ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge and respect the Pambalong clan of the Awabakal people, traditional custodians of the land on which this campus of The University of Newcastle is situated and also acknowledge and pay respect to the other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations from which our students, staff and community are drawn.
Presenter

ARC Executive Director Dr Robert Mun
Engineering & Information Sciences

• Prior to the ARC held senior positions at the Australian Department of Defence including:
  ➢ Branch Head at the Defence Science and Technology Group
  ➢ Scientific Advisor to Navy and to the Defence Material Organisation, and
  ➢ Senior Scientist leading systems engineering research.

• Research expertise in fluid mechanics extended to complex systems integration.
Newcastle ECR/MCR Forum

3-4 July 2019

Dr Robert Mun
Executive Director
Engineering & Information Science
Outline of Today

• National Interest Test
• Newcastle and the NCGP
• Assessment Processes (inc College of Experts)
• How best to position for competitive grants
• Questions
1. The National Interest Test
The National Interest Test

• The small text box on “benefit & impact” in ARC application forms replaced with a small text box on “national interest”.
• Around 100 words, in plain English
• National interest is defined as:
  
  “the extent to which the research contributes to Australia’s national interest through its potential to have economic, commercial, environmental, social or cultural benefits to the Australian community”

• Applications that satisfy the NIT & score highly will be recommended to the Minister for funding
Overview of the NIT process

1. Applications submitted
2. Peer review process results in recommendations to the CEO
3. CEO contacts DVCR where concerns about the NIT response
4. CEO submits recommendations to Minister
Key messages

• The intent of the NIT is to provide a statement to enable the community to understand that the Government’s investment in research is worthwhile.

• NIT Statements should be written simply, clearly and in plain English.

• The CEO is not a disciplinary expert, but will be looking to see whether the statement is in plain English and seems reasonable, i.e. the claims are specific to the research project being proposed and logical.

• The NIT applies to all selection rounds that have opened for applications since the Minister’s announcement on 31 October 2018—DP20, IN20, LP19 and LIEF20.
National Competitive Grants Program

Discovery Program
- Australian Laureate Fellowships
- Future Fellowships
- DECRA
- Discovery Indigenous

Linkage Program
- Centres of Excellence
- SRIs
- ITRP
- LIEF
- LASP
- Linkage Projects

Area of box represents the proportion of ARC funding by scheme
3. Assessment Processes
ARC Assessment Cycle

**Grant Guidelines**
- Grant Guidelines published

**Applications**
- Application submission

**Assessment**
- Detailed assessment
- Rejoinder
- General assessment

**Selection**
- Considered by Selection Advisory Committee

**Approval of funding**
- Approval of funding
ARC Assessment Process

Application → Panel → Rejoinder → Panel Assessment → Selection Meeting → Outcomes → External Assessment → Panel

Keywords: Application, Panel, Rejoinder, Panel Assessment, Selection Meeting, Outcomes, External Assessment
Assessment Overview

• The peer review process is designed to be fair, thorough and transparent

• All Applications are assessed against the selection criteria, and in accordance with the weightings for that scheme

• Applications are generally assigned to two types of assessors:
  • at least two General Assessors called Carriages (with the lead assessor termed Carriage 1); and
  • at least two Detailed Assessors (external assessors)

• ARC staff assess eligibility etc., but do not decide which Applications should be funded
ARC College of Experts

• Have a role in identifying excellence, moderating external assessments and recommending fundable Applications

• Assist the ARC in
  • assigning Detailed Assessors;
  • identifying new assessors especially international nominees;
  • provide feedback/advice on ARC processes; and
  • implementing peer review reforms in established and emerging disciplines as well as interdisciplinary areas.

• Experts of international standing drawn from the Australian research community: from higher education, industry and public sector research organisations

• Nominations usually open around May each year

4. Diversity and ROPE
NCGP: Participation rate by gender and 2-digit FoR code (2014-18)

Participation rate by gender and Primary 2-digit FoR, 2014 - 2018
Participation rate refers to the proportion of female/male applicants. All CIs have been included.

Female participation
Male participation
Equality
NCGP: Success rate by gender and 2-digit FoR code (2014-18)

Success rates by gender and FoR, 2014 - 2018
Includes Chief Investigators only. Excludes LP18.
ROPE career interruptions

• In the ROPE section of the application form, researchers are asked to:
  - Identify if they have experienced a career interruption
  - Indicate the period of the career interruption
  - Provide a reason for the career interruption (free text)
Researchers identifying a ROPE career interruption as a % of total researchers

- Total DE19: 40%
- Total DP19: 32%
- Total FL18: 25%
- Total FT18: 46%
- Total IN19: 36%
Success rate of researchers, with and without ROPE career interruption identified

Success rate of researchers

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5. How best to position research for competitive funding
Future Fellowships

• The aim of *Future Fellowships* is to attract and retain the best and brightest mid-career researchers, to conduct their research in Australia.

• Up to 100 four-year *Future Fellowships* will be awarded each year, providing a four-year salary at one of three salary levels of between $152,630 up to $216,896 per year (including on-costs).

• An additional $50,000 per year may be provided to the Administering Organisation that may be used for higher degree by research stipends and expenditure on field research and travel costs essential to the project.
Future Fellowships

The objectives of the *Future Fellowships* scheme are to:

- ensure that outstanding mid-career researchers are recruited and retained by Administering Organisations in continuing academic positions
- build collaboration across industry and/or research organisations and/or disciplines
- support research in national priorities that will result in economic, environmental, social and/or cultural benefits for Australia
- strengthen Australia’s research capacity by supporting innovative, internationally competitive research.
Future Fellowships—success rates 2009–2018
Future Fellowships, 2012–2018

Participation and success rates by gender of Chief Investigators, ARC Future Fellowships

- Male success
- Male participation
- Female success
- Female participation
Future Fellowships scheme 2018, participation and success rate by gender and career age*

* Extracted from FT 2018 selection report
Questions