Australian Government
Australian Research Council

National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP) Key Performance Indicators (KPI) Targets – RMS User Guide and Instructions

Document Name:	**NCGP KPI Targets – RMS User Guide and Instructions**
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For the following schemes:

Centres of Excellence (CE)
Industry Transformation Research Program (ITRP)
Special Research Initiatives 2020 (SR20 R1)



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1. Purpose

1.1 Overview

The Australian Research Council (ARC) requires Key Performance Indicators (KPI) Targets to be submitted by some ARC funded projects. This includes projects funded through the ARC Centres of Excellence (CE), Industry Transformation Research Program (ITRP) and Special Research Initiative Program 2020 Round 1 (SR20 R1) schemes.

These instructions provide information to assist Research Office (RO) staff and Project participants in the completion and submission of KPI Targets within the Research Management System (RMS).

The Centre/Hub Director (Director) with the assistance of the Chief Operating Officer (COO)/Business Manager (BM) are responsible for the completion of the KPI Targets and its submission to the Administering Organisation's (AO) Research Office. The Director, COO/BM and Research Office staff all have full edit access to the KPI Targets. The Research Office is responsible for the certification of the form and submission of the KPI Targets to the ARC.

If, after consulting this document, there are any queries regarding completing the KPI Targets form in RMS, please contact the Administering Organisation's Research Office.

Note: Paper copies or any other electronic format of the KPI Targets will not be accepted by the ARC.

1.2 When to submit a KPI Targets to the ARC

For newly established grants, the KPI Targets are due within 6 months of the project start date recorded within RMS.

For existing grants, KPI Targets can be updated any time throughout the lifecycle of the project when necessary.

1.3 KPI Target Purpose

Information collected in the KPI Target form will be used to determine whether the Project is setting strong enough goals to progress towards a satisfactory completion. KPI Targets will be assessed against actuals reported in the Progress Report each year. Statistical information collected in KPI Targets and subsequent reporting of actuals enables the ARC to account for public funding of research and to promote the value of research to the Australian community. As such, the ARC reserves the right to reject KPI Targets to seek further clarification on information submitted or the lack thereof.

1.4 KPI Targets Extensions

Extensions for KPI Targets must be approved by the ARC via the Administering Organisation's Research Office. The request must note the Project ID and explain the extenuating circumstances. All requests for extensions must be made in writing to ARC Establish & Manage by email ARC-Postaward@arc.gov.au before the due date.

Note: the ARC will only accept requests for an extension to the KPI Targets due date if received from the Research Office of the Administering Organisation. Requests from researchers or other Participating Organisations will not be accepted.

1.5 Administration of KPI Targets form in RMS

KPI Targets form can only be accessed and managed through RMS. For general instructions on how to use RMS, refer to the RMS User Guide available on the ARC website.

All requests for RO Delegate access to RMS must be made in writing to ARC Establish & Manage by email ARC-Postaward@arc.gov.au.

For any RMS access issues, contact the ARC RMS Helpdesk at ARC-Systems@arc.gov.au.

Note: RMS is compatible with the latest versions of Google Chrome and Microsoft Edge. Compatibility with different browsers or older versions of Google Chrome and Microsoft Edge is not guaranteed.

1.6 Accessing the KPI Targets form

To access a KPI Target form within RMS you must have either of the following RMS roles for your organisation Research Office (RO) Staff, Research Office Delegate, or have an approved role in the project.

Project roles with access to the KPI Target form are:

- Director
- Chief Operating Officer
    - This role is a system title that captures roles such as COO's and Business Managers

Only the Research Office Delegate may certify or submit the form. Once certified or submitted, the form cannot be edited unless returned to a draft state by the ARC.

1.7 Time Required

Allow sufficient time to prepare and complete the form. The time required will depend on the number and complexity of KPI targets being entered. Grant administrators must be aware of submission requirements for their KPIs as stated in the relevant grant agreement.

1.8 Saving the form

Familiarise yourself with the 'Save' button and save your work regularly. RMS does not have an auto-save function and you may lose your information should your connection to RMS drop out.



Reminder: RMS has a time-out function and will log you out after 15 minutes of inactivity.

1.9 Certification and accuracy of information

KPI Targets form must be checked and certified by the Research Office Delegate, before they can be submitted to the ARC. The Research Office Delegate is required to certify that the report is complete and that all information provided within the KPI Targes form is accurate and up to date.



The 'Submitted to Research Office (Valid)' state will appear against each form which is ready to be certified. Once certified, the state of KPI Targets form will appear as 'Research Office Certified' and can then be submitted to the ARC by Research Office staff.

The following prompt will appear once the 'Certify KPI Targets' button has been selected:

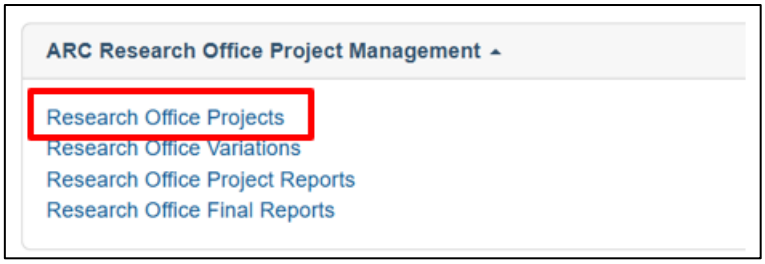
Check that all information contained in the KPI Targets form is accurate and that all required questions are completed as comprehensively as possible.

2. Creating a Form

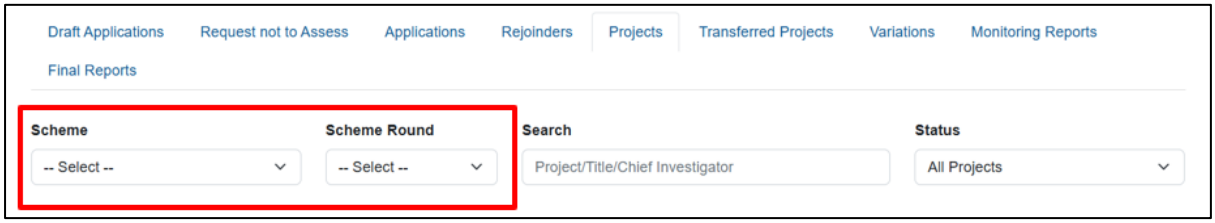
KPI Target forms can only be created by the Research Office Delegate or the ARC.

2.1 Research Office Delegate

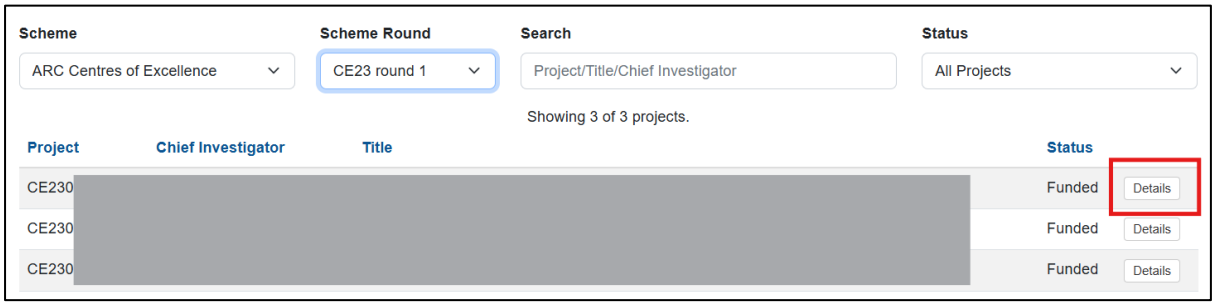
1. Login to RMS
2. In the *ARC Research Office Project Management* section of *Action Centre,* click on 'Research Office Projects'



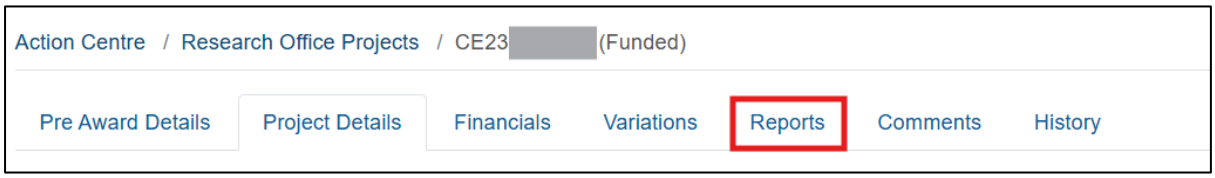
3. Use the filters to search for the relevant 'Scheme' and 'Scheme Round'



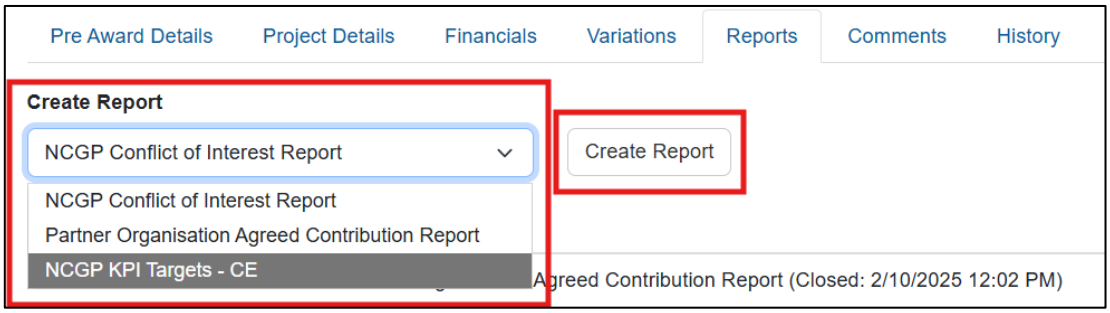
4. Find the relevant project from the list and click on 'Details'



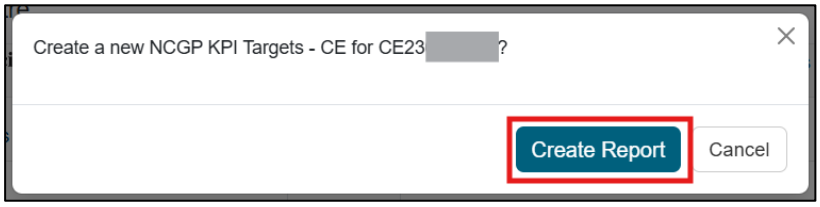
5. From the project details page, click the 'Reports' tab



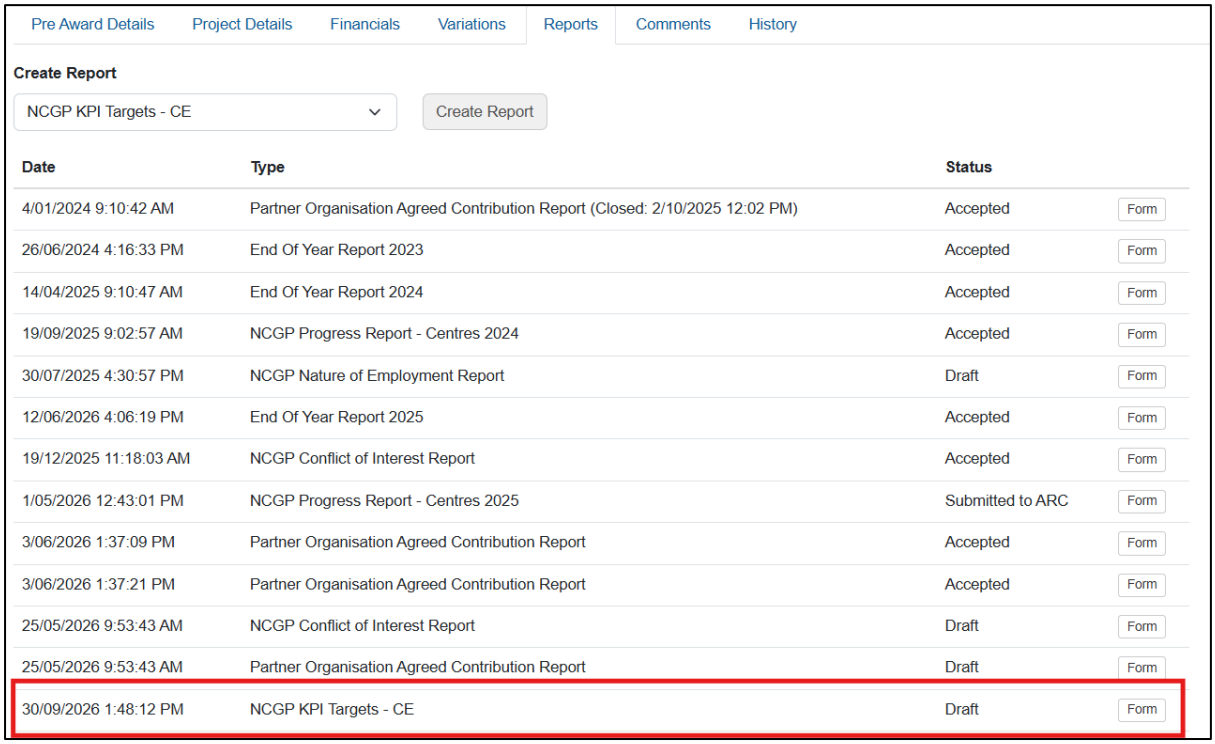
6. Use the Create Report dropdown to select the KPI Target form and click 'Create Report'



7. A pop up will appear, click 'Create Report'



The new KPI Target form will be added to the bottom of the 'Reports' list



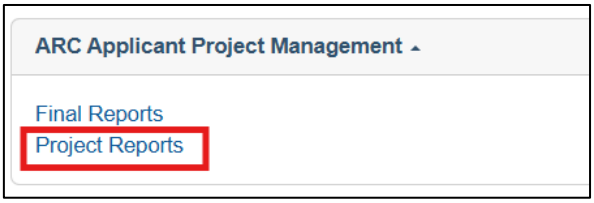
Once the KPI Target form has been created, Research Office Staff, Research Office Delegate and Directors/COO's can edit the form.

3. Accessing the Form

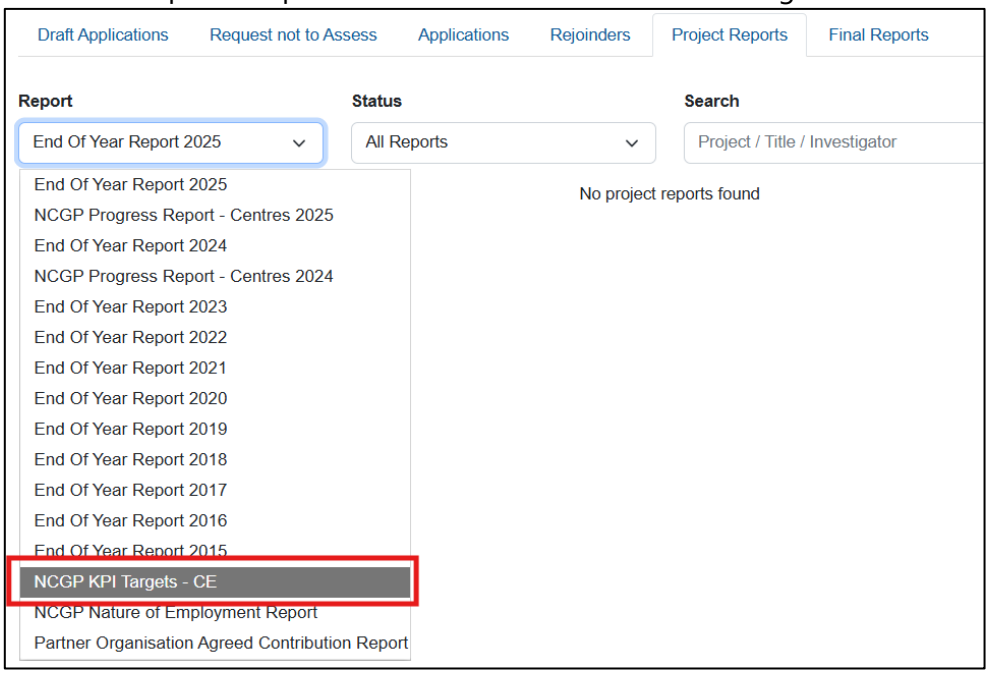
Access depends on what stage the form is in whether Draft, Submit to RO, Submit to Delegate, Certify or Submit to ARC stage. If the expected form or action is not visible, check that the form is created and at the correct stage for your role (Section 1.6).

3.1 As Director/COO

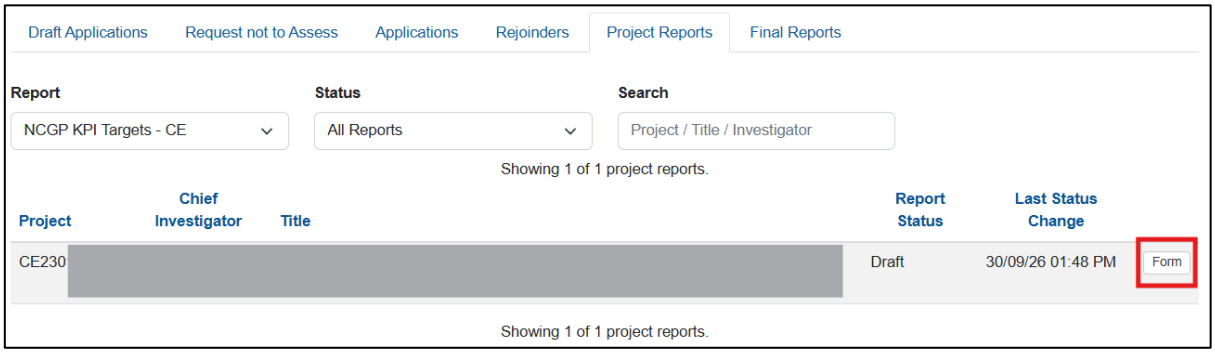
1. Login to RMS
2. In the ARC Applicant Project Management section of Action Centre, click on 'Project Reports'



3. Click the 'Report' drop-down and select the relevant KPI Target form.

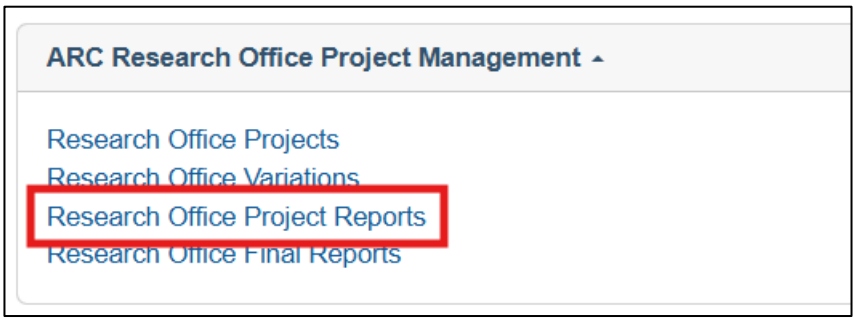


4. Click 'Form' to enter the form relevant to the project

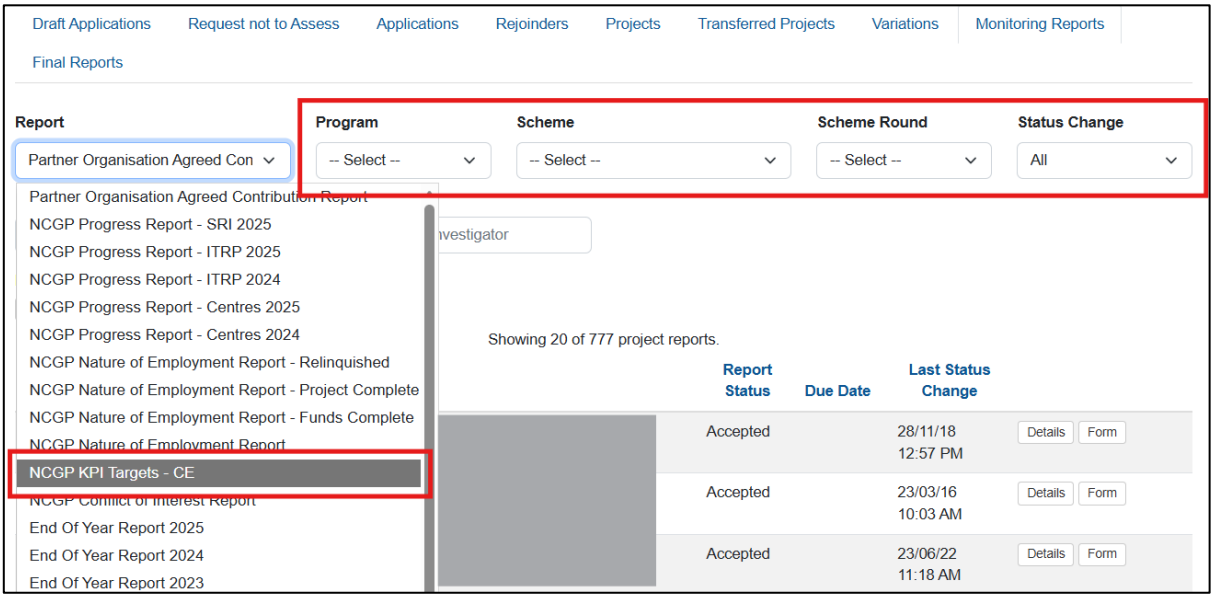


3.2 As Research Office Staff or Delegate

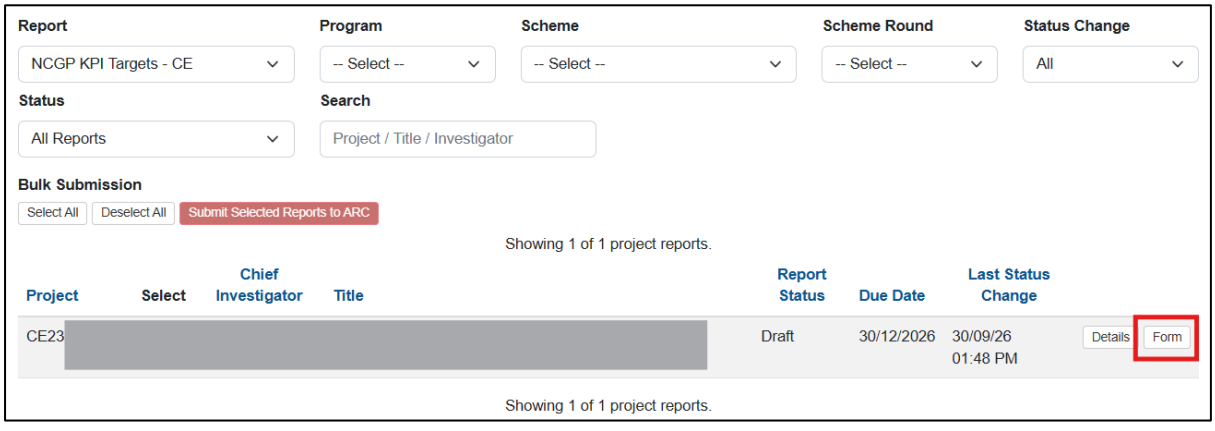
1. Login to RMS
2. In the *ARC Research Office Project Management* section of *Action Centre,* click on either 'Research Office Projects' or 'Research Office Project Reports'



3. Click the 'Report' drop-down and select the relevant KPI Target form. Ensure all other filters are cleared to ensure all projects with KPI Target reports for that scheme appear.



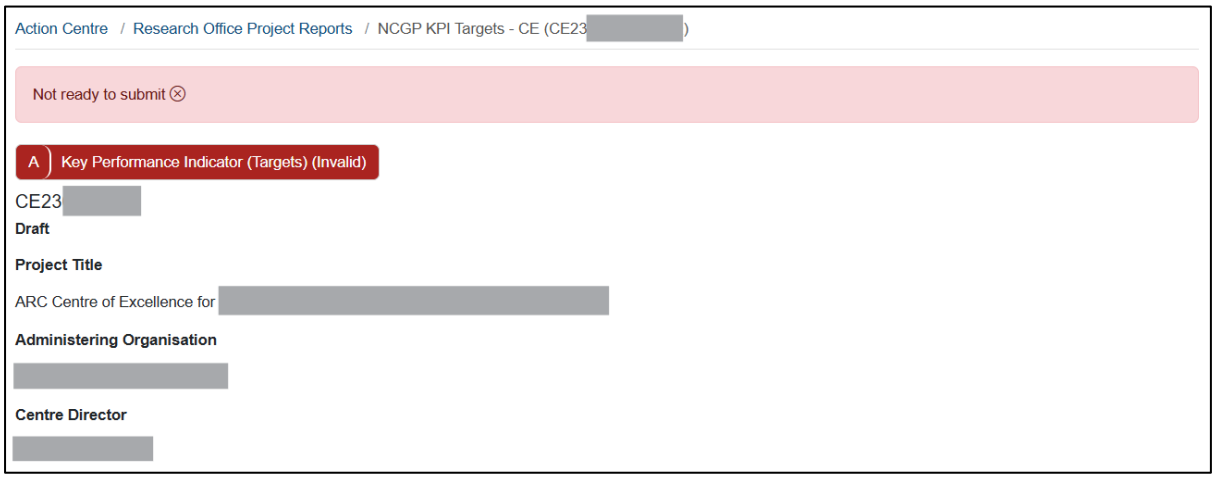
4. Click 'Form' to enter the form relevant to the project.



Note: Users with organisational access may also access the report through the project page under the 'Reports' tab. Follow the steps from 2.1

4. Completing the KPI Targets Form

Once you have accessed the form, the form will display Project ID, Project Title, Administering Organisation and Director prepopulated.



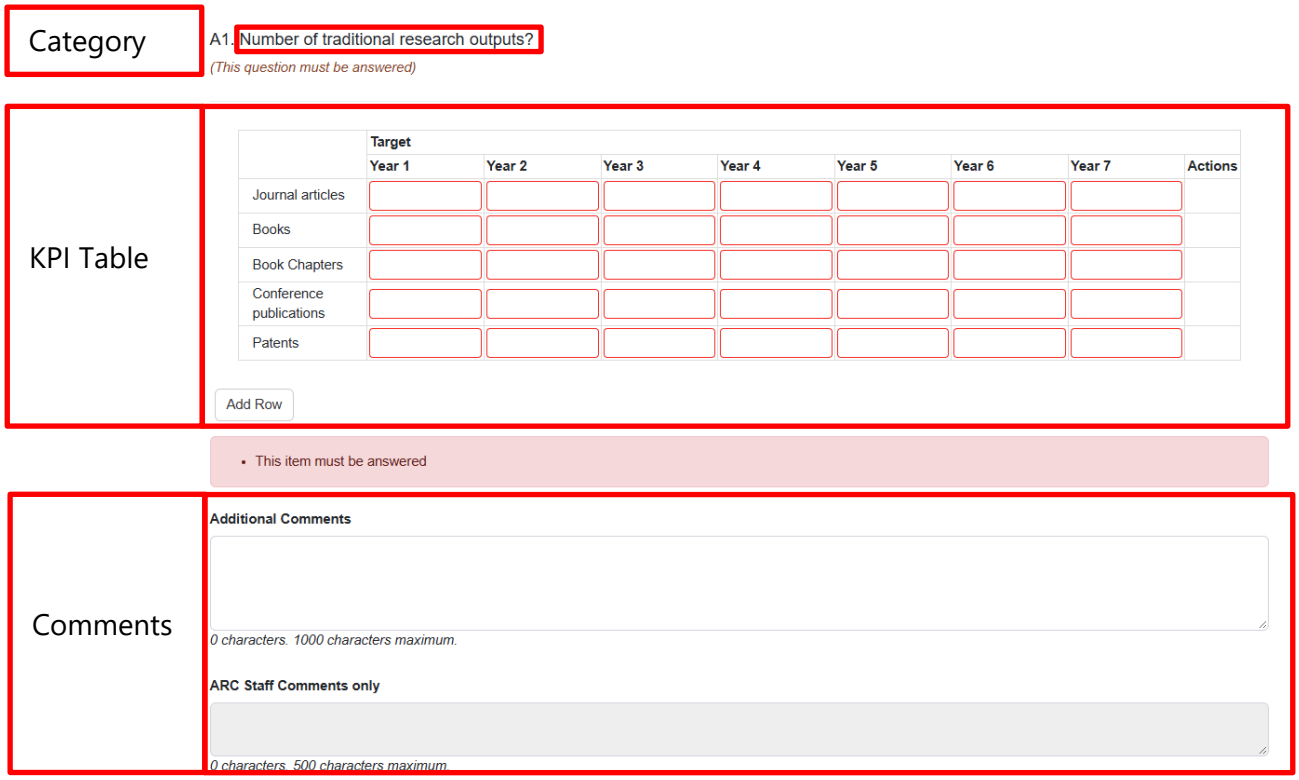
The form consists of one part (Part A) with several questions that captures Key Performance Indicators by category.

4.1 KPI Question parts

Each standard KPI question will consist of three sections:

a) KPI category
b) KPI table to record the KPI targets (prescribed and project specific)
c) Additional Comments section to provide written justification for the proposed KPIs or to communicate with ARC staff.

All KPI Table fields are mandatory and accept whole numbers only. Blank fields will be indicated by a red outline. Once all mandatory fields are completed on the form, the form will validate and may proceed to the next stage of review.



4.2 KPI Table

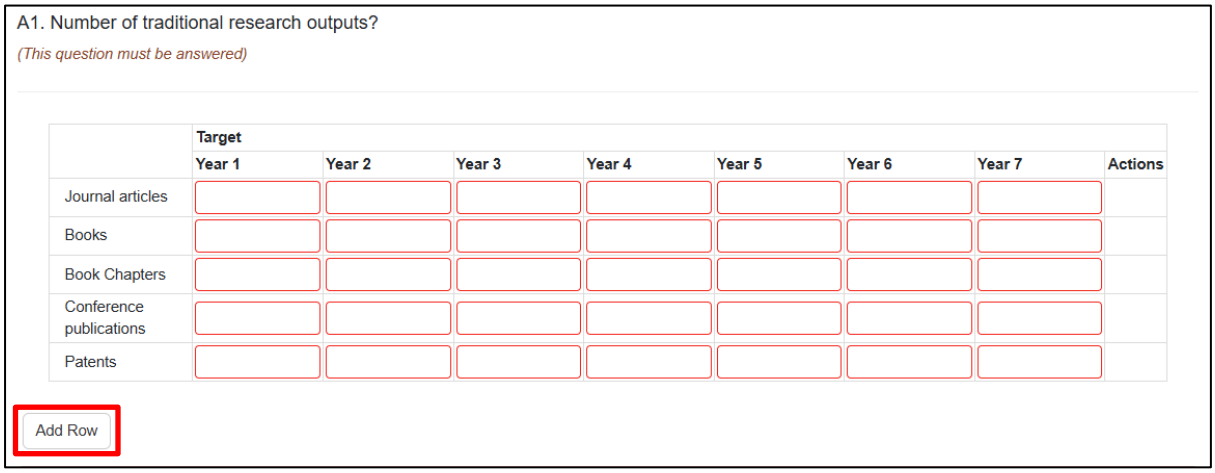
As the KPI Table is mandatory, projects that elect to have 0 (zero) as a target for a prescribed KPI, must enter 0 (zero) into the table. Where a prescribed KPI has a 0 (zero) target, this must be justified in the Additional Comments section.

4.3 Add Row function to KPI Table

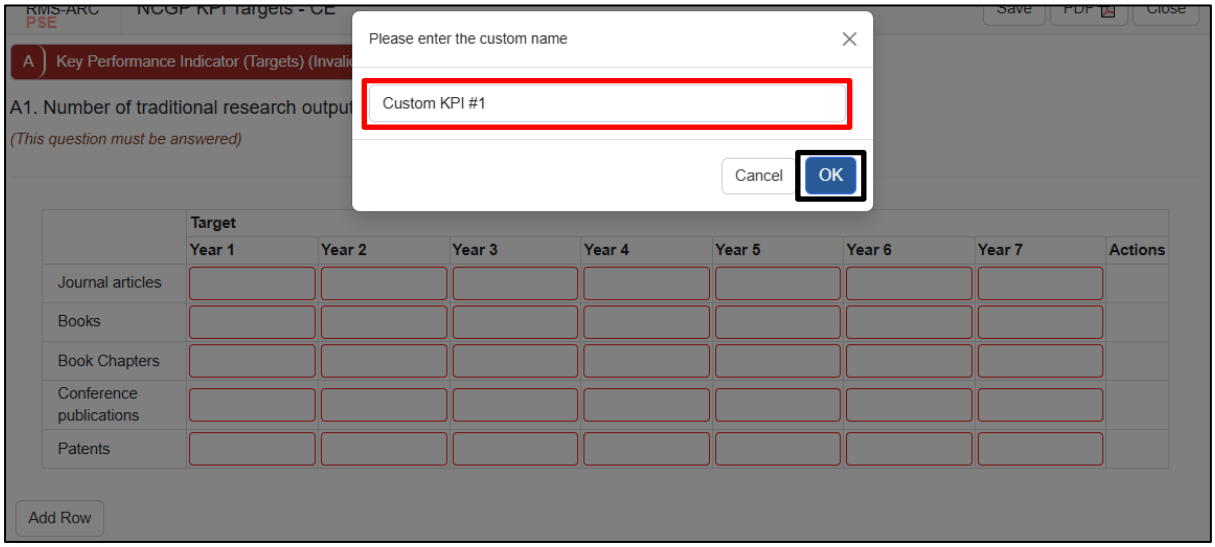
Projects may request project-specific KPIs which are additional to prescribed ARC KPIs. These may be measures that are specific to the project's activity or objectives that measure continued performance. An 'Add Row' function is available to report these custom measures.

When a custom KPI is created, it becomes mandatory to complete all fields within the table and it must be justified in the Additional Comments section.

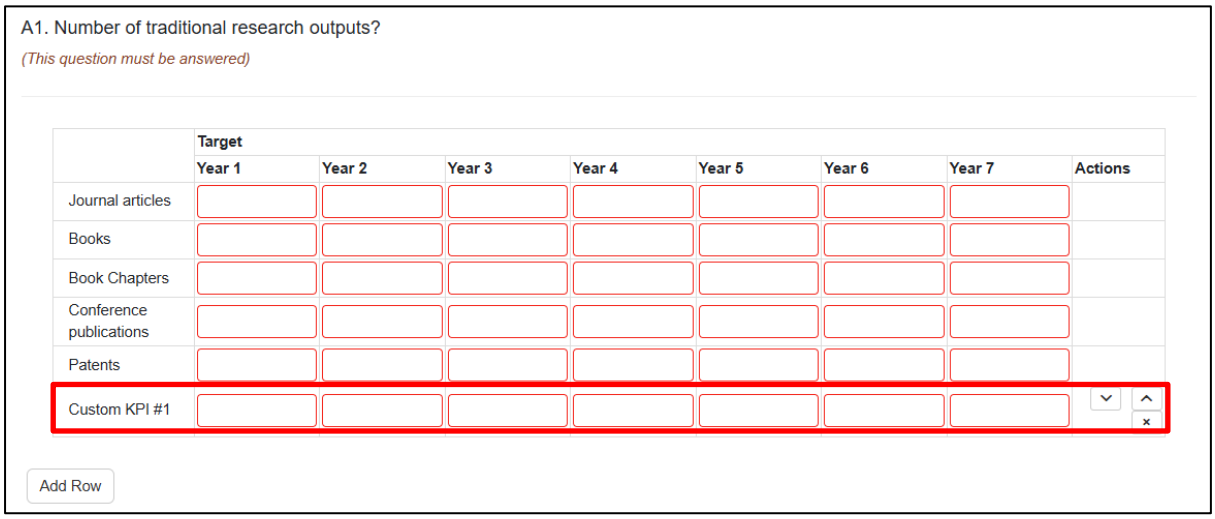
1. Click ‘Add Row’



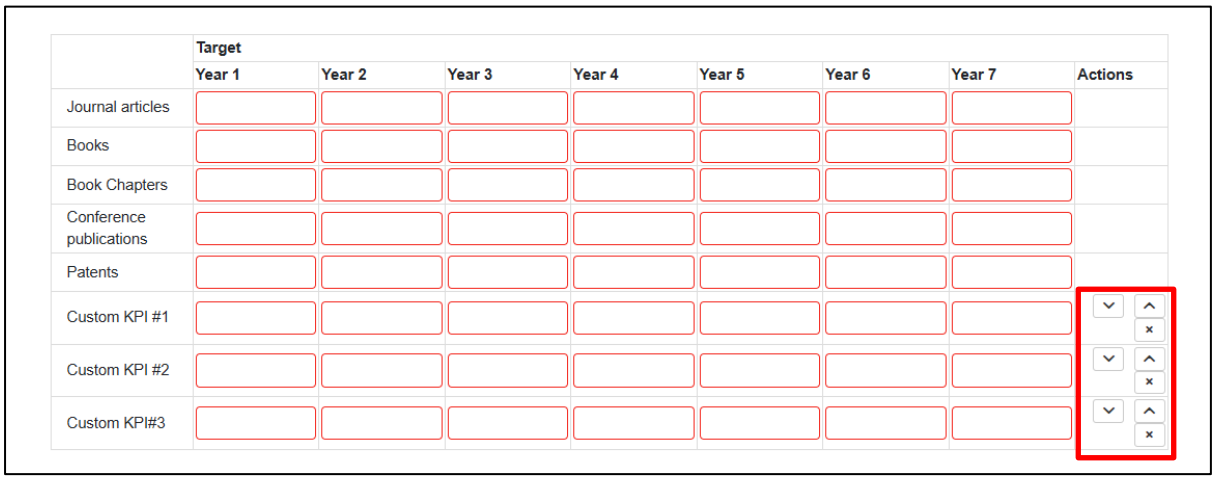
2. Label your custom KPI and click ‘OK’



3. Fill your targets in the tab



4. Add in the Additional Comments field to inform the ARC of the suitability of the custom KPI and its targets
5. Action buttons on the right may be used to re-order and delete KPIs.



4.4 Additional Comments

This section is used to explain the rationale for choosing certain targets and KPIs. In the following instances a comment is required:

- A custom KPI is created
- A prescribed KPI has 0 (zero) as a target

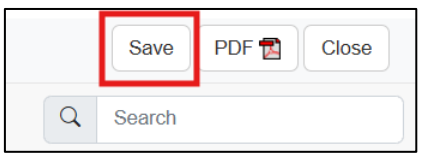
The additional comments field can also be used to respond to any comments from the ARC. It is good practice to date your comments for easier reference as RMS does not have functionality to log changes between submitted versions of this form.

4.5 ARC Comments

The ARC may return a form to the Administering Organisation Research Office and request additional information or require an action. The additional comments field can be used to respond to any query raised by the ARC in the ARC Comments section.

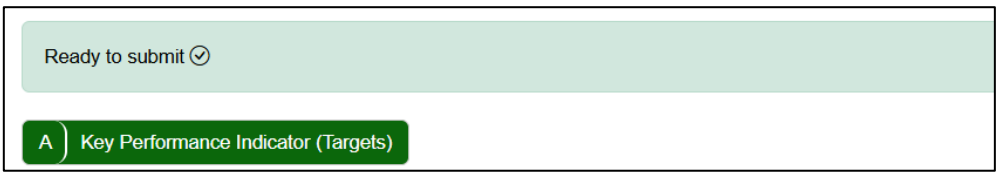
4.6 Reminder to save

As you complete each question, remember to hit 'Save' to keep your progress secured.



4.7 A completed form

Once all mandatory fields are complete (including custom KPIs), the form will validate. A validated form will turn green at the top of the page and allow the RO Delegate to proceed the form to the next stages.



4.8 Projects with previously approved KPIs

ARC acknowledges KPI templates have changed over the years and most recently in 2025.

Where projects have previously been approved against the 2025 KPI template, these should be entered into RMS as approved. Where approved KPIs follow earlier versions of the KPI template (i.e. through an excel spreadsheet) convert these to the current prescribed KPIs as closely as possible so ARC can re-approve.

Include a short comment to the ARC that these KPIs were previously approved or changes since last approved to reduce approval turnaround.

For clarity, any KPI Target Form approved by the ARC replaces previously approved KPIs.

4.9 Projects recently funded

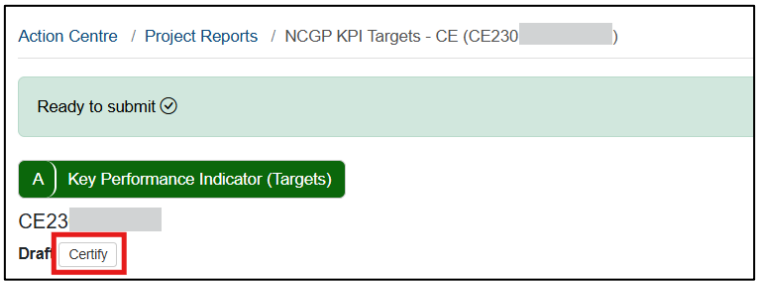
Recently funded projects may be establishing and following ARC guidance on establishment activity. Any submitted form should consider published documents on the ARC website. If any clarification is required, ensure you are reaching out to your Administering Organisation's Research Office initially prior to seeking clarification from the ARC.

Any KPI Target Form approved by the ARC in RMS satisfies the relevant funding requirement to establish KPIs. Project and organisational users must be aware of when these are due and are required to comply with this funding requirement.

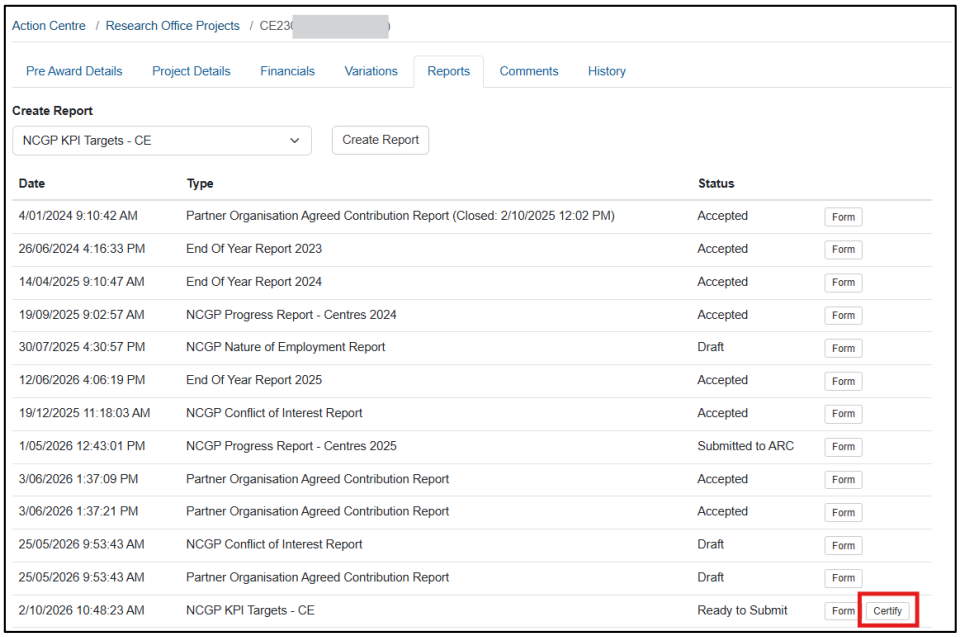
5. Submitting the Form

The form requires certification and submission by the RO Delegate for ARC assessment. The RO Delegate can certify and submit the KPI Target form from various dashboards within RMS.

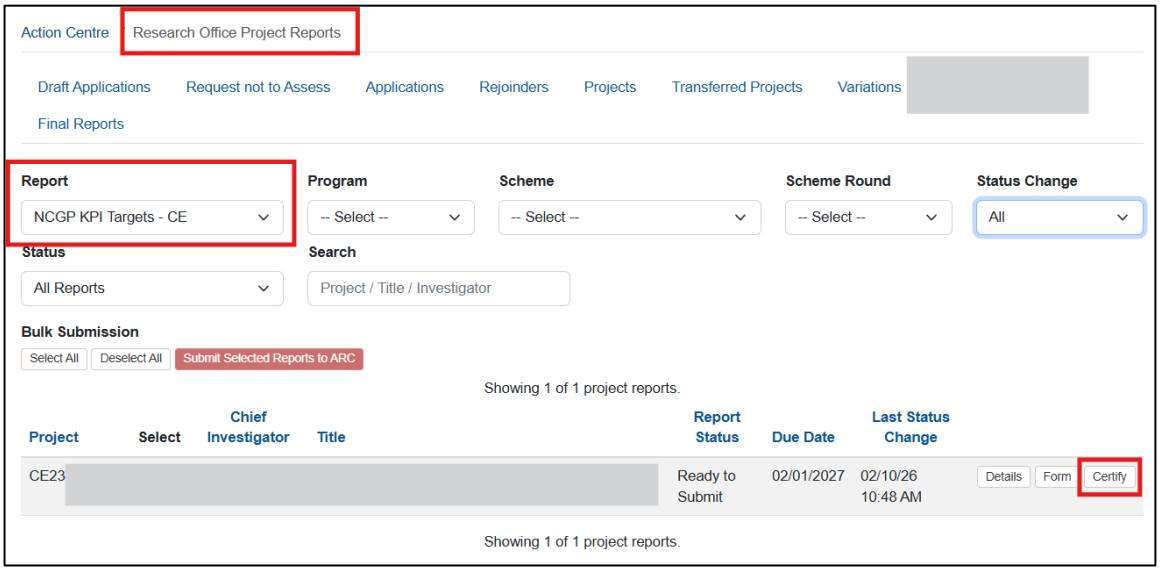
5.1 Within the KPI Target form



5.2 Within the Reports tab of the Project

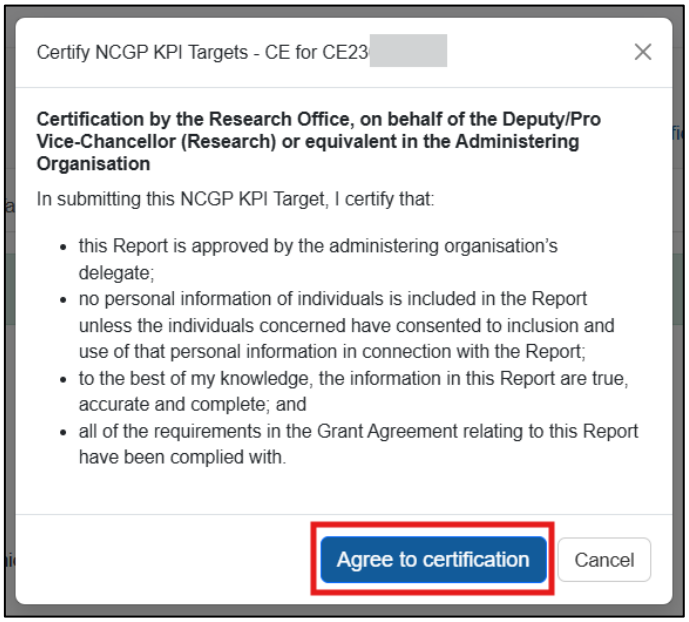


5.3 Research Office Projects Reports



5.4 Certifying as RO Delegate

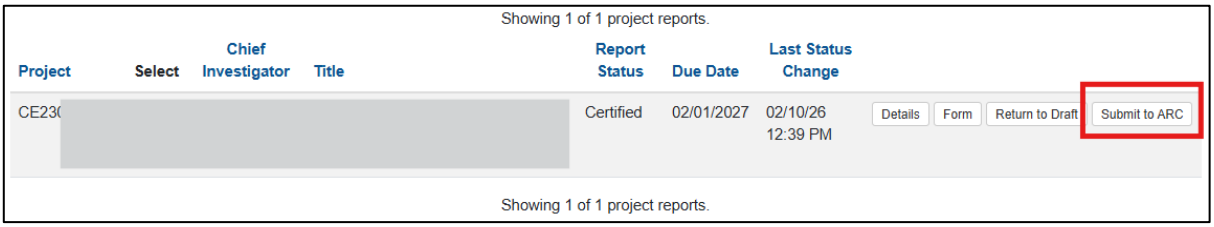
1. Click 'Certify' through the above dashboards
2. Follow the prompts to certify the report



5.5 Submitting as RO Delegate

Once a form has been certified, the RO Delegate needs to submit the form to ARC.

1. Click 'Submit to ARC'

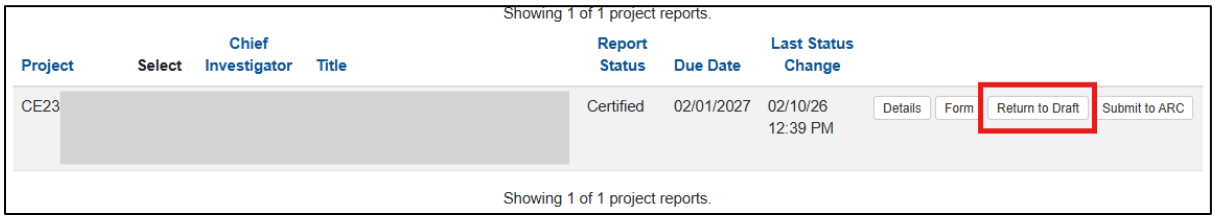


2. Follow the prompts to submit the form to the ARC



5.6 Enabling edit of the form

Prior to submission, the Delegate may click the 'Return to Draft' button. This enables other users to re-gain edit access to the form.



When returned to draft, the form will need to be re-certified prior to submission to the ARC.

If the form has already been submitted to the ARC, please reach out to ARC-Postaward@arc.gov.au and request a return of the form.

6. After Submission

6.1 Review Process

Once the KPI Target form is submitted to the ARC, the Establish & Manage section will assess the form. The assessment may require the report to be returned to the Administering Organisation for amendments should the ARC have questions regarding the submitted targets.

Desubmission will be notified to the University via email with project level users (Director and COO/BM roles) copied.

The ARC will use the ARC Comments field for detailed communication on what needs to be addressed to allow acceptance of KPIs.

Once desubmitted, a form will need to follow the certification and submission processes again.

6.2 On Acceptance

Once accepted by the ARC, the form will be available as a read-only document. The form will be accessible by following the previous steps.

6.3 Updating your KPIs

Once accepted, if a Project needs to revise/update the projects KPIs, a new KPI form may be created by following the steps above.

7. Troubleshooting and Support

7.1 Frequently Asked Questions

Issue	Steps to resolve
I cannot access the form	1. Confirm you have the appropriate authority to access the form. 2. Follow the steps as reflects your user access.
I cannot edit the form	1. Confirm the status of the form 2. A form is only editable if it is in Draft

For other issues, reach out to ARC-Postaward@arc.gov.au.

7.2 Policy and Guidance References

Refer to the relevant Grant Guideline or Grant Agreement which a project was funded under.

The ARC website includes related instructions for ARC Centres of Excellence (Manage your grant | Australian Research Council), and Industrial Transformation Research Program projects (Industrial Transformation Research Program Reporting | Australian Research Council).

Document history

Number	Date Approved	Approved By	Brief Description
1.00	27/10/2026	Establish & Manage Director	First version