# NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY DISCOVERY RESEACH GRANTS (Intelligence Challenges)

## Changes to Grant Guidelines

### for funding commencing in 2024

Version 2

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# 1. Introduction

Research Grants Services (RGS), Australian Research Council (ARC), on behalf of the Office of National Intelligence (ONI), is conducting a grant opportunity for National Intelligence and Security Discovery Research Grants (NISDRG) focusing on the Intelligence Challenges.

The National Intelligence and Security Discovery Research Grants (National Intelligence Challenges) Changes to Scheme Round Rules provides information to participants on the differences between the NISDRG Grant Opportunity round (rounds 2 and 3) and the National Intelligence and Security Discovery Research Grants for funding commencing in 2024 (round 4).

Please note this document is intended to be a high-level summary and may not capture all changes in the Grant Guidelines.

# 2. Expression of Interest Process

NISDRG round 3 introduced an Expression of Interest (EOI) process.

The EOI process is designed to reduce the effort for those applicants that are not sure if their project is in scope for the NISDRG Program, and also for assessors who do not have expertise in the Intelligence Challenges.

The expression of interest process is designed to enable applicants to provide a short summary of the proposed project, how it aligns to the relevant challenges and which Technological Readiness Level represents the project's current stage of technological maturity.

Applicants for this Grant Opportunity are required to submit an EOI application outlining the proposed project and its alignment with the Intelligence Challenges.

Applicants can upload one page in the EOI application to provide detail about how the proposed project will significantly advance the challenges selected.

For the EOI application form, only a Lead Chief Investigator and the Administering Organisation should be listed on the application form.

ONI and the Australian National Intelligence Community (Intelligence Challenges, will assess all submitted EOI applications against the relevant challenges and shortlist the EOI applications that best align.

If an EOI application is shortlisted, the applicants will be invited to submit a full application under the relevant Grant Opportunity in the Research Management System (RMS).

If an EOI application is not shortlisted, applicants will be informed that their application has not been successful through RMS.

Guidelines reference: Flowchart, updated references throughout the Grant Guidelines.

# 3. Eligible Organisations

Avondale University has been removed as an Eligible Organisation.

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# 4. Participants

Chief Investigator (CIs) eligibility was updated in Round 3 to broaden the eligibility of participants to apply as CIs. The Project Leader must now be engaged by the Administering Organisation for the period of project activity, including any post project reporting period. Engaged means that a formal arrangement is in place that attaches the CI to the relevant eligible organisation. If not an employee, the researcher must have access to research support comparable to employees e.g., an emeritus appointment.

The Guidelines have also been updated to state that at least one CI must be: either an employee for at least 0.2 FTE; or a holder of an honorary academic appointment at an Eligible Organisation.

All named participants must provide details of all professional affiliations and publications.

Guidelines reference: 4.17.d; 4.22; 4.23.

# 5. What Grant funds can be used for

ONI have introduced two awards that can be requested as part of the funding available to provide additional salary support:
- Specifically, salary support for a named CI, with **less** than 10 years since the award of earliest PhD, including Allowable Career Interruptions as detailed in Table 3; and
- Specifically, salary support for a Post Graduate researcher as detailed in Table 3.

Guidelines reference: 5.5 iii; 5.5 iv

# 6. What Grant funds cannot be used for

- salaries and/or on-costs, in whole or in part for PIs;
- salaries and/or on-costs, in whole or in part for a named CI, with **more** than 10 years since the award of earliest PhD, including Allowable Career Interruptions.

Guidelines reference: 5.7.e; 5.7.f

# 7. Assessment criteria

Updates to the "Feasibility and commitment" assessment criterion to specify "relevant" money and "including availability and resourcing of HDR students and postdoctoral researchers".

Guidelines reference: 6.3.c

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# 8. Attachments to the application

New paragraph which refers to supporting documentation in the application form which must be in line with the instructions provided in the form or in the Instructions to Applicants.

<u>Guidelines reference:</u> 7.10

# 9. Definitions

These definitions have been updated:

- "ARC College of Experts" has been removed as it is not relevant for the NISDRG program.
- "Australian Organisation" has been updated to specifically mention the citizenship criteria instead of "Australian resident".
- "Australian resident" has been removed (previously it was defined as Australian permanent resident and New Zealand Special Visa holder). These two terms are now mentioned specifically throughout the Grant Guidelines.
- References to The Department of Defence have been removed throughout the document as the Department of Defence has paused its funding contribution of the NISDRG program.
- "grant opportunity closing date" and "grant opportunity opening date" have now been added as definitions.
- "participants" has been updated to include individuals who would be named in publications or would otherwise link their association with the projects.

# 10. Challenges

The Intelligence Challenges for Round 4 are identical to Rounds 2 and 3. The list of the Intelligence Challenges can be found on the [RGS website](#). This document can also be found on the Forecast Opportunity: [NI24R1](#) on the GrantConnect website.