



Australian Government

Australian Research Council

Corporate Plan

2018–19



THE AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL

Purpose

The Australian Research Council's (ARC) purpose is 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 and providing advice on research matters.

Performance



**Working with and for the benefit of a range of stakeholders,
including the Australian community**

**Operating in the context of Australian and international research
systems**

Underpinned by strong organisational capability



CONTENTS

CEO's FOREWORD	2
INTRODUCTION	4
PURPOSE	5
STAKEHOLDERS	7
ENVIRONMENT	8
PERFORMANCE	12
Key Activity 1	12
Key Activity 2	15
Key Activity 3	17
CAPABILITY	20
Corporate governance	21
Program delivery	22
Financial management	24
Workforce	25
Information and Communication Technology	27
Stakeholder engagement	29
Risk management	31
APPENDIX 1: EXPENSES	34
APPENDIX 2: PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK	35
APPENDIX 3: REFERENCE	37
APPENDIX 4: PERFORMANCE MEASURES	39
Key Activity 1	39
Key Activity 2	42
Key Activity 3	43



Professor Sue Thomas
Norman Plant Photography.

CEO'S FOREWORD

As the Accountable Authority of the Australian Research Council (ARC), I am pleased to present the 2018–19 Corporate Plan, which covers the period 2018–19 to 2021–22, as required under subsection 35(1) (b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

The ARC Corporate Plan is an integral part of our planning and reporting framework and the blueprint for our continued success in growing knowledge and innovation for the benefit of the Australian community. I hope this plan clearly conveys the direction of the ARC over the coming four years.

Over the course of this plan, the ARC will continue to fund the highest quality research, assess the quality, engagement and impact of research and provide advice on research matters. We will continue to support the Australian Government's National Innovation and Science Agenda (NISA) by conducting a continuous application process under the *Linkage Projects* scheme, and administering the Engagement and Impact (EI) assessment.

Through the National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP), the ARC will continue to provide support for the highest quality research and research training. In 2018–19, this will include delivering funding outcomes for two strategic research initiatives—a new Special Research Initiative in Excellence in Antarctic Science (SRIEAS) and the PFAS (Per- and Poly-Fluoroalkyl Substances) Remediation Research Program which is already underway.

- The ARC SRIEAS will expand upon the work that has already been undertaken through the ARC's 2014 Special Research Initiative for Antarctic Gateway Partnership. It will complement a new 10-year Antarctic Science Collaborative Initiative grants program with the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science and support Australia's national Antarctic Priorities as determined in the Australian Antarctic Science Strategic Plan and Australian Antarctic Strategy and 20 year Action Plan.
- The PFAS Remediation Research Program aims to facilitate the development of innovative technologies to investigate and remediate PFAS contaminated media including soil and other solid contaminated debris, groundwater, waterways and marine systems.

Another key focus for the ARC in 2018–19 is to identify ways to streamline and simplify NCGP processes, with advances in technology continuing to provide us with new opportunities to improve administrative processes across the whole grant life cycle—from application to completion.

In addition, all ARC programs—especially Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) and EI—will benefit from an upcoming review of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classification (ANZSRC), which is used in the measurement and analysis of research and development (R&D). The review commences in 2018–19, and is being run by the ARC, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Statistics New Zealand, and the New Zealand Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. It will ensure that the research classifications remain contemporary, capture recent changes in the R&D sector and continue to provide data that is relevant to users.



At the ARC, we are committed to looking for innovative ways to create new partnerships across Australia's research and innovation system—between researchers and industry, government, community organisations and the international community—and support the best possible outcomes for Australian research.

Since joining the ARC in July 2017, it has been my great pleasure to engage with many of our stakeholders as I have been out in the research sector. At each event and institutional visit, I have listened carefully to the concerns and suggestions raised and brought these back to the ARC for consideration as we develop and improve our programs, policies and processes. While I am continually impressed by the impact and outcomes of ARC-funded research and how they deliver cultural, economic, social and environmental benefits to all Australians, my challenge to the research sector over the next four years is to improve the way we communicate the outcomes of publicly-funded research. While the ARC's ERA and EI assessment initiatives can assist to some degree, we must find ways to clearly and accessibly communicate the importance and impact of publicly funded research to the wider community—beginning with proposal titles and summaries.

Finally, another important focus for the ARC over the life of this plan is our role in planning for Australia's future research workforce. The ARC will continue to support the research sector to build a strong, diverse and sustainable workforce to ensure Australia's ongoing research competitiveness. ARC policies and programs will continue to support the highest calibre researchers, regardless of gender, ethnicity or career stage, and we will continue to work with the sector to improve participation of researchers in the research workforce at all career stages and from under-represented groups.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sue Thomas'.

Sue Thomas
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Research Council

INTRODUCTION

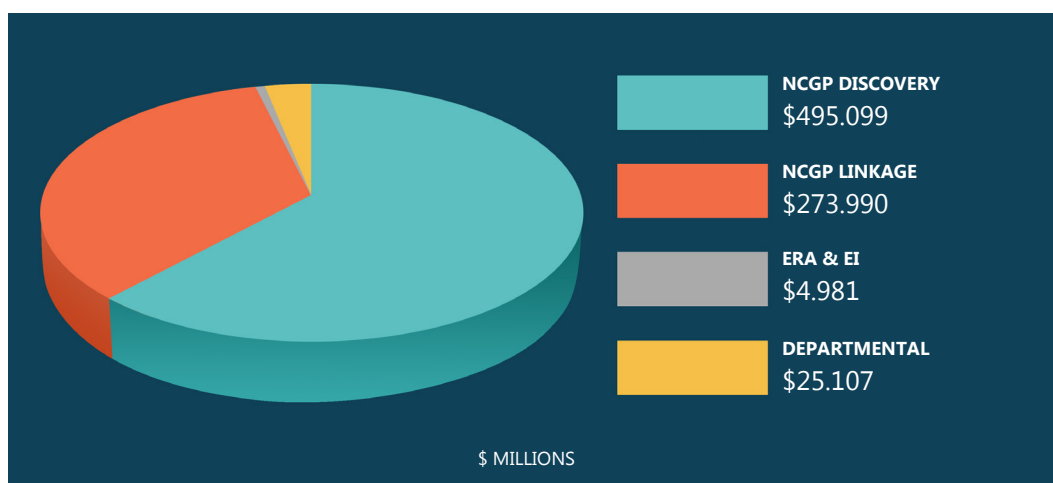
The Australian Research Council (ARC) is a non-corporate Commonwealth entity established under the Australian Research Council Act 2001 (ARC Act). It is located within the Australian Government's Education and Training portfolio, reporting to the Minister for Education and Training, Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham.

The ARC's guiding principles are:

- supporting and facilitating excellence in research
- working to benefit the Australian community through economic and social return on investment, engaged and informed decision making, and efficiency of operations
- actively engaging with government, universities, research agencies, businesses and the wider community, nationally and internationally
- ensuring accountability through adherence to ethical standards and government policy using transparent, efficient and effective processes.

In 2018–19, the ARC will manage a total estimated budget of \$799 million (Figure 1) and have an average staffing level of 136 employees. Details of the ARC's budget are in **Appendix 1** and further information about the ARC is on the ARC website (www.arc.gov.au).

Figure 1: ARC budget 2018–19





PURPOSE

The ARC's purpose is 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 and providing advice on research matters.

The ARC's purpose reflects the agency's functions as established under the ARC Act, which are to administer the National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP), make recommendations to the Minister on funding for research proposals under the NCGP, and provide advice to the Minister on matters related to research.

Funding the highest quality research

Through the NCGP, the ARC provides grants for research and research training in most fields, including science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), as well as the humanities, arts and social sciences (HASS). Funding under the NCGP is awarded based on competitive peer review processes involving Australian and international assessors. The ARC encourages a diverse workforce that is reflective of Australian society by supporting the highest calibre researchers, regardless of gender, ethnicity or career stage.

Assessing the quality, engagement and impact of research

The ARC administers two evaluation frameworks to assess the quality, engagement and impact of Australian research.

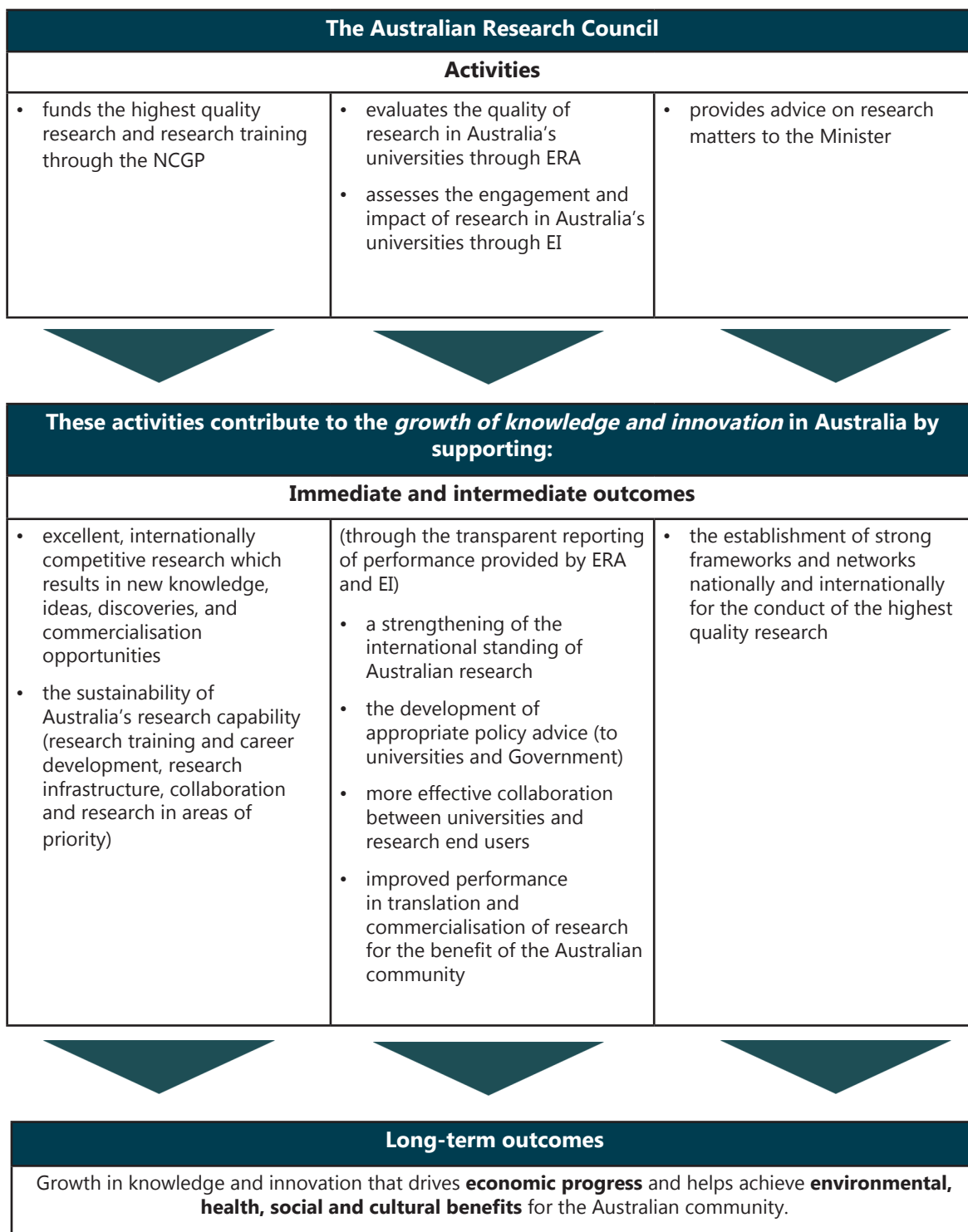
Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) is a comprehensive evaluation of the quality of all research produced in Australian universities against national and international benchmarks. In 2018, the ARC is conducting the fourth ERA evaluation following evaluations in 2010, 2012 and 2015.

As part of the National Innovation and Science Agenda (NISA) the Australian Government announced the establishment of an Evaluation and Impact (EI) assessment of university research. The assessment will assess the engagement of researchers with end-users, and show how universities are translating their research into economic, social, environmental and other impacts. The ARC is conducting the inaugural round of EI in 2018.

Providing advice on research matters

The ARC is a source of advice to the Government on investment in the national research effort. It provides policy advice to the Minister about matters related to research, including capacity building in research and research training, research partnerships, and the quality, engagement and impact of research in Australia.

Figure 2: Our Role





STAKEHOLDERS

The ARC works with, and for, the benefit of the Australian taxpayers. Through its stakeholders, the ARC promotes the outcomes and value of research to ensure the sector, industry and the general public appreciate the benefits of ARC-funded research.

People and communities who will benefit from research

The beneficiaries of ARC-funded research include all sectors of the Australian economy as well as Australian taxpayers. The ARC's focus on funding the best research is underpinned by the expectation that Australian Government funding will be used to best advantage.

Industry and other end users of research

Industry is a key beneficiary of ARC-funded research and the ARC brokers partnerships and collaborations with researchers under a number of NCGP schemes.

Australian Government

The ARC works across government to provide advice on research policy. It works closely with the Department of Education and Training, Department of Industry, Innovation and Science and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

Australian research sector

Australian universities are the main organisations eligible to receive NCGP funding awarded from the ARC. They are also the focus of the ERA evaluation and the EI assessment. The ARC works closely with Australia's universities, Universities Australia, various university cohorts (i.e. Group of Eight, Australian Technology Network, Innovative Research Universities and Regional Universities Network), national academies, discipline peak bodies, researchers and publicly funded research organisations.

Other organisations involved in the conduct and use of research

The ARC delivers its programs for the benefit of a range of organisations including government (Australian, state and local), not-for-profit, higher education and international education organisations. The Linkage Program of the NCGP has a particular focus on promoting national and international research partnerships between researchers and partner organisations from the above-listed sectors.

Global research sector

The ARC is a significant participant in the global research sector which collectively provides benefit both within Australia and more broadly. The ARC facilitates the development of research partnerships between Australian and international researchers through the funding schemes of the NCGP. International assessors are also involved in the ARC's peer review processes, research evaluation, and engagement and impact assessment. The ARC engages with international research agencies and forums to share experiences in grant management and research evaluation.

ENVIRONMENT

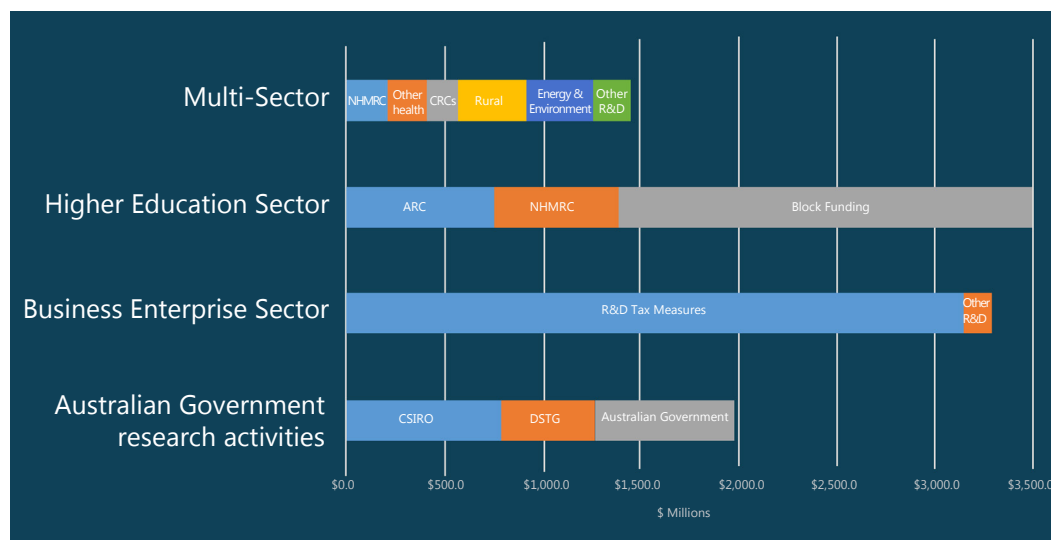
The ARC operates as an important contributor and participant in a global research system. To be successful over the four years of the Corporate Plan (the Plan), the ARC will be aware of its global context and ensure that it continues to support the best researchers conducting the highest quality research. The ARC's activities over the period of the plan may be influenced by:

ARC funding context

The ARC is a vital component of the Australian Government's investment in research and innovation. It provides approximately \$770 million in research funding through the NCGP each year, which represents approximately 7.5 per cent of the Australian Government's investment in research and development.

The ARC is a key investor in the higher education sector together with the NHMRC, university block research funding, and multisector support provided by other bodies. (Figure 3). Based on forward estimates figures over the period of the plan, funding will likely remain stable and demand for funding will remain high.

Figure 3: Australian Government investment in research and development, 2017–18



Science, Research and Innovation Budget Tables Snapshot 2017–18, Department of Industry, Innovation and Science.



ARC policy context

The ARC plays an important role in promoting the importance, value and role of basic research and applied research in order to support and grow Australia's innovation capacity. Over the period of this Plan we expect a continued focus on implementing NISA initiatives and promulgating the Government's plan for Innovation, Science and Research.

Stakeholder and community expectations of publicly funded research

Against a background of fiscal constraint and tight budgetary conditions, expectations of publicly funded research are increasing. This has implications for the conduct of the NCGP as well as for ERA and EI. Under the NCGP, we are expecting continued pressure to:

- find more efficient and effective ways to allocate funding
- maintain the confidence of our stakeholders in the research being funded and its outcomes
- maintain international relevance in order to attract and retain the best researchers in the world.

The ARC has undertaken to provide transparent reporting of processes and results and to seek stakeholder engagement. These elements will be critical to acceptance of the process and results in the future.

Through ERA and EI, the ARC plays a unique role in assessing the quality, engagement and impact of research in Australian universities. The outcomes of ERA and EI provide assurances to stakeholders and the wider community about the public investment in Australia's university sector. The ARC will continue to review and refine the ERA and EI processes to ensure they are:

- streamlined and minimise reporting burden on universities
- rigorous and maintain stakeholder confidence in the evaluation outcomes.

It is also important that the ARC's ERA and EI programs evaluate and report on university research in a way that reflects current research practices, and that the research classification system used to guide and inform NCGP processes and policy development is contemporary and fit for purpose. In this context, the ARC has received regular feedback on the need to review and revise the Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classification (ANZSRC). With a review commencing in 2018–19, extensive consultation with the university sector will be essential to ensure the revised classification meets stakeholder expectations.

International research system

The ARC continues to play a significant role in supporting international collaboration, by maintaining a strong presence within the international research community and providing funding that brings together Australian and international researchers and organisations.

The global environment consistently requires consideration of the ways in which contributors to the global research system can best facilitate opportunities and support for research and innovation activities.

To remain highly relevant and an engaged contributor to the international research system, the ARC continues to maintain a flexible suite of funding programs and participates in discussion about issues relevant to both the Australian and international research effort.



Australian public service reforms

Grants administration and management

Grants administration and management are critical elements of the ARC's activities. The Digital Transformation Agenda, announced as part of the 2015–16 budget, includes a Streamlining Grants Administration Program to improve the way grants are delivered across the Commonwealth. The initiative includes the establishment of two grants administrative hubs, the transition of grant programs to the hubs, a standardised whole-of-government grants administration process, and a data warehouse to provide a central information source. Work on this agenda will continue in 2018–19. The ARC will continue to liaise closely with the Department of Finance to ensure it is compliant with the new arrangements.

Ensuring the responsible conduct and integrity of Australia's research effort

The revised *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (the Code) and accompanying *Guide to Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research* (the Guide) were released on 14 June 2018.

The release of this revised documentation will ensure that Australia's research integrity requirements are contemporary, world-leading and robust. The Code and Guide will continue to provide the cornerstone of ensuring that the Australian research effort is supported by a system that assures the responsible conduct and integrity of that effort.

Throughout 2018–19, the ARC will work together with the co-authors of the Code (the NHMRC and Universities Australia) regarding arrangements for the transition from the 2007 version of the Code, as well as the development of further relevant guidance material.

In 2018, the ARC initiated an interagency process regarding the implications and appropriate implementation arrangements to support compliance with the *Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act 2018*. This process, along with work to support compliance with the *Defence Trade Controls Act 2012*, will continue throughout 2018–19.

Data

The ARC is committed to promoting the outcomes of research and ensuring that non-sensitive data is publicly available to extend the value and use of such data.

A range of ARC program and administrative data is collected and stored, as well as data on the Australian university research system. This constitutes a resource with the potential for use by businesses, researchers, academics and the broader community.

On 7 December 2015, the Australian Government released its *Public Data Policy Statement* as part of NISA. The policy statement commits Australian Government entities to: (i) optimise the use and reuse of public data, (ii) release of non-sensitive data as open by default, and (iii) collaborate with the private and research sectors to extend the value of public data for the benefit of the Australian public.

The challenge for the ARC is to balance the demand from stakeholders for access to ARC data against the requirements of legislation and policy as well as the resources of the agency. The ARC



is responding by developing an approach to data release, including ICT resources required, and communicating this approach to stakeholders.

The ARC also strongly encourages researchers to deposit data arising from research projects in publicly accessible repositories to maximise the benefits from the ARC-funded research.

Summary

The ARC's ability to successfully undertake its activities is influenced by a range of factors, including availability of funding, responding to government policy or direction, community expectations and the global research context. Strategic factors of influence are summarised in Table 1 below while factors specific to each of the ARC's key activities are identified in the performance section.

Table 1: Factors of influence

Greater influence	Partial influence	Less influence
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• General Australian research funding environment• Engagement with our stakeholders• Implementation of the Government's agenda and priorities• Quality of our policy advice and frameworks to support innovative research outcomes• Our risk management profile and the strength of our risk management capabilities• Expectations around use of technology to deliver our objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ongoing transformation of service delivery in the Australian Public Service• Perception of the agency and its activities• Participation in the agency's activities, such as the NCGP, and ERA and EI assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overall economic context• International developments in the research sector• Policy decisions of state and local governments• Research outputs and findings by individual researchers or teams

PERFORMANCE

The ARC's stated purpose, as outlined in the ARC Act, comprises three key activities: funding the highest quality research outcomes, assessing the quality, engagement and impact of research, and providing advice on research matters. For each activity, the ARC has identified the intended outcome, the strategies underpinning this intended outcome, the factors that might affect our performance and the indicators of our performance.

Key Activity 1: Funding the highest quality research

Description

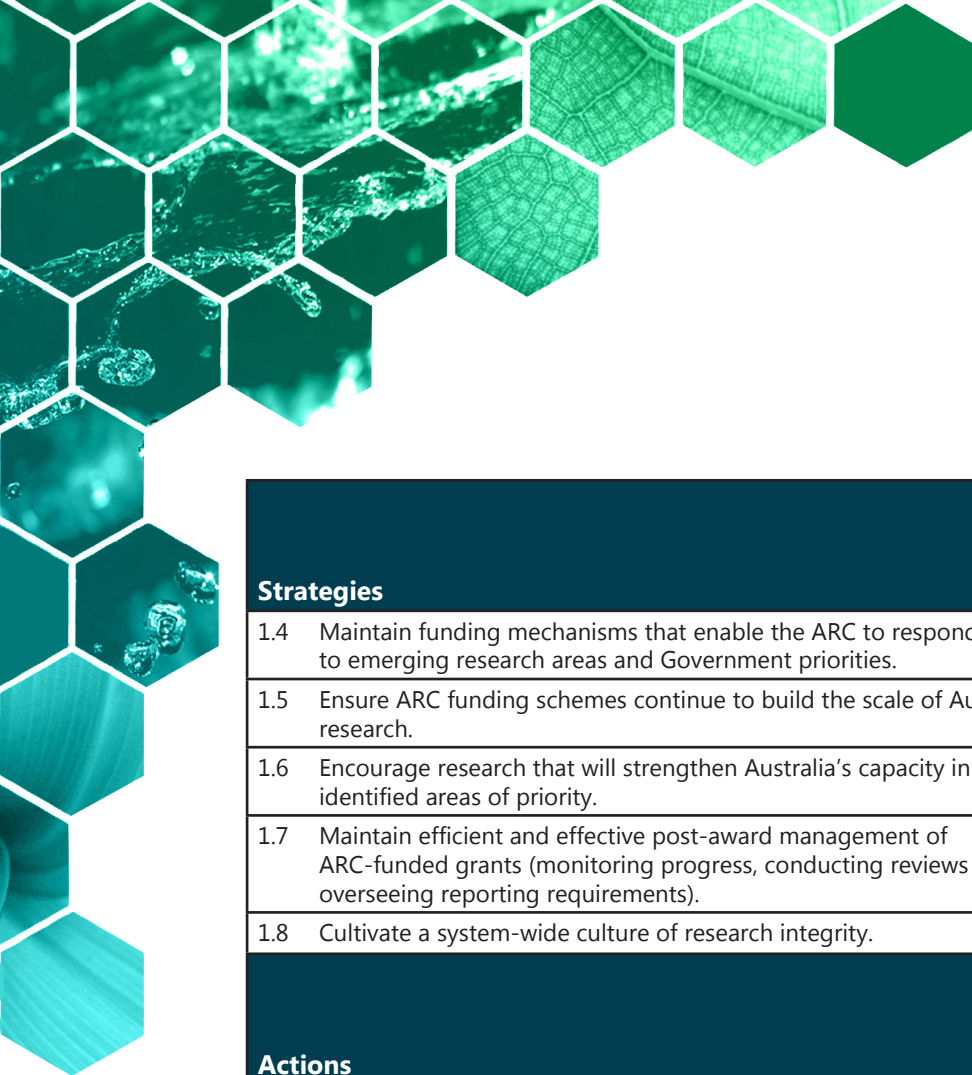
Under the NCGP, the ARC awards grants to the highest quality basic and applied research as assessed through a competitive peer review process. The NCGP provides funding for research projects, fellowships and awards, infrastructure acquisition and research centres and hubs. Through the grants and assessment process, the ARC encourages workforce diversity that is reflective of Australian society by supporting the highest calibre researchers, regardless of gender, ethnicity or career stage.

Intended outcomes

- Immediate:** Excellent research conducted by individuals and teams, collaborative research between university-based researchers and researchers in other sectors including industry, research training and career development, international collaboration, and research in priority areas.
- Intermediate:** Growth of knowledge and innovation resulting from the outputs of ARC-funded research (for example, publications and patents).
- Long-term:** Growth in Australia's research capacity and the realisation of benefits for the Australian community.

Strategies and actions

Strategies	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
1.1 Fund the highest quality basic and applied research across all disciplines, selected through a competitive peer review process.	x	x	x	x
1.2 Support the development of a sustainable and diverse research workforce by encouraging greater participation by early and mid-career researchers, researchers from diverse cultural backgrounds, female researchers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers.	x	x	x	x
1.3 Encourage national and international research partnerships between universities and government, industry and not-for-profit organisations.	x	x	x	x



Strategies	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
1.4 Maintain funding mechanisms that enable the ARC to respond quickly to emerging research areas and Government priorities.	x	x	x	x
1.5 Ensure ARC funding schemes continue to build the scale of Australian research.	x	x	x	x
1.6 Encourage research that will strengthen Australia's capacity in identified areas of priority.	x	x	x	x
1.7 Maintain efficient and effective post-award management of ARC-funded grants (monitoring progress, conducting reviews and overseeing reporting requirements).	x	x	x	x
1.8 Cultivate a system-wide culture of research integrity.	x	x	x	x
Actions	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
1.9 Conduct a post-implementation review of the introduction of the continuous application and assessment process under the <i>Linkage Projects</i> scheme.	x	–	–	–
1.10 Obtain regular feedback from Research Offices and the sector to inform the refinement of future application processes and peer review assessment and streamlining of ARC pre-award processes and reduce red tape for documentation requirements to support application processes.	x	x	x	x
1.11 Implement outcomes of the ARC Major Investments Working Group into better practice post-award management of NCGP Major Investments.	x	–	–	–
1.12 Further streamline ARC post-award processes and reduce red tape for documentation requirements to support variations to funding agreements.	x	x	x	x
1.13 Consolidate feedback from the Industrial Transformation Training Centres through a survey to measure project outcomes and lessons learned.	x	–	–	–
1.14 Deliver funding to grants awarded under the PFAS (Per- and Poly-Fluoroalkyl Substances) Remediation Research Program and review reports and outcomes produced from the research.	x	x	x	x
1.15 Deliver funding to grants awarded under the Excellence in Antarctic Science (SRIEAS) and support the Australian Antarctic Science Strategic Plan 2011-12 to 2020-21.	–	x	x	x
1.16 Review how the ARC is supporting research that traverses or transcends disciplinary boundaries.	–	x	–	–



Operating context

Environment

Within our control	Partially within our control	Outside our control
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Efficiency of peer review processes• Quality of ICT services• Supporting administration of peer review and grant administration processes• Policies underpinning achievement of scheme objectives (see also Key Activity 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stakeholder support of the NCGP peer review and grant administration processes• Demand for funding under the NCGP (putting pressure on the ARC and universities)• Quality of applications for funding received under the NCGP (affecting the volume of high quality research supported)• Preparedness of assessors to participate in peer review processes (affecting robustness of peer review processes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change in policy environment• Changes in ARC resourcing

Capability projects

A capability project supporting delivery of Key Activity 1 is continued enhancement of the ARC's Research Management System.

Performance

Key indicators of the NCGP's success in meeting its objectives include:

- sustainability of Australia's research workforce, as indicated by the career age of researchers supported and analysis of research training opportunities
- improved engagement between universities, industry and other research sectors, as measured by satisfaction, leverage and scale of involvement
- ongoing support from the university sector for the ARC and the role that it performs
- improved international engagement, as measured by volume of international linkages and recipients of ARC-funded grants
- extent to which research projects address areas of Government research priority, as indicated by analysis of research proposals
- benefits to Australia as demonstrated through case studies, analysis of ARC-funded research outcomes (including an assessment of impact) and evaluations.

Details are in **Appendix 4**

Key Activity 2: Assessing the quality, engagement and impact of research

Description

The ARC evaluates the quality of research undertaken at eligible Australian universities through the ERA program. This program is an established evaluation framework that identifies research excellence in Australian universities, by comparing Australia's research effort against international benchmarks. ERA evaluates research quality using a combination of indicators and expert review by research evaluation committees.

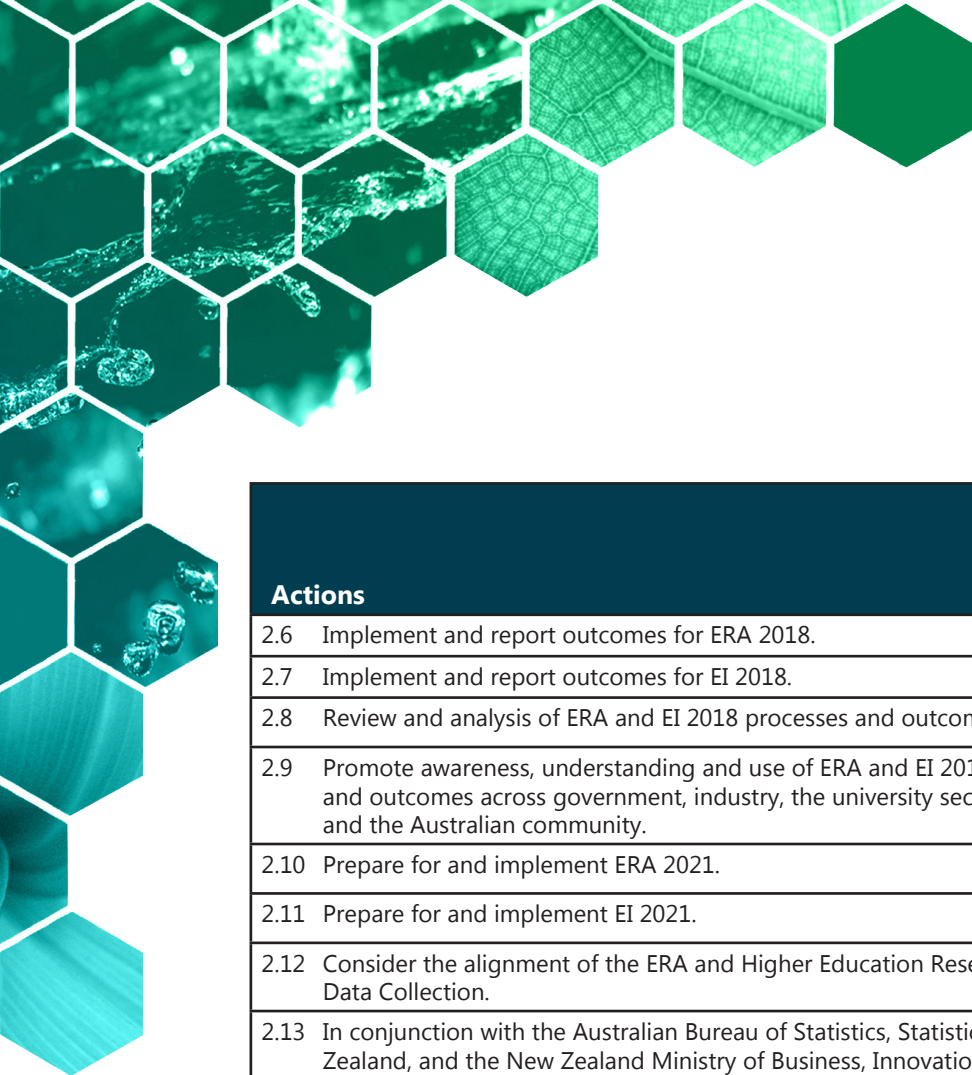
The ARC is also responsible for implementing a new national EI assessment, announced by the Australian Government in December 2015 as part of the NISA. This will assess the engagement of researchers with research end-users, and show how universities are translating their research into economic, social, environmental and other impacts.

Intended outcomes

- Immediate:** Evaluation reports that benchmark the quality of research conducted at eligible Australian universities against international research. Reports that demonstrate the performance of Australian universities in engaging with the users of their research beyond academia, and that show how well universities are translating their research into economic, social, environmental and other benefits.
- Intermediate:** Growth of knowledge and innovation resulting from the use of the ERA and EI outcomes (a unique, evidence-based resource) to inform the Australian Government's research policy, the strategic direction of universities, and encourage researchers to produce high-quality research with real world benefits.
- Long-term:** Growth in Australia's research capacity and the realisation of benefits for the Australian community.

Strategies and actions

Strategies	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
2.1 Administer ERA and EI.	x	x	x	x
2.2 Provide strategic policy advice on research quality, engagement and impact.	x	x	x	x
2.3 Contribute expertise and data to policy discussions on research evaluation.	x	x	x	x
2.4 Engage with stakeholders on ERA and EI processes and outcomes.	x	x	x	x
2.5 Contribute expertise and data to the ANZSRC review to help ensure that the classification remains contemporary and reflects current practice, and that it remains suitable for use in evaluating and reporting on research in ERA and EI.	x	x	–	–



Actions	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
2.6 Implement and report outcomes for ERA 2018.	x	–	–	–
2.7 Implement and report outcomes for EI 2018.	x	–	–	–
2.8 Review and analysis of ERA and EI 2018 processes and outcomes.	x	x	–	–
2.9 Promote awareness, understanding and use of ERA and EI 2018 data and outcomes across government, industry, the university sectors and the Australian community.	x	x	–	–
2.10 Prepare for and implement ERA 2021.	–	–	x	x
2.11 Prepare for and implement EI 2021.	–	–	x	x
2.12 Consider the alignment of the ERA and Higher Education Research Data Collection.	–	x	–	–
2.13 In conjunction with the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Statistics New Zealand, and the New Zealand Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment undertake a review of the ANZSRC, which is used in ERA and EI to categorise data for the evaluation and reporting of Australian university research.	x	x	–	–

Operating Context

Environment

Within our control	Partially within our control	Outside our control
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality and robustness of the ERA and EI methodologies Effective implementation of the ERA and EI processes Adequate levels of internal resourcing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder support of the ERA and EI processes Quality of data and information submitted to ERA and EI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in policy environment Change in ARC resourcing

Capability projects

Capability projects supporting delivery of Key Activity 2 are:

- engagement of assessors to assist with the conduct of ERA and EI, thereby ensuring the input of a broad range of experts in the implementation of both exercises
- developing and consolidating data analysis and reporting capability to ensure ERA and EI data and outcomes are better used to inform key stakeholders regarding retrospective performance across the university sector
- review of the ANZSRC.

Performance

Key indicators of the success of ERA and EI in meeting their objectives include:

- ERA provides assurance of the quality of research in Australia
- ERA effectively reports on excellent, internationally competitive research
- EI effectively reports on research engagement within and beyond the research sector for the delivery of benefits to the Australian community, and encourages universities to support their researchers in these activities.

Details are in **Appendix 4**

Key Activity 3: Providing advice on research matters

Description

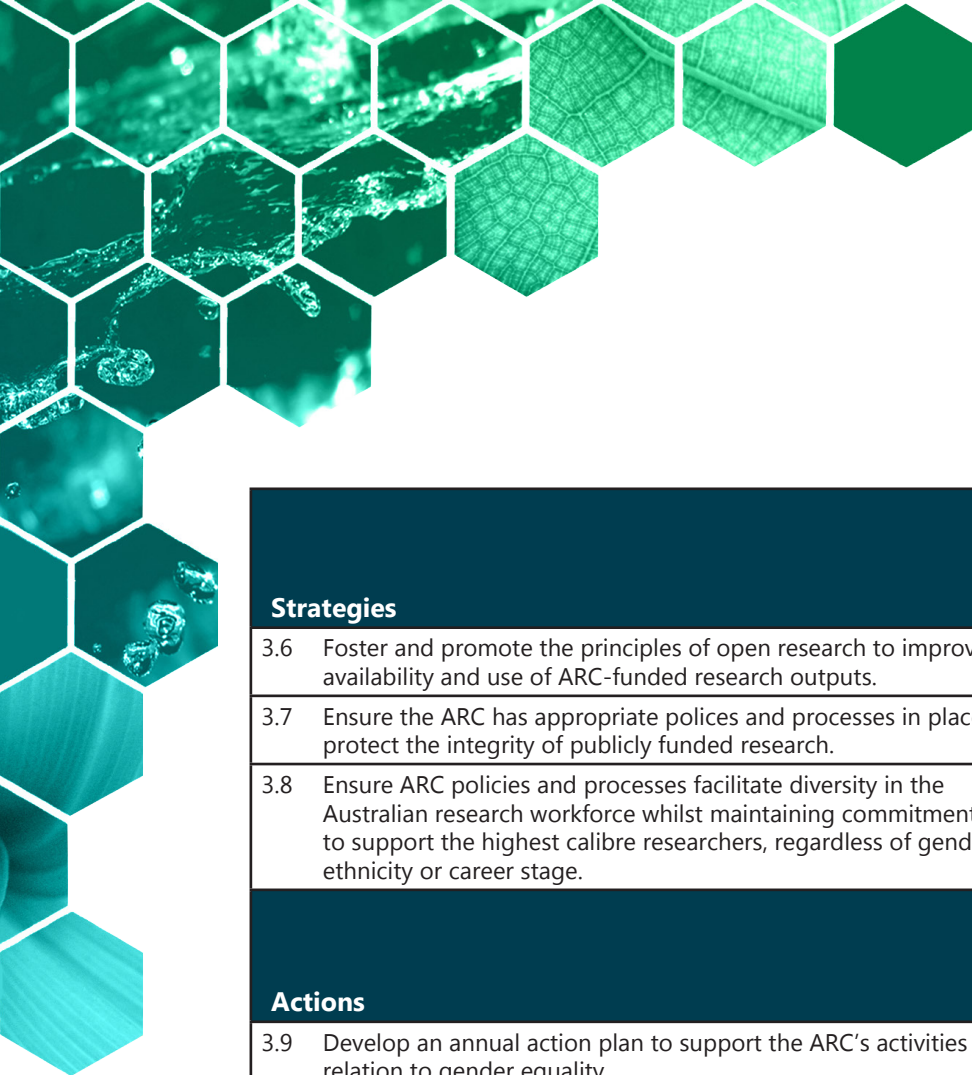
The ARC provides policy advice to the Minister on matters related to research. A strong policy framework underpins the ARC's delivery of the NCGP, ERA and EI. The ARC also participates and informs whole-of-government policy development activities relating to innovation, science and research.

Intended outcomes

- Immediate:** Effective and efficient delivery of the ARC's programs, taking into account the context in which the ARC operates, the outcomes of evaluation and monitoring activities, and stakeholder requirements.
- Intermediate:** Growth of knowledge and innovation resulting from facilitation of the highest quality research through ARC programs.
- Long-term:** Growth in Australia's research capacity, capability and realisation of benefits for the Australian community.

Strategies and actions

Strategies	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
3.1 Develop new, and review existing, policies to ensure the ARC continues to deliver on its purpose and the Australian Government's priorities.	x	x	x	x
3.2 Review NCGP grant guidelines, grant agreements and supporting policies in line with national and international best practice.	x	x	x	x
3.3 Monitor and evaluate program delivery outcomes.	x	x	x	x
3.4 Participate in Australian Government policy development and research and monitoring activities as appropriate.	x	x	x	x
3.5 Monitor and contribute to international developments in research activity.	x	x	x	x



		2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Strategies					
3.6	Foster and promote the principles of open research to improve the availability and use of ARC-funded research outputs.	x	x	x	x
3.7	Ensure the ARC has appropriate policies and processes in place to protect the integrity of publicly funded research.	x	x	x	x
3.8	Ensure ARC policies and processes facilitate diversity in the Australian research workforce whilst maintaining commitment to support the highest calibre researchers, regardless of gender, ethnicity or career stage.	x	x	x	x
Actions		2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
3.9	Develop an annual action plan to support the ARC's activities in relation to gender equality.	x	x	x	x
3.10	Prepare an ARC Intellectual Property Management Policy in consultation with the research sector.	x	–	–	–
3.11	Develop an annual action plan to support the ARC's activities in relation to support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers.	x	x	x	x
3.12	Prepare an ARC Program Evaluation Strategy.	x	–	–	–
3.13	Develop an action plan to support the early career researcher statement of support.	x	–	x	–
3.14	Progress arrangements for the transition to the <i>Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2008</i> including developing further guidance material to support the Code and revising the <i>ARC Research Integrity and Research Misconduct Policy</i> to ensure consistency with the new Code.	x	x	–	–
3.15	In conjunction with NHMRC, review the Australian Research Integrity Committee framework.	x	–	–	–
3.16	Improve the messaging and communication around ARC-funded research workforce activities and initiatives.	x	x	–	–
3.17	Consider the appropriateness of ARC data management requirements and their effectiveness in maximising the benefits from ARC-funded research.	x	–	–	–



Operating Context

Environment

Within our control	Partially within our control	Outside our control
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Availability of appropriate information• Policy development processes (including design, roles and accountabilities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participation in relevant Australian Government policy and program development activities• Stakeholder engagement in policy development activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Changes in policy environment• Changes in ARC resourcing

Capability projects

Capability projects supporting delivery of Key Activity 3 are:

- Complete transition to whole-of-government templates for grant guidelines
- Detailed mapping of policy objectives underpinning delivery of the ARC's funding schemes utilising data collected during the application and post-award periods.

Performance

Key indicators of the ARC's success in meeting its objectives include:

- ARC policy advice contributes and responds to Australian Government policy development
- ARC policy advice supports best practice research
- ARC policy advice engages researchers, both national and international.

Details are in **Appendix 4**

CAPABILITY

Enabling delivery of our purpose

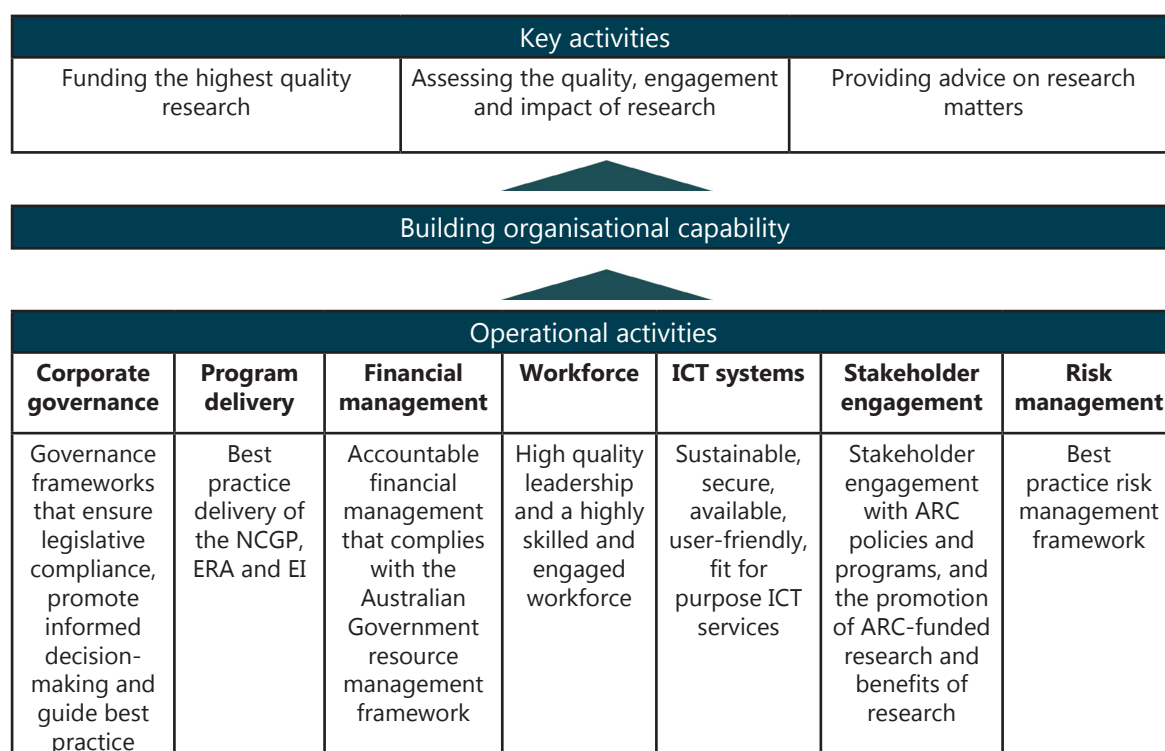
Achievement of our purpose and related activities is dependent on a strong organisational capability in a number of key areas. Over the four years of the plan, the ARC will work to maintain its current capabilities as well as identify and implement opportunities for further developments, particularly in areas which support better practice operations.

The ARC's organisational capabilities (Figure 4) are the people, processes, structures and systems (including risk management) that enable the agency to achieve its purpose. Each year as part of its corporate planning processes the ARC reviews its capability to:

- ensure the agency can respond effectively to current needs
- help build capability for emerging needs
- establish resilience to cope with the unexpected.

This process helps ensure that the ARC's people, processes, structures and systems are aligned to its purpose and future priorities, and that lines of accountability are clear. It also provides an opportunity for the ARC to consider innovative responses to changes in capability needs.

Figure 4: ARC organisational capabilities





Corporate governance

Description

The ARC aims to maintain high-quality governance structures that will facilitate the agency's performance in delivering its responsibilities. The ARC's governance activities cover policies, strategies and frameworks for decision making, performance measurement and reporting, audit, risk management and conduct.

Current strategies

The ARC's current corporate governance strategies are to:

- maintain strong leadership and decision-making frameworks
- identify a clear strategic direction for the agency including through a robust planning and reporting framework
- maintain sound audit and risk management practices
- use recommendations from audits and other evaluation processes to improve business practices
- maintain high standards and ethical conduct in relation to ARC policies and processes.

The ARC's activities in this area are supported by:

- Strategic and Annual Internal Audit Workplan
- ARC Audit Committee, Senior Management Group, Planning and Reporting Committee, Information Governance Committee.

Future capability planning

Projects	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Further integrate the operational plan into business planning and reporting processes.	x	–	–	–
Monitor and implement where necessary better practice Australian Public Sector corporate service practices.	x	x	x	x



Program delivery

Description

The ARC administers grant funding through the NCGP, and assesses the quality, engagement and impact of research through ERA and EI. These programs involve a significant component of expert review in which the ARC has an excellent track record. The ARC's program delivery activities rely on the ARC's Information and Communication Technology (pages 27–28). Current strategies and future capability planning enable better practice program delivery and support the successful delivery of long-term outcomes. The success of the ARC depends on Government and stakeholder confidence (see Stakeholder Engagement, (pages 29–30) and Risk management, (pages 31–33).

Current strategies

The ARC's current program delivery strategies are to:

- maintain and adhere to strong governance frameworks
- comply with government best practice guidance
- work with other funding bodies to co-ordinate funding opportunities and approaches
- consult and engage with stakeholders to develop or review programs, policies, and strategies
- work with ARC-funded researchers to improve understanding of program requirements
- deliver outputs and outcomes consistent with stakeholder expectations.

The ARC's activities in this area are supported by:

- ARC Discovery Program and Linkage Program Grant Guidelines, Grant Agreements, NCGP Standard Operating Procedures and Instructions to Applicants
- NCGP College of Experts and Selection Advisory Committees
- Expert review provided by external peer reviewers that contribute their time on a voluntary basis
- ERA and EI guidelines
- ERA Research Evaluation Committees and EI assessment panels
- ANZSRC
- Cohort of research management officers in the higher education sector
- Funded researcher's activities to promote research above and beyond requirements.

Future capability planning

Projects	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Ensuring input from a broad range of experts to the implementation of both ERA 2018 and EI 2018, through the engagement of assessors to assist with the conduct of both exercises.	x	–	–	–
Enabling more efficient program delivery processes, through the use of ORCID information under both the NCGP and ERA to link researcher publications with NCGP grant applications and, potentially in the longer term, ERA submissions.	x	x	–	–
Developing and consolidating data analysis and reporting capability to ensure ERA and EI data and outcomes are better used to inform key stakeholders regarding performance across the university sector.	x	x	x	x
Continued investigation of remote technologies for the conduct of grant assessment meetings.	x	x	x	–
Engagement with stakeholders through the ARC Major Investments Working Group.	x	x	x	x
Outreach and engagement with Research Offices.	x	x	x	x
Ongoing engagement with the Australian Government in the context of streamlining grant administration.	x	x	x	x



Financial management

Description

The ARC has established efficient and effective financial management systems and controls to ensure compliance with the Australian Government's resource management framework, and to support the delivery of its programs and policies. This capability is heavily reliant on the ARC's Information and Communication Technology (pages 27–28).

Current strategies

The ARC's current financial management strategies are to:

- maintain an effective financial management system with robust controls
- maintain comprehensive policies and procedures to support the financial management function
- provide regular financial management reports to Senior Management Group, line areas, and the ARC Audit Committee
- include, as appropriate, relevant audits in the ARC's internal audit workplan.

The ARC's activities in this area are supported by the:

- relevant legislation, Commonwealth Procurement Rules, *Accountable Authority's Instructions*, Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines, and Financial Delegations
- Strategic and Annual Audit Workplan
- ARC Audit Committee.

Future capability planning

	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22
Projects				
Continued conduct of reviews of ARC-funded administering organisations, to ensure that grants management is being conducted in accordance with grant agreements between the ARC and those organisations.	x	x	x	x
Systematic review of controls and procedures, to maintain compliance with the financial elements of the Australian Government's resource management framework.	x	x	x	x



Workforce

Description

The ARC is reliant on its highly skilled and diverse workforce to deliver its purpose. It has established policies and procedures to help develop and maintain a workforce with the skills, knowledge, experience and the attitudes we need in the future to maintain a productive, healthy and inclusive workplace.

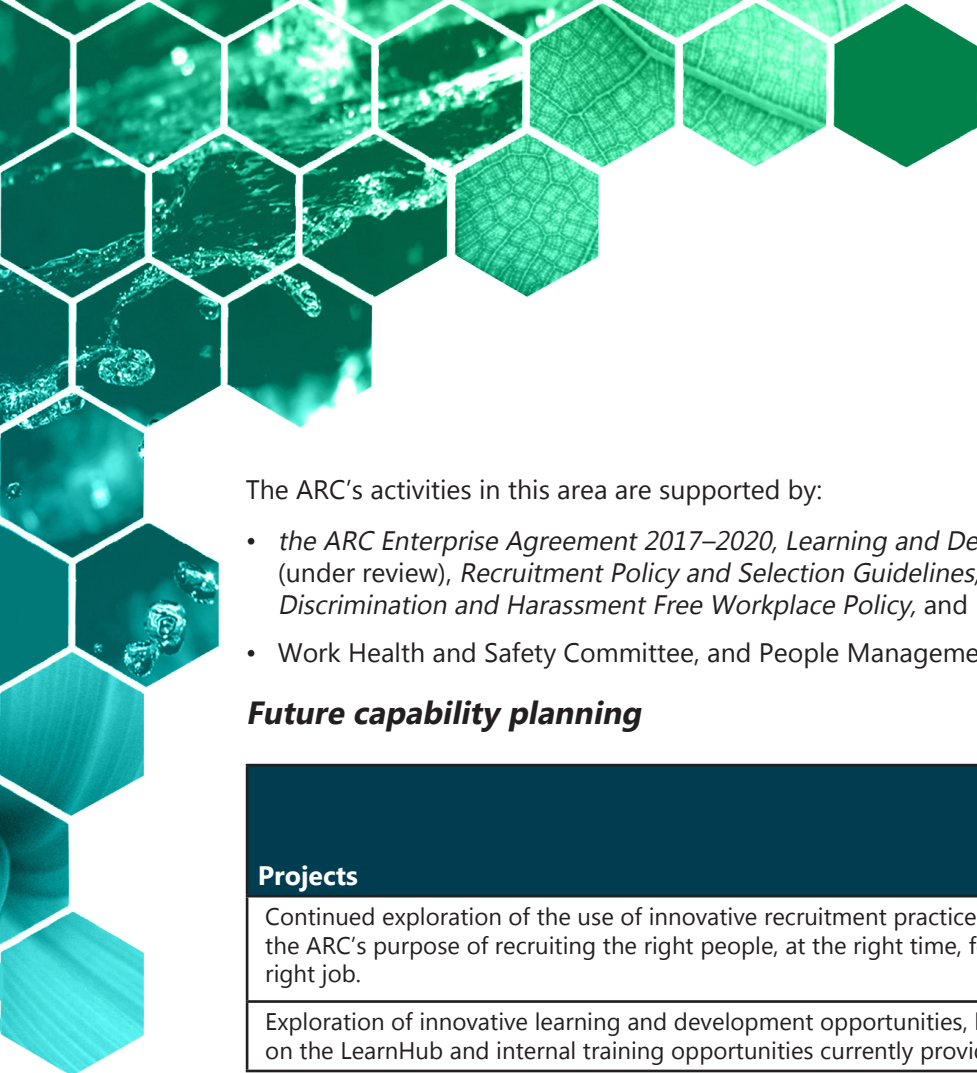
The staff of the ARC are a mix of academics, currently including a Chief Executive Officer (CEO), professor-level Executive Directors with strong research backgrounds, and over 100 public servants.

Current strategies

Current strategies and future capability planning reduces the risks of the ARC not having the staff capacity to respond to changing demands on skills, possible loss of staff, and related human resource challenges (see Risk Management, pages 31–33).

The ARC's current workforce strategies are to:

- support our leaders in driving a high performing culture
- maintain efficient and effective recruitment processes, aimed at recruiting the right people, at the right time, for the right job
- maintain a comprehensive approach to learning and development, aimed at providing all staff with training in identified areas; and staff at different levels with different skill-sets with targeted opportunities to grow and develop
- undertake an annual workforce planning exercise as part of internal budget deliberations, aimed at ensuring the ARC's staff resources are used to best advantage
- foster a supportive work culture, aimed at retaining excellent staff by providing access to a range of supportive mechanisms including flexible work options, promotion of work-life balance and employee benefits and initiatives
- provide and maintain a safe working environment, with the aim of minimising risks to staff, generating positive views about the workplace and maximising productivity.



The ARC's activities in this area are supported by:

- the ARC Enterprise Agreement 2017–2020, Learning and Development Strategy 2014–17 (under review), Recruitment Policy and Selection Guidelines, Work Health and Safety Policy, Discrimination and Harassment Free Workplace Policy, and Teleworking Policy
- Work Health and Safety Committee, and People Management and Development Committee.

Future capability planning

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Projects				
Continued exploration of the use of innovative recruitment practices to meet the ARC's purpose of recruiting the right people, at the right time, for the right job.	x	x	x	x
Exploration of innovative learning and development opportunities, building on the LearnHub and internal training opportunities currently provided.	x	x	x	x



Information and Communication Technology

Description

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) services are fundamental to the ARC's productivity and ability to deliver its objectives. New and emerging ICT provides opportunities to ensure that the ICT services are current, responsive and efficient.

ICT services also provide a means of engaging with stakeholders who have access to ARC systems and data. Internal and external users participate in the NCGP through the Research Management System (RMS) and for ERA and EI through the System to Evaluate Excellence in Research (SEER) for Australia.

There are four primary ICT services:

- Workspace—provides ARC staff with a standard operating environment, communications, printing, mobility and an office productivity suite
- Business applications—specialised tools such as RMS and SEER to support business processes
- Business intelligence—analytical tools and data to support business decision making, policy creation and advice. It also provides data transparency for external stakeholders
- Infrastructure—the platforms on which all other ICT services are delivered.

Current strategies

The ARC's current ICT services strategies are to:

- maintain a suite of business systems which support the ARC's programs
- maintain integrated ARC systems with effective controls and security
- implement mobile technologies to enable ARC staff to work anywhere at anytime
- implement robust and modern ICT infrastructure
- engage expert ICT staff to support the management and development of key ARC business systems and services
- continue to consolidate data in a data warehouse that separates transactional and reporting requirements
- maintain governance frameworks with appropriate levels of consultation and decision-making controls.

The ARC's activities in this area are supported by:

- Australian Government Policy
- *ICT Strategic Plan*
- *ARC Data Management Plan*
- ICT Governance Committee, ICT Change Advisory Committee and ICT Change Control Committee.

Future capability planning

Projects	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Continual enhancement of capabilities and services in providing a modern and efficient workspace for ARC staff.	x	x	x	x
Redevelopment of SEER to support ERA and EI 2018.	x	–	–	–
Continued provision of process efficiencies for the higher education sector and ARC through improvements to RMS and SEER.	x	x	x	x
Further development of the ARC Grants Search on the ARC website to support process transparency and data sharing.	x	x	–	–
Development of an ARC open data portal for ERA datasets and impact case studies.	x	–	–	–
Continued development of internal business intelligence tools to support data driven decisions and policy advice.	x	x	x	x
Enhance usability and security of the ARC's ICT systems and services through the continual improvement of the ARC's ICT infrastructure and appropriate use of public cloud solutions.	x	x	x	x



Stakeholder engagement

Description

The ARC has a track record of, and commitment to, undertaking communication activities that engage effectively with stakeholders to ensure the highest quality performance in the delivery of our core programs. This capability is linked closely to the ARC's program delivery activities (pages 12–14).

Current strategies

The ARC's current stakeholder engagement strategies are to:

- promote the value of ARC-funded research—across the full spectrum of research disciplines from the humanities and social sciences through to science, technology, engineering and mathematics—by highlighting the beneficial outcomes of fundamental and applied research projects funded under the NCGP, including research breakthroughs, accolades and impacts
- undertake media activities to announce and promote new research to be funded through NCGP schemes, including ARC-funded fellowships and centres, and to promote the outcomes and importance of ERA and the EI assessment
- disseminate high quality strategic and policy advice to the Minister and the research sector to support a strong, sustainable and diverse research workforce and safeguard public confidence in the integrity and transparency of Australian research
- improve stakeholder awareness and understanding of ARC programs and policies, through promotional material, outreach activities, ARC coordinated seminars and forums, as well as participation in international forums for greater global engagement
- effectively consult and collaborate with stakeholders across the higher education and research sector, including researchers, research leaders and research administrators, and pursue collaborative relationships across Australian government departments, agencies and other publicly-funded research organisations.

The ARC's activities in this area are supported by the:

- *External Communications Strategy*
- *Industry Communication Strategy*
- *Outreach and Engagement Protocol*
- *Consultation Framework.*

Future capability planning

Projects	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Highlighting the importance of basic research to innovation (Discovery Program) and the opportunities offered by collaborative research (Linkage Program), through development of targeted messaging.	x	x	x	x
Investigation of options for providing information on ARC program developments (for example, through webcasts, webinars, blogs and community engagement platforms).	x	x	x	x
Implementation of a Research Office Engagement strategy to address the specific requirements of staff most closely involved with ARC programs.	x	x	x	x
Develop an ARC Outreach Strategy which better addresses stakeholder requirements.	x	–	–	–
Expand the ARC's digital communications activities, including enhancing user experience and interaction with the ARC website, and increasing its social media presence.	x	x	x	x

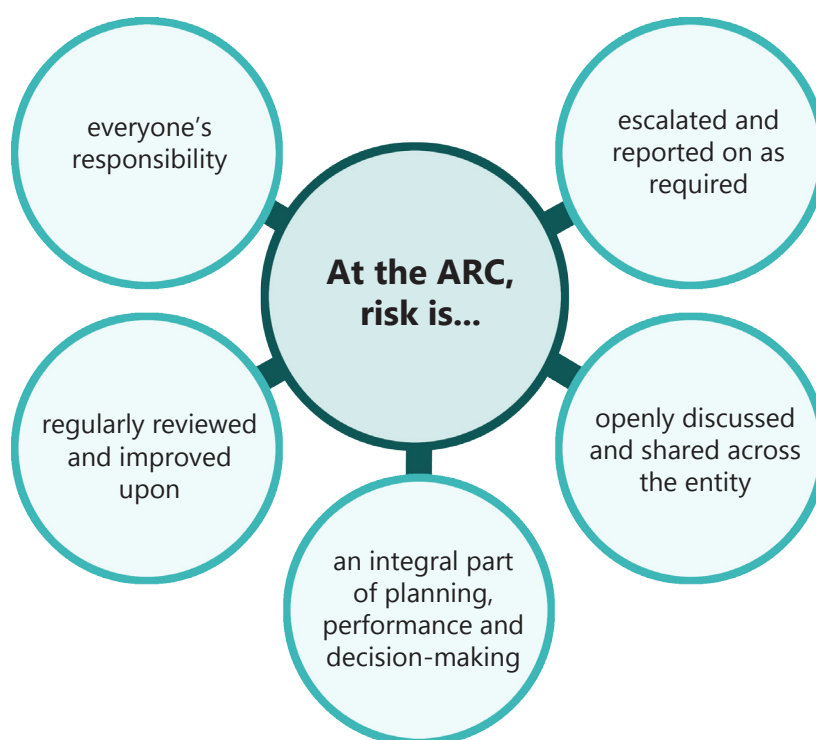
Risk management

Framework

The ARC's Risk Management Framework (the Framework) provides the ARC with a system for managing and overseeing its risks and controls. The Framework has been developed to comply with the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy. It meets the needs of the ARC giving consideration to the unique context of the entity's functions.

The *ARC Risk Management Policy* and *ARC Risk Management Plan and Toolkit* support the Framework by describing the ARC's approach and processes for risk management. They outline the accountabilities and responsibilities for managing risk across the agency. The ARC also has an established Risk Champions Network to ensure that risk management responsibility is widely communicated, and that risks are carefully considered and proactively managed in all areas of business.

The Framework encourages a positive risk management culture through the following themes:



Risk appetite and tolerance

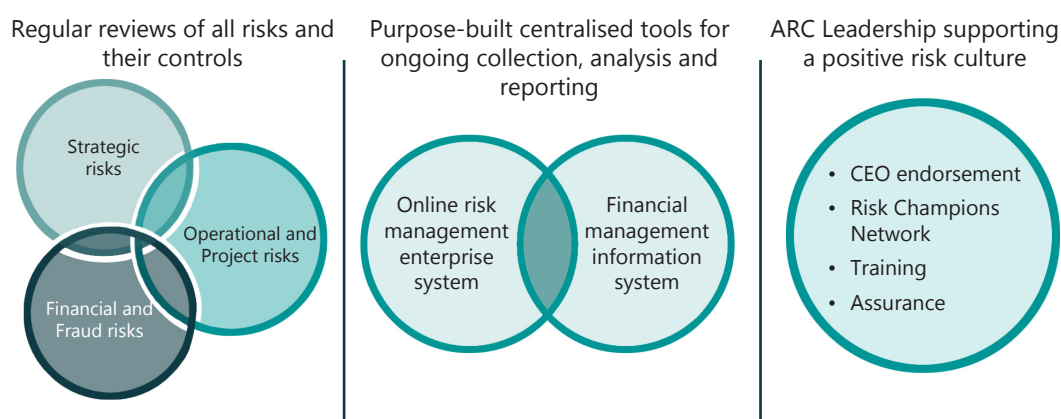
The ARC recognises that the impact of a number of its risks, if realised, could be significant. Proper management of these risks will ensure their impact on the organisation's reputation and stakeholder confidence is minimal. In light of the ARC's role as a key funding agency, the agency carefully manages risks associated with financial management as well as having a low tolerance for risks that damage the ARC's reputation or impact on the safety of ARC staff and stakeholders.

Risk priorities and management

The ARC has identified the following (strategic) risks that could prevent the entity from delivering on its purpose and activities:

Risk	Linked to Activity ¹		
	1	2	3
The ARC does not fund the highest quality research through the NCGP.	x	–	–
The ARC's ICT systems fail or are compromised.	x	x	x
The ARC is unable to recruit or retain a high quality workforce.	x	x	x
The ARC provides inaccurate or incomplete advice.	–	–	x
The ARC fails to deliver its measures under the NISA and other identified Australian Government priorities.	x	x	–
The ARC's governance mechanisms fail or do not comply with legislative requirements.	x	x	–
The ARC is not engaging effectively with its stakeholders.	x	x	x

The ARC manages all risks through:



¹Key Activity 1: Funding the highest quality research; Key Activity 2: Assessing the quality, engagement and impact of research; Key Activity 3: Providing advice on research matters



Continual improvement

The ARC reviews the framework on an annual basis, drawing on advice from the Comcover Benchmarking Program, best practice guidance, and lessons learned from internal and external assurance activities.

The ARC will undertake the following activities over the four years of the Plan to further support the management of risk:

Operational activities	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Continued development of processes and systems to allow for improved recording and analysis of risks that have been realised and for emerging risks.	x	–	–	–
Build the ARC's capacity, awareness and expertise in risk management through key staff completing formal risk management training courses and organising agency workshops and opportunities for critical self-reflection.	x	x	x	x

APPENDIX 1: EXPENSES

Table 1: ARC budget, 2018–19 to 2021–22

	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22
	(\$'000)	(\$'000)	(\$'000)	(\$'000)
Program 1.1: Discovery—research and research training				
Administered expenses	495,099	508,965	516,506	528,572
Total	495,099	508,965	516,506	528,572
Program 1.2: Linkage—cross sector research partnerships				
Administered expenses	273,990	285,432	293,492	297,862
Total	273,990	285,432	293,492	297,862
Program 1.3: Excellence in Research for Australia				
Administered expenses	4,981	3,093	3,161	3,240
Total	4,981	3,093	3,161	3,240
ARC Departmental				
Departmental expenses	21,940	21,747	21,784	21,503
Expenses not requiring appropriation in budget year ¹	3,167	2,903	2,568	2,505
Total	25,107	24,650	24,352	24,008
Administered	774,070	797,490	813,159	829,674
Departmental	25,107	24,650	24,352	24,008
Total	799,177	822,140	837,511	853,682

¹Expenses not requiring appropriation in budget year are made up of depreciation and amortisation expenses and audit fees.



APPENDIX 2: PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK

Planning and Reporting Framework

The ARC's planning and reporting activities are aligned with the requirements of the PGPA Act and its associated guidance documentation, as well as the ARC Act.

The ARC's activities, outlined in the *ARC Planning and Reporting Framework* (May 2018), are undertaken at three levels—strategic, operational and activity (**Figure 7**). The Plan is a key element of the strategic level of the Framework.

Figure 7: ARC Planning and Reporting Framework, 2017–18

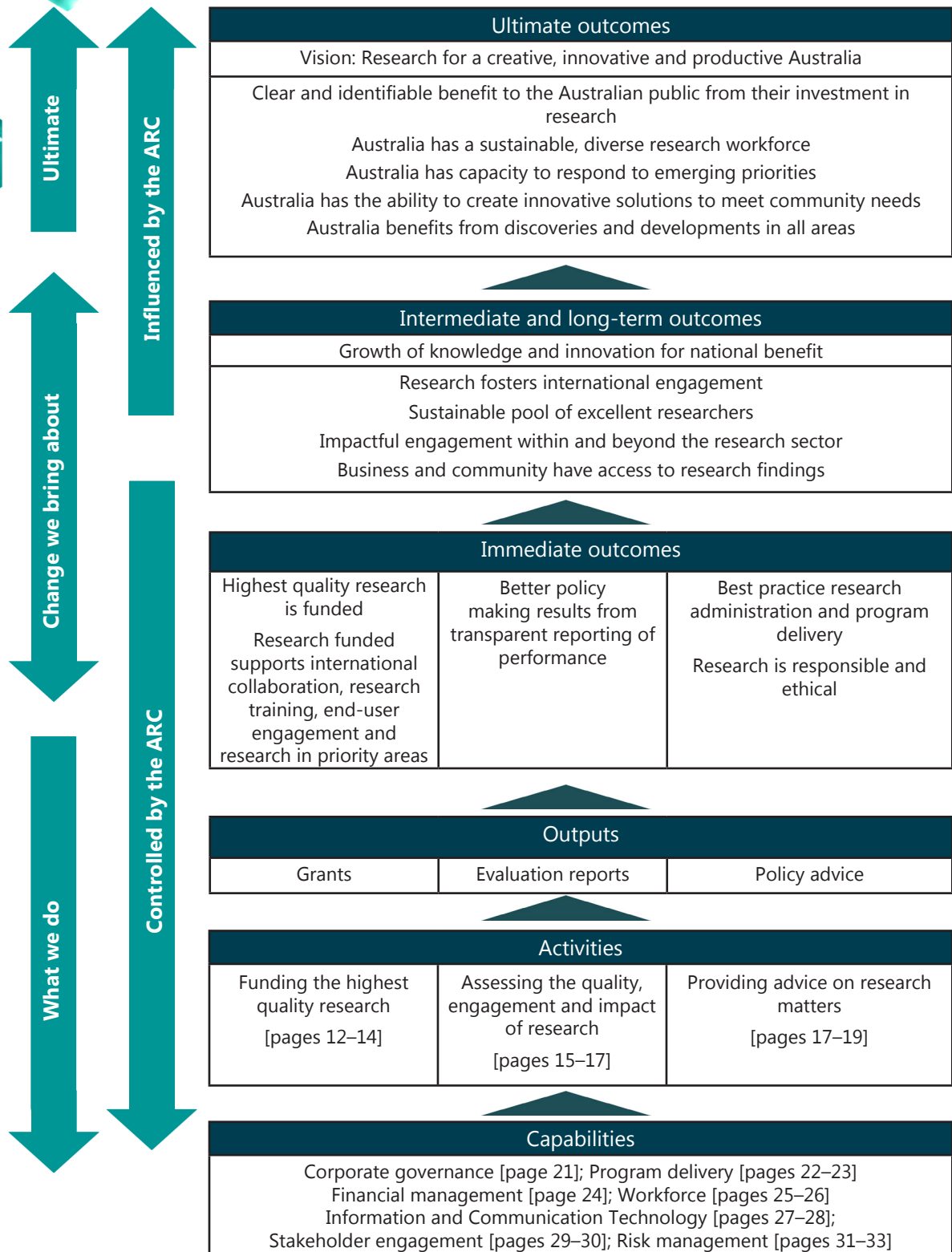
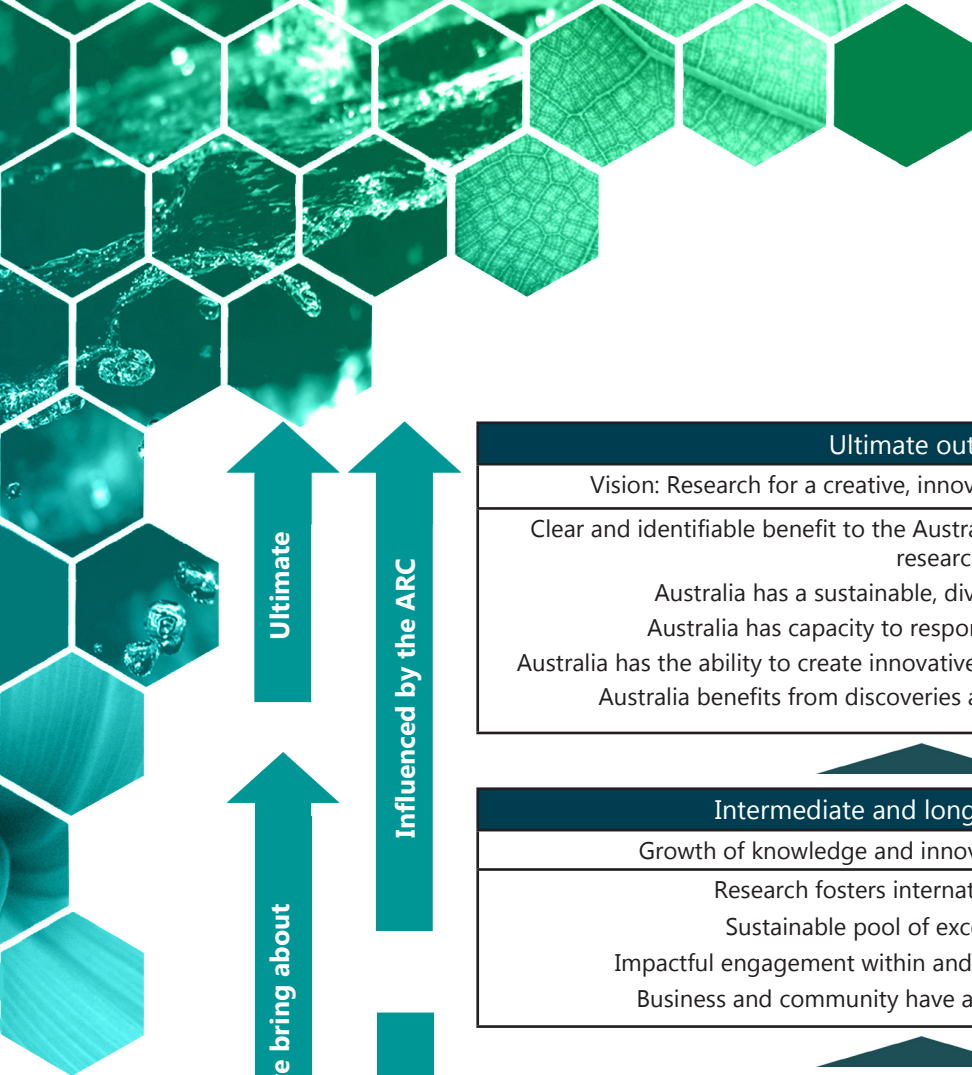
Level	Resource elements	Activity elements	Performance measurement
Strategic level	Portfolio Budget Statements	Corporate Plan	Annual Report/ Annual performance statement
Operational level	Internal annual budget	Operational Plan	Quarterly progress reports on Operational Plan / Monthly financial report
Activity level	Section budgets	Branch / section plans	Progress reports Performance plans Monthly financial reports

Performance Measurement Framework

The ARC's Performance Measurement Framework sets the parameters for assessing the agency's performance against its purpose.

In 2017–18 the ARC continued to refine its Planning and Reporting Framework and the Senior Management Group, the ARC's key governance committee, endorsed the broad level logic model approach illustrated in Figure 7.

The ARC is interested in the outcomes of research supported by the ARC and whether Australia's research performance improves, rather than how many grants are awarded or how many units of evaluation it assesses.





APPENDIX 3: REFERENCE

Acronyms

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ANZSRC	Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classification
ARC	Australian Research Council
ARC Act	<i>Australian Research Council Act 2001</i>
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DECRA	Discovery Early Career Researcher Award
EI	Engagement and Impact Assessment
ERA	Excellence in Research for Australia
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
NCGP	National Competitive Grants Program
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
NISA	National Innovation and Science Agenda
PBS	Portfolio Budget Statement
PGPA	<i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i>
PFAS	Per- and Poly-Fluoroalkyl substances
RMS	Research Management System
SEER	System to Evaluate Excellence in Research
SRIEAS	Special Research Initiative in Excellence in Antarctic Science

Glossary

Activities	What the ARC does with the inputs to fulfil its purpose
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
Early-career researcher	Researchers who have held a PhD or equivalent qualification for a period less than or equal to five years at the time of their application
Inputs	Resources for ARC activities
Logic model	Framework which outlines the anticipated cause-and-effect relationships between activities, outputs, and outcomes (immediate, intermediate and long-term)
Outputs	Direct products of ARC activities, for example, grants
Outcomes	Benefits or changes to individuals or populations including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate outcomes: changes in knowledge, attitudes or skills • Intermediate outcomes: changes in behaviour, practices, policies, procedures • Long-term outcomes: the ultimate outcomes that the program desires to achieve including changes in environment, social and economic conditions
ORCID	A persistent digital identifier that distinguishes individual researchers (https://orcid.org/)
Partner Organisations	National or international organisations that satisfy the eligibility criteria for partner organisations under the NCGP including business, industry, not-for-profit, Government and international higher education organisations
Peer review	Evaluation of research proposals by experts, most often in the same research discipline
Science and Research Priorities	Nine research priority areas identified by the Australian Government which are Food, Soil and Water, Transport, Cybersecurity, Energy, Resources, Advanced Manufacturing, Environmental Change, and Health

APPENDIX 4: PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Key Activity 1: Funding the highest quality research

Performance measures

Outputs

Grants

Outcomes

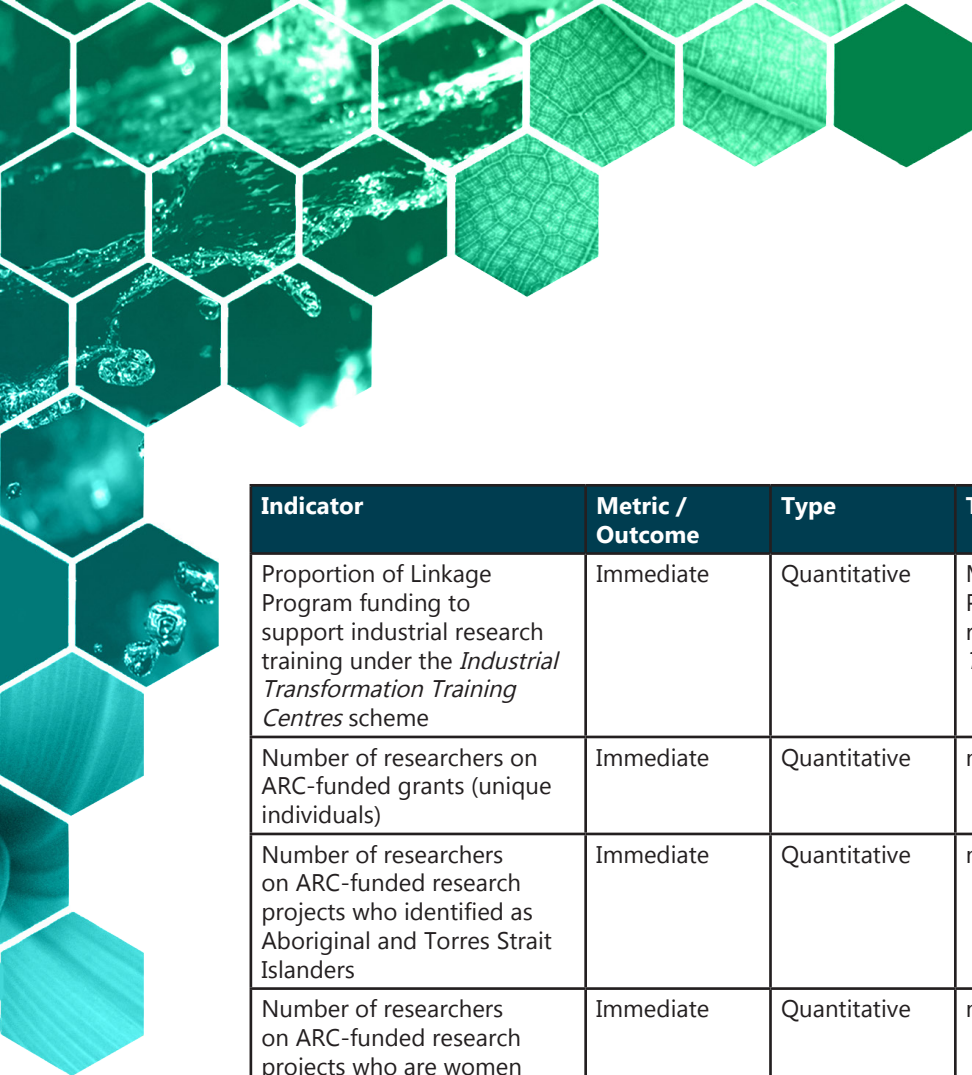
The change or difference resulting:

- at the time the grant is awarded or during the grant (immediate outcomes)
- at the time the grant is completed or final reports submitted (Intermediate outcomes)
- some time after the final report is submitted (Long-term outcomes).

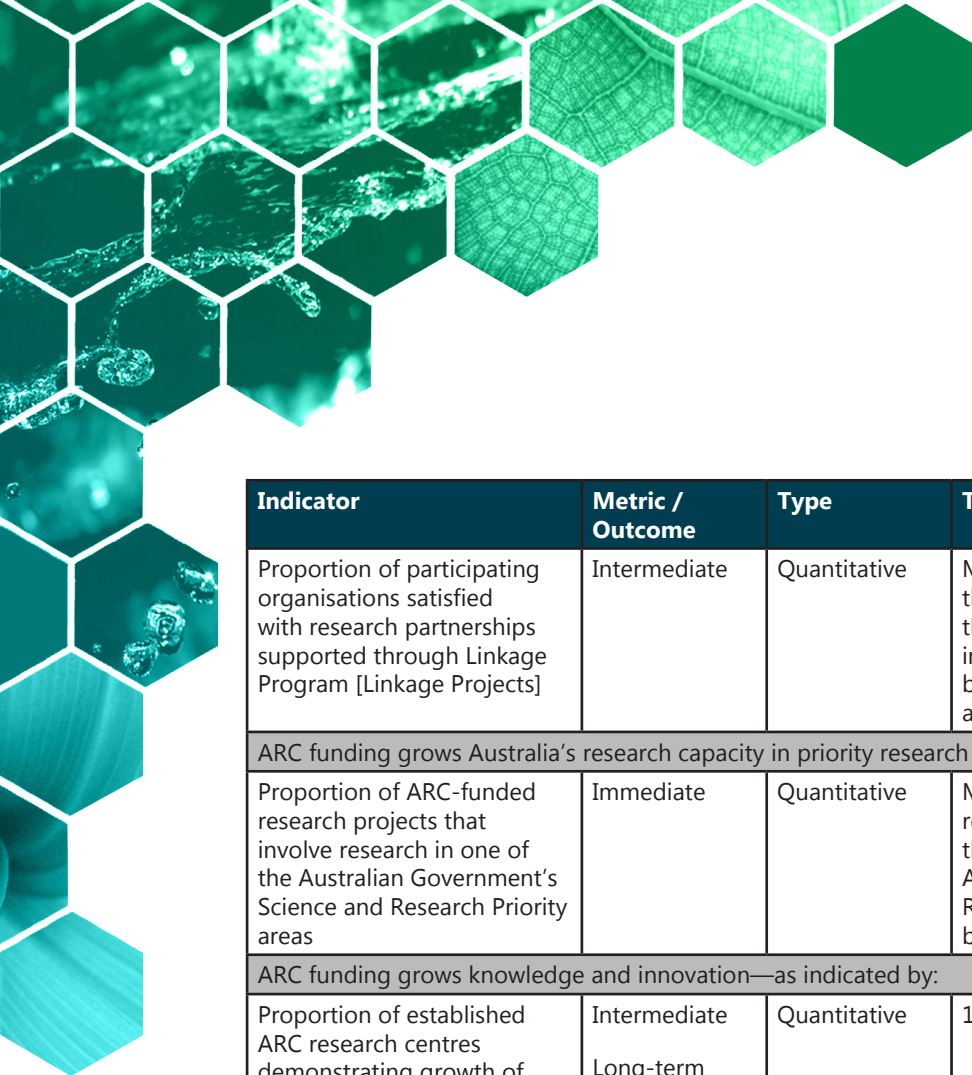
Performance criterion

The NCGP contributes to the growth of knowledge and innovation in Australia by funding: excellent research and researchers, research training and career development, international collaboration and research in areas of priority. It produces outcomes that improve our fundamental understanding of the world and/or provide economic, environmental, social, health and/or cultural benefits to Australia.

Indicator	Metric / Outcome	Type	Target (1)
Volume/efficiency of activity and outputs—as indicated by:			
Length of <i>Linkage Projects</i> scheme application and assessment process	Activity	Quantitative	Announcement within six months of submission
Number of proposals submitted to the ARC for funding	Activity	Quantitative	n/a
Number of research projects funded by the ARC	Output	Quantitative	n/a
ARC funding supports excellent researchers—as indicated by:			
External recognition of the achievements of ARC-funded researchers	Immediate Intermediate	Qualitative	Prizes and awards are won by ARC-funded researchers
ARC funding supports research training and career development—as indicated by:			
Proportion of Discovery Program funding allocated to support early career researchers under the <i>Discovery Early Career Researcher Award</i> (DECRA) scheme	Immediate	Quantitative	Maintain proportion of Discovery Program funding allocated to support Early Career Researchers under the DECRA scheme



Indicator	Metric / Outcome	Type	Target (1)
Proportion of Linkage Program funding to support industrial research training under the <i>Industrial Transformation Training Centres</i> scheme	Immediate	Quantitative	Maintain proportion of Linkage Program funding to support industrial research training under the <i>Industrial Transformation Training Centres</i> scheme
Number of researchers on ARC-funded grants (unique individuals)	Immediate	Quantitative	n/a
Number of researchers on ARC-funded research projects who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders	Immediate	Quantitative	n/a
Number of researchers on ARC-funded research projects who are women	Immediate	Quantitative	n/a
Number of researchers on ARC-funded research projects who are early career researchers	Immediate	Quantitative	n/a
Number of researchers on ARC-funded research projects who are fellows or awardees	Immediate	Quantitative	n/a
ARC funding supports international collaboration—as indicated by:			
Proportion of ARC-funded research projects that involve international collaboration	Immediate	Quantitative	Maintain or increase the proportion of ARC research projects, fellowships and awards that involve international collaboration
Proportion of financial contributions to ARC-funded research made by international partner organisations	Immediate	Quantitative	n/a
Proportion of Participating Organisations that are international organisations	Immediate	Quantitative	n/a
ARC funding supports expanded engagement between researchers and end-users—as indicated by:			
Level of co-funding from partner organisations involved in ARC-funded research projects [Linkage Projects]	Immediate	Quantitative	Maintain or increase the level of co-funding from partner organisations under the <i>Linkage Project Scheme</i> [\geq \$1 for every ARC dollar]



Indicator	Metric / Outcome	Type	Target (1)
Proportion of participating organisations satisfied with research partnerships supported through Linkage Program [Linkage Projects]	Intermediate	Quantitative	Maintain stakeholder satisfaction with the researcher partnerships supported through Linkage research projects, infrastructure, hubs and centres [with baseline based on four year rolling average]
ARC funding grows Australia's research capacity in priority research areas—as indicated by:			
Proportion of ARC-funded research projects that involve research in one of the Australian Government's Science and Research Priority areas	Immediate	Quantitative	Maintain the proportion of ARC-funded research projects, fellowships and awards that involve research in one of the Australian Government's Science and Research Priority areas [with baseline based on four year rolling average]
ARC funding grows knowledge and innovation—as indicated by:			
Proportion of established ARC research centres demonstrating growth of knowledge and innovation	Intermediate Long-term	Quantitative	100%
ARC-funded research produces outcomes of benefit—as indicated by:			
Proportion of ARC-funded research projects that meet their objectives	Intermediate	Qualitative	Maintain
NCGP funded projects contribute towards the growth of knowledge and innovation in Australia and produce outcomes that improve our fundamental understanding of the world and/or provide economic, environmental, social, health and/or cultural benefits to Australia	Intermediate Long term	Qualitative	Evidence of outcomes arising from NCGP research projects, fellowships and awards improving our fundamental understanding of the world and/or provide economic, environmental, social, health and/or cultural benefits to Australia illustrated by published case studies

Key Activity 2: Assessing the quality, engagement and impact of research

Performance measures

Outputs

ERA evaluation and EI assessment reports

Outcomes

The change or difference resulting:

- at the time the ERA and EI rounds are completed or during the rounds (Immediate outcomes)
- some time after the ERA and EI rounds are completed (Intermediate outcomes)
- beyond the period of direct influence by the ARC (Long-term outcomes).

Performance criterion

The ERA program, including the research quality evaluation framework and EI assessment framework, contributes to the growth of knowledge and innovation in Australia by:

- providing assurance of the quality of research in Australia
- encouraging excellent, internationally competitive research
- encouraging impactful engagement within and beyond the research sector. [PBS page 127].

Indicator	Metric / Outcome	Type	Target (1)
Outcomes—as indicated by:			
Australian Government policy	Immediate Intermediate	Qualitative	ERA program reports and activities inform Australian Government policy
Strategic planning at eligible Australian higher education institutions	Immediate Intermediate	Quantitative Qualitative	ERA program reports and activities inform strategic planning at eligible Australian higher education institutions
Engagement within and beyond the research sector	Immediate	Quantitative	Engagement within and beyond the research sector is benchmarked
Translation of university research into economic, social, environmental and other impacts	Immediate Intermediate Long-term	Qualitative	Impact studies submitted for the EI assessment publicly demonstrate how universities are translating their research into economic, social, environmental and other impacts
Research performance of higher education institutions	Immediate Intermediate Long-term	Quantitative Qualitative	Research performance of Australian higher education institutions improves

Note

(1) n/a targets cannot be identified for some activity and output metrics as they are demand driven.

Key Activity 3: Providing advice on research matters

Performance measures

Outputs

Policy advice

Outcomes

The change or difference resulting:

- at the time the policy activity is completed or during the development of the policy (Immediate outcomes)
- some time after the policy activity is completed (Intermediate outcomes)
- beyond the period of direct influence by the ARC (Long-term outcomes).

Performance criterion

ARC policy advice contributes to the growth of knowledge and innovation in Australia by: providing a robust framework for administration of the NCGP, ERA and EI. Providing a robust framework supports the conduct of the highest quality research leading to outcomes of benefit for Australia.

Indicator	Metric / Outcome	Type	Target (1)
Volume/efficiency of activity and outputs—as indicated by:			
Number of policies developed	Activity	Quantitative	n/a
Outcomes—as indicated by:			
ARC policy advice reflecting Australian Government priorities and policies	Immediate	Qualitative	ARC policy advice reflects Australian Government priorities and policies
ARC policy advice supporting best practice research	Immediate Intermediate	Qualitative	ARC policy advice supports best practice research
Stakeholder engagement in ARC policy development activities (including international organisations and researchers)	Immediate Intermediate	Qualitative	Stakeholder engagement in ARC policy development activities
Stakeholder satisfaction with the quality of ARC policy advice	Immediate Intermediate	Qualitative	Stakeholders are satisfied with the quality of ARC policy advice

Note

(1) n/a targets cannot be identified for some activity and output metrics as they are demand or need driven.

(2) 'Providing advice on research matters' is not identified as a separate program in the ARC Portfolio Budget Statements.



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ISSN 2205-0264 (print)
ISSN 2206-1088 (online)

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