

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio
Additional Estimates Hearing
26 February 2009

AGENCY: AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL

TOPIC: Grant Program Changes

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard 26 February 2009, E134)

QUESTION No.: AI-67

Senator ABETZ— Have any changes been made to the rules applying ARC's various grant programs?

Mr Marsden—Substantial changes?

Senator ABETZ—Any material changes?

Mr Marsden—I cannot recall. I will take that on notice. I do not think so.

Senator ABETZ—What consultation took place about any of those changes?

Mr Marsden—Each year we go out to the sector as a whole and take comments on all of our funding rules. We then review those comments and, where appropriate, and where we think it is useful to further the research investment, we actually build those into the funding rules. Those changes we are proposing to put into place are usually discussed with the research officers administrator's conference which is round about early November, I think.

Senator ABETZ—Sorry, I thought Mr Cameron was giving you further information.

Mr Marsden—He was, actually. He has given a list of some of the changes.

Senator ABETZ—You are taking that on notice, so—

Mr Marsden—There is nothing significant.

Senator ABETZ—If you could provide that on notice to the committee, that would be very helpful.

ANSWER

The Australian Research Council (ARC) receives a range of different feedback from the research sector. This feedback, combined with the experience in administering the National Competitive Grant Program schemes over the previous years, allows the ARC to amend the funding rules to clarify the policy intent of the scheme and ensure it is carried out.

The changes to the *Discovery Projects* scheme for 2010 are outlined in section 5 of the *Discovery Projects Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2010* (the DP Funding Rules). Section 5.1 of the DP Funding Rules provides:

- a. For the purposes of improved clarity, the Definitions section includes definitions of Eligibility Exemption Ruling and Eligibility Advice Request (Section 3).
- b. The Definitions section contains a definition of Adjunct or Emeritus Appointment or equivalent (Section 3). The term is used in relation to the eligibility of CIs [Chief Investigators].
- c. A new internationalisation objective has been added to the scheme (subsection 4.2.2.e).
- d. Proposals may include requests for costs associated with access to workshop services (subsection 6.3.2.e).
- e. Funding is permitted for the cost of PI [Partner Investigators] travel to Australia to work on the research project to a maximum of once per annum provided that it is fully justified against the project (subsection 6.3.2.f.ii).

- f. In order to enhance opportunities for collaboration among researchers, research teams and/or research centres in Australia and overseas, and to build Australia's international research capability, International Collaboration Awards are available for CIs/Fellows, as well as PIs living overseas (subsection 6.3.2.g and Section 8.2).
- g. The employment-related eligibility criteria for CIs have been changed slightly with "50% of time" replacing "50% of Earnings" (subsection 8.4.1).
- h. Subsection 8.4.5 stipulates the conditions under which it is permissible for a project to be continued under replacement CIs after a Proposal has been approved for funding (subsection 8.4.4).
- i. Projects must be terminated in instances where no investigators who were original CIs on the Proposal are remaining after the Proposal has been approved for funding. Sole-CI projects cannot be continued under replacement CIs (subsection 8.4.5).
- j. Clarification is provided that researchers who are employees of Eligible Organisations listed in Appendix C subsection C1.1 and C1.2 and do not reside predominantly in Australia may be PIs (subsection 8.5.2).
- k. APF [Australian Professorial Fellow] candidates seeking 100 per cent salary support may, in certain cases, submit an Eligibility Exemption Request for a relaxation of the requirement to have held an ARF [Australian Research Fellow]/QEII [Queen Elizabeth II Fellow] or equivalent (subsection 8.9.9).
- l. Clarification is provided that the font type used must be equivalent to 12 point font (11.2.2); and
- m. AIATSIS [Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies] is now eligible to submit Proposals for the full range of funding available in *Discovery Projects* (Appendix C subsection C1.2).