FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
Early Career Industry Fellowships
for funding commencing in 2023 (IE23)

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- All participants should read the Grant Guidelines for the Industry Fellowships Program (IFP) 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 arc-systems@arc.gov.au for assistance.

This Frequently Asked Questions document will be updated as required.

ELIGIBILITY:

The new Industry Fellowships Program provides an opportunity to pilot a new and significantly streamlined approach, including in relation to eligibility.

Eligible Organisations are responsible for certifying that each of their applications is eligible.

Following feedback from the sector, the ARC has sought to reduce the number of specific threshold participation (i.e., eligibility) requirements. These include that an applicant must have a Higher Degree Research (or equivalent), and an application
must include a Fellow candidate and a Key Industry Partner. There are other eligibility requirements in relation to holding of other ARC awards and grants. All requirements are outlined in the Grant Guidelines.

In contrast to Discovery Program eligibility requirements, definitions of career stages within the Industry Fellowships Program are not intended to be prescriptive.

In our consultations, you told us that:

• Individuals who have significant research experience but not a formal PhD qualification may have the relevant skills and experience to be competitive for the Schemes, but as a research scheme holding a Higher Degree Research was important
• Rates of career progression differ between disciplines and sectors such that time since Higher Degree Research conferral may not be a reliable measure of career stage
• Providing guidance rather prescribing eligibility criteria regarding career stage may encourage a range of candidates, including both those in research and in industry settings

We want to encourage a diversity of applicants and consider that Eligible Organisations will make a reasonable assessment of best scheme fit. The Grant Guidelines provide an indication of number of years of research that we expect would align with the designations of Early Career, Mid-Career or Laureate, to assist Eligible Organisations in making this judgement.

In considering which scheme level to apply for, Eligible Organisations should consider the number of years of research experience for the applicant – whether this be in an academic, industry, or other setting.

In assessing the merits of applications, Industry Fellowships Program assessors will consider the experience of the applicant in the context of the scheme for which they have applied.

1. **Does research undertaken during a Higher Degree Research, PhD or Masters count as ‘research experience?**
   No. Research experience should not include those periods undertaken during study.

2. **I am on a fixed-term contract. Would I be eligible to apply?**
   Applicants can apply if they are currently on a fixed-term contract. If the applicant is successful and awarded an Early Career Industry Fellowship the applicant must be employed by the Administering Organisation for the duration of the grant as per the Grant Agreement Linkage Program – Industry Fellowships on Grant Connect.
3. **I work in industry and want to apply. Do I need to be employed at an Australian University before applications close?**

Applicants who are working in industry do not need to be employed at an Eligible Organisation (an Australian university who submits the application and is the Administering Organisation) at the time they apply. If the applicant is successful and awarded an Early Career Industry Fellowship the applicant must be employed by the Administering Organisation for the duration of the grant.

4. **I am currently employed by the Key Industry Partner, if I am successful can I continue to be employed by the Key Industry Partner with a transfer of the Industry Fellowships Program salary to the Key Industry Partner?**

Funding for the successful Fellow will be provided to the Administering Organisation (an Australian university who submits the application and is an Eligible Organisation). If a candidate is successful, they are to be employed by the Administering Organisation. The ARC recognises that flexibility is required in relation to employment conditions and remuneration arrangements and recommends that in preparing to submit an application the Administering Organisation and Key Industry Partner come to arrangement that appropriately supports the Fellow. Arrangements may include secondments, fixed-term appointments or joint appointments.

5. **How do I calculate if I am eligible to apply regarding the requirement of 5 or less years of industry and/or academic research experience?**

The 5 or less years of research experience is a guide to level, not a prescriptive requirement. It should take into account the number of years the applicant has spent in research-based employment – whether this be in an academic, industry, or other setting. Applicants should calculate the duration of their research experience by measuring their research career in Full-Time Equivalent as at the closing date of applications for the Early Career Industry Fellowships as listed on the ARC Grants Calendar. In calculating your eligibility career interruptions can also be accounted for.

Examples where the close of submission for applications is 3 November 2022:

**No Career Interruptions Example:**

Applicant A, as of the 3 November 2022 has 3 years FTE research experience and is eligible to apply as the applicant is within the 5 or less years of research experience requirement.

**Career Interruptions Example:**

Applicant B, as of 3 November 2022 has 2 years FTE research experience, followed by 2 years FTE of career interruptions, followed by 5 years 0.5 FTE research experience. The applicant is eligible to apply as the total research experience is \((2 + 2.5 = 4.5\) years) and this places the applicant with the 5 or less years requirement.
Example:
Applicant C, as of 3 November 2022 has been working on a 40% Teaching; 40% Research and 20% service contract for 10 years. This researcher has 4 years FTE (40% of 10 years) research experience and is eligible for an Early Career Industry Fellowship.

6. What are the allowable career interruptions?
The ARC’s Research Opportunity and Performance Statement available on the ARC website provides a list of career interruptions that can be included, but are not limited to:
- unemployment
- non-research employment
- limited or no access to facilities and resources—such as through workplace interruptions
- disaster management and recovery
- misadventure
- medical conditions
- disability
- caring and parental responsibilities, and
- community obligations, including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural practices and protocols.

In-depth details of the applicant’s career interruptions are not required within the application form, instead applicants should provide the total Full-Time Equivalent of research time, taking interruptions into account in the relevant section/s of the application form.

7. Does the Deputy Vice Chancellor Research/Pro-Vice Chancellor Research or equivalent need to certify my career interruptions, in addition to the ‘Delegate’ certification that occurs in RMS when the application is submitted to the ARC?
No. The Deputy Vice Chancellor Research/Pro-Vice Chancellor Research or equivalent of the Administering Organisation that your application will be submitted to the ARC will not be required to provide any additional certification.

8. I am a non-Australian Citizen, can I apply?
Yes, non-Australian citizens are eligibility to apply. As with the Discovery Program Fellowships, international candidates can apply and if successful need to obtain a legal right to work and reside in Australia, prior to the commencement of the project.
DEVELOPING THE APPLICATION:

9. What are the eligible research costs that can be requested from the ARC?
The eligible research costs are costs that are directly related to the research in your application. Please refer to Section 5 in the Industry Fellowships Program Grant Guidelines available on Grant Connect.

10. Can the project costs requested include requests for travel both domestically and internationally?
Yes. You can include relevant domestic and/or international travel in the total costing being requested per year. Justification of the travel and travel costs can be provided at Question F2 in the application form.

11. How many years of funding can I request from the ARC for an Early Career Industry Fellowship?
Applicants can apply for a duration of 1 to 3 years (on a full-time basis). Salary contribution and project costs must be for the same duration.

12. Can I apply for funding at a part time rate?
No. Applicants apply at the full-time rate. If successful, this can be converted to part-time as per the Grant Agreement Linkage Program – Industry Fellowships on Grant Connect.

13. Does my application have to include a Key Industry Partner or Other Industry Partners?
The application must list the Administering Organisation who will be submitting the application and one Key Industry Partner. It is not mandatory to include any Other Industry Partners, nor is there a maximum number of Other Industry Partners per application.

14. Is there a minimum cash contribution required from the Key Industry Partner or Other Industry Partners?
There is no minimum cash contribution requirement. Contributions, cash and/or in-kind, can be entered into the budget and further details provided at Question F3 for the Key Industry Partner and Other Industry Partner/s listed on the application. The Industry Fellowship Program Grant Guidelines provide further information regarding who can be a Key Industry Partner or Other Industry Partner.

15. Can CSIRO or other Australian Government Entities that undertake research be a Key Industry Partner?
Yes. As per clause 4.8.b a Key Industry Partner can be an Australian Government entity (Commonwealth, State/Territory or Local). Any cash contributions being made must not breach clause 4.11:
- Key Industry Partner and Other Industry Partner cash contributions cannot be sourced from funds awarded or appropriated by the Commonwealth or an Australian State or Territory or Local Government for the purposes of research, nor funds used to leverage any other government research or research infrastructure.

16. **The application asks for a 2-page CV to be provided. What is required to be included?**

   It is up to the applicant to include the most appropriate information, noting the points below. Applicants should note that they do not need to include their Qualifications or Previous Appointments/Position(s) as this will be automatically populated from the applicants RMS profile for these 2 questions. Applicants should include:

   - Up to 10 research, innovation, translation or commercialisation outputs, or outcomes most relevant to the project, for example publications, patents, policy documents, process changes, datasets, or copyrights.
   - Activities undertaken that have supported research translation and impact (this may include actions to achieve translation and impact directly, or to build related skills in others).
   - **The remaining information to include in the CV is** up to the Candidate.

**LIMITS:**

17. **If I have a current Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA) grant, can I apply for the Early Career Industry Fellowship?**

   There are no cross scheme limits applicable in the Industry Fellowships Program. An applicant can apply for an Early Career Industry Fellowship, if they are within the eligible criteria regarding research experience (5 or less years) but will not be able to commence the Early Career Industry Fellowship if successful, until the DECRA is completed. Applicants should only consider applying if their DECRA grant is due for completion within the timing of the Early Career Industry Fellowship requirements to commence.

   As per the Grant Agreement Linkage Program – Industry Fellowships for funding applied for in 2022, the project start date for Early Career Industry Fellowships must be before 30 June 2024.

18. **I have a current Commonwealth Fellowships grant (non-ARC grant), can I apply for the Early Career Industry Fellowship?**

   As outlined above, an applicant can apply whilst currently holding a Fellowship if eligible but cannot commence an Early Career Industry Fellowship until the current Fellowship is completed.

19. **Can I submit 2 applications in the Early Career Industry Fellowships (IE23) round?**

   No. Applicants can only submit one application in the IE23 round.
20. **Is there a limited number of times that an applicant can apply for an Early Career Industry Fellowship?**
Yes. An individual may only submit a maximum of 2 Early Career Industry Fellowships applications. Please note that an application that is deemed ineligible or is withdrawn counts towards the maximum. A previous recipient of an Early Career Industry Fellowship is not eligible to apply for another Early Industry Fellowship.

21. **Can I apply for both an Early Career Industry Fellowship and a Discovery Early Career Researcher Award?**
Applicants can submit in both rounds if applications are distinctly different and are aligned with the specific outcomes of each scheme. There are no cross-scheme limits for submission of applications between the Discovery Program Fellowships and the Industry Fellowships Program.

**Important:** You cannot hold two concurrent Fellowships, if awarded in both schemes only one can proceed.

22. **Can I apply for both an Early-Career Industry Fellowships and a Mid-Career Industry Fellowship?**
No. Although some applicants may meet eligibility requirements for more than one kind of Industry Fellowship, only one can be applied for during a program round (i.e. one application each year) as per the IFP Grant Guidelines clause 4.3.

**Important:** You can apply, if eligible, for one of the Discovery Program Fellowships, (DECRA or a Future Fellowship or an Australian Laureate Fellowship) in the same year that you apply for an Industry Fellowship, but you cannot hold 2 concurrent Fellowships, so if you are awarded in both programs, you can only accept one.

23. **Discovery Fellowships like Future Fellowships have a minimum FTE requirement of 0.8. Does this apply to Industry Fellows?**

There is no minimum FTE requirement stipulated in the industry fellowships scheme. Note that the salary contribution is supplied on a full time (five days per week) basis and any variation on this arrangement must be approved by the ARC.

24. **There is a requirement for the fellow to spend a minimum of 20% but not more than 80% of the project working in an industry setting. What is an industry setting and how is this affected by part-time arrangements?**

The kind of industry setting will be determined by the nature of the business of the Industry Partner. It may encompass industry-specific laboratories or workplaces, industry related fieldwork, or remote work where remote working is standard practice for other employees at that industry partner.
If the fellowship is extended through conversion to part-time arrangements note that this will affect the calculation of the 20-80% which is determined by the total duration of the fellowship.

25. **Does the industry setting have to be provided by the Key Industry Partner?**

The placement could occur at a mix of industry settings with the agreement and support of the Key Industry Partner – it does not have to be located in e.g. premises owned by the Key Industry Partner.

26. **Can further salaries for e.g. PhD stipends be taken from the Project Costs?**

Yes additional salary support can be provided as part of the project costs and this should be included in the budget justification part of the application.

27. **The applicant is the owner/Director of the Key Industry Partner – can they still apply?**

There is nothing precluding an applicant from applying for a fellowship whereby they are also in the position of owner or Director of the Key Industry Partner. Noting, the applicant must declare the potential for conflicts of interest to their Administering Organisation and the DVCR or their delegate must certify to the ARC that all potential conflicts of interest will be managed in accordance with the Australian Code of Responsible Conduct of Research (2018), the ARC Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy and any relevant successor documents.

28. **What is an example of a ‘controlled entity’ (that is ineligible to be an Industry Partner as per Grant Guidelines 4.10c)?**

An entity that is controlled by an Eligible Organisation could include spin-off companies, institutes and centres where financial and operating or policy decisions are determined by the Eligible Organisation.

**Version history:**

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Additions and amendments to FAQ 27.