



**Australian Government**  
**Australian Research Council**

# **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

## **Industrial Transformation Research Program for funding commencing 2024 (ITRP24) – Training Centres & Research Hubs**

**Version 1.0**

**Release Date: 11 October 2023**

- All participants should read the *Industrial Transformation Research Program Grant Guidelines* (grant guidelines) and specific *Instructions to Applicants* documents available on GrantConnect as they contain important information for Research Office staff and individual participants preparing applications.
- The 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 ARC at [arc-ncgp@arc.gov.au](mailto:arc-ncgp@arc.gov.au)
- Information regarding the Research Management System (RMS) is available on the [ARC website](#), or by contacting [ARC-Systems@arc.gov.au](mailto:ARC-Systems@arc.gov.au) for assistance.

This Frequently Asked Questions document will be updated as required.

## 1. Participants

**1.1 Are all Chief Investigators (CIs) and all Partner Investigators (PIs) (not only key personnel) required to be listed in Question A2?**

Yes. All named participants are required to be listed at Question A2. This list of named participants must include the Training Centre/Research Hub Director, and all CIs and PIs.

**1.2 Is there a requirement to have at least one PI named amongst the 5 key personnel?**

No. Up to 5 of the named participants listed in Question A2 may be identified as key personnel at Question B9.

While key personnel may be all CIs or CIs and PIs, other participants nominated as key personnel should hold significant roles within the Research Hub/Training Centre. For example, Program Leaders, Theme Leaders, or Node Leaders who will be expected to manage the ARC funding.

**1.3 What is the minimum FTE commitment for a CI to participate?**

The grant guidelines states a minimum requirement of 0.2 FTE for CIs at an eligible organisation or be a holder of an honorary academic appointment at an eligible organisation.

**1.4 What is the minimum FTE commitment for a PI to participate?**

While the grant guidelines do not state a minimum FTE requirement for PIs, the ARC considers it good practice to have at least a minimum commitment of 0.1 FTE, due to the expected significance of the Research Hub's/Training Centre's research program, capacity building, and its impact.

**1.5 Can international investigators be nominated as PIs for a Research Hub/Training Centre?**

Yes, international investigators can be listed as PIs on Research Hub/Training Centre application. The Administering Organisation is responsible for undertaking due diligence checks on all participants and organisations, including international participants, before the application is submitted.

It is good practice to clearly identify the role of the international PIs in Part C of the application, as part of the requirement to demonstrate their contribution to the proposed research program and their capability, capacity and commitment to the Research Hub/Training Centre.

**1.6 Is there a limit on how many PIs may participate on a Research Hub/Training Centre application?**

No. There is no limit to the number of PIs that may be named on a Research Hub/Training Centre application. However, all PIs must be appropriate and relevant to the proposed research program.

**1.7 Do PIs need to have an RMS account/profile?**

All named participants must have an RMS account/profile including PIs. A number of questions in the application form are automatically populated from a PI's RMS profile. As such, all participants are responsible for ensuring their personal details in RMS are correct and up to date.

If a PI already has an RMS account, the email address associated with this account must be used to invite the PI to participate. The automated invitation email will then ask the PI to accept or decline the invitation.

If the PI does not have an RMS user account, they can request one by using the link found on the [RMS homepage](#). Alternatively, the automated email invitation will prompt the invited PI to create an RMS account/profile. The PI will need to complete their profile to ensure automatically populated questions in the application form can be completed.

## 1.8 COVID-19 has affected my academic record. Is this considered a career interruption as part of the ROPE – Career Interruptions?

Yes. Career interruptions arising from COVID-19 can be included under ROPE for consideration by assessors. The *Instructions to Applicants* (ITAs) provide specific advice on how to enter this in the application.

## 2. Application Information

### 2.1 Does the certification within RMS replace the ARC written evidence document (certification proforma) on GrantConnect for all named participants and their organisations?

Yes. The Certification Proforma document was replaced with a simplified process through RMS. The process includes:

- participant certification within the RMS application form (questions B17 for Research Hubs and Training Centres)
- an additional DVCR certification clause in RMS prior to submission (delegate certification)
- letter of support for the application including Partner Organisation (PO) certification (question G2).

A template Partner Organisation letter of support is available in Appendix C of the ITAs document.

### 2.2 Can you confirm there is no requirement for Administering Organisations to hold certifications on file for the ITRP24 application round?

While ARC no longer provides a certification proforma, the ITRP24 grant guidelines state that Administering Organisations must retain the evidence and paperwork relied upon to certify the application in RMS and make this available to the ARC if requested.

Administering Organisations are expected to undertake appropriate due diligence as, consistent with the grant guidelines, application forms are checked and when certifying applications for submission. The Administering Organisation may wish to ask for appropriate documentation for their own certification purposes.

The Administering Organisation may determine the form of such evidence and paperwork, but as stated in the grant guidelines, the Administering Organisation must retain it. This can also include supporting documentation as outlined in the RMS form instructions, or in the ITAs document.

### 2.3 Can participants on currently funded ITRP grants be named on Research Hub/Training Centre applications for funding commencing 2024?

Yes. Participants will need to consider grant limits applicable to other grants held or being applied for, as outlined in the grant guidelines, and all participants must meet project limits before a project can start.

### 2.4 Are all named participants and organisations included on an application required to view it before it is submitted in RMS?

All named participants (Research Hub/Training Centre Director, CIs, PIs) and all organisations (including Other Eligible Organisations, Other Organisations and Partner Organisations) listed on an application should be provided with a copy/access to the application form prior to its submission in RMS. This is an important step in the due diligence process to ensure the information contained in the application is accurate prior to submission. Changes cannot be made once the application form has been submitted and the application period has closed.

Named participants and organisations can see all information contained in Parts A, C, D, E, F and G of an application. The information in Part B is partially restricted to the relevant individual and the Administering Organisation. Due to ARC privacy obligations, certain questions and their corresponding answers in Part B will not be displayed in RMS nor appear in the PDF version of the form and as such will not be visible to other named participants, organisations or assessors.

### 2.5 Can I source or leverage (levy) funds from other government contributions (that have been appropriated or awarded) as cash contribution towards a project?

Levy funds are ineligible as a cash contribution towards an ITRP application as these funds have already leveraged appropriated income from an Australian State or Territory government for the purposes of research or research infrastructure. Please refer to section 4.11 in the Grant guidelines.

### 2.6 Can I use generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in writing my application?

Please see the advice to applicants in the ARC's Policy on Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in the ARC's grants programs available on the [ARC website](#).

## 3. Partner Organisations

### 3.1 In regard to the National Redress Scheme, which list should be used when determining who is not eligible to be a Partner Organisation?

To be eligible as a Partner Organisation, an organisation cannot be an organisation included on the [National Redress Scheme's website](#) on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme'.

An organisation listed on the 'Institutions that are unable to participate in the National Redress Scheme' or 'Institutions intending to participate in the National Redress Scheme' on the National Redress Scheme's website can be a Partner Organisation.

### 3.2 Is there a specific ratio for cash contributions from the various participating organisations?

No. There is no specific ratio for contributions provided by Eligible Organisations, Partner Organisations or Other Organisations. Contributions must be appropriate and relevant for the research and personnel being proposed.

### 3.3 Can industry partners be from overseas?

Yes, noting that there is an expectation of transformation and benefit to Australian industry in the ITRP objectives. Supporting clearly identified market opportunities and intended transformation for Australian industry is part of the assessment criteria.

### 3.4 Does a Partner Organisation need an associated PI listed on the application?

Yes. As per the ITRP24 grant guidelines, at least one PI from each Partner Organisation must be included on the application.

### 3.5 Can State and or Commonwealth government departments be Partner Organisations?

Yes, government departments can be Partner Organisations. It should be noted that the ARC will not fund research or research infrastructure, which is being, or will be, supported through other Commonwealth, State or Territory sources. This includes funds used to leverage Commonwealth, State or Territory funds for research or research infrastructure (such as levies from RDCs).

All Partner Organisations must provide a financial commitment (cash, in-kind and or other material resources) to the proposed Research Hub/Training Centre as stated in the ITRP24 grant guidelines.

If an organisation (including Commonwealth and State/ Territory departments and statutory authorities, and industry owned companies which are receiving Commonwealth funds) wishes to be listed as a Partner Organisation on a Research Hub/Training Centre application – applicants will need to certify the source of any listed financial contributions. Funds appropriated, awarded by, or leveraged through Commonwealth, State or Territory sources for research cannot be included on an application as a financial contribution. To do so would be considered a breach of the grant guidelines.

If certification is provided that the contribution is **not** government funding allocated to research, such funds can be included as a contribution by the Partner Organisation. To justify any such contributions, the budget justification questions in the application form would need to include explanations regarding the source of this funding, as well as appropriate certification from the Partner Organisations in letters of support.

### 3.6 Do Partner Organisations need to be registered in RMS?

Yes, a named Partner Organisation must be listed in RMS to enable it to be included on the application.

## 4. Budgets

### 4.1 Do applicants have to prioritise budget items requested from the ARC?

No. Participants do not need to list budget items in priority order. Participants will need to justify why budget items have been requested.

#### 4.2 Is Teaching Relief an eligible budget item?

Teaching Relief is an eligible budget item for the Research Hubs scheme only. Teaching Relief is not an eligible budget item for Training Centres.

#### 4.3 Can multiple budget lines be entered under project costs in D1?

The ITAs state that a one-line budget is to be entered in D1 except for under personnel lines where multiple entries are allowed. Please note that the RMS budget question does not prevent candidates from entering additional lines of information.

Details about the budget are to be provided in the Justification for project costs and non-ARC contributions questions (D2 and D3 respectively), in the format prescribed in the ITAs.

### 5. General

#### 5.1 Can the ARC fund medical research?

Section 5.6 of the grant guidelines states:

“You cannot request or use grant funds for:...

b. medical research, including clinical trials, as detailed in the ARC Medical Research Policy on the [ARC website](#).”

Applications which address the ‘Medical Science’ priority (and or you suspect it’s potentially related to medical research), must take the ARC Medical Research Policy into consideration.

ITRP applications must clearly address the objectives of the ITRP schemes. The main aim of the ITRP application must not be to understand the causes, treatment and/or prevention of human diseases and/or the maintenance of human health. Please refer to part F of the ITAs for further information.

Applicants must use the Medical Research Statement in the application form to articulate which activity is potentially breaching the policy, why it is critical to the overall outcome, how it aligns to the scheme priorities, and how it is funded. This can be further elaborated in the project description and budget justification sections of the application, noting that the NCGP Eligibility Committee will consider the information contained in the Medical Research Statement question in the application form to determine whether the application is eligible.

#### 5.2 Request not to assess process.

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

#### 5.3 Is there an optimal or maximum number of nodes for a Research Hub/Training Centre?

No. It is up to the bid team to determine the most appropriate number of nodes for the Research Hub/Training Centre. The bid team should consider the expertise required to achieve the work, and balance this with the complexity of managing the proposed Research Hub/Training Centre. It is important to ensure the nodes are well integrated within the proposed research program both within the node and across the Research Hub/Training Centre.

#### 5.4 What are the implications of Open Access mandates on publishing of research?

The ARC Open Access Policy applies to all Research Outputs arising from ARC Funded Research and their Metadata. Any Research Outputs arising from an ARC supported research project must be made openly accessible within a 12-month period from the date of publication. For the purposes of the policy, Research Outputs do not include research data and research data outputs. Further details about the Open Access requirements for research outputs including metadata, licencing, and reporting obligations can be found in the ARC Open Access policy on the [ARC website](#).

#### 5.5 What are the changes to the ITRP priority areas?

Due to the change in government, there has also been a change in the Australian government's priority areas. These new areas are part of the National Reconstruction Fund (NRF) developed by the Department of Industry, Science and Resources. To read more about these, please see [National Reconstruction Fund: diversifying and transforming Australia's industry and economy | Department of Industry, Science and Resources](#).

### 6. Preprint or Comparable Resource

#### 6.1 What is a preprint or comparable resource?

Information about preprints or comparable resources can be found in section 2.2 and Appendix A in the ITAs document.

#### 6.2 How do I appropriately cite a preprint in the project description?

Information about citing preprints can be found in Appendix A in the ITAs document.

#### 6.3 How many preprints can I include?

The ARC has not placed a limit on the number of preprints or comparable resources that you can include within your grant application. You will need to consider the disciplinary standards of preprint or comparable resource use in your field. Detailed and general assessors will consider the academic merit of your research outputs as part of their holistic assessment including the value, relevance and suitability of any preprint or comparable resources within your application.

#### 6.4 Can I include a preprint in my 10 career-best achievements?

Yes, if it is best placed to demonstrate the excellence of your research considering preprint or comparable resource use in your disciplinary area.

### 7. FAQs relevant to Training Centres

#### 7.1 Do we need to enter individual lines in the budget table for each ICHDR and ICPD we are requesting from the ARC?

No. The ARC no longer requires an individual budget line for each ICHDR and ICPD that is being requested. The ARC now captures the number of Higher Degree by Research stipends that would be involved in this application that are proposed to be funded by the ARC. In Part E, the total number of ICHDRs and ICPEDs required should be entered. In Part D, ARC-funded ICHDRs and ICPDs can be entered as individual budget lines or as grouped positions at a single institution (e.g. 2 x ICHDRs @ University X).

To ensure the scheme objectives are being met for Training Centres, a minimum number of higher degree by research candidates (10 ICHDRs) and postdoctoral fellows (one ICPD) must be included in the application.

## 7.2 Can ICHDRs and ICPDs be partially funded by ARC and partially funded by other organisations?

No. ICHDRs and ICPDs are supported using ARC grant funds which are requested for these roles. ICHDRs and ICPDs have specific employment conditions which are outlined in the grant agreement.

If a HDR or postdoctoral researcher is partially or fully supported by another organisation, these roles are not considered to be ICHDRs or ICPDs. As such, they are not covered by the employment conditions in the grant agreement.

## 7.3 Salary and Stipend Rates for ICHDRs and ICPDs

The specified amounts for ICPD salaries and ICHDR stipends have been removed from the guidelines in order to streamline the application form, remove some of the complexities in the budget, reflect the salary and stipend policy applied to other Linkage Program grant opportunities and allow applicants additional flexibility to bring together an appropriate mix of people. ICHDRs and ICPDs must be paid at a level appropriate to the employing organisation, which can be no less than the level indicated on the salaries and stipends page of the [ARC website](#).

## 7.4 Can ICHDRs can be requested for 3.5 years with ARC funding?

Yes. ICHDRS can be requested for 3.5 years. The appropriate stipend amount should be requested and justified in the Budget section of the application form.

## 7.5 Can stipends be topped up?

Yes. ICHDR stipends can be topped up. Firstly, you must request the minimum ARC rate and then you can top up the ARC stipend with an additional contribution from partner/s in the application.

Applicants will often use this top up method as a way of offering more competitive stipends to attract high quality applicants.

# 8. FAQs relevant to Research Hubs

## 8.1 Why do Partner Organisations need to advise the number of their employees in the letter of support?

The Grant Guidelines state that you must provide the number of employees of a Partner Organisation in your application.

It is an important part of information required for the Selection Advisory Committee and Detailed Assessors to assess the scale and contributions of the organisation you are partnering with. It is also useful information to ascertain capability to manage student and postdoctoral placements as they learn industry ready skills.

## Changes to the document

Section	Description	Date