

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2003-2004 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 1

Output Group: ARC

DEST Question No. E822_04

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question:

Under the Linkages programs, success rates seem to vary. (Annual Report pp.176-7)

- (a) The Projects program had a success rate in 2003 of almost 50% - up from 45% two years earlier. This reflects higher funding levels – is that right?
- (b) Do you think that the success rate here is too high? Are you not being selective enough?
- (c) The APA (Industry) program had a success rate of 48% (which is slightly up on two years ago), and the Postdoctoral Fellowships (Industry) had a rate of 46%. Both these rates are pretty high, wouldn't you say?
- (d) Is that desirable?
- (e) What are the obligations of the industry partners in the cases of these schemes?

Success rates – Linkages, by discipline (Annual Report p. 199)

The success rate for Linkages-Projects by discipline varies too. The highest rate is 79% for Mathematics and the lowest is 11% for Philosophy and Religion.

- (f) How can you even these out? Are you trying to do this?

Answer:

Success rates under Linkage-Projects

The ARC has provided the following response:

- (a) Under Linkage Projects the success rate of applications for new funding in 2003 was 49.7 per cent, up from that of applications for new funding in 2001 (44.6 per cent). The rise in the success rate was achievable with the additional funding provided under *Backing Australia's Ability*.
- (b), (c) & (d) The requirement under Linkage Projects that collaborating industry partners make a cash or in-kind contribution helps to ensure that applications for funding are of high quality and closely aligned to the needs of industry. Through open competition, the highest quality project proposals are supported. Low success rates are undesirable as they can have the effect of discouraging

high-quality industry-supported applications from researchers who, if successful, would be new entrants to program support.

- (e) Broadly, under Linkage Projects collaborating industry partners must at least match, in cash or in-kind, the amount of project funding provided by the Commonwealth.

In cases in which the Commonwealth has provided a stipend for an Australian Postgraduate Award (Industry), the industry partner must contribute in cash or in-kind a minimum of \$10,000 in total for each year that the student is to receive a stipend.

Detailed information about the obligations of industry partners under Linkage Projects is contained in program funding rules which are available on the ARC website (www.arc.gov.au).

- (f) From year to year, the success rate of applications for ARC funding from researchers in different disciplines varies according to the quality of applications in those disciplines. The ARC has in place a number of mechanisms for providing feedback to applicants and advice to researchers generally that aim to maintain and improve the quality of applications that it receives.