



Australian Government

Australian Research Council

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Discovery Early Career Researcher Award for funding commencing 2027
(DE27)**

Version 1

Release Date: 28 January 2026

- All participants should read the *Discovery Program Grant Guidelines - Fellowships (2024 edition – Variation 1)* (Grant Guidelines) available on [GrantConnect](#) and specific *Instructions to Applicants* documents available on Grant Connect as they contain important information for Research Office staff and individual participants preparing applications.
- The Australian Research Council (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 the NCGP at arc-ncgp@arc.gov.au.
- Information regarding the Research Management System ([RMS](#)) is available at the [ARC website](#), or by contacting rmssupport@arc.gov.au for assistance.

This Frequently Asked Questions document will be updated as required.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Timing of Grant Opportunities

1.1 Where are the key dates for upcoming ARC Grant Opportunities advised?

Dates of all upcoming ARC Grant Opportunities are published on the NCGP scheme timelines on the [ARC Grants Calendar](#).

1.2 When will the Funding Outcomes be announced?

The ARC publishes anticipated Funding Announcement dates. Please refer to the Scheme Calendar on the [ARC Grants Calendar](#).

2. Funding Available

2.1 Will there be a cap on the number of Discovery Early Career Researcher Awards awarded in the DE27 scheme round?

In recent Discovery Early Career Researcher Award scheme rounds, the Grant Guidelines stipulated up to 200 three-year awards were to be funded. In the DE27 scheme round, this funding cap will be removed, and it is anticipated that more than 200 awards will be funded.

3. Application information

3.1 Can I include requests for domestic and international travel in my application?

Yes. You can include requests for domestic and international travel in accordance with the requirements set out in the relevant Grant Guidelines, noting that researchers should include a realistic plan of how their research will be undertaken. Where an application is successful, any changes to the proposed travel plans due to the impact of environmental factors (e.g., natural disasters, pandemics, etc.) will be managed as a post award issue.

3.2 What font size can I use for figures, tables, or pictures in my application to comply with ARC submission requirements?

Applicants should ensure that the text is readable both online and in print as detailed in the Instructions to Applicants. It is recommended that 12pt font is used. Readability also needs to be ensured for text within figures and tables. It is recommended that 10pt font is used.

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

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

3.4 How should I complete the Question D1 'What is the proposed budget for your project'?

The ARC strongly recommends entering a simplified budget into the Budget Table at Question D1. Rather than list every item, each category (e.g., Travel, Field Research, Equipment) should have a one-line budget figure.

For example, if you are requesting two sets of Travel in Year 1, one at a cost of \$5000 and another at a cost of \$1500, the Budget Table should show only the total amount of funding requested for travel in Year 1: i.e., \$6500. The request will need to be justified in Question D2 'Justification of funding requested from the ARC'.

✓	Travel	+	6,500
	Total Travel Costs	 	6,500
✗	Travel	+	6,500
	Trip 1	 	5,000
	Trip 2	 	1,500

Note: You will not be able to enter all 'Personnel' as a one-line budget figure, as the DECRA Salary is automatically entered into the Budget Table and will require its own budget line.

4. Career Interruptions

4.1 How do I enter my career interruptions in the Application Form? Will assessors be able to see the details of my interruptions?

Information on how to enter the candidate's career interruptions can be found in Question B6 'Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) – Career Interruptions' of the Instructions to Applicants (ITAs). Examples of how career interruptions can be entered can be found in the Appendix of the ITAs.

Assessors will not be able to see the details of the entered career interruptions, nor will they be made visible in the PDF.

Assessors will only see the total period which RMS will automatically calculate using the entered career interruptions. The following questions and answers from Question B6 will be viewable:

Question: Has the participant experienced a significant interruption that has impacted on research opportunity?

Answer: 'Yes' or 'No'

If answered 'Yes' and career interruptions are entered, the following statement will appear:

Question: Total Period of Career Interruptions

Answer (auto-fill): 'Researcher [Participant Name] has reported a career interruption of [duration] since [Year of earliest interruption].'

4.2 Regarding career interruptions - If applicants are seeking an extension at B15, does the period of extension need to match the period of career interruptions listed at B6?

Not necessarily, B6 includes all career interruptions to inform ROPE, whereas B15 are the allowable career interruptions that determine eligibility for the scheme as defined in the Grant Guidelines.

4.3 Regarding career interruptions - can you please confirm whether a primary carer of a dependent child is entitled to claim two-years career interruption for each dependent child regardless of the amount of leave taken as per the DE27 ITAs? If yes, can the two-years interruption be included at both B6 and B15?

A researcher can claim up to two years per child if they are the primary carer as an allowable career interruption in B15, regardless of the leave taken. However, B6 asks about significant career interruptions for assessment of ROPE and requires applicants to enter the exact amount of leave taken.

In B15, an allowable career interruption is certified by the DVCR for the purpose of assessing candidate eligibility. The allowable career interruptions and associated timeframes for eligibility are listed in the Grant Guidelines and include up to two years per child.

5. Time Commitments

5.1 How much time must I commit to the research activities relating to the project?

As per the Grant Agreement, it is a requirement for the participant to commit a minimum of 80% (0.8 FTE) of their time on research and research capacity-building activities related to the DECRA. Research capacity-building activities could include activities that develop the participant's emerging capability for research leadership and supervision of HDR students, but these activities do not include the participant undertaking a major administrative role.

5.2 How much time can I spend on activities not related to the Discovery Early Career Researcher Award such as teaching?

As per the Grant Agreement, the participant may not spend more than 20% (0.2 FTE) of their time on activities not related to the DECRA such as teaching. The DECRA will not be extended to accommodate any periods of teaching.

6. Logistics support for Antarctic research

6.1 What logistics advice should I seek if my proposed research project included Antarctic research?

If your proposed research project includes Antarctic research that will require logistical support, please contact the [Australian Antarctic Division](#) for advice about available logistical support prior to submitting your application.

7. Assessment of applications

7.1 Requests Not to Assess process

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

7.2 What is the maximum character limit for justification for RNTA?

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 (the maximum character count for the justification is 2500 characters, or approximately 330 words).

8. The National Interest Test (NIT)

8.1 What is the NIT statement and how is it assessed?

Information regarding the requirements of the National Interest Test, including examples and detailed FAQs, can be found on the [ARC website](#).

9. Budget

9.1 What are the expectations for non-mandated contributions in applications submitted for upcoming Grant Opportunities?

For those schemes where Grant Guidelines do not require minimum co-contributions by participating organisations the ARC understands that the level of cash and/or in-kind contributions pledged by Administering Organisations to show support for a proposed research project may vary. Noting that Administering Organisations still need to consider the feasibility of the proposed research project if there are reduced contributions.

ARC assessors will be instructed that they should not make assumptions about an Administering Organisation's level of commitment and support of an application solely based on lower levels of pledged additional cash and/or in-kind support than historically provided.

9.2 What salary and stipend figures will appear in the Discovery Early Career Researcher Award 2027 (DE27) application form?

The salary and stipend figures for DE27 have been updated to 2026\$ in RMS and are displayed in the table below.

Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA) candidate Salary and Stipend rates 2026\$:

Discovery Early Career Researcher Award salary	\$129,734.00
Higher Degree by Research stipend	\$34,338.00

The salary and stipend figures will be indexed again once the fellowships are awarded so they will be paid at the appropriate rates.

Updated salary and stipend rates are available on the [ARC website](#).

10. What has changed from last round?

10.1 Removal of the cap of 200 awards from the Grant Guidelines

In recent Discovery Early Career Researcher Award scheme rounds, the Grant Guidelines stipulated that up to 200 three-year awards were to be funded each year. In the DE27 scheme round this funding cap will be removed, and it is anticipated that more than 200 awards will be funded.

10.2 Addition of Adelaide University as an Eligible Organisation

For DE27, Adelaide University has been added as an eligible organisation. Grants will not be able to be submitted through either the University of Adelaide or University of South Australia for the DE27 round.

10.3 Summary of changes to the DE27 Application Form and DE27 ITAs.

There have been no major changes to the DE27 Application Form and the DE27 ITAs since the last round. For the list of changes in the previous rounds please see the Frequently Asked Questions for previous rounds on GrantConnect.