

ARC DECRA Workshop



Introduction

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Workshop Program

Time	Session
9:33 – 9:45	Introduction to the DECRA Scheme
9:45 – 10:15	Developing your Project Description and Strategic Statement Professor Brett Neilan
10:15 – 10:30	Q&A Session
10:30 – 10:45	Break & Morning Tea
10:45 – 11:00	Tips for completing the ROPE sections
11:00 – 11:15	Tips for completing an ARC Budget in RMS
11:15 – 11:25	Other Research Office tips and resources
11:25 – 11:35	Wrap, feedback form and Thank you



DECRA Overview

The ARC Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA) scheme primarily aims to:

- support excellent basic and applied research by early career researchers;
- support national and international research collaboration;
- enhance the scale and focus of research in Australian Government priority areas;
- advance promising early career researchers and promote enhanced opportunities for diverse career pathways; and
- enable research and research training in high quality and supportive environments

The DECRA scheme up to 200 three-year awards will be offered to early career researchers each year.



EARLY ACTIONS FOR APPLICANTS

- Download and read the Grant Guidelines and Instructions to Applicants (ITAs)
- Commence DECRA application in the ARC's Research Management System (RMS)
 - Ensure you add yourself as an Applicant and UON as the Administering Organisation
 - The Research Office (RO) will send you Essential Instructions
 - The RO will be aware that you intend to applying and can contact you if required
- Talk to HoS and ADR about your application and required documents
- Advise your Faculty Research Development Manager (or equivalent) that you intend to apply
- Book an Eligibility and Compliance Check



Eligibility

Eligibility to Apply in 2020 for funding commencing 2021

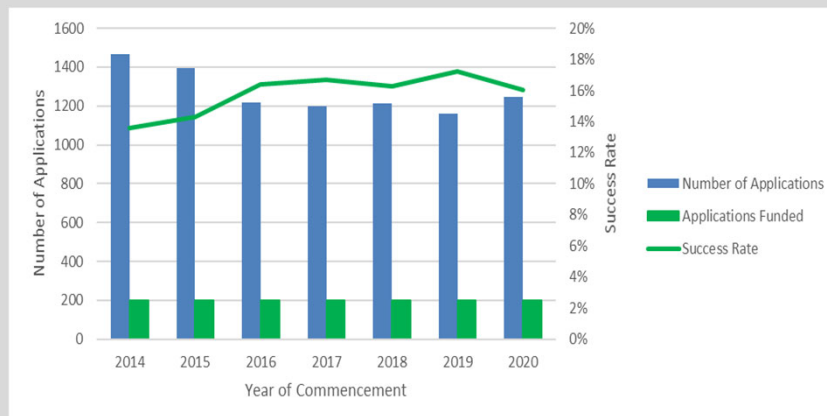
- Must have been conferred a PhD within the past five years (on or after 1 March 2015) **or**
- Have a PhD conferral date together with allowable periods of career interruption that would be commensurate with being awarded a PhD on or after 1 March 2015.

- Eligible career interruptions include (but not limited):
 - International relocation.
 - Carer's responsibilities
 - Medical condition or disability
 - Maternity or parental leave
 - Unemployment
 - Non-research employment not concurrent with research employment

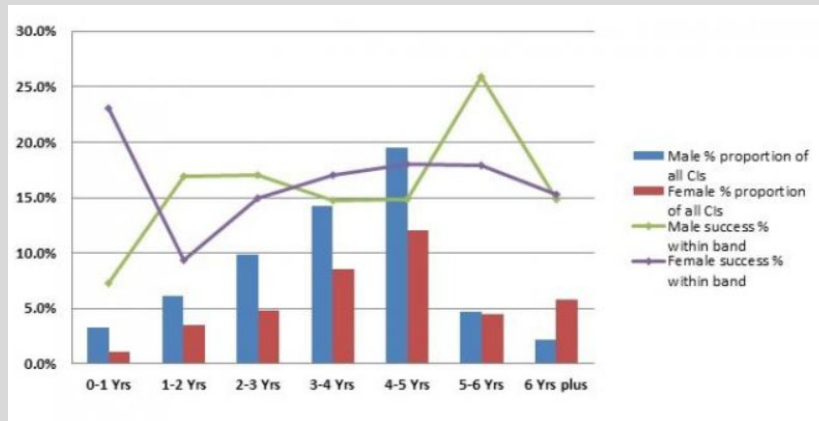
- Can only apply **twice** for a DECRA over the scheme lifetime



DECRA – return and success rates 2014-2020



Participation and Success Rate of DECRA 2020 Candidates by gender and age



Two types of Assessors

Detailed Assessor

Detailed assessors complete in-depth assessments of proposals by providing scores and comments against the scheme specific selection criteria.

Detailed assessors are drawn from the Australian and international research community

General Assessor

General assessors are members of the ARC's peer review committees (such as the ARC College of Experts) who are both specialist and generalist experts in their knowledge fields.

There are currently 194 members on the ARC College of Experts



Importance of Detailed and General Assessor

Actual Rating Distribution for Discovery Projects 2015

Detailed Assessors	A	B	C	D	E
Target	10%	15%	20%	35%	20%
Feasibility and Benefit	25%	34%	25%	12%	3%
Investigator(s)	40%	37%	17%	5%	1%
Project Quality and Innovation	25%	32%	25%	14%	4%
Research Environment	54%	32%	11%	3%	1%
Total	36%	34%	20%	9%	2%

General Assessors	A	B	C	D	E
Target	10%	15%	20%	35%	20%
Feasibility and Benefit	5%	24%	38%	24%	9%
Investigator(s)	13%	34%	33%	15%	5%
Project Quality and Innovation	7%	25%	37%	23%	8%
Research Environment	22%	40%	24%	10%	3%
Total	12%	31%	33%	18%	6%



What if my research is not in a priority area?

Science and Research Priorities
Advanced manufacturing
Cybersecurity
Energy
Environmental change
Food
Health
Resources
Soil and water
Transport
Unspecified
Total



ARC DECRA WORKSHOP



Preparing ARC Budgets in RMS

DECRA Funding

Salary Supplement

- \$104,316 (2019\$) including 30 per cent on-costs.
- For 3 years – or up to 6 years if part-time
- Not recommended to write application as a part-time Project as RMS only allows for 3 year projects in budget.
 - Easier for the Assessors (they are used to 3 year applications).
 - Can change to part-time once awarded

Project Funding

- Up to \$50,000 per annum.
- Can include:
 - a. Up to one Higher Degree by Research stipend per Proposal; and
 - b. Travel Costs essential to the Project up to \$50,000 over the Project Activity Period.



DECRA Salary

Auto-populates in RMS (Part E)

- \$ 104,316 (2019\$) including 30 per cent on-costs.

Description	Australian Research Council	Administering Organisation
	Cash	Cash
Total	161,428	14,439
Personnel	153,428	14,439
Ms Jane Graham (Discovery Early Career Researcher Award)	104,316	14,439

Salary Gap

- All applicants will have a salary gap – current minimum Academic Level A6 salary plus 30% on-cost is \$118,755 (see Essential Instructions)
- Entered Salary Gap as a Administering Organisation Cash Contribution on the same budget line.
- UON requires that either your School / Faculty or Central (SVDCRI) contributes the appropriate salary gap in order to apply for an ARC DECRA (See Essential Instructions for more guidance)



Will I be more competitive if I ask for less money?

Importance of Budget and Justification

Selection Criteria C: Feasibility – 10%

- Do the Project's design, participants and requested budget create confidence in the timely and successful completion of the Project?
- Are the necessary facilities available to complete the Project?
- Request a budget that is required to complete the project and is well justified.
- Not just complete the project – but also disseminate the findings.
- Is budget within reason?
- Don't add on 'token' conferences
- A good budget won't ensure you are successful but will ensure that any assessor has confidence in you as a candidate.



KEY BUDGET ITEMS

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	
			Australian Research Council
			Cash
Total			131,925
Personnel			131,925
Ms Jane Graham (Discovery Early Career Researcher Award)			104,316
HDR (Higher Degree by Research stipend)			27,609
Travel			+
Field Research			+
Equipment			+
Maintenance			+
Other			+

Number of years

As DECRA's are funded for three years, if an HDR stipend is requested from the ARC you should include a six month HDR stipend extension in Year 3 as a cash contribution from UON (in the same row as the stipend request).



Adding HDR stipends into the budget

YEAR 3			
Description	Australian Research Council		Administering Organisation
		Cash	Cash
HDR (Higher Degree by Research stipend)		27,609	13,805
HDR project costs			1,500



Don't Request Ineligible Items

Ineligible Expenditure (See 5.7 and 5.8 of the guidelines)

- Basic facilities
- Capital works and general infrastructure costs.
- Any costs not directly related to the project such as:
 - professional membership fees or development courses
 - Patent fees
 - Visas, relocation costs
 - Insurance or Indirect Costs
- Fees for international students or the HECS and HELP liabilities for students.
- Equipment for live music or drama performances.
- Bench fees, lab access fees or work accommodation (office space etc.)
- Library access
- Access to film or music editing facilities
- Basic computer facilities and reference materials



Project Costs

All funding requested must be allocated to the following categories

- Personnel
- Travel
- Field Research
- Equipment
- Maintenance
- Other

Please refer to the UONs webpage [Preparing Research Budgets](https://www.newcastle.edu.au/research-and-innovation/resources/grants/apply/preparing-research-budgets) (you will need to log in)

<https://www.newcastle.edu.au/research-and-innovation/resources/grants/apply/preparing-research-budgets>

Detailed advice available on (for example):

- Indirect Costs (Overheads)
- Salary Costs – including calculators
- HDR Scholarships
- Teaching Relief
- UON Contributions (Cash and In-kind)
- Travel



Budget Justification

- Every budget item request must be justified not simply listed or described. Show value for money.
- Must use the same categories and descriptions as listed in the Budget section – the aim is to make it easy for the reviewer.
- Read the Instructions to Applicants carefully
 - The formatting requirement for DECRA application is often different to other ARC schemes – consider table format
- You do not need to justify the DECRA salary supplement



Personnel

For DECRA, you will be limited to being able to fund part-time or casual Research Assistants/Laboratory Assistants etc - due to the \$50,000 pa project funding level limit

Example Description – Research Assistant HEW 6.4 – 0.2FTE + 30% oncosts

Example Justification – Explain the qualifications and expertise required for the role, what they will be working on and why their involvement is essential. Explain why a particular appointment level is required.

“A part-time (0.2 FTE) Research Assistant will be required in year 1 for coordinating the development of pilot training and survey material in conjunction with key stakeholder groups. In Years 2 and 3 the role will be required for the coordination of the fully developed training program and subsequent data collection and entry. To attract a high quality Honours graduate this position will require appointments at HEW Level 6.”



Personnel

How to Calculate Personnel Costs

- Research Services provides an excel tool based on the current UON Enterprise bargaining agreement (see Preparing Research Budgets tool)

HEW Level	FTE Base Salary	costs (30%)	Salary + 30% on-costs*
Level 1			
Level 5			
Step 1	\$ 71,298	\$ 21,389	\$ 92,687
Step 2	\$ 73,600	\$ 22,080	\$ 95,680
Step 3	\$ 75,897	\$ 22,769	\$ 98,666
Step 4	\$ 78,198	\$ 23,459	\$ 101,657
Step 5	\$ 80,502	\$ 24,151	\$ 104,653
Step 6	\$ 82,707	\$ 24,812	\$ 107,519
Level 6			

- Must include on-costs
- Do not include indexation (eg allowances for future Enterprise Bargaining increases)
- Should include an increase in salary level by one Step each year (eg HEW 5.1, 5.2, 5.3)
- Research Office recommends requesting all salaries at highest step level to ensure all costs will be covered**

Personnel

Poor Example

Description		Australian Research Council
Total		Cash 157,925
Personnel	+	149,925
Ms Jane Graham (Discovery Early Career Researcher Award)		104,316
HDR (Higher Degree by Research stipend)		27,609
RA1		10,000
TA1		8,000

Personnel

Good Examples

Description		Australian Research Council	Cash
Total			150,173
Personnel	+		150,173
Ms Jane Graham (Discovery Early Career Researcher Award)			104,316
HDR (Higher Degree by Research stipend)			27,609
Research Associate (RA) Level A6 @ 0. FTE + 30% oncosts for 3 years			11,875
UON GIS and Computer Modelling support @ Level A8 1.0 FTE + 30% on-costs			6,373

Description		Australian Research Council	Cash
Total			153,428
Personnel	+		153,428
Ms Jane Graham (Discovery Early Career Researcher Award)			104,316
HDR (Higher Degree by Research stipend)			27,609
Technical Assistant (TA) HEW5.6 @ 0.3 FTE + 30% oncosts for 3 years			21,503
Travel	+		



Travel

- \$50,000 ARC limit on travel (over the life of the Project)
- Travel costs essential to the Project, including economy travel costs for domestic and/or international travel associated with the Project, including to foster and to strengthen collaborations between researchers in Australia and overseas
- Do not include requests for Field Research expenses in this section.
- Summarise travel items – list by trip only



Travel

Poor Examples

Travel		+		8,000
Travel to attend meetings and conferences		/		8,000

Travel		+	8,000	4,000
From ARC		/	8,000	0
From UON		/	0	4,000



Travel

Good Examples

Project Cost (E1)

Travel		+	2,500	2,500
Dr Graham - Newcastle to Japan to attend 4th World Conference of Reproductive Biology		/	2,500	0
Dr Graham - Newcastle to Auckland to visit Joe Bloggs at the University of Auckland		/	0	2,500

ARC Budget Justification (E2)

Budget Item	ARC Request	Justification
Registration and attendance at 4 th World Conference of Reproductive Biology	2,500	This annual conference encourages early-stage, ground-breaking ideas. The application for inclusion is in February every year based on a short proposal. Cost estimate of \$2,500 based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$800 – return economy airfare Sydney to Tokyo • \$860 - ATO expenses rate of \$215 per day/4 days • \$400 – registration fee • \$440 – Accommodation for 3 nights in Tokyo

It is not necessary to include table format but ensure it is clear and corresponds to budget line items.



Equipment

- Directly relevant to and essential for the project
- Hardware and software - ARC will NOT fund standard computers or laptops,
- Cost items based on quotes not estimates (Cost plus installation)

Example Description – 2 x Apple iPads and Tough Case x \$750 (ex GST) = \$1,500

Example Justification - State why this particular equipment is essential for delivering on the project, and if necessary explain that the same or similar equipment is not available at UON or that access to such equipment housed elsewhere is not practical and/or cost effective.

“Two Apple iPads are required to complete the GIS specific fieldwork. Apple iPads support the required GIS software as described in Part C – Project Description and requested in this budget. Two tough cases are also requested to ensure equipment is well maintained for the project.”



Maintenance

- Include in this category consumables and small equipment items
- Quotes not estimates

•Example Description – Mass Spectrometry Consumables (\$5,000 each year)

•Example Justification:

“This project relies heavily on mass spectroscopic analysis for the assessment of cell proteomic changes during microbial division. The costs include general mass spectrometry reagents – trypsin, protein fragmentation, MS columns and labelling reagents. Sigma Aldrich has quotes \$1,000 for the reagent listed. Based on the number of experiments required, 5 x units are the minimum requirements, totalling \$5,000. “



Other

- Please include any items in the 'Other' budget category that cannot be appropriately placed in another category.

- Data collection/translation/workshops/transcription/compensation to participants

- **Example Description** – *Participant Recruitment Compensation*

- **Example Justification**

“Participant compensation is needed to assist in recruiting large numbers of participants for the experimental studies. The use of paid compensation will ensure that the project is completed within the projected timeline. In addition, the use of paid compensation means that a more representative sample can be accessed for the experimental studies. We anticipate requiring approximately 100 participants from the paid pool, who each would be paid \$50 as compensation for their time. Thus, \$5000 is requested for paid compensation.”



University Contributions

- If the University (School / Faculty / Central etc) have offered it is important that these are detailed on the External grant Coversheet
- Ensure appropriate approvals are included with the coversheet (if not School or Faculty)
- Application will not be submitted if your application has UON Contributions that have not been approved



QUESTIONS?



ARC DECRA Workshop

Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE)



ROPE (Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence)

Research Opportunity

- ROPE recognises research excellence in the context of the diversity of career and life experiences
- Research Opportunity comprises two separate elements:
 - Career experiences (relative to opportunity)
 - Career interruptions

Performance Evidence

- Takes into account the quality rather than simply the volume or size of the research contribution



Main Components of Personnel and ROPE Section **

Sections that auto-populate from RMS profile

- Qualification
- Appointments
- Currently held ARC grants

Other

- Academic Interruptions
- Details of your academic career and opportunities for research, evidence of research impact and contributions to the field, including those most relevant to this Proposal
- Publications
 - i) Publication context and contribution
 - ii) Publication list
- Ten career-best academic research outputs
- Eligibility Questions



ROPE – Academic Interruptions

F16. Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) - Academic Interruptions

(You must read the ROPE Statement <http://www.arc.gov.au/arc-research-opportunity-and-performance-evidence-ropes-statement> before filling out this section.)

- ARC has a ROPE Statement - recommend reading before completing this section
- Opportunity to provide a brief description of career circumstances which may influence research productivity.
 - employment situations, including those outside academia
 - the research component of employment conditions
 - any periods of unemployment, part-time employment or other interruptions
 - childbirth, carers' responsibilities, misadventure or debilitating illness
- Any other aspects of career or opportunities for research that are relevant to assessment and that have not been detailed elsewhere in this Proposal
 - For example, any circumstances that may have limited research and publications or affected the time available to conduct and publish their research.



ROPE – Academic Interruptions


- ARC does not recommend going into specific detail, particularly around illness or carers responsibilities.

From when	01/09/2008
To when	31/01/2012
FTE of academic interruption	1.0
Details	I was employed full time in industry, until I moved to Australia in Feb 2012.

From when	14/03/2011
To when	24/06/2011
FTE of academic interruption	1.0
Details	I had my second maternity leave (three months full-time, March - June 2011).



ROPE – Research Evidence and Impact Statement

F17. Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) - Details of the DECRA candidate's academic career and opportunities for research, evidence of research impact and contributions to the field, including those most relevant to this application 

Provide details of the DECRA candidate's academic career and opportunities. This should not include information presented in the following questions (Upload a PDF of up to five A4 pages)

(This question must be answered)

- Read the Instructions to Applicants – provides significant detail on what to include.
- Ensure you follow the required headings
 - Easy for you = Easy for the Assessor

o AMOUNT OF TIME AS AN ACTIVE RESEARCHER

o RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

o RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS



ROPE Statement

RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

- Prizes, honours and awards
- Invited keynote and speaker addresses
- Research support income
- Commercial outcomes such as patents, IP licences and resulting benefits
- Identifiable benefits outside of academia
- Other professional activities
- Describe how the DECRA candidate's research has led to a significant change or advance of knowledge in their field, and outline how their achievements will contribute to this application.
- Other?
 - Reviewing articles for journals.
 - Research training supervision (incl. Honours)
 - Commercial reports
 - Other professional activities:
 - Involvement in professional societies
 - Community engagement or outreach



ROPE Statement

RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS (2)

- Avoid using dot point lists which do not identify differences of impact and/or significance.
- Describe the contribution.
- Describe why it is significant.
- Explain how other people have recognised its significance.
- What has been the impact of the research?



ROPE Statement

UON Engagement and Impact Toolkit

Research Services has developed an Engagement and Impact Toolkit which assists to provide:

- a comprehensive overview of how research engagement and impact is increasingly influencing researcher practice, institutional strategies and practices as well as research funding;
- strategies to support research impact at the institutional, faculty and individual level;
- resources to support data capture and effectively communicate research impact.

A series of tiles on the EI Toolkit homepage link visitors to information and resources across major themes including 'An introduction to the EI Toolkit', 'Resources', 'Writing your impact story', 'ARC Engagement and Impact assessment', 'Promoting your research impact' and 'Collecting EI data'.



Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) - Publications

Research Output context

- Provide clear information that explains the relative importance of different research outputs and expectations within the context of your discipline/s.
- Provide a context of the candidate's research achievements.

This may include:

- the importance/esteem of specific journals in your field;
- specific indicators of recognition within your field such as first authorship/citations
- Non-traditional research outputs and how these are valued in your discipline

The ARC does not provide any rules against including citation measures such as:

- Impact factor
- H-Index

Should not be a discussion of your publication record and should not repeat other information already provided.



Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) – Publications (F19)

Research Outputs listing including 10 Career-best research outputs

This data is populated from your RMS profile using ORCID, BibTex or Manually

The ARC provides a helpful user guide on how to populate Research Outputs to your profile and the application.

[Research Outputs in RMS—Instructions for adding Research Outputs to your RMS Profile.](#)

The application will generate the list for you:

- Ten career-best research outputs (Indicate up to ten career-best research outputs by ranking from one up to ten)
- Authored books;
- Edited books;
- Book chapters;
- Refereed Journal articles;
- Fully refereed conference proceedings;
- Additional research outputs.

Do not include: CVs and theses or pre-prints (not yet published)

Provide the Project ID and years funded for on any ARC grant on which you were a CI or Fellow from which the item originated.



Eligibility Exemption Requests

- All DECRA candidates who must claim career interruption to meet the eligibility criteria must have an eligibility exemption request approved by SDVCRI.
 - ARC requirement
- Form is available on the UON ARC DECRA webpage to facilitate this approval.
- Due to Research Office on Wednesday 5 February 2020.
- If any career interruption is of a sensitive nature, than arrangement for SDVCRI approval can be discussed with the Research Office.



Eligible Career Disruptions

Reason for Career Interruption	Time which can be claimed
Disruption due to international relocation.	A period of time commensurate with the interruption not exceeding three months per international relocation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carer's responsibilities - Medical condition or disability - Maternity or parental leave - Unemployment - Non-research employment not concurrent with research employment 	A period of time commensurate with the interruption
Being the primary carer of a dependent child (inclusive of carer's responsibilities and any maternity or parental leave)	<p>Two years per dependent child, inclusive of any period of maternity or other parental leave, with no maximum identified</p> <p>A primary carer who has had extensive caring responsibilities for a dependent child may be granted a further extension (in addition to the two years) with justification. This may be due to the child being ill or having a disability</p>



Questions?



ARC DECRA WORKSHOP

OTHER TIPS and Q&A



When should I apply for a DECRA?

When your track record is at its most competitive

What should you consider :

- number of outputs already published or accepted;
- publications in preparation;
- your capacity to publish in the coming years; and
- How many years left you will be eligible



Be Organised!

The application is larger than most applicants realise, so leave plenty of time to prepare a competitive application.



Key Dates for DE21

Deadlines	Date
Scheme Opens in RMS	Wednesday 16 October 2019
UON Deadline for Statement by Administering Organisation (Strategic Statement)	Wednesday 5 February 2020
UON Deadline for Eligibility Exemption Requests	Wednesday 5 February 2020
Eligibility and Compliance Check Period*	Monday 10 - Friday 28 February 2020
Request not to Assess to Research Office	Tuesday 25 February 2020
UON Deadline for Final Application	9:00am Thursday 5 March 2020
ARC Submission Deadline	5:00pm Thursday 12 March 2020



Strategic by Admin Organisation

Strategic Statement Process

1. Template and Quick Guide is provided by Research Grants when you commence application in RMS (or earlier if available).
2. **DECRA candidate to write Statement and liaise with Mentor/Supervisor.**
3. Submit Statement to Faculty by the Faculty deadline
4. Statement reviewed/approved by Faculty.
5. **Statement sent to Research Grants by Wednesday 5 February 2020**
 - DVCRI review & changes as required
 - Returned to Faculty/Candidate if major changes required
6. DVCRI approval and signature
7. Statement returned to DECRA candidate to upload in RMS application.



Strategic by Admin Organisation

Tips to help us help you please ensure

- The statement has been peer reviewed
- The statement has been edited and approved by the Faculty (Faculty must submit to our Office on your behalf)
- Grammar and spelling have been checked and no errors are present
- The statement fits within the allotted space on the template, whilst leaving room for DVCRI signature without exceeding the page restriction (3 page limit)
- All UON contributions listed in the statement (cash and/or in-kind) have been approved by a person in authority (i.e., School contributions by the HoS, Faculty contributions by the AD(R)).
- As we do not request a coversheet at the time the Statement is submitted for DVCRI signature, the expectation is that all School and Faculty contributions will be listed on the Coversheet and approved at signoff of the Coversheet. Any additional contributions (i.e., PRC, etc.) require submission of approval (email sufficient) along with the Statement in order to gain DVCRI signature.



Request not to Assess

Individuals applying for ARC funding have the opportunity to nominate persons whom they do not wish to assess a Proposal by submitting a Request Not to Assess form, to the ARC through the Research Office.

The ARC discourages such requests to exclude assessors, as it limits the pool of available assessors for a Proposal; however the ARC recognises that there are situations in which some assessors should be excluded.

Requests may include only three assessors to be excluded for an application.

Nomination of an ARC College of Experts member must be accompanied by comprehensive evidence justifying the request.



ARC Medical Research Policy

ARC does not normally fund health and medical research through its competitive funding schemes

To provide clarity, the ARC Medical Research Policy details the research that is eligible and ineligible for ARC support.

Some examples of research that is ineligible for ARC support includes (but not limited to):

- research with human health and/or medical goals.
- research involving the use or development of animal models of human health conditions,.
- interventional research in humans or research aiming to modify the health of the human participants.
- the use or development of equipment, facilities, tools, games, devices, smart phone applications or other items to understand, diagnose, monitor, manage or treat human health conditions.



What does a successful application look like?

Hard-copies available for viewing at the Research Grants office.

- Previous successful applications are a great tool to understand
- Contact research-applications@newcastle.edu.au to request access to view successful applications for the DECRA (or any other ARC) scheme.



Questions?

Where to get further information

ARC

- ARC website
<http://www.arc.gov.au/discovery-early-career-researcher-award>

UON Research & Innovation Services

- Via ARC Research Email List
- Please direct any questions to:
Research Applications
Phone: (02) 4921 7733
Email: research-applications@newcastle.edu.au

