EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Funding Rules made under section 60 of the Australian Research Council Act 2001

Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2009

Issued by the authority of the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research

Subject: Australian Research Council Act 2001

Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2009

Authority

Section 60 of the Australian Research Council Act 2001 (the Act) provides that the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research must approve ARC funding rules.

Purpose and effect

Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development is a scheme funded under the Australian Research Council’s National Competitive Grants Program. The scheme provides support for Indigenous Researchers to undertake research projects which may lead to an advance in the understanding of a subject or contribute to the solution of an important practical problem. The award of Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development projects are approved by the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research.

In accordance with subsection 59 (2) of the Act, the Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development Funding Rules for funding Commencing in 2009 contain:

(a) the eligibility criteria to be met in order for a proposal to be approved for financial assistance (including criteria relating to the kinds of organisation that may receive assistance and the kinds of research program in respect of which assistance may be provided);
(b) how to apply for financial assistance;
(c) the assessment process for deciding which proposals will be recommended for approval;
(d) the ways in which, and circumstances in which, a funding approval may be varied; and
(e) any additional accountability requirements that the ARC thinks desirable.

In accordance with subsection 59 (2) of the Act, the Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2009, the rules take account of, and are consistent with:

(a) the funding cap for the year, or each of the years, to which the rules apply; and
(b) the funding split determination for the year, or each of the years, to which the rules apply.

The Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2009 were approved by the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, Senator the Hon Kim Carr, on 4 February 2008. No amendments have been made.

Documents incorporated by reference

The following documents have been incorporated by reference:

- The Joint NHMRC/AVCC Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice (1997)/the NHMRC’s National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans; and/as applicable, the NHMRC’s other codes on animal research (see subsection 4.4.1.1 of the rules), available from (www.nhmrc.gov.au);
- Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development Instructions to Applicants for funding commencing in 2009 (see subsection 10.4.3.2), available from (www.arc.gov.au);
- National Principles of Intellectual Property Management for Publicly Funded Research (see subsection 14.4.4 of the rules), available from (www.arc.gov.au); and
- The draft Funding Agreement (see subsections 13.1), available from (www.arc.gov.au).
Commencement
The Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2009 shall take effect upon registration on the Federal Register of Legislative Instruments.

Likely impact and effect
These Funding Rules provide the key criteria and requirements for proposals for, and the allocation and administration of, funding under the Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development scheme for research projects where funding will commence in 2009.

Explanation of provisions: provision by provision description
Section 1 provides the name of the Funding Rules.

Section 2 provides the commencement details.

Section 3 provides interpretations of the Funding Rules.

Section 4 provides an overview and outlines the objectives of the National Competitive Grants Program and the Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development scheme, and the fundamental principles and requirements, including ethics and research practice, non-duplication, conflict of interest, acknowledging ARC support and dissemination of research outputs.

Section 5 outlines changes from last year.

Section 6 outlines the level and period of funding, types of research supported, restrictions on budget items, areas of investigation/work not supported, and the number of proposals and funded projects.

Section 7 deals with organisational types, roles and eligibility, including eligible organisations and partner organisations.

Section 8 outlines roles and general eligibility for researchers, including eligibility criteria for Chief Investigators and Indigenous Researcher Fellowships, and information about mentors and supervisors.

Section 9 outlines cross-scheme issues relating to funding, eligibility, and funding of clinical medical and dental research.

Section 10 deals with the application process, including eligibility exemption and eligibility ruling process, proposals, certification and submission of proposals.

Section 11 outlines the selection and approval process, including selection criteria, assessment and selection procedure and offer of funding.

Section 12 deals with the appeals process.

Section 13 deals with the administration of funding, including the Funding Agreement, varying the Funding Agreement or Funding Approval, and reporting.

Section 14 refers to other relevant matters, including applicable law, confidentiality, project description, intellectual property, incomplete or misleading information, and insurance and liabilities.

There are three appendices:
Appendix 1: Descriptions of National Research Priorities and associated Priority Goals
Appendix 2. Eligible Organisations
Appendix 3. Notional Fellowship salaries, relocation allowances and teaching relief contributions