



## Australian Government

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## Australian Research Council

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### Discovery Indigenous for funding commencing 2026 (IN26)

Version 1.0

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- All participants should read the *Discovery Program Grant Guidelines (2024 edition): Discovery Indigenous* 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](mailto: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](mailto: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 now 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 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. Readability also needs to be ensured for text within figures and tables and 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 participants in *ARC's Policy on Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in the ARC's grants programs* available on the [ARC website](#).

#### 2.4 How should I complete the Question D1 'What is the proposed budget for your project'?

The ARC strongly recommends entering a simplified budget into the Budget Table at Question D1. Rather than list every item, each category (e.g., Travel, Field Research, Equipment) should have a one-line budget figure.

For example, if you are requesting two sets of Travel in Year 1, one at a cost of \$5,000 and another at a cost of \$1,500, the Budget Table should show only the total amount of funding requested for travel in Year 1: i.e., \$6,500.

The request will need to be justified in Question D2 'Justification of funding requested from the ARC'.

✓	Travel	+	6,500
	Total Travel Costs	✎ 🗑	6,500

  

✗	Travel	+	6,500
	Trip 1	✎ 🗑	5,000
	Trip 2	✎ 🗑	1,500

**Note:** You will not be able to enter all 'Personnel' as a one-line budget figure, as IN26 DAATSIA salaries and other stipends are automatically entered into the Budget Table and will require its own budget line.

### 3. Career Interruption

#### 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 B9 '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 which RMS will automatically calculate using the entered career interruptions. The following question and answers from Question B9 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. Logistics support for Antarctic research

#### 4.1 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.

## **5. Assessment of Applications**

### **5.1 Requests Not to Assess process**

A Request Not to Assess (RNTA) form is now submitted in RMS as detailed on [GrantConnect](#) and the [ARC website](#).

### **5.2 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 new maximum character count for the justification has been increased to 2,500 characters).

## **6. The National Interest Test (NIT)**

### **6.1 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](#).

## **7. Budget**

### **7.1 What are the expectations for non-mandated contributions in applications submitted for upcoming Grant Opportunities?**

For those schemes where Grant Guidelines do not require minimum co-contributions by participating organisations, the ARC also understands that the level of cash and/or in-kind contributions pledged by Administering Organisations and other Participating Organisations to show support for a proposed research project may vary. Noting that Administering Organisations still need to take into account the feasibility of the proposed research project if there are reduced contributions.

ARC assessors will be instructed that they should not make assumptions about an Administering Organisation's level of commitment and support of an application solely based on lower levels of pledged additional cash and/or in-kind support than historically provided.

### **7.2 Can I request more than one HDR stipend?**

Yes. More than 1 HDR stipend can be included per application. As per clause 5.3(c) of the Grant Guidelines, all HDR stipends in the application must be requested as full-time (1.0 FTE) at the rate specified on the [Salaries and Stipends](#) page of the [ARC website](#).

If an application is successful, stipends may be divided amongst more than one person, for example dividing 1 stipend between 2 students at 0.5 FTE each as per the Discovery Program Grant Agreement.

## 8. What has changed from last round? Summary of changes to the IN26 Application Form and IN26 Instructions to Applicants (ITAs)

### 8.1 Part B – Participant Details including ROPE

- **Question B10 – Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) - Career Narrative** is a new question to provide an overview of the participant’s career opportunities for research, including any periods of research only employment, access to periods of research leave, and proportions of time allocated for research, teaching and administrative responsibilities.

Please note, Question B10 - Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) - Career Highlights from the last round has been removed.

- **Question B11 - Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) - Evidence of the participant’s research impact and contributions to the field, including evidence of high-quality outputs and collaboration most relevant to this application.** – This question has been updated to remove mentoring and leadership components. A new question on mentoring and leadership has been added at B12.
- **Question B12 - Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) – Mentoring and Leadership** is a new question to provide evidence of the participant’s leadership, mentoring and research training or supervision experience, achievements and capability. This question has replaced the previous question on number of PhDs, Masters and Honours student completions.

### 8.2 Part E – Classifications and Other Statistical Information

- **Question E1 – Does this Application align with any of the National Science and Research Priorities?** This is a new question for reporting purposes only on which national Science and Research Priorities the application aligns with.
- **Question E2 – Does this Application align with any of the National Reconstruction Fund priority areas?** This is a new question for reporting purposes only on which priority areas for the National Reconstruction Fund the application aligns with.
- **Question E3 – Does this Application align with any other Australian Government priority areas?** This is a new question for reporting purposes only to replace the previous ‘Australian Government Priority areas’ question.

- **Question E4 – To what extent does your application align with each of the following types of research activity? – Applied research, Pure basic research or Strategic basic research.** This is a new question for reporting purposes only to indicate which type(s) of research activity the project best aligns with by selecting a percentage weighting for each research type. The research may be proportioned across one or more research type(s) but the percentage must total 100.

### 8.3 Part F – Project Eligibility

- **Question F3 – Experimental Development.** New question - Will ARC funds awarded under this Scheme be used for activities classified as 'experimental development' according to the definition in the Grant Guidelines?

## 9. Discovery Indigenous Information Session for IN25 - Questions and Answers – 27 November 2023

### Limits/Eligibility:

#### 9.1 If I were to apply for an IN25, I would want to apply as the CI, however I aim to submit my PhD in February 2024. Would I still be eligible to apply?

A researcher cannot be a Chief Investigator if they are undertaking a PhD during the Project. The IN25 grants commence 1 January 2025, in this example as the PhD is being submitted in February 2024 and must be conferred by 1 January 2025. You do not need to have your PhD conferred before applications close for IN25 but must be conferred before the grant can commence.

#### 9.2 Does a person have to have PhD conferred at time of application. Does it differ between different programs?

Yes, when a PhD is required to be conferred differs between grant opportunities. For IN25 see answer to question 9.1.

#### 9.3 Does the CI Indigenous researcher have to be affiliated with a university?

If you are a CI, you must meet the eligibility criteria for being a CI. At the grant commencement date, you need to be employed at an eligible organisation for 0.2 or more or be holder of an honorary academic appointment an eligible organisation.

#### 9.4 Does the CI have to be indigenous to apply?

As per section 4.5(a) of the *Discovery Program Grant Guidelines (2024 edition): Discovery Indigenous* -

The Lead investigator must be an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander researcher. Additional Chief Investigators named in the application can include non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers.

**9.5 Does the project have to be an Indigenous project?**

The Discovery Indigenous Scheme funds research across all disciplines (excluding medical research). Whilst a project must be led by an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander researcher, the research does not need to be in the field of Indigenous Studies.

**9.6 Will applying for a Discovery Indigenous grant conflict with the total number of other grants allowable such as Discovery Projects?**

Yes, we have application limits across all the different ARC schemes. Applying for a Discovery Indigenous application is considered as part of the eligibility calculations around the number of projects that you can apply for. Typically, with the Discovery Program schemes, you can have two Discovery Projects or combination of 1 Discovery Project and one Discovery Fellowship. Please refer to section 10 of this FAQ for more information and examples regarding limits.

**ROPE:**

**9.7 Is it a total of 10 research outputs for everyone on the application?**

Yes, all Chief Investigators on the application should provide up to 10 best research outputs in Question B14. These may include NTROs.

**9.8 It's only Discovery Indigenous ROPE that is not visible to assessors or is it across all of ARC grants?**

The question, 'Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) - Career Interruptions', has been rebuilt so that participants can enter all periods of career interruption and RMS will automatically calculate their total interruptions. Additionally, the question has been updated so that the assessors will not see the specific dates, full time equivalent and category of each interruption, nor will this information be populated into the application PDF. Assessors will only be able to see the total period of interruptions to help determine research opportunity. This change was made to the Discovery Fellowships and will be rolled out across other NCGP schemes.

**9.9 Does the Research Office need to keep "evidence" of all career interruptions listed in B9 and if so, what evidence is acceptable as proof of career interruptions e.g for unemployment etc?**

Yes, the Administering Organisation is required to provide evidence to the ARC if requested. Noting that as the DVCR, their delegate or equivalent must certify the application, the type of evidence collected, and the timing of that collection is at their discretion.

**Assessment:**

**9.10 I presume applications will be assessed within a Combined Panel?**

Yes, they are known as the Selection Advisory Committee, and it is a combined panel.

**Other:**

**9.11 Has the ARC considered the feasibility of a project if a DAATSIA is not awarded, and the project is - what if the CI is unable to find alternative salary support?**

The Discovery Indigenous project and the DAATSIA component are assessed and considered separately. The Selection Advisory Committee considers the project first and a recommendation is made to either fund or not fund the application. If the application is recommended for funding the Selection Advisory Committee will then consider the DAATSIA request.

**9.12 To upload a community support letter, would that organisation need to become a formal participant in the project in Question A3 as other organisation?**

No, the organisation or community providing the letter of support need not be a formal participant on the application. The Letter of Community Support is intended to give the applicant further opportunity to demonstrate that where they are working with communities and organisations, that those communities can outline their support for the project and the potential benefits that will come from the research to those communities.