EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

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

Linkage Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2010

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

Subject: Australian Research Council Act 2001
        Linkage Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2010

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
Linkage Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities is a scheme funded under the Australian Research Council’s National Competitive Grants Program. The Linkage Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities for funding commencing in 2010 sets out the eligibility and accountability requirements and other relevant matters for research programs which may be funded under this scheme. The scheme provides funding to eligible organisations for research infrastructure, equipment and facilities that will be used to support high-quality research projects. Funding under this scheme is approved by the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research.

In accordance with subsection 59 (2) of the Act, the Linkage Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities for funding commencing in 2010 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 Linkage Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2010 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 Linkage Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2010 were approved by the Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, Senator the Hon Kim Carr, on 16 March 2009. No amendments have been made.

Documents incorporated by reference
The following documents are 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 A1.1 of the rules), available from (www.nhmrc.gov.au);
- Linkage Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities Instructions to Applicants for funding commencing in 2010 (see subsection 10.1), available from (www.arc.gov.au)
- The draft Funding Agreement (see subsections B1.1), available from (www.arc.gov.au); and
Commencement
The Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2010 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 Linkage Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities scheme for research projects where funding will commence in 2010.

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 Linkage Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities 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 infrastructure, equipment and facilities supported, restrictions on budget items, areas of investigation/work not supported, the number of proposals and funded projects, and the ownership and location of infrastructure, equipment and facilities.

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

Section 8 outlines roles and general eligibility for researchers, and eligibility criteria for Chief Investigators and Partner Investigators.

Section 9 outlines cross-scheme issues relating to funding, eligibility, and funding of 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 selection and approval process, rejoinder, recommendations and offer of funding, exclusion of Proposals.

Section 13 deals with Appeals

There are five appendices:

Appendix A: Fundamental principles and requirements
Appendix B: Administration of funding
Appendix C: Eligible Organisations
Appendix D: Contributions by organisations
Appendix E: National Research Priorities and associated Priority Goals