FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Early Career Industry Fellowships for funding commencing 2025 (IE25)

Version 2.0   **Release Date: 3 October 2024**

- All participants should read the *Industry Fellowships Program (IFP) Grants Guidelines (2024 edition)* (Grant Guidelines)*,* the *Summary Of Changes - Industry Fellowships Program (IFP) Grant Guidelines (2024 edition)* and specific *Instructions to Applicants* documents available on GrantConnect as they contain important information for Research Office staff and individual participants preparing applications.

- The Australian Research Council (ARC) does not respond to queries from individual participants. Individual participants should direct all queries regarding ARC grant opportunities to their Administering Organisation's Research Office (or equivalent). If further information regarding the National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP) is required, the Research Office should contact ARC at arc-ncgp@arc.gov.au

- Information regarding the Research Management System (RMS) is available on the ARC website, or by contacting ARC-Systems@arc.gov.au for assistance.

This Frequently Asked Questions document will be updated as required.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. General

1.1   How do the Industry Fellowship Program schemes differ from the other NCGP schemes?

The key difference between Industry Fellowships Program (IFP) schemes and other National Competitive Grant Program (NCGP) schemes is that the primary goal of the IFP is to support outstanding academic researchers to develop industry-focused or industry-based careers, and to support outstanding industry-based researchers to work in university settings. These schemes aim to support increased two-way mobility and skill-development for researchers with a demonstrated capacity for high-quality research to drive research collaboration, translation and commercialisation across a range of industry settings.

This is reflected in key differences between the assessment criteria across schemes. For example, the emphasis in the Discovery Fellowships is to build Australia's research capacity through supporting the careers and opportunities of Australia's best researchers to undertake internationally competitive research. The Industry Fellowships, however, emphasise the need for two-way collaboration and mobility between industry and academia.

1.2   What are the new requirements regarding specific timeframes for PhD awards? Can I still apply for an Early Career Industry Fellowship if I do not meet the specified PhD award dates?

To be eligible for an Early Career Industry Fellowship, the participant must, as at the time of the grant opportunity closing date:

- have an award of PhD date on, or after, 1 March 2020; or
- have an award of PhD date together with an allowable period of career interruptions that would be commensurate with an award of PhD date on, or after 1 March 2020.

However, the Instructions to Applicants and the *Eligibility and Career Interruptions Statement* on the ARC website do provide information on allowable career interruptions, and the period allowed for each. Career interruptions can be indicated at Question E7.

If the participant has more than one PhD, the earliest awarded PhD must fall within this timeframe.

1.3   Can I apply if I do not hold a PhD?

Yes. Where the participant holds a higher research degree that is not a PhD, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or equivalent must certify that the qualification meets the level 10 criteria of the Australian Qualifications Framework Second Edition.

Where the participant holds a professional equivalent to a PhD which is relied upon as the relevant qualification, this must be certified by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or equivalent.

The participant can demonstrate their eligibility by selecting the relevant qualification at Question E4. The data is automatically populated from your RMS profile, so you will need to ensure that the 'Qualifications' section of your Person Profile is up to date. Career interruptions can be indicated at Question E7.

1.4   I am on a fixed-term contract. Would I be eligible to apply?

Participants can apply if they are currently on a fixed-term contract. If the participant is successful and awarded an Early Career Industry Fellowship, the participant must be employed by the Administering Organisation for the duration of the grant as per the draft Grant Agreement Linkage Program – Industry Fellowships on GrantConnect.

1.5   I am a non-Australian Citizen, can I apply?

Yes. Foreign nationals can apply and if successful need to obtain a legal right to work and reside in Australia, prior to the commencement of the project.

1.6   I work in industry and want to apply. Do I need to be employed at an Australian university before applications close?

Participants who are working in industry do not need to be employed at an Eligible Organisation (an Australian university that submits the application - known as the Administering Organisation) at the time they apply. If the participant is successful and awarded an Early Career Industry Fellowship, the participant must be employed by the Administering Organisation for the duration of the grant.

1.7 Are participants from Industry disadvantaged given that they may have less time to spent on research and supervision than participants with university-based appointments?

ARC assessors take into consideration research opportunities when assessing participants' individual track-records, supervision, and research experience, and recognise that indicators of esteem for participants from industry might differ to those from academia. As a result, industry researchers are not disadvantaged in the assessment process.

1.8 Will there be a rejoinder process for the Early Career Industry Fellowships Program?

Yes. As per section 7.14 of the Grant Guidelines, you will be given the opportunity to respond to assessors' written comments through a rejoinder, as applies for other NCGP Schemes. The purpose of the rejoinder process is to allow applicants to respond to assessment comments made by Detailed assessors.

The rejoinder process will be from 10 to 21 February 2025.

1.9 How much time must I commit to research activities relating to the project?

As per section 8.15 of the Grant Guidelines, you must work a minimum 80% (0.8 FTE) of your time on research activities related to the Fellowship, including time spent in the Key Industry Partner setting.

1.10 How do I enter my career interruptions in the Application Form? Will assessors be able to see the details of my interruptions?

Information on how to enter the participant's career interruptions can be found in Question E7 'Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) – Career Interruptions' of the Instructions to Applicants (ITAs). Examples of how career interruptions can be entered can be found in Appendix C of the ITAs.

Assessors will not be able to see the details of the entered career interruptions, nor will they be made visible in the PDF.

Assessors will only see the total period which RMS will automatically calculate using the entered career interruptions. The following question and answers from Question E7 will be viewable:

Question:	Has the participant experienced an interruption that has impacted on research opportunity?
Answer:	'Yes' or 'No'

If answered 'Yes' and career interruptions are entered:

Question:	Total Period of Career Interruptions
Answer (auto-fill):	'Researcher [Participant Name] has reported a career interruption of [duration] since [Year of earliest interruption].

1.11 What are the allowable career interruptions?

The ARC's Research Opportunity and Performance Statement available on the ARC website provides a list of career interruptions that can be included. These include (but are not limited to) the following:
- unemployment
- non-research employment
- limited or no access to facilities and resources—such as through workplace interruptions
- disaster management and recovery
- misadventure

- medical conditions
- disability
- caring and parental responsibilities, and
- community obligations, including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural practices and protocols.

If they have career interruptions, participants are asked to complete the career interruption question in the application form. They will be asked to provide information regarding the dates of the interruption, the relevant FTE of research time, and the nature of the interruption. In-depth details of the participant's career interruptions are not required.

1.12 What is an example of a 'controlled entity' (that is ineligible to be an Industry Partner as per Grant Guidelines 4.12c)?

A 'controlled entity' is an entity that is controlled by an Eligible Organisation and may include spin-off companies, institutes, and centres where financial and operating or policy decisions are determined by the Eligible Organisation. Please also refer to the definition given in the Grant Guidelines.

1.13 Can CSIRO or other Australian Government Entities that undertake research be a Key Industry Partner?

Yes. As per clause 4.10.b of the IFP grant guidelines, a Key Industry Partner can be an Australian Government entity (Commonwealth, State/Territory or Local). However, cash contributions being made must not breach clause 4.14:

Key Industry Partner and Other Industry Partner cash contributions cannot be sourced from funds awarded or appropriated by the Commonwealth or an Australian State or Territory or Local Government for the purposes of research, nor funds used to leverage any other government research or research infrastructure funding.

1.14 Does the Deputy Vice Chancellor Research/Pro-Vice Chancellor Research or equivalent need to certify my career interruptions, in addition to the 'Delegate' certification that occurs in RMS when the application is submitted to the ARC?

No. The Deputy Vice Chancellor Research/Pro-Vice Chancellor Research or equivalent of the Administering Organisation who will submit your application to the ARC will not be required to provide any additional certification.

2. Application Information

2.1 Can I use generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in writing my application?

Please see the advice to applicants in ARC's *Policy on Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in the ARC's grants programs* available on the [ARC website](#).

2.2 For Question B3 "Other Australian Government Priority areas" can only policies be included or can other initiatives, agendas, investments etc. be included, if they are areas of priority for the Australian Government?

The response to Question B3 should include announced only policies of the current Australian Government.

Examples: Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality (2024), Australia's Long-Term Emissions Reduction Plan (2022), Digital Economy Strategy (2022), Powering Australia Plan (2022), Multicultural Access and Equity Policy (2013).

These policies may also include announced initiatives, agendas, and investments (e.g., Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme (2018), Developing Northern Australia (2016)). They could be policies announced by the current Australian Government (e.g. Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality (2024)) or policies of a former Australian Government that have been continued by the current Australian Government (e.g. Australia's Long-Term Emissions Reduction Plan (2022)).

2.3 What are the eligible research costs that can be requested from the ARC?

The eligible research costs are costs that are directly related to the research activities proposed in your application. Please refer to the Industry Fellowships Program Grant Guidelines available on [GrantConnect.](#)

2.4 Can the project costs requested include requests for travel both domestically and international?

You can include relevant domestic and/or international travel in the total costing being requested per year. Justification of the travel and travel costs can be provided at Question F2 in the application form.

2.5 Can further salaries (for example, PhD stipends) be included in the Project Costs?

Yes. Additional salary support can be provided as part of the project costs, and this should be included in the budget justification as part of the application.

2.6 Can administering organisations use their own internal rates for HDR stipends being requested from the ARC?

Yes. Additional requests for ARC funding for HDR stipends can be requested at the appropriate salary/stipend level for your organisation.

2.7 Can multiple budget lines be entered under project costs in Question F1?

The Instructions to Applicants state that a one-line budget is to be entered in Question F1. Please note that although the RMS budget question does not prevent participants from entering additional lines of information, this is not the format that is required for Industry Fellowship budgets. Justification for project costs and non-ARC contributions must be provided in Questions F2 and F3 respectively in the format prescribed in the Instructions to Applicants.

2.8 If additional personnel are being requested as part of project costs (requested from the ARC or being funded by administering or partner organisation), should these be entered as separate line items?

If additional personnel costs are being requested from the ARC or are contributions from the administering organisation or industry partner organisations, these should be included in the project costs and included under the relevant columns in Question F1. Please refer to the example budget screenshot in the ITAs on Page 21.

2.9 Does my application have to include a Key Industry Partner or Other Industry Partners?

The application must list the Administering Organisation that will be submitting the application and one Key Industry Partner. It is not mandatory to include any Other Industry Partners, nor is there a maximum number of Other Industry Partners per application.

2.10 The application asks for a 2-page CV to be provided. What is required to be included?

It is up to the participant to include the most relevant information, noting the points below. Participants do not need to include their qualifications or their current and previous appointment(s)/position(s) as this will be automatically populated from the participant's RMS profile at Questions E3, E4 and E6.

Participants should include evidence of research performance to demonstrate a track record of high-quality research outputs and their capability to undertake research projects in collaboration with industry and/or other research end-user groups. Participants may also include activities they have undertaken to support research translation and impact (this may include actions to achieve translation and impact directly, or to build related skills in others).

A full list of publications or outputs is not required.

3. Funding

3.1 How many years of funding can I request from the ARC for an Early Career Industry Fellowship?

Participants can apply for a duration of 1 to 3 years (on a full-time basis). Salary contribution and project costs must be for the same duration.

3.2 Can I apply for funding at a part time rate?

No. Participants must apply at the full-time rate. If successful, the Fellowship can be converted to part-time when the Grant Agreement is finalised.

Please note that the salary contribution is supplied on a full time (five days per week) basis and any variation on this arrangement must be approved by the ARC.

3.3 What salary and stipend figures will appear in the Early Career Industry Fellowships 2025 (IE25) application form?

The salary and stipend figures for IE25 have been updated to 2024$ in RMS and are displayed in the table below.

Salary and Stipend rates 2024$

Personnel	Amount
Early Career Industry Fellowship	$121,703

4. Key Industry Partner/Other Industry Partner

4.1 I am currently employed by the Key Industry Partner. If I am successful, can I continue to be employed by the Key Industry Partner with a transfer of the Industry Fellowships Program salary to the Key Industry Partner?

Funding (including the ARC salary contribution) for the successful Fellow will be provided to the Administering Organisation (an Australian university who submits the application and is an Eligible Organisation). ARC funding cannot be transferred to the Key Industry Partner. If a participant is successful, they are to be employed by the Administering Organisation for the duration of the Fellowship.

The ARC recognises that flexibility is required in relation to employment conditions and remuneration arrangements. The ARC recommends that in preparing to submit an application, the Administering Organisation and Key Industry Partner agree on an arrangement that appropriately supports the Fellow. Although ARC funding cannot be transferred to the Key Industry Partner, possible arrangements may include secondments, fixed-term appointments, or joint appointments.

4.2 The applicant/participant is also the owner or Director, or holds any other paid position, within the Key Industry Partner or Other Industry Partner – can they still apply?

As per section 4.13 of the Grant Guidelines, an IFP applicant/participant currently employed by an Eligible Organisation must not simultaneously be an owner or Director, or hold any other paid position, within the Key Industry Partner or Other Industry Partner.

This eligibility criteria is applicable at the time of submission of the application, as this is when the applicant and the DVCR certify that no such simultaneous arrangement exists. The exclusion will apply throughout the life of the Fellowship.

For IFP applicants/participants who are an owner or Director, or holds any other paid position, within the Key Industry Partner or Other Industry Partner, but who are not currently employed at an Eligible Organisation at the time of submission, submission of an application through an Eligible Organisation is not considered a breach of this requirement.

4.3 Does the industry setting have to be provided by the Key Industry Partner? What is an industry setting?

The placement could occur at a mix of industry settings with the agreement and support of the Key Industry Partner.

The industry setting does not have to be located on premises owned by the Key Industry Partner. For example, it could be on the premises of an Other Industry Partner.

The kind of industry setting will be determined by the nature of the business of the Industry Partner. It may encompass industry-specific laboratories or workplaces, industry related fieldwork, or remote work where remote working is standard practice for other employees at that industry partner.

4.4 **Is there a minimum cash contribution required from the Key Industry Partner or Other Industry Partners?**

There is no minimum cash contribution requirement. Contributions, cash and/or in-kind, can be entered into the budget and further details provided at Question F3 for the Key Industry Partner and Other Industry Partner/s listed on the application. Please see the Grant Guidelines for further information on the eligibility requirements for Key Industry Partner or Other Industry Partner.

Key Industry Partners and Other Industry Partners can provide evidence of their commitment (including cash and in-kind contributions as well as other commitments) in their Letter of Industry Partner Certification.

5. Participant Limits

5.1 **Do applications to the Industry Fellowships Program need to meet the project limit requirements at the grant opportunity closing date?**

No. As per section 4.17 of the Grant Guidelines, applications to the Industry Fellowship Program do not need to meet the project limit requirements at the grant opportunity closing date.

If an Industry Fellowship Program application is successful, named participants must meet the project limits under section 4.16 of the Grant Guidelines before the project can start. Project limits can be met by relinquishing existing active project(s), or relinquishing role(s) on existing active projects or withdrawing application(s) that would exceed the project limits. This may not need to occur until all applications are announced.

5.2 **I have a current Commonwealth Fellowships grant (non-ARC grant). Can I apply for the Early Career Industry Fellowship?**

A participant can apply whilst currently holding a non-ARC Commonwealth Fellowship, but if successful, cannot commence an Early Career Industry Fellowship until the current Fellowship is completed or relinquished.

5.3 **Can I submit 2 applications in the Early Career Industry Fellowships (IE24) round?**

No. Participants can only submit one application in the IE24 round.

5.4 **Is there a limited number of times that a participant can apply for an Early Career Industry Fellowship?**

Yes. An individual may only submit a maximum of 2 Early Career Industry Fellowship applications. Please note that an application that is deemed ineligible or is withdrawn counts towards the maximum.

5.5 **Can I apply for an Early Career Industry Fellowship as well as a Mid-Career Industry Fellowship or an Industry Laureate Fellowship?**

No. Although some participants may meet eligibility requirements for more than one kind of Industry Fellowship, only one can be applied for during a program round (i.e. one application each year), as per the clause 4.3 of the IFP Grant Guidelines.

Changes to document:

- Additional information provided at Question 4.2.