



Australian Government
Australian Research Council

Establishment Toolkit

Industrial Transformation Research Program for funding commencing in 2020



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Introduction

The document provides helpful information to Applicants and grant awardees on best practice administration requirements of *Industrial Transformation Research Program (ITRP)*.

This document supports the *Industrial Transformation Research Program Grant Agreement for funding commencing in 2020* (Grant Agreement). Where appropriate, this document will reference clauses within the Grant Agreement.

Applicants and grant awardees must use the Grant Guidelines and Grant Agreements as the authoritative documents.

Please note, all terms and definitions in this document align with the Grant Agreement such as:

- 'Research Hub' refers to the awarded *Industrial Transformation Research Hub*
- 'Training Centre' refers to the awarded *Industrial Transformation Training Centre*
- 'You/Your' refers to the Administering Organisation
- 'We/Us' refers to the Australian Research Council (ARC).

In addition, 'senior leadership' refers to the Research Hub or Training Centre Director, Deputy Directors, and node leaders.

Execution of the Grant Agreement

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- A.2.1 Commencement
- A.4 Payment of the Grant

Additional information

Grant Agreements and Grant Offers will be provided to the Research Office through the Research Management System (RMS) and accepted by a user with the role type 'Research Office Signatory'. The Grant Agreement and Grant Offer will then be counter-accepted by an ARC Delegate and the associated project is created for payment of funding.

For more information on accepting a Grant Agreement in RMS, please visit 'RMS: How to use Funding Agreement functionality' page on the [ARC Website](#).

Your first ARC payment is made in the next monthly pay run in the funded year. For more information regarding ARC payments, please visit the 'Grant Payments' page on the [ARC website](#).



Establishment Funds

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B2.2 Establishment

Additional information

Once the Grant Agreement has been executed and prior to commencement of the Research Hub or Training Centre, You can seek approval from the ARC to access up to \$100,000 in establishment funds.

A one-page request including a breakdown of proposed expenditure and rationale must be made via the Research Office to ARC-Postaward@arc.gov.au.

Example of an establishment fund request:

Request for Total \$X of ARC establishment funding to support the following activities:

- Salary for the Business Manager or other senior administrative personnel to be employed by the Administering Organisation to directly assist in establishment activities \$X
- Recruitment costs including advertising: \$X (estimate only)
- Setting up of the website and KPI Reporting Tool plus logo, flyers, etc.: \$X
- Travel for Research Hub Director's or Training Centre Director's and any other personnel to attend the meetings between universities and industry partners: \$X
 - Air fares and taxis (\$X each), accommodation (\$X each), travel allowance (\$X each)
- Cost of workshop including travel costs for inter-state participants: \$X
 - Air fares and taxis (\$X each), accommodation (\$X each), Venue hiring and expenses \$X

In the unlikely event that the Research Hub or Training Centre does not commence and ceases, establishment funds will not be recovered by the ARC.

Please note that You hold the risk for incurring any other costs before the Research Hub or Training Centre has officially commenced, above and beyond the establishment funds.

Access to the remaining project funds for eligible budget items will be only available once the Research Hub or Training Centre has officially commenced (following the execution of agreements with Participating Organisations).

Taskforce to assist university administration during establishment

The senior leadership of the Research Hub or Training Centre needs early support from the university administration during the establishment process, especially to navigate complex policy and agreement challenges.



You are encouraged to establish a small temporary taskforce to support the Research Hub or Training Centre, potentially including representatives from:

- Human Resources
- Finance
- Research Office
- Communications
- Information and Communications Technology
- Legal office
- Commercialisation and Intellectual Property (IP)/Business Development

This taskforce can provide operational guidance and support for establishment matters including:

- recruitment and appointments
- budget management and financial delegation
- reporting requirements
- corporate identity and branding
- establishing key admin contacts
- agreements with the Participating Organisations.

It may be valuable to include a member with experience in good governance processes for research entities as well.

Setting out the terms of the taskforce (through the creation of a short document) may assist in ensuring everyone is working toward the same goal.

Some universities have taskforce structures already in place, or You can help the Research Hub or Training Centre create a temporary one.

TIP: Documenting the operational guidance will allow You and the senior leadership to reference this material over the life of the Research Hub or Training Centre, regardless of any staff changes.

Participating Organisation Agreements

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- A2.2.4 Participating Organisation Agreements
- 10.2 Conflicts of Interest

Additional information

Building on the discussions and draft agreements developed during the application phase, negotiating and executing agreements with Participating Organisations may require significant effort.

You may choose to enter into a single agreement with multiple organisations or a single agreement per organisation as appropriate. You may consider a simplified agreement in certain circumstances, i.e. with an overseas institution, or an organisation which is only making a small contribution. Please note that all agreements must include certain provisions as required under the Grant Agreement.



The ARC has reduced the requirements to be included in the Participating Organisation Agreements to allow You to tailor the agreements appropriately.

When drafting agreements with Participating Organisations You must include the following requirements (clause A.2.2.4 of the Grant Agreement):

- outline the roles, responsibilities, contributions and research that must be undertaken by You and relevant Participating Organisation;
- describe the IP arrangements that each party brings to the project (or background IP) as well as the outcomes or results generated by the project (or Project IP); and
- not impede or prevent You from complying with any of its obligations under this Agreement

You may also consider the following:

- provide clear guidance about Conflicts of Interest arrangements. This should include the management of current relationships within the Research Hub or Training Centre and how potential future conflicts will be identified and managed.

Previous experience has shown executing agreements with some organisations from overseas can be challenging and time consuming. Some countries need to ensure that any research agreement does not contradict their own legal framework. Note that larger organisations often need to seek legal advice in other countries.

TIP: Consider simplifying the agreement, such as term sheets outlining high level requirements during the application stage or use a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to manage expectations on participation.

If You are experiencing difficulties in finalising any of the Participating Organisation agreements, please contact the ARC Major Investments Team for advice.

In extenuating circumstances, where all agreements have been completed with the exception of one which is seriously delaying the commencement of the Research Hub or Training Centre, it may be possible to submit a Variation to temporarily remove that organisation subject to ARC approval. This allows the Research Hub or Training Centre to commence and the organisation may be re-added once the agreement has been finalised. You must ensure the Participating Organisation agrees to this Variation and continue to manage their expectations.

You can create additional policy and procedure documents that underpin the terms of the agreement. This will allow You flexibility to make any procedural changes over time without varying the agreements. For example, the agreement states parties must comply with Conflicts of Interest, but the detailed mechanisms are outlined in a procedural document.

TIP: It may be useful to workshop Your draft Participating Organisation agreement by running it through a variety of tests using hypothetical scenarios, particularly around IP ownership and other potential disputes.

TIP: Develop an abridged version of the agreement which explains in clear language “what this means for me” which may be a useful tool to provide to all parties.

TIP: Some Research Hubs or Training Centres have found it beneficial to use consistent plain language in the agreements with all Participating Organisations to enable a community of understanding.



Ethics and protocols clearances

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- A2.1.2 Commencement

Additional information

Previously, the Administering Organisation was required to ensure that a Research Hub or Training Centre would not commence without appropriate ethical clearances from the relevant committees.

The ARC has reviewed this clause and revised it for the latest Grant Agreement.

An ethics plan must be in place prior to commencing the Research Hub or Training Centre. Any ethics clearances as outlined in this plan must now be obtained **prior to the commencement** of the research activities.

TIP: Carefully consider any other statutory or regulatory requirements with which the Research Hub or Training Centre must comply.

Detailed project plans/agreements

Once the Research Hub or Training Centre is established, nodes will begin setting up project agreements/plans. This step requires more detailed negotiations with Participating Organisations and personnel involved. While the activity is Research Hub- or Training Centre-wide, the oversight of the process is driven centrally by the senior leadership.

TIP: Make sure the agreements are integrated within the research program to avoid it becoming a loose network of projects.

TIP: Consider outlining the key milestones, reporting requirements, and an escalation process for issues.

TIP: Consider how the projects will be managed through to commercialisation and have agreed tracking mechanisms for broad theme progress with industry partners (“stage gates”).

TIP: Document the project IP through an IP register: this can be a simple excel document list or something more technical to suit the needs of the Research Hub or Training Centre. Include information on the:

- **Background IP**
- **Expected Project IP**
- **A process for managing New/Emerging IP**

Further information regarding the development of a translation plan is provided below.

Please be aware that in negotiating project plans/agreements, it must be implemented in accordance with the Research Hub’s or Training Centre’s ‘Project Description’ and within the broad structure of the proposed ‘Project Cost’ contained in the application, as well as any Special Conditions.



There are examples where Research Hubs or Training Centres seek scope changes for approval by the ARC that can either emerge during the early negotiations or during the lifespan of the agreement.

Examples of scope changes that would be considered for approval by the ARC

Example 1

A Research Hub or Training Centre had three themes and six sub projects in the application. However, after accepting the funding offer there was a return rate of 90% of ARC funds and it was decided that the grant would scale back and remove two of the sub projects from the research program. There is no major impact to the overall outcomes.

Example 2

A Training Centre proposed six themes of research, each with two students to work under the themes. Due to recruitment issues, one of the themes was unable to find suitable candidates to satisfy the industry partners needs. The Administering Organisation requests to change the scope to remove that theme and embed critical components into another theme. This would form a 'scope change' variation (see Variation Guidelines on the [ARC Website](#))

Example 3

A Research Hub had a partner withdraw from the Project and a new partner is interested in joining the Research Hub, under a different/new research theme than the original partner was involved in. This new research direction is still within the intent of the Research Hub program and can be integrated easily into future research program activities. The Administering Organisation requests a new organisation and scope change variation to seek permission from the ARC.

Examples of scope changes which would NOT be approved by the ARC

Example 1

A Research Hub wishes to change a research theme due to changes in a Partner Organisation's priorities, which falls outside the objectives of the research program or scheme objectives. In this case, a scope change variation would not be approved.

Transitioning arrangements for Research Hubs and Training Centres (existing/new)

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B2.5 Ongoing Research Hubs and Training Centre Grants from previous ITRP Grant opportunities

Additional information

You may be awarded a new Research Hub or Training Centre before the end date of a previously funded Research Hub or Training Centre. To manage the transition



arrangements the ARC requires You and the senior leadership to submit a transition statement for consideration by the ARC.

The transition statement must be provided to the ARC-Postaward@arc.gov.au **within three months** of the new Research Hub or Training Centre Grant Offer being executed by the ARC.

To allow detailed consideration by the ARC, the transition statement must include:

- a **comparative evaluation** of the two Research Hub's or Training Centre's research plans, including an explanation of any duplication or overlap (if any) and how the transition will be managed.
- an assessment of the **time commitment** of personnel common to the two Research Hubs or Training Centres, and whether they have adequate capacity to undertake work across both investments to adequately conclude one and satisfactorily commence the other.
- a **list of postgraduates and postdoctoral researchers** and the remaining period of their participation in the previous Research Hub or Training Centre (completion of thesis or expiration of contract).
- a detailed **wind-down financial statement** listing committed and expected expenditure of the previous Research Hub's or Training Centre's allocation, including support for postgraduates and postdoctoral researchers.
- if the Research Hubs or Training Centres have a period of overlap, have a clear understanding that a researcher can only be **Director on one Research Hub or Training Centre at a time**. Where required, interim arrangements for a replacement Director should be outlined for the Research Hub or Training Centre which is winding down.

IMPORTANT: Should the transition statement be unsatisfactory in outlining the transition arrangements, or if there is potential overlap of funding the ARC may recover funds from either the new and/or old Research Hub or Training Centre.



Examples of transitioning arrangements for Research Hubs or Training Centres

There are three general options for transition:

Option 1:

The old Research Hub or Training Centre will conclude and then the new Research Hub or Training Centre will commence. This arrangement may include requesting approval from the ARC to delay the start of the new Research Hub or Training Centre.

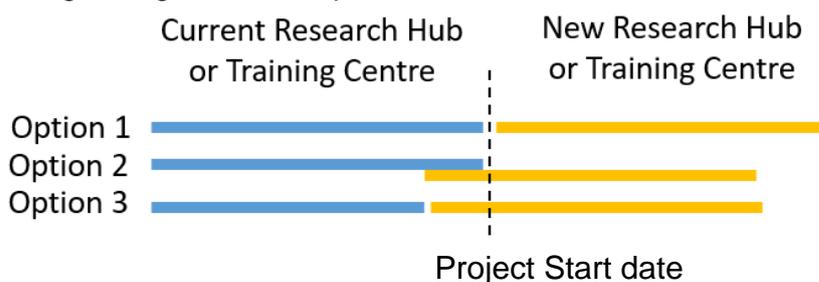
Option 2:

The old Research Hub or Training Centre will continue with an acting Director while the new Research Hub or Training Centre will commence with the Director. This arrangement will need to carefully detail the movement of all personnel from the old to the new, where appropriate. You must seek approval from the ARC to appoint an acting Director to manage the old Research Hub or Training Centre.

Option 3:

You can seek approval from the ARC to conclude the old Research Hub or Training Centre earlier (with or without a partial relinquishment of funds) and then commence the new Research Hub or Training Centre.

Figure 1: Transitioning arrangement examples



Additional interest to join the Research Hub or Training Centre

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- C2.1 Evaluation of the adequacy of Partner Organisation Cash and In-Kind Contributions for the Research Hub scheme

Additional information

There is a requirement for Research Hubs to maintain a 75% threshold of cash contributions from Partner Organisations that You need to maintain. Training Centres do not have this threshold but do heavily rely on Partner Organisations to provide the majority of the project costs.

When obtaining cash from industry, there has to be ongoing engagement and monitoring of cash flow, particularly for investments over multiple years.

Note also that the objectives of the ITRP schemes seek to actively leverage national and international interest and strengthen capacity of industry.

As such, a newly established Research Hub or Training Centre may acquire additional interest from other organisations that would like to be involved. Ensure there is a clear strategy and criteria for managing requests for adding new organisations, including a framework to consider the merits of the collaboration.



Example criteria for considering new Participating Organisations

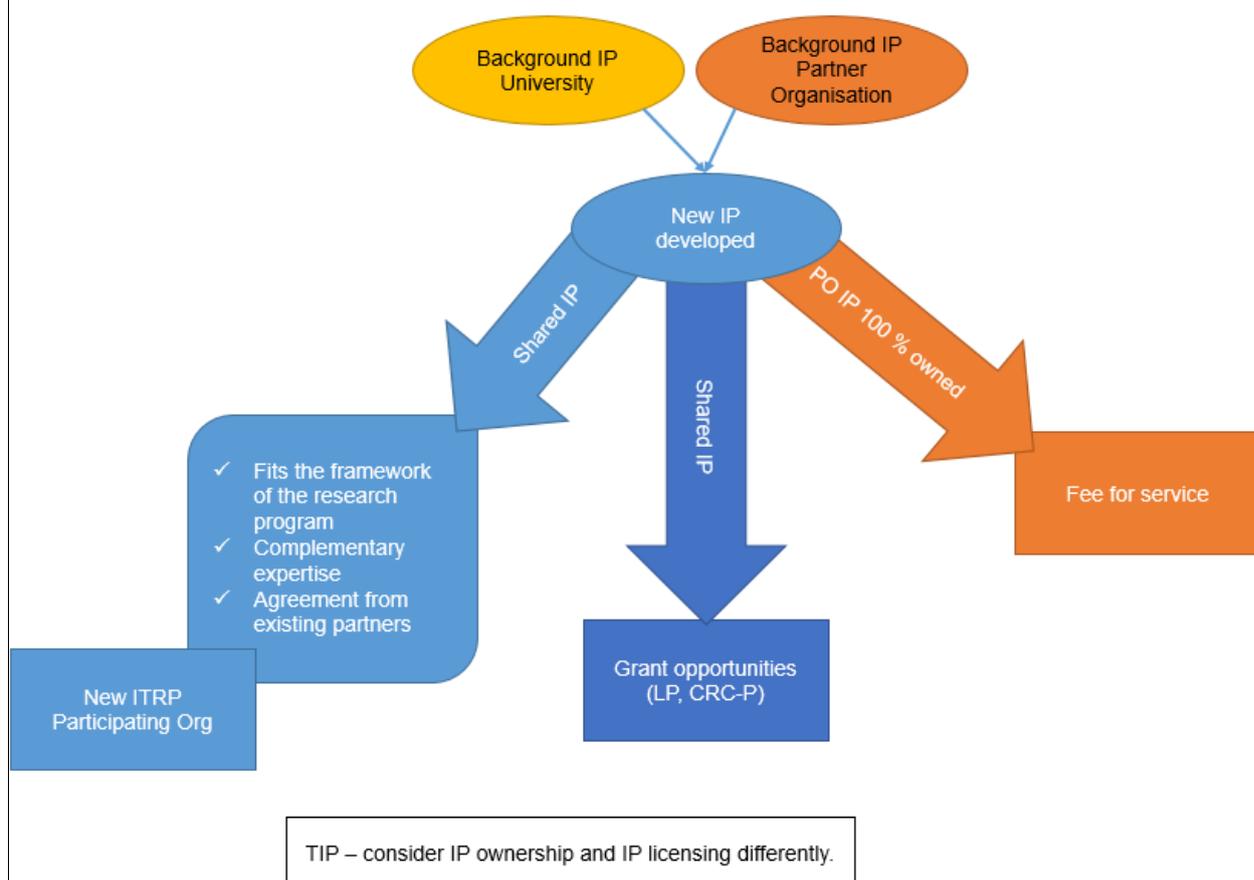
Have criteria to identify if the new partnership is more appropriate as a:

- Fee for Service contract or consultancy direct with the university (for example when the partners are seeking 100% IP ownership)
- Separate grant opportunity (e.g. ARC Linkage Projects, ARC Discovery Projects or Cooperative Research Centres Projects [CRC-P]) (for example, shared IP and outside of the Research Hub or Training Centre)
- New Partner Organisation within the Research Hub or Training Centre, ensuring it fits in the research program and collaboration framework.

Appropriateness to add a new Participating Organisation?

- Consider the framework of the research program
- Consider the merits for adding a partner—does the new Participating Organisation enhance the capability and direction of the research program?
- Is this replacing a Participating Organisation that has been removed from the grant? Is this 'like for like', or not?
- What is the impact on the existing shared IP arrangements?
- Is there clear support from the current Participating Organisations to add the new organisation?

Figure 2: Example of business process flow for considering new partners



Governance

Research Hubs and Training Centres are large commonwealth investments with multiple organisations involved and considered research entities. As such, governance is an important consideration. Clear governance arrangements facilitate better program management and translation of outcomes.

Advisory Committee

It is recommended that an Advisory Committee is established as early as possible. Membership of this committee will particularly help with strategic and translational planning and thinking ahead.

Membership should include unique strategic skills to advise on challenges that could lie ahead, not only current issues for the Research Hub or Training Centre. The committee can have national and international membership. Scientific, governance or operational expertise can be sought from members—whatever is needed to support the Research Hub or Training Centre.

Develop clear Terms of Reference including:

- quorum requirements
- gender equality and diversity
- Early Career Researcher (ECR) participation (as a part of professional development and mentoring)
- equitable organisational representation
- ensuring the membership gives advice, not directives
- clear requirements for refreshing membership every couple of years to continue developing and meeting new strategic directions.

Talk to other existing Research Hub Directors or Training Centre Directors and Business Managers. The ARC does not give specific recommendations on governance structure.

Additionally, the senior leadership may consider establishing a Science Advisory committee which would provide advice on benchmarking of the research outcomes within the Research Hub or Training Centre.

Note that the ARC does not stipulate the number of members for this committee, only that it should have the right mix of expertise.

TIP: The Advisory Committee(s) should be independent of the members of the Research Hub or Training Centre to enable them to consider strategic issues and provide appropriate advice to the ITRP leadership.

Executive Management Committee

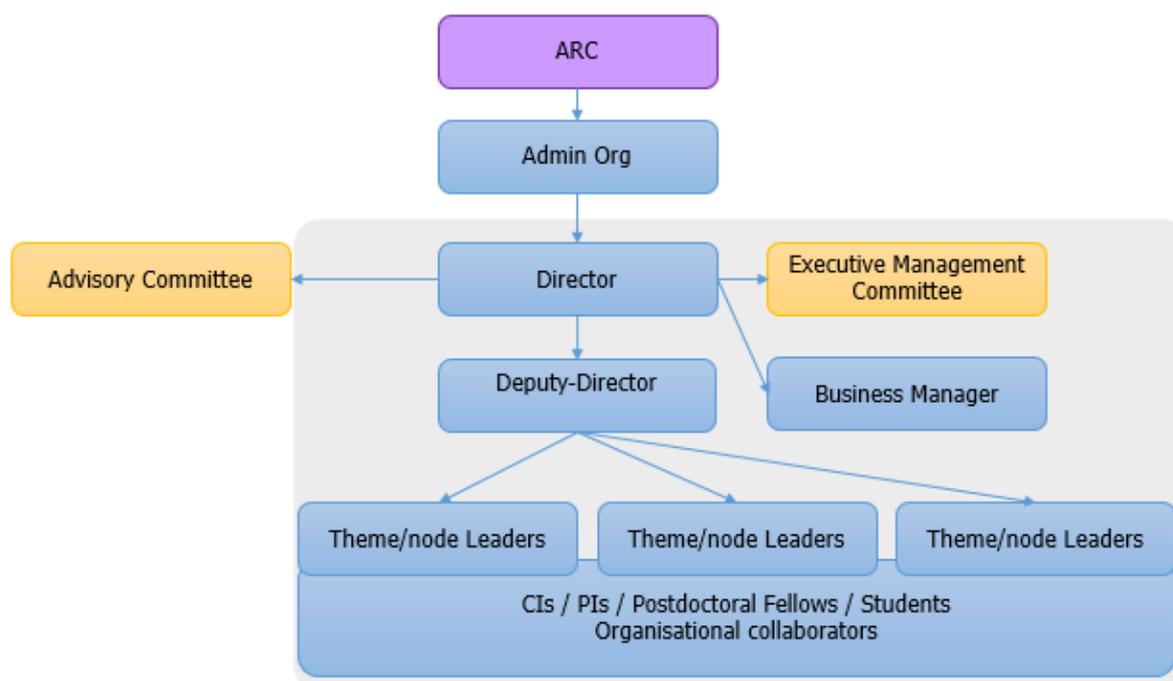
To ensure that the Research Hub or Training Centre operates as an entity in its own right, there must be adequate representation of senior leadership to manage the Research Hub or Training Centre. This can include the Research Hub Director or Training Centre Director, Business Manager, Node Leaders, and on occasions university senior executive. Also consider how best to include and engage with Partner Organisation representatives.

Additionally, the Business Manager is an important role, ensuring operational aspects of the Research Hub or Training Centre are represented in discussions which is important



context for decision making. Remember that members of the Executive Management Committee should be working together for the Research Hub's or Training Centre's best interests (and not individual institutions).

Figure 3: Example of key elements of a governance framework



Reporting lines

Ensure there are clear reporting lines for the Research Hub or Training Centre to ensure there is smooth communication with the relevant parties.

You will need to consider reporting lines within the context of the governance structure of Research Hub or Training Centre too, including across the nodes. Note that administration staff within other nodes will often report to the lead Chief Investigator within that node rather than the central administration team.

Further to this, You will need to consider the reporting lines to the Administering Organisation senior executive.

In terms of the Research Hub Director or Training Centre Director, it is common to report to a Head of School, Dean, or directly to Deputy Vice Chancellor Research (DVC-R).

Financial delegations

You need to clearly determine the delegations early for finances and HR related activities to allow for operational autonomy for the Director and Business Manager.

Should a change to the structure of delegations inside the university be required, negotiate and allow for a long lead time to complete this negotiation process.

Research Hub or Training Centre senior leadership should clearly support the efforts of the Business Manager and administrative team in managing operational requirements, and also intervene when necessary to ensure compliance by all Research Hub or

Training Centre participants (people and organisations) in expenditure and other reporting requirements.

TIP: To obtain more ideas and to assist in engaging with other university's structures, contact the Research Office staff, Business Managers and Chief Operating Officers from ARC Centres of Excellence and Research Hubs and Training Centres from other nodes to understand administrative structures, identify key contacts and understand their financial and other delegations.

Recruitment processes

Given the grant can be up to five years duration, the ARC expects that there will be changes to personnel.

Change of Research Hub Director or Training Centre Director

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B2.6.2 Personnel Transfer or Change

Additional information

You will need to work closely with the ARC to manage the request for a new Research Hub Director or Training Centre Director.

For a change of Research Hub Director or Training Centre Director these steps need to occur:

- You must **notify the ARC** via email to advise that a leadership change is likely to take place including the rationale for this change.
- A competitive **recruitment process** should be undertaken by the Administering Organisation for an appropriately qualified person to lead the Research Hub or Training Centre.
- You must **advise the ARC** via email that a candidate has been selected and that the necessary preliminary approvals have been given by other Participating Organisations. The ARC should also be supplied with a copy of the CV for the proposed Research Hub Director or Training Centre Director (no more than two pages).
- A **meeting/interview is organised** with the ARC with the proposed Research Hub Director or Training Centre Director, the DVC-R or equivalent delegate from the Administering Organisation, the Business Manager (if applicable) and the Director of the Research Office from the Administering Organisation.
- In some cases, the interview may also involve a site visit to the Administering Organisation and a performance review.

At the meeting with the ARC, a **short presentation** must be given by the proposed Research Hub Director or Training Centre Director outlining:

- the expertise and skills he/she brings
- a summary of progress of the Research Hub or Training Centre
- potential opportunities and challenges which lie ahead
- activities in the next 12 months—including strategic funding options and wind down plans (if applicable).



Subject to the ARC assessment of the paperwork and meeting, the ARC will provide advice on whether the appointment of the new Director may progress which may include follow up conditions required to support the new Director taking on the role. If the appointment may proceed, You will submit a formal request into **RMS as a Variation** for final ARC approval of the Research Hub or Training Centre Director change.

Appointment of Business Manager

The ARC funds can be used to appoint a highly qualified Business Manager for the Research Hub or Training Centre.

An appropriate competitive recruitment process should be followed to enable the appointment of a Business Manager. The Business Manager is a vital role expected to lead the business and operational administration of Research Hub or Training Centre. As one of the first appointees, the Business Manager will also play an important role in coordinating the negotiation and execution of the participating organisation agreements in collaboration with organisations.

Once the Business Manager is appointed, please notify the ARC Major Investments Team, who will organise a videoconference or face-to-face meeting as a means for introduction and to facilitate an ongoing and productive working relationship.

We encourage new Business Managers to reach out to the regional network in their state (for example, NSW, VIC, and QLD). If a network does not exist within your university contact the Major Investments team who can provide some other useful contacts.

It is also important that the Business Manager liaises with You and other administrative support personnel at the nodes from the early stages of the Research Hub or Training Centre to build an operational network to support effective administration.

Change of Business Manager

At any point during the life of the Research Hub or Training Centre, You must notify the ARC if the Business Manager has left and when a replacement has been appointed. The Major Investments team will organise a videoconference or face-to-face meeting with the new Business Manager as a way of introduction to the ARC.

Recruitment of Personnel

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- C2.2 Recruitment Processes

Additional information

Best practice university recruitment processes should be followed for the recruitment of staff to the Research Hub or Training Centre. We also encourage Research Hubs and Training Centres to be innovative in their recruitment processes to attract the best candidates.

Recently some ARC Centres of Excellence have advertised female-only postdoctoral positions to meet their gender equality and diversity policy targets. There are also a number of toolkits which have been developed by ARC Centres of Excellence, Research Hubs and Training Centres and are available on their respective websites. For more information, contact the ARC Major Investments team.

Consider the timing of appointments for staff and students across the life of the Research Hub or Training Centre to ensure an appropriate balance of resources and supervision of



staff. Also plan for the final years of the Research Hub or Training Centre to ensure students are not left unsupported or unsupervised, or have research activities that extend beyond the project end date.

It is important to achieve a balance of senior positions and post-doctoral researchers (at levels A, B, and C). This will create a strong foundation for effective succession planning in the Research Hub or Training Centre.

If there are personnel changes *other than* the Research Hub Director or Training Centre Director:

- all replacement Chief Investigators (CIs) or Partner Investigators (PIs) must meet the **eligibility criteria** specified in the Grant Guidelines
- all replacement CIs and PIs must have the **relevant expertise** which is commensurate with or equivalent to the standard of the original team which was awarded the Research Hub or Training Centre
- all replacement PIs must have **research and/or supervision/mentoring and/or management expertise** which is commensurate with or equivalent to the standard of the original team which was awarded the Research Hub or Training Centre
- **approval** must be sought from the ARC for the change in Specified Personnel by submitting a Variation request to the ARC in RMS. See Variation Guidelines on the 'Grants Administration' page on the [ARC Website](#)

Following the recruitment of personnel, all staff should undergo an induction process. A plan for their professional development and mentoring should also be put in place. Be innovative in ideas for mentoring and supervision—the Research Hub or Training Centre is building a future research workforce.

Preliminary Research Hub or Training Centre meeting

It is recommended that a preliminary meeting or strategic planning day is held with the Research Hub or Training Centre team within the first few months of establishment. Include as many participants as possible, noting you can use the \$100,000 establishment funds to support this activity.

Some suggested topics to discuss at this meeting can include:

- use of strategic funds
- development of a framework for implementing operational requirements
- establishment of a communications strategy, which should address:
 - team cohesion
 - processes for management of expectations
 - performance reporting coordination of variations to the Grant Agreement
- revised budget plan (if required)
- development of detailed project plans
- establishment of good governance framework and reporting processes, and consider risk mitigation strategies
- clear reporting requirements for both industry and ARC
- and consider setting the Centre's Key Performance Indicator (KPI) targets.



Operational Plans for Research Hubs and Training Centres

Strategic Plan

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B2.3 ITRP Plans

Additional information

You must put in place a strategic plan within six months of the Project Start Date. This plan should:

- provide a **purpose and vision** statement for the Research Hub or Training Centre in clear plain language
- outline the **expected outcomes** of the research through the Project Activity Period and at its conclusion, and provide indicators of success in achieving these
- outline **research translation** and/or **Intellectual Property** strategies
- outline **key risks** and mitigation plans
- note identified and/or potential opportunities for **end-user and industry collaborations**;
- provide broad **succession plans** for critical positions, including those of Research Hub Director or Training Centre Director and Business Manager
- identify opportunities for **emerging research areas** and how to manage these.
- note identified and/or potential **sources of funding** to support projects both during the Project Activity Period and particularly beyond the Project Activity Period
- **revise this plan annually** and update over the Project Activity Period, ideally with input from a broad range of members from the Participants.

Circulate and consult widely in the development of the strategic plan, and provide copies of it to all Research Hub or Training Centre participants when they are appointed, as part of their induction.

The strategic plan will form part of the Progress Reporting requirements for the first year of operations. Please see below for more information.

Gender equality and diversity plan

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B2.3 ITRP Plans
- 27. 3 Compliance with legislation and policies

Additional information

You must put in place a gender equality and diversity plan within six months of the Project Start Date. This plan should:

- consider strategies to position the Research Hub or Training Centre as a **flexible and family-friendly work environment**
- **support innovative recruitment processes and employment conditions** of postdoctoral researchers, students and other staff including committees



- encourage the **recruitment of and flexible employment** arrangements for research personnel and other staff with family or carer responsibilities
- be developed in conjunction with the **human resources areas** of the Participating Organisations.

Mentoring plan

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B2.3 ITRP Plans

Additional information

You must put in place a mentoring plan within six months of the Project Start Date. This plan should:

- outline the implementation of a high quality supervision, mentoring and professional development program, encompassing students, postdoctoral researchers and mid-career researchers
- outline mechanisms through which students can be supervised including co-supervision by researchers both across nodes and across academic disciplines
- where appropriate, confirm that the Research Hub or Training Centre Directors, CIs and PIs must act as supervisors and mentors to assist less experienced personnel in developing research management and leadership skills and outline mechanisms through which this can occur.

Translation plan

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B2.3 ITRP Plans

Additional information

You must put in place a translation plan within six months of the Project Start Date. This plan should include:

- identification of actual and potential end users and industry sectors
- a map of a clear pathway to research impact and how progress can be monitored and measured
- how the data will be effectively collected to undertake impact monitoring and evaluation
- an outline of the IP arrangements and commercialisation pathways.

Governance plan

A robust governance framework for the Research Hub or Training Centre should include:

- key expert advice needed and structure of the committee with Terms of Reference, including reviewing membership regularly.
- reporting requirements and Terms of Reference
- management of risks and mitigation strategies
- identification of university regulatory frameworks and critical legislation requirements



- communication strategy and how it should operate.

Budget plan

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- A2.1.2 Commencement

Additional information

During the establishment phase of the Research Hub or Training Centre, it may be necessary to revisit the budget costings to the research program. If the Research Hub or Training Centre needs to make revisions make sure it is clearly documented. Include details on other changes in research direction or issues with equipment purchase or infrastructure access.

If there are major changes to the budget, which include funding being moved across line items, for example Personnel Equipment or Travel, then a budget Variation will need to be completed to obtain ARC approval. For more information, please see the [Variations Guidelines](#) on the ARC Website.

Have clear arrangements on the distribution and in some cases recovery of funds across nodes. The Administering Organisation should administer the strategic funds and its distribution based on performance management of the research projects.

It is important to ensure that sufficient funds are allocated for administrative costs right to the end date of the Research Hub or Training Centre, or beyond (with approved use of Administering Organisation funds), to ensure all final reporting requirements are met.

Carefully consider the eligible budget items which the ARC funds can support, and which items will need to be supported through other funding sources. See the Grant Guidelines clause 5 for more information.

Items which are not eligible for ARC funding can be supported from university or partner funds.

It is important to have clear documented rules for how the funds will be distributed across the Research Hub or Training Centre so there is transparency in the process, including strategic funds.

Strategic funds

Consider setting aside a pool of funds for strategic purposes throughout the operation. These funds can support opportunities as an incentive which can emerge (brand new or serendipitous). For example, 'innovation award' that drives new directions, ideas or applications. You must ensure these emerging investments continues to be run in accordance with the research program in the application or subsequent approved project scope change. These strategic funds can be used for management of risk by funding mitigation plans if risks are realised.

Agreement on the use and distribution of these funds should be established early and the Executive Management Committee has oversight on the distribution of this initiative and performance of the research outcomes.

Some Administering Organisations of Research Hubs or Training Centres set aside extra income from ARC indexation or bank interest to supplement strategic funds.



Creating a Research Hub or Training Centre as an entity

Website and social media

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B2.2 Establishment

Additional information

Establishing an online presence is increasingly important as a Research Hub or Training Centre is expected to be its own entity. Websites and social media platforms facilitate greater engagement with the public, and have been used to great effect by existing Research Hubs and Training Centres.

TIP: Some existing Research Hubs and Training Centres use the university's social media accounts while others create their own.

TIP: Share your Twitter handle with [@ARC-Communications@arc.gov.au](https://twitter.com/ARC-Communications) and tag ARC in your posts (@arc_gov_au).

During establishment, it may be beneficial to have a placeholder website to ensure that there is a domain name and URL available.

There is currently no guidance from the ARC around domain names and Research Hubs or Training Centres have used .com, .org, and .edu.

TIP: Research Hubs and Training Centres are multi-organisational grants and it may be beneficial to have a website and social media presence that does not lead the Research Hub or Training Centre to be perceived as a sub department in a particular university.

Research Hub or Training Centre Logo

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B2.2 Establishment

Additional information

The ARC does not have any specific requirements in the development of a Research Hub or Training Centre logo, however you must ensure that branding material such as banners and signs acknowledges the ARC.

Some Research Hubs or Training Centres develop the logo as part of a team building exercise, or as an internal competition. Other Research Hubs or Training Centres have requested the public or school groups enter their designs for a logo.

Signage

Signage for the Research Hub or Training Centre should be in a prominent place within the Administering Organisation and nodes. Signage must include the ARC logo and full title of the Research Hub or Training Centre.



Launch Event

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B2.4 Project Launch

Additional information

All Research Hubs and Training Centres are expected to hold a launch event within 12 months of commencing. The Federal Minister for Education and the ARC CEO must be invited.

Launches should be organised in consultation with the ARC, following protocols set out in the ARC's event advice documentation (available from ARC Stakeholder Relations).

The format of the event will be managed in conjunction with You and the senior leadership of the Research Hub or Training Centre.

TIP: Read the ARC event advice before you commence planning your launch event

TIP: The timing of the event is should be chosen so that initial achievements of the Research Hub or Training Centre can be showcased, and attendance by Partner Organisation representatives is desirable.

Some example formats are provided below:

- New building opened for the Research Hub or Training Centre
- New equipment and lab tours
- Unveiling of signage
- The functions can be held in or around lab facilities or within a general function area within the University or some are held at Parliament House.

In some cases, the launch is held in conjunction with a Research Hub or Training Centre event such as a workshop, summer/winter school, or annual meeting to maximise attendance.

TIP: ARC Stakeholder Relations can assist with contact with the Federal Minister for Education. It may also be appropriate to consider inviting other Federal or State Parliamentarians.

Setting Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B5.1 Research Hub and Training Centre Key Performance Indicators Report

Additional information

Prior to commencement, all Research Hubs and Training Centres must set performance targets across a range of categories for each year of funding. These performance targets, or Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), are reported annually through the ITRP Progress Report.

Note that KPIs are only one measurement of the overall performance of the Research Hub or Training Centre.

It is important that adequate time and consideration is given to setting up KPI data collection processes.



Please refer to the KPI Guidance document on the ITRP reporting page of the [ARC Website](#) for further information regarding setting KPIs.

Consider KPIs early: KPIs should be aspirational targets to stretch Research Hub or Training Centre participants' performance. Excluding Year 1 performance where the Research Hub or Training Centre is still establishing, consider reviewing KPI targets each year to ensure they are fit for purpose.

TIP: You can amend the KPI targets for the forward years at any time. You will need to seek approval from the ARC by emailing ARC-Postaward@arc.gov.au and provide a short rationale for the changes. Once approved, the updated targets can be reported on in forward years.

Reporting tools

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- A5 Reporting
- B5 Reporting
- C5 Reporting
- D5 Reporting
- 16 Reporting

Additional information

There are a number of reporting requirements as outlined in the Grant Agreement, which will require data collection within the Research Hub or Training Centre. When implementing internal reporting tools, consider how data is requested, collected and presented, and how it will be used over the forward years. The senior leadership of the Research Hub or Training Centre will need to ensure that there is a robust and accurate mechanism to report and track against KPIs for their own purposes as well as reporting to the ARC.

TIP: Report against KPIs monthly or quarterly over the life of the Research Hub or Training Centre. This information can be sent out to communicate across the nodes and will be easier to collate for the Progress Reports each year.

TIP: Contact existing Business Managers and Chief Operating Officers of ARC Centres of Excellence and ITRP for ideas about the different systems that are being used to collect KPI information. A number of Major Investments have either in-house custom built or externally commissioned online reporting databases.

Progress Report

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B5.2 Progress Report

Additional information

Progress Report templates, key criteria to include and instructions are provided on the 'Grants Administration' page on the [ARC Website](#).

Three key stages in the project lifecycle have been identified for Research Hubs and Training Centres and there is a corresponding template for each of these stages:



- **Pre-commencement** (Accepted the funding offer, but yet to commence): an email update of progress to date is required to be submitted to the ARC.
- **Year 1** (Project has commenced and is within the first year of operating): Year 1 Template is to be completed, including attaching the Strategic Plan, Governance Plan and a short research highlight story.
- **Years 2-5** (Project is in its second or later years through to the end of the Project): Years 2-5 Template to be completed, which identifies any key changes from the previous year's Progress Report and a short research highlight story.

Reviews

Ad hoc performance reviews for Research Hubs and Training Centres

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B5.3.6 Ad Hoc Performance Reviews

Additional information

Please note that Ad hoc performance reviews may be undertaken at any time and can apply to both Research Hubs and Training Centres.

The ARC will notify You, the Research Hub Director or Training Centre Director, and the Business Manager if You have been identified for an Ad hoc performance review. This review may include a site visit and may follow the same format as outlined in the Performance Reviews below. The ARC will provide further information at the time of notification.

Performance Reviews

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- B5.3 Performance Reviews

Additional information

Performance Reviews may be undertaken in the third year of operation. The Research Office and DVCR (or equivalent) of the Administering Organisation will receive an email from the ARC advising that the Research Hub or Training Centre has been selected for a review.

In most cases, Performance Reviews involve the consideration of documentation submitted to the ARC and a site visit or interview. You, the Director, and Business Manager will be provided with guidance material seeking information against specific Terms of Reference. The Review Panel, which may include members external to the ARC with relevant expertise, will review the submission material and attend the site visit or interview.

The Performance Review evaluates a Research Hub's or Training Centre's performance against:

- the **Scheme Objectives** outlined in the Grant Guidelines,
- the **Project-specific objectives** as set out in the Application,
- the **specific performance targets**, Key Performance Indicators, or milestones identified in the Application.



The Performance Review includes consideration of the operations, management and governance of the Research Hub or Training Centre which may include:

- the effectiveness of the Research Hub or Training Centre in building a **collaborative research team**
- the effectiveness of building human capacity through supporting and **mentoring students and postdoctoral researchers**
- the growth in **capability and capacity**
- the quality and effectiveness of the **communication, education and outreach strategies**
- the effectiveness of the **gender equality and diversity plan** in developing a flexible and family friendly work environment
- the quality of **commitment and support** provided by Participating Organisations
- the quality of the **strategic planning and succession planning**.
- Effective of the governance framework

You and the senior leadership will be provided with a Terms of Reference which outlines the criteria for the Performance Review.

You must provide any reasonable assistance requested by the ARC to undertake the review, including the preparation of the agenda for the site visit, providing a venue to conduct the Performance Review and catering for the Review Panel.

A Performance Review will assess the satisfactory progress or otherwise of the Research Hub, which affects the continued provision of Grant funding as per Grant Guidelines.

The Performance Review will produce a Review Report which will include recommendations from the Review Panel for response from the Research Hub or Training Centre. Progress against implementing the recommendations will be monitored through the Progress Report and ongoing consultation with the Research Hub or Training Centre.

Final Report

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- A5.3 Final Report

Additional information

The Final Report will be made available by the ARC in RMS well before the end date of the Research Hub or Training Centre to allow sufficient time to complete the report.

Guidelines for completing the Final Report for all ARC schemes including Research Hubs and Training Centres is available on the 'Grants Administration' page on the [ARC website](#).

TIP: Final Reports can take significant time to complete for Research Hubs and Training Centres and it is recommended that You consider populating the form well before the end date, particularly with regards to Research Outputs.



TIP: You will need to consider administrative staff support after the end date to complete and submit the Final Report. This may include continuing the Business Manager or providing part-time resources from the Administering Organisation.

If a Final Report is considered by the ARC to be inadequate, unsatisfactory or is not submitted on time, You will be contacted for further information.

IMPORTANT: Overdue Final Reports will affect eligibility for Research Hub Directors, or Training Centre Directors, and all named Chief Investigators for future applications of any ARC grant.

Research Hub Grant Funding

Managing 75% threshold of Partner Organisation cash contributions

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- C2.1 Evaluation of the adequacy of Partner Organisation Cash and In-Kind Contributions for the Research Hub scheme

Additional information

As outlined in A3.7 of the Grant Guidelines, total **cash contributions** for all Partner Organisations must be at least 75% of the requested ARC funds, if any Partner Organisation has more than 100 employees.

Partner Organisation contributions need to be aligned with the budget, aims and research program as outlined in the application or as approved by the ARC in a scope change Variation.

During the life of a Research Hub, Partner Organisation's contributions may change or default on payments and You are responsible to ensure the threshold is maintained, where appropriate.

Contact the ARC Major Investments Team for further advice.

ARC Higher Degree by Research (HDR) rates

IMPORTANT: The HDR stipend must be paid at an appropriate level as specified in the ARC salary and stipend page on the [ARC Website](#). Should students be paid less than the specified amounts, You will be required to back pay the difference using ARC funds. If ARC funds have been spent, You will need to back pay using university or other funds

The ARC encourages the Research Hub to use innovative methods to recruit for prospective high quality positions including HDRs. The recruitment process must be of a competitive nature and seek applications from national and international candidates.

IMPORTANT: Note that if you have international appointees, ARC funding cannot be used for covering student fees.

Should recruitment be staggered over the course of the Research Hub, careful consideration must be given to a wind-down strategy to ensure that students are not left unsupported to complete studies after the Research Hub end date.

There have been cases where the ARC has approved additional top ups to HDR positions, such as ensuring equity across the cohort or to attract quality students in a competitive environment. ARC funded HDR positions are not allowed to use ARC funds



as a source for top up to the salary. However, there are a number of alternative sources, as outlined in the table below:

Table 1: example of salary top up arrangements

Type	Funding source	Allowed (✓) Not allowed (✗)
ARC Stipend	ARC top up	✗
ARC Stipend	Other funds (Partner or University)	✓
Partner Organisation stipend	ARC top up	✓
APA Stipend	ARC top up	✓
University Stipend	ARC top up	✓

Contact the Major Investments team for more information.

Training Centres Grant Funding

ARC funded positions

Relevant Grant Agreement Clause(s):

- D2.2 ICHDRs and ICPD Salaries

Additional information

As defined in the Grant Agreement:

- **ICHDR** means a HDR candidate funded by the ARC through the Administering Organisation, who meets the ICHDR candidate eligibility criteria under the Grant Guidelines, and who will be employed on the Training Centre Project.
- **ICPD** means a postdoctoral fellow funded by the ARC through the Administering Organisation, who meets the ICPD candidate eligibility criteria under the Grant Guidelines, and who will be employed on the Training Centre Project.

Funding for ICHDRs and ICPDs is provided as part of the one line budget in the Grant Offer. In cases where the funding offer is less than requested in the Application, You must review the funding offer and determine the appropriate number of ICHDR and ICPD positions within the Training Centre. It is expected that if You are awarded the full amount of ARC funding, You will employ the number of positions as outlined in the application. You must also check and adhere to any Special Conditions.

IMPORTANT: The ICHDR and ICPD stipend must be at an appropriate level as specified in the ARC salary and stipend rates document on the [ARC website](#). Should ICHDRs and ICPDs be paid less than the specified amounts, You will be required to back pay the difference using ARC funds. If ARC funds have been spent, You will need to back pay using university or other funds.



There have been cases where top-ups have been approved. See Table 1 above about top up salaries and some case study examples below.

Examples Salary management of ICHDRs and ICPDs

Example 1: Scholarships

Three students, one recruited to an ICHDR position and two recruited to industry funded HDR positions, were awarded scholarships from the university. The stipend for the ICHDR position was proposed to be split across the three students to increase their salary from APA to APAL rates to retain them within the Training Centre.

The Administering Organisation requested this change for ARC approval.

Example 2: Attracting Talent

The Training Centre increases the stipend rates to attract and retain talent across the ICHDR and ICPD positions, the Administering Organisation can use non-ARC sourced funds to provide that top up.

Example 3: Disparity of salaries

There is often a mix of ARC funded ICHDRs and ICPDs and non-ARC sourced funded HDRs and PDs within the Training Centre which can lead to a disparity in salaries across the cohort. It is common to use non-ARC funds to top up students salaries to ensure equity across all students within the Training Centre.

ICHDR or ICPD salary conversation of funds

The ARC may consider a request for an ICHDR or ICPD salary conversion to project funds. These will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, as outlined below.

Case study—example of ICHDR or ICPD salary funds converted to Project Grant funds

In the later years of the Training Centre a student has vacated the ARC funded position. The recruitment process to replace this student fails to find anyone suitable or there isn't enough time left to support another student.

The Director/Business Manager/Research Office staff contacts the ARC to provide an update on this issue and requests to convert to project funds to complete a component of research which is aligned with the research program as outlined in the Application.

The Research Office submits a Variation (Budget Change) for consideration for approval by the ARC.

Change of ICHDR or ICPD

The unspent component of Grant funding provided for the initial cohort for ICHDR or ICPD may be used for the replacement ICHDR or ICPD. The ARC will not, however, supplement the Grant funds to cover any salary funding in excess of that originally funded for the Training Centre. You will be responsible for any shortfall between the amount of the funding provided by the ARC and the amount required for the replacement ICHDR or ICPD.



The appointment term of the replacement ICHDR cannot be extended beyond the Training Centre End Date for the purposes of meeting PhD requirements.

However, if the tenure goes beyond the Project End Date:

- You will be responsible for **ongoing support** of the candidate and their research project until completion of the candidate's research project. ARC Grant funds cannot be used past the Project End Date.

The term of the replacement **ICPD must finish** on the Project End Date.

ICHDR and ICPD Employment Conditions

You may approve a **part-time award** subject to Your employment conditions, however You must ensure that any students' studies are completed before the end date of the Training Centre.

You may provide ICHDRs and ICPDs with **sick, recreation and maternity parental leave** in accordance with Your usual practice. The ARC supports these costs through the 30% on-costs which You manage. The ARC will not provide additional Grant funds to cover accrued leave proposed to be taken after the ICHDR and ICPD period has expired or been terminated in accordance with this Agreement. ICHDRs and ICPDs should therefore take recreation leave or other leave during the period of the ICHDR and ICPD tenure.

You must ensure the ICHDRs and ICPDs have access to the following leave entitlements:

- up to **14 weeks paid parental leave** where such leave is taken during the course of the Training Centre, subject to the provisions of the relevant enterprise agreement.

Additional ARC funding will not be provided for this purpose. Training Centre funds may be used for parental leave.

The ARC will not supplement the funds to cover any additional costs incurred as a result of any leave being taken or a delay in finalisation of the Training Centre.

