

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2014-2015**

Agency - Australian Research Council (ARC)

Department of Education Question No. ED0253_15

Senator Rhiannon provided in writing.

Question

Funding, research & staffing

1. Will the allocation of funds for the "Government research priorities" be subject to peer-review processes at the ARC?
2. How are applications for the ARC Special Research Initiative for Tropical Health and Medicine 2014 being assessed?
3. What processes are followed for the allocation of these funds?
4. Where is the money for these new initiatives coming from?
5. Where will it be re-allocated from?
6. How will this effect success rates for researchers applying to the Discovery programmes?
7. What is the current success rates and what are they predicted to be?
8. If they are constant, will this affect the average allocation of grant funding (ie, same number of grants, but for less and less money)?
9. Will this affect jobs for the research community?
10. What will the impacts be? Has any modelling been don to predict these impacts? If so can it be provided?
11. Has there been any modelling on how these cuts to the Discovery programme and the Linkage programme will affect the research workforce?
12. What is the effect on research productivity?
13. Will money be taken from the DECRA program, a program that supports early-and-mid-career researchers? What are the implications for our future science leaders?
14. With decreases to the Linkage program how many rounds of funding will commence?
15. Has the department done any work on how this effects the attractiveness and the likelihood of researchers being able to attract Partner Organisations for the Linkage grants will only one funding round offered per year?
16. Linkage grants are obviously vital in getting new products and advances from the lab flow into benefits for Australian people, something the Abbott govt has said is a priority "open to Business". So is it the case that reduction of funding to these grants and a reduced number of rounds could harm this priority?

Answer

The Australian Research Council has provided the following response:

1. Yes.
2. Normal ARC processes.
3. Following execution of the Funding Agreement, the ARC provided funding to the Administering Organisation.
4. Funding is to be redirected from existing ARC resources.

5. ARC National Competitive Grants Program Budget.
6. Success rates and average amount of allocation depend on a number of factors, including the number of proposals received, and the amount of funding requested. It is impossible for the ARC to predict accurately any effect on success rates.
7. The success rate for Discovery Projects for funding commencing in 2014 was 20%. The success rate for Discovery Early Career Researcher Awards (DECRA) for funding commencing in 2014 was 13.6%. The success rate for Future Fellowships for funding commencing in 2013 was 16.29%. Finally the success rate for Australian Laureate Fellowships for funding commencing in 2013 was 15.18%. With respect to predicting future success rates see answer to question 6.
8. See answer to question 6.
9. Given the answer provided at question 6, it is not possible for the ARC to predict any effects on jobs for the research community.
10. See answer to question 9. The ARC has not done any modelling to predict impacts.
11. No.
12. The ARC is not able to predict this.
13. The ARC is not anticipating any reduction in the number of DECRA awards under future rounds. The ARC is not able to predict implications for future science leaders.
14. There will be a single round of Linkage Projects for funding commencing in 2015. There has been only one round of Linkage Projects per year since 2012 (for funding commencing in 2013).
15. No.
16. The ARC is not able to predict this – See question 6.