Linkage Projects Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2014

Australian Research Council Act 2001

I, KIM CARR, Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, having satisfied myself of the matters set out in section 59 of the Australian Research Council Act 2001, approve these Funding Rules under section 60 of that Act.

Dated 19 July 2013

Kim Carr
Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research
Table of Contents

Key Dates .......................................................................................................................... 4
Contacts .............................................................................................................................. 4
1. Name of Funding Rules ............................................................................................. 5
2. Commencement .......................................................................................................... 5
3. Definitions ................................................................................................................... 5
4. Introduction .................................................................................................................. 8
   4.1 Overview ............................................................................................................... 8
   4.2 Linkage Projects .................................................................................................. 8
   4.3 Selection Criteria ................................................................................................. 8
5. Funding ....................................................................................................................... 10
   5.1 Level and Period of Funding ............................................................................... 10
   5.2 Budget Items Supported ...................................................................................... 10
   5.3 Budget Items Not Supported ............................................................................... 11
   5.4 Research / Activities Not Supported .................................................................. 11
6. Organisational Types, Roles, Eligibility and Contributions ...................................... 12
   6.1 Eligible Organisations General Requirements .................................................. 12
   6.2 Partner Organisations General Requirements ................................................... 12
   6.3 Partner Organisation Contribution Requirements .............................................. 13
   6.4 Eligibility for Concessional Treatment ................................................................ 14
   6.5 Other Organisations ............................................................................................. 14
7. Roles and Eligibility for Participants ......................................................................... 14
   7.1 Participant Roles and General Eligibility ............................................................ 14
   7.2 Eligibility Criteria for Chief Investigators (CIs) .................................................. 15
   7.3 Eligibility Criteria for Partner Investigators (PIs) ................................................ 15
8. Proposals ..................................................................................................................... 16
   8.1 Number of Proposals and Cross-Scheme Eligibility ............................................ 16
   8.2 Proposal Eligibility and Duplication .................................................................... 16
9. Submission of Proposals ............................................................................................ 17
   9.1 Proposals .............................................................................................................. 17
   9.2 Submission of Proposals in the RMS .................................................................... 17
   9.3 Closing Time for submission of Proposals ......................................................... 17
   9.4 Certification in the RMS ....................................................................................... 17
   9.5 Conflict of Interest ............................................................................................... 17
10. Selection and Approval Process ............................................................................... 18
   10.1 Assessment and Selection Process for Proposals ................................................. 18
   10.2 Rejoinder ............................................................................................................. 18
   10.3 Request Not to Assess ......................................................................................... 18
   10.4 Recommendations and Offer of Funding ............................................................ 19
11. Appeals Process ......................................................................................................... 19
12. Reporting Requirements ......................................................................................... 20
   12.1 Progress Reports ................................................................................................. 20
   12.2 End of Year Reports ............................................................................................ 20
   12.3 Final Report ........................................................................................................ 20
13. **Fundamental Principles of Conducting Research**..........................................................20
   13.1 Ethics and Research Practices 20
   13.2 Applicable Law 21
   13.3 Confidentiality 21
   13.4 Intellectual Property 21
   13.5 Incomplete or Misleading Information 22
   13.6 Publication and Dissemination of Research Outputs 22

**Appendix A Eligible Organisations**.................................................................................23
Key Dates
Please refer to the Important Dates page on the ARC website for key dates and updates relevant to these Funding Rules [www.arc.gov.au/media/important_dates.htm](http://www.arc.gov.au/media/important_dates.htm).

Contacts
Participants should direct requests for information to the Research Office or equivalent within their organisation.

ARC Contacts:
by mail to: Linkage Projects Coordinator
Australian Research Council
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CANBERRA ACT 2601
Email: ARC-linkageprojects@arc.gov.au
Phone: 02 6287 6600
Fax: 02 6287 6638
Web: www.arc.gov.au

by courier to: Linkage Projects Coordinator
Australian Research Council
Level 2, 11 Lancaster Place
Majura Park
CANBERRA ACT 2609

Appeals must be addressed and sent:
by mail to: The Appeals Officer
Australian Research Council
GPO Box 2702
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Email: appeals@arc.gov.au

by courier to: The Appeals Officer
Australian Research Council
Level 2, 11 Lancaster Place
Majura Park
CANBERRA ACT 2609

or by email to: appeals@arc.gov.au

Other:
RMS Support Team
Email: rms@arc.gov.au

Post-award enquiries and report submission:
Post-Award Team
Email: ARC-postaward@arc.gov.au
1. **Name of Funding Rules**

These Funding Rules are the Australian Research Council *Linkage Projects* Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2014.

2. **Commencement**

The Funding Rules shall take effect upon registration on the Federal Register of Legislative Instruments.

3. **Definitions**

In these Funding Rules, unless the contrary intention appears:

- **Adjunct or Emeritus Appointment** or equivalent means that an Eligible Organisation has a formal agreement with a participant which establishes an ongoing association with the Eligible Organisation, of the nature of an Emeritus or honorary academic or visiting fellow. The ARC may seek documentary evidence of such an association if it is considered necessary.

- **Administering Organisation** means an Eligible Organisation which submits a Proposal for funding under the scheme and which will be responsible for the administration of the funding if the Proposal is approved for funding.

- **AIATSIS** means the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.

- **ARC** means the Australian Research Council, as established under the ARC Act.

- **ARC Act** means the *Australian Research Council Act 2001*.

- **ARC College** means a body of scholars appointed to assist the ARC to identify research excellence, to moderate external assessments and recommend fundable Proposals.

- **ARC Fellowship** means a named Fellowship position within any ARC scheme where the salary is funded wholly or partly by the ARC.

- **Australian Postdoctoral Fellow (Industry)** (APDI Fellow) means a researcher who satisfies the eligibility criteria for an APDI Fellow, whose salary is wholly or partly funded under an APDI Fellowship (under the *Linkage Projects* scheme). The APDI Fellowship is a discontinued component which is not available under these Funding Rules.

- **Cash Contribution** means the cash from an organisation for the Project which is transferred to and managed by the Administering Organisation.

- **Chief Investigator** (CI) means a researcher who satisfies the eligibility criteria for a Chief Investigator.

- **Commonwealth** means the Commonwealth of Australia.

- **Commonwealth Fellowship** means a position held by a researcher where the salary is funded wholly or partly by the Commonwealth and where the researcher in that position was a named participant in a Proposal.

- **Conflict of Interest** means any conflict of interest, any risk of a conflict of interest and any apparent conflict of interest arising through a party engaging in any activity,
participating in any association, holding any membership or obtaining any interest that is likely to conflict with or restrict that party from participating in the Project.

Consultancy means the provision of specialist advice, analysis, assistance, services or products to another organisation(s), generally where the consultancy services are for the sole or preferred use of that other organisation(s).

Eligible Organisation means an organisation listed in Appendix A.

Exempt Community Organisation is a non-profit organisation whose main purpose, as identified in official documents, is to help the community.

Exempt Herbarium\(^1\) means a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society, which acquires, conserves, and researches preserved and labeled plant specimens, arranged to allow easy access and archival storage with a mission to preserve and document the diversity of plants.

Exempt Museum\(^2\) means a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.

Exempt Non-Profit Organisation means a non-profit organisation registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

Exempt Registered Charity means a charity registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

Exempt Start-up means a company that is commercialising research and development (R&D) activities and has an average annual revenue over the previous two years of income that does not exceed $5 million per year. The start-up must have a majority of its employees (by number) and assets (by value) inside Australia.

Fieldwork means the collection of information integral to the project outside of a laboratory, library or workplace setting and often in a location external to the researcher’s normal place of employment.

Funding Agreement means the agreement entered into by the ARC and the Administering Organisation when a Proposal from that organisation is approved for funding.

GST has the meaning as given in section 195-1 of the *A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999*.

In-kind Contribution means a contribution of goods, services, materials or time to the Project from an individual, business or organisation. Values are calculated based on the current market rates/valuations/rentals/charges (that is in the financial year of the date of the Proposal’s submission) of the costs of labour, work spaces, equipment and databases. The calculations covering time and costs should be documented by the Administering Organisation. The ARC may require these calculations to be audited from time-to-time.

Instructions to Applicants means a set of instructions prepared by the ARC to assist applicants in completing the application form and associated documentation.

\(^1\) Adapted from: [http://herbarium.msu.edu/definition.html](http://herbarium.msu.edu/definition.html)

\(^2\) Adapted from: [http://icom.museum/the-vision/museum-definition/](http://icom.museum/the-vision/museum-definition/)
Medical and Dental Research means research and/or training primarily and substantially aimed at understanding or treating a human disease or health condition, and as defined on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au/applicants/md_research.htm.

Minister means the Minister responsible for the administration of the ARC Act, or the Minister’s delegate.

National Research Priorities means priority research areas identified by the ARC and updated from time-to-time on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au.

NCGP means the National Competitive Grants Program.

NHMRC means the National Health and Medical Research Council.

Other Eligible Organisation means an Eligible Organisation listed on the Proposal which is not the Administering Organisation.

Other Organisation means an organisation which is listed in a Linkage Projects Proposal and is not an Eligible Organisation or a Partner Organisation.

Partner Investigator (PI) means a participant who satisfies the eligibility criteria for a PI under these Funding Rules.

Partner Organisation means an Australian or overseas organisation, other than an Eligible Organisation, which satisfies the eligibility requirements for a Partner Organisation and is to be a cash and/or in-kind contributor to the Project.

Project means a Proposal approved by the Minister to receive funding from the ARC in accordance with these Funding Rules.

Project Leader means the first-named CI on a Proposal.

Proposal means a request to the ARC for the provision of funding which is submitted in accordance with the Funding Rules.

Research Environment means the laboratory, department, school, centre or institute within an Administering Organisation or Partner Organisation where research will be undertaken, and which provides opportunities for knowledge growth, innovation, collaboration, mentoring and student training.

Research Office means a business unit within an Eligible Organisation that is responsible for administrative contact with the ARC regarding Proposals and Projects.

RMS means the ARC’s online Research Management System.

Selection Advisory Committee (SAC) means a group of experts appointed to assist the ARC to identify and evaluate research excellence in Australia.

Strategic Research Priorities means priority research areas identified by the ARC and updated from time-to-time on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au.

Technical workshop services means construction and maintenance activities carried out by a technician, often within a dedicated facility for working with materials such as wood, glass, metal, or electronics.

UA means Universities Australia.
4. **Introduction**

4.1 **Overview**

4.1.1 These Funding Rules are a legislative instrument, current as at the date of signing by the Minister, and have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the ARC Act in force then.

4.1.2 The *Linkage Projects* scheme is funded under the Linkage Program of the ARC’s *National Competitive Grants Program*.

4.1.3 The *Linkage Projects* scheme provides funding to Eligible Organisations to support research and development (R&D) projects which are collaborative between higher education researchers and other parts of the national innovation system, which are undertaken to acquire new knowledge, and which involve risk or innovation.

4.1.4 For the purposes of these Funding Rules, research is defined as the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative.

This definition of research is consistent with a broad notion of research and experimental development (R&D) as comprising creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man [human-kind], culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications.

4.1.5 The ARC undertakes periodic evaluations of the performance and administration of the schemes under the *National Competitive Grants Program*.

4.2 **Linkage Projects**

4.2.1 The objectives of the *Linkage Projects* scheme are to promote:

a. initiation and/or development of long-term strategic research alliances between higher education organisations and other organisations, including industry and end-users, in order to apply advanced knowledge to problems and/or to provide opportunities to obtain national economic, social or cultural benefits;

b. the scale and focus of research in the Strategic Research Priorities;

c. opportunities for researchers to pursue internationally competitive research in collaboration with organisations outside the higher education sector, targeting those who have demonstrated a clear commitment to high-quality research; and

d. growth of a national pool of world-class researchers to meet the needs of the broader Australian innovation system.

4.2.2 *Linkage Projects* funding will be awarded on the basis of excellence through a competitive peer review process.

4.3 **Selection Criteria**

4.3.1 Proposals will be assessed and merit ranked using the following selection criteria:

a. Investigator(s) (20%)

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- research opportunity and performance evidence (ROPE);
- potential to engage in collaborative research with end-users; and
- time and capacity to undertake and manage the proposed research in collaboration with the Partner Organisation(s).

b. Proposed Project (50%) comprising

i. Significance and Innovation (25%)
   - Does the research address an important problem?
   - How will the anticipated outcomes advance the knowledge base?
   - Are the Project aims and concepts novel and innovative?
   - Will new methods or technologies be developed?
   - Will the proposed research maximise economic, environmental and/or social benefit to Australia?
   - Does the Project address the Strategic Research Priorities?
   - Will the Project benefit Partner Organisation(s) and other relevant end-users?
   - Does the Project significantly enhance links with organisations outside the Australian publicly-funded research and higher education sectors?

ii. Approach and Training (15%)
   - Are the conceptual framework, design, methods and analyses adequately developed, well integrated and appropriate to the aims of the Project?
   - Where relevant, is the intellectual content and scale of the work proposed appropriate to a higher degree by research?
   - How appropriate is the proposed budget?
   - Does the Project represent value for money?

iii. Research Environment (10%)
   - Is there an existing, or developing, supportive and high-quality Research Environment for this Project, both within the Administering Organisation and in the Partner Organisation(s)?
   - Are the necessary facilities available to conduct the proposed research?
   - Are there adequate strategies to encourage dissemination, commercialisation, if appropriate; and promotion of research outcomes?

c. Commitment from Partner Organisation(s) (30%)
   - Is there evidence that each of the Partner Organisation(s) is genuinely committed to, and prepared to collaborate in, the research Project?
   - Will the proposed research encourage and develop strategic research alliances between the higher education organisation(s) and other organisation(s)?
   - Is the budget justification for Cash and In-kind Contributions adequate?
5. **Funding**

5.1 **Level and Period of Funding**

5.1.1 All amounts referred to in these Funding Rules are to be read as exclusive of GST (if any), unless expressly stated otherwise.

5.1.2 The minimum level of funding provided by the ARC under *Linkage Projects* is $50,000 per year of funding and the maximum is $300,000 per year of funding per Project, for each year of the Project.

5.1.3 A Project may be applied for and awarded funding for a minimum of two (2) to a maximum of three (3) consecutive years.

5.1.4 The ARC reserves the right to recommend levels of funding for a Project at levels that may differ from those requested in the Proposal.

5.1.5 Funding for approved Projects will commence with effect 1 July 2014, unless other arrangements are approved by the Minister. Any funding awarded will be subject to sufficient funds being available for the Project, the provisions of the ARC Act, and continued satisfactory progress of the Project.

5.2 **Budget Items Supported**

5.2.1 Budget items that directly support a research project may be funded, including:

a. expenditure on fieldwork essential to the project, including technical and logistical support, and travel and accommodation costs, for CIs, PIs and research support personnel;

b. expert services of a third party if the services are deemed to be directly related to and necessary for the proposed Project. Such services include, but are not limited to:
   i. language translation services, transcribing services;
   ii. purchase of bibliographical or archival material (electronic or hard copy); and
   iii. workshop services, data collection and analysis services;

c. maintenance and access to infrastructure and equipment required for the Project. Funding will not be provided for infrastructure or equipment that is deemed to be for broad general use;

d. personnel:
   i. salary support for research associates and assistants, technicians and laboratory attendants at an appropriate salary level, including 28 per cent on-costs, for the Administering Organisation; and
   ii. stipends for Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students, in whole or in part, at an appropriate level for the Administering Organisation or the relevant industry sector;

e. publication and dissemination of Project outputs and outreach activity costs;

f. specialised computer equipment and software essential to the Project;

g. teaching relief for CIs up to a total value for the Project of $40,000 per year;
h. travel costs essential to the Project, including economy travel costs for domestic and/or international travel and accommodation, not exceeding $50,000 over the life of the project. Funding is permitted for CIs, PIs and research support personnel. Travel costs related to carrying out fieldwork are supported separately under 5.2.1.a and are not counted towards the $50,000 limit detailed in this subsection 5.2.1.h; and

i. web hosting and web development specific to the project.

5.2.2 All budget items must be justified in the Proposal to the satisfaction of the ARC.

5.3 **Budget Items Not Supported**

5.3.1 Budget items that will not be supported by ARC funding and should not be requested in the budget include:

a. bench fees or similar laboratory access fees;

b. capital works and general infrastructure costs, in whole or in part;

c. costs not directly related to research, for example, professional membership fees, professional development courses, fees for patent application and maintenance, equipment for live music or drama performances, visas, relocation costs, insurance, mobile phones (purchase or call charges), entertainment costs, hospitality costs, and other indirect costs;

d. fees for international students or Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) and Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP) liabilities for students;

e. hosting of seminars, conferences and other similar activities; and

f. salaries and/or on-costs, in whole or in part, for CIs or PIs.

5.3.2 The following basic facilities must be provided and funded by the Administering Organisation:

a. access to a basic library collection;

b. access to film or music editing facilities;

c. accommodation (for example, laboratory and office space, suitably equipped and furnished);

d. provision of basic computer facilities such as desktop computers, portable computer devices, printers, word processing and other standard software;

e. standard reference materials or funds for abstracting services; and

f. use of photocopiers, telephones, mail, fax, email and internet services.

5.3.3 The Administering Organisation must ensure that any organisational In-kind Contributions in the budget section of the Proposal do not include basic salary for any Commonwealth Fellowships, unless it is salary over and above the Commonwealth component supported.

5.4 **Research / Activities Not Supported**

5.4.1 Except where such activities meet the definition of research at subsection 4.1.4, the *Linkage Projects* scheme does not support production of:

a. data compilation, computer programs, research aids and tools;

b. descriptive data compilations, catalogues or bibliographies; or
c. teaching materials.

5.4.2 The Linkage Projects scheme does not support:

a. Projects where one or more Partner Organisation(s) is seeking expert external assistance, not available within their own organisation, in order to develop specific applications or outputs which:
   i. involve little innovation or are low risk; or
   ii. the ARC deems to be essentially contracted research or a Consultancy arrangement; or

b. Medical and Dental Research, as defined at section 3.

6. Organisational Types, Roles, Eligibility and Contributions

6.1 Eligible Organisations General Requirements

6.1.1 A Proposal may only be submitted by an Eligible Organisation listed at Appendix A, through its Research Office.

6.1.2 The Eligible Organisation that submits the Proposal will be the Administering Organisation and all other Eligible Organisations listed on the Proposal will be Other Eligible Organisations.

6.1.3 The Administering Organisation and any other Eligible Organisation(s) must demonstrate a significant contribution of cash, in-kind or other material resources, having regard to the total cost of the Project and the relative contribution of each CI.

6.2 Partner Organisations General Requirements

6.2.1 A Proposal must include at least one (1) Partner Organisation.

6.2.2 Partner Organisation participation is required for the duration of the Project.

6.2.3 To be eligible as a Partner Organisation, an organisation cannot be:

a. an Eligible Organisation;

b. a controlled entity of any Eligible Organisation; or

c. an entity (for example a joint venture) where more than 50 per cent is owned by one or more Eligible Organisations.

6.2.4 For each Partner Organisation, three (3) conditions must be met. There must be:

a. evidence of new or on-going collaboration between the Partner Organisation and the Administering Organisation;

b. no duplication of Commonwealth funding for the research and/or activities funded for the Project; and

6.2.5 A Proposal should include details of the collaborative arrangements proposed, including how each Partner Organisation is involved in the Project, how the Project fits into each Partner Organisation’s overall strategic plan and how the Project is of value to each of the Partner Organisation(s) involved.
6.2.6 A Proposal submitted in RMS must include a letter of support from each Partner Organisation. Each Partner Organisation’s letter of support must:

a. include the official letterhead;

b. be of no more than two A4 pages;

c. include a brief profile of the organisation;

d. provide details of the Cash and/or In-kind Contributions;

e. demonstrate the source of its Cash Contribution (if a Cash Contribution is being made);

f. certify that no part of its Cash Contribution is drawn from funds previously appropriated or awarded from Commonwealth or Australian State or Territory sources for the purposes of research;

g. certify that it will meet the requirements outlined in a standard Funding Agreement, including the requirement to enter into arrangements regarding intellectual property; and

h. be signed by the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate.

6.3 Partner Organisation Contribution Requirements

6.3.1 Cash and in-kind contributions from Partner Organisation(s), must be specific to the Project and must not be part of a broader contribution to an Administering Organisation.

6.3.2 The Proposal must demonstrate that the combined Partner Organisation(s) eligible contributions for a Proposal (i.e. the total of the cash and/or in-kind eligible contributions of the Partner Organisations) must at least match the total funding requested from the ARC.

6.3.3 Pursuant to subsection 6.3.2, a Proposal must seek a minimum $50,000 and up to $300,000 a year from the ARC.

6.3.4 The combined Partner Organisation(s) eligible Cash Contribution must be at least 25 per cent of the total funding requested from the ARC.

6.3.5 Cash Contributions cannot be sourced from funds awarded or appropriated by the Commonwealth or an Australian State or Territory for the purposes of research nor from funds previously used to leverage government research funding.

6.3.6 Partner Organisation(s) whose funds are appropriated predominantly from Commonwealth or Australian State or Territory funding sources for the purposes of research are restricted in their capacity to contribute to the required Partner Organisation contribution. Cash and/or in-kind contributions from Partner Organisation(s) of this type are only eligible to make up a maximum of 25 per cent of the required Partner Organisation contribution. This maximum of 25 per cent is the combined eligible contribution from Partner Organisations of this type, and is not the maximum per individual Partner Organisation of this type.

6.3.7 Partner Organisation(s) whose funds are appropriated predominantly from Commonwealth or Australian State or Territory funding sources for the purposes of research can make combined contributions to the Project over and above 25 per cent of the required Partner Organisation contribution, however these additional
contributions are not eligible to make up part of the required Partner Organisation contribution.

6.3.8 The Partner Organisation Cash Contribution must not be a contribution to salaries for CIs and PIs on the Project.

6.3.9 The following types of Partner Organisation(s), as defined in section 3 of the Funding Rules, are exempt from the Cash Contribution requirements:

a. Exempt Community Organisation;
b. Exempt Herbarium;
c. Exempt Museum;
d. Exempt Non-Profit Organisation;
e. Exempt Registered Charity; and
f. Exempt Start-up.

6.3.10 Proposals in which all Partner Organisations are exempt from the Cash Contribution requirements do not have to meet the overall Cash Contribution requirement specified at 6.3.4.

6.3.11 Partner Organisation contributions must be specified in Australian dollars and, subject to these Funding Rules, contributed at the specified level regardless of currency fluctuations.

6.3.12 In-kind contributions must be essential and central to the Project. It is the responsibility of the Administering Organisation to establish the merit of the case for recognition of In-kind Contributions.

6.3.13 The ARC reserves the right to determine the levels of Partner Organisation contributions and may determine contributions to be at levels that may differ from those submitted in a Proposal.

6.4 Eligibility for Concessional Treatment

6.4.1 Partner Organisation contributions to the Linkage Projects scheme may be eligible for a R&D Tax Incentive to the extent that the expenditure is incurred by an eligible company in respect of eligible R&D activities and provided that all other relevant requirements are met.

6.4.2 Detailed information on the eligibility requirements for the Australian Government’s R&D Tax Incentive can be found at www.ausindustry.gov.au.

6.5 Other Organisations

6.5.1 Organisations that are not Eligible Organisations and not Partner Organisations but that are listed on a Proposal will be Other Organisations.

7. Roles and Eligibility for Participants

7.1 Participant Roles and General Eligibility

7.1.1 Roles that may be nominated in a Proposal are:

a. Chief Investigator (CI); or
b. Partner Investigator (PI).

7.1.2 The following roles must be nominated in a Proposal:
a. at least one (1) CI from an Eligible Organisation. The first named CI must be from the Administering Organisation and will be the Project Leader; and

b. at least one (1) PI from each Partner Organisation.

All CIs and PIs nominated in a Proposal must satisfy the eligibility criteria for the role they are to perform at 1 July 2014 and for the duration of the Project.

7.1.3 If the ARC considers that a participant nominated as a CI or PI does not meet the eligibility criteria for the role that participant is to perform, the Proposal may be deemed ineligible.

7.1.4 At the time of the submission of a Proposal, all obligations regarding previously funded Projects involving the nominated CIs on the Proposal must have been fulfilled to the satisfaction of the ARC. Such obligations include the provision of satisfactory Progress and Final Reports.

7.2 Eligibility Criteria for Chief Investigators (CIs)

7.2.1 A researcher nominated on a Proposal as a CI must meet at least one of the following criteria at 1 July 2014 and for the duration of the Project:

a. be an employee for at least half-time (50 per cent of Full Time Equivalent) at one Eligible Organisation; or

b. be a holder of an Emeritus, Adjunct or equivalent appointment at an Eligible Organisation listed in Appendix A and not have a substantive (50 per cent of Full Time Equivalent or more) paid position elsewhere.

7.2.2 The CI must take significant intellectual responsibility for the conduct of the Project and for any strategic decisions called for in its pursuit and the communication of results. The CI must have the capacity to make a serious commitment to carrying out the Project and cannot assume the role of a supplier of resources for work that will largely be placed in the hands of others.

7.2.3 The CI must reside predominantly in Australia for the full life of the Project. Any significant absences including fieldwork or study leave directly related to the Project must have approval from the Administering Organisation and must not total more than half the Project funding period.

7.2.4 A researcher undertaking undergraduate studies or a higher degree by research is not eligible to be a CI on the Project.

7.2.5 If a Proposal has been approved for funding and a CI is, at any time, no longer able to work as proposed on the Project, the Project may be continued provided that any replacement CI meets the CI eligibility criteria and is approved by the ARC.

7.3 Eligibility Criteria for Partner Investigators (PIs)

7.3.1 A participant nominated as a PI on a Proposal must not meet the eligibility criteria for a CI.

7.3.2 A participant who is an employee of an Eligible Organisation listed in Appendix A who does not reside predominantly in Australia may be a PI.

7.3.3 A PI must:

a. take significant intellectual responsibility for the conduct of the Project and for any strategic decisions called for in its pursuit and the communication of results; and/or
b. have the experience and capacity to provide effective supervision, support and mentoring of research personnel associated with the Project; and/or
c. have the relevant skills and experiences to manage a similar scale research Project effectively.

7.3.4 A PI who is representing a Partner Organisation on the Proposal is required to have a role within that Partner Organisation.

7.3.5 A PI must have the capacity to make a commitment to carrying out the Project and cannot assume the role of a supplier of resources for work that will largely be placed in the hands of others.

7.3.6 If a Proposal has been approved for funding and a PI is, at any time, no longer able to work as proposed on the Project, the Project may be continued provided that any replacement PI meets the PI eligibility criteria and is approved by the ARC.

8. Proposals

8.1 Number of Proposals and Cross-Scheme Eligibility

8.1.1 A CI may submit and/or be funded concurrently for a maximum of four (4) Linkage Projects as a CI or APDI.

8.1.2 A CI cannot be involved in more than the maximum number of Projects (including Awards and Fellowships) permitted in 2014. This number is calculated at the closing time of submission of Proposals by totalling the number of Projects receiving funding at 1 July 2014 and the number of Proposals submitted for funding commencing 1 July 2014. A Project is considered to be funded for the years set out in the Funding Agreement.

8.1.3 Researchers will not be permitted to relinquish a CI or APDI role, or existing Linkage Project held on 1 July 2013, to circumvent the limits in this section.

8.1.4 A Proposal may only be submitted once in the same funding round regardless of any variation in the proposed research, the listed participants and/or Administering Organisation.

8.1.5 Applicants should note the eligibility criteria for access to other funding schemes, as expressed in the funding rules for those schemes. The ARC reserves the right to change these criteria in future funding rounds. Funding Rules for all ARC schemes may be found on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au.

8.2 Proposal Eligibility and Duplication

8.2.1 The ARC will not duplicate funding for research, including infrastructure, funded by the Commonwealth as at 1 July 2014.

8.2.2 The Proposal must list all current funding and requested funding for the CIs and PIs under any ARC schemes, including Projects, Awards and Fellowships, or any other Commonwealth funding scheme.

8.2.3 The Proposal cannot be the same or similar (in whole or in part) to a project described in another current ARC-submitted Proposal.

8.2.4 The ARC will assess whether a Proposal meets the eligibility requirements in these Funding Rules and may recommend that a Proposal that does not meet the requirements be deemed ineligible.
8.2.5 A decision under subsection 8.2.4 may be made by the ARC at any stage during assessment of the Proposal and may result in non-progress of the Proposal to the next level of assessment.

9. Submission of Proposals

9.1 Proposals

9.1.1 The Proposal must be submitted as a mature research plan presenting the proposed research ready for implementation and must contain all the information necessary for its assessment without the need for further written or oral explanation, or reference to additional documentation, unless requested by the ARC.

9.1.2 All details in the Proposal must be current at the time of submission.

9.2 Submission of Proposals in the RMS

9.2.1 Administering Organisations must submit Proposals through the RMS unless otherwise advised by the ARC.

9.2.2 All Proposals must meet the format and content requirements, including certification, as set out in the RMS form and the Instructions to Applicants.

9.3 Closing Time for submission of Proposals

9.3.1 The online form completed within the RMS must be submitted by the closing date and time on the Important Dates page on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au/media/important_dates.htm.

9.3.2 Additions, deletions and modifications will not be accepted after submission, unless invited by the ARC.

9.3.3 Upon receipt of a written request with justification from the Administering Organisation, the ARC may approve the withdrawal of a Proposal. The ARC will approve such a request only in exceptional circumstances.

9.4 Certification in the RMS

9.4.1 The Administering Organisation must certify a Proposal online in the RMS. Research Offices should ensure that the Research Office delegate role is authorised in the RMS to certify and submit Proposals.

9.4.2 The ARC reserves the right at any point in the process to seek evidence from the Administering Organisation to support the certification of Proposals.

9.5 Conflict of Interest

9.5.1 Each party involved in a Proposal must declare to the Administering Organisation at the date of submission any Conflict of Interest that exists or is likely to arise in relation to any aspect of the Proposal.

9.5.2 If a Conflict of Interest exists or arises, the Administering Organisation must have documented processes in place for managing the Conflict of Interest for the duration of the Project. Such processes must comply with the NHMRC/ARC/UA Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007) and any relevant successor document.

9.5.3 As part of the certification at 9.4.1, the Administering Organisation must certify that all Conflicts of Interest have been disclosed in accordance with 9.5.1, and that any Conflict of Interest will be managed in accordance with 9.5.2.
9.5.4 The ARC’s Conflict of Interest policy is available on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au.

10. Selection and Approval Process

10.1 Assessment and Selection Process for Proposals

10.1.1 Assessment of Proposals is undertaken by the ARC, which has the right to make recommendations for funding to the Minister based on any number of assessments or solely on the basis of its expertise.

10.1.2 All Proposals will be considered against eligibility criteria and compliance with the Funding Rules.

10.1.3 All Proposals may be:

a. assigned to independent assessors, from a range of organisations, who will assess and report and may include written comments, on the Proposal against the selection criteria; and

b. ranked and allocated a budget, relative to other Proposals, by the ARC College or other Selection Advisory Committee (SAC), on the basis of the Proposal and any assessors’ reports and any rejoinder.

10.1.4 The ARC may exclude Proposals at any time during the selection process. Grounds for exclusion include, but are not limited to:

a. not meeting the eligibility criteria set out in these Funding Rules; or

b. providing incomplete, inaccurate or misleading information.

10.1.5 Following the recommendations of the ARC College or other Selection Advisory Committee, the CEO must make recommendations to the Minister in relation to what Proposals should be approved and at what level of funding, and what Proposals should not be approved.

10.1.6 The ARC has procedures in place for managing organisational and personal Conflicts of Interest for assessors, members of the ARC College or SAC, members of other ARC Committees and ARC staff. Details of these procedures are available on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au/about_arc/coe_guidelines.htm#conflict.

10.2 Rejoinder

10.2.1 The Administering Organisation may be given the opportunity for a rejoinder to assessors’ written comments, and to provide any additional information requested by the ARC. Names of assessors will not be provided to the Administering Organisation.

10.3 Request Not to Assess

10.3.1 Administering Organisations may name any person or persons whom they do not wish to assess a Proposal by submitting a ‘Request Not to Assess’ form available on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au/applicants/request_notassesform.htm and received by the Request Not to Assess date and time on the Important Dates page on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au/media/important_dates.htm. While the ARC will endeavour to be accommodating to such requests, only one request may be submitted per Proposal and any request containing more than three (3) individual non-assessors for a Proposal must be directly supported in writing by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) or equivalent of the Administering Organisation.
10.4 **Recommendations and Offer of Funding**

10.4.1 In accordance with the ARC Act, the ARC Chief Executive Officer will submit funding recommendations to the Minister for consideration. The Minister will determine which Proposals will be approved and the amount and timing of funding to be paid to Administering Organisations for approved Proposals.

10.4.2 Under the ARC Act, the Minister cannot approve funding for any Proposal that fails to meet the eligibility criteria set out in these Funding Rules.

10.4.3 All Administering Organisations will be notified of the outcomes of their Proposals (including Proposals not recommended for funding). Outcomes, funding allocations and other relevant information about the successful Proposal will be published on the ARC website.

10.4.4 Administering Organisations whose Proposals are approved will be notified in a letter of offer that will indicate the funding offered; and provided with a copy of a Funding Agreement for signing. Outcomes of the selection process are also made available on the ARC website.

10.4.5 The Minister may vary the funding approval if the ARC recommends that the particular circumstances of the Project warrant variation. Any variation or change will accord with the *Linkage Projects* Funding Rules and Funding Agreement.

10.4.6 If the ARC funding approved for a Project varies from the amount requested, pro rata adjustments may be made to the Partner Organisation contributions.

11. **Appeals Process**

11.1.1 Applicants for funding under the schemes of the NCGP are able to submit an appeal against administrative process issues. The appeals process is designed to ensure that the applicant has been treated fairly and consistently in the context of the selection procedures.

11.1.2 Appeals will be considered only against administrative process issues and not against committee recommendations, assessor ratings and comments or the assessment outcome.

11.1.3 Appeals must be submitted by the Administering Organisation on the ARC Appeals Form available on the ARC website at [www.arc.gov.au/applicants/appeals.htm](http://www.arc.gov.au/applicants/appeals.htm), authorised by a Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) or equivalent. Appeals must be received within 28 days of the date of the notification to the Administering Organisation of the outcome of Proposals. The ARC will not accept appeals later than 5.00 pm (AEST) on the date of submission of the appeal.

11.1.4 Appeals must be addressed and sent to the Appeals address advised at the beginning of these Funding Rules. The ARC will accept both electronic and hard copy Appeal submissions.

11.1.5 Applicants for funding may at any time seek to appeal ARC decisions using available external appeal options. Regarding available options for external appeal, the Administrative Appeals Tribunal does not have general power to review ARC decisions.
12. **Reporting Requirements**

12.1 **Progress Reports**

12.1.1 Report by Exception. A report must only be submitted if significant issues are affecting the progress of the Project. The report must specify the actions being taken to address the issues. Details of ARC reporting requirements can be found on the ARC website at [www.arc.gov.au/applicants/reported_requirements.htm](http://www.arc.gov.au/applicants/reported_requirements.htm).

12.1.2 When required, Progress Reports must be submitted by 31 March in each year for which the funding was awarded as directed by the ARC.

12.2 **End of Year Reports**

12.2.1 The Administering Organisation must submit an End of Year Report, including details of both the Partner Organisation Cash and In-kind Contributions, by 31 March in the year following each calendar year for which the funding was awarded in accordance with the instructions to be provided by the ARC each year.

12.3 **Final Report**

12.3.1 A Final Report must be submitted for the Project within twelve (12) months of the final payment or within twelve (12) months of the final approved carryover funds as directed by the ARC. Details of ARC reporting requirements can be found on the ARC website at [www.arc.gov.au/applicants/reported_requirements.htm](http://www.arc.gov.au/applicants/reported_requirements.htm).

12.3.2 The Final Report must justify why any publications from the Project have not been deposited in an open access institutional repository within twelve (12) months of publication. The Final Report must outline how data arising from the Project has been made publicly accessible where appropriate.

12.3.3 If any reports are not submitted or are not satisfactory to the ARC this will be noted against future Proposals submitted by the associated CIs with the Project.

12.3.4 The ARC may also seek additional information about subsequent publications after submission of the Final Report.

13. **Fundamental Principles of Conducting Research**

13.1 **Ethics and Research Practices**

13.1.1 All Proposals and ARC-funded research projects must conform to the principles outlined in the following and their successor documents:

a. NHMRC/ARC/UA *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (2007);

b. as applicable, NHMRC/ARC/UA *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007);

c. as applicable, NHMRC *Values and Ethics - Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research* (2003);

d. as applicable, AIATSIS *Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies* (2011); and

e. as applicable, codes on animal research promulgated by the NHMRC.

13.1.2 If there is any conflict between a successor document and its predecessor, then the successor document prevails to the extent of any inconsistency.
13.2 **Applicable Law**

13.2.1 The ARC is required to comply with the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1988* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

13.3 **Confidentiality**

13.3.1 The ARC will treat information contained in a Proposal as confidential. However, the ARC may disclose information contained in a Proposal, or otherwise provided to the ARC, to the extent that the information is:

a. disclosed by the ARC to its advisers (including external assessors), officers, employees or other third parties in order to assess, evaluate or verify the accuracy or completeness of a Proposal;

b. disclosed to ARC personnel to enable effective management or auditing of the ARC *Linkage Projects* scheme or any Funding Agreement;

c. disclosed by the ARC to the Minister;

d. shared by the ARC within the agency, or with another Commonwealth Department or agency, where this serves the Commonwealth’s legitimate interests;

e. authorised or required by law to be disclosed;

f. disclosed in accordance with any other provision of these Funding Rules or the Funding Agreement; or

g. in the public domain.

13.3.2 Where information contained in a Proposal is made available to third parties for evaluation or assessment purposes the ARC will require the third parties to maintain the confidentiality of the material, including any intellectual property contained in the Proposal.

13.3.3 Notwithstanding the above, and in addition to the exemptions listed at subsection 13.3.1, the ARC may publicise and report offers or awards of funding, including information about the proposed research; the name of nominated CIs or PIs and their organisations; the name of the Administering Organisation and any other parties involved in or associated with the Project; the title and summary descriptions of the Project and its intended outcomes; and the level and nature of financial assistance from the ARC. Administering Organisations should ensure that information contained in the Project title and summaries would not, if released, compromise their own requirements for confidentiality (such as future protection of intellectual property).

13.3.4 In making public information about a Proposal that has been approved for funding, the ARC may use a Project description, including title and summary, which may differ from that provided in the Proposal.

13.4 **Intellectual Property**

13.4.1 The ARC does not claim ownership of any intellectual property in a Proposal or in any research arising from a Project.

13.4.2 The Administering Organisation must adhere to an intellectual property policy, approved by the Administering Organisation’s governing body, which has as one of its aims the maximisation of benefits to Australia arising from research. Unless
otherwise approved by the Commonwealth, the Administering Organisation’s Intellectual Property policy must comply with the *National Principles of Intellectual Property Management for Publicly Funded Research* as amended from time to time.

**13.5 Incomplete or Misleading Information**

13.5.1 It is a serious offence to provide false or misleading information to the Commonwealth.

13.5.2 If the ARC considers that a Proposal is incomplete, inaccurate or contains false or misleading information, the ARC may in its absolute discretion decide to recommend that the Proposal not be approved for funding.

13.5.3 A decision under subsection 13.5.2 may be made by the ARC at any stage during the assessment of the Proposal and may result in non-progression of the Proposal to the next level of assessment.

13.5.4 Examples of misleading information and misconduct include:

a. providing fictitious research opportunity and performance evidence;

b. plagiarism;

c. making false claims in publications records (such as describing a paper as accepted for publication when it has only been submitted);

d. making false claims in relation to qualifications and/or appointments;

e. making false certifications in the RMS certification; or

f. failing to disclose to the Administering Organisation the existence, and nature, of actual or potential conflicts of interest of any of the parties involved in the Proposal/Project (such as any affiliations or financial interest in any organisation that has a direct interest in the matter or outputs of the Project).

**13.6 Publication and Dissemination of Research Outputs**

13.6.1 All Proposals and ARC-funded research projects must comply with the ARC Open Access policy on the dissemination of research findings, which is available on the ARC website at [www.arc.gov.au](http://www.arc.gov.au). In accordance with this policy, the ARC requires that any publications arising from a Project must be deposited into an open access institutional repository within a twelve month period from the date of publication. The ARC strongly encourages the depositing of data arising from a Project in an appropriate publicly accessible subject and/or institutional repository. See also clause 12.3.2.
Appendix A  Eligible Organisations

The organisations listed below are eligible to apply for funding under these Funding Rules.

New South Wales
Australian Catholic University
Charles Sturt University
Macquarie University
Southern Cross University
The University of New England
The University of New South Wales
The University of Newcastle
The University of Sydney
University of Technology, Sydney
University of Western Sydney
University of Wollongong

Victoria
Deakin University
La Trobe University
MCD University of Divinity
Monash University
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT University)
Swinburne University of Technology
The University of Melbourne
University of Ballarat
Victoria University

Queensland
Bond University
Central Queensland University
Griffith University
James Cook University
Queensland University of Technology
The University of Queensland
The University of the Sunshine Coast
University of Southern Queensland

Western Australia
Curtin University of Technology
Edith Cowan University
Murdoch University
The University of Notre Dame Australia
The University of Western Australia
South Australia
   The Flinders University of South Australia
   The University of Adelaide
   University of South Australia

Tasmania
   University of Tasmania

Northern Territory
   Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education
   Charles Darwin University

Australian Capital Territory
   Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)
   The Australian National University
   University of Canberra