Special Research Initiative for a Science of Learning Research Centre Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2012

Australian Research Council Act 2001
I, Chris Evans, Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Science and Research, having satisfied myself of the matters set out in section 59 of the Australian Research Council Act 2001, approve these Funding Rules under section 60 of that Act.

Dated 18 June 2012

CHRIS EVANS
Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Science and Research
Table of Contents

Key Dates ........................................................................................................................................... 4
Contacts ............................................................................................................................................... 4
1. Name of Funding Rules .................................................................................................................. 5
2. Commencement ................................................................................................................................. 5
3. Definitions ......................................................................................................................................... 5
4. Introduction ....................................................................................................................................... 8
   4.1 Overview .................................................................................................................................... 8
   4.2 Science of Learning Research Centre ........................................................................................ 8
   4.3 Objectives ................................................................................................................................... 9
   4.4 Selection Criteria ......................................................................................................................... 9
   4.5 Organisational Statement in respect to the Research Environment .......................................... 10
5. Funding ............................................................................................................................................... 10
   5.1 Level and Period of Funding ....................................................................................................... 10
   5.2 Budget Items Supported ............................................................................................................. 11
   5.3 Budget Items Not Supported ...................................................................................................... 12
   5.4 Research/Activities Not Supported ........................................................................................... 12
6. Organisational Types, Roles and Eligibility ................................................................................... 13
   6.1 Eligible Organisations ............................................................................................................... 13
   6.2 Partner Organisations ............................................................................................................... 13
   6.3 Collaborative Arrangements ....................................................................................................... 13
7. Roles and Eligibility for Researchers ............................................................................................... 14
   7.1 Researcher Roles and General Eligibility .................................................................................. 14
   7.2 Eligibility Criteria for a Centre Director .................................................................................... 15
   7.3 Eligibility Criteria for Chief Investigators ............................................................................... 15
   7.4 Eligibility Criteria for Partner Investigators ............................................................................. 16
8. Governance Structure and Arrangements ......................................................................................... 16
9. Number of Proposals, Funded Projects and Cross-Scheme Eligibility ............................................. 16
   9.1 Number of Proposals and Cross-Scheme Eligibility ................................................................ 16
   9.2 Proposal Eligibility and Duplication .......................................................................................... 16
10. Submission of Proposals .................................................................................................................. 17
    10.1 Proposals ................................................................................................................................. 17
    10.2 Submission of Proposals in the RMS ...................................................................................... 17
    10.3 Closing Time for Proposals ..................................................................................................... 17
    10.4 Certification in the RMS .......................................................................................................... 17
    10.5 Conflict of Interest .................................................................................................................. 17
11. Selection and Approval Process ....................................................................................................... 18
    11.1 Assessment and Selection Process ........................................................................................... 18
    11.2 Rejoinder .................................................................................................................................. 18
    11.3 Request Not to Assess ............................................................................................................ 18
    11.4 Recommendations and Offer of Funding ................................................................................ 19
12. Appeals Process ................................................................................................................................. 19
13. Reporting Requirements .................................................................................................................... 19
    13.1 Progress Reports ....................................................................................................................... 19
    13.2 End of Year Reports .................................................................................................................. 20
    13.3 Final Report .............................................................................................................................. 20
13.4 Audited Financial Statement 20
13.5 Performance Reviews 20

14. **Fundamental Principles of Conducting Research**.................................................................21
14.1 Ethics and Research Practices 21
14.2 Applicable Law 21
14.3 Confidentiality 21
14.4 Intellectual Property 22
14.5 Incomplete or Misleading Information 22

**Appendix A. Eligible Organisations** .................................................................................................23
Key Dates
Please refer to the Important Dates page on the ARC website for key dates and updates relevant to these Funding Rules at www.arc.gov.au/media/important_dates.htm.

Contacts
In the first instance, Researchers should direct all queries regarding ARC funding schemes to their Administering Organisation’s Research Office or equivalent.

ARC Contacts:
by mail to: Special Research Initiatives Coordinator
Australian Research Council
GPO Box 2702
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Email: sri@arc.gov.au
Phone: 02 6287 6600
Fax: 02 6287 6638
Web: www.arc.gov.au

by courier to: Special Research Initiatives Coordinator
Australian Research Council
Level 2, 11 Lancaster Place, Majura Park
CANBERRA ACT 2609

Appeals must be addressed and sent:
by mail to: The Appeals Officer
Australian Research Council
GPO Box 2702
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Or by email to: appeals@arc.gov.au

or by courier to: The Appeals Officer
Australian Research Council
Level 2, 11 Lancaster Place, Majura Park
CANBERRA ACT 2609

Other:
RMS User IDs:
Email: rms@arc.gov.au
1. **Name of Funding Rules**
These Funding Rules are the Australian Research Council *Special Research Initiative for a Science of Learning Research Centre* Funding Rules for funding commencing in 2012.

2. **Commencement**
These Funding Rules shall take effect upon registration on the Federal Register of Legislative Instruments.

3. **Definitions**
In these Funding Rules, unless the contrary intention appears:

- **Adjunct or Emeritus Appointment** or equivalent means that an Eligible Organisation has a formal agreement with a researcher which establishes an ongoing association with the Eligible Organisation, of the nature of an emeritus or honorary academic or visiting fellow. The ARC may seek documentary evidence of such an association if it is considered necessary.

- **Administering Organisation** means an Eligible Organisation that is also a higher education institution, which submits a Proposal for funding under the *Special Research Initiative for a Science of Learning Research Centre* and which will be responsible for the administration of the funding if the proposed Program is approved for funding.

- **ARC** means the Australian Research Council, as established under the ARC Act.

- **ARC Act** means the *Australian Research Council Act 2001*.

- **ARC Research Centre** means any research centre wholly or partly funded by the ARC and includes Centres of Excellence, Special Research Initiatives and Co-funded Centres.

- **Cash Contribution** means the cash funding from an organisation which is transferred to and managed by the Administering Organisation for the Program.

- **Centre Director** means the first-named Chief Investigator on a Proposal.

- **Chief Investigator (CI)** means a researcher who satisfies the eligibility criteria for a Chief Investigator under these Funding Rules.

- **Collaborating Organisation** means any Eligible Organisation which is identified in the Proposal as a contributor to the Program but is not the Administering Organisation.

- **Commonwealth** means the Commonwealth of Australia.

- **Commonwealth Fellowship** means a position held by a researcher where the salary is funded wholly or partly by the Commonwealth and where the researcher in that position was named in a Proposal.

- **Conflict of Interest** means any conflict of interest, any risk of a conflict of interest and any apparent conflict of interest arising through a party engaging in any activity, participating in any association, holding any membership or obtaining any interest that is likely to conflict with or restrict that party participating in the Program.
Eligible Organisation means an organisation listed in Appendix A.

Funding Agreement means the agreement entered into by the ARC and the Administering Organisation when a Proposal from that organisation is approved for funding.

Funding Rules means this document.

GST has the meaning as given in section 195-1 of the A New Tax System (Goods and Services Tax) Act 1999.

In-kind Contribution means a contribution of goods, services, materials or time to the Program from an individual, business or organisation. These are calculated based on the current market rates/valuations/rentals/charges (that is in the financial year of the date of the Proposal’s submission) of the costs of, for example, labour, work spaces, equipment and databases. The calculations covering time and costs should be documented by the Administering Organisation. The ARC may require these calculations to be audited from time-to-time.

Medical and Dental Research means research and/or training primarily and substantially aimed at understanding or treating a human disease or health condition as defined on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au/applicants/rnd_research.htm.

Minister means the Minister responsible for the administration of the ARC Act, or the Minister’s delegate.

NCGP means the National Competitive Grants Program.

Partner Investigator (PI) means a researcher who satisfies the eligibility criteria for a Partner Investigator under these Funding Rules.

Partner Organisation means an organisation, other than an Eligible Organisation, which is to be a contributor to the Program.

Program means a Proposal approved by the Minister to receive funding from the ARC in accordance with these Funding Rules.

Proposal means a request to the ARC for the provision of funding which is submitted in accordance with these Funding Rules.

Research Environment means the laboratory, department, school, centre or institute within an Administering Organisation, Collaborating Organisation or Partner Organisation where research will be undertaken.

Research Office means a business unit within an Eligible Organisation that is responsible for administrative contact with the ARC regarding Proposals and Programs.

RMS means the ARC online Research Management System.

Selection Advisory Committee means a group of experts appointed by the ARC who will review and evaluate each Expression of Interest and Proposal and provide a recommendation for funding to the ARC.

Special Condition means a special condition specified in a Funding Agreement which governs the use of the funding provided by the ARC.
Specified Personnel means the personnel required for this Program and may include roles such as Centre Director, Research Director, Chief Operations Officer, Chief Investigators, Partner Investigators or other key personnel in the Program.
4. Introduction

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 These Funding Rules are current as at the date of signing and have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the ARC Act in force then.

4.1.2 *Special Research Initiatives* are established to address specific research priorities and/or build capacity in strategically important areas.

4.1.3 The *Special Research Initiative for a Science of Learning Research Centre* provides funding to Eligible Organisations to support a centre that will undertake cross-disciplinary research programs in the human learning process. The centre will provide synergies between researchers and community institutions and educational providers and will cover a comprehensive range of geographic, demographic and socio-economic groups including Indigenous communities.

4.1.4 For the purposes of these Funding Rules, research is defined as the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative.

This definition of research is consistent with a broad notion of research and experimental development (R&D) as comprising ‘creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man [human-kind], culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications’.

4.2 Science of Learning Research Centre

4.2.1 The successful Program will be a national collaborative centre that will research the complex issues in the learning process. A key initiative recommended by the Prime Minister’s Science, Engineering and Innovation Council Expert Working Group’s report, *Transforming Learning and Transmission of Knowledge* (2009), the centre will draw together educational professionals, educational groups and researchers in areas ranging from neuroscience and cognitive development, through to pedagogy and educational technology. Through this cross-disciplinary and inter-professional approach, the primary objective of the centre is to develop a scientific evidence base that can be used to inform teaching practices.

4.2.2 The centre will be led by experienced researchers in higher education institutions with strong credentials in coordinating team-based cross-disciplinary projects. The centre will develop and explore innovative opportunities for research and translation of the learning process, bringing cultural, social and environmental benefits to all Australians. Collaboration with live educational settings, families and educational groups will be integral to the centre’s program to test the transfer of new insights in the learning process into practice.

4.2.3 The centre will provide scale and focus for research in learning processes with a strong collaborative governance framework. This structure will support and encourage participants to commit to broader strategic objectives producing outcomes not independently obtainable.

---

4.3 Objectives

4.3.1 The specific objective for the Special Research Initiative for a Science of Learning Research Centre is the delivery of a program of activities that develop a strong evidence base for learning processes to inform teaching practices. The centre will:

a. undertake highly innovative and internationally competitive research with a strategic focus on learning processes;

b. build critical mass through significant cross-disciplinary collaboration, which may range from neuroscience and cognitive development to pedagogy and education technology, including development of national and international partnerships and linkages with leading researchers, institutions, educational professionals and educational groups;

c. build Australia’s research capacity by attracting researchers of a high international standing, as well as the most promising research students;

d. strengthen capability by providing high-quality postgraduate and postdoctoral training environments for the next generation of researchers;

e. engage with stakeholders and live educational settings to identify and explore opportunities for translation and development of research in learning processes that will deliver benefits to Australia;

f. address issues relating to Indigenous learners, learners in regional and remote locations, and learners from underprivileged backgrounds;

g. address the role and integration of digital technology as a learning tool; and

h. facilitate the transfer of knowledge through public education of the outcomes of learning processes research and provide support for policy development.

4.4 Selection Criteria

4.4.1 All Proposals that meet the eligibility criteria will be assessed and merit ranked using the following selection criteria:

a. Investigator(s) (30%)
   - research opportunity and performance evidence (ROPE);
   - time and capacity to undertake the proposed research and mentorship;
   - record of successful supervision and training of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers.

b. Program Quality and Innovation (30%)
   - Does the method and approach proposed address the objectives of the program?
   - Is the conceptual/theoretical framework, genuinely broad, cross-disciplinary, innovative and original?
   - Will the aims, concepts, methods and results advance knowledge?
   - Does the Program have a wide level of collaboration, including the development of national and international partnerships and linkages?
Will the proposed research encourage and develop strategic research alliances between the higher education organisation(s), Collaborating/Partner organisation(s) and stakeholder(s)?

c. **Feasibility and Benefit** (20%)
   - Are the design of the Program and the expertise of the participants sufficient to ensure the Program can be completed with the proposed budget and timeframe?
   - Will the completed Program produce innovative economic, environmental, social and/or cultural benefits to the Australian community?
   - Is the nature and extent of the Program’s strategic approach to communication and outreach appropriate for the objectives?

d. **Governance** (10%)
   - Does the Program have an effective governance arrangement with the capacity to transcend disciplinary, geographical, professional and institutional boundaries and cultures, to achieve the Program’s vision?

e. **Research Environment** (10%)
   - Does the Research Environment in each node or institution provide high-quality intellectual support for the project?
   - Are the necessary facilities to complete the Program available?
   - Are there adequate strategies to encourage dissemination, commercialisation (if appropriate); and promotion of research outcomes?

4.5 **Organisational Statement in respect to the Research Environment**

4.5.1 The Administering Organisation must provide a statement in relation to the Research Environment(s), approved by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research), or equivalent, within the Proposal outlining the:

   a. extent to which the proposed Program aligns with the existing and/or emerging research strengths of the Administering Organisation and Collaborating Organisations;

   b. arrangements under which the proposed Program and investigators will be supported in a collaborative Research Environment(s);

   c. arrangements for oversight of cross-institutional collaboration

5. **Funding**

5.1 **Level and Period of Funding**

5.1.1 All amounts referred to in these Funding Rules are to be read as exclusive of GST (if any), unless expressly stated otherwise.

5.1.2 Total funds of up to $4 million per year may be awarded over four years, subject to Parliamentary appropriations.
5.1.3 The ARC reserves the right to recommend levels of funding for a Program at levels that may differ from those requested in the Proposal.

5.1.4 Financial assistance may be payable under these Funding Rules in respect of the calendar year 2012 and any subsequent years to which the ARC Act applies. Funding for the approved Program(s) will commence effective December 2012, unless other arrangements are approved by the Minister.

5.1.5 Funding may be provided for short-term or long-term activities. Any funding awarded will be subject to sufficient funds being available for the Program, the provisions of the ARC Act and continued satisfactory progress of the Program.

5.1.6 The ARC may recommend funding for a Program for a duration different from that requested in the Proposal.

5.2 Budget Items Supported

5.2.1 Budget items that directly support a research Program may be funded, including:

a. Maintenance, infrastructure and equipment required for the Program. Funding will not be provided for infrastructure or equipment that is deemed to be for general use.

b. Specialised computer equipment and software essential to the Program.

c. Expert services of a third party, if the services are deemed to be directly related to and necessary for the proposed Program. Such services include, but are not limited to:

i. translation services, transcriptions services;

ii. workshop services, data collection and analysis services; and

iii. the purchase of bibliographical or archival material (electronic or hard copy).

d. Personnel (salaries and on-costs) including research associates, Chief Operations Officer, technicians and laboratory attendants but excluding the Centre Director, Chief Investigators and Partner Investigators. Salary support must be requested at an appropriate salary level, including 28 per cent on-costs, for the Administering Organisation.

e. Publication and dissemination of Program outputs and outreach activity costs may be supported at up to two (2) per cent of total ARC funding awarded to the Program, and no prior approval is required; nor does this need to be separately itemised at the time of application. This excludes fees for patent application and holding. The ARC strongly encourages publication in publicly accessible outlets and the depositing of data and any publications arising from a Project in an appropriate subject and/or institutional repository.

f. PhD stipends, at a minimum of $23,728 (2012 $).

g. Teaching relief for Chief Investigators (CIs) on the Program, up to a total value of $40,000 per year per CI for the Program.

h. Travel and associated costs for field and observational work, workshops and other forms of research-based engagement with teaching professionals and educational groups.
i. Short-term project support for Partner Investigators (PIs).

j. Other Travel costs up to $100,000 per year for the life of the Program:
   i. economy, domestic and international travel costs for CIs and research support personnel associated with the Program, including to foster and strengthen collaborations between researchers in Australia and overseas; and
   ii. economy, domestic and international travel costs for PIs living overseas to travel to and from Australia, once per year, to work on the Program.

5.3 **Budget Items Not Supported**

5.3.1 Budget items that will not be supported by ARC funding include:
   a. capital works and general infrastructure, in whole or in part;
   b. ‘bench fees’ or similar laboratory access fees levied by the institution;
   c. salaries and/or on-costs, in whole or in part, for the Centre Director, CIs or PIs;
   d. research support for PIs, except as outlined in clause 5.2.1(i);
   e. fees for international students or Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) and Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP) liabilities for students; and
   f. costs not directly related to research, for example, professional membership fees, fees for patent application and holding, visas, relocation, costs of dependants, insurance, and mobile phones (purchase or call charges).

5.3.2 The following basic facilities must be provided and funded by the Administering Organisation:
   a. accommodation (for example, laboratory and office space, suitably equipped and furnished);
   b. access to film or music editing facilities;
   c. access to a basic library collection;
   d. standard reference materials;
   e. web hosting;
   f. provision of computers and basic computing facilities such as printers, word processing and other standard software; and
   g. use of photocopiers, telephones, mail, fax, email and internet services.

5.3.3 Eligible Organisations must ensure that organisational In-kind Contributions in the budget section of the Proposal do not include salary for any Commonwealth Fellowships, unless it is salary committed by an Eligible Organisation over and above the Commonwealth component. The inclusion of a Commonwealth Fellowship salary as an organisational In-kind Contribution may lead to a Proposal being excluded and not recommended for funding.

5.4 **Research/Activities Not Supported**
5.4.1 Except where such activities meet the definition of research at subsection 4.1.4, the Special Research Initiative for a Science of Learning Research Centre does not support the production of:

a. descriptive data compilations, catalogues or bibliographies; or
b. compilation of data, computer programs, research aids and tools.

5.4.2 The Special Research Initiative for a Science of Learning Research Centre scheme does not support Medical and Dental Research, defined as research and/or training primarily and substantially aimed at understanding or treating a human disease or human health condition. Where a proposal satisfies all other eligibility requirements set out in the Funding Rules, the ARC may support a Program where the primary aim is an educational outcome in addition to Research and Development and the Program does not include clinical trials.

6. Organisational Types, Roles and Eligibility

6.1 Eligible Organisations

6.1.1 A Proposal may only be submitted by an Administering Organisation. An Administering Organisation is an Eligible Organisation (listed at Appendix A) that is also a higher education institution.

6.1.2 Other Eligible Organisations listed on the Proposal will be Collaborating Organisations.

6.1.3 In addition to the Administering Organisation, the Program must involve a number of Collaborating Organisations to ensure a national approach.

6.1.4 To maximise the impact of ARC funding, Proposals must demonstrate a significant contribution of cash, in-kind or other material resources from the Administering Organisation and all Collaborating Organisations, having regard to the total cost of the Program and the relative contribution of each CI. Combined Cash and In-kind Contributions must include the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) salary of the Centre Director.

6.1.5 The combined Administering Organisation and Collaborating Organisations contributions for a Proposal (i.e., the total of the Cash and In-kind Contributions of the Administering Organisation and Collaborating Organisations) must be at least 30 per cent of the funding requested from the ARC.

6.2 Partner Organisations

6.2.1 Organisations that are not Eligible Organisations but are listed on the Proposal will be Partner Organisations.

6.2.2 In addition to the Administering Organisation and Collaborating Organisations, the Program must involve a number of Partner Organisations to ensure a national approach.

6.2.3 A Proposal must demonstrate a contribution of cash, in-kind or other material resources from the Partner Organisations, having regard to the total cost of the Program and the relative contribution of each Partner Investigator (PI).

6.3 Collaborative Arrangements
6.3.1 A Proposal should include the details of the collaborative arrangements proposed, including how each organisation is involved in the Program, how the Program fits into each Collaborating and Partner Organisation’s overall strategic plan and how the Program is of value to each of the Collaborating and Partner Organisations involved.

6.3.2 A Proposal submitted in RMS must include a letter of support (of no more than two A4 pages) from each Collaborating and Partner Organisation. Each letter must:
   a. be on the organisation’s letterhead;
   b. signed by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) for Collaborating Organisations or by the Chief Executive Officer or delegate for Partner Organisations;
   c. include a brief profile of the organisation and details of the Cash and In-kind Contributions to the Program; and
   d. certify that the organisation will meet the requirements outlined in a standard Funding Agreement, concerning Multi-Institutional and Partner Agreements, including the requirement to enter into arrangements regarding intellectual property.

7. Roles and Eligibility for Researchers

7.1 Researcher Roles and General Eligibility

7.1.1 Roles that may be undertaken by researchers are:
   a. Centre Director (CD);
   b. Chief Investigator (CI); or
   c. Partner Investigator (PI).

7.1.2 The Centre Director, CIs and PIs nominated in a Proposal must satisfy the eligibility criteria for the role they are to perform at the commencement of the Program and for the duration of the Program.

7.1.3 A researcher nominated as the Centre Director, CI or PI must take significant intellectual responsibility for the proposed centre, its conception, and any strategic decisions called for in its pursuit and the communication of results. The researcher must have the capacity to make a serious commitment to the Program. The ARC reserves the right to determine whether a person has the requisite capacity to perform the role.

7.1.4 A researcher undertaking undergraduate studies or higher degree by research is not eligible to be a Centre Director or CI on the Program.

7.1.5 If the ARC considers that a researcher nominated as a Centre Director, CI or PI does not meet the eligibility criteria for the role that researcher is to perform, the Proposal may be deemed ineligible.

7.1.6 At the time of the submission of a Proposal, all obligations regarding previously funded projects involving the nominated Centre Director, CIs and PIs on the Proposal must have been fulfilled to the satisfaction of the ARC. Such obligations include the provision of satisfactory Progress and Final Reports.
7.1.7 A researcher cannot participate as a Centre Director or CI on a Proposal if they hold a position as a Director, Board Member or have a financial interest (salary, contract or equity) in a proposed Partner Organisation for the Program. This exclusion does not confer PI eligibility under 7.4.1.a.

7.1.8 If a Proposal has been approved for funding and a CI or PI is, at any time, no longer able to work as proposed on the Program, the Program may be continued provided that any replacement CI or PI is approved by the ARC and meets the relevant eligibility criteria.

7.2 **Eligibility Criteria for a Centre Director**

7.2.1 The Centre Director must meet all the eligibility criteria for a CI and must be employed by the Administering Organisation at the commencement of the Program and for the duration of the Program.

7.2.2 The Centre Director will be responsible for implementing the strategies of the Program and managing the research Program. The Centre Director must coordinate the research effort and reporting structures across the Administering Organisation and the Collaborating and Partner Organisations.

7.2.3 The Centre Director is expected to demonstrate that they have the time and capacity to engage effectively in the activities of the Program. If a Centre Director is unable to meet this undertaking, the ARC may, in its absolute discretion, decide not to recommend the Proposal for funding.

7.2.4 A researcher who is named as the Centre Director on a Proposal cannot be named as a Centre Director or CI on any other Proposal submitted to the *Special Research Initiative for a Science of Learning Research Centre*.

7.2.5 If a Proposal has been approved for funding and the Centre Director is at any time during the Program no longer able to undertake this role, the Program may be continued under a replacement Centre Director provided that:

a. approval is obtained from the ARC for the change in Centre Director; and

b. a replacement Centre Director meets the eligibility criteria for a Centre Director and those for a CI at the time of their nomination and for the full term of their participation in the Program, and the reasons for replacement justified to the satisfaction of the ARC; and

c. the Administering Organisation has obtained approval from the Collaborating and Partner Organisations for the change in Centre Director.

7.3 **Eligibility Criteria for Chief Investigators**

7.3.1 A researcher nominated on a Proposal as a CI must meet at least one of the following criteria as at the commencement the Program and for the duration of the Program:

a. be an employee for at least half-time (50 per cent of Full Time Equivalent) at one Eligible Organisation; or

b. be a holder of an Emeritus, Adjunct or equivalent appointment at an Eligible Organisation and not have a substantive paid position elsewhere.

7.3.2 A CI must reside predominantly in Australia for the life of the Program. The CI may seek approval from the Administering Organisation to undertake fieldwork,
7.3.3 A researcher who is named as a CI on a Proposal cannot be named as a Centre Director or CI on any other Proposal submitted to the Special Research Initiative for a Science of Learning Research Centre.

7.4 Eligibility Criteria for Partner Investigators

7.4.1 A researcher nominated as a PI on a Proposal must not:

a. meet the eligibility criteria for a CI; or

b. be an employee of an Eligible Organisation

7.4.2 Notwithstanding 7.4.1b, a researcher who is an employee of an Eligible Organisation listed in Appendix A who does not reside predominantly in Australia may be a PI.

8. Governance Structure and Arrangements

8.1.1 Administrative operations of the centre must be established within the academic, administrative and financial governance structures of the Administering Organisation.

8.1.2 A centre may comprise networked nodes, or operate as a ‘virtual centre’, or adopt any other appropriate approach to research management, provided that it meets the objectives and selection criteria and is not contrary to the Funding Agreement.

8.1.3 The centre must implement appropriate governance structures to ensure strategic alliances and collaboration with researchers, industry and stakeholders.

8.1.4 The centre must have an expert Advisory Committee to provide advice and strategic focus on the research activities for the centre. The Advisory Committee will have a Chair who will champion the centre and provide advice to the Centre Director.

9. Number of Proposals, Funded Projects and Cross-Scheme Eligibility

9.1 Number of Proposals and Cross-Scheme Eligibility

9.1.1 An Administering Organisation may submit only one Proposal.

9.1.2 Applicants should note the eligibility criteria for access to other funding schemes, as expressed in the funding rules for those schemes. The ARC reserves the right to change these criteria in future funding rounds. Funding Rules for all ARC schemes are available on the ARC website, www.arc.gov.au.

9.1.3 Program(s) funded under these Funding Rules will be considered an ARC Research Centre for the purposes of cross-scheme eligibility considerations.

9.2 Proposal Eligibility and Duplication

9.2.1 The ARC will not duplicate funding for research, including infrastructure funded by the Commonwealth as at commencement of the Program.
9.2.2 The Proposal must list all current funding and requested funding for the Centre Director, CIs and PIs under any ARC schemes including projects, Awards and Fellowships, or any other Commonwealth funding scheme.

9.2.3 The Proposal cannot be the same or similar (in whole or in part) to a project described in another current ARC-submitted Proposal.

9.2.4 The ARC will assess whether a Proposal meets the eligibility requirements in these Funding Rules and may recommend that a Proposal that does not meet the requirements be deemed ineligible.

9.2.5 A decision under subsection 9.2.4 may be made by the ARC at any stage during assessment of the Proposal and may result in non-progression of the Proposal to the next level of assessment.

10. Submission of Proposals

10.1 Proposals

10.1.1 The Proposal must contain all the information necessary for its assessment without the need for further written or oral explanation, or reference to additional documentation, unless requested by the ARC.

10.1.2 All details in the Proposal must be current at the time of submission.

10.2 Submission of Proposals in the RMS

10.2.1 Administering Organisations must submit Proposals through the RMS unless otherwise advised by the ARC.

10.2.2 All Proposals must meet the format and content requirements, including certification, as set out in the RMS form and the Instructions to Applicants.

10.3 Closing Time for Proposals

10.3.1 The online form must be completed within the RMS and submitted by the closing date on the Important Dates page on the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au/media/important_dates.htm.

10.3.2 Additions, deletions and modifications will not be accepted after submission, unless invited by the ARC.

10.4 Certification in the RMS

10.4.1 The Administering Organisation must certify a Proposal online in the RMS. Research Offices should ensure that the Research Office delegate role is authorised in the RMS to certify and submit Proposals.

10.4.2 The ARC reserves the right at any point in the process to seek evidence from the Administering Organisation to support the certification of Proposals.

10.5 Conflict of Interest

10.5.1 All parties involved in or associated with a Proposal must disclose at the date of submission any Conflict of Interest that exists or is likely to arise in relation to any aspect of the Proposal.

10.5.2 If a Conflict of Interest exists or arises, the Administering Organisation must have documented processes in place for managing the Conflict of Interest for the
duration of the Program. Such processes must comply with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007)* and any relevant successor document.

10.5.3 A researcher cannot participate as a Centre Director or CI on a Proposal if they hold a position as a Director, Board member or has a financial interest (salary, contract or equity) in a proposed Partner Organisation for the Program as at the commencement date for funding of the Program.

11. **Selection and Approval Process**

11.1 **Assessment and Selection Process**

11.1.1 Assessment of Proposals is undertaken by the ARC, which has the right to make recommendations for funding to the Minister, based on any number of assessments or solely on the basis of its expertise.

11.1.2 All Proposals will be considered against eligibility criteria and compliance with the Funding Rules.

11.1.3 Proposals may be:

   a. Assigned to independent assessors, from a range of organisations, who will assess and report and may provide written comments on the Proposal against the selection criteria.

   b. Ranked and allocated a budget, relative to other Proposals, by the Selection Advisory Committee (SAC), on the basis of the Proposal and any assessors’ reports and any rejoinder.

   c. Subject to additional assessment, including interviews, in a format to be determined by the ARC (including required participants). Applicants will be advised by the ARC if they are required to participate in interviews. The ARC will not fund interviewee participation in interviews.

11.1.4 The ARC has procedures in place for managing organisational and personal Conflicts of Interest for assessors, members of the SAC, members of other ARC committees and ARC staff. Details of these procedures are available on the ARC website at [http://www.arc.gov.au/about_arc/coe_guidelines.htm#conflict](http://www.arc.gov.au/about_arc/coe_guidelines.htm#conflict).

11.2 **Rejoinder**

11.2.1 The Administering Organisation may be given the opportunity for a rejoinder to assessors’ written comments, and to provide any additional information requested by the ARC. Names of assessors will not be provided to the Administering Organisation.

11.3 **Request Not to Assess**

11.3.1 Administering Organisations may name any person or persons whom they do not wish to assess a Proposal on a Request Not to Assess form. The notification must be sent to the email address advised under Contacts on page 4 of these Funding Rules and received by the ARC by the Request Not to Assess date on the Important Dates page on the ARC website at [www.arc.gov.au/media/important_dates.htm](http://www.arc.gov.au/media/important_dates.htm). The ARC will consider the justification put forward to exclude any person as an assessor, but may choose not to give effect to such a request.
11.4 Recommendations and Offer of Funding

11.4.1 In accordance with the ARC Act, the ARC Chief Executive Officer will submit funding recommendations to the Minister for consideration. The Minister will determine which Proposals will be approved and the amount and timing of funding to be paid to Administering Organisations for approved Proposals.

11.4.2 Under the ARC Act, the Minister cannot approve funding for any Proposal that fails to meet the eligibility criteria set out in these Funding Rules.

11.4.3 Administering Organisations whose Proposals are approved will be notified in a letter of offer that will indicate the funding offered. They will also be provided with a copy of a Funding Agreement for signing. Outcomes of the selection process are also made available on the ARC website.

11.4.4 The Minister may vary the funding approval if the ARC recommends that the particular circumstances of the Program warrant variation. Any variation or change will accord with these Funding Rules and the Funding Agreement.

11.4.5 If the ARC funding approved for a Program varies from the amount requested, pro rata adjustments may be made to the Collaborating and Partner Organisation contributions.

12. Appeals Process

12.1.1 Applicants for funding under the schemes of the NCGP are able to submit an appeal against administrative process issues. The appeals process is designed to ensure that the applicant has been treated fairly and consistently in the context of the selection procedures.

12.1.2 Appeals will be considered only against administrative process issues and not against committee recommendations, assessor ratings and comments or the assessment outcome.

12.1.3 Appeals must be submitted by the Administering Organisation on the ARC Appeals Form, authorised by a Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research), Chief Executive Officer or equivalent. Appeals must be received within 28 days of the date of the notification to the Administering Organisation of the outcome of Proposals. The ARC will not accept appeals later than 5.00 pm (AEST) of the date of submission of the appeal.

12.1.4 Appeals must be addressed and sent to the address advised under Contacts on page 4 of these Funding Rules. The ARC will accept both electronic and hard copy appeal submissions.

12.1.5 Applicants for funding may at any time seek to appeal ARC decisions using available external appeal options.

13. Reporting Requirements

13.1 Progress Reports

13.1.1 Administering Organisations must submit reports to the ARC concerning the centre, in the format and by the due dates detailed in the Funding Agreement. Details of ARC reporting requirements can be found on the ARC website at http://www.arc.gov.au/applicants/reported_requirements.htm.
13.1.2 The centre will be required to report on a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to be developed within the first six months of operation and approved by the ARC.

13.1.3 The centre will be required to submit annual reports to the ARC covering both their financial operations and their research performance.

13.1.4 If the ARC is not satisfied with the progress of any Program, further payment of funds will not be made until satisfactory progress has been made on the Program. If satisfactory progress is still not achieved within a reasonable period of time, the funding may be terminated and all outstanding funding will be recovered by the ARC.

13.2 End of Year Reports

The Administering Organisation must submit an End of Year Report by 31 March in the year following each full calendar year for which the funding was awarded. The ARC will provide instructions on the End of Year Report process each year.

13.3 Final Report

13.3.1 A Final Report must be submitted for the Program within 12 months of the final payment or within 12 months of the final approved carryover of funds. Details of ARC reporting requirements can be found on the ARC website at http://www.arc.gov.au/applicants/reported_requirements.htm.

13.3.2 The Final Report must justify why any publications from the Program have not been deposited in appropriate repositories within 12 months of publication. The Final Report must outline how data arising from the Program have been made publicly accessible where appropriate.

13.3.3 If any reports are not submitted or are not satisfactory to the ARC this will be noted against future Proposals submitted by the CIs associated with the Program.

13.3.4 The ARC may also seek additional information about subsequent publications after submission of the Final Report.

13.4 Audited Financial Statement

13.4.1 In accordance with section 58 of the ARC Act, the Administering Organisation must submit an Audited Financial Statement by 31 March for each year following each calendar year for which the funding was awarded.

13.4.2 In completing the Audited Financial Statement, the Administering Organisation must ensure that the amount shown in that statement as ‘approved carry forward funds’ is the same as the amount (if any) for which approval was given by the ARC to carryover in the End of Year Report.

13.5 Performance Reviews

13.5.1 The centre will undergo an external performance review arranged by the ARC mid-term through the funding period. Continuation of funding for the remaining years of operation will be dependent on the outcome of the review.

13.5.2 Ad hoc reviews of the centre may be held at any time. A review may be triggered in special circumstances including, but not limited to a change of Centre Director or withdrawal of a substantial Collaborating Organisation.
14. **Fundamental Principles of Conducting Research**

14.1 **Ethics and Research Practices**

14.1.1 All Proposals and ARC-funded research Programs must conform to the principles outlined in the following and their successor documents:

a. *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007)*;

b. as applicable, the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*; and

c. as applicable, codes on animal research promulgated by the National Health and Medical Research Council.

If there is any conflict between a successor document and its predecessor, then the successor document prevails to the extent of any inconsistency.

14.2 **Applicable Law**

14.2.1 The ARC is required to comply with the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1988* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

14.3 **Confidentiality**

14.3.1 The ARC will treat information contained in a Proposal as confidential. However, the ARC may disclose information contained in a Proposal, or otherwise provided to the ARC, to the extent that the information is:

a. disclosed by the ARC to its advisers (including external assessors), officers, employees or other third parties in order to assess, evaluate or verify the accuracy or completeness of a Proposal;

b. disclosed to ARC personnel to enable effective management or auditing of the ARC *Special Research Initiative* scheme or any Funding Agreement;

c. disclosed by the ARC to the Minister;

d. shared by the ARC within the agency, or with another Commonwealth Department or agency, where this serves the Commonwealth’s legitimate interests;

e. authorised or required by law to be disclosed;

f. disclosed in accordance with any other provision of these Funding Rules or the Funding Agreement; or

g. in the public domain.

14.3.2 Where information contained in a Proposal is made available to third parties for evaluation or assessment purposes, the ARC will require the third parties to maintain the confidentiality of the material.

14.3.3 Notwithstanding the above, and in addition to the exemptions listed at subsection 14.3.1, the ARC may publicise and report offers or awards of funding, including information about the proposed research, the name of nominated CIs or PIs and their organisations, the name of the Administering Organisation and any other parties involved in or associated with the Program, the title and summary descriptions of the Program and its intended outcomes, and the level and nature of financial assistance from the ARC. Administering Organisations should ensure that information contained in the Program title and summaries would not, if
released, compromise their own requirements for confidentiality (such as future protection of intellectual property).

14.3.4 In making public information about a Proposal that has been approved for funding, the ARC may use a Program description, including title and summary, which may differ from that provided in the Proposal.

14.4 Intellectual Property

14.4.1 The ARC does not claim ownership of any intellectual property in a Proposal or in any research arising from the Program.

14.4.2 The Administering Organisation must adhere to an intellectual property policy, approved by the Administering Organisation’s governing body, which has as one of its aims the maximisation of benefits arising from research. Unless otherwise approved by the Commonwealth, the Administering Organisation’s Intellectual Property policy must comply with the *National Principles of Intellectual Property Management for Publicly Funded Research* as amended from time to time.

14.5 Incomplete or Misleading Information

14.5.1 It is a serious offence to provide false or misleading information to the Commonwealth.

14.5.2 If the ARC considers that a Proposal is incomplete, inaccurate or contains false or misleading information, the ARC may in its absolute discretion decide to recommend that the Proposal not be approved for funding.

14.5.3 Examples of misleading information and misconduct include:

- a. providing fictitious research opportunity and performance evidence;
- b. plagiarism;
- c. making false claims in publications records (such as describing a paper as accepted for publication when it has only been submitted);
- d. making false claims in relation to qualifications and/or appointments;
- e. making false certifications in the RMS certification; or
- f. failing to disclose to the ARC the existence, and nature, of actual or potential Conflicts of Interest of any of the parties involved in the Proposal/Program (such as any affiliations or financial interest in any organisation that has a direct interest in the matter or outputs of the Program).
Appendix A. Eligible Organisations

Eligible Organisations

The organisations listed below are eligible to apply for funding under these Funding Rules.

New South Wales
Charles Sturt University
Macquarie University
Southern Cross University
The University of New England
The University of New South Wales
The University of Newcastle
The University of Sydney
University of Technology, Sydney
University of Western Sydney
University of Wollongong

Victoria
Deakin University
La Trobe University
MCD University of Divinity
Monash University
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT University)
Swinburne University of Technology
The University of Melbourne
University of Ballarat
Victoria University

Queensland
Bond University
Central Queensland University
Griffith University
James Cook University
Queensland University of Technology
The University of Queensland
The University of the Sunshine Coast
University of Southern Queensland

Western Australia
Curtin University of Technology
Edith Cowan University
Murdoch University
The University of Notre Dame Australia
The University of Western Australia

South Australia
Flinders University
The University of Adelaide
University of South Australia
Tasmania
   University of Tasmania

Northern Territory
   Charles Darwin University
   Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education

Australian Capital Territory
   The Australian National University
   University of Canberra
   Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)

Multi-State
   Australian Catholic University
   Australian Council for Educational Research