truly the "Holy Grail" of aquaculture and does what so many have tried and failed at before – commercial production of Tropical Rock Lobster from egg that will underpin production of premium lobsters to a marketable size on land using sustainable practices,' Mr Parkinson said.

Ornatas is investing a further \$20 million over the next 3 years in commercialising the new technology. Looking forward, up to 1,000 new jobs are expected to be created in the industry within a decade.

Image: Juvenile Tropical Rock Lobster, supplied by ARC Research Hub for Sustainable Onshore Lobster Aquaculture.



Content warning: The following article contains content relating to domestic, family, and physical violence. Readers are advised to proceed to page 69 if this topic could be potentially triggering or harmful to your wellbeing.

Understanding domestic and family violence to save lives

Primary Researcher: Professor Heather Douglas and Associate Professor Robin Fitzgerald.

Institution: The University of Melbourne and The University of Queensland.





Domestic and family violence has a devastating impact on communities around the world, particularly for women, who are disproportionately affected. In Australia, up to three-quarters of women escaping domestic and family violence and residing in shelters have survived strangulation, or what is termed non-fatal strangulation (NFS), by their previous partner.

The University of Melbourne's Professor Heather Douglas is continuing to lead ground-breaking research on NFS, which is at once extremely dangerous and a significant risk factor for later serious harm or death by the same partner.

In 2016, the Queensland Government introduced a new offence focused explicitly on domestic and family violence. The Queensland Parliament credited Professor Douglas' own research on law and domestic violence, through a 2015 ARC Future Fellowships grant, for revealing 'the full extent of this horrific but often hidden form of violence' and leading to a change of law not just in Queensland, but across Australia.

Prior to the NFS offence, such incidents had been treated as common assaults, with a correspondingly lower penalty.

Now, through an ARC Discovery Projects grant awarded in 2020, Professor Douglas, along with her colleague Associate Professor Robin Fitzgerald, is conducting research to fill a gap in knowledge about the operation and stakeholder experiences of the NFS offence as a response to domestic and family violence.

'Our research will inform the approach to NFS nationally and contribute to development of improved legal responses,' Professor Douglas said.

Professor Douglas' new findings, including a 2023 paper outlining the best way to collect evidence for prosecutions, will contribute to her already significant body of ARC-funded research into domestic and family violence. Much of that research has directly and positively influenced the way governments, police, services, and courts respond to domestic violence.

The next chapter in Professor Douglas' research will include her role as a Chief Investigator and Deputy Director of the ARC Centre of Excellence for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, established in 2023.

'I am really looking forward to working with colleagues in the region to share what's working well and to discover new and better ways to contribute to ending domestic and family violence.'

Image: iStock.

3.3 Financial performance

Summary

This section provides an overview of the ARC's financial performance during 2022–23 for departmental and administered activities. It should be read in conjunction with the information on financial performance provided in **Part 5**, which includes:

- the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) unqualified audit opinion for the statements
- a statement from the CEO and Chief Financial Officer that the statements comply with the PGPA Act
- the ARC's financial statements.

The ARC resource statement is presented in **Appendix 3, Table A3**, followed by the ARC expenses for Outcome 1 which is presented in **Table A4**.

The ARC's total appropriated resources for 2022–23 was \$866.7 million. This comprised:

- \$840.8 million for the administered appropriation (\$831.6 million special appropriation for the NCGP and \$9.2 million for the annual administered appropriation).
- \$25.9 million for the departmental appropriation (\$24.7 million for operating expenses and \$1.2 million for the Departmental Capital Budget).

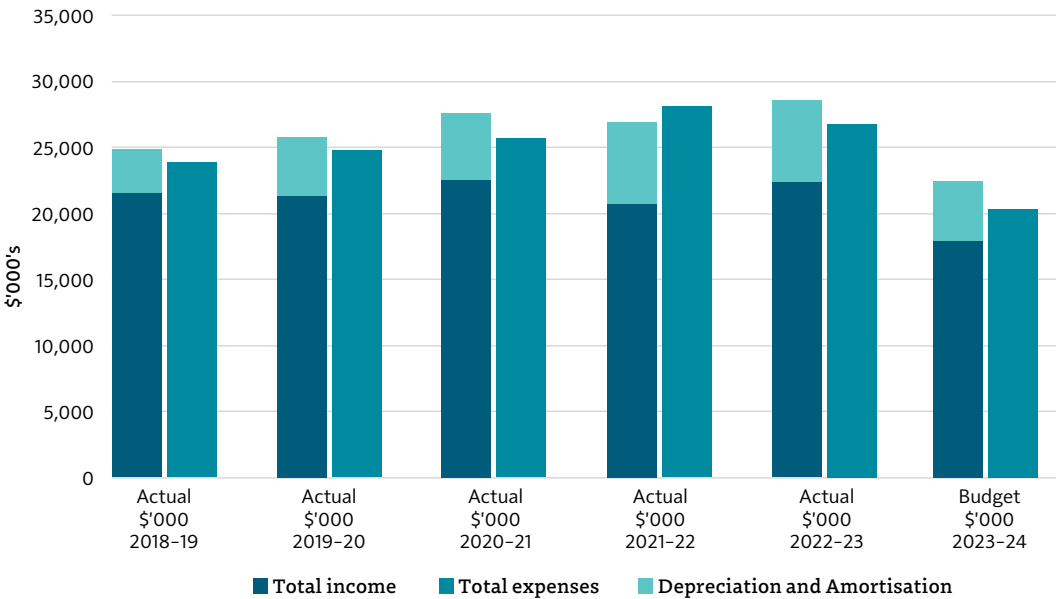
Departmental activities

Departmental activities include assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses that the ARC controls directly and uses to produce outcomes on behalf of the Australian Government.

For 2022–23 the ARC recorded an operating deficit of \$3.0 million compared to the October 2022–23 budget position of an operating deficit of \$3.5 million.

Figure 3 outlines the ARC's departmental financial performance over the past 5 years and the current budget for 2023–24. Total income reduced in 2021–22 due to \$1.1 million in revenue from Government being reclassified from revenue to departmental capital budget. Total income increased in 2022–23 due to an increase in own source revenue from providing grant services to other Commonwealth entities and revenue from government being received to increase workforce mobility.

Figure 3: Departmental financial performance, 2018-19 to 2023-24



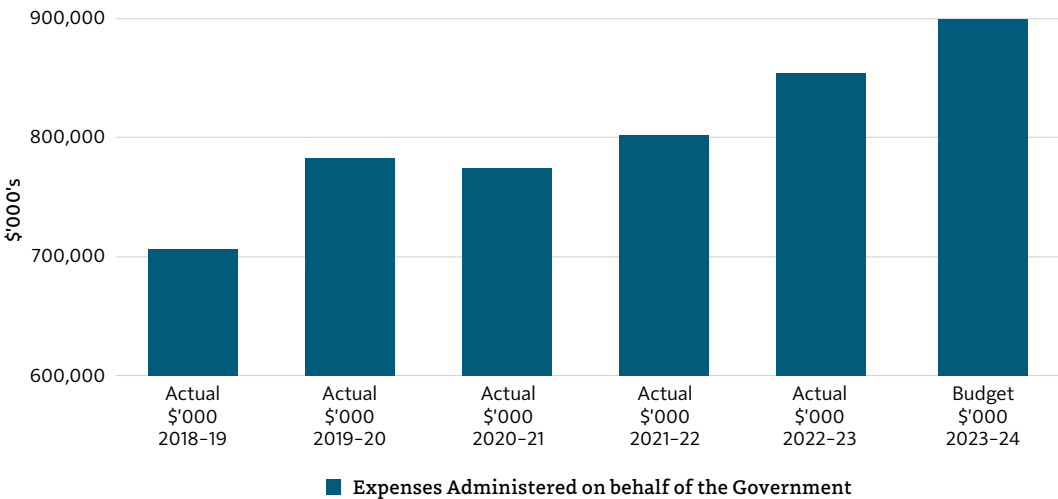
Administered activities

Administered activities include assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses that are managed by the ARC on behalf of the Australian Government, including grants and supplier costs.

For 2022-23 there were \$853.5 million in administered expenses.

Figure 4 outlines the ARC’s administered financial expenditure over the past 5 years and the budget for 2023-24. The expenditure fluctuates from year to year and reflects the Government’s priorities and the timing of when expenditure has been recognised.

Figure 4: Administered financial performance, 2018-19 to 2023-24



PART 04



Management and accountability

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4.1 Corporate governance

Fraud management

In accordance with section 10 of the [*Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*](#) (PGPA Rule), the ARC CEO must take all reasonable measures to prevent, detect and deal with fraud relating to the agency. The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) reports all fraud and potential fraud incidents to the ARC Audit and Risk Committee. No instances of fraud or potential fraud were identified in 2022–23.

The ARC recognises the need for a sound and robust financial framework based on legal and ethical decision-making. Management has a key responsibility to ensure the ARC's assets are safeguarded against loss by fraud or negligence. ARC staff are required to implement and adhere to fraud control procedures and report all instances of suspected fraud.

The *ARC Fraud Control Plan* complies with the *Commonwealth Fraud Control Framework 2017*. This fraud control plan was reviewed and updated in October 2022. Fraud activities undertaken at the ARC during 2022–23, include:

- Fraud Awareness Week (13 to 19 November 2022) including webinars by the Commonwealth Fraud Prevention Centre communicated through the agency
- risk management training including managing fraud risks was provided to all ARC staff in December 2022
- the ARC's fraud risks were reviewed in March 2023
- information sessions on fraud control, along with corruption and public interest disclosure reporting requirements were provided to all ARC staff in June 2023.

Corporate governance structures and processes

Senior executive and their responsibilities

As at 30 June 2023, the ARC's senior executives consisted of:

- Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Deputy CEO)
- Chief Research Officer (CRO)
- Branch Manager, Corporate Services
- Branch Manager, Programs
- Branch Manager, Research Evaluation and Data
- Branch Manager, Research Policy
- Branch Manager, Strategy and Communications.

The CEO is supported by the ARC Leadership Group (ALG) which comprises the Deputy CEO, CRO, Branch Managers, Chief Information Officer, and the Executive Directors who have academic research backgrounds.

Responsibilities



Ms Judi Zielke PSM – Chief Executive Officer

Ms Judi Zielke PSM is the accountable authority of the ARC and has statutory responsibilities for managing and leading the agency in accordance with legislated requirements. Under the *Australian Research Council Act 2001* (ARC Act), the CEO is responsible for all ARC activities including providing advice to the Minister on research matters and making recommendations to the Minister on which applications should be approved for funding.



Dr Richard Johnson – Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Dr Richard Johnson was appointed to the position of Deputy CEO in September 2022. The Deputy CEO is responsible for assisting the CEO to carry out the agencies functions, drive strategy, providing sound strategic and operational advice on the agency and government policies, programs and operations, and determine organisational policies and strategies.



Professor Christina Twomey – Chief Research Officer

Professor Christina Twomey commenced in January 2023 as the ARC's inaugural CRO. The CRO plays an important role in providing strategic advice to the CEO regarding driving strategy, engagement with, and the evolution of, the higher education and research sectors and overseeing the ARC's assessment and peer review processes.



Ms Julija Deleva – Branch Manager, Corporate Services

As Corporate Services Branch Manager, Ms Julija Deleva leads the ARC corporate functions including finance, legal, human resources, property, governance, corporate reporting, risk management, audit and security.

Ms Deleva is also the ARC's Diversity and Indigenous Champion, Business Continuity Delegate and Chief Security Officer.



Dr Mary Kelly – Branch Manager, Programs

Dr Mary Kelly oversees delivery of the NCGP and Research Grants Services (RGS). The Programs Branch manages delivery and administration of the NCGP including grant applications and processes, funding variations, reporting and compliance. The Programs Branch also provides a service delivery model to other Government funding programs, including pre and post Award administrative activities, through RGS.

Dr Kelly was Executive Director, Biological Sciences and Biotechnology until December 2022.



Miss Claire Forsyth – Branch Manager, Research Evaluation and Data

Miss Claire Forsyth leads the ongoing transition of a research evaluation framework to a modern data driven approach informed by expert review. Miss Forsyth also oversees the management of policy analysis and advice for government in relation to research evaluation, provision of scientometric research to inform the development of indicators to evaluate research quality, research engagement and impact.

The Research Evaluation and Data Branch manage and maintain all data sets related to research quality and impact.



Dr Mel Southwell-Lee – Branch Manager, Research Policy

Dr Mel Southwell-Lee leads the ARC's strategic policy, policy development and evidence work – working with domestic and international stakeholders across sectors to contribute to the vision for the agency outlined in the ARC Strategy. The branch also supports the ARC's responsibilities in relation to the research integrity and national security of the research it funds.



Ms Geraldine Dennis – Acting Branch Manager, Strategy and Communications

Ms Geraldine Dennis leads the ARC's Strategy and Communications Branch which is responsible for driving agency-wide communications, parliamentary, and strategic engagement, strategic planning and coordination functions, including implementation of the ARC Strategy.



Mr Peter Conn – Chief Information Officer

As the Chief Information Officer for the ARC, Mr Peter Conn is responsible for ICT services for the ARC. This includes the provision of a suite of web applications for ARC clients – Research Management System (RMS) and System to Evaluate the Excellence in Research (SEER) – and support for ARC’s corporate applications, desktop, ICT security, information management and infrastructure services.



Professor Anika Gauja – Executive Director for Social, Behavioural and Economic Sciences

Professor Anika Gauja joined the ARC as Executive Director for Social, Behavioural and Economic Sciences in January 2023.



Professor Alison Ross – Executive Director for Humanities and Creative Arts

Professor Alison Ross joined the ARC as Executive Director for Humanities and Creative Arts in February 2023.



Professor Steven Weller – Executive Director for Engineering and Information Sciences

Professor Steven Weller joined the ARC as Executive Director for Engineering and Information Sciences in March 2023.

Executive Directors have an important role in engaging and liaising with the research community and utilising their research and academic expertise to contribute to our programs, policies, and peer review processes.

Dr Robert Mun finished his term as an Executive Director for Engineering and Information Sciences in June 2023.

Distinguished Professor Craig Simmons FTSE, the ARC’s Executive Director for Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Earth Sciences since July 2020, finished his term in November 2022.

Agency restructure

In February 2023, the ARC undertook a significant restructure, which included the creation of a team to support the new CRO position, the establishment of an expert data capability, realignment of existing functions and roles, and development of clear lines for collaboration and shared responsibilities.

The restructure focused on the priorities of the ARC Strategy, supporting the agency to deliver world-class advice and engagement, research system excellence, and empowered people. Our new structure was developed through extensive internal consultation to position the ARC to meet the new challenges and opportunities of the changing research environment, including the expectations of the new Government, and is aligned with other agency activities focused on capability building and organisational culture.

ARC committees and their roles

The ARC's committees support activities across 4 key areas:

- governance
- administration of the NCGP
- design and administration of research evaluation activities
- research integrity matters relating to ARC business.

Governance

The ALG supports the CEO to deliver her responsibilities under the ARC Act, the [*Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*](#) (PGPA Act) and the *Public Service Act 1999* (PS Act).

The ALG meets every 2 weeks and membership comprises the ARC leadership team: the CEO (Chair), Deputy CEO, CRO, Branch Managers, Chief Information Officer, and Executive Directors.

To further assist the CEO, the ARC has an Advisory Committee which is a designated committee under the ARC Act, and an Audit and Risk Committee as required under the PGPA Act.

ARC Advisory Committee

The ARC Advisory Committee was established on 31 March 2022 as a designated committee under the ARC Act, replacing the previous ARC Advisory Council. The Advisory Committee and independent Chair are appointed by the Minister for Education for up to 3 years. Members have broad expertise across research, industry, and governance (**Table 6**).

The Advisory Committee supports the CEO in setting the ARC's strategic agenda to deliver on the 3 broad objectives:

- to grow knowledge and innovation for the benefit of the Australian community by funding the highest quality research
- assessing the quality, engagement, and impact of research
- providing advice on research matters.

The Advisory Committee held 5 official meetings and 2 out-of-session meetings in 2022–23.

Table 6: Membership of the ARC Advisory Committee, 2022–23

Member name	Organisation	Term of appointment
Professor Chris Moran (Chair)	Curtin University	March 2022 – August 2024
Professor Deborah Terry AO	University of Queensland	March 2022 – August 2024
Mr Mark McKenzie	Council of Small Business Organisations Australia	March 2022 – August 2024
Professor Maggie Walter	University of Tasmania and Yoorrook Justice Commission	March 2022 – August 2024
Professor Michelle Simmons AO	University of New South Wales	March 2022 – August 2024
Professor Calum Drummond AO	RMIT University	March 2022 – August 2024
Professor Mark Hutchinson	University of Adelaide	March 2022 – August 2024
Dr Mirjana Prica	Food Innovation Australia Limited	March 2022 – March 2025
Professor Susan Dodds	La Trobe University	June 2022 – March 2025
Mr Duncan McIntyre (Ex-officio)	Department of Industry, Science and Resources	Ex-officio from January 2023
Mr Ben Rimmer (Ex-officio)	Department of Education	Ex-officio from March 2023
Mr David Williamson (Ex-officio)	Department of Industry, Science and Resources	Ex-officio March 2022 – November 2022
Mr Tony Cook PSM (Ex-officio)	Department of Education	Ex-officio March 2022 – April 2023

ARC Audit and Risk Committee

The ARC Audit and Risk Committee provides independent advice to the CEO on the appropriateness of the ARC's financial and performance reporting, and systems of risk oversight and management and internal control. In April 2023, the Committee was renamed from the 'ARC Audit Committee' to 'ARC Audit and Risk Committee'.

The Audit and Risk Committee is established by the CEO in compliance with the PGPA Act and PGPA Rule (section 17). Its functions and responsibilities are detailed in the *ARC Audit and Risk Committee Charter*, which is reviewed annually or as required. The charter is available on the ARC website, www.arc.gov.au > About the ARC > Our Organisations > Committees > ARC Audit and Risk Committee > [ARC Audit and Risk Committee Charter 2023](#).

During 2022–23, the Audit and Risk Committee comprised 4 members external to the ARC. The members collectively possessed a broad range of skills and experience relevant to the operations of the ARC (**Table 7**). The ARC Audit and Risk Committee held 5 meetings in 2022–23, including 4 quarterly meetings and one preliminary financial and performance statements meeting.

Table 7: Membership of the ARC Audit and Risk Committee, 2022–23

Name	Qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience	Number of meetings attended / total number of meetings	Total annual remuneration (GST inclusive) ⁽¹⁾	Additional information
Mr Allan Gaukroger (Chair)	Mr Gaukroger has over 40 years of experience in the public and private sector, and has held senior positions in finance, audit and general management roles. He has previously served as CFO for several Commonwealth departments and agencies and as Chief Audit Executive (CAE) for the Department of Human Services. As CFO and CAE, Mr Gaukroger was a participant and auditee at those departmental and agency audit committees. He was also an independent audit committee member (later Chair) for the National Water Commission. He is currently Chair for 3 audit committees. Mr Gaukroger has a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in accounting, and is a Certified Public Accountant.	5/5	\$14,000	n/a
Ms Karen Michelle	Ms Michelle is a Chartered Accountant Fellow with over 20 years of experience in finance and risk management, program management, stakeholder management, and strategic planning and ICT management. She has worked in the public and private sectors and held volunteer board positions for non-profit and professional organisations. Ms Michelle has Bachelor degrees in the fields of Commerce and Science.	5/5	\$9,900	n/a

Name	Qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience	Number of meetings attended / total number of meetings	Total annual remuneration (GST inclusive) ⁽¹⁾	Additional information
Mr Peter McKeon	Mr McKeon has more than 40 years of experience across a broad range of public sector organisations, private sector and international organisations, including previous roles as Chief Information Officer and First Assistant Secretary at his last 4 organisations. He has held senior roles in public service governance and management, ICT, and cyber security. He has served on Audit and Risk Committees for more than 14 years. Mr McKeon has a Bachelor degree in computing studies.	5/5	\$9,000	n/a
Ms Fiona Smart	Ms Smart has 30 years of experience in the public service. Ms Smart has held senior management roles in social policy, program development, implementation and management, and business transformation and administration. She has over 15 of years experience in grant design, selection and management including leading development of a key Commonwealth government grants management system. Ms Smart has a Bachelor of Economics.	5/5	\$9,000	n/a

(1) where GST is applicable.

The CEO is also advised by 2 management committees:

- Business Continuity Committee – ensures the Business Continuity Plan (BCP) and ICT Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) remain current and practical, and are tested on a scheduled basis to minimise the likelihood and/or consequence of any potential risk exposure to the ARC's core business processes
- People Management and Development Committee – provides a forum for the ARC to consult with employees and their representatives about workplace issues.

Administration of the National Competitive Grants Program

ARC College of Experts

The ARC College of Experts are experts of international standing, drawn from the Australian research community and across all disciplines from higher education, industry and public sector research organisations. They are also eminent members of the wider academic community and/or key industry groups. College of Experts members play a key role in the peer review processes of grant applications submitted under the NCGP and provide advice on current and emerging research matters.

New members are announced annually for terms of up to 3 years, ensuring a consistent source of expertise and providing opportunity across the breadth of the research and innovation sector. At the discretion of the ARC, extensions of up to one year may be offered to ensure that available expertise reflects the range of applications being submitted.

As at 30 June 2023, the College of Experts is comprised of 269 members, including 95 new members appointed for 2023. College of Experts nominations place a strong emphasis on multi-disciplinary and cross-disciplinary expertise, with high regard also placed on applicants with a strong assessor history. In addition, nominations from women, people of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, and end-users across the private, public and not-for-profit sectors were particularly encouraged to nominate. Continuing to support the ARC Reconciliation Action Plan, 6 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander College of Experts members were re-appointed. A list of members is on the ARC website, www.arc.gov.au > About the ARC > Our Organisation > Committees > [ARC College of Experts](#).

To further enhance the peer review process for the new Industry Fellowship Program delivered in 2022–23, an additional 77 experts were engaged by the ARC to work alongside the College of Experts for this program given the specific focus on mobility between academia and industry. These individuals were identified for their research knowledge and expertise within industry and/or the advanced stages of research translation and commercialisation.

Selection Advisory Committees

Selection Advisory Committees (SACs) recommend to the ARC CEO which applications should be funded, and how much funding successful applications should receive. The nature of the grant opportunity and the volume of applications influence the size and structure of each SAC, which may consist of College of Experts members and/or other distinguished academic researchers, industry researchers and members from end-user stakeholder groups.

The Discovery Projects and Discovery Early Career Researcher Award schemes use a SAC structure with 5 disciplinary panels. The Future Fellowships scheme and the Early Career Industry Fellowships scheme have a SAC structure with 4 disciplinary panels.

A single disciplinary SAC structure is used for the following schemes: Australian Laureate Fellowships, Discovery Indigenous, Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities, Linkage Projects, Mid-Career Industry Fellowships, Industry Laureate Fellowships, Industrial Transformation Training Centres, Industrial Transformation Research Hubs, Special Research Initiatives and ARC Centres of Excellence schemes.

National Competitive Grants Program Appeals Committee

The NCGP Appeals Committee operates independently to ensure rigour and considers appeals submitted to the ARC in relation to the NCGP and makes recommendations to the CEO about whether appeals should be allowed or dismissed. This committee also provides general advice to the ARC about modifications and improvements to the ARC's administrative processes. It consists of external members appointed by the Branch Manager, Programs.

The NCGP Appeals Committee members for 2022–23 were:

- Mr Peter Lambert
- Ms Sayuri Grady
- Emeritus Professor Amanda Lawson.

The NCGP Appeals Committee met twice in 2022–23.

Details about the appeals are provided under *service delivery and complaints handling* later in this section.

National Competitive Grants Program Scrutiny Committee

The NCGP Scrutiny Committee examines the probity of ARC assessment processes for applications submitted by SAC members and/or ARC staff. This committee comprises members appointed by the Branch Manager, Programs.

In 2022–23 the NCGP Scrutiny Committee members were:

- Professor Andrew Francis
- Professor Maria Forsyth
- Professor Patrick Kluth
- Professor Lynette Russell
- Mr Justin Withers.

The NCGP Scrutiny Committee met 4 times in 2022–23.

Medical Research Advisory Group and National Competitive Grants Program Eligibility Committee

The ARC's Medical Research Advisory Group (MRAG) is responsible for providing additional technical advice regarding eligibility for selected applications under consideration by the NCGP Eligibility Committee. Where the NCGP Eligibility Committee considers that additional expertise is required to determine eligibility under the *ARC Medical Research Policy*, the application is referred to MRAG members for written advice. Each application requiring additional expertise is referred to at least 3 MRAG members for written advice.

MRAG members may be individuals from the current or past ARC College of Experts or individuals with sufficient seniority to have a broad overview of research, particularly within research disciplines where there is potential for an overlap with medical research. Advice from the MRAG members is considered by the NCGP Eligibility Committee, and a final eligibility recommendations made by the NCGP Eligibility Committee to the ARC CEO.

Design and administration of research evaluation activities

Following the discontinuation of the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) and Engagement and Impact (EI) rounds, the ARC engaged an external group to assist with transitioning to a new approach to research evaluation.

ERA Transition Plan Working Group

The ERA Transition Plan Working Group was appointed to provide advice on developing a transition plan to a modern data driven approach informed by expert review. The working group included senior representatives from universities, Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, and the Department of Education. Membership also included an Indigenous researcher and research end-users. In consultation with this group, the ARC delivered a transition plan to the Minister for Education on 14 December 2022.

Research integrity matters relating to ARC business

Australian Research Integrity Committee

The Australian Research Integrity Committee (ARIC) comprises 7 expert members (**Table 8**) and reports to both the ARC and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

In 2022–23 the ARC and NHMRC commissioned an independent evaluation of ARIC. The evaluation focused on the effectiveness and performance of ARIC in meeting its purpose as outlined in the ARIC Framework. The evaluation also undertook a desk-top review of the research integrity arrangements in other countries.

During 2022–23 the ARIC ARC secretariat received 6 new requests for review. It also provided support to ARIC in relation to 5 cases received in 2021–22.

In relation to the 11 ARIC-ARC matters active in 2022–23, as of 30 June 2023:

- 3 reviews that commenced prior to 1 July 2022 were finalised and the outcome communicated to the relevant parties by the ARC
- 1 request for review was determined to be outside the scope of ARIC
- 1 request is still under consideration by ARC
- 6 reviews are ongoing.

Table 8: Membership of ARIC, 2022–23

Member	Term of appointment
Ms Patricia Kelly (Chair)	April 2020 – March 2024
Emeritus Professor Alan Lawson (Deputy Chair from March 2023)	April 2020 – March 2024
Ms Julie Hamblin (Deputy Chair until March 2023)	April 2020 – September 2023
Mr Michael Chilcott	April 2020 – March 2024
Professor Margaret Otlowski	April 2020 – March 2024
Emeritus Professor Janice Reid	April 2020 – March 2024
Emeritus Professor John Finlay-Jones	April 2020 – March 2024

Planning and reporting arrangements

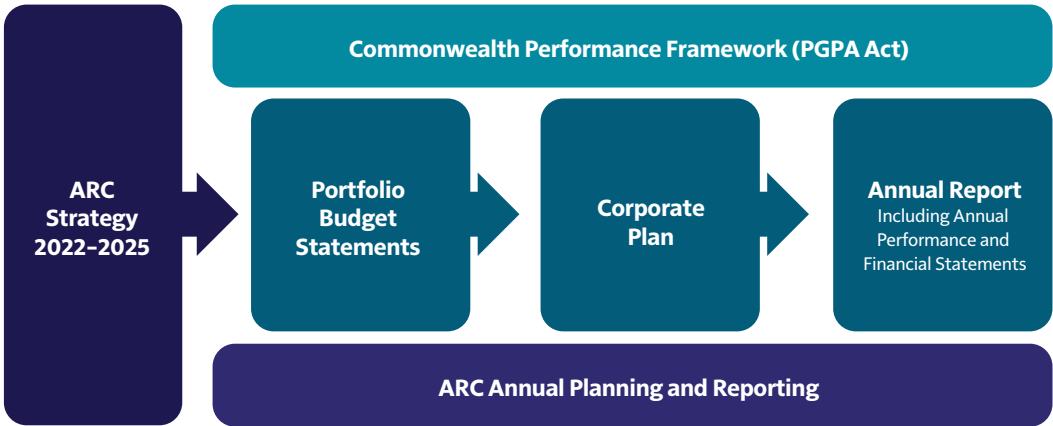
The ARC’s Planning and Reporting Framework is consistent with the requirements of the PGPA Act, PGPA Rule and the *Commonwealth Performance Framework*. The ARC Planning and Reporting Framework aims to:

- establish accountabilities for the achievement of the ARC’s purpose
- establish elements for governance reporting to facilitate continual improvement
- ensure all reporting components are fully integrated with other related ARC activities such as risk management
- ensure a clear line-of-sight is established and maintained in governance reporting activities to clearly demonstrate and measure the ARC’s performance against its purpose and strategic objectives.

The Planning and Reporting Framework encompasses our requirements under the *Commonwealth Performance Framework* and the ARC’s annual planning and reporting activities. As outlined in **Figure 5**, there is a clear flow and line-of-sight from planning activities through to reporting activities.

In addition to the legislative requirements from the PGPA Act, the ARC’s planning and reporting is supported by the *ARC Strategy 2022–2025* which was published in 2022, as well as internal branch and operational plans. The ARC Strategy set out the vision for the agency to 2030 and provides the key strategic priorities over 3 years to enable that vision. During 2022–23 the ARC also published the *ARC Annual Report 2021–22* and *ARC Corporate Plan 2022–23*.

Figure 5: The ARC Planning and Reporting Framework



Internal audit arrangements and risk management

Internal audit

An integral part of the ARC's corporate governance framework is the ARC's internal audit function. Internal audit provides an independent and objective review and advisory service, giving the CEO assurance that the ARC's financial and operational controls, designed to manage the entity's risk and achieve its objectives, are operating in an efficient, effective, economical, and ethical manner. Internal audit also assists management in improving the ARC's business performance.

The ARC's internal audit function is managed by the Head, Internal Audit, which at the time of reporting is the Branch Manager, Corporate Services. The internal auditor role is outsourced to an independent service provider and reports to the Audit and Risk Committee through the Head, Internal Audit.

In 2022-23 the ARC's internal auditor was McGrathNicol Advisory. McGrathNicol Advisory assisted in the development of an annual internal audit work plan, attended Audit and Risk Committee meetings, and completed the following internal audits and management initiated reviews during 2022-23:

- internal audit on foreign interference and security risks
- internal audit on delegations
- internal audit on the Protective Security Policy Framework – ICT/cyber
- management initiated review on the ARC's Business Continuity Plan
- management initiated review on the RGS cost model.

Risk Framework

The ARC has implemented risk management with the guidance of the *Commonwealth Risk Management Policy* (RM Policy), which ensures the ARC manages risk in accordance with Section 16 of the PGPA Act. Under the RM Policy, the ARC, as a non-corporate Commonwealth entity, must comply with the 9 elements that contribute to effective risk management.

The ARC's Risk Management Framework (risk framework) aligns with the RM Policy and supports our staff in carrying out risk management effectively. The risk framework is designed to minimise the possibility of loss or damage to operations, staff, visitors, property, reputation, and assets while recognising innovation and opportunities to meet our objectives. It is underpinned by the *ARC Risk Management Policy* and *ARC Risk Management Plan and Toolkit* which articulate our risk culture, appetite, tolerance and approach to engaging with risk.

The ARC routinely monitors the risk environment and reviews its risks and controls through an online risk management system. Risk information from all business areas is regularly reported to the CEO and the ALG.

Contribution of risk management to achieving objectives

The approach to risk management in the ARC forms a comprehensive clear-line-of-sight across the governance and business processes. All staff contribute to and are responsible for risk management as underpinned by the risk framework.

The CEO reviewed and approved the ARC's strategic risks and controls for 2022–23 in July 2022. The strategic risks and controls were reviewed in August 2022 and again in May 2023. The ARC's strategic risks and controls are reviewed twice a year to ensure:

- they remain relevant and capture key risks in the environment
- controls are in place and operating effectively in conjunction with the treatments to manage the risks
- the risk ratings are appropriate
- each risk is being managed by a senior manager.

The ARC reviewed its operational risks and controls in October 2022 and April 2023. This twice yearly activity is designed to ensure that business areas have a risk approach embedded into processes and planning to assist with delivery against the activities outlined in the corporate and operational plans.

Business continuity and disaster recovery

The ARC's Business Continuity Plan (BCP) sets out controls and contingencies to minimise the likelihood and/or consequence of any potential risk exposure to the core business processes of the ARC. It includes the Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP), which is designed to safeguard and recover critical ICT systems. In 2022–23 the ARC:

- refined the BCP and included the DRP within the BCP
- trained Business Continuity Committee (BCC) and Business Continuity Management team members on incident management
- conducted a desktop disaster recovery incident exercise with the DRP
- held one formal meeting of the BCC
- undertook a management initiated review of the BCP.

Ethical standards as a public service agency

The ARC promotes its commitment to high ethical standards through the:

- ARC's guiding principles, which include 'accountability through transparent, efficient and effective processes and adherence to ethical standards'
- incorporation of ethical standards into ARC governance policies and guidelines
- incorporation of ARC values into performance agreements
- provision of ethics, integrity and fraud pages on the ARC intranet site, as well as the Australian Public Service Commission Ethics Advisory Service, www.apsc.gov.au > Home > Working in the APS > Integrity > [Ethics Advisory Service](#).

The ARC includes an overview and discussion of the Australian Public Service Values and Code of Conduct as part of its induction training for new appointees. Regular individual performance reviews provide ongoing opportunities for staff and supervisors to address ethical issues.

The ARC is committed to preserving public confidence in the integrity, legitimacy, impartiality, and fairness of its business. ARC committee members and assessors, as well as any individual undertaking ARC business, must comply with the *ARC Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy*, which is available on the ARC website, www.arc.gov.au > Home > About the ARC > Program Policies and Statements > [Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy](#).

Ethical standards as a research funding agency

ARC Research Integrity Policy

To safeguard the integrity of the ARC's processes, the *ARC Research Integrity Policy* requires organisations, and in some circumstances individuals, engaged in ARC business to report to the ARC on research integrity matters. This policy outlines actions the ARC may take in response to breaches of the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018* (Code). It also describes how potential breaches of the Code can be referred to institutions for investigation. The *ARC Research Integrity Policy* is available on the ARC website, www.arc.gov.au > Home > About the ARC > Program Policies and Statements > [Research Integrity Policy](#).

In 2022–23 the ARC considered 39 new matters relating to actual or potential breaches of the Code or research misconduct. These included matters reported by institutions, as well as concerns identified through ARC business or by members of the public. In addition, 33 matters reported or identified prior to 1 July 2022 were still active in 2022–23.

Of the total 72 matters that were active in 2022–23, 44 were finalised as of 30 June 2023. This included:

- 13 matters where institutions reported breaches of the Code and the ARC took action in response
- 8 matters where an institution reported a breach of the Code and the ARC determined that no additional ARC action was required as the breach was minor, and the action taken by the institution was considered sufficient

- 19 matters were dismissed following institutional preliminary assessments or investigations
- 4 matters where preliminary assessments by the relevant institutions were not required as the matters were not within the scope of the policy, or insufficient information was available to provide grounds for proceeding to preliminary assessments.

As at 30 June 2023, 28 active matters were being assessed or investigated by institutions and/or considered by the ARC.

National codes and statements on research ethics

All ARC-funded institutions and researchers are required to comply with the expectations of the Code. Where applicable, ARC-funded research projects must also comply with the:

- *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2023*
- *Ethical Conduct in Research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders 2018*
- *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research 2020*
- *Australian Council for Arts, Protocols for using First Nations Cultural and Intellectual Property in the Arts 2019*
- *Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes 2013.*

As one of the 3 primary authors of the Code, in 2022–23 the ARC continued to promote research integrity in conjunction with the NHMRC and Universities Australia. The ARC also continued to work closely with the NHMRC and other relevant organisations in reviewing the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2023.

Service delivery and complaints handling

The *ARC Client Service Charter* embeds a client-centric approach to all agency functions and underscores the service standards clients should expect from the ARC.

The *ARC Complaints Handling and Appeals Policy* assists our stakeholders to make a general complaint about the ARC or submit an appeal about the administrative processes of the NCGP. In 2022–23 the ARC received 5 complaints relating to our processes and interactions and 3 general complaints. A total of 17 appeals were also received relating to applications submitted for funding under the NCGP. No appeals were upheld. Please note, these numbers refer to appeals that received a decision in the 2022–23 reporting period.

Non-compliance with finance law

The ARC did not report any significant issues to the Minister under paragraph 19(1)(e) of the PGPA Act that relates to non-compliance with finance law.

4.2 External scrutiny

Judicial decisions, decisions of administrative tribunals and by the Australian information commissioner

There were no decisions from any court during 2022–23 that had, or may have, a significant impact on the operations of the ARC.

There were also no decisions from administrative tribunals and one decision of the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner during 2022–23 that had, or may have, a significant impact on the operations of the ARC. The Information Commissioner ordered the ARC to provide documents to a Freedom of Information applicant – the ARC has applied to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal for review of the Information Commissioner’s decision.

Reports on ARC operations by the Auditor-General

During 2022–23, the ARC was not directly involved in any performance audits conducted by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO).

ANAO performance audit reports, recommendations, and key learnings are monitored and disseminated to relevant business areas across the ARC for review and consideration of actions, to ensure that the agency is adhering to best practice.

Parliamentary services and reporting to Parliamentary Committees

During 2022–23, ARC officials appeared before the Senate Education and Employment Legislation Committee for:

- Budget Estimates – November 2022
- Supplementary Budget Estimates – February 2023
- Budget Estimates – May 2023.

On 17 May 2023, the ARC published the outcomes of an internal audit report on Foreign Interference and Security Risk which reviews the ARC’s performance in assessing foreign interference and national security risks since the launch of the University Foreign Interference Taskforce Guidelines in 2019. A copy of the findings was shared with the Minister of Education and the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security (PJCIS).

The report was referenced in the Government response to the PJCIS Inquiry into national security risks affecting the Australian higher education and research sector.

An executive summary and recommendations of the audit report can be found on the ARC website, www.arc.gov.au > Home > News > Publications > [ARC Foreign Interference and Security Risk - Internal Audit Findings](#).

Reports on ARC operations by the Commonwealth Ombudsman

During 2022–23, no investigations were conducted by the Commonwealth Ombudsman’s Office into ARC business.

Agency capability reviews

No capability reviews of the ARC were conducted or released during 2022–23.

4.3 Management of human resources

Effectiveness in managing and developing staff

Workforce planning, staff retention and turnover

During 2022–23, the ARC reviewed its priorities for the year and the need for staff in particular areas to support those priorities. The ARC maximised opportunities to develop a flexible and responsive workforce by:

- providing opportunities for staff to work on cross-agency projects
- continuing to support changes to workplace arrangements
- enabling staff rotations to support staff development, increase business cycle knowledge, and manage cross-agency workload during peak periods of activity
- providing targeted training opportunities
- providing opportunities to work at higher levels during staff absences
- ensuring relevant knowledge management and sharing processes were in place.

Staff turnovers (as a percentage) were lower in 2022–23 compared to the previous year, with 25.7% (43 separations out of 167 staff) recorded in 2022–23, and 27.1% (38 separations out of 140 staff) in 2021–22. Of the 43 separations in 2022–23, 38 (88.4%) were ongoing APS staff.

Employment agreements

During 2022–23 the ARC employed non-Senior Executive Service (SES) staff under the following arrangements:

- **ARC Enterprise Agreement 2017–2020***: Under this agreement ARC employees receive a productivity salary increase of 2% upon commencement of the agreement, 2% after 12 months, and 2% after 24 months of service
- **Individual Flexibility Arrangements (IFAs)**: Employees covered by the ARC Enterprise Agreement 2017–2020 may agree to make an IFA to vary the effect of terms of the agreement. IFAs within the ARC generally deal with retention allowances or remuneration, allowing the CEO to ensure the employment conditions of specialised employees reflect market forces and experience.

*In February 2023, the CEO signed a Section 24 Determination to extend the current Enterprise Agreement for a further year. All eligible APS staff covered by the Enterprise Agreement received a 3% pay increase which came into effect on 30 March 2023.

Training and development

ARC training and development activities are conducted within the framework of the agency's Learning and Development Strategy. The ARC strives to build a culture of continuous learning and resilience to adapt, change and meet the challenges of our environment, stakeholders and agency objectives.

In 2022–23 the ARC’s People and Services Section coordinated access to a range of training opportunities including eLearning, in-house training, and external opportunities such as coaching and studies assistance.

In-house development

During the year, all employees were required to undertake mandatory eLearning modules. These modules included:

- Commonwealth Child Safe Framework
- Integrity in the Australian Public Service
- Commonwealth Resource Management Framework
- Disability
- Core inclusion
- Accessible documents
- Workplace Health and Safety (WHS)
- Security awareness.

Other internal training included:

- Financial delegations
- Risk management framework and managing risk
- Privacy awareness
- Freedom of Information responsibilities
- Preparing for interviews
- Preparing for performance discussions.

In 2022–23 all new starters to the ARC completed the ‘Induction to the ARC’ program which consists of APS induction modules covering topics such as fraud awareness, integrity, child safety, diversity and inclusion, and general working in government information.

The ARC also provided staff with access to further development opportunities, including:

- Managing for team wellbeing
- Family wellbeing program
- Change management courses for all staff levels with the Department of Home Affairs Change Management Centre of Excellence
- PowerBI
- Introduction to public policy
- External leadership development course opportunities
- Internal leadership series LEAD (EL1 and EL2 staff)

- Strategic leadership (EL1s and EL2s)
- Individual and team coaching
- Organisational change coaching.

The ARC's WHS arrangements, provided in accordance with Schedule 2, Part 4 of the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) (WHS Act), are reported in **Appendix 4**.

Productivity gains

During 2022–23, the ARC continued to review its procedures to streamline administrative processes and systems for ARC staff and NCGP, research evaluation and RGS stakeholders. In addition, the ARC:

- streamlined NCGP application forms and processes
- enhanced the automated population of Fields of Research 2020 codes and foreign funding and affiliation questions into RMS grant application forms
- improved functionality and automation for eligibility management in RMS grant application forms
- improved the reporting functionality in the Online Governance and Risk Management Enterprise system by creating automated reports for operational plan activities and internal audit recommendation reporting
- streamlined the Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) process by integrating the Department of Education's process with the ARC's, meaning that institutions only need to submit their data to government once
- strengthened engagement and communications through proactive outreach with key research sector stakeholders to promote the value and benefit of ARC-funded research to the research community and the wider Australian public.

Diversity

The *ARC Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2021–2023* encompasses a number of diversity plans and policies including the *Multicultural Access and Equity Plan*, *Respectful Workplace Policy* and *ARC Reconciliation Action Plan*.

In the 2022 APS Census, 84% of staff believed that the ARC supports and actively promotes an inclusive workplace culture.

During 2022–23 the ARC:

- provided 'Cultural Awareness' training with local Ngannawal-led organisation Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation
- delivered 'Disability Confident Managers' training with the Australian Network on Disability
- delivered 'Understanding and managing your mental health' and 'Managing for team wellbeing' training with the Black Dog Institute
- created a Diversity Portal on the ARC's intranet as a central hub for information and resources

- developed internal action plans for several diverse groups to demonstrate ARC's commitment to being an inclusive workplace
- through the Diversity Working Group, increased diversity awareness in the agency by publishing a monthly diversity events overview in the ARC's internal newsletter, and conducted staff focus groups to discuss key matters for diverse groups within the agency
- returned to in person events held at our premises for National Reconciliation Week activities
- celebrated Harmony Day by continuing our popular Multicultural Food Festival event
- promoted the National Aborigines' and Islanders' Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) week activities
- facilitated fundraising events including the Cancer Council's Australia's Biggest Morning Tea and Soldier On in recognition of ANZAC day
- publicised R U OK? Day to raise awareness of the importance of meaningful conversations with colleagues to foster mental health
- created partnerships with key diversity organisations such as Diversity Council of Australia, the Australian Network on Disability and Pride in Diversity
- continued to encourage use of the Employee Assistance Program
- promoted key diversity days such as 'Wear it Purple Day', International Day of Women and Girls in Science, National Apology Day, Inclusion at Work Week, International Day of People with Disability, World Down Syndrome Day and Diwali through executive blogs, all staff correspondence, online seminars and events.

Staff statistics

Overview

Table 9: All ongoing employees, current reporting period (as at 30 June 2023)

	Man			Woman			Uses a different term			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
NSW	1	2	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	4
QLD	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
SA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TAS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
VIC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ACT	49	2	51	84	19	103	0	0	0	154
NT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
External Territories	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overseas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	50	4	54	86	19	105	0	0	0	159

Note: The CEO is not included in this table.

Table 10: All non-ongoing employees, current reporting period (as at 30 June 2023)

	Man			Woman			Uses a different term			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
NSW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
QLD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TAS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
VIC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ACT	1	0	1	6	1	7	0	0	0	8
NT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
External Territories	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overseas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1	0	1	6	1	7	0	0	0	8

Note: The CEO is not included in this table.

Table 11: All ongoing employees, previous reporting period (as at 30 June 2022)

	Man			Woman			Uses a different term			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
NSW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
QLD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TAS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
VIC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ACT	41	4	45	66	23	89	0	0	0	134
NT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
External Territories	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overseas	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	41	5	46	66	23	89	0	0	0	135

Note: The CEO is not included in this table.

Table 12: All non-ongoing employees, previous reporting period (as at 30 June 2022)

	Man			Woman			Uses a different term			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
NSW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
QLD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TAS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
VIC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ACT	1	0	1	4	0	4	0	0	0	5
NT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
External Territories	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overseas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1	0	1	4	0	4	0	0	0	5

Note: The CEO is not included in this table.

Gender

Table 13: Number of ongoing employees by gender, current reporting period (as at 30 June 2023)

	Man			Woman			Uses a different term			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
SES 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SES 2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
SES 1	0	0	0	5	0	5	0	0	0	5
EL 2	13	2	15	12	0	12	0	0	0	27
EL 1	12	1	13	32	6	38	0	0	0	51
APS 6	9	1	10	22	8	30	0	0	0	40
APS 5	8	0	8	9	4	13	0	0	0	21
APS 4	2	0	2	4	0	4	0	0	0	6
APS 3	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	2
APS 2	2	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	3
APS 1	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	50	4	54	86	19	105	0	0	0	159

Note: The CEO is not included in this table.

Table 14: Number of non-ongoing employees by gender, current reporting period (as at 30 June 2023)

	Man			Woman			Uses a different term			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
SES 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SES 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SES 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EL 2	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
EL 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
APS 6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
APS 5	0	0	0	2	1	3	0	0	0	3
APS 4	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	2
APS 3	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
APS 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
APS 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1	0	1	6	1	7	0	0	0	8

Note: The CEO is not included in this table.

Table 15: Number of ongoing employees by gender, previous reporting period (as at 30 June 2022)

	Man			Woman			Uses a different term			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
SES 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SES 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SES 1	1	0	1	4	0	4	0	0	0	5
EL 2	10	1	11	7	1	8	0	0	0	19
EL 1	14	2	16	21	7	28	0	0	0	44
APS 6	8	3	11	16	8	24	0	0	0	35
APS 5	2	0	2	9	5	14	0	0	0	16
APS 4	5	0	5	7	1	8	0	0	0	13
APS 3	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
APS 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
APS 1	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	2
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	40	6	46	66	23	89	0	0	0	135

Note: The CEO is not included in this table.

Table 16: Number of non-ongoing employees by gender, previous reporting period (as at 30 June 2022)

	Man			Woman			Uses a different term			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
SES 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SES 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SES 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EL 2	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	2
EL 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
APS 6	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
APS 5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
APS 4	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
APS 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
APS 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
APS 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1	0	1	4	0	4	0	0	0	5

Note: The CEO is not included in this table.

Full-time/part-time employment arrangements

Table 17: Employees by full-time and part-time status, current reporting period (as at 30 June 2023)

	Ongoing			Non-ongoing			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
SES 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SES 2	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
SES 1	5	0	5	0	0	0	5
EL 2	25	1	26	2	0	2	28
EL 1	44	7	51	0	0	0	51
APS 6	31	10	41	0	0	0	41
APS 5	17	4	21	2	1	3	24
APS 4	6	0	6	2	0	2	8
APS 3	1	1	2	1	0	1	3
APS 2	3	0	3	0	0	0	3
APS 1	3	0	3	0	0	0	3
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	136	23	159	7	1	8	167

Note: The CEO is not included in this table.

Table 18: Employees by full-time and part-time status, previous reporting period (as at 30 June 2022)

	Ongoing			Non-ongoing			Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	
SES 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SES 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SES 1	5	0	5	0	0	0	5
EL 2	17	2	19	2	0	2	21
EL 1	35	9	44	0	0	0	44
APS 6	24	11	35	2	0	2	37
APS 5	11	5	16	0	0	0	16
APS 4	12	1	13	1	0	1	14
APS 3	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
APS 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
APS 1	2	0	2	0	0	0	2
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	106	29	135	5	0	5	140

Note: The CEO is not included in this table.

Location

Table 19: Employment type by location, current reporting period (as at 30 June 2023)

	Ongoing	Non-ongoing	Total
NSW	4	0	4
QLD	1	0	1
SA	0	0	0
TAS	0	0	0
VIC	0	0	0
WA	0	0	0
ACT	154	8	162
NT	0	0	0
External Territories	0	0	0
Overseas	0	0	0
Total	159	8	167

Note: The CEO is not included in this table.

Table 20: Employment type by location, previous reporting period (as at 30 June 2022)

	Ongoing	Non-ongoing	Total
NSW	0	0	0
QLD	0	0	0
SA	0	0	0
TAS	0	0	0
VIC	0	0	0
WA	0	0	0
ACT	134	5	139
NT	0	0	0
External Territories	0	0	0
Overseas	1	0	1
Total	135	5	140

Note: The CEO is not included in this table.

Indigenous employment

Table 21: Indigenous employment, current reporting period (as at 30 June 2023)

	Total
Ongoing	2
Non-ongoing	1
Total	3

Table 22: Indigenous employment, previous reporting period (as at 30 June 2022)

	Total
Ongoing	3
Non-ongoing	0
Total	3

Employment arrangements

Number of staff by employment arrangement

Table 23: Employment arrangements, current reporting period (as at 30 June 2023)

	SES	Non-SES	Total
ARC Enterprise Agreement	0	161	161
Australian Workplace Agreements	0	0	0
Individual Flexibility Arrangements (IFAs)	0	23	23
Common Law Contract	6	0	6

Note: Staff on IFAs are included in the ARC Enterprise Agreement total.

Salary ranges

Table 24: Employment salary ranges by classification level, current reporting period (as at 30 June 2023)

	Minimum Salary (\$)	Maximum Salary (\$)
SES 3	-	-
SES 2	250,000	319,689
SES 1	170,000	257,750
EL 2	132,714	228,888
EL 1	110,606	156,287
APS 6	86,599	96,711
APS 5	78,216	82,658
APS 4	71,997	76,084
APS 3	64,043	67,677
APS 2	57,344	62,296
APS 1	53,044	54,402
Other	-	-
Total (Minimum/Maximum)	53,044	319,689

Note: The CEO is not included in this table.

Performance pay

The ARC does not provide performance pay or performance-based bonuses.

Non-salary benefits

The ARC offered a range of non-salary benefits to employees in 2022–23 including:

- flu vaccinations
- a healthy lifestyle allowance
- superannuation advice
- access to salary packaging arrangements
- access to the Employee Assistance Program.

Senior executive service remuneration

Terms and conditions for ARC SES staff are set out by common law contracts. As at 30 June 2023 there were 6 common law contracts in place for ARC SES staff.

Remuneration is reviewed annually taking into account the individual's personal skills, knowledge, experience and capabilities as well as achievements against goals set in the preceding performance cycle.

At 30 June 2023 the notional salary range for SES Band 1 and Band 2 officers was between \$170,000 and \$319,689. Further information about the ARC's remuneration of key management personnel is provided in **Table 25**.

Table 25: Information about remuneration for key management personnel, 2022-23

Name	Position Title	Short-term benefits			Post-employment benefits	Other long-term benefits		Termination benefits	Total remuneration (\$)
		Base Salary (\$)	Bonuses (\$)	Other benefits and allowances (\$)		Long service leave (\$)	Other long-term benefits (\$)		
Ms Judith Zielke PSM	CEO	455,162	0	4,112	83,995	14,412	0	0	557,681
Total	-	455,162	0	4,112	83,995	14,412	0	0	557,681

Note: There was one key management personnel (KMP) in 2022-23, compared to 9 in 2021-22. This reflects changes to the ARC's corporate governance structure. Following the formation of the ARC's Leadership Group in April 2022, the ARC's KMP decreased from 9 to one.

Table 26: Information about remuneration for senior executives, 2022-23

		Short-term benefits			Post-employment benefits	Other long-term benefits		Termination benefits	Total remuneration
Total remuneration bands	Number of senior executives	Average Base Salary (\$)	Average Bonuses (\$)	Average other benefits and allowances (\$)	Average Superannuation contribution (\$)	Average long service leave (\$)	Average other long-term benefits (\$)	Average termination benefits (\$)	Average total remuneration (\$)
\$0- \$220,000	5	126,296	0	4,997	24,479	4,833	0	0	160,605
\$220,001- \$245,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
\$245,001- \$270,000	1	215,382	0	946	36,960	3,208	0	0	256,496
\$270,001- \$295,000	1	213,749	0	11,028	35,033	12,255	0	0	272,065
\$295,001- \$320,000	1	238,228	0	4,112	48,041	6,448	0	0	296,829
\$320,001- \$345,000	1	270,279	0	3,618	48,253	14,808	0	0	336,958

Note: The ARC had 9 senior executives during 2022-23 under the definition outlined in the Department of Finance's RMG-138: *Commonwealth entities executive remuneration reporting guide for annual reports*.

Table 27: Information about remuneration for other highly paid staff, 2022–23

Total remuneration bands	Number of other highly paid staff	Short-term benefits			Post-employment benefits	Other long-term benefits		Termination benefits	Total remuneration
		Average Base Salary	Average Bonuses	Average other benefits and allowances		Average long service leave	Average other long-term benefits		
\$240,000–\$245,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
\$245,001–\$270,000	1	193,457	0	21,658	28,261	23,633	0	0	267,109

Note: The ARC had one ‘other highly paid staff’ as defined for reporting in this table. Table 27 does not include staff already recognised in Table 25: Information about remuneration of key management personnel, 2022–23.

4.4

Assets management

The ARC does not have any significant asset holdings.

The ARC's assets include office fit out, furniture, ICT software and 'portable and attractive' equipment (such as laptops and mobile phones) held at the ARC office. The ARC also owns server and network infrastructure located at an appropriately secured commercial data centre located in the ACT.

The ARC reviews its asset holdings annually to ensure cost effectiveness and whole-of-life utilisation. The ARC conducted its annual stock take in May 2023 and undertook a materiality review of its assets value as at the end of the financial year.

4.5 Purchasing

The ARC's approach to purchasing is consistent with the *Commonwealth Procurement Rules* and the PGPA Act, which regulate how agencies govern and undertake procurement. Detailed policies and procedures relating to procurement are also outlined in the *ARC Chief Executive Instructions* and specific policy and procedure guides (such as those for travel and use of Commonwealth credit cards). All policies and procedures are reviewed periodically and updated as required.

The Finance Section is responsible for procurement within the ARC. Finance Section staff provide information and training about procurement policies and procedures as required.

The ARC publishes information on proposed procurements in the *Annual Procurement Plan – Australian Research Council*, available on the AusTender website, www.tenders.gov.au > Home > Planned Procurements > Annual Procurement Plan List > [List By Agency](#). This plan gives potential suppliers early notice of significant planned procurements for the coming year. All procurements over \$10,000 are published on the AusTender website.

4.6 Consultants

Expenditure for consultancy contracts

During 2022–23 the ARC entered into 212 new consultancy contracts involving total actual expenditure of \$2.054 million (inclusive of GST). In addition, 435 ongoing consultancy contracts were active during the period, involving total actual expenditure of \$3.149 million (inclusive of GST). A summary of the ARC's engagements with consultants for 2022–23 is provided in **Tables 28** and **29**.

Table 28: Expenditure on consultancy contracts 2022–23

Number		Expenditure \$ (GST inc.)
New contracts entered into during the reporting period	212	\$2.054 million
Ongoing contracts entered into during a previous reporting period	435	\$3.149 million
Total	647	\$5.203 million

Note: The contract numbers are as per all consultancy contracts that have been entered into not just those that are reportable on AusTender. The number of ongoing contracts is all active consultancy contracts as at 30 June 2023 that were entered into prior to the 2022–23 period. The expenditure on consultancy contracts represents the actual cash expenditure during the period for the contracts detailed but does not include any accrued expenses.

Table 29: Organisations consultancy contract expenditure 2022–23

Name of organisation ⁽¹⁾	Expenditure \$ (GST inc.)
Iceni Group Pty Ltd – 50 607 624 304	\$694,828
ACIL Allen Pty Limited – 68 102 652 148	\$504,067
The University of Queensland – 63 942 912 684	\$303,025
Digital Science	\$161,500
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu – 74 490 121 060	\$159,816

(1) Australian Business Number (ABN) provided where applicable.

Note: The expenditure above is the top 5 consultancy expenditures during 2022–23 by organisation. This may cover multiple contracts and contracts that are no longer active as at 30 June 2023.

Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on contracts for consultancies. Information on the value of contracts and consultancies is available on the AusTender website, www.tenders.gov.au.

Policy on selection and engagement for consultancy contracts

The ARC's policy on selecting and engaging consultants is set out in the *ARC Chief Executive Instructions* and in related procurement instructions and guidance material.

The ARC engages consultants in accordance with the PGPA Act, including the *Commonwealth Procurement Rules* and relevant internal policies. Consultants are primarily for independent research or assessment, or where specialist skill or expertise is required. Consultants are engaged through a merit selection or procurement process. Most of the ARC's consultancy expenditure relates to the engagement of independent members for selection and evaluation committees.

Consultancy services are distinguished from other contracts for services by the nature of the work performed, which typically involves the development of an intellectual output that assists with agency decision-making and reflects the independent views of the service provider.

Expenditure for non-consultancy contracts

During 2022–23 the ARC entered into 75 new non-consultancy contracts involving total actual expenditure of \$3.686 million (inclusive of GST). In addition, 103 ongoing non-consultancy contracts were active during the period, involving total actual expenditure of \$10.372 million (inclusive of GST). A summary of the ARC's engagements with non-consultants for 2022–23 is provided in **Tables 30** and **31**.

Table 30: Expenditure on non-consultancy contracts 2022–23

Number		Expenditure \$ (GST inc.)
New contracts entered into during the reporting period	75	\$3.686 million
Ongoing contracts entered into during a previous reporting period	103	\$6.686 million
Total	178	\$10.372 million

Note: The contract numbers are as per all non-consultancy contracts that have been entered into not just those that are reportable on AusTender. The number of ongoing contracts is all active non-consultancy contracts as at 30 June 2023 that were entered into prior to the 2022–23 period. The expenditure on non-consultancy contracts represents the actual cash expenditure during the period for the contracts detailed but does not include any accrued expenses.

Table 31: Organisations non-consultancy contract expenditure 2022–23

Name of organisation ⁽¹⁾	Expenditure \$ (GST inc.)
Jones Lang LaSalle (ACT) Pty Limited – 69 008 585 260	\$2,733,494
Staffing and Office Solutions Pty Ltd – 78 082 056 782	\$498,627
Enable Software Pty Ltd – 62 085 051 216	\$496,601
K.J. Ross and Associates Pty Ltd – 11 079 218 652	\$483,408
Calleo Research Pty Ltd – 29 606 001 763	\$438,276

(1) Australian Business Number (ABN) provided where applicable.

Note: The expenditure above is the top 5 non-consultancy expenditures during 2022–23 by organisation. This may cover multiple contracts and contracts that are no longer active as at 30 June 2023.

Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on non-consultancy contracts. Information on the value of contracts is available on the AusTender website, www.tenders.gov.au.

Australian National Audit Office access clauses and exempt contracts

Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) access clauses

The ARC is required to provide details of any contract let during the reporting period of \$100,000 or more (inclusive of GST) that does not provide for the Auditor-General to have access to the contractor's premises. The ARC must include the name of the contractor, the purpose and value of the contract, and the reason for not including standard access clauses in the contract.

The ARC did not have any contracts over \$100,000 that did not provide for the Auditor-General to have access to the contractor's premises.

Exempt contracts

The ARC CEO did not exempt any contracts from publication on the AusTender website during the reporting period.

Procurement initiatives to support small business

The ARC supports small business participation in the Commonwealth Government procurement market. Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and Small Enterprise participation statistics are available on the Department of Finance's website, www.finance.gov.au > Home > Government > Procurement > [Statistics](#).

The ARC recognises the importance of ensuring that small businesses are paid on time. The results of the *Survey of Australian Government Payments to Small Business* are available on the Treasury's website, www.treasury.gov.au > Home > Publications > [Australian Government Payments to Small Business Performance Report 2014](#).

The ARC employs a number of procurement practices to support SMEs including:

- using standard contract templates with clear and simple language
- using electronic payment systems to facilitate on-time payment
- encouraging credit card use to expedite payments
- utilising Supply Nation, a non-profit organisation established to grow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business sector by promoting supplier diversity in Australia
- reporting against the *Indigenous Procurement Policy* on the number of contracts, contract values and expenditure for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander SMEs.

Grant programs

GrantConnect is the Australian Government's whole-of-government, centralised, web-based grant information system. All non-corporate Commonwealth entities, including the ARC, must publish on GrantConnect to meet requirements under the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines*. GrantConnect is the authoritative source of information in relation to Australian Government Grant Opportunities and Grant Guidelines, including for all schemes under the NCGP. Further information can be found on the GrantConnect website, www.grants.gov.au.

Information on grants awarded by the ARC during the period 2022–23 is available on the ARC website, www.arc.gov.au > Home > Funding research > [Funding outcomes](#). The ARC also provides access to NCGP data through ARC Grants Search, which forms part of the agency's Data Portal, www.arc.gov.au > Home > Funding research > Funding outcomes > [Grants Dataset](#).

Annual Statement of Compliance with the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework

The ARC is committed to child safety through the implementation of the [Commonwealth Child Safe Framework](#) (CCSF) and the *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations*.

The ARC and its staff do not have interactions with children as part of its standard operations, however third parties funded through the NCGP may undertake research involving children.

An assessment of child safety related risks was undertaken by the ARC in 2022–23 and determined that the ARC's overarching residual risk rating is low. Key risks identified related to non-compliance with the CCSF and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations by both ARC staff and funded third parties, at organisation, project and researcher levels.

The ARC has a range of controls in place to address these risks including:

- provision of training for ARC staff on the requirements of the CCSF to ensure an understanding of their role in fostering child safety
- inclusion of child safety clauses in ARC Grant Agreements for funded third parties
- an annual assurance of compliance from all relevant funded third-party grant recipients.

The ARC is compliant with all the requirements of the CCSF. Child safety activities undertaken by the ARC during 2022–23 included provision of CCSF training to ARC staff and contractors, as well as evaluation of internal child safety processes and procedures. In addition, in July–August 2023, an annual assurance was sought and received from all third-party grantees regarding their compliance with the CCSF.

Disability reporting mechanism

Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 (Disability Strategy) is the overarching framework for inclusive policies, programs and infrastructure that will support people with disability to participate in all areas of Australian life. The Disability Strategy sets out where practical changes will be made to improve the lives of people with disability in Australia. It acts to ensure the principles underpinning the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are incorporated into Australia's policies and programs that affect people with disability, their families and carers. All levels of government have committed to deliver more comprehensive and visible reporting under the Disability Strategy. A range of reports on progress of the Disability Strategy's actions and outcome areas will be published and available on the Disability Gateway website, www.disabilitygateway.gov.au > Home > [Australia's Disability Strategy Hub](#).

Disability reporting is included the Australian Public Service Commission's State of the Service reports. These reports are available on the Australian Public Service Commission's website, www.apsc.gov.au > Home > Working in the APS > [State of the Service](#).

Web versions of the *ARC Annual Report 2022–23* conform with WCAG 2.1 AA accessibility requirements.

Information publication scheme

Entities subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) are required to publish information for the public as part of the Information Publication Scheme (IPS). In compliance with the FOI Act, information relating to the IPS is published on the ARC website, www.arc.gov.au > Home > About the ARC > Our Organisation > Privacy and Information > Freedom of Information > [Information Publication Scheme](#).

Correction of information published in previous annual reports

Since publishing the [ARC Annual Report 2021–22](#), 2 errors have been identified:

- In Part 1.1, the introduction from the Chief Executive Officer, it was stated that the ARC received a Statement of Expectations from the then Acting Minister for Education, the Hon Stuart Robert MP, in December 2022; this Statement of Expectations was received in December 2021.
- In Appendix 1 – National Competitive Grants Program, it was stated that funding for Linkage Learned Academies Special Projects commenced in 2017, however it commenced in 2002.

PART 05



Financial statements

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Minister for Education

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of the Australian Research Council (the Entity) for the year ended 30 June 2023:

- (a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015*; and
- (b) present fairly the financial position of the Entity as at 30 June 2023 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

The financial statements of the Entity, which I have audited, comprise the following as at 30 June 2023 and for the year then ended:

- Statement by the Accountable Authority and Chief Financial Officer;
- Statement of Comprehensive Income;
- Statement of Financial Position;
- Statement of Changes in Equity;
- Cash Flow Statement;
- Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income;
- Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities;
- Administered Reconciliation Schedule;
- Administered Cash Flow Statement; and
- Notes to the financial statements, comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report. I am independent of the Entity in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements for financial statement audits conducted by the Auditor-General and his delegates. These include the relevant independence requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) to the extent that they are not in conflict with the *Auditor-General Act 1997*. I have also fulfilled my other responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Accountable Authority's responsibility for the financial statements

As the Accountable Authority of the Entity, the Chief Executive Officer is responsible under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (the Act) for the preparation and fair presentation of annual financial statements that comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the rules made under the Act. The Chief Executive Officer is also responsible for such internal control as the Chief Executive Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

GPO Box 707, Canberra ACT 2601
38 Sydney Avenue, Forrest ACT 2603
Phone (02) 6203 7300

In preparing the financial statements, the Chief Executive Officer is responsible for assessing the ability of the Entity to continue as a going concern, taking into account whether the Entity's operations will cease as a result of an administrative restructure or for any other reason. The Chief Executive Officer is also responsible for disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the assessment indicates that it is not appropriate.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control;
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Accountable Authority;
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Accountable Authority's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern; and
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Accountable Authority regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Australian National Audit Office



Saminda Maddumahewa
Senior Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General
Canberra
14 September 2023

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Australian Research Council

STATEMENT BY THE ACCOUNTABLE AUTHORITY AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

In our opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2023 comply with subsection 42(2) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), and are based on properly maintained financial records as per subsection 41(2) of the PGPA Act.

In our opinion, at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Australian Research Council (ARC) will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.



Judi Zielke PSM
Chief Executive Officer

13 September 2023



Craig Maconachie
Chief Financial Officer

13 September 2023

Australian Research Council
Statement of Comprehensive Income
for the period ended 30 June 2023

		2023	2022	Original Budget
	Notes	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
NET COST OF SERVICES				
Expenses				
Employee benefits	1.1A	20,789	17,131	18,130
Suppliers	1.1B	2,433	4,397	2,270
Depreciation and amortisation	3.2A	4,830	6,136	6,189
Finance costs	1.1C	216	287	188
Write-down and impairment of other assets	1.1D	35	167	-
Total expenses		28,303	28,118	26,777
Own-source income				
Own-source revenue				
Revenue from contracts with customers	1.2A	1,864	410	333
Other revenue	1.2B	64	64	62
Total own-source revenue		1,928	474	395
Gains				
Gains from sale of assets		20	1	-
Total gains		20	1	-
Total own-source income		1,948	475	395
Net cost of services		(26,355)	(27,643)	(26,382)
Revenue from Government	1.2C	23,401	20,226	22,005
Deficit on continuing operations		(2,954)	(7,417)	(4,377)

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.
For variance explanations, refer to budget variance commentary which follows the primary financial statements.

Australian Research Council
Statement of Financial Position
as at 30 June 2023

	Notes	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000
ASSETS				
Financial assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	3.1A	274	323	675
Trade and other receivables	3.1B	13,550	14,800	15,295
Total financial assets		13,824	15,123	15,970
Non-financial assets*				
Buildings	3.2A	4,868	6,920	5,046
Plant and equipment	3.2A	945	828	686
Computer software	3.2A	7,215	6,937	6,000
Prepayments		157	158	213
Total non-financial assets		13,185	14,843	11,945
Total assets		27,009	29,966	27,915
LIABILITIES				
Payables				
Suppliers	3.3A	336	757	499
Other payables	3.3B	936	393	487
Total payables		1,272	1,150	986
Interest bearing liabilities				
Leases	3.4A	5,271	7,342	5,258
Total interest bearing liabilities		5,271	7,342	5,258
Provisions				
Employee provisions	6.1A	6,086	5,449	5,530
Other provisions	3.5A	778	709	559
Total provisions		6,864	6,158	6,089
Total liabilities		13,407	14,650	12,333
Net assets		13,602	15,316	15,582
EQUITY				
Contributed equity		42,448	41,208	42,449
Reserves		17	17	16
Accumulated deficit		(28,863)	(25,909)	(26,883)
Total equity		13,602	15,316	15,582

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

For variance explanations, refer to budget variance commentary which follows the primary financial statements.

* Right-of-use assets are included in the following line items: Buildings, Plant and equipment.

Australian Research Council
Statement of Changes in Equity
for the period ended 30 June 2023

	Notes	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000
CONTRIBUTED EQUITY				
Opening balance				
Balance carried forward from previous period		41,208	39,973	41,209
Transactions with owners				
Contributions by owners				
Departmental capital budget		1,240	1,235	1,240
Total transactions with owners		1,240	1,235	1,240
Closing balance as at 30 June		42,448	41,208	42,449
RETAINED EARNINGS				
Opening balance				
Balance carried forward from previous period		(25,909)	(18,492)	(22,506)
Comprehensive income				
Deficit for the period		(2,954)	(7,417)	(4,377)
Total comprehensive income		(2,954)	(7,417)	(4,377)
Closing balance as at 30 June		(28,863)	(25,909)	(26,883)
ASSET REVALUATION RESERVE				
Opening balance				
Balance carried forward from previous period		17	17	16
Asset Revaluation				
Change in the measurement of provision to make good		-	-	-
Change in asset value on revaluation		-	-	-
Closing balance as at 30 June		17	17	16

Statement of Changes in Equity (continued)

for the period ended 30 June 2023

	Notes	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000
TOTAL EQUITY				
Opening balance				
Balance carried forward from previous period		15,316	21,498	18,719
Comprehensive income				
Deficit for the period		(2,954)	(7,417)	(4,377)
Change in the measurement of provision to make good		-	-	-
Change in asset value on revaluation		-	-	-
Total comprehensive income		(2,954)	(7,417)	(4,377)
Transactions with owners				
Contributions by owners				
Departmental capital budget		1,240	1,235	1,240
Total transactions with owners		1,240	1,235	1,240
Closing balance as at 30 June		13,602	15,316	15,582

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

For variance explanations, refer to budget variance commentary which follows the primary financial statements.

Accounting Policy

Departmental Capital Budgets

Amounts appropriated which are designated as Departmental Capital Budgets (DCBs) are recognised directly in contributed equity in that year.

Australian Research Council

Cash Flow Statement

for the period ended 30 June 2023

	Notes	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000	Original Budget \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES				
Cash received				
Appropriations		26,837	24,045	23,608
Sale of goods and rendering of services		2,194	236	333
GST received		892	717	581
Other		67	221	-
Total cash received		29,990	25,219	24,522
Cash used				
Employees		19,932	17,337	18,049
Suppliers		2,726	4,009	2,208
Interest payments on lease liabilities		214	284	188
GST paid		902	764	581
Section 74 receipts transferred to OPA		2,261	236	-
Total cash used		26,035	22,630	21,026
Net cash from operating activities		3,955	2,589	3,496
INVESTING ACTIVITIES				
Cash received				
Proceeds from sales of property, plant and equipment		7	1	-
Total cash received		7	1	-
Cash used				
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		469	304	145
Purchase of computer software		2,671	1,883	2,000
Total cash used		3,140	2,187	2,145
Net cash used by investing activities		(3,133)	(2,186)	(2,145)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES				
Cash received				
Contributed equity		1,240	1,235	1,240
Total cash received		1,240	1,235	1,240
Cash used				
Principal payments of lease liabilities		2,111	1,990	2,092
Total cash used		2,111	1,990	2,092
Net cash used by financing activities		(871)	(755)	(852)
Net decrease in cash held		(49)	(352)	499
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		323	675	176
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	3.1A	274	323	675

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

For variance explanations, refer to budget variance commentary which follows the primary financial statements.

Australian Research Council
Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income
for the period ended 30 June 2023

		2023	2022	Original
	Notes	\$'000	\$'000	Budget \$'000
NET COST OF SERVICES				
Expenses				
Suppliers	2.1A	8,576	2,620	8,641
Grants	2.1B	844,924	799,451	851,894
Total expenses		853,500	802,071	860,535
Income				
Revenue				
Non-taxation revenue				
Other revenue	2.2A	13,205	14,761	9,721
Total non-taxation revenue		13,205	14,761	9,721
Total revenue		13,205	14,761	9,721
Total income		13,205	14,761	9,721
Net cost of services		(840,295)	(787,310)	(850,814)
Deficit		(840,295)	(787,310)	(850,814)
Total comprehensive loss		(840,295)	(787,310)	(850,814)

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

For variance explanations, refer to budget variance commentary which follows the primary financial statements.

Australian Research Council
Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities
as at 30 June 2023

		2023	2022	Original
	Notes	\$'000	\$'000	Budget \$'000
ASSETS				
Financial assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	4.1A	2,120	2,253	2,291
Trade and other receivables	4.1B	122	69	225
Total financial assets		2,242	2,322	2,516
Non-financial assets				
Prepayments		255	185	115
Total non-financial assets		255	185	115
Total assets administered on behalf of Government		2,497	2,507	2,631
LIABILITIES				
Payables				
Grants	4.2A	256,439	242,830	246,137
Other payables	4.2B	500	577	531
Total payables		256,939	243,407	246,668
Total liabilities administered on behalf of Government		256,939	243,407	246,668
Net liabilities		(254,442)	(240,900)	(244,037)

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.
For variance explanations, refer to budget variance commentary which follows the primary financial statements.

Australian Research Council**Administered Reconciliation Schedule***for the period ended 30 June 2023*

	Notes	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Opening assets less liabilities as at 1 July		(240,900)	(245,012)
Net (cost of)/contribution by services			
Income		13,205	14,761
Expenses		(853,500)	(802,071)
Transfers (to)/from the Australian Government			
Appropriation transfers from Official Public Account (OPA)			
Annual appropriations	5.1A	8,587	2,644
Special appropriations (limited)	5.1C	831,433	803,695
Administered GST Appropriations		872	550
Appropriation transfers to OPA			
Appropriations		(13,313)	(14,890)
Return of GST Appropriations		(826)	(577)
Closing assets less liabilities as at 30 June		(254,442)	(240,900)

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

For variance explanations, refer to budget variance commentary which follows the primary financial statements.

Accounting Policy***Administered Cash Transfers to and from the Official Public Account***

Revenue collected by the entity for use by the Government rather than the entity is administered revenue. Collections are transferred to the Official Public Account (OPA) maintained by the Department of Finance. Conversely, cash is drawn from the OPA to make payments under Parliamentary appropriation on behalf of Government. These transfers to and from the OPA are adjustments to the administered cash held by the entity on behalf of the Government and reported as such in the schedule of administered cash flows and in the administered reconciliation schedule.

Australian Research Council

Administered Cash Flow Statement

for the period ended 30 June 2023

	Notes	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
GST received		826	577
Other		13,313	14,890
Total cash received		14,139	15,467
Cash used			
Suppliers		8,587	2,644
Grants		831,566	803,868
GST paid		872	550
Total cash used		841,025	807,062
Net cash used by operating activities		(826,886)	(791,595)
Cash from Official Public Account			
Appropriations		840,020	806,339
Administered GST Appropriation		872	550
Total cash from official public account		840,892	806,889
Cash to Official Public Account			
Appropriations		13,313	14,890
Return of GST Appropriation to OPA		826	577
Total cash to official public account		14,139	15,467
Net decrease in cash held		(133)	(173)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		2,253	2,426
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	4.1A	2,120	2,253

This schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

For variance explanations, refer to budget variance commentary which follows the primary financial statements.

Budget Variances

The following commentary provides a high-level commentary of major variances between the original budget as published in Education, Skills and Employment 2022-23 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) to the 2022-23 actuals. Note the Budget is not audited.

Departmental and Administered variances are considered to be major based on the following criteria:

- the variance between original budget and actual is greater than 5% of the line item and \$0.5 million; or
- an item below this threshold is considered important for the reader's understanding or is relevant to an assessment of the ARC's performance.

Explanation of major variances	Variance to Budget		Affected line items
	Variance to Budget	%	
	\$'000		
Departmental			
1.1A. Employee benefits - Overspend compared to Budget primarily due to two reasons: - a higher staffing requirement to provide Research Grant Management services, which are cost recovered; and - retaining capacity and capabilities in relation to the Excellence in Research Program.	2,659	15%	Expenses – Employee benefits Consequential Impacts Revenue – Revenue from Customers Liabilities - Employee provisions Cashflow - Employees Cashflow - Sale of goods and rendering of services
3.2A. Depreciation and amortisation - Underspend compared to budget is primarily due to extending the useful life of Research Management System software by 12 months to 30 June 2024.	-1,359	-22%	Expenses - Depreciation and Amortisation Consequential Impacts Assets - Computer Software
3.1B. Trade and other receivables - The decrease in receivables when compared to Budget reflects the decision to partially fund asset replacements from prior year non-DCB appropriations.	-1,745	-11%	Assets – Trade and other receivables

Note negative numbers indicate that the actual is less than budget.

Explanation of major variances	Variance to Budget	Variance to Budget	Affected line items
	\$'000	%	
Administered			
2.2A. Other Revenue -This balance comprises revenue from the return of unspent grant funding by prior year grant recipients, as required by the ARC Act. Actual returns of grant funding were higher than Budget, due to the inherently variable nature of this revenue stream, which is dependent on the actual grant usage and timing of grant acquittals by grant recipients.	3,484	36%	Revenue - Other Revenue Consequential Impacts Cashflow - Cash received other Cashflow - Cash to OPA
Note negative numbers indicate that the actual is less than budget.			

Note negative numbers indicate that the actual is less than budget.

Overview

Objectives of the Australian Research Council (ARC)

The Australian Research Council (ARC) is an Australian Government controlled entity. It is a not-for-profit entity. The ARC is responsible for administering the National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP), assessing the quality, engagement and impact of research and providing advice and support on research matters.

The ARC is structured to meet the following outcome:

Outcome 1: Growth of knowledge and innovation through managing research funding schemes, measuring research excellence and providing advice.

The continued existence of the ARC in its present form and with its present programs is dependent on Government policy and on continuing funding by Parliament for the ARC's administration and programs.

ARC activities contributing toward this outcome are classified as either departmental or administered. Departmental activities involve the use of assets, liabilities, income and expenses controlled or incurred by the entity in its own right. Administered activities involve the management or oversight by the entity, on behalf of the Government, of items controlled or incurred by the Government.

The entity conducts the following administered activities on behalf of the Government:

NCGP: Through the NCGP, the ARC supports excellent research, research training and research infrastructure for the benefit of Australians, across all disciplines (excluding pre-clinical, clinical medical or health research), awarding funding based on a competitive peer review process. The NCGP comprises two programs, Discovery and Linkage, which fund a range of complementary schemes that provide funding for basic and applied research, research training, research collaboration and research infrastructure.

Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA): ERA assesses research quality by research discipline at eligible Australian higher education institutions. ERA is an established evaluation framework that reflects the Government's commitment to a transparent and streamlined approach to research evaluation. The ARC is also responsible for administering the Engagement and Impact (EI) assessment, which assesses the engagement of researchers with end-users, and shows how universities are translating their research into economic, social, environmental, cultural and other impacts.

In the 2022 Statement of Expectations, the Minister for Education asked that the ARC discontinue preparations for the 2023 ERA round. The ARC has since developed a transition plan, in consultation with the sector and the Department of Education, to a modern, data-driven approach informed by expert review. The ARC will continue working with the Department of Education to develop research engagement and impact indicators to inform the assessment of quality and impact.

The Basis of Preparation

The financial statements are required by section 42 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with:

- a) *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015* (FRR); and
- b) Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations – including simplified disclosures for Tier 2 Entities under AASB 1060 issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that apply for the reporting period.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and in accordance with the historical cost convention, except for certain assets and liabilities at fair value. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position. The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars.

New Accounting Standards

All new standards issued prior to the sign-off date and that are applicable to the current reporting period that did not have a material effect on the entity's financial statements are presented below.

Standard/ Interpretation	Nature of change in accounting policy, transitional provisions, and adjustment to financial statements
AASB 2021-2 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Disclosure of Accounting Policies and Definition of Accounting Estimates (AASB 2021-2) and	AASB 2021-2 amends AASB 7, AASB 101, AASB 108, AASB 134 and AASB Practice Statement 2. The amending standard requires the disclosure of material, rather than significant, accounting policies, and clarifies what is considered a change in
AASB 2021-6 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards - Disclosure of Accounting Policies: Tier 2 and Other Australian Accounting Standards (AASB 2021-6)	accounting policy compared to a change in accounting estimate. AASB 2021-6 amends the Tier 2 reporting requirements set out in AASB 1049, AASB 1054 and AASB 1060 to reflect the changes made by AASB 2021-2.

Taxation

The ARC is exempt from all forms of taxation except Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) and the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Reporting of Administered activities

Administered revenues, expenses, assets, liabilities and cash flows are disclosed in the administered schedules and related notes.

Except where otherwise stated, administered items are accounted for on the same basis and using the same policies as for departmental items, including the application of Australian Accounting Standards.

Events After the Reporting Period

Departmental

No Departmental events have occurred after the reporting period that have the potential to significantly affect the ongoing structure and financial activities of the ARC.

Administered

No Administered events have occurred after the reporting period that have the potential to significantly affect the ongoing structure and financial activities of the ARC.

Financial Performance

This section analyses the financial performance of the Australian Research Council for the year ended 2023.

1.1 Expenses

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
1.1A: Employee benefits		
Wages and salaries	15,509	12,796
Superannuation		
Defined contribution plans ¹	1,992	1,522
Defined benefit plans ²	1,208	890
Leave and other entitlements	1,780	1,685
Separation and redundancies	3	-
Other employee entitlements	297	238
Total employee benefits	20,789	17,131

1. Includes the Public Sector Superannuation Plan (PSSap) and other choice of fund.

2. Includes the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS) and the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme (PSS).

Accounting Policy

Accounting policies for employee related expenses is contained in the People and relationships section.

1.1B: Suppliers

Goods and services supplied or rendered

Audit fees	64	72
Consultants	354	1,084
Contractors	21	1,727
Employee related ¹	449	331
Travel	190	9
IT services	683	612
Property related	276	183
Other ²	226	220
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	2,263	4,238

Goods supplied	181	689
Services rendered	2,082	3,549
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	2,263	4,238

Other suppliers

Workers compensation expenses	67	67
Variable lease payments	103	92
Total other suppliers	170	159
Total suppliers	2,433	4,397

1. Employee related expenses include staff training, staff study assistance costs, recruitment charges.

2. Other includes media monitors, subscriptions, graphic design, printing, photocopier, telephone costs, office consumables and stationery, legal services, storage and hire of equipment.

1.1C: Finance costs

Interest on lease liabilities	214	284
Unwinding of discount	2	3
Total finance costs	216	287

The above lease disclosures should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes 3.2 and 3.4A.

Accounting Policy

All borrowing costs are expensed as incurred.

1.1D: Write-down and impairment of other assets

Revaluation decrements	31	147
Write-down	4	20
Total write-down and impairment of other assets	35	167

1.2 Own-Source Revenue and gains

	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000

Own-Source Revenue

1.2A: Revenue from contracts with customers

Rendering of services (related parties)	1,864	410
Total revenue from contracts with customers	1,864	410

Disaggregation of revenue from contracts with customers

The ARC is providing grants administration services to other Australian Government entities who are managing grant programs focussed on the research sector.

Timing of transfer of goods and services:

Over time	1,864	410
	1,864	410

Accounting Policy

The ARC has entered into collaborative agreements with three Australian Government entities. They have been assessed as enforceable for the purposes of AASB 15.

Each collaborative agreement covers multiple years. They include specific performance obligations allocated via service schedule to each financial year and performance is regularly monitored in partnership with client organisations. All services are agreed and charged in the year provided.

Receivables for goods and services, which have 30 day terms, are recognised at the nominal amounts due less any impairment allowance account. Collectability of debts is reviewed at the end of the reporting period and allowances are made when collectability of the debt is no longer probable.

1.2B: Other revenue

Resources received free of charge

Remuneration of auditors	64	64
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Total other revenue	64	64
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Accounting Policy

Resources Received Free of Charge

Resources received free of charge are recognised as revenue when, and only when, a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated. Use of those resources is recognised as an expense. Resources received free of charge are recorded as either revenue or gains depending on their nature.

1.2C: Revenue from Government

Appropriations

Departmental appropriations	23,401	20,226
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Total revenue from Government	23,401	20,226
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Accounting Policy

Revenue from Government

Amounts appropriated for departmental appropriations for the year (adjusted for any formal additions and reductions) are recognised as Revenue from Government when the entity gains control of the appropriation, except for certain amounts that relate to activities that are reciprocal in nature, in which case revenue is recognised only when it has been earned. Appropriations receivable are recognised at their nominal amounts.

Income and Expenses Administered on Behalf of Government

This section analyses the activities that the Australian Research Council does not control but administers on behalf of the Government. Unless otherwise noted, the accounting policies adopted are consistent with those applied for departmental reporting.

2.1 Administered - Expenses

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
2.1A: Suppliers		
Goods and services supplied or rendered		
Consultants	3,928	1,420
Contractors	3,883	963
Travel	24	14
Other	741	223
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	8,576	2,620
Goods supplied	2	204
Services rendered	8,574	2,416
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	8,576	2,620
Total suppliers	8,576	2,620
2.1B: Grants		
Public sector		
Commonwealth educational institutions (related parties)	58,448	54,353
State and Territory Governments	786,138	745,098
Private sector		
Other research organisations	338	-
Total grants	844,924	799,451

Accounting Policy

The ARC administers the National Competitive Grants Program on behalf of the Australian Government. Grant and subsidy liabilities are recognised to the extent that (i) the services required to be performed by the grantee have been performed or (ii) the grant eligibility criteria have been satisfied, but payments due have not been made. When the Government enters into an agreement to make these grants and services but services have not been performed or criteria satisfied, this is considered a commitment.

2.2 Administered - Income		
	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
Revenue		
Non-Taxation Revenue		
<u>2.2A: Other revenue</u>		
Recovery of prior year unspent grant payments	13,205	14,761
Total other revenue	13,205	14,761
<p>Accounting Policy</p> <p>All administered revenues are revenues relating to ordinary activities performed by the ARC on behalf of the Australian Government. As such, administered appropriations are not revenues of the ARC. The ARC oversees distribution or expenditure of the funds as directed.</p> <p>Other revenue relates to the prior year unspent grant payments. Under the ARC Act, grant recipients are required to return unspent money to the ARC unless otherwise approved.</p> <p>Recovery of prior year unspent grant payments is recognised when unspent grant money is identified during grant acquittal processes or grants are relinquished.</p>		

Financial Position

This section analyses the Australian Research Council's assets used to conduct its operations and the operating liabilities incurred as a result.

Employee related information is disclosed in the People and Relationships section.

3.1 Financial Assets

	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000

3.1A: Cash and cash equivalents

Cash on hand or on deposit	274	323
Total cash and cash equivalents	274	323

Accounting Policy

Cash is recognised at its nominal amount. Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on deposits.

3.1B: Trade and other receivables

Goods and services receivables

Other	311	397
Total goods and services receivables	311	397

Appropriation receivables

Appropriation receivable	13,110	14,285
Total appropriation receivables	13,110	14,285

Other receivables

GST receivable from the Australian Taxation Office	129	118
Total other receivables	129	118

Total trade and other receivables (gross)	13,550	14,800
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Total trade and other receivables (net)	13,550	14,800
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Current and non-current allocation disclosed in Note 8.1.

Credit terms for goods and services were within 20 days (2022: 20 days).

Accounting Policy

Financial assets

Trade receivables, loans and other receivables that are held for the purpose of collecting the contractual cash flows where the cash flows are solely payments of principal and interest, that are not provided at below-market interest rates, are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method adjusted for any loss allowance.

The Appropriation Receivable balance represents the amount of undrawn appropriation available to the ARC.

3.2 Non-Financial Assets

3.2A: Reconciliation of the Opening and Closing Balances of Property, Plant and Equipment and Intangibles

	Buildings \$'000	Plant and equipment \$'000	Computer Software ¹ \$'000	Total \$'000
As at 1 July 2022				
Gross book value	14,365	1,146	20,906	36,417
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment	(7,445)	(318)	(13,969)	(21,732)
Total as at 1 July 2022	6,920	828	6,937	14,685
Additions				
Purchase or Internally developed	6	412	2,670	3,088
Right-of-use assets	-	55	-	55
Revaluations recognised in net cost of services	36	-	-	36
Depreciation and amortisation	(149)	(324)	(2,392)	(2,865)
Depreciation on right-of-use assets	(1,945)	(20)	-	(1,965)
Disposals				
Gross book value	-	(9)	(336)	(345)
Gross book value (RoU)	(1)	(20)	-	(21)
Accumulated depreciation	-	5	0	5
Accumulated amortisation	-	-	336	336
Accumulated depreciation (RoU)	1	18	-	19
Total as at 30 June 2023	4,868	945	7,215	13,028
Total as at 30 June 2023 represented by				
Gross book value	14,406	1,584	23,240	39,230
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment	(9,538)	(639)	(16,025)	(26,202)
Total as at 30 June 2023	4,868	945	7,215	13,028
Carrying amount of right-of-use assets	4,492	36	-	4,528

1. The carrying amount of computer software included \$84,367 purchased software and \$7,131,065 internally generated software.

No indicators of impairment were found for buildings, plant and equipment and computer software.

Contractual commitments for the acquisition of property, plant, equipment and intangible assets

Contractual commitments for IT systems under development are predominately for ICT contractors. The GST inclusive amount is \$1,234,231 (2021-22: \$673,165). The GST exclusive amount is \$1,122,028 (2021-22: \$611,968).

Accounting Policy

Assets are recorded at cost on acquisition except as stated below. The cost of acquisition includes the fair value of assets transferred in exchange and liabilities undertaken. Financial assets are initially measured at their fair value plus transaction costs where appropriate.

Assets acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration, are initially recognised as assets and income at their fair value at the date of acquisition, unless acquired as a consequence of restructuring of administrative arrangements. In the latter case, assets are initially recognised as contributions by owners at the amounts at which they were recognised in the transferor's accounts immediately prior to the restructuring.

Asset Recognition Threshold

Purchases of property, plant and equipment are recognised initially at cost in the statement of financial position, except for purchases costing less than \$2,000, which are expensed in the year of acquisition (other than where they form part of a group of similar items which are significant in total).

The initial cost of an asset includes an estimate of the cost of dismantling and removing the item and restoring the site on which it is located. This is particularly relevant to 'make good' provisions in property leases taken up by the entity where there exists an obligation to restore the property to its original condition. These costs are included in the value of the ARC's Buildings with a corresponding provision for the 'make good' recognised.

Lease Right of Use (ROU) Assets

Leased ROU assets are capitalised at the commencement date of the lease and comprise of the initial lease liability amount, plus initial direct costs incurred when entering into the lease less any lease incentives received. These assets are accounted for by Commonwealth lessees as separate asset classes to corresponding assets owned outright, but included in the same column as where the corresponding underlying assets would be presented if they were owned.

An annual impairment review is undertaken for any right of use lease asset that shows indicators of impairment and an impairment loss is recognised against any right of use lease asset that is impaired. ROU assets continue to be measured at cost after initial recognition in Commonwealth agency, General Government Sector (GGS) and Whole of Government financial statements.

Revaluations

Following initial recognition at cost, property, plant and equipment (excluding ROU assets) are carried at fair value (or an amount not materially different from fair value) less subsequent accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Valuations are conducted with sufficient frequency to ensure that

the carrying amounts of assets did not differ materially from the assets' fair values as at the reporting date. The regularity of independent valuations depended upon the volatility of movements in market values for the relevant assets.

Revaluation adjustments are made on a class basis. Any revaluation increment is credited to equity under the heading of asset revaluation reserve except to the extent that it reversed a previous revaluation decrement of the same asset class that was previously recognised in the surplus/deficit. Revaluation decrements for a class of assets are recognised directly in the surplus/deficit except to the extent that they reverse a previous revaluation increment for that class.

Any accumulated depreciation as at the revaluation date is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the asset restated to the revalued amount.

Depreciation

Depreciable property, plant and equipment assets are written-off to their estimated residual values over their estimated useful lives to the entity using, in all cases, the straight-line method of depreciation.

Depreciation rates (useful lives), residual values and methods are reviewed at each reporting date and necessary adjustments are recognised in the current, or current and future reporting periods, as appropriate.

Depreciation rates applying to each class of depreciable asset are based on the following useful lives:

	2023	2022
Buildings	Lease term	Lease term
Plant and equipment	2 to 10 years	2 to 10 years

The depreciation rates for ROU assets are based on the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the ROU asset or the end of the lease term.

Accounting Policy (continued)**Impairment**

All assets were assessed for impairment at 30 June 2023.

Where indications of impairment exist, the asset's recoverable amount is estimated and an impairment adjustment made if the asset's recoverable amount is less than its carrying amount.

The recoverable amount of an asset is the higher of its fair value less costs of disposal and its value in use. Value in use is the present value of the future cash flows expected to be derived from the asset. Where the future economic benefit of an asset is not primarily dependent on the asset's ability to generate future cash flows, and the asset would be replaced if the entity were deprived of the asset, its value in use is taken to be its depreciated replacement cost.

Derecognition

An item of property, plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when no further future economic benefits are expected from its use or disposal.

Intangibles

The entity's intangibles comprise internally developed software for internal use. These assets are carried at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses. The threshold for capitalisation of internally developed intangibles is \$50,000.

Software is amortised on a straight-line basis over its anticipated useful life. The useful lives of the entity's software are 1 to 11 years (2022: 1 to 11 years).

All software assets were assessed for indications of impairment as at 30 June 2023.

3.3 Payables

	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000

3.3A: Suppliers

Trade creditors and accruals

	336	757
--	-----	-----

Total suppliers

	336	757
--	-----	-----

Current and non-current allocation disclosed in Note 8.1.

Settlement is usually made within 20 days except e-invoicing which are 5 days (2022: 20 days).

3.3B: Other payables

Salaries and wages

	482	337
--	-----	-----

Superannuation

	81	56
--	----	----

Unearned income

	253	-
--	-----	---

Other

	120	-
--	-----	---

Total other payables

	936	393
--	-----	-----

Current and non-current allocation disclosed in Note 8.1.

3.4 Interest Bearing Liabilities

	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
3.4A: Leases		
Lease liabilities	5,271	7,342
Total leases	5,271	7,342
Maturity analysis - contractual undiscounted cash flows		
Within 1 year	2,268	2,110
Between 1 to 5 years	3,003	5,232
Total leases	5,271	7,342

Total cash outflow for principal lease payments for the end of June 2023 was \$2,110,620 (2022: \$1,990,000).

During 2022-23, the ARC had two leasing arrangements in place. Of these, the office accommodation leases are material, non-cancellable and for a fixed term of 15 years (since September 2010). They account for \$5,232,270 of the current lease liability. The remaining lease liability relates to offsite data storage.

The above lease disclosures should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes 1.1B, 1.1C, 1.1D and 3.2.

Accounting Policy

For all new contracts entered into, the ARC considers whether the contract is, or contains, a lease. A lease is defined as 'a contract, or part of a contract, that conveys the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time in exchange for consideration'.

Once it has been determined that a contract is, or contains a lease, the lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments unpaid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease, if that rate is readily determinable, or the ARC's incremental borrowing rate.

Subsequent to initial measurement, the liability will be reduced for payments made and increased for interest. It is remeasured to reflect any reassessment or modification to the lease. When the lease liability is remeasured, the corresponding adjustment is reflected in the right-of-use asset or profit and loss depending on the nature of the reassessment or modification.

3.5 Other Provisions

3.5A: Other provisions

	Provision for makegood	
	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
As at 1 July 2022	709	559
Unwinding of discount	2	3
Change in discount rate and estimated costs to restore	67	147
Total as at 30 June 2023	778	709

Current and non-current allocation disclosed in Note 8.1.

The ARC currently has one (2021-22: one) agreement for the leasing of premises which has a provision requiring the entity to restore the premises to their original condition at the conclusion of the lease.

The entity has made a provision to reflect the present value of this obligation.

Assets and Liabilities Administered on Behalf of the Government

This section analyses assets used to conduct operations and the operating liabilities incurred as a result the Australian Research Council does not control but administers on behalf of the Government. Unless otherwise noted, the accounting policies adopted are consistent with those applied for departmental reporting.

4.1 Administered - Financial Assets

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
4.1A: Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash in special accounts ¹	2,120	2,253
Total cash and cash equivalents	2,120	2,253

Current and non-current allocation disclosed in Note 8.1.

1. The ARC Research Endowment Account credit balance held in the OPA.

The above disclosure should be read in conjunction with the accompanying note 5.2.

4.1B: Trade and other receivables

GST Receivable from the Australian Taxation Office	122	69
Total trade and other receivables	122	69

Current and non-current allocation disclosed in Note 8.1.

Credit terms for trade and other receivables were within 20 days (2022: 20 days).

All receivables are current assets and not overdue.

4.2 Administered - Payables

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
4.2A: Grants		
State and Territory Governments	240,551	226,467
Commonwealth educational institutions (related parties)	15,550	16,363
Other	338	-
Total grants	256,439	242,830

Current and non-current allocation disclosed in Note 8.1.

Settlement is in accordance with the terms and conditions of each grant which is consistent with the payment schedule determined by the Minister under the *Australian Research Council Act 2001*.

Accounting Judgements and Estimates

Grants

The ARC recognises a liability for grant funding which is unpaid as at reporting date. Management has made a judgement that there are limited options not to pay out the entire remaining grants or enforce recovery until the recipient acquits the funds.

4.2B: Other payables

Other ¹	500	577
Total other payables	500	577

Current and non-current allocation disclosed in Note 8.1.

1. Other payables mainly include accruals for the program assessment fees and committee member sitting fees.

Funding

This section identifies the Australian Research Council's funding structure.

5.1 Appropriations

5.1A: Annual appropriations ('recoverable GST exclusive')

Annual Appropriations for 2023

	Annual Appropriation ¹ \$'000	Adjustments to appropriation ² \$'000	Total appropriation \$'000	Appropriation applied in 2023 (current and prior years) \$'000	Variance \$'000
Departmental					
Ordinary annual services	23,401	2,261	25,662	26,837	(1,175)
Capital Budget ³	1,240	-	1,240	1,240	-
Total departmental	24,641	2,261	26,902	28,077	(1,175)
Administered					
Ordinary annual services					
Administered items	9,185	-	9,185	8,587	598
Total administered	9,185	-	9,185	8,587	598

1. Departmental and Administered Ordinary annual services budgets are appropriated through Appropriation Acts (No.1,3,5).

2. \$2.261 million are retained revenue receipts under Section 74 of the PGPA Act.

3. Departmental Capital Budgets are appropriated through Appropriation Acts (No.1,3,5). They form part of ordinary annual services, and are not separately identified in the Appropriation Acts.

Annual Appropriations for 2022

	Annual Appropriation ¹ \$'000	Adjustments to appropriation ² \$'000	Total appropriation \$'000	Appropriation applied in 2022 \$'000	Variance ³ \$'000
Departmental					
Ordinary annual services	20,226	236	20,462	24,397	(3,935)
Capital Budget ⁴	2,335	(1,100)	1,235	1,235	-
Total departmental	22,561	(864)	21,697	25,632	(3,935)
Administered					
Ordinary annual services					
Administered items	5,896	-	5,896	2,644	3,252
Total administered	5,896	-	5,896	2,644	

1. Departmental and Administered Ordinary annual services budgets are appropriated through Appropriation Acts (No.1,3,5).

2. Includes \$0.236 million retained revenue receipts under Section 74 of the PGPA Act and \$1.1 million represents amount quarantined by Department of Finance under section 51 PGPA Act.

3. Administered appropriation applied in 2021-22 was less than the total appropriation received primarily due to an underspend in ERA program, which in turn depends on the timing of ERA and EI assessment rounds. As approved by the previous Minister, ERA and EI programs will run in 2023 and 2024 respectively. The significant expenditure relating to these programs will occur in 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25. Accordingly unspent 2021-22 annual appropriation has been sought to be moved to future years through Movement of Funds process.

4. Departmental Capital Budgets are appropriated through Appropriation Acts (No.1,3,5). They form part of ordinary annual services, and are not separately identified in the Appropriation Acts.

5.1B: Unspent annual appropriations ('recoverable GST exclusive')

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Departmental		
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2021-22		14,608
Supply Act (No. 3) 2022-23	13,384	-
Total departmental	13,384	14,608
Administered		
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2019-20	-	13
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2020-21 ¹	310	310
Supply Act (No. 1) 2020-21 ¹	4	4
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2021-22	913	3,763
Supply Act (No. 3) 2022-23	1,158	-
Total administered	2,385	4,090

1. The unspent 2020-21 appropriation amounting to \$0.314 million will lapse on 1 July 2023 under section 39 of the FRR.

5.1C: Special appropriations ('recoverable GST exclusive')

	Appropriation applied	
	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Authority		
<i>Australian Research Council Act 2001 s.49</i> , Administered, limit \$852,911,000 for the current reporting period, remaining appropriation lapsed on 1 July 2023.	831,433	803,695
Total special appropriations applied	831,433	803,695

5.2 Special accounts ('recoverable GST exclusive')

ARC Research Endowment Account (Administered)¹	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
Balance brought forward from previous period	2,253	2,426
Increases		
Appropriation credited to special account	-	-
Recovery of unspent grant payments	-	-
Total increases	-	-
Available for payments	2,253	2,426
Decreases		
Payments made to research organisations	133	173
Total decreases	133	173
Total balance carried to the next period	2,120	2,253
Balance represented by:		
Cash held in the Official Public Account	2,120	2,253
Total balance carried to the next period	2,120	2,253

1. Appropriation: *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* section 80.
Establishing Instrument: *Australian Research Council Act 2001* section 62.

Purpose: The purpose of the ARC Research Endowment Account is to provide assistance to organisations for eligible research programs. Currently, the Endowment Account is being used for the Special Research Initiative - Per and Poly-Fluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Remediation Research Program.

5.3 Net Cash Appropriation Arrangements

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Total comprehensive loss - as per the Statement of Comprehensive Income	(2,954)	(7,417)
Plus : depreciation/amortisation of assets funded through appropriations (departmental capital budget funding and/or equity injections) ¹	2,865	4,142
Plus : depreciation of right-of-use assets ²	1,965	1,994
Less : lease principal repayments ³	2,111	1,990
Net Cash Operating Deficit	(235)	(3,271)

1. From 2010-11, the Government introduced net cash appropriation arrangements where revenue appropriations for depreciation/amortisation expenses of non-corporate Commonwealth entities and selected corporate Commonwealth entities were replaced with a separate capital budget provided through equity appropriations. Capital budgets are to be appropriated in the period when cash payment for capital expenditure is required.

2. The inclusion of depreciation/amortisation expenses related to ROU leased assets and the lease liability principal repayment amount reflects the impact of AASB 16 Leases, which does not directly reflect a change in appropriation arrangements.

3. In 2021-22, \$0.284 million worth of interest payments on lease arrangements were included in lease principal repayments. This resulted in Net Cash Operating Deficit disclosed as \$2.987 million instead of \$3.271 million. This change has no impact on the ARC's Statement of Financial Position.

People and Relationships

This section describes a range of employment and post employment benefits provided to our people and our relationships with other key people.

6.1 Employee Provisions

	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
6.1A: Employee provisions		
Leave	6,086	5,449
Total employee provisions	6,086	5,449

Current and non-current allocation disclosed in Note 8.1.

Accounting policy

Liabilities for short-term employee benefits and termination benefits expected within twelve months of the end of reporting period are measured at their nominal amounts.

Other long-term employee benefits are measured as net total of the present value of the defined benefit obligation at the end of the reporting period minus the fair value at the end of the reporting period of plan assets (if any) out of which the obligations are to be settled directly.

Leave

The liability for employee benefits includes provision for annual leave and long service leave.

The leave liabilities are calculated on the basis of employees' remuneration at the estimated salary rates that will be applied at the time the leave is taken, including the entity's employer superannuation contribution rates to the extent that the leave is likely to be taken during service rather than paid out on termination.

The liability for long service leave is recognised and measured at the present value of the estimated future cash flows to be made in respect of all employees at 30 June 2023, using the long service leave shorthand model issued by the Department of Finance. The estimate of the present value of the liability takes into account attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation.

Separation and Redundancy

Provision is made for separation and redundancy benefit payments. The ARC recognises a provision for termination when it has developed a detailed formal plan for the terminations and has informed those employees affected that it will carry out the terminations.

As at 30 June 2023 the ARC did not have any provisions for separation and redundancy benefit payments.

Superannuation

The ARC's staff are members of the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS), the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme (PSS), or the PSS accumulation plan (PSSap), or other superannuation funds held outside the Australian Government.

The CSS and PSS are defined benefit schemes for the Australian Government. The PSSap is a defined contribution scheme.

The liability for defined benefits is recognised in the financial statements of the Australian Government and is settled by the Australian Government in due course. This liability is reported in the Department of Finance's administered schedules and notes.

The entity makes employer contributions to the employees' defined benefit superannuation scheme at rates determined by an actuary to be sufficient to meet the current cost to the Government. The entity accounts for the contributions as if they were contributions to defined contribution plans.

The liability for superannuation recognised as at 30 June represents outstanding contributions.

Defined Benefit Plan

The actual return on plan assets for the current year was 9.03% (2021:-3.35%)

Accounting Judgements and Estimates

Employee provisions are dependent on management assumptions for their measurement.

No accounting assumptions or estimates have been identified that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

6.2 Key Management Personnel Remuneration

Key management personnel (KMP) are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the ARC, either directly or indirectly. In 2022-23, the Chief Executive Officer was considered the only KMP in the ARC.

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Short-term employee benefits	459	1,350
Post-employment benefits	84	225
Other long-term employee benefits	14	106
Termination benefits	-	-
Total key management personnel remuneration expenses¹	557	1,681

The total number of key management personnel that are included in the above table are 1 (2022: nine individuals).

1. The above key management personnel remuneration excludes the remuneration and other benefits of the Portfolio Minister. The Portfolio Minister's remuneration and other benefits are set by the Remuneration Tribunal and are not paid by the ARC.

6.3 Related Party Disclosures

Related party relationships:

The ARC is an Australian Government controlled entity. Related parties to the ARC are Key Management Personnel including the Portfolio Minister and other Australian Government entities.

Transactions with related parties:

Given the breadth of Government activities, related parties may transact with the government sector in the same capacity as ordinary citizens. Such transactions include the payment or refund of taxes, receipt of a Medicare rebate or higher education loans. These transactions have not been separately disclosed in this note. In 2022-23, no Grants were made to KMP or their related parties under AASB 124 Related Party Disclosures.

The following transactions with related parties occurred during the financial year:

The entity transacts with other Australian Government controlled entities consistent with normal day-to-day business operations provided under normal terms and conditions, including the payment of workers compensation, insurance premiums and the payment of superannuation to the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS), the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme (PSS), and the PSS accumulation plan (PSSap). These are not considered individually significant to warrant separate disclosure as related party transactions.

Revenue received and receivable from contracts with other Australian Government controlled entities for the delivery of grant management services are disclosed under Notes 1.2A and 3.1B.

Grants paid and grants owing to other Australian Government controlled entities are disclosed under Notes 2.1B and 4.2A.

Managing uncertainties

This section analyses how the Australian Research Council manages financial risks within its operating environment.

7.1A: Contingent assets and liabilities

There were no Departmental and Administered contingent assets and liabilities in 2022-23 for the ARC (2021-22: nil).

Accounting Policy

Contingent liabilities and contingent assets are not recognised in the statement of financial position but are reported in the notes. They may arise from uncertainty as to the existence of a liability or asset or represent an asset or liability in respect of which the amount cannot be reliably measured. Contingent assets are disclosed when settlement is probable but not virtually certain and contingent liabilities are disclosed when settlement is greater than remote.

7.2 Financial Instruments

	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
7.2A: Categories of financial instruments		
Financial assets at amortised cost		
Cash and cash equivalents	274	323
Goods and services receivables	311	397
Total financial assets at amortised cost	585	720
Total financial assets	585	720
Financial Liabilities		
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost		
Suppliers	336	757
Other Payables	936	393
Total financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	1,272	1,150
Total financial liabilities	1,272	1,150

Accounting Policy

Financial assets

In accordance with AASB 9 *Financial Instruments*, the ARC classifies its financial assets in the following categories:

- a) financial assets at fair value through profit or loss;
- b) financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income; or
- c) financial assets measured at amortised cost.

The classification depends on both the ARC's business model for managing the financial assets and contractual cash flow characteristics at the time of initial recognition. Financial assets are recognised when the ARC becomes a party to the contract and, as a consequence, has a legal right to receive or a legal obligation to pay cash and derecognised when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial asset expire or are transferred upon trade date.

Comparatives have not been restated on initial application.

Financial Assets at Amortised Cost

Financial assets included in this category need to meet two criteria:

1. the financial asset is held in order to collect the contractual cash flows; and
2. the cash flows are solely payments of principal and interest (SPPI) on the principal outstanding amount.

Amortised cost is determined using the effective interest method.

Effective Interest Method

Income is recognised on an effective interest rate basis for financial assets that are recognised at amortised cost.

Financial Assets at Fair Value Through Other Comprehensive Income (FVOCI)

Financial assets measured at fair value through other comprehensive income are held with the objective of both collecting contractual cash flows and selling the financial assets and the cash flows meet the SPPI test.

Any gains or losses as a result of fair value measurement or the recognition of an impairment loss allowance is recognised in other comprehensive income.

Financial Assets at Fair Value Through Profit or Loss (FVTPL)

Financial assets are classified as financial assets at fair value through profit or loss where the financial assets either doesn't meet the criteria of financial assets held at amortised cost or at FVOCI (i.e. mandatorily held at FVTPL) or may be designated.

Financial assets at FVTPL are stated at fair value, with any resultant gain or loss recognised in profit or loss. The net gain or loss recognised in profit or loss incorporates any interest earned on the financial asset.

Impairment of Financial Assets

Financial assets are assessed for impairment at the end of each reporting period based on Expected Credit Losses, using the general approach which measures the loss allowance based on an amount equal to *lifetime expected credit losses* where risk has significantly increased, or an amount equal to *12-month expected credit losses* if risk has not increased.

The simplified approach for trade, contract and lease receivables is used. This approach always measures the loss allowance as the amount equal to the lifetime expected credit losses.

A write-off constitutes a derecognition event where the write-off directly reduces the gross carrying amount of the financial asset.

Financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are classified as either financial liabilities 'at fair value through profit or loss' or other financial liabilities. Financial liabilities are recognised and derecognised upon 'trade date'.

Financial Liabilities at Fair Value Through Profit or Loss

Financial liabilities at fair value through profit or loss are initially measured at fair value. Subsequent fair value adjustments are recognised in profit or loss. The net gain or loss recognised in profit or loss incorporates any interest paid on the financial liability.

Financial Liabilities at Amortised Cost

Financial liabilities, including borrowings, are initially measured at fair value, net of transaction costs. These liabilities are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, with interest expense recognised on an effective interest basis.

Supplier and other payables are recognised at amortised cost. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods or services have been received (and irrespective of having been invoiced).

7.3 Administered - Financial Instruments

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
7.3A: Categories of financial instruments		
Financial assets at amortised cost		
Cash and cash equivalents	2,120	2,253
Total financial assets at amortised cost	2,120	2,253
Total financial assets	2,120	2,253
Financial Liabilities		
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost		
Grants payables	256,439	242,830
Other payables	500	577
Total financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	256,939	243,407
Total financial liabilities	256,939	243,407

7.4 Fair Value Measurement

Accounting Policy

The ARC tests the procedures of the valuation model as an asset materiality review at least once every 12 months. If a particular asset class is subject to significant and volatile changes in fair value (i.e. where indicators suggest that the value of the class has changed materially since the previous reporting period), that class is subject to specific valuation in the reporting period, where practicable, regardless of the timing of the last specific valuation. The ARC engaged a valuer to undertake a valuation of property, plant and equipment assets and confirm that the models developed comply with AASB13.

7.4A: Fair value measurement

	Fair value measurements at the end of the reporting period	
	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Non-financial assets¹		
Buildings	4,868	6,920
Plant and Equipment	945	828
Total non-financial assets	5,813	7,748

1. The ARC did not measure any non-financial assets (NFAs) at fair value on a non-recurring basis as at 30 June 2023.

ARC recognises all Administered assets and liabilities at amortised cost.

Other information

8.1 Current/non-current distinction for assets and liabilities

8.1A: Current/non-current distinction for assets and liabilities

	Notes	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Assets expected to be recovered in:			
No more than 12 months			
Cash and cash equivalents	3.1A	274	323
Trade and other receivables	3.1B	13,550	14,800
Prepayments	3.2B	157	158
Total no more than 12 months		13,981	15,281
More than 12 months			
Land and buildings	3.2A	4,868	6,920
Plant and equipment	3.2A	945	828
Computer software	3.2A	7,215	6,937
Total more than 12 months		13,028	14,685
Total assets		27,009	29,966
Liabilities expected to be settled in:			
No more than 12 months			
Suppliers	3.3A	336	757
Other payables	3.3B	936	393
Leases	3.4A	2,268	2,110
Employee provisions	6.1A	2,110	1,435
Total no more than 12 months		5,650	4,695
More than 12 months			
Leases	3.4A	3,003	5,232
Employee provisions	6.1A	3,976	4,014
Other provisions	3.5A	778	709
Total more than 12 months		7,757	9,955
Total liabilities		13,407	14,650

8.1B: Administered - current/non-current distinction for assets and liabilities

		2023	2022
	Notes	\$'000	\$'000
Assets expected to be recovered in:			
No more than 12 months			
Cash and cash equivalents	4.1A	2,120	2,253
Trade and other receivables	4.1B	122	69
Prepayments		255	185
Total no more than 12 months		2,497	2,507
Total assets		2,497	2,507
Liabilities expected to be settled in:			
No more than 12 months			
Grants	4.2A	256,439	242,830
Other payables	4.2B	500	577
Total no more than 12 months		256,939	243,407
Total liabilities		256,939	243,407

PART 06



Appendices

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Appendix 1 National Competitive Grants Program

This appendix provides information to support the annual performance statements (**Section 3.1**) for the National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP) – Funding Excellent Basic and Applied Research and Research Training. The Discovery Program and the Linkage Program are funded under the NCGP.

Discovery Program

Australian Laureate Fellowships (FL)

First selection round:	Funding commencing in 2009
Frequency:	Annual
Description:	The FL scheme reflects the Australian Government’s commitment to excellence in research by supporting world-class researchers to conduct research in Australia.

Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA)

First selection round:	Funding commencing in 2012
Frequency:	Annual
Description:	The DECRA scheme provides focused research support for early career researchers in both teaching and research, and research-only positions.

Discovery Indigenous (IN)

First selection round:	Funding commencing in 2002 under the Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development scheme. Funding commencing in 2012 as IN
Frequency:	Annual
Description:	The IN scheme provides grant funding to support research projects led by an Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander researcher. The IN scheme also funds fellowships through the Discovery Indigenous Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Award.

Discovery Projects (DP)

First selection round:	Funding commencing in 2002
Frequency:	Annual
Description:	The DP scheme provides grant funding to support research projects that may be undertaken by individual researchers or research teams.

Future Fellowships (FT)

First selection round:	Funding commencing in 2009
Frequency:	Annual
Description:	The FT scheme provides support for excellent midcareer researchers to undertake high quality research in areas of national and international benefit.

Linkage Program

ARC Centres of Excellence (CE)

First selection round:	Funding commencing in 2003
Frequency:	Periodic
Description:	The CE scheme facilitates significant collaboration which allows the complementary resources of universities, publicly funded research organisations, other research bodies, government and business to be concentrated to support outstanding research in all fields (except clinical medical research).

Industrial Transformation Research Hubs (ITRH)

First selection round:	Funding commencing in 2012
Frequency:	Annual
Description:	The ITRH scheme engages Australia's best researchers to develop collaborative solutions to Industrial Transformation Priority areas and enhance end-user national research capability. Research Hubs support joint research activity between the Australian higher education sector and industry and are designed to focus on strategic outcomes that cannot be realised independently of each other.

Industrial Transformation Training Centres (ITTC)

First selection round:	Funding commencing in 2013
Frequency:	Annual
Description:	The ITTC scheme fosters close partnerships between university-based researchers and other sector researchers. Training Centres deliver innovative Higher Degree Research and postdoctoral training. The focus is on creating capacity of a future research workforce that is vital to Australia's future by developing solutions relevant to the Industrial Transformation Priorities.

Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities (LIEF)

First selection round:	Funding commencing in 2002
Frequency:	Annual
Description:	The LIEF scheme provides funding for research infrastructure, equipment, and facilities to Eligible Organisations. It enables researchers to participate in cooperative initiatives so that expensive research infrastructure, equipment and facilities can be shared between higher education organisations and industry. The scheme also fosters collaboration through its support of the cooperative use of national or international research facilities.

Linkage Projects (LP)

First selection round:	Funding commencing in 2002
Frequency:	Annual from funding commencing in 2013. Continuous from 1 July 2016.
Description:	The LP scheme supports projects which initiate or develop long-term strategic research alliances to apply advanced knowledge to problems, acquire new knowledge and as a basis for securing commercial and other benefits of research.

Special Research Initiatives (SRI)

First selection round:	Funding commencing in 2002
Frequency:	As required
Description:	Under the SRI scheme, new or emerging areas of research for funding are identified. Applications for funding may be submitted only through ARC invitation by means of a call for proposal(s).

Supporting Responses to Commonwealth Science Council Priorities (CS)

First selection round:	Funding commencing in 2018
Frequency:	As required
Description:	The CS scheme aims to support the development of Australian research in priority areas as set by the Commonwealth Science Council. Organisations eligible to administer funding under the scheme are the Australian Council of Learned Academies (ACOLA) and the Learned Academies.

Learned Academies Special Projects (LASP)

First selection round:	Funding commencing in 2002
Frequency:	As required
Description:	The objective of the LASP scheme is to support the development of Australian research. LASP aims to provide the Learned Academies and the ACOLA with the flexibility to achieve that objective.

Early Career Industry Fellowships (IE)

First selection round:	Funding commencing in 2023
Frequency:	Annual
Description:	The primary goal of the IE scheme is to develop the industry collaboration skills of early career researchers and support early career researchers to achieve translatable and/or commercialisable outcomes.

Mid-Career Industry Fellowships (IM)

First selection round:	Funding commencing in 2023
Frequency:	Annual
Description:	The primary goal of the IM scheme is to strengthen the industry collaboration skills of mid-career researchers, to encourage uptake of a wider range of career options for established researchers, nurture the development of collaboration, commercialisation and translation skills and deliver significant, actionable outcomes for industry partners and end-users.

Industry Laureate Fellowships (IL)

First selection round:	Funding commencing in 2023
Frequency:	Annual
Description:	The IL scheme provides support for outstanding researchers and research leaders of international reputation to provide leadership in the development of high quality and impactful collaborations between university and industry, funding significant programs of research, providing an excellent research training environment for early career researchers and students, and to drive research collaboration, translation and commercialisation outcomes across a range of industry settings.

Appendix 2 National Competitive Grants Program statistics

This appendix details statistics for each NCGP funding scheme for the most recent scheme rounds.

Table A1: Discovery Program funding by scheme round (and reporting period) ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾⁽³⁾

Scheme round (and reporting period)			
Future Fellowships (FT)	FT 2020 (2020–21)	FT 2021 (2021–22)	FT 2022 (2022–23)
Number of applications	689	675	627
Number of awards	100	101	100
Success rate (%)	14.5	15	15.9
Total funding (\$)	90,512,393	93,747,816	94,249,836
Australian Laureate Fellowships (FL)	FL 2020 (2020–21)	FL 2021 (2021–22)	FL 2022 (2022–23) ⁽²⁾
Number of applications	157	170	160
Number of awards	15	17	16
Success rate (%)	9.6	10	10
Total funding (\$)	47,329,286	53,706,710	48,636,469
Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DE)	DE 2021 (2020–21)	DE 2022 (2021–22) ⁽⁴⁾	DE 2023 (2022–23)
Number of applications	1,173	996	1,335
Number of awards	200	201	200
Success rate (%)	17.1	20.2	15
Total funding (\$)	84,041,533	85,162,851	85,790,883
Discovery Indigenous (IN)	IN 2021 (2020–21)	IN 2022 (2021–22)	IN 2023 (2022–23)
Number of applications	24	35	27
Number of awards	9	9	10
Success rate (%)	37.5	25.7	37
Total funding (\$)	7,121,756	8,462,620	7,535,365
Discovery Projects (DP)	DP 2021 (2020–21)	DP 2022 (2021–22)	DP 2023 (2022–23)
Number of applications	3,019	3,095	2,588
Number of awards	603	587	478
Success rate (%)	20	19	18.5
Total funding (\$)	260,034,079	258,691,272	221,394,142

Table A2: Linkage Program funding by scheme round (and reporting period)⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾⁽³⁾

Scheme round (and reporting period)			
ARC Centres of Excellence (CE) ⁽⁵⁾	CE 2017 (2016–17)	CE 2020 (2019–20)	CE 2023 (2022–23)
Number of Expressions of Interest (EOI)	97	93	101
Number of EOI shortlisted	20	20	17
EOI success rate (%)	20.6	21.5	16.8
Number of applications funded	9	9	11
Application success rate (%)	45	45	64.7
Total funding (\$)	283,500,000	308,790,287	384,905,274
Industrial Transformation Research Hubs (ITRH)	ITRH 2020 (2019–20)	ITRH 2021 (2020–21)	ITRH 2022 (2021–22)
Number of applications	16	16	12
Number of awards	5	8	4
Success rate (%)	31.3	50	33.3
Total funding (\$)	24,950,000	36,418,096	17,768,172
Industrial Transformation Training Centres (ITTC)	ITTC 2020 (2019–20)	ITTC 2021 (2020–21)	ITTC 2022 (2021–22)
Number of applications	31	25	21
Number of awards	5	8	6
Success rate (%)	16.1	32	28.6
Total funding (\$)	24,334,385	37,770,864	29,285,604
Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities (LIEF)	LIEF 2021 (2020–21)	LIEF 2022 (2021–22)	LIEF 2023 (2022–23)
Number of applications	138	138	133
Number of awards	47	46	45
Success rate (%)	34.1	33.3	33.8
Total funding (\$)	38,827,812	32,611,772	39,515,942
Linkage Projects (LP)	LP 2020 ⁽⁶⁾ (2020–21)	LP 2021 ⁽⁷⁾ (2021–22)	LP 2022 ⁽⁸⁾ (2022–23)
Number of applications	715	569	401
Number of awards	196	181	138
Success rate (%)	27.4	33.8	34.4
Total funding (\$)	90,170,327	85,906,568	68,129,083

Scheme round (and reporting period)			
Special Research Initiatives (SR)	SR 2020 Round 1 ⁽⁹⁾ (2019–20)	SR 2020 Round 2 ⁽¹⁰⁾ (2020–21)	-
Number of applications	20	692	-
Number of awards	2	49	-
Success rate (%)	10	7.1	-
Total funding (\$)	56,000,000	11,759,398	-
Early Career Industry Fellowships (IE) ⁽¹¹⁾	-	-	IE 2023 (2023–24)
Number of applications	-	-	359
Number of awards	-	-	50
Success rate (%)	-	-	13.9
Total funding (\$)	-	-	22,227,166
Mid-Career Industry Fellowships (IM) ⁽¹¹⁾	-	-	IM 2023 (2023–24)
Number of applications	-	-	314
Number of awards	-	-	25
Success rate (%)	-	-	8
Total funding (\$)	-	-	23,840,576
Industry Laureate Fellowships (IL) ⁽¹¹⁾	-	-	IL 2023 (2023–24)
Number of applications	-	-	116
Number of awards	-	-	8
Success rate (%)	-	-	6.9
Total funding (\$)	-	-	27,709,549

(1) The reporting period is the period where outcomes were finalised (i.e. ministerial decision occurred).

(2) Outcomes for FL 2023, ITTC 2023 and ITRH 2023 are not included as a ministerial decision was not made within the 2022–23 reporting period. Statistics for these scheme rounds will be included in the Annual Report 2023–24.

(3) In 2020–21, the ARC introduced refined methodology and data collection to ensure the performance information is relevant, reliable and complete. Therefore, in some cases results for previous years presented within this appendix differ slightly to those recorded in the Annual Report 2019–20.

(4) DE 2022 originally funded 196 projects, and due to subsequent successful appeals an additional 5 projects were funded bringing the total to 201.

(5) CE rounds are run periodically. The most recent round (CE 2023) was finalised in 2022–23.

(6) LP 2020 includes all applications received for funding under the 2020 selection round. Funding for projects in the 2020 selection round may have commenced in 2020 or 2021.

(7) LP 2021 includes all applications received for funding under the 2021 selection round. Funding for projects in the 2021 selection round may have commenced in 2021 or 2022.

(8) LP 2022 includes all applications received for funding under the 2022 selection round. Funding for projects in the 2022 selection round may commence in 2022 or 2023.

(9) SR 2020 round 1 refers to the Excellence in Antarctic Science Program which was reported in the 2019–20 financial year.

(10) SR 2020 round 2 refers to the Australian Society, History and Culture scheme which received a ministerial decision in the 2020–21 reporting period.

(11) IE 2023, IM 2023, and IL 2023 are the inaugural rounds of the ARC's Industry Fellowships scheme, with funding commencing in 2023.

Appendix 3 Resource statements

This appendix provides information to support the financial information in **Section 3.3: Financial performance**.

Table A3: ARC resource statement, 2022–23 (all figures \$'000)

		Actual available appropriation (2022–23)	Payments made (2022–23)	Balance remaining (2022–23)
	Notes	(a)	(b)	(a) – (b)
Departmental				
Annual appropriations – ordinary annual services ⁽¹⁾		41,461	28,077	13,384
Total departmental resourcing	A	41,461	28,077	13,384
Administered				
Annual appropriations – ordinary annual services ⁽²⁾		13,275	8,587	-
Total administered annual appropriation	B	13,275	8,587	-
Administered special appropriations				
<i>Australian Research Council Act 2001</i>		852,911	831,433	-
Total administered special appropriations	C	852,911	831,433	-
Special accounts ⁽³⁾				
Opening balance		2,253	-	-
Payments made		-	133	-
Total special account	D	2,253	133	2,120
Total administered resourcing	B+C+D	868,439	840,153	-
less administered appropriations drawn from annual appropriations and credited to special accounts	E	-	-	-
Total resourcing and payments for the ARC	A+B+C+D-E	909,900	868,230	-

(1) Departmental Appropriation Act (No.1 and No.3) 2022–23. This also includes prior-year departmental appropriation, cash held in bank and external revenue receipts under section 74 of the PGPA Act.

Departmental capital budgets (DCB) are not separately identified in Appropriation Bill (No.1, 3, 5) and form part of ordinary annual services items. For accounting purposes, this amount has been designated as a 'contribution by owner'.

(2) Administered Appropriation Act (No.1 and No.3) 2022–23. This also incorporates prior-year Administered appropriations.

(3) ARC Research Endowment Account (Administered). Excludes trust moneys held in Services for Other Entities and Trust Moneys (SOETM) and other special accounts.

Table A4: ARC expenses for Outcome 1, 2022–23 (all figures \$'000)

Outcome 1: Growth of knowledge and innovation through managing research funding schemes, measuring research excellence and providing advice	Budget* (2022–23) (a)	Actual expenses (2022–23) (b)	Variation (2022–23) (a) – (b)
Program 1.1: Discovery – Research and Research Training			
Administered expenses			
Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Act No.1 and 3)	1,240	1,954	(714)
Special appropriations	511,074	496,802	14,272
Total for Program 1.1	512,314	498,756	13,558
Program 1.2: Linkage – Cross sector research partnerships			
Administered expenses			
Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Act No.1 and 3)	1,847	2,283	(436)
Special appropriations	317,251	348,122	(30,871)
Special accounts	2,252	133	2,119
Total for Program 1.2	321,350	350,538	(29,188)
Program 1.3: Excellence in Research for Australia			
Administered expenses			
Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Act No.1 and No.3)	6,098	4,339	1,759
Total for Program 1.3	6,098	4,339	1,759
Outcome 1: Totals by appropriation type			
Administered expenses			
Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Act No.1)	9,185	8,576	609
Special appropriations	828,325	844,924	(16,599)
Special accounts	2,252	133	2,119
Departmental expenses			
Departmental appropriation	22,902	21,508	1,394
s74 External Revenue ⁽¹⁾	1,328	1,864	(536)
Expenses not requiring appropriation in the budget year ⁽²⁾	5,098	4,931	167
Total expenses for Outcome 1	29,328	28,303	1,025
	Budget (2022–23)	Actual (2022–23)	Variation (2022–23)
Average staffing level (number)	140	148	(8)

* Full-year budget in 2023–24 Portfolio Budget Statements, which included any subsequent adjustment made to the 2022–23 budget at 2022–23 Additional Estimates and 2023–24 Portfolio Budget Statements.

(1) Estimated expenses incurred in relation to retained revenue receipts under Section 74 of the PGPA Act.

(2) Expenses not requiring appropriation in the Budget year are made up of depreciation expenses, amortisation expenses, make good expenses, write-down and impairment of assets and audit fees.

Appendix 4 Other mandatory information

This appendix provides information required by other legislation, relating to:

- advertising and market research (section 311A of the [Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918](#))
- ecologically sustainable development and environmental performance (section 516A of the [Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999](#))
- work health and safety (Schedule 2, Part 4 of the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) [WHS Act])
- The ARC is not defined as a 'public service care agency' and has no obligations under the [Carer Recognition Act 2010](#).

Advertising and market research

During 2022–23 there were no advertising campaigns conducted by the ARC.

Under section 311A of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, agencies are required to report in their annual reports on payments made to advertising agencies, market research organisations, polling organisations, direct mail organisations and media advertising organisations.

During 2022–23 the ARC did not employ the services of any market research, polling or direct mail organisations.

Ecologically Sustainable Development and environmental performance

Under section 516A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, Commonwealth entities have a statutory requirement to report on environmental matters in their annual reports. The annual report must:

- report how the agency's activities have accorded with the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD)
- identify how their departmental outcomes contributed to ESD
- report on their impacts upon the environment and measures taken to minimise those impacts
- identify the review mechanisms they used to improve the effectiveness of their measures to minimise its impact upon the environment.

Accordance with and contribution to ESD

Under the NCGP, the ARC provides funding support for research in all disciplines, including issues of national significance such as health, social welfare, defence, transport, communications and the environment. The accordance between the ARC's activities and the principles of ESD is outlined in **Table A5**.

Table A5: Principles of ESD and ARC activities

ESD principle	Linked ARC activity
Integration: decision making processes should effectively integrate both long-term and short-term economic, environmental, social and equity considerations.	Assessment criteria relating to the provision of economic, environmental, social, health and/or cultural benefits to Australia are employed across a range of NCGP schemes. Applications are assessed through a competitive peer review process.
Intergenerational: if there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation.	The NCGP provides funding for research in all disciplines including research relevant to ESD and environmental protection. Excellence in Research for Australia identifies and promotes excellence across all research fields in Australia's higher education institutions. One aim is to build research excellence resulting in better outcomes for Australia.
Biodiversity: the conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration in decision-making.	All ARC-funded projects must comply with ethics and research practice requirements including the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research. This includes the requirement that researchers should conduct research to minimise adverse effects on the wider community and the environment.
Valuation: improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms should be promoted.	The ARC complies with the <i>Commonwealth Procurement Rules</i> ensuring that any procurement takes into consideration, among other factors, the environmental sustainability of the proposed goods and services.

Examples of NCGP outcomes that support the Australian Government Science and Research priority area 'environmental change' can be found in the articles in **Section 3.2**.

Environmental performance

The ARC's daily operational activities have an impact on the environment through the use of electricity, vehicles, water, paper and other materials, and the generation of waste. Measures to minimise this impact are outlined below.

Building

The ARC leases an office space at 11 Lancaster Place, Canberra Airport, Canberra. This location houses one of the largest tri-generation plants in Australia. Tri-generation is a process through which natural gas is used as the single input source of energy to generate electricity. Excess energy that would have been lost during the production of electricity is used to heat the buildings in winter and cool them in summer. In addition to producing 3 forms of energy, tri generation provides efficiencies of 90%. This surpasses the Commonwealth Green Lease Requirement of 4.5 Star NABERS (the National Australian Building Environment Rating System). It also equates to less than half the carbon dioxide emissions of a 5 Star NABERS building.

Energy

The ARC undertakes an electrical audit of any personal devices to be used on ARC premises. The audit applies a reasonableness test, considering key priorities, including cost, productivity, and environmental impact. Devices that do not meet the requirements of this test cannot be used on ARC premises. ARC staff participated in Earth Hour on 25 March 2023. Earth Hour is a 'lights out' movement uniting people to take action on environmental issues and protect the planet.

Information management

During 2022–23 Information Management initiatives were undertaken to enhance the ARC's maturity in line with the National Archive of Australia's (NAA) Building Trust in the Public Record policy, including:

- updating or creating the Information Management Strategy and associated policies, plans and procedures
- extending the Information Management Strategy to include data management
- selecting a vendor for the provision and implementation of an Information Management System to manage the full lifecycle of the ARC's information and records
- migrating all physical records to a new external records management provider following an approach to market and conducting a stock take of physical records
- working with the NAA to extend the scope of the draft records (RA) authority intended to cover the retention and disposal of records created as part of the Excellence in Research for Australia evaluation and Engagement and Impact assessment – the extended RA will cover other exceptions in the ARC not currently the subject of a retention policy.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) services

During the 2022–23 period ICT undertook the following activities.

- refreshed core network infrastructure
- enhanced system processes to support changes to business practices
- continued cyber security uplift against the essential eight and greater 37 mitigation strategies
- supported streamlining activities for the NCGP
- enhanced business reporting and business intelligence capabilities
- increased resilience and availability of ICT systems for the agency to reduce risk to core business processes supported Research Grants Services (RGS) clients through enhancements to their RMS instances
- continued to support a fully mobile workforce.

During this period, the ARC continued to pursue best practice principles including:

- sustainable procurement (for example, using recycled office paper and ensuring appropriate resource reuse or recovery for mobiles, toner cartridges and ICT equipment)
- managing resource consumption and demand (for example, monitoring computer to printer ratios)
- managing waste (for example, ensuring e-waste is used or recycled and ICT packaging is recycled)
- providing electronic tools to facilitate a paperless office
- modernised hardware with lower power consumption
- appropriate power saving and sleep settings for devices.

Australian Public Service Net Zero 2030

As part of the reporting requirements under section 516A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and in line with the Government's Australian Public Service (APS) Net Zero 2030 policy, all non-corporate Commonwealth and corporate Commonwealth entities are required to report publicly on the emissions from their operations, commencing with reporting of 2022–23 emissions in their 2022–23 annual reports.

There are 7 greenhouse gases identified as relevant to the APS Net Zero 2030 policy target and public reporting. There are 3 categories identified as common sources of these greenhouse emissions by where they occur in the supply chain of the responsible entity. The 7 greenhouse gases are:

- carbon dioxide
- methane
- nitrous oxide
- hydrofluorocarbons
- perfluorocarbons
- sulfur hexafluoride
- nitrogen trifluoride.

The 3 categories of emission source activities are as follows:

- Scope 1 is direct emissions from entity facilities and company owned vehicles
- Scope 2 is direct emissions from purchased electricity, steam, heating and cooling for own use
- Scope 3 is all other indirect emissions, including from leased assets up and down stream.

The ARC's inventory of greenhouse gas emissions, produced by the 3 emission source categories, in **Table A6** presents greenhouse gas emissions over the 2022–23 reporting period. Results are presented on the basis of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO₂-e) emissions.

Greenhouse gas emissions reporting has been developed with methodology that is consistent with the Whole-of-Australian Government approach as part of the APS Net Zero 2030 policy. Not all data sources were available at the time of the report and adjustments to baseline data may be required in future reports. Further information on the APS net zero emissions by 2030 target can be found on the Department of Finance's website, www.finance.gov.au > Home > Government > [APS Net Zero Emissions by 2030](#).

Table A6: ARC greenhouse gas emissions inventory, calculated using a location-based approach (as at 30 June 2023)

Emission source	Scope 1 (kg CO ₂ -e)	Scope 2 (kg CO ₂ -e)	Scope 3 (kg CO ₂ -e)	Total (kg CO ₂ -e)
Electricity ⁽¹⁾	-	75,764	6,227	81,991
Natural Gas	-	-	-	-
Fleet vehicles	-	-	-	-
Domestic flights	-	-	22,040	22,040
Other energy	-	-	-	-
Total kg CO₂-e	-	75,764	28,267	104,031

(1) Emissions related to electricity usage using the location-based accounting method.

CO₂-e = Carbon Dioxide Equivalent.

Work Health and Safety (WHS)

In accordance with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act), agencies must provide information relating to WHS matters in their annual reports.

Health and safety initiatives

During 2022–23 the ARC continued to:

- hold WHS meetings
- provide first aid training to nominated first aid officers
- provide employer-subsidised eyesight testing for screen-based work
- provide training for fire wardens and health and safety representatives
- provide influenza vaccinations to employees and contractors
- organise workstation assessments where required
- provide online WHS training.

Pandemic response

The ARC's ongoing COVID-19 response has been guided by the ARC COVID-Safe Plan. The plan outlines how we will adhere to the COVID-19 safe workplace principles and provide a safe and healthy working environment during the pandemic. It includes guidance on physical distancing, hygiene, risk management and responding to a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 at the ARC's premises.

Health and safety outcomes

No incidents were reported to the Director, People and Services.

Notifiable incidents

The ARC had no notifiable incidents during 2022–23. Under the WHS Act, a notifiable incident is one involving the death of a person, the serious injury or illness of a person, or a dangerous incident.

Investigations including details of all notices.

The ARC was not issued with any WHS notices and there were no WHS investigations undertaken during 2022–23.

Other matters

There are no other matters required by guidelines approved on behalf of the Parliament by the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit.

PART 07



Aids to access

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Abbreviations and acronyms

A	
ACEAS	Australian Centre for Excellence in Antarctic Science
ACOLA	Australian Council of Learned Academies
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AEA	Australia's Economic Accelerator initiative
AI	Artificial intelligence
ALG	ARC Leadership Group
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
ANU	Australian National University
ANZCCART	Australian and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching
AO	Officer of the Order of Australia
APS	Australian Public Service
APSC	Australian Public Service Commission
ARC	Australian Research Council
ARC Act	<i>Australian Research Council Act 2001</i>
ARC Strategy	<i>ARC Strategy 2022–25</i>
ARIC	Australian Research Integrity Committee
B	
BCC	Business Continuity Committee
BCP	Business Continuity Plan
C	
CABAH	Centre of Excellence for Australian Biodiversity and Heritage
CAE	Chief Audit Executive
CE23	ARC Centres of Excellence commencing 2023
CE	Centre of Excellence
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
CO ₂ -e	Carbon Dioxide equivalent
Code	<i>Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018</i>
COVID-19/ COVID	Coronavirus Disease of 2019
CRO	Chief Research Officer
CCSF	Commonwealth Child Safe Framework

CP	<i>ARC Corporate Plan 2022–23</i>
CS	Supporting Responses to Commonwealth Science Council Priorities
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
D	
DECRA/DE	Discovery Early Career Researcher Award
DCB	Departmental capital budgets
Deputy CEO	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Disability Strategy	<i>Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031</i>
DP	Discovery Projects
DRP	Disaster Recovery Plan
DVCRs	Deputy Vice Chancellors of Research
E	
ECR	Early Career Researcher
EI	Engagement and Impact
EL1	Executive Level 1
EL2	Executive Level 2
EOI	Expressions of Interest
EOYR	End of Year Report
ERA	Excellence in Research for Australia
ESD	Ecologically Sustainable Development
F	
FL	Australian Laureate Fellowships
FT	Future Fellowships
FTSE	Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences
FOI Act	<i>Freedom of Information Act 1982</i>
G	
GST	Goods and Services Tax
H	
HERDC	Higher Education Research Data Collection
Hon	Honourable
I	
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IE	Early Career Industry Fellowships

IFAs	Individual Flexibility Arrangements
IPS	Information Publication Scheme
IL	Industry Laureate Fellowships
IM	Mid-Career Industry Fellowships
IN	Discovery Indigenous
ITRH	Industrial Transformation Research Hubs
ITTC	Industrial Transformation Training Centres
L	
LASP	Learned Academies Special Projects
LIEF	Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities
LP	Linkage Projects
M	
MRAG	Medical Research Advisory Group
N	
NAA	National Archive of Australia
NABERS	National Australia Building Environment Rating System
NAIDOC	National Aborigines' and Islanders' Day Observance Committee
NCGP	National Competitive Grants Program
NCGP Impact Assessment Report	<i>Impact Assessment of ARC-funded Research</i>
NCRIS	National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy
NFS	Non-Fatal Strangulation
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
NISDRG	National Intelligence and Security Discovery Research Grants
NIT	National Interest Test
NSSTC	National Security Science and Technology Centre
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
NZ	New Zealand
O	
ONI	Office of National Intelligence
P	
PBS	October ARC Portfolio Budget Statements 2022–23
PGPA Act	<i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i>

PGPA Rule	<i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014</i>
PJCIS	Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security
PS Act	<i>Public Service Act 1999</i>
PSM	Public Service Medal
Q	
QLD	Queensland
QUT	Queensland University of Technology
R	
RA	Records Authority
Review of the ARC Act	Independent review of the <i>Australian Research Council Act 2001</i>
RGS	Research Grants Services
RM Policy	Risk Management Policy
RMS	Research Management System
S	
SA	South Australia
SACs	Selection Advisory Committees
SES	Senior Executive Service
SEER	System to Evaluate the Excellence in Research
SOETM	Services for Other Entities and Trust Moneys
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SRI/SR	Special Research Initiatives
T	
TAPS	Transitional, Academic, Pastoral, Support
TAS	Tasmania
U	
UFIT	University Foreign Interference Taskforce
UNSW	University of NSW
UTAS	University of Tasmania
V	
VIC	Victoria
W	
WA	Western Australia
WHS	Work Health and Safety
WHS Act	<i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i>

Glossary

Administered expenditure

Funding that is managed by agencies on behalf of the Government.

Applied research

Research that aims to address real-world problems by applying existing research theories or practices in a novel or innovative way.

Basic research

Research that contributes to understanding the world through discoveries and the creation of new knowledge, theories and practices.

Chief Investigator

A researcher who satisfies the eligibility criteria for a Chief Investigator under the Discovery Program or Linkage Program Grant Guidelines, and takes responsibility for the conduct of an ARC-funded project.

Discovery Program

Funding for investigator-initiated research projects and research fellowships and awards. The Discovery Program comprises the FL, DECRA, IN, DP and FT schemes.

Early career researcher

A researcher who has held a PhD or equivalent qualification for a period of less than or equal to 5 years at the time of their application.

Eligible Organisation

An organisation that satisfies the eligibility criteria for an Administering Organisation under the Discovery Program or Linkage Program Grant Guidelines.

EI assessment

An assessment of researchers' engagement with end-users, and how universities are translating their research into economic, social, environmental, cultural and other impacts.

ERA

Provides Australian Government, industry, business and the wider community with assurance of the excellence of research conducted in Australia's higher education institutions. The evaluation framework identifies universities and disciplines that are internationally competitive and highlights areas where there are opportunities for further development and investment.

Ex-officio

A person who was appointed as a member of the committee as a result of another position they held.

Final report

A report to the ARC that researchers must submit within 12 months of completing their research project. The report includes a range of data and information including a description of research outcomes, academic and commercialisation outputs, and details of collaboration.

Grant Agreement

The agreement entered into by the ARC and an Administering Organisation when an application from that organisation is approved for funding.

Grant Guidelines

Documents published on the GrantConnect website for each grant opportunity that provide applicants with information about schemes, eligibility requirements, the application, selection and approval processes, and requirements for the administration of funding.

Linkage Program

Provides funding for research projects, infrastructure, hubs and centres that foster collaboration among researchers and research teams in Australia and internationally, and with industry and other research end-users. The Linkage Program comprises the ARC CE, ITRH, ITTC, LIEF, LASP, LP, SRI, CSIE, IM and IL schemes.

Mid-career researchers

A researcher with between 5 and 15 years of research experience since the award of a PhD or equivalent qualification at the time of their application.

NCGP

The NCGP incorporates the Discovery Program and the Linkage Program, under which the ARC funds a range of complementary schemes to support the highest-quality basic and applied research, research training, research collaboration or partnerships, and infrastructure across all research disciplines.

Partner Investigator

A researcher who satisfies the eligibility criteria for a Partner Investigator under the Discovery Program or Linkage Program Grant Guidelines, and takes significant intellectual responsibility for the research.

Partner Organisations

National or international organisations that satisfy the eligibility criteria for a Partner Organisation as defined under Linkage Program Grant Guidelines, and contribute to the research project in accordance with the requirements of the scheme.

Peer review

Evaluation of research applications or outputs by experts who assess individual research applications within their field of research or across a broader disciplinary area on the basis of established selection criteria.

Science and Research Priority areas

A set of priority areas identified by the Australian Government that replaced the Strategic Research Priority areas in 2015. The priorities are designed to focus Australian Government support for science and research on the most important challenges facing Australia. The current Science and Research Priority areas are: food, soil and water, transport, cybersecurity, energy, resources, advanced manufacturing, environmental change and health. Each priority is associated with 3 to 4 Practical Research Challenges, which aim to prioritise the development of Australia's research and innovation capabilities in areas the Australian Government regards as pivotal to the nation's future.

Success rate

The number of awards made in a year or funding round as a percentage of the total number of applications. Withdrawn applications are excluded from calculations.

Compliance index

Australian Research Council Act 2001 – list of requirements

ARC Act Reference	Part of Report	Description	Requirement	Page
46	Letter of transmittal	The Annual Report prepared by the CEO and given to the Minister under section 46 of the PGPA Act for a period must also deal with: (a) any matters required by other provisions of this Act to be dealt with in the report; and (b) any other matters that the Minister, by notice in writing to the CEO, requires to be dealt with in the report. Note: A provision of this Act that requires matters to be dealt with in the report is subsection 33C(3).	Mandatory	iii
33(c)	Letter of transmittal	Particulars of any directions given by the Minister under subsection (1) must be (b) included in the Annual Report prepared by the CEO and given to the Minister under section 46 of the PGPA Act, for the period in which the direction is given.	Mandatory	iii

Annual reports for non-corporate Commonwealth entities – list of requirements

PGPA Rule Reference	Part/Section of Report	Description	Requirement	Page(s)
17AD(g)	Letter of transmittal			
17AI	Letter of transmittal	A copy of the letter of transmittal signed and dated by accountable authority on date final text approved, with statement that the report has been prepared in accordance with section 46 of the Act and any enabling legislation that specifies additional requirements in relation to the annual report.	Mandatory	iii
17AD(h)	Aids to access			
17AJ(a)	Contents	Table of contents (print only).	Mandatory	iv–v
17AJ(b)	Part 7: Alphabetical index	Alphabetical index (print only).	Mandatory	203
17AJ(c)	Part 7: Abbreviations and acronyms	Glossary of abbreviations and acronyms.	Mandatory	185–188
17AJ(d)	Part 7: Compliance index	List of requirements.	Mandatory	191–202
17AJ(e)	Copyright page	Details of contact officer.	Mandatory	ii
17AJ(f)	Copyright page	Entity's website address.	Mandatory	ii
17AJ(g)	Copyright page	Electronic address of report.	Mandatory	ii
17AD(a)	Review by accountable authority			
17AD(a)	Section 1.1: From the Chief Executive Officer	A review by the accountable authority of the entity.	Mandatory	3–11
17AD(b)	Overview of the entity			
17AE(1)(a)(i)	Section 2.1: Roles and functions	A description of the role and functions of the entity.	Mandatory	23–27

PGPA Rule Reference	Part/Section of Report	Description	Requirement	Page(s)
17AE(1)(a)(ii)	Section 2.2: Organisational structure	A description of the organisational structure of the entity.	Mandatory	28
17AE(1)(a)(iii)	Section 2.1: Roles and functions	A description of the outcomes and programmes administered by the entity.	Mandatory	24
17AE(1)(a)(iv)	Section 2.1: Roles and functions, Section 2.3: Performance framework, and Section 3.1: Annual performance statements	A description of the purposes of the entity as included in corporate plan.	Mandatory	24, 30, 33
17AE(1)(aa)(i)	Section 2.2: Organisational structure	Name of the accountable authority or each member of the accountable authority.	Mandatory	28
17AE(1)(aa)(ii)	Section 2.2: Organisational structure	Position title of the accountable authority or each member of the accountable authority.	Mandatory	28
17AE(1)(aa)(iii)	Section 2.2: Organisational structure	Period as the accountable authority or member of the accountable authority within the reporting period.	Mandatory	28
17AE(1)(b)	n/a	An outline of the structure of the portfolio of the entity.	Portfolio departments mandatory	-
17AE(2)	n/a	Where the outcomes and programs administered by the entity differ from any Portfolio Budget Statement, Portfolio Additional Estimates Statement or other portfolio estimates statement that was prepared for the entity for the period, include details of variation and reasons for change.	If applicable, Mandatory	-

PGPA Rule Reference	Part/Section of Report	Description	Requirement	Page(s)
17AD(c)	Report on the performance of the entity			
Annual performance statements				
17AD(c)(i); 16F	Section 3.1: Annual performance statements	Annual performance statements in accordance with paragraph 39(1)(b) of the Act and section 16F of the Rule.	Mandatory	33–50
17AD(c)(ii)	Report on Financial Performance			
17AF(1)(a)	Section 3.3: Financial performance	A discussion and analysis of the entity's financial performance.	Mandatory	69–70
17AF(1)(b)	Part 6: Appendix 3 – Resource statement	A table summarising the total resources and total payments of the entity.	Mandatory	172–173
17AF(2)	n/a	If there may be significant changes in the financial results during or after the previous or current reporting period, information on those changes, including: the cause of any operating loss of the entity; how the entity has responded to the loss and the actions that have been taken in relation to the loss; and any matter or circumstances that it can reasonably be anticipated will have a significant impact on the entity's future operation or financial results.	If applicable, Mandatory.	–
17AD(d)	Management and accountability			
Corporate governance				
17AG(2)(a)	Section 4.1: Corporate governance	Information on compliance with section 10 (fraud systems).	Mandatory	73
17AG(2)(b)(i)	Letter of transmittal	A certification by accountable authority that fraud risk assessments and fraud control plans have been prepared.	Mandatory	iii

PGPA Rule Reference	Part/Section of Report	Description	Requirement	Page(s)
17AG(2)(b)(ii)	Letter of transmittal	A certification by accountable authority that appropriate mechanisms for preventing, detecting incidents of, investigating or otherwise dealing with, and recording or reporting fraud that meet the specific needs of the entity are in place.	Mandatory	iii
17AG(2)(b)(iii)	Letter of transmittal	A certification by accountable authority that all reasonable measures have been taken to deal appropriately with fraud relating to the entity.	Mandatory	iii
17AG(2)(c)	Section 4.1: Corporate governance	An outline of structures and processes in place for the entity to implement principles and objectives of corporate governance.	Mandatory	73–88
17AG(2)(d) – (e)	Section 4.1: Corporate governance	A statement of significant issues reported to Minister under paragraph 19(1)(e) of the Act that relates to noncompliance with Finance law and action taken to remedy noncompliance.	If applicable, Mandatory	88
Audit Committee				
17AG(2A)(a)	Section 4.1: Corporate governance	A direct electronic address of the charter determining the functions of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory	78
17AG(2A)(b)	Section 4.1: Corporate governance	The name of each member of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory	79–80
17AG(2A)(c)	Section 4.1: Corporate governance	The qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience of each member of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory	79–80
17AG(2A)(d)	Section 4.1: Corporate governance	Information about the attendance of each member of the entity's audit committee at committee meetings.	Mandatory	79–80
17AG(2A)(e)	Section 4.1: Corporate governance	The remuneration of each member of the entity's audit committee.	Mandatory	79–80

PGPA Rule Reference	Part/Section of Report	Description	Requirement	Page(s)
External scrutiny				
17AG(3)	Section 4.2: External scrutiny	Information on the most significant developments in external scrutiny and the entity's response to the scrutiny.	Mandatory	89–90
17AG(3)(a)	Section 4.2: External scrutiny	Information on judicial decisions and decisions of administrative tribunals and by the Australian Information Commissioner that may have a significant effect on the operations of the entity.	If applicable, Mandatory	89
17AG(3)(b)	Section 4.2: External scrutiny	Information on any reports on operations of the entity by the Auditor-General (other than report under section 43 of the Act), a Parliamentary Committee, or the Commonwealth Ombudsman.	If applicable, Mandatory	89–90
17AG(3)(c)	Section 4.2: External scrutiny	Information on any capability reviews on the entity that were released during the period.	If applicable, Mandatory	90
Management of human resources				
17AG(4)(a)	Section 4.3: Management of human resources	An assessment of the entity's effectiveness in managing and developing employees to achieve entity objectives.	Mandatory	91–94
17AG(4)(aa)	Section 4.3: Management of human resources	Statistics on the entity's employees on an ongoing and nonongoing basis, including the following: (a) statistics on full-time employees; (b) statistics on part-time employees; (c) statistics on gender; (d) statistics on staff location.	Mandatory	95–101

PGPA Rule Reference	Part/Section of Report	Description	Requirement	Page(s)
17AG(4)(b)	Section 4.3: Management of human resources	<p>Statistics on the entity's APS employees on an ongoing and nonongoing basis; including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistics on staffing classification level; Statistics on full-time employees; Statistics on part-time employees; Statistics on gender; Statistics on staff location; Statistics on employees who identify as Indigenous. 	Mandatory	95–101
17AG(4)(c)	Section 4.3: Management of human resources	Information on any enterprise agreements, individual flexibility arrangements, Australian workplace agreements, common law contracts and determinations under subsection 24(1) of the <i>Public Service Act 1999</i> .	Mandatory	91, 101
17AG(4)(c)(i)	Section 4.3: Management of human resources	Information on the number of SES and nonSES employees covered by agreements etc identified in paragraph 17AG(4)(c).	Mandatory	101
17AG(4)(c)(ii)	Section 4.3: Management of human resources	The salary ranges available for APS employees by classification level.	Mandatory	102
17AG(4)(c)(iii)	Section 4.3: Management of human resources	A description of nonsalary benefits provided to employees.	Mandatory	102
17AG(4)(d)(i)	n/a	Information on the number of employees at each classification level who received performance pay.	If applicable, Mandatory	–
17AG(4)(d)(ii)	n/a	Information on aggregate amounts of performance pay at each classification level.	If applicable, Mandatory	–
17AG(4)(d)(iii)	n/a	Information on the average amount of performance payment, and range of such payments, at each classification level.	If applicable, Mandatory	–

PGPA Rule Reference	Part/Section of Report	Description	Requirement	Page(s)
17AG(4)(d) (iv)	n/a	Information on aggregate amount of performance payments.	If applicable, Mandatory	–
Assets management				
17AG(5)	Section 4.4: Assets management	An assessment of effectiveness of assets management where asset management is a significant part of the entity's activities.	If applicable, mandatory	106
Purchasing				
17AG(6)	Section 4.5: Purchasing	An assessment of entity performance against the <i>Commonwealth Procurement Rules</i> .	Mandatory	107
Reportable consultancy contracts				
17AG(7)(a)	Section 4.6: Consultants	A summary statement detailing the number of new reportable consultancy contracts entered into during the period; the total actual expenditure on all such contracts (inclusive of GST); the number of ongoing reportable consultancy contracts that were entered into during a previous reporting period; and the total actual expenditure in the reporting period on those ongoing contracts (inclusive of GST).	Mandatory	108
17AG(7)(b)	Section 4.6: Consultants	A statement that “ <i>During [reporting period], [specified number] new reportable consultancy contracts were entered into involving total actual expenditure of \$[specified million]. In addition, [specified number] ongoing reportable consultancy contracts were active during the period, involving total actual expenditure of \$[specified million]</i> ”.	Mandatory	108
17AG(7)(c)	Section 4.6: Consultants	A summary of the policies and procedures for selecting and engaging consultants and the main categories of purposes for which consultants were selected and engaged.	Mandatory	108–109

PGPA Rule Reference	Part/Section of Report	Description	Requirement	Page(s)
17AG(7)(d)	Section 4.6: Consultants	A statement that <i>"Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable consultancy contracts. Information on the value of reportable consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website."</i>	Mandatory	108
Reportable non-consultancy contracts				
17AG(7A)(a)	Section 4.6: Consultants	A summary statement detailing the number of new reportable non-consultancy contracts entered into during the period; the total actual expenditure on such contracts (inclusive of GST); the number of ongoing reportable non-consultancy contracts that were entered into during a previous reporting period; and the total actual expenditure in the reporting period on those ongoing contracts (inclusive of GST).	Mandatory	109
17AG(7A)(b)	Section 4.6: Consultants	A statement that <i>"Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on reportable non-consultancy contracts. Information on the value of reportable non-consultancy contracts is available on the AusTender website."</i>	Mandatory	109
17AD(daa)	Additional information about organisations receiving amounts under reportable consultancy contracts or reportable non-consultancy contracts			
17AGA	Section 4.6: Consultants	Additional information, in accordance with section 17AGA, about organisations receiving amounts under reportable consultancy contracts or reportable non-consultancy contracts.	Mandatory	108, 109

PGPA Rule Reference	Part/Section of Report	Description	Requirement	Page(s)
Australian National Audit Office access clauses				
17AG(8)	Section 4.7: Australian National Audit Office access clauses and exempt contracts	If an entity entered into a contract with a value of more than \$100 000 (inclusive of GST) and the contract did not provide the Auditor-General with access to the contractor's premises, the report must include the name of the contractor, purpose and value of the contract, and the reason why a clause allowing access was not included in the contract.	If applicable, Mandatory	110
Exempt contracts				
17AG(9)	Section 4.7: Australian National Audit Office access clauses and exempt contracts	If an entity entered into a contract or there is a standing offer with a value greater than \$10 000 (inclusive of GST) which has been exempted from being published in AusTender because it would disclose exempt matters under the FOI Act, the annual report must include a statement that the contract or standing offer has been exempted, and the value of the contract or standing offer, to the extent that doing so does not disclose the exempt matters.	If applicable, Mandatory	110
Small business				
17AG(10)(a)	Section 4.8: Procurement initiatives to support small business	A statement that "[Name of entity] supports small business participation in the Commonwealth Government procurement market. Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and Small Enterprise participation statistics are available on the Department of Finance's website."	Mandatory	111
17AG(10)(b)	Section 4.8: Procurement initiatives to support small business	An outline of the ways in which the procurement practices of the entity support small and medium enterprises.	Mandatory	111

PGPA Rule Reference	Part/Section of Report	Description	Requirement	Page(s)
17AG(10)(c)	Section 4.8: Procurement initiatives to support small business	If the entity is considered by the Department administered by the Finance Minister as material in nature—a statement that “[Name of entity] recognises the importance of ensuring that small businesses are paid on time. The results of the Survey of Australian Government Payments to Small Business are available on the Treasury’s website.”	If applicable, Mandatory	111
Financial Statements				
17AD(e)	Part 5: Financial statements	Inclusion of the annual financial statements in accordance with subsection 43(4) of the Act.	Mandatory	117–162
Executive Remuneration				
17AD(da)	Section 4.3: Management of human resources	Information about executive remuneration in accordance with Subdivision C of Division 3A of Part 23 of the Rule.	Mandatory	102–105
17AD(f) Other mandatory information				
17AH(1)(a)(i)	n/a	If the entity conducted advertising campaigns, a statement that “During [reporting period], the [name of entity] conducted the following advertising campaigns: [name of advertising campaigns undertaken]. Further information on those advertising campaigns is available at [address of entity’s website] and in the reports on Australian Government advertising prepared by the Department of Finance. Those reports are available on the Department of Finance’s website.”	If applicable, Mandatory	–
17AH(1)(a)(ii)	Part 6: Appendix 4 – Other mandatory information	If the entity did not conduct advertising campaigns, a statement to that effect.	If applicable, Mandatory	174

PGPA Rule Reference	Part/Section of Report	Description	Requirement	Page(s)
17AH(1)(b)	Section 4.9: Other mandatory information	A statement that <i>"Information on grants awarded by [name of entity] during [reporting period] is available at [address of entity's website]."</i>	If applicable, Mandatory	112
17AH(1)(c)	Section 4.9: Other mandatory information	Outline of mechanisms of disability reporting, including reference to website for further information.	Mandatory	113
17AH(1)(d)	Section 4.9: Other mandatory information	Website reference to where the entity's Information Publication Scheme statement pursuant to Part II of FOI Act can be found.	Mandatory	113
17AH(1)(e)	Section 4.9: Other mandatory information	Correction of material errors in previous annual report.	If applicable, mandatory	113
17AH(2)	Section 4.9: Other mandatory information and Part 6: Appendix 4 – Other mandatory information	Information required by other legislation.	Mandatory	112, 174–179

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