



Australian Government

Australian Research Council

Funding Rules for schemes under the Linkage Program for the year 2017—ARC Centres of Excellence

Australian Research Council Act 2001

I, Christopher Pyne, Minister for Education and Training, 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.

12 May 2015

Christopher Pyne

Minister for Education and Training

Table of Contents

KEY DATES	5
CONTACTS	5
PART A – GENERAL RULES FOR SCHEMES UNDER THE LINKAGE PROGRAM.....	6
A1. NAME OF FUNDING RULES.....	6
A2. COMMENCEMENT.....	6
A3. DEFINITIONS.....	6
A4. INTRODUCTION.....	8
A4.1 Overview	8
A4.2 Research/activities supported.....	9
A4.3 Research/activities not supported	9
A5. FUNDING	9
A5.1 Level and period of funding.....	9
A6. BUDGET ITEMS SUPPORTED	10
A7. BUDGET ITEMS NOT SUPPORTED.....	10
A8. ORGANISATION GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS	10
A8.1 Eligible Organisations.....	10
A8.2 Partner Organisations.....	10
A9. RESEARCHER GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS	10
A9.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR RESEARCHERS.....	10
A10. ELIGIBILITY PROCESS	10
A11. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS.....	11
A12. SELECTION AND APPROVAL PROCESS	11
A13. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.....	11
A14. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCTING RESEARCH	11
A14.1 Ethics and research practices	11
A14.2 Applicable law	11
A14.3 Confidentiality	11
A14.4 Intellectual property	12
A14.5 Publication and dissemination of research outputs	13
A14.6 Misconduct, incomplete or misleading information	13
A15. ELIGIBLE ORGANISATIONS.....	13
A15.1 Higher education organisations.....	13
A15.2 Other Eligible Organisations.....	15
PART B – SCHEME-SPECIFIC RULES FOR ARC CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE FOR FUNDING COMMENCING IN 2017.....	16

B1.	INTERPRETATION	16
B2.	ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS FOR PART B.....	16
B3.	OVERVIEW.....	16
B4.	OBJECTIVES.....	17
B5.	SELECTION CRITERIA.....	17
B6.	FUNDING	19
B6.1	Level and period of funding.....	19
B6.2	Budget items supported	20
B6.3	Budget items not supported	20
B7.	GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND ARRANGEMENTS.....	21
B8.	ORGANISATION ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.....	22
B8.1	Eligible Organisations.....	22
B8.2	Other Eligible Organisations.....	22
B8.3	Partner Organisations.....	22
B8.4	Funding contributions from organisations	22
B9.	ROLES AND ELIGIBILITY FOR RESEARCHERS	22
B9.1	Researcher roles and eligibility.....	22
B9.2	Eligibility criteria for Centre Directors	23
B9.3	Eligibility criteria for Chief Investigators.....	24
B9.4	Eligibility criteria for Partner Investigators	24
B10.	NUMBER OF PROPOSALS AND CROSS-SCHEME ELIGIBILITY	25
B10.1	Number of Expressions of Interest and Proposals	25
B10.2	Cross-scheme eligibility	25
B10.3	Proposal eligibility and duplication	25
B10.4	Conflict of Interest.....	26
B11.	SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST	26
B11.1	Expression of Interest	26
B11.2	Submission of Expressions of Interest in RMS.....	26
B11.3	Closing time for submission of Expressions of Interest.....	27
B11.4	Certification in RMS.....	27
B12.	ASSESSMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST	27
B12.1	Expressions of Interest – first stage of assessment	27
B12.2	Request not to assess.....	28
B12.3	Rejoinder	28
B13.	SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS.....	28
B13.1	Proposals.....	28
B13.2	Submission of Proposals in RMS	29

B13.3	Closing time for submission of Proposals.....	29
B13.4	Certification in RMS.....	29
B14.	ASSESSMENT, SELECTION AND APPROVAL PROCESS FOR PROPOSALS	29
B14.1	Proposals – second and third stages of assessment.....	29
B14.2	Rejoinder	30
B14.3	Recommendations and offer of funding.....	30
B15.	APPEALS PROCESS	31
B16.	REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.....	31
B16.1	Reporting	31
B16.2	Performance reviews.....	32

Key Dates

Please refer to the [Important Dates](#) page on the ARC website for key dates and updates relevant to these Funding Rules.

Contacts

Researchers should direct requests for information to the Research Office within their organisation.

ARC Contacts are located on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au.

Appeals must be addressed and sent to:

by mail to:

The Appeals Officer
Australian Research Council
GPO Box 2702
CANBERRA ACT 2601

or by courier to:

The Appeals Officer
Australian Research Council
Level 2, 11 Lancaster Place
Canberra Airport
CANBERRA ACT 2609

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

Part A – General Rules for schemes under the Linkage Program

A1. Name of Funding Rules

These Funding Rules are the Australian Research Council (ARC) *Funding Rules for schemes under the Linkage Program for the year 2017—ARC Centres of Excellence*.

A2. Commencement

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

A3. Definitions

In these Funding Rules, unless the contrary intention appears:

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

Applicant means the Administering Organisation. Funding under the Linkage Program is provided to Administering Organisations, not to individual researchers.

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

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

ARC Award means a named Award within any ARC scheme where the salary is funded wholly or partly by the ARC.

ARC College of Experts means a body of experts of international standing appointed to assist the ARC to identify research excellence, 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.

Cash Contribution means the cash from an organisation provided to support the Program.

Chief Investigator (CI) means a researcher who satisfies the eligibility criteria under these Funding Rules.

Commencement Date means the specific date on which funding commences, as defined in Part B of these Funding Rules.

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 Program. The ARC Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy is available on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au.

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 section A15.

Emeritus Appointment means any honorary position that gives full academic status, as certified by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) in the Proposal. These positions are typically held by former academic staff members that continue to have an ongoing relationship with the institution. For ARC purposes this relationship should include access to research support comparable to employees, and would also normally include participation in postgraduate supervision. The person would not normally be eligible if they hold a substantive (paid) position elsewhere.

Field Research means the collection of information integral to the Program outside 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 and/or time to the Program from an individual, business or organisation. Values should be calculated based on the most likely actual cost, for example, current market, preferred provider or internal provider 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.

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

Medical Research means medical research as defined in the ARC Medical Research Policy available on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au.

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

NCGP means the ARC's National Competitive Grants Program.

NHMRC means the National Health and Medical Research Council.

Other Eligible Organisation means an Eligible Organisation which is not the Administering Organisation but which is identified in the Proposal as a contributor to the Program.

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

Partner Organisation means an organisation which is not an Eligible Organisation, but which is identified in the Proposal as a contributor to the Program.

Program means a Proposal for an ARC Centre of Excellence approved by the Minister to receive funding from the ARC in accordance with these Funding Rules.

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

Research Impact means the demonstrable contribution that research makes to the economy, society, culture, national security, public policy or services, health, the environment, or quality of life, beyond contributions to academia.

Research Infrastructure means assets, facilities, services and coordinated access to major national and/or international research facilities or consortia which directly support research in higher education organisations and more broadly, and which maintain the capacity of researchers to undertake excellent research and deliver innovative outcomes.

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

RMS means the ARC's online Research Management System.

Special Condition means a special condition specified in a Funding Agreement which governs the use of the funding provided by the ARC.

Strategic Research Priorities means priority research areas identified by the Australian Government, and available on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au.

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

UA means Universities Australia.

Refer to Part B of these Funding Rules for additional scheme-specific definitions.

A4. Introduction

A4.1 Overview

A4.1.1 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.

A4.1.2 These Funding Rules relate to a scheme funded under the Linkage Program of the ARC's National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP). The Linkage Program supports the growth of research partnerships between university-based researchers and researchers in other sectors in Australia and overseas that generate new knowledge, technologies and innovations.

The Linkage Program aims to deliver outcomes of benefit to Australia and build Australia's research and innovation capacity through support for:

- a. collaborative research between university-based researchers and researchers in other sectors
- b. research training and career opportunities that enable Australian and international researchers and research students to work with industry and other end-users
- c. research in priority areas.

A4.1.3 The Linkage Program schemes provide funding to Administering Organisations to support research Projects.

A4.1.4 Linkage Program funding will be awarded on the basis of excellence through a competitive peer review process for each scheme.

A4.1.5 The ARC undertakes periodic evaluations of the performance and administration of the schemes under the NCGP.

A4.1.6 The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the Linkage Program are specified each year in the ARC Portfolio Budget Statements and the ARC Strategic Plan.

The KPIs focus on long-term outcomes as well as medium-term outcomes relating to building Australia's research capacity, for example, research careers and training, contributions in areas of national need and research collaboration. These are addressed each year in the ARC's annual report.

A4.1.7 Refer to Part B of these Funding Rules for a scheme-specific overview.

A4.2 Research/activities supported

A4.2.1 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.

A4.2.2 This definition of research is consistent with a broad notion of research and experimental development as comprising 'creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man [humankind], culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications'¹.

A4.3 Research/activities not supported

A4.3.1 Except where such activities meet the definition of research in section A4.2.1, the *ARC Centres of Excellence* scheme does not support production of:

- a. compilation of data, computer programs, research aids and tools
- b. descriptive data compilations, catalogues or bibliographies
- c. teaching materials
- d. activities leading solely to the creation or performance of a work of art, including visual art, musical compositions, drama, dance, film, broadcasts, designs and literary works.

A4.3.2 The Linkage Program does not support Medical Research, as defined in the ARC Medical Research Policy available on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au.

A5. Funding

A5.1 Level and period of funding

A5.1.1 All amounts referred to in these Funding Rules are to be read as exclusive of GST (if any), unless expressly stated otherwise.

A5.1.2 The level and period of funding as well as details of supported budget items for specific schemes under the Linkage Program is outlined in Part B of these Funding Rules.

A5.1.3 The ARC reserves the right to recommend levels and duration of ARC funding which may differ from those requested in the Proposal.

A5.1.4 The ARC will not duplicate funding for research or Research Infrastructure funded by the Commonwealth.

A5.1.5 The Administering Organisation is responsible for all financial and taxation implications associated with receiving funds.

¹ OECD (2002), *Frascati Manual: Proposed Standard Practice for Surveys on Research and Experimental Development*, Paris (Page 30).

A6. Budget items supported

- A6.1.1 All budget items must be justified in the Proposal to the satisfaction of the ARC and the assessors involved in the peer review process.
- A6.1.2 Refer to Part B of these Funding Rules for scheme-specific budget items supported.

A7. Budget items not supported

- A7.1.1 Refer to Part B of these Funding Rules for scheme-specific budget items not supported.
- A7.1.2 The Administering Organisation must ensure that any organisational In-kind Contributions do not include basic salary for any researchers on Commonwealth Fellowships, unless it is salary over and above the Commonwealth component supported.

A8. Organisation general eligibility requirements

A8.1 Eligible Organisations

- A8.1.1 An application may only be submitted through the Research Office of an Eligible Organisation listed at Section A15.
- A8.1.2 The Eligible Organisation which submits the Proposal will be considered to be the Administering Organisation which will receive and administer ARC funding if the Proposal is successful. All other Eligible Organisations listed on the Proposal will be Other Eligible Organisations.
- A8.1.3 Refer to Part B of these Funding Rules for scheme-specific eligibility requirements for Eligible Organisations.

A8.2 Partner Organisations

- A8.2.1 To be eligible as a Partner Organisation, an organisation **cannot be**:
- a. an Eligible Organisation
 - b. a controlled entity of any Eligible Organisation
 - c. an entity (for example a joint venture) where more than 50 per cent is owned by one or more Eligible Organisations.
- A8.2.2 Refer to Part B of these Funding Rules for scheme-specific eligibility requirements for Partner Organisations.

A9. Researcher general eligibility requirements

A9.1 Eligibility criteria for researchers

- A9.1.1 All named researchers nominated must satisfy the eligibility criteria for the role they are to perform as at the scheme-specific Commencement Date and for the duration of the Program.
- A9.1.2 Refer to Part B of these Funding Rules for scheme-specific eligibility requirements for researchers.

A10. Eligibility process

- A10.1.1 Refer to Part B of these Funding Rules for scheme-specific eligibility processes.

A11. Submission of Proposals

- A11.1.1 Refer to Part B of these Funding Rules for scheme-specific submission requirements.

A12. Selection and approval process

- A12.1.1 Refer to Part B of these Funding Rules for scheme-specific selection and approval processes.

A13. Reporting requirements

- A13.1.1 Refer to Part B of these Funding Rules for scheme-specific reporting requirements.

A14. Fundamental principles of conducting research

A14.1 Ethics and research practices

- A14.1.1 All applications and all ARC-funded research Programs should conform to the principles outlined in the following or 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, updated 2014)
 - c. as applicable, NHMRC *Values and Ethics: Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research* (2003)
 - d. as applicable, *Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies* (2012)
 - e. as applicable, *Australia Council for the Arts Indigenous Cultural Protocols for Producing Indigenous Music, Writing, Visual Arts, Media Arts and Performing Arts* (2007)
 - f. as applicable, the *Australian Code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes* (2013) endorsed by the NHMRC, the ARC, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation and UA.

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

A14.2 Applicable law

- A14.2.1 The ARC is required to comply with the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1988* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

A14.3 Confidentiality

- A14.3.1 The ARC will treat information contained in an application as confidential. However, the ARC may disclose information contained in an application, or otherwise provided to the ARC, to the extent that the information is:
- a. disclosed by the ARC to its advisors (including assessors), officers, employees or other third parties in order to assess, evaluate or verify the accuracy or completeness of an application

- b. disclosed by the ARC to its advisors (including assessors), officers, employees or other third parties solely to comply with obligations or exercise rights under the ARC Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy
 - c. disclosed to ARC personnel to enable effective management or auditing of the Linkage Program schemes or any Funding Agreement
 - c. disclosed by the ARC to the Minister
 - d. shared by the ARC within the ARC's organisation 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
 - g. in the public domain.
- A14.3.2 Where information contained in an application 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 application.
- A14.3.3 In addition to the exemptions listed at A14.3.1, the ARC may publicise and report offers or awards of funding, including information about the proposed research; the names of nominated researchers and their organisations; the name of the Administering Organisation and any other parties involved in or associated with the proposed Program; the title and summary descriptions of the Program and its intended outcomes including any potential Research Impact that are expected to arise from the research; classifications and international collaboration; and the level and nature of funding from the ARC. Administering Organisations should ensure that information contained in the Program title and summaries would not, if released, compromise their own requirements for confidentiality (such as future protection of intellectual property).
- A14.3.4 In making public information about a Proposal that has been approved for funding, the ARC may use a project description, including Proposal working title and impact statement, which may differ from that provided in the Proposal.
- A14.4 Intellectual property**
- A14.4.1 The ARC does not claim ownership of any intellectual property in an application or in any research arising from the Program.
- A14.4.2 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 and/or any successor document/s. These documents are available on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au.

A14.5 Publication and dissemination of research outputs

- A14.5.1 All ARC-funded research projects must comply with the ARC Open Access Policy on the dissemination of research findings, which is available at www.arc.gov.au. In accordance with this policy, any publications arising from the Program must be deposited into an open access institutional repository within a 12 month period from the date of publication. When depositing publications in an institutional repository the ARC Project ID should be included in the metadata.
- A14.5.2 Researchers and institutions have an obligation to care for and maintain research data in accordance with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007). The ARC expects data management planning as an important part of the responsible conduct of research and strongly encourages the deposition of data arising from an ARC-funded Program in an appropriate publicly accessible discipline and/or institutional repository.

A14.6 Misconduct, incomplete or misleading information

- A14.6.1 All ARC-funded research projects must comply with the ARC's Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy, which is available at www.arc.gov.au.
- A14.6.2 If the ARC considers that an application is incomplete, inaccurate or contains false or misleading information, the ARC may in its absolute discretion decide to recommend that the application not be approved for funding.
- A14.6.3 A decision under subsection A14.6.1 may be made by the ARC at any stage during the assessment process and may result in non-progression of the application through the assessment process.
- A14.6.4 Examples of misleading information and misconduct include:
- a. providing fictitious research opportunity and performance evidence
 - b. plagiarism
 - c. making false claims in relation to the authorship of the application
 - d. failing to make adequate acknowledgement of intellectual, design or other significant contributions to the application
 - e. making false claims in publications records (such as describing a paper as accepted for publication when it has only been submitted)
 - f. making false claims in relation to qualifications and/or appointments
 - g. making false certifications
 - h. 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 application (such as any affiliations or financial interest in any organisation that has a direct interest in the matter or outputs of the Program).

A15. Eligible Organisations

A15.1 Higher education organisations

Australian Capital Territory
The Australian National University
University of Canberra

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

Northern Territory

Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education
Charles Darwin University

Queensland

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

South Australia

Flinders University
The University of Adelaide
Torrens University Australia
University of South Australia

Tasmania

University of Tasmania

Victoria

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

Western Australia

Curtin University of Technology
Edith Cowan University

Murdoch University
The University of Notre Dame Australia
The University of Western Australia

A15.2 Other Eligible Organisations

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)

Part B – Scheme-specific rules for ARC Centres of Excellence for funding commencing in 2017

B1. Interpretation

- B1.1 Part B contains the scheme-specific rules for ARC Centres of Excellence for funding commencing in 2017.
- B1.2 Funding for approved ARC Centres of Excellence will commence with effect on the Commencement Date of 1 January 2017.

B2. Additional definitions for Part B

For the purposes of this Part:

ARC Research Centres Program means a research centre wholly or partly funded by the ARC and includes ARC Centres of Excellence, Co-funded Centres and specific ARC Special Research Initiatives (excluding Initiatives providing funding for Synchrotron Science, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Researchers' Network and Type 1 Diabetes)

Centre Director means the person appointed to direct the programs of a Commonwealth-funded Research Centre.

Commonwealth-funded Research Centre means a research centre established under a competitive Commonwealth scheme and includes the ARC Research Centres Program, Cooperative Research Centres and the NHMRC Program Grants and Centres of Clinical Research Excellence.

Expression of Interest means a preliminary request to the ARC for a research Program which is submitted in accordance with Funding Rules approved by the Minister.

Key Performance Indicators means a set of quantifiable measures that ARC Centres of Excellence use to monitor and reporting on progress of research outcomes.

Selection Advisory Committee (SAC) means a group of experts appointed to assist the ARC to evaluate each Expression of Interest and Proposal and to provide a recommendation for funding to the ARC.

Specified Personnel means the named personnel required for the Program and includes roles such as the Centre Director, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Investigators and Partner Investigators in the Program.

B3. Overview

- B3.1 The ARC Centres of Excellence are prestigious foci of expertise through which high-quality researchers collaboratively maintain and develop Australia's international standing in research areas of national priority.
- B3.2 ARC Centres of Excellence involve significant collaboration which will allow the complementary research resources of universities, publicly funded research organisations, other research bodies, governments and businesses to be concentrated to support research in all fields of research (except Medical Research).

- B3.3 ARC Centres of Excellence will be selected through a competitive three-stage process. An Expression of Interest (EOI) must be submitted to the ARC in the first instance. The EOIs will be assessed and then shortlisted by the Selection Advisory Committee (SAC) based on the assessments. Full Proposals will be invited from this shortlist by the ARC that will be assessed by the SAC and external experts. The Applicants will be subsequently invited to participate in interviews with the SAC. The ARC reserves the right to shortlist Proposals prior to inviting Applicants for interviews.

B4. Objectives

- B4.1 The objectives of the *ARC Centres of Excellence* scheme are to:
- a. undertake highly innovative and potentially transformational research that aims to achieve international standing in the fields of research envisaged and leads to a significant advancement of capabilities and knowledge
 - b. link existing Australian research strengths and build critical mass with new capacity for interdisciplinary, collaborative approaches to address the most challenging and significant research problems
 - c. develop relationships and build new networks with major national and international centres and research programs to help strengthen research, achieve global competitiveness and gain recognition for Australian research
 - d. build Australia's human capacity in a range of research areas by attracting and retaining, from within Australia and abroad, researchers of high international standing as well as the most promising research students
 - e. provide high-quality postgraduate and postdoctoral training environments for the next generation of researchers
 - f. offer Australian researchers opportunities to work on large-scale problems over longer periods of time
 - g. establish Centres that have an impact on the wider community through interaction with higher education institutions, governments, industry and the private and non-profit sector.

B5. Selection criteria

- B5.1 All ARC Centres of Excellence EOIs which meet the eligibility criteria will be assessed and merit ranked using selection criteria A and B as listed below. Criteria weightings for the EOI are the first percentage figure noted against criteria A and B.
- B5.2 All invited ARC Centres of Excellence Proposals which meet the eligibility criteria will be assessed and merit ranked using all selection criteria listed below. Criteria weightings for the Proposal are the second percentage figure noted against criteria A and B, and the single percentage figure noted against criteria C to E.

	<i>EOI</i>	<i>Proposal</i>
A. Research program—quality and innovation	(70%)	(20%)
1. How will the proposed research program address the objectives of the <i>ARC Centres of Excellence</i> scheme?		

2. How will the proposed research program be innovative and potentially transformational, and will it lead to significant advancement of knowledge, expertise and technologies?
3. How does the proposed research program build effective collaboration and critical mass across groups of researchers?
4. How will the proposed conceptual framework, design, human resource commitments, methods and analyses, project structures, budget planning and risk mitigation strategies be assembled into an effective and integrated research program?
5. How will the proposed Centre build effective and high quality national and international partnerships, exchanges and networks?

B. Investigators *EOI* *Proposal*
(30%) (20%)

1. What will be the contribution of the Centre Director, Chief Investigators and Partner Investigators to the proposed research program and do they have appropriate capacity and commitment to the Program?
2. Why are the investigators suitable and relevant to the conduct and delivery of the proposed research program, giving consideration to Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE)?

C. Institutional support *Proposal*
(20%)

1. How is the proposed Centre aligned with the research focus and strategic direction of the Administering Organisation?
2. How will the combined level of support and commitment from the Administering Organisation, Other Eligible Organisations and Partner Organisations be sufficient for the proposed Centre?

D. Governance, leadership and mentoring *Proposal*
(20%)

1. What is an appropriate organisational structure of the proposed Centre, including:
 - a. proposed management arrangements and responsibilities (including management of dispersed and diverse teams and reporting arrangements both internally and externally)
 - b. financial systems, strategic and translation plans, milestones for achievement of objectives and delivery of outputs and outcomes, and draft Key Performance Indicators.
2. How are the performance measures listed in the application relevant to the Centre's objectives, project outputs and outcomes, and are they appropriate for assessing the Centre's performance?
3. How do the Centre Director and leadership team demonstrate their leadership ability and vision, with the capacity to perform the responsibilities of the role including strategic planning and management?
4. What is the contribution of the Centre to research training at the Honours, postgraduate and postdoctoral level?

5. How will the Centre's education and engagement programs demonstrate value in professional, ethical, technical training and outreach?

Proposal
(20%)

E. Outcomes and linkages

1. How will the path to Research Impact of the proposed research program be clearly outlined in terms of delivering benefit to Australia?
2. How will the links with Australian researchers in universities, other research organisations, industry and strategic agencies facilitate collaboration in, and application of the outcomes of, the proposed research program?
3. How will partners and end-users be involved in the translation of outcomes arising from the proposed research program?
4. How adequate are the plans and strategies for translation of research outcomes including: knowledge transfer, knowledge application, and if applicable, technology transfer, including fostering a culture of innovation and outcomes focus?
5. What are the organisational arrangements and plans relating to ownership and potential exploitation of intellectual property and/or utilisation or commercialisation of research (where appropriate)?
6. How will the proposed research program expand Australia's knowledge base and research capability and enhance Australia's international reputation and competitiveness?
7. How will the proposed research program make a significant contribution to one or more of the Strategic Research Priorities?
8. How will the proposed research program deliver effective outcomes commensurate with the request for appropriate resources (value for money)?
9. How will the Centre involve partners and end-users in development of strategic plans and Centre governance?
10. How will the Centre develop and enhance international linkages to benefit the research, training and translation programs?

B6. Funding

B6.1 Level and period of funding

- B6.1.1 The minimum level of ARC funding for an ARC Centre of Excellence is \$1 million per calendar year. The maximum level of ARC funding for an ARC Centre of Excellence is \$5 million per calendar year.
- B6.1.2 ARC Centres of Excellence may be applied for and awarded funding for up to seven years, subject to sufficient funding being available for the *ARC Centres of Excellence* scheme, the provisions of the ARC Act, and continued satisfactory progress of the Centre.
- B6.1.3 Funding may be payable under these Funding Rules for ARC Centres of Excellence in respect of financial year 2016–17 and any subsequent years to which the ARC Act applies. Funding for approved ARC Centres of Excellence will commence with effect 1 January 2017, unless other arrangements are approved by the Minister.

- B6.1.4 To maximise the impact of ARC funding, participants must obtain commitments for additional contributions from a variety of sources including the Administering Organisation, Other Eligible Organisation(s) and Partner Organisation(s). Contributions from these sources can take the form of Cash Contributions and/or In-kind Contributions and/or contributions of other material resources. The ARC is not prescriptive as to the type or level of contribution.

B6.2 Budget items supported

- B6.2.1 Budget items that directly support the research program of an ARC Centre of Excellence may be funded, including:
- a. salaries and up to 30 per cent on-costs for Centre personnel who perform research or activities that support the research, including Research Associates, Research Assistants, a Centre Manager or Chief Operations Officer, technicians and laboratory assistants but excluding the Centre Director, Chief Investigators, and Partner Investigators. Salary support must be requested at an appropriate level for the Administering or Other Eligible Organisation(s)
 - b. stipends for postgraduate students, in whole or in part, at an appropriate level for the Administering or Other Eligible Organisation(s)
 - c. equipment required for the Centre research program
 - d. maintenance and consumables required for the Centre research program but excluding that deemed to be for broad general use
 - e. access to workshop services necessary for the Centre research program
 - f. publication and dissemination of Centre outputs and outreach activity, including the development and maintenance of the Centre's website
 - g. general domestic and international travel costs (economy) for Centre personnel where this is related to the research program or to support Field Research essential to the research program (including research, technical and logistical support, local travel and accommodation costs)
 - h. domestic and international travel costs (economy) for visitors to the Centre where this is related to the research program or Centre governance.
- B6.2.2 All budget items must be justified in the Proposal to the satisfaction of the ARC and the assessors involved in the peer review process.

B6.3 Budget items not supported

- B6.3.1 The ARC will not provide funding for the following budget items:
- a. salaries and/or on-costs for the Centre Director, Chief Investigators or Partner Investigators
 - b. capital works and general infrastructure costs, in whole or in part
 - c. research support for Partner Investigators, apart from short-term project support for investigators visiting from overseas and domestic and international travel associated with the Centre
 - d. fees for international students or the Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP) liabilities for students
 - e. bench fees or similar laboratory access fees levied by the institution

- f. teaching relief
 - g. direct development of products and other commercialisation activities
 - h. investigations that are more appropriately undertaken by way of a Consultancy
 - i. costs not directly related to the Centre research program, including but not limited to professional membership fees, professional development courses, fees for patent application and maintenance, equipment for live music or drama performances, visas, relocation costs, insurance, and mobile phones (purchase or call charges).
- B6.3.2 The ARC will not provide funding for indirect costs, including basic facilities and equipment, organisational overheads and/or infrastructure costs.
- B6.3.3 The Administering Organisation, Other Eligible Organisation(s) and Partner Organisation(s) must agree to provide and fund the following basic facilities where required:
- a. accommodation (for example, laboratory and office space, suitably equipped and furnished in standard ways)
 - b. access to film or music editing facilities
 - c. access to a basic library collection
 - d. bench fees or similar laboratory access fees
 - e. provision of basic computing facilities such as desk top computers, portable computer devices, printers, word processing and other standard software
 - f. standard reference material or funds for abstracting services
 - g. use of photocopiers, telephones, mail, fax, email and internet services.
- B6.3.4 The ARC may, in its absolute discretion, determine whether any project costs involve any of the items not permitted under sections B6.3.1, B6.3.2 and B6.3.3. If such a determination is made, then the ARC may, in its absolute discretion, decide to not recommend part or all of the Proposal for funding.

B7. Governance structure and arrangements

- B7.1.1 Administrative operations of an ARC Centre of Excellence must be established within the academic, administrative and financial governance structures of the Administering Organisation.
- B7.1.2 An ARC Centre of Excellence may comprise integrated nodes or adopt any other appropriate approach to research management, provided that it meets the objectives and selection criteria and is not contrary to the Funding Agreement.
- B7.1.3 An ARC Centre of Excellence must implement appropriate governance structures to encourage centrally managed strategic alliances and collaboration with researchers, industry and stakeholders within Australia and internationally.
- B7.1.4 An ARC Centre of Excellence must have an expert Advisory Committee that provides broad professional representation of the research and end-user communities. Within the governance structures of the Administering Organisation, the Advisory Committee will provide advice and a strategic focus on the research activities for the Centre, its structure and general operating principles, and intellectual property and commercialisation management.

The Advisory Committee membership should include both national and international members and will have a Chair of significant reputation who will champion the Centre and provide advice to the Centre Director.

B8. Organisation eligibility requirements

B8.1 Eligible Organisations

- B8.1.1 Eligible Organisations may be involved in more than one EOI or Proposal but must consider their capacity to contribute in the event that all Proposals are successful.

B8.2 Other Eligible Organisations

- B8.2.1 An EOI or a Proposal must identify one or more Other Eligible Organisations to be involved with the proposed Centre.

B8.3 Partner Organisations

- B8.3.1 An EOI or Proposal must identify one or more Partner Organisations to be involved with the proposed Centre.
- B8.3.2 A Partner Organisation may be listed on an EOI or Proposal without an associated Partner Investigator in cases where the Partner Organisation provides a financial commitment only or where a Partner Investigator would not be appropriate given the role of the Partner Organisation in the proposed ARC Centre of Excellence.

B8.4 Funding contributions from organisations

- B8.4.1 The ARC provides substantial financial support to ARC Centres of Excellence. The Administering Organisation, Other Eligible Organisations and Partner Organisations must also demonstrate commitment to the proposed ARC Centre of Excellence through significant Cash Contributions and/or In-kind Contributions and/or contributions of other material resources, having regard to the total cost of the proposed ARC Centre of Excellence and the relative contribution of each investigator at the organisation. The ARC is not prescriptive as to the type or level of contributions.
- B8.4.2 In-kind Contributions must be essential to the Program. It is the responsibility of the Administering Organisation to establish the merit of the case for the recognition of In-kind Contributions.
- B8.4.3 Partner Organisation contributions must be specified in Australian dollars and, subject to these Funding Rules, contributed at the specified level regardless of currency fluctuations.
- B8.4.4 Contributions from Partner Organisations(s) must be specific to the Program of the proposed ARC Centre of Excellence and must not be part of a broader contribution to an Eligible Organisation.
- B8.4.5 Cash Contributions from Partner Organisations must not 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 or research infrastructure funding.

B9. Roles and eligibility for researchers

B9.1 Researcher roles and eligibility

- B9.1.1 Roles that may be undertaken by researchers at an ARC Centre of Excellence are:

- a. Centre Director
- b. Chief Investigator (CI)
- c. Partner Investigator (PI).

The Centre Director and all CIs and PIs nominated in an EOI or a Proposal must satisfy the eligibility criteria for the role they are to perform.

- B9.1.2 An EOI or a Proposal must nominate a Centre Director and at least one researcher as a CI.
- B9.1.3 A researcher nominated as the Centre Director, a CI or a PI must take significant intellectual responsibility for the proposed Centre, its conception, and any strategic decisions called for in its pursuit and the communication of results. The researcher must have the capacity to make a serious commitment to the Centre and cannot assume the role of a supplier of resources for work that will largely be placed in the hands of others. The ARC reserves the right to determine whether a person has the requisite capacity to perform the role.
- B9.1.4 A researcher undertaking undergraduate studies or a higher degree by research is not eligible to be the Centre Director, a CI or a PI for ARC Centres of Excellence.
- B9.1.5 If the ARC considers that any researcher nominated in an EOI as a Centre Director, CI or PI does not meet the eligibility criteria for the role which that researcher is to perform, the EOI will not be recommended for shortlisting.
- B9.1.6 If the ARC considers that any researcher nominated in a Proposal as a Centre Director, CI or PI does not meet the eligibility criteria for the role which that researcher is to perform, the Proposal will not be recommended for funding.
- B9.1.7 At the time of the submissions 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.

B9.2 Eligibility criteria for Centre Directors

- B9.2.1 The Centre Director must meet the eligibility criteria for a CI. He/she should be employed by the Administering Organisation at the commencement of the Centre and for the full term of her/his participation in the Centre. The Centre Director, through outstanding leadership, will be responsible for implementing the strategic direction of the Centre, managing the research program, and coordinating the research effort and overseeing the reporting structures across the participating Organisations.
- B9.2.2 The first-named CI on an EOI or a Proposal will be considered the Centre Director.
- B9.2.3 The Centre Director is expected to have a minimum time commitment of 70 per cent (0.7 Full Time Equivalent (FTE)) on the activities of the Centre. If a Centre Director is unable to meet this undertaking, the ARC may, in its absolute discretion, decide not to recommend the Proposal for funding.
- B9.2.4 A Centre Director may be nominated for this role on one EOI or Proposal only. A person nominated as Centre Director may be nominated as a CI on no more than one additional EOI or Proposal. The CI role must be relinquished should both Proposals be successful.

- B9.2.5 If a Proposal has been approved for funding and the Centre Director is at any time during the life of the Centre no longer able to undertake this role for any period greater than two months due to leave, incapacity, or other personal circumstances, the Centre may be continued under a replacement Centre Director provided that:
- a. prior approval is obtained from the ARC for the change in Centre Director
 - b. a replacement Centre Director meets the eligibility criteria for a Centre Director and those for a CI at the time of her/his nomination and for the full term of her/his participation in the Centre.

B9.3 Eligibility criteria for Chief Investigators

- B9.3.1 A researcher nominated on an EOI or a Proposal as a CI must meet at least one of the following criteria at the commencement of the Centre and for the full term of her/his participation in the Centre:
- a. be an employee for at least 20 per cent (0.2 FTE) at an Eligible Organisation
 - b. be a holder of an Emeritus appointment at an Eligible Organisation.
- B9.3.2 The CI must reside predominantly in Australia for the full life of the Centre. The CI may seek approval from the Administering Organisation to undertake Field Research, or study leave, directly related to the Centre research program. Such absences should not total more than two years during the Centre funding period. Where total absences for a CI during the funding period will exceed two years, ARC approval of the absences exceeding the two year limit will be required in advance. Any periods of absence must not exceed a total of six months in any 12 month period. This six month period may be taken at one time or spread across a 12 month period.
- B9.3.3 The CI must have a minimum time commitment of 20 per cent (0.2 FTE) on the activities of the Centre.
- B9.3.4 Subject to section B9.2.4, a CI may be nominated on a maximum of two EOIs or Proposals for ARC Centres of Excellence for funding commencing in 2017.
- B9.3.5 If a Proposal has been approved for funding and a CI is at any time no longer able to work as proposed on the Centre, a replacement CI may be appointed provided that:
- a. approval is obtained from the ARC for the change in CI
 - b. a replacement CI meets the eligibility criteria for a CI at the time of her/his nomination and for the full term of her/his participation in the Centre.

B9.4 Eligibility criteria for Partner Investigators

- B9.4.1 A researcher nominated on an EOI or a Proposal as a PI must not meet the eligibility criteria for a CI at the commencement of the Centre, and for the full term of her/his participation in the Centre.
- B9.4.2 A PI must secure Cash Contributions and/or In-kind Contributions and/or contributions of other material resources from her/his Partner Organisation, having regard to the total cost of the Centre and her/his relative contribution to the Centre.
- B9.4.3 If a Proposal has been approved for funding and a PI is at any time, no longer able to work as proposed on the Centre, a replacement PI may be appointed provided that:

- a. approval is obtained from the ARC for the change in PI
- b. a replacement PI meets the eligibility criteria for a PI at the time of her/his nomination and for the full term of her/his participation in the Centre.

B10. Number of Proposals and cross-scheme eligibility

B10.1 Number of Expressions of Interest and Proposals

- B10.1.1 Eligible Organisations may submit one or more EOIs for ARC Centres of Excellence in this funding round.
- B10.1.2 Eligible Organisations may be invited to submit Proposals following the conclusion of the shortlisting process for EOIs.
- B10.1.3 The ARC will only consider Proposals preceded by a shortlisted EOI; that is, an EOI must have been submitted and shortlisted, and a full Proposal subsequently invited by the ARC. This includes proposals where two or more EOIs have been requested by the ARC to submit a combined proposal.

B10.2 Cross-scheme eligibility

- B10.2.1 Researchers 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 www.arc.gov.au.
- B10.2.2 The ARC acknowledges that researchers nominating for an ARC Centre of Excellence may hold funded grants/Fellowships/Awards or have submitted Proposals through other ARC funding schemes. For the purposes of the ARC Centres of Excellence for funding commencing in 2017, all grants/Fellowships/Awards held or Proposals submitted through other ARC funding schemes may be retained until the outcome of the ARC Centres of Excellence Proposal is known.
- B10.2.3 The Centre Director and CIs on successful ARC Centres of Excellence Proposals will be required to relinquish ARC-funded grants/Fellowships/Awards which would result in the researcher exceeding limits on the number of grants/Fellowships/Awards able to be held (as stated in scheme funding rules) as at 1 January 2017. The ARC reserves the right to determine which grants/Fellowships/Awards are to be relinquished.

B10.3 Proposal eligibility and duplication

- B10.3.1 The ARC will not duplicate funding for research, including infrastructure, funded by the Commonwealth as at the Commencement Date of 1 January 2017. Participants on successful ARC Centres of Excellence Proposals funded in this round must relinquish any ARC funding that would result in duplication as at 1 January 2017.
- B10.3.2 Subject to sections B10.2 and B10.3.1, the Centre Director and CIs named on a successful Proposal may retain their current overlapping ARC projects provided that:
 - a. the Proposal clearly demonstrates and explains, to the satisfaction of the ARC, the overlap between the proposed Centre research program and the research program of the existing non-Centre grant

- b. funding for the overlapping aspect of the Centre research program is not requested in the Proposal budget for the duration of the existing non-Centre grant.
- B10.3.3 The ARC will assess whether an EOI or Proposal meets the eligibility requirements in these Funding Rules and may recommend that an EOI or Proposal that does not meet the requirements be deemed ineligible.
- B10.3.4 A decision under section B10.3.3 may be made by the ARC at any stage during assessment of the EOI or the Proposal and may result in non-progression of the EOI or the Proposal to the next stage of assessment.

B10.4 Conflict of Interest

- B10.4.1 All parties involved in or associated with an EOI or 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 EOI or the Proposal.
- B10.4.2 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 Centre. Such processes must comply with the NHMRC/ARC/UA *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (2007), the *ARC Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy* and any relevant successor documents.
- B10.4.3 As part of the certification of EOIs and Proposals, the Administering Organisation must certify that all Conflicts of Interest have been disclosed in accordance with B10.4.1, and that any Conflict of Interest will be managed in accordance with B10.4.2.

B11. Submission of Expressions of Interest

B11.1 Expression of Interest

- B11.1.1 An EOI must be submitted as a comprehensive summary of the proposed ARC Centre of Excellence. The EOI must contain all the information necessary for its assessment without the need for explanatory documentation. The ARC can request further documentation as part of the selection process. Such explanation or documentation may be used by the ARC and/or the SAC to inform its deliberations.
- B11.1.2 All details in the EOI must be current at the time of submission.
- B11.1.3 In submitting an EOI, the Administering Organisation and the Centre Director, CIs and PIs nominated in the EOI are consenting to the EOI being assessed under the ARC's peer assessment procedures and agreeing to the release of the EOI to third parties for assessment.

B11.2 Submission of Expressions of Interest in RMS

- B11.2.1 The Administering Organisation must submit EOIs through RMS unless otherwise advised by the ARC.
- B11.2.2 All EOIs must meet the format and content requirements, including certification, as set out in the RMS form and the Instructions to Applicants.
- B11.2.3 EOIs may be withdrawn but additions, deletions and modifications will not be accepted after the closing date for submission, unless invited by the ARC. To withdraw the EOI, the Administering Organisation must notify the ARC in writing.

The ARC will consider the request to withdraw an EOI but may choose not to give effect to such a request.

B11.3 Closing time for submission of Expressions of Interest

- B11.3.1 The online form completed within RMS must be submitted by the ARC Centres of Excellence EOI closing date on the Important Dates page on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au
- B11.3.2 Researchers must note that Administering Organisations may have internal closing times which precede ARC closing times.

B11.4 Certification in RMS

- B11.4.1 The Administering Organisation must certify an EOI online in RMS. Research Offices should ensure that the Research Office delegate role is authorised in the RMS to certify and submit EOIs.
- B11.4.2 The ARC reserves the right at any point in the process to seek evidence from the Administering Organisation to support the certification of EOIs.

B12. Assessment and selection process for Expressions of Interest

B12.1 Expressions of Interest – first stage of assessment

- B12.1.1 Assessment of EOIs is undertaken by the ARC, which reserves the right to make recommendations based on any number of expert assessments or solely on the basis of its expertise.
- B12.1.2 For each EOI, the ARC will:
- a. consider if an EOI satisfies the eligibility criteria and complies with the Funding Rules
 - b. assign EOIs to independent assessors from a range of organisations, who will assess and report, and may provide written comments, on the EOI against the selection criteria
 - b. merit rank each EOI against the selection criteria relative to the others on the basis of the EOI
 - c. shortlist EOIs and call for full Proposals from Administering Organisations for those shortlisted EOIs.
- B12.1.3 The ARC may exclude EOIs 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
 - b. providing incomplete, inaccurate or misleading information.
- Excluded EOIs cannot be shortlisted.
- B12.1.4 The ARC reserves the right to invite a single amalgamated Proposal where the research programs of two or more EOIs demonstrate significant synergy, overlap or duplication. The Administering Organisations may choose to give effect to the ARC's invitation. Should the invitation be accepted, the Administering Organisations of the EOIs will be responsible for negotiating with the Centre Directors, researchers and organisations in relation to the coordination, preparation and submission of a single amalgamated Proposal. The ARC will not accept

individual Proposals arising from EOIs where a single amalgamated Proposal has been invited.

- B12.1.5 The SAC and external assessors may assist the ARC with the assessment of EOIs against the EOI selection criteria (see section B5.2). The ARC has procedures for managing organisational and personal conflicts of interest experienced by members of the SAC, the ARC College of Experts, members of other ARC committees, ARC staff, and other assessors, and for enabling individuals to withdraw from the assessment process for particular EOIs where any actual or perceived conflict may exist.

B12.2 Request not to assess

- B12.2.1 Administering Organisations may name any person or persons whom they do not wish to assess an EOI by submitting a 'Request Not to Assess' as stated on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au. This form must be received by the ARC by the ARC Centres of Excellence EOI closing date and time available on the Important Dates page on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au. While the ARC may accommodate such requests, only one request may be submitted per EOI and any request containing more than three individual assessors to be excluded for an EOI must be directly justified in writing by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or equivalent of the Administering Organisation.
- B12.2.2 The 'Request Not to Assess' submitted for the EOI will also be used to inform the assignment of assessors for the subsequent full Proposal.

B12.3 Rejoinder

- B12.3.1 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 or to EOI participants.

B13. Submission of Proposals

B13.1 Proposals

- B13.1.1 Proposals for the *ARC Centres of Excellence* scheme may be submitted only when invited by the ARC. The ARC may invite Proposals from one or more Administering Organisations.
- B13.1.2 A Proposal must be submitted as a mature research plan presenting the proposed ARC Centre of Excellence as coherent, integrated and ready for implementation. The Proposal 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.
- B13.1.3 Where a single amalgamated Proposal has been invited, the proposed research program, personnel and organisations may vary from those stated in the individual EOIs. It is expected, however, that the amalgamated Proposal will incorporate aspects of both the research programs and appropriate personnel and organisations from each EOI.
- B13.1.4 Substantial changes to the research program, personnel or organisations in Proposals arising from a single EOI must be justified in the Proposal.
- B13.1.5 All details in the Proposal must be current at the time of submission.

B13.2 Submission of Proposals in RMS

- B13.2.1 Administering Organisations must submit Proposals through RMS unless otherwise advised by the ARC.
- B13.2.2 All Proposals must meet the format and content requirements, including certification, as set out in the RMS form and the Instructions to Applicants.
- B13.2.3 Proposals may be withdrawn but additions, deletions and modifications will not be accepted after the closing date for submission, unless invited by the ARC. To withdraw the Proposal, the Administering Organisation must notify the ARC in writing. The ARC will consider the request to withdraw a Proposal but may choose not to give effect to such a request.
- B13.2.4 Letters of support from Other Eligible Organisation(s) and Partner Organisation(s) must be uploaded into the Proposal. These letters must specify financial commitments (both Cash Contributions and/or In-kind Contributions) and the participation of researchers named on the Proposal, and be signed by a senior representative (Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or equivalent) of the organisation. In providing and signing these letters, the organisations are certifying the support to, and researcher participation in, the proposed Centre.

B13.3 Closing time for submission of Proposals

- B13.3.1 The online form completed within RMS must be submitted by the ARC Centres of Excellence Proposals closing date on the Important Dates page on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au
- B13.3.2 Researchers must note that Administering Organisations may have internal closing times which precede ARC closing times.

B13.4 Certification in RMS

- B13.4.1 The Administering Organisation must certify Proposals online in RMS. Research Offices should ensure that the Research Office delegate role is authorised in the RMS to certify and submit Proposals.
- B13.4.2 The ARC reserves the right at any point in the process to seek evidence from the Administering Organisation to support the certification of Proposals.

B14. Assessment, selection and approval process for Proposals

B14.1 Proposals—second and third stages of assessment

- B14.1.1 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.
- B14.1.2 For each Proposal, the ARC will:
 - a. consider if a Proposal satisfies the eligibility criteria and complies with the Funding Rules
 - b. assign Proposals to independent assessors from a range of organisations, who will assess and report, and may provide written comments, on the Proposal against the selection criteria
 - c. merit rank each Proposal relative to the others on the basis of the Proposal, any assessors' reports and any rejoinder and, if required, shortlist Proposals

B14.1.3 At the third stage of assessment, Applicants will be advised by the ARC if and when they are required to participate in interviews. The interview format, including required participants, will be advised at the same time. The ARC will not fund interviewee participation. For each Proposal invited to interview, the ARC will then:

- a. interview representatives of the Centre for those Proposals
- b. merit rank and allocate a budget for recommended Proposals, relative to other Proposals, on the basis of the Proposal, any assessors' reports, any rejoinder and the interview.

B14.1.4 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
- b. providing incomplete, inaccurate or misleading information.

Excluded Proposals will not be recommended for funding.

B14.1.5 The Selection Advisory Committee (SAC) may assist with the assessment of Proposals against the Proposal Selection Criteria (see section B5.2). The ARC has procedures for managing organisational and personal conflicts of interest experienced by members of the SAC, the ARC College, members of other ARC committees, ARC staff, and other assessors, and for enabling individuals to withdraw from the assessment process for particular Proposals where any actual or perceived conflict may exist.

B14.2 Rejoinder

B14.2.1 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 or to Proposal participants.

B14.3 Recommendations and offer of funding

B14.3.1 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.

B14.3.2 Under the ARC Act, the Minister must not approve for funding any Proposal that fails to meet the eligibility criteria set out in these Funding Rules.

B14.3.3 All Administering Organisations will be notified of the outcomes of their EOIs and Proposals, including EOIs and Proposals not recommended for funding. Administering Organisations whose Proposals are approved will be notified in a letter of offer that will indicate the funding to be offered, and provided with a copy of a Funding Agreement for signing. Outcomes, funding allocations and other relevant information about successful Proposals will be published on the ARC website.

B14.3.4 The Minister may vary the funding approval if the ARC recommends that the particular circumstances of the Centre warrant variation. Any variation or change will accord with the ARC Centres of Excellence Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2017 and the Funding Agreement.

- B14.3.5 If the ARC funding approved for a Centre varies from the amount requested, pro rata adjustments may be made to the Administering, Other Eligible and/or Partner Organisation contributions as follows:
- where the ARC funds a Centre at 90 per cent or more of the requested funding, the Administering, Other Eligible and Partner Organisations must provide their funding commitment in full as outlined in the Proposal
 - where the ARC funds a Centre at less than 90 per cent of requested funds, the Administering, Other Eligible and Partner Organisations may each pro rata their funding commitment at a level no lower than the proportion of the ARC contribution.
- B14.3.6 ARC Centres of Excellence must commence as required by the Funding Agreement. Failure to do so will result in termination of funding for the Centre.

B15. Appeals process

- B15.1.1 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.
- B15.1.2 Appeals will be considered only against administrative process issues and not against committee decisions, assessor ratings and comments or the assessment outcome.
- B15.1.3 Appeals must be submitted by the Administering Organisation on the ARC Appeals Form on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au to the address stated under Contacts on page 5 of these Funding Rules, authorised by a Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Chief Executive Officer or equivalent. Appeals must be received within 28 days of the date of the ARC notification to the Administering Organisation of the outcome of Proposals. The ARC will not accept appeals later than 5.00 pm (AEDT/AEST) on the appeals submission due date.
- B15.1.4 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.

B16. Reporting requirements

Details of [ARC reporting requirements](#) can be found on the ARC website.

B16.1 Reporting

- B16.1.1 Administering Organisations must submit reports to the ARC concerning the Centre, in the format and by the due dates detailed in the Funding Agreement or as amended from time to time.
- End of Year Reports will be required for financial reporting. Annual Reports and Final Reports will be required for research progress reporting.
- B16.1.2 Through the Administering Organisation, the Centre will be required to submit Annual Reports (and any other documentation required by the ARC) to the ARC covering both their financial operations and their research performance.

- B16.1.3 The Centre will be required to report on a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) common to all ARC Centres of Excellence, targets for which will be approved by the ARC and specified in the Funding Agreement. The Centre will also be required to report on a range of Centre-specific KPIs, targets for which are to be developed within the first six months of Centre operation and approved by the ARC for subsequent inclusion in the Funding Agreement.
- B16.1.4 If the ARC is not satisfied with the progress of any Centre, further payment of funds will not be made until satisfactory progress has been made on the Centre. If satisfactory progress is still not achieved within a reasonable period of time, the funding may be terminated and all outstanding funding will be recovered by the ARC.

B16.2 Performance reviews

- B16.2.1 Each ARC Centre of Excellence will undergo a rigorous and comprehensive external performance review arranged by the ARC in its fourth year of operation. Continuation of funding for the remaining years of operation will be dependent on the outcome of the review.
- B16.2.2 ARC Centres of Excellence funded in this selection round will not be eligible to apply for funding in future ARC Centres of Excellence selection rounds until the scheduled fourth-year review is completed.
- B16.2.3 Ad hoc reviews of ARC Centres of Excellence may be held at any time. A review will be triggered in special circumstances including, but not limited to:
- a. a change of Centre Director
 - b. proposed transfer of the Centre to a new Administering Organisation.
- B16.2.4 Outcomes and feedback arising from the performance reviews as outlined above may inform future evaluations of the *ARC Centres of Excellence* scheme.