ARC LINKAGE GRANTS

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WHAT WE WILL COVER TODAY:

- ARC Funding Schemes policy and outcomes

- New selection criteria

- The Linkage Research Question

- Research project check list

- Partner Organisation Cash, Inkind and Zero cash formula

- The research team – CI and PI

- Success factors

- Post Award contractual issues that need to be agreed prior to submission

ARC National Competitive Grant Program (NCGP)

- 'The ARC supports the **highest-quality** fundamental and applied research and research training across all disciplines' except Clinical and Medical Research (NHMRC)

- Mechanism for deciding on funding projects = **Peer Review panels**

- NCGP funds through 2 main overarching programs – Discovery and Linkage

- Discovery – Project and Fellowship funding – individuals and teams

- Linkage – Collaboration with Industry – and they must contribute $$$

- Focus today on the Linkage Program

Linkage policy objectives and outcomes

The Linkage Projects **scheme objectives** are to:

a. support internationally competitive research projects and teams on challenges or opportunities of relevance to research end-users;

b. foster the establishment and strengthening of research alliances between higher education organisations and research end-users;

c. enhance the scale and focus of research, including in Australian Government priority areas.

The **intended outcomes** of the Linkage Projects scheme are:

a. new or strengthened collaborations and research alliances between universities and research end-users;

b. new knowledge that is of benefit to Australian research end-users, including in Australian Government priority areas; and

c. economic, commercial, environmental, social and/or cultural benefits for Australia.

What is a Linkage project grant?

- Linkage Program supports research partnerships between researchers and industry (effectively focus is on **applied** research)

- Need industry partners organisations on board (POs)

- Industry must contribute cash and inkind (under certain conditions no cash but substantial inkind instead)

- Linkage Projects average ARC grant over 3 years $423k (plus industry cash)

- Linkage Projects are about applying advanced knowledge to problems with industry/end users

= 50/50 research partnership between CI's and the PO's

Linkage - NEW selection criteria

See Attachment A notes for specific details of each criteria

SELECTION CRITERIA	LINKAGE
Investigator(s') capability and quality of team	20%
Project quality and innovation	30%
Impact	**20%**
Strength of the proposed research alliance	30%

IMPACT – Selection criteria (20%) - the old 'Benefit' but more specific

- "demonstration of the mutual benefit for participating organisations now and into the future;

- evidence of how the research will advance/address Partner Organisation(s)'s **core strategy;**

- potential contribution to Australian Government priority areas;

- potential economic, commercial, environmental, social and/or cultural benefits for Australia; and

- appropriateness of strategies for adoption, commercialisation, promotion, and/or dissemination of research outcomes, including IP management arrangements."

The starting point is the research project:

What needs to be found out – why and how?

- What's new? So what?

- How come it has not been done before?
  (NB: *A project is not important just because it has not been done before – maybe it is just not worth doing!*)

- Why has no-one else, including your PO, been able to solve the problem?

- What is the **innovation** about the proposed research project?

The research project and the PO – why are they on board?

- Does the PO have the same 'research' problem but from a 'commercial perspective'?

- How have they attempted to solve the problem?
  - The answer is that they have tried all the usual solutions, but they are failing or did not work!

- Outcome: they have approached you to see if a Linkage collaboration can solve the problem!

- NB the research problem and outcome must relate to the PO's **core strategy** (i.e., core business operations)

The research project part 2 – check list – success factors

- The PO must have an ABN and have substantial business operations in Australia - preference is an Australian company or organisation!

- What will be the engagement level by the PO in the project or would contract research be a better option?

- The research project:
  - Research question cannot be unique (one-off) and have no wider application and/or gives an unfair competitive advantage to an entity
    - There are protections: IP policy/Patents etc) or
    - No impact or pathway to impact

- What is the broader impact for Australia – will it give a competitive advantage?

- Will there be any IP issues?

- Multiple PO's – will they all work together, or do they have different agendas? (e.g., govt vs private sector): success = commonality

PO cash and inkind contributions 'formula' (1)

Funding rules:

- The **combined** Partner Organisation(s) eligible Cash Contribution must be at least **25 per cent** of the total funding requested from the ARC (unless Exempt Organisation - see later)

- Minimum ARC ask = $50k pa (25% = $12.5k pa cash contribution from PO)

- **Issue: what do you buy with $62k pa?**

- **ARC Maximum: $300k pa**

Cash /inkind and the partner organisation (2)

- Cash contributions and inkind must be commensurate with:
    - the scale of the problem;
    - the size of the organisation; and
    - the risk profile of the project.

- *Not for profit   -   Govt depts   -   Corporate Australia*

- *CSIRO/ ANSTO etc a problem and other statutory entities – Commonwealth and State e.g., Environmental Trust NSW*

'Not for Profits' and Small Medium Enterprises' & zero cash requirements = Exempt Partner Organisations*

Exempt Partner Organisations = zero cash but need inkind!

But:

- There are wealthy NFP and poor ones! Decider – do they have Balance Sheet reserves?

- Exempt SME'S = less than 20 Full time employees (FTEs)

- Structure of grant depends on the project and the PO/s engagement

- Issue 1: building up the inkind - salaries are not high in the NFP and SME sectors

- Issue 2: too many CIs and POs and PIs and Administrative paperwork

* Exempt Archive and Public Record Office; Exempt Charity; Exempt Herbarium; Exempt Museum and Collecting Organisation; Exempt Non-Profit Organisation; Exempt Small Business; and Exempt Start-up.

How much industry cash do I need for success?

- Reality: 40% cash 60% in-kind of budget ask
  - If cash exceeds inkind – look like consultancy in disguise
  - Cash + inkind must = or exceed ARC ask

- $100k pa cash substantially improved success rate

- (+ $150k inkind) = $250k pa contribution PO

- ARC ask = $250k pa   Grand total = $350k Cash pa project !!

- MINIMUM CASH FOR SUCCESS: $50K PA (+ $75K IN KIND)= $125K EX PO

- ARC ask = $125k pa   Grand total = $175k Cash pa project !!

The research team – CIs

- A research team (minimum 2) who are EXPERTS in their discipline fields and have a record of collaboration – evidence is:
    a. Track record and publications showing a variety of collaborations
    b. Collaborations with 'Australian industry'
    c. Preferable – research has had impact

- <u>Recent</u> evidence that the team can deliver a project on time.

- It is not:
    ➢ 'doing mates a favour'
    ➢ Providing employment for your post-doc

- Track records: 1 strong + 1 weak = 2 weak ones!! (In general – occasional exceptions)

The research team: Engagement with industry partner organisations through PI'S

- PIs seldom have an academic track record

- On board because they have the career experience to contribute to solving the problem:

  1. PI 1 = The management position they hold and the ability to influence/deliver on the project deliverables/outcomes/line management authority sign off – minimum 10% time inkind to the project

  2. PI 2 = day to day liaison /support on the project – often reporting to PI 1 – minimum 20% time in kind - skill base directly relates to the project.

  3. Other staff on PO engaged and inkind time ≠ shopping list but their skills must directly relate to the project methodology etc. but do not have to be a PI.

Final observations for success

- The Partner Organisation and CI team have a success story of a well-established collaboration over the years (not just in research but could be through teaching – placement/secondments or industry advisory board…)

- Preliminary data or proof of concept and published – TRLs 4-7*

- The PO needs to be engaged in all aspects and be seen to be contributing to all stages of the project: co-supervising PhD student (industry training)…

*Attachment B notes

Post Award contractual issues that need to be agreed prior to submission

- Public dissemination – public domain

- Intellectual property

- Data Management - who owns it?

Charles Sturt Library – Research Metrics

Library resources and support:

- Locating metrics: [Scopus](), [SciVal](), [Web of Science]()

- [For Researchers: Manage and Fund](): Information about author profiles, research impact and engagement

- [Research Metrics, Impact and Engagement Guide]()

- [How to use Metrics in Promotion and Grants: A Self-Help Guide]()

- Request a [Research Metrics Report]()

- Library [training & workshops]()

- [Contact us]()

Questions?

Next Steps

- Contact your Faculty Librarian to arrange an individualised metrics report.

- Begin developing your ROPE and update your researcher profile.

- Access support materials and annotated application forms in the Grant Writing Toolkit.

- If you submitted an Intent to Submit form recently, we will be in touch regarding next steps.

  - If you haven't submitted and Intent to Submit form, please contact the Grant Development Team at research-preaward@csu.edu.au.