**ARC**

**Australian Government**

**Australian Research Council**

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
## Linkage Projects for funding applied for in 2025 (LP25)

**Version 1**                                    **Release Date: 12 December 2024**

- All participants for LP25 should read the *Linkage Program Grant Guidelines (2024 edition): Linkage Projects* (Grant Guidelines) available on GrantConnect and specific *Instructions to Applicants* documents available on Grant Connect 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 the NCGP at arc-ncgp@arc.gov.au

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

This Frequently Asked Questions document will be updated as required.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**1.      Timing of Grant Opportunities**

**1.1      Where are the key dates for upcoming ARC Grant Opportunities advised?**
Dates of all upcoming ARC Grant Opportunities are published on the NCGP scheme timelines on the ARC Grants Calendar.

**1.2      When will the Funding Outcomes be announced?**
The ARC publishes anticipated Funding Announcement dates. Please refer to the Scheme Calendar PDF on the ARC Grants Calendar.

**2.      Application information**

**2.1      Can I include requests for domestic and international travel in my application?**
Yes. You can include requests for both domestic and international travel in accordance with the requirements set out in the relevant Grant Guidelines, noting that researchers should include a realistic plan of how their research will be undertaken. Where an application is successful, any changes to the proposed travel plans due to the impact of environmental factors (e.g., natural disasters, pandemics, etc.) will be managed as a post award issue.

**2.2      What font size can I use for figures, tables, or pictures in my application to comply with ARC submission requirements?**
Applicants should ensure that the text is readable both online and in print as detailed in the Instructions to Applicants. It is recommended that 12pt font is used to ensure readability. Readability also needs to be ensured for text within figures and tables and it is recommended that 10pt font is used.

**2.3      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.

**3.      Career Interruptions**

**3.1      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 C10 '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 the Appendix 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 of interruption which RMS will automatically calculate using the entered career interruptions. The following question and answers from Question C10 will be viewable:

> **Question:** Has the participant experienced a significant interruption that has impacted on research opportunity?
> **Answer:** 'Yes' or 'No'

If 'Yes' is selected, and career interruptions are entered, the following statement will appear:

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

## 4. Certification

**4.1 Does the certification within RMS replace the need for the Administering Organisation to seek written evidence of agreement from all named organisational participants?**
No. The certification within RMS is for the participant only. The simplified process through RMS includes:

- individual participant certification within the RMS application form
- an additional DVCR certification clause in RMS prior to submission (delegate certification)
- Letter of support for the application including Partner Organisation certification (question E2). A Partner Organisation letter of support template is available in Appendix A of the Instructions to Applications document.

The Administering Organisation must obtain the written agreement of all relevant organisational participants to allow the proposed project to proceed as specified in the Grant Guidelines. This excludes the employing organisations of overseas Partner Investigators (PIs) and any participant's current organisation which is not their relevant organisation for the application. This written evidence must be retained by the Administering Organisation and must be provided to the ARC if requested.

## 5. Logistics support for Antarctic research

**5.1 What logistics advice should I seek if my proposed research project included Antarctic research?**
If your proposed research project includes Antarctic research that will require logistical support, please contact the Australian Antarctic Division for advice about available logistical support prior to submitting your application.

## 6. Assessment of applications

**6.1 Request Not to Assess process**
A Request Not to Assess (RNTA) form is now submitted in RMS as detailed on GrantConnect and the ARC website.

**6.2 What is the maximum character limit for justification for RNTA?**
If a request includes the name of a current ARC College of Experts member, as listed on the ARC website, or in RMS at the time of submitting the RNTA form, the request must be accompanied by a justification (the maximum character count for the justification is 2500).

## 7. Project Role and Employment Type

**7.1 Am I a Chief Investigator (CI) or a Partner Investigator (PI)?**
Whether a participant is a CI or PI is determined by meeting the eligibility requirements in sections 4.18-4.24 in the Grant Guidelines, not by the level of their

intended involvement in the project. Please read the Grant Guidelines closely and refer to Appendix C of the Instructions to Applications for a decision tree to assist in determining whether a participant is eligible as a CI or as a PI.

A participant is not eligible to apply as a PI if they meet the requirements to be a CI.

**7.2 When should I choose Honorary Academic Appointment at C5 'Employment Details as at the grant commencement date'?**
Participants must only choose the honorary academic appointment role type at C5 if they meet the ARC's definition of an 'honorary academic appointment' as specified in Appendix A of the Grant Guidelines:
*An honorary academic appointment for eligibility purposes means a position that gives full academic status to the researcher, as certified by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) (or equivalent) in the application. The researcher must have access to research support comparable to employees e.g., an emeritus appointment. The researcher is not eligible to be a Chief Investigator using their honorary academic appointment if they are employed by an organisation other than an Eligible Organisation for more than 0.2 FTE.*

Where a participant is not an employee and does not meet the definition of an honorary academic appoint as specified above, they should select 'other' as their employment type.

**8. The National Interest Test (NIT)**

**8.1 What is the NIT statement and how is it assessed?**
Information regarding the requirements of the National Interest Test, including examples and detailed FAQs, can be found on the [ARC website](#).

**9. Linkage Projects Frequently Asked Questions**

**9.1 How do I know if my Partner Organisation is one of the types that is exempt from the cash contribution? Can the ARC provide a ruling on this?**
The ARC does not provide advice on whether a specific organisation meets the definition of an exempt Partner Organisation type in the Glossary of the Grant Guidelines. It is the responsibility of the Administering Organisation to determine whether a potential Partner Organisation meets the definition of an exempt Partner Organisation type. Please refer to section 4.3.d and the Definitions in the Grant Guidelines in consultation with the Research Office.

**9.2 I have two Partner Organisations on my application, one is an organisation whose funds are appropriated predominantly from Commonwealth or Australian State or Territory Government funding sources for the purposes of research and the other is a not an exempt type. What are the requirements to match the cash and in-kind contributions?**
Partner Organisations whose funds are appropriated predominantly from Commonwealth or Australian State or Territory Government funding sources for the purposes of research are restricted in their capacity to contribute to the required Partner Organisation contribution. Cash and/or in-kind contributions from Partner Organisation(s) of this type are only eligible to make up a maximum of 25% of the required Partner Organisation contribution. There is no limit to the contributions that

can be provided, but they will not be counted as part of the required PO contribution beyond matching 25% of the funding requested from the ARC.

For Linkage Projects, the application must demonstrate that the combined Partner Organisation(s) eligible contributions for an application (i.e. the total of the cash and/or in-kind eligible contributions of the Partner Organisation) must at least match the total funding requested from the ARC. Therefore, on an application with a Partner Organisation restricted under 4.11, the remaining minimum of 75% of eligible cash and/or in-kind contributions must be made up by other Partner Organisations.

For example, if the total funding requested from the ARC (in 3 years) is $300,000 and a Partner Organisation of this type (whose funds are appropriated predominantly from Commonwealth or Australian State or Territory Government funding sources for the purposes of research) is contributing $400,000 (cash and /or in-kind), only $75,000 will be counted towards matching the total funding requested from the ARC. The additional $325,000 will not count towards matching the total funding requested from the ARC. This means that another type of Partner Organisation will be required to participate on the application and make contributions (cash and/or in-kind) to match the total funding requested from the ARC.

**9.3    I would like to use funds awarded through other funders (HERDC Category 2 or Category 3) as an Eligible Organisation contribution to a Linkage Projects application. Would this be possible and if so, would it be considered as a cash contribution from the Eligible Organisation or would it be noted as an in-kind contribution?**

The Administering Organisation would need to be cautious to ensure that any awarded HERDC Category 2 or Category 3 funds are not misrepresented as university funds contributing to a Linkage Projects application. This is to ensure that clause 8.3 of the Linkage Program Grant Guidelines (2024 edition): Linkage Projects is not contravened (clause copied below):

In Our absolute discretion, We may recommend an application not be approved if we consider it (a) incomplete, (b) inaccurate or contains false or misleading information, or (c) is otherwise in breach of the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (2018).

The two categories are as follows:

- If the funds awarded through other funders is category 3 funding, it may be an acceptable contribution on a Linkage Projects application, with an explanation in the budget justification about what the funds were for originally, and what the funds will be used for now. Please check the funder's grant agreements and with your finance team to ensure these sourced funds do not contravene any clauses within the funder's grant agreement(s).

- If the funds awarded through other funders is category 2 funding, government non competitive funding, this is more difficult. It may be an acceptable Linkage Project contribution if it was not awarded for research, of if the university could justify how the original grant is related to the intended contribution and show it is not the grant money being represented as university money. Any funds

sourced from grant money must not be represented as university money. An example of this is:

- o Commonwealth fellowships funding as mentioned in the Grant Guidelines – the money is coming from the Commonwealth for research, so the university cannot represent it as a university contribution.

**10.    ARC Policies**

**10.1    Where can the ARC's policies and statements be found?**
ARC policies can be found on the [ARC website](#).

If you require further assistance in locating a particular policy or statement, individual research should contact their Research Office in the first instance.

**10.2    What are the implications of Open Access mandates on publishing research?**
The ARC Open Access Policy applies to all Research Outputs arising from ARC Funded

Research and their Metadata. Any Research Outputs arising from an ARC supported research project must be made openly accessible within a 12-month period from the date of publication. For the purposes of the policy, Research Outputs do not include research data and research data outputs. Further details about the Open Access requirements for research outputs including metadata, licencing, and reporting obligations can be found in the ARC Open Access policy on the [ARC website](#).