

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

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

Outcome: 1

Output Group: ARC

DEST Question No. E823_04

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question:

Australian Postdoctoral Fellowships (CSIRO)

There is a sharp contrast with the postdoctoral fellowships for CSIRO – where the success rate is only 14%. There were 72 applications, but only ten fellowships were awarded.

- (a) Was this the first year when these particular fellowships were available?
- (b) Who is eligible to apply for them? What are the conditions and the salary attached to them?
- (c) Why do you think there has been such a mismatch between availability and applications?
- (d) What are the financial or other obligations of CSIRO attached to these Fellowships?
- (e) Do they have to provide matching funding, or facilities?

Answer:

Linkage Australian Postdoctoral Fellowships - CSIRO

The ARC has provided the following response:

- (a) Funding was provided for the first time under Linkage-Australian Postdoctoral Fellowships (CSIRO) commencing in 2003.
- (b) To be eligible for funding, applications must specify one prospective fellowship holder and at least two Chief Investigators, one from a university and one from a CSIRO division. Detailed information about eligibility, extracted from the funding rules for the scheme, is at Attachment A. The funding rules are available on the ARC website (www.arc.gov.au). Information about salaries and allowances is at Attachment B.
- (c) The high number of applications relative to the number of fellowships awarded may be due to the fact that, because it was new, the scheme attracted a high level of interest.
- (d) & (e) Linkage-Australian Postdoctoral Fellowships (CSIRO) was a pilot scheme co-funded by the ARC and CSIRO to offer 10 fellowships commencing in 2003.

ARC and CSIRO funding provides the salary and on-costs of the fellowships. To ensure that the research to be undertaken by fellowship holders is adequately funded, applicants must demonstrate that research project support provided by the administering institution, in cash and in-kind, at least matches the fellowship funding. If the administering institution is a CSIRO division, the Chief Investigator from CSIRO will normally be the direct supervisor of the fellowship holder.

Extract from the ARC funding rules for Linkage Australian Postdoctoral Fellowships – CSIRO (APDC)

4 Eligibility

4.1 Eligibility criteria for Chief Investigators

To be eligible to apply as a Chief Investigator, the applicant must meet the following criteria:

- He/she must be an active researcher who takes intellectual responsibility for the project, its conception, any strategic decisions called for in its pursuit and the communication of results. The applicant must have the time and capacity to make a serious commitment to the project and cannot assume the role of a supplier of resources for work that will largely be placed in the hands of others.
- He/she must reside predominantly in Australia for the full term of the funding. If the applicant does not have permanent resident status he/she must obtain temporary resident status from the Department of Immigration, Multicultural Affairs and Indigenous Affairs before taking up the funding.

Notwithstanding his/her eligibility under the criteria above, researchers in the following categories are not eligible to apply as a CI:

- an undergraduate student; or
- a postgraduate student (unless eligible to be a CIU because of employment but only for research which lies outside the scope of the postgraduate studies).

Chief Investigators must have fulfilled all obligations from previous ARC grants (including final and progress reports). Chief Investigators who have not fulfilled all obligations from previous ARC grants are ineligible to apply.

4.1.1 Eligibility criteria for Chief Investigators—University

To be eligible to apply as a Chief Investigator—University, the applicant must meet the following criterion: he/she must be associated with, or employed by, an eligible Australian higher education institution. To qualify as associated with, or employed by an institution, the applicant must hold a substantive position at, and/or derive at least 50 per cent of his/her salary from that institution.

“Eligible Australian higher education institutions”, for the purposes of these Funding Rules, are those institutions listed in Appendix 1.

4.1.2 Eligibility criteria for Chief Investigators—CSIRO

To be eligible to apply as a Chief Investigator—CSIRO, the applicant must meet the following criterion: he/she must be associated with, or employed by CSIRO. The applicant must hold a substantive position at, and/or derive at least 50 per cent of his/her salary from CSIRO.

4.2 Eligibility criteria for APDC Fellowships

Australian and overseas researchers may apply for an APDC to commence in 2003 if:

- they have been awarded a PhD since 1 March 1999, or
- they have not yet submitted their PhD thesis but are due to do so before the end of 2002.

If an APDC offer is made, it will be contingent upon receiving official confirmation that the thesis has been submitted by 31 December 2002. An APDC cannot be taken up until formal advice is received that the PhD thesis has been accepted, within a maximum time limit of six months, that is, by 30 June 2003. If these conditions have not been satisfied, the offer will be withdrawn.

Preference may be given to Australian citizens and permanent residents. Overseas applicants will need to demonstrate a higher level of performance than their competitors or be able to offer special expertise, extensive skills or exceptionally high performance levels not available locally, and of benefit to Australian research.

An APDC, must reside predominantly in Australia for the full term of the award. If the applicant does not have permanent resident status he/she must obtain temporary resident status from the Department of Immigration, Multicultural Affairs and Indigenous Affairs before taking up the award.

An APDC (or an Australian Postdoctoral Fellowship awarded under Discovery—Projects or Linkage—Projects or the earlier ARC Fellowships or SPIRT programs) may only be awarded to an applicant once.

4.2.1 Request for eligibility exemption

In some circumstances, an applicant who is seeking a *Linkage—APDC* may not satisfy all the required eligibility criteria due to research career interruption. Career interruptions could include, for example, non-research employment, misadventure or carer responsibilities. If this is the case, an applicant must apply for an exemption from the eligibility criteria.

If the applicant does require an eligibility exemption, a request must be lodged in writing, through the institution's Research Office, or the administering organisation's equivalent office, with the Director, Program Management Section, at the ARC by 13 September 2002. The eligibility exemption request must include a statement justifying the applicant's special circumstances for an eligibility exemption. The applicant will be advised of the decision as soon as possible to allow time for a detailed application to be completed.

4.2.2 Tenure details and support entitlements

APDCs are available only on a full time basis.

APDCs must commence in the first year of the award. The ARC notional salary rates for Fellowships are set out in Appendix 2.

Tenure will be continued, provided the ARC receives satisfactory annual progress reports, but will not be extended.

APDCs are available only in eligible higher education institutions or CSIRO divisions. If the administering institution is an eligible higher education institution, the Chief Investigator—University will be the first-named CI on the application and will normally be the direct supervisor of the APDC. If the administering institution is a CSIRO division, the Chief Investigator—CSIRO will be the first-named CI on the application and will normally be the direct supervisor of the APDC.

4.3 Number of awards and applications

The following limits apply to funds awarded under the *Linkage—APDC* program:

- every application must have one APDC and at least one Chief Investigator—University and one Chief Investigator—CSIRO;
- a researcher may not hold more than one *Linkage—APDC* awards on which he/she is Chief Investigator;
- applicants may apply for *Linkage—APDC* awards only to the extent that, if successful, they would not exceed the maximum number of awards they may hold in 2003.

Submitting initial applications that contravene the above limits will result in the automatic exclusion of all applications involving that applicant as a CI or APDC. Only one application to *Linkage—APDC* may be submitted in respect of a single project in the same year, regardless of any variation in the applicants and/or proposed administering institution. Submitting similar or duplicate applications will result in automatic exclusion of all applications involving those applicants. The ARC reserves the right to determine whether applications are duplicates or sufficiently similar to warrant exclusion.

ARC notional fellowship salaries (in \$2002) - Australian Postdoctoral Fellowships-CSIRO (APDC)

2003 Salaries

<i>Salary Scale*</i>	<i>Salary + 26% on-costs</i>
\$51,067	\$64,345

* salary scales and stipends will be indexed to 2003 dollars for successful applications

2003 ARC Fellows Relocation (maximum) Allowances

USA	\$15,000
UK/Europe/Asia (Nth Hem)	\$12,000
Asia (Sth Hem)/NZ	\$ 9,000
Australia	\$ 6,000