



Australian Government
Australian Research Council

Corporate Plan 2026–27



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Acknowledgement of Country

The Australian Research Council (ARC) acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to lands, seas, skies and waterways. The ARC acknowledges the important contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research, researchers and the communities they work with, make to our collective knowledge, culture, society, economy and environment. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and to Elders past and present.

Introduction

Message from the Chair of the ARC Board

On behalf of the ARC Board, I am pleased to present the *ARC Corporate Plan 2026–27*. This corporate plan sets out how the Australian Research Council (ARC) will continue to fulfil its purpose: helping shape Australian research for the nation's economic, social, environmental and cultural benefit by enabling excellent research; evaluating the excellence, impact and depth of Australian research; providing expert advice and research grants services; supporting research integrity and promoting ethical research. This plan also addresses the priorities outlined in the [Statement of Expectations](#) from the Hon Jason Clare MP, Minister for Education, dated 26 March 2026 and the Board's responding [Statement of Intent](#), dated 3 August 2026.

This year, the ARC marks 25 years of supporting world-class Australian research and building a strong international reputation for excellence, rigour and independence. That role remains unchanged. At the same time, the research system is operating in a more complex rapidly changing environment shaped by fiscal constraint, rapid technological change, heightened expectations on security, integrity and impact and growing national and global challenges.

The ARC operates within a whole-of-government environment where research and innovation policy is shaped by a wide range of national priorities and reforms. Working collaboratively across government, with the research sector and international partners, the ARC will continue to contribute expertise, insight and leadership to support a strong, coherent and trusted research system that delivers long-term benefit for Australia.

Australians' trust in research, and in the value of supporting it with public funding, depends on robust integrity, ethical conduct, and security. The ARC plays an important role in assessing research risk within ARC-funded programs and in advising government on research security matters and will continue to work closely with the Department of Education and other relevant agencies on research security matters.

A central focus of the ARC's work over the 2026–27 financial year is reform of the National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP). Following extensive consultation with the research sector, the ARC developed proposals to revitalise the NCGP. These changes are outlined in the [NCGP Policy Review final report](#), which was released in July 2026. The revitalised NCGP provides a greater focus on aligning with government priorities and will deliver wide ranging benefits for researchers, institutions, communities, and industry – strengthening research opportunities, industry collaboration, and ease of administration into the future. Enhanced agility and partnership opportunities under these schemes will strengthen research on these priorities, supporting the security, resilience and health of Australians, and the nation's ability to face future challenges and drive productivity.

The revitalised NCGP will continue the ARC's support of important research relating to the Australian Government's national science statement and research priorities. Enhanced agility and partnership opportunities under these schemes will strengthen research on these priorities; support the security, resilience and health of Australians; and the nation's ability to face future challenges and transitions.



Professor Peter Shergold AC FASSA, Chair of the ARC Board

Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and researchers is integral to this reform agenda. The ARC is committed to enabling emerging First Nations researchers across all disciplines and to strengthening opportunities for First Nations leadership in research. The advice of the ARC Indigenous Forum continues to be central to this work.

The ARC's reform efforts are guided by a long-term strategic outlook. During 2026–27, the ARC will operate under its new 10-year strategy, which sets the direction for how we exercise leadership in research; highlight the value of research; and enable people in research. The [ARC Strategy 2026–35](#) (ARC Strategy) reflects the ARC's role not only as a funder, but as a steward of the national research system.

Another major priority for 2026–27 is the development of a new approach to research evaluation through the ARC's [Research Insights Capability](#) (RIC), in partnership with the Department of Education. This work aims to replace previous evaluation activities with a more contemporary, data-driven approach that provides deeper insight into the excellence, impact and depth of Australian university research. Its success will rely on transparent and open data sources; the ability to respond dynamically to government; and close engagement with universities.

The ARC is also actively engaging with the Department of Education through the Commonwealth Research Grants Working Group established by the Antisemitism Education Taskforce, which I am pleased to chair.

Consistent with this important work, the ARC will have strong regard for relevant laws to ensure our processes are compliant. The ARC will continue to work with partners across government and research on these important issues.

Leadership and engagement are central to the ARC's role. The ARC exercises leadership through stewardship of Australia's research system; contributing expertise, insight and assurance; and working in partnership with others to support its ongoing evolution. We will continue to work closely with the ARC Advisory Committee and the Indigenous Forum, and collaborate across government, industry, peak bodies and the research community to support a strong, coherent, trusted and future-focused research system.

As the ARC moves into 2026–27, it remains strongly focused on maintaining trust in the research system through robust governance; strong research integrity and security arrangements; and transparent decision-making. The public value of research is clear, but it must continue to be demonstrated and strengthened. This corporate plan sets out how the ARC will do that work, carefully and confidently, in service of Australia's future.

Statement of preparation

I, as Chair of the accountable authority (ARC Board) of the ARC, present the *ARC Corporate Plan 2026–27*, which covers the period 2026–27 to 2029–30, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the [Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013](#) (PGPA Act), and subsection 16E(2) of the [Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014](#) (PGPA Rule).



Professor Peter Shergold AC FASSA
Chair of the ARC Board
Australian Research Council

Chief Executive Officer's foreword

I am pleased to join the Chair of the ARC Board, Professor Peter Shergold AC FASSA, in presenting the *ARC Corporate Plan 2026–27*. This corporate plan sets out how the ARC's staff and leadership will support the Board in delivering the ARC's purpose, key activities, and strategic priorities over the 2026–27 reporting period and the forward years. Through the plan we will translate strategic intent into effective delivery.

The ARC Strategy provides a clear long-term direction for the agency, while this corporate plan outlines the operational focus, capabilities and governance arrangements that will enable delivery. With the Board's leadership arrangements now firmly established, the ARC is well placed to build on the groundwork undertaken in recent years to strengthen our organisational foundations, implement reform, and continue to deliver for the research sector and the Australian community.

A key focus over the 2026–27 financial year will be the implementation of recommendations from the NCGP Policy Review. In late 2025, the ARC undertook an organisational review, in consultation with staff, to better align the resources of our agency to our strategic priorities. The outcomes of this review were a refreshed operating model and organisational restructure. These were designed to support more integrated policy, program delivery and assurance functions and roles within the ARC – allowing us to manage the complexity of reform while maintaining continuity of core grant administration.

This year, the ARC will continue to review and improve its research security processes, strengthening the identification and assessment of risks associated with prospective and existing funding decisions. The ARC recognises that public trust in research depends on robust integrity, ethical conduct, and security. With its unique legislated responsibilities to assess and advise on research security risks, the ARC has made a substantial contribution, alongside other agencies, to managing research security risk in government funded research. The ARC will continually review and improve its processes for identifying and assessing risks related to prospective and existing funding decisions that it has made or administers, and to ensure grant funding applicants understand their legal obligations. The ARC will continue to work closely with the Department of Education and other relevant agencies on research security matters.

I am pleased to welcome Mr Anthony Murfett as Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Deputy CEO). Anthony brings deep leadership experience and strong strategic judgement, and he is already contributing to supporting reforms and delivery of the government's and Board's directions. I also wish to acknowledge and thank Miss Claire Forsyth for her significant contribution while acting in the Deputy CEO role in 2025. Claire now leads the new Evaluation and Data Branch, which plays a central role in advancing the ARC's data-driven approach to program and research evaluation; strengthening the evidence base for policy advice; and developing both the RIC and evaluation of the NCGP.

Effective communication, engagement and cooperation remain essential to the ARC's work. Over the coming year, we will continue to engage closely with universities, government agencies including the Australian Tertiary Education Commission, research peak bodies, and international partners to share expertise and support research quality, integrity and impact. Recent initiatives, such as the [joint research integrity statement](#) with the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and Universities Australia and the [joint statement on generative artificial intelligence \(AI\) use](#) with NHMRC, demonstrate the value of coordinated sector leadership and our shared commitment to responsible research conduct and grant selection processes. These relationships will remain critical as the research system continues to evolve.



Professor Ute Roessner AM FAA, Chief Executive Officer

Delivering on our purpose requires strong internal governance and effective risk management. The ARC maintains robust governance and assurance arrangements to support sound decision-making, integrity and accountability, including independent oversight through the ARC Audit and Risk Committee. These arrangements are complemented by the ARC College of Experts, which provides independent, peer-based assessment of grant applications to support fair, rigorous and trusted funding decisions.

Amendments made in 2024 to the [Australian Research Council Act 2001](#) (ARC Act) have provided greater clarity about the ARC's purpose and functions. While the ARC's mandate has been broadened, our core responsibility remains the careful management of research funding to deliver economic, social, environmental and cultural benefit for Australia. This corporate plan introduces a refreshed set of key activities, which provide enhanced insight into how we will deliver against our legislative responsibilities, and outlines the systems and capabilities that will allow us to do so.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the professionalism, expertise and commitment of ARC staff. The ARC is a small agency with a significant national role. It is the dedication of our people that enables us to deliver complex reforms while maintaining trust and confidence in our core functions. I also thank our stakeholders across government and the research ecosystem for their continued engagement and collaboration, and the ARC Board for its leadership and guidance. Working together, we are well placed to support a strong and resilient Australian research system into the future.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ute Roessner', is positioned above the printed name and title.

Professor Ute Roessner AM FAA
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Research Council

Purpose

The ARC is a non-corporate Commonwealth entity established under the ARC Act, located within the Australian Government's Education portfolio and reporting to the Minister for Education (Minister).

Our purpose is to help shape Australian research for the nation's economic, social, environmental and cultural benefit by enabling excellent research; evaluating the excellence, impact and depth of Australian research; providing expert advice and research grants services; supporting research integrity and promoting ethical research.

By achieving our purpose, we advance our outcome, which is the growth of knowledge and innovation through managing research funding schemes, measuring research excellence and providing advice.

The ARC is a vital component of Australia's innovation and research system. It plays an integral role in supporting the research sector to produce excellent and impactful research for Australia's economic, social, environmental and cultural benefit through the delivery of the NCGP. The NCGP funds excellent pure basic, strategic basic and applied research in all disciplines except medical research.

The ARC's broader remit includes the provision of high-quality research policy advice to the Australian Government and supporting research security and integrity. It also includes promoting ethical research, evaluating the excellence, impact and depth of Australian research and expanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems. It also facilitates partnerships between researchers and industry, government, community organisations and the international community.

Key activities

The ARC undertakes a range of key activities all aimed at achieving our purpose. These key activities are enabled by our people, skills and expertise; culture and practices; partnerships and engagement; data and technology; and legislation and regulations. The ARC's key activities are outlined in **Table 1**.¹

Table 1: ARC key activities

Key activity 1: Administer and support research grants programs	Key activity 2: Uphold research standards and processes	Key activity 3: Strengthen and expand collaboration, careers and knowledge systems	Key activity 4: Provide research policy advice and insight	Key activity 5: Evaluate and promote the excellence, impact and value of Australian research
- Administering funding to support excellent early-stage research (covering pure basic, strategic basic and applied research) and nationally significant research programs - Partnering with other Commonwealth entities to support the delivery of their research grants - Upholding standards of identifying research excellence through a competitive peer review process - Maintaining and supporting systems and applications that ensure effective delivery and management of grants programs.	- Safeguarding research security by assessing and advising on relevant risks to national security, defence and international relations - Promoting research integrity and responsible, ethical research - Maintaining robust compliance and risk management measures for funded research consistent with legislative and policy frameworks - Upholding standards of stewardship and privacy.	- Promoting research career pathways and research skills - Supporting First Nations research and researchers across all disciplines - Driving initiatives to foster collaboration across the Australian and global research ecosystems, engaging industry and the community - Promoting equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility principles in research - Supporting engagement and visibility of research outcomes across the research ecosystem.	- Providing advice on research policy, funding and trends - Using data and analytics to demonstrate research outcomes and impacts - Collaborating across government to inform and align with strategic government priorities, policies and mandates.	- Evaluating the excellence, depth and impact of Australian research and promoting outcomes - Identifying the strengths, gaps and opportunities within the research sector - Facilitating open access to research publications and data to promote accessibility and maximise research outcomes.

¹ The ARC's key activities were amended to align more closely with the objects of the ARC Act, and to better support the ARC's performance measurement and reporting capability. This corporate plan is the first time this new set of key activities has been published.

Strategic priorities

Guided by the new [ARC Strategy](#), in 2026–27 the ARC will continue to bolster how we support research excellence; strengthen Australia’s capacity to respond to national challenges; and nurture the next generation of researchers.

The ARC’s key priorities for the year are:

- Draw on findings from the NCGP Policy review to implement improvements to the design and settings of the NCGP to ensure it is strategic, targeted, well-designed, aligned to government priorities, and able to deliver visible returns on public investment.
- Strengthen safeguards relating to research security. The ARC will continue to work with universities, the Department of Education, national security agencies and other stakeholders to address the threat of foreign interference to Australia’s research sector.
- Build trust in Australian research by delivering effective research integrity frameworks, in partnership with the NHMRC, universities, and other stakeholders, to uphold high standards of research conduct. This includes ensuring all applicants understand their obligations under Australian law.
- Develop a new approach to evaluating the excellence, impact and depth of Australian university research. The RIC will be data driven and offer greater insights to the research sector, government and the Australian community. This new approach will replace the discontinued Excellence in Research for Australia and Engagement and Impact.
- Lead efforts to support First Nations researchers by supporting them to engage in research across all disciplines; advancing First Nations leadership and research workforce; and strengthening engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations through the ARC’s grants program.
- Support the effective and efficient operation of the ARC by enhancing the equity, fairness and transparency of grant processes, while reducing administrative burden for both the sector and the agency.
- Work across government to improve the visibility and connection of research funding opportunities throughout the sector, which will contribute to nationally-coordinated approaches and continue to partner with other Commonwealth entities to support the delivery of their research grants.
- Enhance Australia’s international research reputation and maintain regular dialogue and collaboration with key international partners.
- Leverage data, analytics and communication capabilities to offer greater insight into the Australian research landscape, and champion the value and impact of ARC-funded research.
- Capitalise on opportunities to strengthen the ARC’s Research Management System (RMS) application’s capability, scalability and cyber security posture. Enhancing the RMS platform will continue to support efficient and effective research management while safeguarding the interests of the ARC’s stakeholders.

Operating context

Our key activities are undertaken within the context of:

- our governance and operational structures
- the environment in which we operate
- our key risks and the systems we have in place to manage them
- the capability required to deliver our key activities and achieve our purpose
- who we cooperate with and how they help us to achieve our purpose.

Governance

The ARC's governance structure (**Figure 1**) supports the agency in delivering its purpose. Our governance framework ensures the ARC operates in accordance with our responsibilities under legislation on matters of effective performance measurement, risk oversight, compliance and reporting.

The ARC Board is chaired by Professor Peter Shergold AC FASSA and includes a deputy chair and 6 other members, all appointed by the Minister. The Board is responsible for determining the priorities, strategies and policies for the ARC and advising the Minister on these matters. As the accountable authority for the ARC, the Board is also required to establish and oversee the ARC's financial administrative framework under section 20A of the PGPA Act.

To assist the Board to carry out its functions, it is directly supported by the following committees:

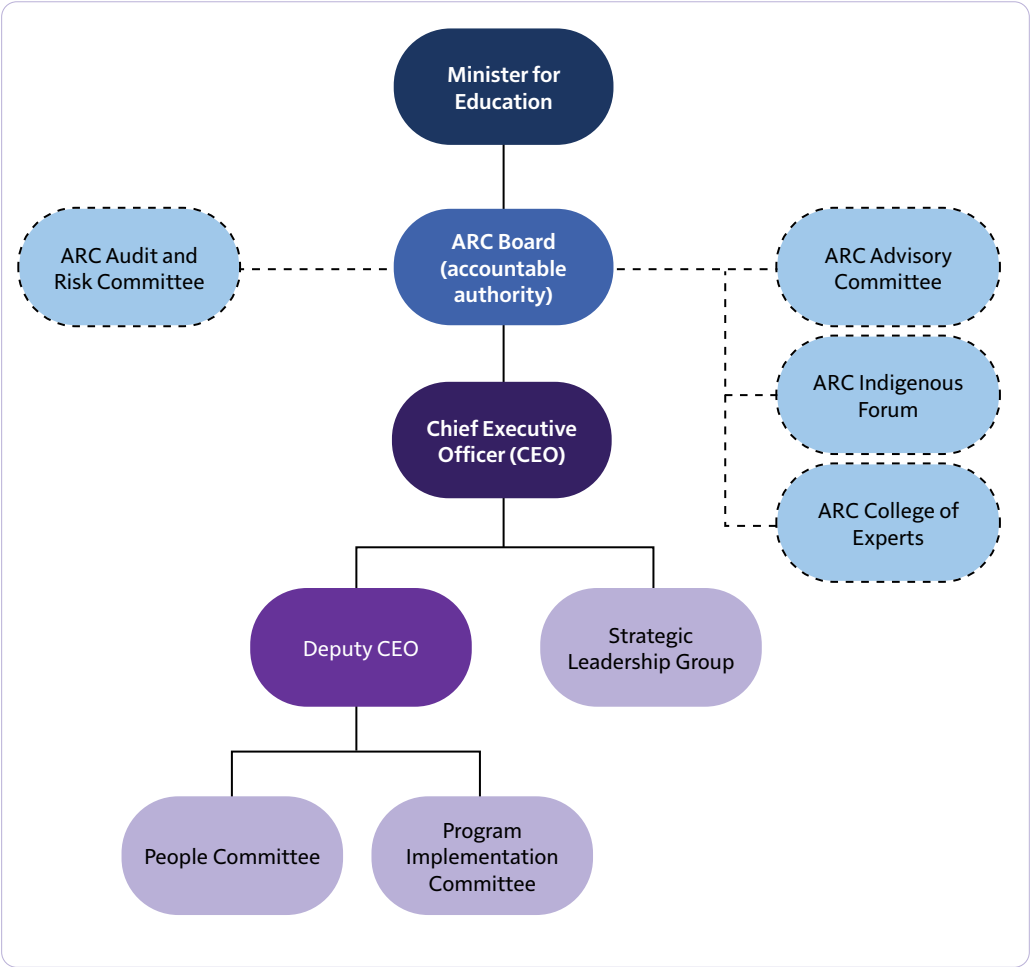
- The ARC Audit and Risk Committee comprises independent members who are not officials of the ARC. The committee provides independent advice to the ARC Board on governance and risk matters including the appropriateness of the ARC's financial and performance reporting; system of risk oversight and management; and system of internal control.
- The ARC Advisory Committee comprises members with a variety of skills and experiences across higher education, industry, civil society and public administration. It also includes members who are familiar with the particular challenges facing regional and rural Australia. The committee assists the Board in determining priorities, strategies and policies for the ARC.
- The ARC Indigenous Forum comprises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives including eminent academics; industry, community and research end-users; and early- and mid-career researchers. The forum supports and provides advice to the Board, assisting its work to strengthen First Nations leadership and research in Australia's higher education sector.
- The ARC College of Experts (College) comprises experts of international standing drawn from the Australian research community, appointed by the Board. The College assists the Board in the exercise of its powers through their support in advising on and participating in the peer review process, which plays a key role in identifying research excellence.

The CEO reports to the Board and is responsible for the agency’s day-to-day operations and assisting the Board in the performance of its functions. The operations of the ARC are coordinated through internal management committees comprising the Strategic Leadership Group, People Committee, and the Program Implementation Committee.

The CEO is supported by the ARC’s Deputy CEO; 4 branches; and a cohort of Academic Directors that provide strategic advice on research and research administration matters.

The Deputy CEO leads the team of senior managers and is responsible for providing strategic advice to the CEO on agency and government policies, programs and operations. The position determines organisational policies and strategies in consultation with the CEO. The Deputy CEO also oversees the strategic development and reform of the agency across a diverse range of areas, including research grant policy and administration; research security; improved research grant program design and delivery; stakeholder engagement; and the provision of advice on the higher education and research sectors.

Figure 1: Governance structure



Environment

The ARC operates within a dynamic domestic and international research ecosystem encompassing researchers, universities, government, industry, and research end-users. Positioned within the Australian Government's Education portfolio and operating under our enabling legislation (the ARC Act) we work in partnership with stakeholders across this environment to shape Australian research.

The ARC's leadership and funding role in the Australian research ecosystem is guided by our operating environment and the Australian Government's priorities. Within the Education portfolio, these include the priorities outlined in the Minister's [Statement of Expectations](#) and the reforms undertaken by the Australian Tertiary Education Commission and the Antisemitism Education taskforce. They also extend to other government research priorities such as the [National Science Statement](#), the [National Science and Research Priorities](#), the Future Made in Australia policy agenda.

At a time of increasing public scrutiny, maintaining responsible and ethical research practices is more important than ever. While research in Australia is overwhelmingly conducted to the standards expected by the Australian community, there are always opportunities to strengthen the system that safeguards those standards. The ARC and NHMRC are working with Universities Australia to understand how Australia's research integrity system is operating and where it can be further strengthened.

Rapid geopolitical and economic changes may pose foreign interference risks and create uncertainty in how the ARC, researchers, industry and other partners work together. The ARC continues to strengthen its due diligence on funded research collaborations in line with the Minister's responsibilities under the ARC Act and broader government expectations. The ARC works alongside other agencies to manage research security risk in government-funded research. This includes ensuring that applicants seeking ARC funding are informed of their obligations under Australian law and working with Australian universities to ensure that they can demonstrate their commitment to protecting Australia's security, defence and international relations. Similarly, in making decisions about grant applications, the ARC Board has strong regard for relevant laws, including applicants' past compliance with these obligations.

The ARC administers 7% of the Australian Government's funding on research and development (R&D). The ARC's investment in Australian university research generates new knowledge, drives innovation and lays the foundations for future economic and societal benefit.

In a tight fiscal environment with competing priorities, the ARC has a responsibility to demonstrate the value and impact of this investment. It is essential that the ARC regularly evaluates the effectiveness and efficiency of the research it funds; reports these findings to government; and demonstrates these benefits the Australian community. To support this, the ARC is establishing a robust evaluation framework for the NCGP.

More broadly, there is a national need to evaluate the excellence, impact and depth of all university research. Internationally, research evaluation is at a crossroads, and it is essential that national research evaluation activities are genuinely valuable, methodologically sound, and make use of open and existing data sources wherever possible. The ARC is leading national efforts in the development of the RIC, which will facilitate access to timely, actionable and inclusive information on Australian research outputs, outcomes, connections and practices. This work will strengthen the evidence base demonstrating the return on government investment in university research.

Although many factors influencing the ARC's operating environment are out of our control, we recognise that our performance over the coming years will play a significant role in guiding and supporting the Australian research sector to thrive in increasingly dynamic conditions and we will continue to evolve to deliver against our purpose, key activities and priorities. The ARC has a responsibility and a commitment to identify and acknowledge the ongoing changes within our operating environment, and importantly, to mitigate risks and seize opportunities as they arise.

Capability

The ARC is a small agency with big ambition. To undertake our key activities and achieve our purpose, we must continue to foster and grow the capabilities to make the most of what enables us: people, skills and expertise; culture and practices; partnerships and engagement; data and technology; and legislation and regulations.

The ARC Capability Framework sets out the essential organisational capabilities the ARC requires. Throughout 2026–27, the ARC will continue to focus on maximising our resources by reprioritising efforts towards delivering on the priorities outlined in the Minister’s Statement of Expectations and the recommendations outlined in the NCGP Policy Review, and undertaking a range of development activities to enhance our capabilities.

People, skills and expertise

- Continue to implement the ARC Learning and Development Strategy 2024–2027 through a mix of essential, facilitated, role-specific and team-led learning opportunities.
- Explore pathways to strengthen the ARC’s AI organisational maturity by supporting exploration of AI capabilities that are underpinned by governance, oversight, and guardrails to ensure trustworthy and responsible practice, consistent with the ARC’s Transparency Statement and AI Acceptable Use Policy.
- Develop and implement succession planning strategies and mobility opportunities by identifying roles within branches where internal mobility can be leveraged to build capability and capacity.
- Continue to uplift data capability across the agency in line with the ARC’s Data Strategy through targeted training to help users’ self-service data requests.
- Embed evaluation as a core agency capability, with staff applying evaluative thinking appropriate to their role.

APS Strategic Commissioning Framework

As required by the [Australian Public Service \(APS\) Strategic Commissioning Framework](#), for the 2026–27 reporting year the ARC has identified job functions within the following job families as core work:

- Accounting and Finance (procurement and contracting)
- Policy (policy design)
- Service Delivery (grants management)
- Strategic Leadership (senior executive)
- Portfolio, Program and Project Management (program delivery).

In line with the *APS Strategic Commissioning Framework*, the ARC will continue to examine opportunities to reduce outsourcing of core work – focusing on the Portfolio, Program and Project Management job family.

Culture and practices

- Support and promote the work of our Diversity Working Group and diversity initiatives to provide a safe and inclusive workplace.
- Review the ARC's individual performance management process to align with the [APS performance framework](#); ensure clearer performance expectations; promote regular and open feedback; and support a culture of high performance.
- Implement refreshed annual business planning processes that incorporate and operationalise principles of the ARC's new operating model.
- Review the ARC's new operating model and organisational structure for effectiveness.
- Develop an employee value proposition and work with staff to embed behaviours that support diversity and inclusion and strengthen accountability, trust, empowerment, innovation and high performance across ARC teams.

Partnerships and engagement

- Strengthen the ARC's influence through proactive engagement with the research sector and broader community – including on investment in early-stage research – through collaboration and consultation on changes to ARC programs and policies, supported by a refreshed ARC Communications Strategy.
- Deliver targeted engagement and communications activities, aligned to the ARC's Communications Strategy, to support effective, transparent and timely engagement with stakeholders across the research ecosystem.
- Advance international engagement and collaboration, working with peer research funders and international networks to enable best practice; align approaches where appropriate; and explore opportunities for coordinated or complementary initiatives that are consistent with the ARC's legislative remit and government policy.
- Engage across government and the sector through formal and informal working groups that bring together expertise on cross-cutting priorities such as research security, research integrity, regulation and system resilience.
- Strengthen the ARC's leadership of peer review and assessment processes, including sustaining and broadening the pool of expert assessors, and supporting confidence in the integrity and quality of funding decisions.
- Enhance engagement with assessors and research partners, including improving systems and processes that support efficient communication, participation and recognition of expert contribution.
- Strengthen collaboration with partner agencies and service providers, including through Research Grants Services and system partnerships, to improve post-award experiences, access to data and expertise, and effective use of shared platforms.
- Identify opportunities to reduce duplication and share resources with the Department of Education and other research funders.

Data and technology

- Pilot AI-driven approaches to streamline business processes across the agency and enhance analytics capability for policy evaluation and delivery of evaluation objectives.
- Finalise implementation of a modern data analytics and computing platform to enhance organisational data capability and enable the expanded use of advanced analytics and AI applications.
- Modernise and optimise our document and content management environment, to foster improved collaboration; streamline document management; and enhance communication capabilities.
- Progress implementation of the [ARC Research Data Framework](#) to build data capabilities; improve research data practices; and increase access to research outputs and datasets.
- Implement automated progress and end-of-project reporting that connects to an evaluation framework for the NCGP, which will be used to improve reporting efficiency and enable better analysis of the impact and outcomes of ARC-funded research.

Legislation and regulations

- Deliver post-award data management plans for ARC-funded projects to support ethical and responsible research.
- Deliver a refreshed ARC Performance Measurement Framework and suite of performance measures to enhance the ARC's performance measurement and reporting capabilities.
- Implement the findings of a review of probity arrangements and practices relating to the NCGP assessment process.
- Continue to improve processes to identify and assess risks relating to prospective and existing funding decisions made or administered by the ARC.

Risk management and oversight

The ARC Board has overall responsibility for risk management; setting the ARC's risk appetite and tolerance; and assessing strategic risks. The CEO and senior management work with the Board to promote and communicate risk management strategies and practices within the ARC; manage strategic, operational, fraud and corruption risks, and their controls; monitor the management of shared risks; and review the ARC Risk Management Framework.

Business areas routinely monitor the ARC's risk environment and review their risks and controls through a centralised online governance and risk management system. Risk information from all business areas is reported to the ARC Board, CEO and senior management. The ARC Audit and Risk Committee review the appropriateness of the ARC's systems of risk oversight, risk management, and internal controls, and provide advice to the Board.

The ARC Risk Management Framework aligns with the [Commonwealth Risk Management Policy](#) and supports our staff in carrying out risk management effectively. The 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's internal risk management policy, plan and toolkit, which articulate our risk culture, appetite, tolerance and approach to engaging with risk.

The ARC has 5 key strategic risks which could affect the agency's achievement of its objectives (**Table 2**). The ARC actively manages and regularly reviews the controls for these risks.

Table 2: Strategic risks and mitigations

Strategic risk	Mitigations
Strategic leadership on research policy matters	The ARC is strengthening policy capability across the agency and works closely with government to stay aligned with national priorities and the broader geopolitical context. The ARC's engagement on research policy matters is increasingly proactive. It builds inclusive and collaborative relationships with stakeholders through consultation and codesign and is bolstered by the ARC Academic Directors' engagement and experience within the research community. Our engagement is supported by strategic communications, strong partnerships, and improved internal coordination that ensures consistent messaging.
ARC-funded research demonstrates expected value and impact	The ARC implements several policies and processes, such as rigorous grants administration and peer review systems, to support the funding of research that will lead to new knowledge. We continually improve grants administration processes, striving to enhance engagement with our stakeholders and to progress vital work on implementing recommendations from the NCGP Policy Review. These recommendations include developing a robust evaluation framework to assess and demonstrate the value and impact of ARC-funded research. Furthermore, the ARC's RIC will provide dynamic reporting on the state of the broader university research sector and include metrics to evaluate the excellence, impact and depth of Australian university research.
Upholding security, integrity and compliance in the administration of research funding	The ARC has strengthened research integrity, security and compliance throughout the NCGP grant lifecycle. This includes improved due diligence, disclosure, and conflict of interest processes, and measures to ensure that funded research complies with applicable laws and government expectations. We work closely with relevant government agencies to inform risk assessments and decision-making, supported by Minister-endorsed frameworks and cross-government collaboration. Dedicated functions, clear policy frameworks, and active engagement with stakeholders promote transparency, lawful conduct and shared responsibility. Ongoing refinement of systems and capabilities ensures emerging risks relating to integrity, security and compliance are effectively identified and managed.
Complying with legislative requirements and government policies	The ARC consistently fosters productive relationships and engages with our stakeholders and colleagues across government. We participate in interdepartmental committees and working groups that support our ability to interpret and comply with government policies and legislation. The NCGP Policy Review and development of the new RIC, supported by our research policy and data capacity, will position the ARC at the forefront of Australian research strategy and policy. With its unique legislated responsibilities to assess and advise on research security risks, the ARC works alongside other agencies, to manage research security risk in government funded research. The ARC is also actively engaging with the Department of Education through the Commonwealth Research Grants Working Group established by the Antisemitism Education Taskforce. The ARC will continually review and improve its processes for identifying and assessing risks related to prospective and existing funding decisions that it has made or administers, and to ensure grant funding applicants understand their legal obligations.
Building and sustaining the ARC's organisational capability and culture to achieve its mission	Implementation of the ARC People Strategy and Capability Framework, supported by targeted learning and development initiatives, continues to strengthen our workforce capability and culture. We are building leadership capability; enhancing workforce planning; and expanding data-informed decision-making to ensure we can deliver on strategic priorities, including NCGP reforms. The ARC fosters a positive, psychosocially safe, inclusive and respectful workplace through wellbeing initiatives, employee support programs, and regular staff engagement activities. We are also advancing succession planning and knowledge management to support organisational continuity and sustain high performance.

Cooperation

In addition to supporting the Minister for Education, we cooperate and collaborate with a broad range of national and international stakeholders. The organisations and stakeholders that play a significant role in helping us achieve our purpose are outlined in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Stakeholder contributions to achieving our purpose

Stakeholder	Contribution towards achieving our purpose
Australian universities	Australian universities are key stakeholders of the ARC as they are the recipients of the funding we administer through the NCGP, which is at the core of our purpose as an agency. The ARC's role also includes evaluation of the excellence, impact and depth of university research. The ARC works closely with university leaders, such as Vice Chancellors, Deputy Vice Chancellors (Research) and university research offices. This engagement helps to ensure we are informed by sector knowledge and that there is awareness and understanding of our policies and grants processes, as well as compliance with the funding requirements and participation in our national research assessments.
Researchers	Researchers, including early- and mid-career researchers, play an important role across the NCGP and our national research assessments. They deliver excellent research and research outcomes; peer-review applications for the NCGP; and participate in our research evaluations. The ARC College of Experts comprises experts of international standing drawn from the Australian research community, which includes university researchers; experienced researchers with industry expertise; and senior researchers from public sector research organisations. The College plays a central role in identifying and recommending research excellence for funding.
Department of Education	The ARC sits within the Education portfolio, and we regularly engage with the Department of Education to ensure our advice on research policy is available to the government and that our priorities are aligned with government activities. The Department of Education also works closely with the ARC on numerous key activities and priorities, including research security assessments and the development of a new National Research Evaluation and Impact Framework.

Stakeholder	Contribution towards achieving our purpose
Other government departments and agencies	The ARC works across government to align our activities with strategic government priorities and ensure that we comply with cross-government legislative requirements. We partner with other Australian Government entities to support the design and administration of their research grants programs. We also coordinate the timing of grant opportunities with other government entities who administer research grants. The ARC engages with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Department of Home Affairs, the Department of Industry, Science and Resources and the Department of Defence on matters relating to security, defence and international relations. We collaborate closely with the NHMRC to align grant administration practices and policies where appropriate, including open access policies, the use of persistent identifiers, and the use of AI. The ARC and NHMRC jointly oversee the Australian Research Integrity Committee, which contributes to public confidence in the integrity of Australia's research effort. 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.
First Nations communities and individuals	The ARC engages with First Nations communities and individuals by supporting First Nations researchers across all disciplines; strengthening First Nations leadership in research; and funding research that reflects First Nations communities, knowledges and perspectives through the ARC's grant programs. This engagement is guided and supported by the ARC Indigenous Forum, which advises the ARC Board and comprises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives, including eminent academics; industry, community and research end-users; and early- and mid-career researchers. The ARC is also recruiting its first Academic Director (Indigenous), who will work closely with the ARC Indigenous Forum, the ARC Board, universities and Indigenous research communities to provide strategic leadership, policy advice and sector engagement.
Industry, not-for-profit organisations and other research end-users	Industry, not-for-profit organisations and other research end-users help to maximise the 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. The ARC's engagement with these stakeholders is supplemented by the ARC Advisory Committee, which consists of members with a variety of skills and experiences across higher education, industry, civil society and public administration, including members who are familiar with the challenges facing regional and rural Australia.
Research peak bodies	The ARC collaborates closely with Australian and international research peak bodies. These engagements ensure that our policies and programs are fit-for-purpose and meet the broader needs of the Australian research sector.
International research funding bodies and collaborators	The ARC is committed to creating and boosting international research collaboration opportunities. Encouraging global research linkages through our schemes is key to ensuring Australian researchers can connect and partner with outstanding international researchers to produce world-leading research outcomes. We engage with international research funders individually and through our membership of the Global Research Council and the Research on Research Institute, supporting policy development and sharing expertise.

Performance

The ARC's Performance Measurement Framework provides a structured approach to monitoring, measuring and reporting how effectively we deliver our purpose and key activities. It is aligned with the [Commonwealth Performance Framework](#) and the [Commonwealth Evaluation Policy](#).

Our performance measures are developed using program logic modelling, which establishes a clear line of sight between our inputs, actions, outputs and intended outcomes. Within the context of the *Commonwealth Performance Framework*, the ARC's inputs are the funds appropriated through our budget programs; our actions are our key activities, which are enabled by our inputs; our outputs are the tangible products, services or deliverables that are a result of our key activities; and our intended outcomes are described by our outcome statement (see **Figure 2**).

The portfolio budget statements and corporate plans outline the ARC's budget programs, key activities and outcome, along with the performance measures used to assess their effectiveness and achievement. The annual performance statements, which are included in our annual reports, report on our actual performance results and outputs against those performance measures.

Figure 2: Overview of the ARC Performance Measurement Framework



² As per the *ARC Portfolio Budget Statements 2026–27*.

³ The 2023 ERA round was discontinued, and the Australian Universities Accord has made recommendations regarding a future National Research Evaluation and Impact Framework. The government is currently considering the recommendations made in the Australian Universities Accord final report.

Performance measures

The ARC is undertaking a broad review and uplift of its performance measurement framework. The aim of this is to enhance our performance measurement and reporting capabilities, and to refine and strengthen our suite of performance measures to ensure they are meaningful, reliable and fit-for-purpose.

In doing so, the ARC has implemented an appropriate reduced suite of performance measures for the 2026–27 reporting period, as published in the [ARC Portfolio Budget Statements 2026–27](#). This reduced suite consists of 5 existing performance measures and 7 sub-measures, which align with our purpose, key activities and budget programs.⁴

This section outlines the 2026–27 performance measures and sub-measures, the results of which will be reported in the annual performance statements published in the ARC's 2026–27 annual report.

During 2026–27, the ARC will progress the development of a refreshed, fit-for-purpose suite of performance measures to improve efficiency while maintaining clear accountability. This process will be focused on ensuring alignment with the ARC's legislative functions, strategic priorities, and outcomes of the NCGP Policy Review. This ongoing work is aimed at implementing an updated suite of measures for the 2027–28 reporting year.

The ARC's approach to evaluating the excellence, impact and value of Australian research through the Research Insights Capability (RIC) is currently being developed and therefore does not have a specific performance measure in place for 2026–27. While the 2026–27 suite of performance measures does not include a measure dedicated to RIC, sub-measure 5.4 measures the progress of the ARC Research Data Framework, which is closely linked to the RIC and will provide a strong foundation for future delivery of this activity. Progress in developing the RIC is also closely monitored through internal reporting mechanisms.

⁴ A sub-measure is a component of a performance measure, representing a specific element or target that contributes to the overall measure. Performance is assessed by monitoring and reporting on results across all relevant sub-measures.

Performance measure 1	The percentage of ARC schemes completed in time to meet ARC published timeframes		
Target	100% of scheme round outcomes are announced within the timeframes published on the ARC website		
Summarised methodology	For all NCGP scheme rounds (excluding expressions of interest) where funding outcomes were announced during the reporting period – the number of rounds, where outcomes were announced within or before the expected timeframes as published on the ARC website, is divided by all rounds where outcomes were announced and is displayed as a percentage. A scheme is considered as announced on time when its outcomes are released within the published timeframe. The following assessment rules apply: - Where a scheme round includes multiple tranches of funding outcome announcements, the announcement date is defined as the date on which at least 95% of funding outcomes have been released. - Where the final stages of the approval process are delayed due to a significant external event, such as a federal election, the scheme may still be considered as delivered on time.		
Changes from previous year	- The measure remains functionally unchanged from the previous year. To improve transparency, the summarised methodology published externally is expanded to better reflect the measure's detailed methodology. This amendment outlines the 95% threshold and exception for significant external events, which is applied when considering if a scheme is announced on time. - Updated to align with the ARC's amended set of key activities		
Related budget programs	1.1 and 1.2	Planned reporting period	2026–27
Related key activities	Administer and support research grants programs	Measure type/s	- Quantitative - Efficiency
Intended outcome	NCGP application assessment processes are conducted in an efficient and timely manner		
Target rationale	This measure identifies that the ARC is delivering funding recommendations to the Minister and the ARC Board in a timely manner to ensure outcomes are delivered. Scheme assessment processes are an indication of the efficiency of the process and the ease with which researchers and partner organisations can access support.		

Performance measure 2	The average number of days for the ARC to respond to reported outcomes of research integrity investigations		
Target	Investigation outcomes reported to the ARC Research Integrity Office are considered and responded to by the ARC in less than or equal to 30 working days on average		
Summarised methodology	For all outcomes of an integrity investigation by an institution responded to by the ARC within the reporting period – the number of working days for the ARC to respond, is divided by the total number of investigation outcomes that the ARC responded to, to calculate an average number of working days		
Changes from previous year	- The measure remains functionally unchanged from the previous year. Minor editorial amendments have been made to the measure name, target and methodology to improve clarity. - Updated to align with the ARC's amended set of key activities		
Related budget programs	1.1 and 1.2	Planned reporting period	2026–27
Related key activities	- Uphold research standards and processes - Administer and support research grants programs	Measure types	- Quantitative - Efficiency
Intended outcome	ARC-funded research is undertaken with integrity and complies with national codes on research ethics and the ARC Research Integrity Policy		
Target rationale	Less than or equal to 30 working days allows sufficient time for the ARC to review and make a determination. Calculation based on working days allows public holidays and the end-of-year shutdown period to be excluded from the calculation.		

Performance measure 3	The proportion of funded Chief Investigators who are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander researchers		
Target	The proportion of Chief Investigators who identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander researcher on funded applications is higher than the previous reporting period		
Summarised methodology	For all NCGP scheme rounds where funding outcomes were announced during the reporting period for 4 consecutive financial years – the number of unique Chief Investigators who identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander researcher on funded applications is divided by the total number of unique Chief Investigators on funded applications for those same scheme rounds and is displayed as a percentage, to calculate the average over 4 consecutive financial years		
Changes from previous year	- The measure remains functionally unchanged from the previous year. Minor editorial amendments have been made to the measure name and methodology. - Updated to align with the ARC's amended set of key activities		
Related budget programs	1.1 and 1.2	Planned reporting period	2026–27
Related key activities	- Administer and support research grants programs - Strengthen and expand collaboration, careers and knowledge systems	Measure type/s	- Quantitative - Output
Intended outcome	ARC grant activities support leadership of projects by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander researchers		
Target rationale	Current stretch target is set based on calculation from the data available for the last 4 financial years. Rolling average allows for natural variation in application numbers over time.		

Performance measure 4	The ARC peer review process supports the identification of research excellence		
Target	The ARC uses a robust peer review process to make funding recommendations based on expertise representing the breadth of research fields funded by the ARC, and through close engagement with the research sector		
Summarised methodology	The ARC has identified 3 sub-measures (with defined targets) to determine whether the ARC peer review process supports the identification of research excellence. The target will be: • Achieved: if the target is met for all 3 sub-measures • Substantially achieved: if the target is met for 2 of the 3 sub-measures • Not achieved: if the target is met for one or none of the sub-measures. If a sub-measure has no available data or is not applicable for the reporting period, its target will be considered met solely for the purpose of this calculation. However, for transparency its reported status must still be shown as 'no data' or 'not applicable'.		
Changes from previous year	• The measure remains functionally unchanged from the previous year. Minor editorial amendments have been made to the measure name and, to improve transparency, the summarised methodology published externally is expanded to better reflect the measure's detailed methodology. This amendment outlines the thresholds used to determine the level of achievement. • The previously used term 'reporting mechanisms' has been amended to 'sub-measures' to better reflect their purpose • Updated to align with the ARC's amended set of key activities		
Related budget programs	1.1 and 1.2	Planned reporting period	2026–27
Related key activities	• Administer and support research grants programs • Strengthen and expand collaboration, careers and knowledge systems	Measure types	• Quantitative • Output • Composite
Intended outcome	The ARC uses a robust peer review process to make funding recommendations based on expertise representing the breadth of research fields funded by the ARC, and through close engagement with the research sector		
Target rationale	• Sub-measure 4.1 ensures applications are being assessed thoroughly to determine whether they should be funded • Sub-measure 4.2 ensures the people completing the application assessments have sufficient expertise to do so • Sub-measure 4.3 focuses on the communication and engagement of the peer review process, highlighting the prestige of becoming a member of the College of Experts, which allows ARC to increase the number of people within the College who can conduct peer review assessments		

Sub-measure 4.1	The percentage of full applications that receive a minimum of 2 peer review assessments per application across all NCGP schemes
Target	More than or equal to 90% of applications receive a minimum of 2 peer review assessments
Summarised methodology	For all NCGP schemes (excluding Special Research Initiatives and Linkage Learned Academies Special Projects) where applications closed within the reporting period and all assessments have been completed – the number of full applications that received 2 or more peer review assessments is divided by the total number of applications assessed for those same scheme rounds and is displayed as a percentage
Changes from previous year	• The sub-measure remains functionally unchanged from the previous year. Minor editorial amendments have been made to the methodology. • Updated to align with the ARC's amended set of key activities
Related key activities	• Administer and support research grants programs
Intended outcome	The ARC funds the highest quality research and provides applicants with useful, constructive feedback for future applications
Target rationale	A minimum of 2 peer review assessments provides assurance that funded research projects are viable and will provide value to the community

Sub-measure 4.2	The proportion of Fields of Research represented by the ARC College of Experts
Target	ARC College of Experts represents more than or equal to 80% of the total number of Fields of Research (FoR) covered by the NCGP
Summarised methodology	The FoR codes assigned to each member of the College of Experts is divided by the total number of FoR codes as classified by the Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classification (ANZSRC)
Changes from previous year	• The sub-measure remains functionally unchanged from the previous year. Minor editorial amendments have been made to the methodology. • Updated to align with the ARC's amended set of key activities
Related key activities	• Administer and support research grants programs
Intended outcome	The College of Experts has the broad expertise necessary to reliably identify research excellence across all disciplines
Target rationale	A target of 80% of the total FoRs being represented by the College of Experts allows for a natural variation of College members over time while maintaining the broad coverage required for assessing the NCGP

Sub-measure 4.3	The number of communication and engagement activities where the ARC promotes, educates or recognises participation in the peer review process
Target	The number of communication and engagement activities held or attended by the ARC – where the ARC promoted, educated or recognised participation in the peer review process – is more than or equal to the previous year
Summarised methodology	The total number of events attended or held by the ARC during the reporting period that were reported to promote, educate or recognise participation in the peer review process
Changes from previous year	• The sub-measure remains functionally unchanged from the previous year. Minor editorial amendments have been made to the sub-measure name. • Updated to align with the ARC's amended set of key activities
Related key activities	• Administer and support research grants programs • Strengthen and expand collaboration, careers and knowledge systems
Intended outcome	Academics who conduct reviews are recognised for their contributions and educated on review processes and expectations, ensuring consistency and the maintenance of high standards. The value of peer review is actively promoted, contributing to an increase in applications from academics seeking to join the ARC College of Experts.
Target rationale	The importance of the peer review process is highlighted by the ARC attending a high number of communication and engagement activities where peer review is promoted and discussed

Performance measure 5	The ARC provides advice on research across government		
Target	Providing timely advice on research across government		
Summarised methodology	The ARC has identified 4 sub-measures (with defined targets) to assess whether the ARC provides advice on research across government. The target will be: • Achieved: if the target is met for all 4 sub-measures • Substantially achieved: if the target is met for 2 or 3 of the 4 sub-measures • Not achieved: if the target is met for one or none of the sub-measures. If a sub-measure has no available data or is not applicable for the reporting period, its target will be considered met solely for the purpose of this calculation. However, for transparency its reported status must still be shown as 'no data' or 'not applicable'.		
Changes from previous year	• Apart from introducing a new sub-measure, the measure remains functionally unchanged from the previous year. Minor editorial amendments have been made to the measure name and target and, to improve transparency, the summarised methodology published externally is expanded to better reflect the measure's detailed methodology. This amendment outlines the thresholds used to determine the level of achievement. • Sub-measure 5.4 was introduced to measure the delivery and transformation of initiatives that aim to build data capabilities, improve research data practices, and increase access to research outputs and datasets. These initiatives will directly contribute to development of a research insights capability that supports the ARC's provision of evidence-based advice on research • The previously used term 'reporting mechanisms' has been amended to 'sub-measures' to better reflect their purpose • Updated to align with the ARC's amended set of key activities		
Related budget programs	1.1, 1.2 and 1.3	Planned reporting period	2026–27
Related key activities	• Provide research policy advice • Evaluate and promote the excellence, impact and value of Australian research • Strengthen and expand collaboration, careers and knowledge systems	Measure types	• Quantitative • Output • Composite
Intended outcome	The ARC is a trusted and consistent source of advice on research matters across government		
Target rationale	• Sub-measure 5.1 ensures that parliamentary advice is provided within the requested timeframe to be considered by the government • Sub-measure 5.2 records the number of interdepartmental committees and forums that the ARC participates in, which indicates the amount of advice that is provided • Sub-measure 5.3 ensures we are employing an appropriate suite of expertise from the research sector that can contribute to the advice that is given • Sub-measure 5.4 ensures we are building research data maturity to enable significant understanding of the value and contributions that Australian research makes both nationally and internationally		

Sub-measure 5.1	The ARC provides advice on research to parliamentary inquiries within timeframes provided
Target	The ARC makes submissions (i.e. responds) to 100% of formal parliamentary inquiries within the timeframes provided
Summarised methodology	For each parliamentary inquiry responded to within the reporting period – the number of parliamentary inquiries responded to by the ARC on time (i.e. as per the submission due date outlined in the inquiry request) is divided by the total number of parliamentary inquiries received by the ARC and is displayed as a percentage
Changes from previous year	• The sub-measure remains functionally unchanged from the previous year. Minor editorial amendments have been made to the sub-measure name and methodology. • Updated to align with the ARC's amended set of key activities
Related key activities	• Provide research policy advice and insight • Strengthen and expand collaboration, careers and knowledge systems
Intended outcome	The ARC's advice is considered by parliamentary committees
Target rationale	Responding to parliamentary inquiries by the submission due date ensures that ARC advice is considered by the inquiry. A target of 100% ensures ARC is providing advice effectively and at all opportunities.

Sub-measure 5.2	The number of research-related committees and forums where the ARC delivers policy advice
Target	The ARC delivers policy advice through 10 research-related interdepartmental committees (IDCs) and forums
Summarised methodology	The sum of unique research-related IDCs with ARC membership and the number of unique research-related forums attended by the ARC, during the reporting period
Changes from previous year	- The name, target and methodology of this sub-measure have been adjusted to focus on IDC membership (rather than participation in individual meetings) and attendance at forums to better reflect the engagements where the ARC is actively delivering policy advice - Updated to align with the ARC's amended set of key activities
Related key activities	- Provide research policy advice and insight - Strengthen and expand collaboration, careers and knowledge systems
Intended outcome	The ARC is a consistent source of advice on research matters, and is informed by advice from other stakeholders
Target rationale	The ARC's membership of IDCs and attendance of forums that are related to research indicates the ARC's proactive participation in discussions on research policy. The more the IDCs and forums the ARC engages with, the more opportunities there are for the ARC to deliver policy advice.

Sub-measure 5.3	The number of senior academics engaged as Academic Directors who provide the ARC with advice on research
Target	The average number of Academic Directors engaged by the ARC across the year will be more than or equal to 3
Summarised methodology	The number of Academic Directors engaged by ARC during each quarter of the reporting period is divided by 4
Changes from previous year	- The sub-measure remains functionally unchanged from the previous year. Minor editorial amendments have been made to the target and methodology. - Updated to align with the ARC's amended set of key activities
Related key activities	- Provide research policy advice and insight - Strengthen and expand collaboration, careers and knowledge systems
Intended outcome	ARC advice on research is informed by academic leaders who bring broad disciplinary expertise and experience in research and research management
Target rationale	Having multiple Academic Directors, representing a broad range of disciplines, ensures the ARC has a breadth of experience, perspectives, and expertise across the spectrum of ARC-funded research

Sub-measure 5.4	The percentage of ARC Research Data Framework actions completed
Target	The ARC completes more than or equal to 70% of actions outlined in the ARC Research Data Framework
Summarised methodology	The number of actions outlined in the ARC Research Data Framework completed during the reporting period is divided by the total number of actions outlined in the framework and is displayed as a percentage. The target will be: • Achieved: if the percentage of actions completed is more than or equal to 70% • Substantially achieved: if the percentage of actions completed is less than 70% and above or equal to 50% • Not achieved: if the percentage of actions completed is less than 50%.
Changes from previous year	• N/A – new sub-measure
Related key activities	• Provide research policy advice and insight • Evaluate and promote the excellence, impact and value of Australian research
Intended outcome	Improved quality and availability of research data; reduced administrative burden on the research sector by minimising duplication in data collection; and improved reproducibility, provenance and attribution of research
Target rationale	The actions outlined in the ARC Research Data Framework aim to build data capabilities, improve research data practices, and increase access to research outputs and datasets. Setting a target of 70% reflects the ARC's commitment to making substantial progress in these areas, while recognising that some initiatives will require a longer timeframe to be fully implemented.

Reference material

Acronyms and abbreviations

AC	Companion of the Order of Australia
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AM	Member of the Order of Australia
APS	Australian Public Service
ARC	Australian Research Council
ARC Act	<i>Australian Research Council Act 2001</i>
ARC Strategy	<i>ARC Strategy 2026–35</i>
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
College	ARC College of Experts
Corporate Plan	<i>ARC Corporate Plan 2026–27</i>
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
ERA	Excellence in Research for Australia
FAA	Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science
FASSA	Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences
Minister	Minister for Education
NCGP	National Competitive Grants Program
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
PGPA Act	<i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i>
PGPA Rule	<i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014</i>
R&D	Research and development
RIC	Research Insights Capability
RMS	Research Management System

Glossary

Administering Organisation: An Eligible Organisation that submits an application for grant funds and is responsible for the administration of grant funds under a Grant Agreement.

Australian Universities Accord: An Australian Government review of the higher education system, aimed at devising recommendations and performance targets to improve the quality, accessibility, affordability and sustainability of higher education for the long-term benefit of the nation.

Chief Investigator: A researcher who satisfies the eligibility criteria for a Chief Investigator under the relevant Grant Opportunity Guidelines and takes responsibility for the conduct of an ARC-funded project.

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, excluding any approved period of career interruption.

Eligible Organisation: An organisation that satisfies the eligibility criteria for an Administering Organisation under the relevant Grant Opportunity Guidelines.

Early-stage research: The initial phase of investigation in pure basic, strategic basic and/or applied research, characterised by the exploration of novel ideas or concepts. Research outcomes may include new knowledge, policy advice, proof of concept, preliminary data, or new theoretical frameworks.

Fields of Research: A term used to describe common knowledge domains and/or methodologies used in research and experimental development.

Grant Agreement: The agreement entered into by the ARC and an Administering Organisation when an application from that organisation is approved for funding.

Grant Opportunity 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.

Mid-career researcher: 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.

National Research Evaluation and Impact Framework: The Universities Accord final report recommended the ARC develop a fit-for-purpose research quality and impact evaluation system through the creation of a National Research Evaluation and Impact Framework that is data driven and uses intelligent technologies.

Partner Organisations: National or international organisations (other than Eligible Organisations) that satisfy the eligibility criteria for partner organisations under the relevant Grant Opportunity 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 assessment criteria.

Policy review of the NCGP: An Australian Government review of the ARC's NCGP, aimed at assessing the current strengths and weaknesses of the NCGP; ensuring the program is well-designed and fit-for-purpose in building and supporting Australia's research capacity and capability; enhances the program's ability to deliver visible returns on public investment through strengthened collaboration between the research sector and end-users of research; and aligns the NCGP with other government programs that support and invest in research.

Research Office: A business unit within an Eligible Organisation that is responsible for administrative contact with the ARC regarding applications and projects.

Research and development (R&D): Creative and systematic work undertaken to increase the stock of knowledge – including knowledge of humankind, culture and society – and to devise new applications of available knowledge.

Research translation: The process through which knowledge is used or applied to practical problems or issues to achieve outcomes that benefit the end-users of research.

Schemes/scheme rounds: A scheme is a grant opportunity round that targets a particular set of researchers and organisations or research issues with individual eligibility requirements, with one or more rounds of grant opportunities offered in a financial year.

List of requirements

PGPA Rule reference	Required element	Legislative requirement	Page number(s)
s16E(2) item 1	Introduction	The following: (a) a statement that the plan is prepared for paragraph 35(1)(b) of the Act; (b) the reporting period for which the plan is prepared; (c) the reporting periods covered by the plan.	4
s16E(2) item 2	Purposes	The purposes of the entity.	7, 20
s16E(2) item 3	Key activities	For the entire period covered by the plan, the key activities that the entity will undertake in order to achieve its purposes.	8, 20
s16E(2) item 4	Operating context	For the entire period covered by the plan, the following:	10-19
s16E(2) item 4(a)	Environment	(a) the environment in which the entity will operate;	12
s16E(2) item 4(b)	Capability	(b) the strategies and plans the entity will implement to have the capability it needs to undertake its key activities and achieve its purposes;	13-15
s16E(2) item 4(c)	Risk	(c) a summary of the risk oversight and management systems of the entity, and the key risks that the entity will manage and how those risks will be managed;	16-17
s16E(2) item 4(d)	Cooperation	(d) details of any organisation or body that will make a significant contribution towards achieving the entity's purposes through cooperation with the entity, including how that cooperation will help achieve those purposes;	18-19
s16E(2) item 4(e)	Subsidiaries	(e) how any subsidiary of the entity will contribute to achieving the entity's purposes.	N/A
s16E(2) item 5	Performance	For each reporting period covered by the plan, details of how the entity's performance in achieving the entity's purposes will be measured and assessed through: (a) specified performance measures for the entity that meet the requirements of section 16EA; and (b) specified targets for each of those performance measures for which it is reasonably practicable to set a target.	20-31

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