



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

for *Discovery Early Career Researcher Award* commencing in 2016

Version 1

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- All Participants should read Parts A and D of the *Funding Rules for schemes under the Discovery Program for the years 2015 and 2016—Australian Laureate Fellowships, Discovery Projects, Discovery Early Career Researcher Award and Discovery Indigenous* (the Funding Rules). The *Discovery Early Career Researcher Award Instructions to Applicants for funding commencing in 2016* (The DE16 Instructions to Applicants) also contains important information for Research Office staff and individual Participants preparing proposals.
- The Australian Research Council (ARC) does not respond to queries from individual Participants. Individual Participants should direct all queries regarding ARC funding schemes to their Administering Organisation's Research Office (or equivalent). If further information regarding the scheme is required, the Research Office should contact the [Discovery Early Career Researcher Award](#) team.
- Information regarding the [Research Management System](#) (RMS) is available at the ARC website, or by contacting the [RMS helpdesk](#) for assistance.

As soon as information regarding important scheme dates becomes available, the ARC website will be updated at the [Important Dates](#) page. The ARC will also notify the Research Administrators' Network of any updates via an email message.

This Frequently Asked Questions document will be updated as required. Details of any amendments will be appended to this document.

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1. DECRA CANDIDATE – ELIGIBILITY

1.1 Is DECRA open to International applicants?

Yes. International applicants are eligible to apply provided they meet all of the eligibility criteria, including the requirement under subsection D7.3.5 of the Funding Rules that they must obtain a legal right to work and reside in Australia for the duration of the Award.

1.2 Am I eligible to apply for a DECRA if I do not hold a PhD?

Yes, as long as the DECRA Candidate meets the requirements in subsections D7.3.2, D7.3.3 and D7.4.

In accordance with subsection D7.3.2 of the Funding Rules a DECRA candidate must have been awarded a PhD on or after 1 March 2010; or have obtained approval from the ARC, via the submission of an Eligibility Exemption Request pursuant to the process outlined in subsection D7.4 of the Funding Rules, for recognition of research experience equivalent to having been awarded a PhD on or after 1 March 2010; and /or having been awarded a PhD on or after 1 March 2006, together with periods of significant career interruption (subsection D7.4.4).

As per Subsection D7.3.3 of the Funding Rules If the DECRA Candidate holds a research higher degree which is not a PhD, it is the Administering Organisation's responsibility to certify that the DECRA candidate's qualification meets the level 10 criteria of the *Australian Qualifications Framework Second Edition 2013*.

As defined in section A3 of the Funding Rules, the ARC considers a PhD to be a qualification that meets the level 10 criteria of the *Australian Qualifications Framework Second Edition 2013* (available at www.aqf.edu.au).

1.3 I don't have a PhD but I have research experience, can I apply for a DECRA?

Yes. Subsection D7.3.2.b.i of the Funding Rules states that if a Candidate with research experience equivalent to having been awarded a PhD, has obtained approval from the ARC through an Eligibility Exemption Request, they can apply for a DECRA. See subsection D7.4.4 regarding the Eligibility Exemption Process.

1.4 I wish to apply for a DECRA even though I was awarded my PhD before 1 March 2010. I have experienced a number of career interruptions. Is it sufficient to note these in the Proposal?

No. As per subsection D7.3.2.b.ii of the Funding Rules, you must submit an Eligibility Exemption Request to the ARC. Eligibility Exemption Requests must be submitted online through the Eligibility Exemptions section of RMS and received by the ARC by the closing date and time on the [Important Dates page](#).

1.5 I received my PhD before 1 March 2010 and have had significant career interruptions. Is there a limit to how many years prior to 1 March 2010 that I can apply for an Eligibility Exemption?

Yes. Subsection D7.3.2.b.ii of the Funding Rules states that the ARC will not approve any applications for an Eligibility Exemption where the applicant was awarded their

PhD after 25 March 2015 (closing time of submission of proposals) or before 1 March 2006.

1.6 Does the DECRA Candidate need to submit an Eligibility Exemption Request to claim career interruption?

Yes. As per Subsections D7.3.2 and D7.4.4 of the Funding Rules the ARC may grant an Eligibility Exemption for a DECRA Candidate who has been awarded a PhD on or after 1 March 2006, together with periods of significant career interruption. Please note that career interruptions of less than one month will not be considered.

1.7 What types of career interruptions are acceptable as significant career interruptions?

Subsection D7.4.4 of the Funding Rules lists the acceptable significant career interruptions. These are:

- (i) carer's responsibility
- (ii) disruption due to international relocation for post-doctoral studies or other research employment not exceeding three months per international relocation
- (iii) illness
- (iv) maternity or parental leave
- (v) unemployment and/or
- (vi) non-research employment not concurrent with research employment.

1.8 Can I add together several periods of significant career interruption to meet the eligibility requirements under subsection D7.3.2 of the Funding Rules?

Yes, however each of the career interruptions must be at least one month in length, within the eligible timeframe and of an acceptable type as described in subsection D7.4.4 of the Funding Rules. The only way to claim a career interruption is via an Eligibility Exemption Request. The Eligibility Exemption Request will need to be submitted to the ARC by the deadline on the Important Dates page, and approved by the ARC.

1.9 Can you please clarify whether the term 'international relocation' in the Funding Rules only relates to physical activities associated with an international relocation or to the whole period of the fellowship/studies/research position?

The term 'international relocation for post-doctoral studies' as mentioned in subsection D7.4.4.b of the Funding Rules refers to the initial activities directly related to relocating overseas, such as time spent organising rental properties and moving personal belongings. If the DECRA Candidate encountered further difficulties after the relocation period was completed, this would not be considered a disruption due to relocation.

The ARC may consider more than one career interruption due to international relocation. In these cases up to three months may be allowed per relocation, if justified. Please provide details for each international relocation in the Proposal form.

1.10 When is it appropriate to claim career interruption for an international relocation?

A career interruption for an international relocation may be claimed when post-doctoral studies, including a fellowship, teaching and or/research position or other research opportunities, were undertaken in a country other than the country where the Candidate had most recently been residing. Candidates should only claim the period of time that their research work was disrupted by the relocation. A maximum period of three months is allowed per relocation. A period of three months shouldn't be claimed if the actual interruption was less than three months.

1.11 A DECRA Candidate is employed in a full-time academic position where research is a component of the role as specified in the employment contract. Can a career interruption be claimed?

No. Employment in a teaching role which allows some time for research is not considered a career interruption. However, the amount of time available for research activities will be considered as a factor in Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) in the DE16 Proposal form.

1.12 A DECRA Candidate is employed in a teaching only or non-research position where no research opportunity is provided for in the employment contract. Can a career interruption be claimed?

Yes. The time spent in non-research employment, with no opportunity for research may be considered a career interruption under subsection D7.4.4 of the Funding Rules, provided the employment was within the eligible period of 1 March 2006 to the closing time for Proposals. If the PhD award date is before 1 March 2010 an Eligibility Exemption Request will need to be submitted to the ARC.

1.13 A DECRA Candidate has supervised postgraduate research students while undertaking a full-time teaching load. The candidate's employment contract requires them to supervise students. Can a career interruption be claimed?

No. The supervision of postgraduate research students is a research component and subsection D7.4.4.f states that the non-research employment must not be concurrent with research employment.

1.14 A DECRA Candidate has supervised postgraduate research students while undertaking a full-time teaching load. The candidate's employment contract does not stipulate the supervision of students. Can a career interruption be claimed?

Yes. As the supervision of postgraduate students is not part of the candidate's employment contract, they may claim the period worked under this contract as a career interruption.

1.15 A DECRA Candidate has two concurrent employment contracts, a teaching-only contract and professional role contract with a research component related to the academic area in which they wish to apply for a DECRA. Can a career interruption be claimed for the teaching-only contract?

No. As the teaching-only contract is concurrent with a contract which involves research employment, the time spent on this contract can not be claimed as a career interruption under subsection D7.4.4 of the Funding Rules.

1.16 A DECRA Candidate is employed for 12 months in a 0.5 FTE teaching only or non-research position and has no additional employment or carer responsibilities. Can a career interruption be claimed?

Yes. The Candidate may be able to claim up to six months as a career interruption as non-research roles and unemployment are listed as valid career interruptions under subsection D7.4.4 of the Funding Rules.

Please note that, as well being one of the types described in subsection D7.4.4 of the Funding Rules, a career interruption must also fall within the allowable timeframe (that is, between 1 March 2006 and 25 March 2015 which is the closing time for Proposals).

1.17 A DECRA Candidate works for 30 months in a research and research support position where 0.7 FTE is spent on administrative tasks and 0.3 FTE is spent on research. Can a career interruption be claimed?

No. Any role with a research component will not be considered as a career interruption under subsection D7.4.4 of the Funding Rules.

The part-time nature of the research employment would be a factor considered under Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) in the DE16 Proposal form, should the Candidate be eligible.

1.18 A DECRA Candidate works for 30 months in a 0.7 FTE research and teaching position and the remaining time (0.3 FTE) at home looking after children. Can a career interruption be claimed?

Yes. Carer's responsibility is an eligible career interruption. Therefore, in this example, the Candidate may be able to claim up to 30% of this period (0.3 FTE over 30 months = nine months in total) as a career interruption, provided the time claimed falls within the eligible period specified in subsection D7.4.4 of the Funding Rules.

The part-time nature of the research employment would also be a factor considered under Personnel and Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) in the DE16 Proposal form.

1.19 Is a DECRA Candidate awarded a PhD between 1 March 2006 and before 1 March 2010 only eligible if they have has one or more periods of significant career interruption between 1 March 2006 and the closing time for Proposals?

Yes. In accordance with subsection D7.3.2 of the Funding Rules, A DECRA candidate awarded a PhD between 1 March 2006 and before 1 March 2010 must, at the closing time of Proposals, have had a period of significant career interruption (as described in the Funding Rules) between 1 March 2006 and proposal submission. If taken into account, the period of the career interruption must equate with the Candidate's PhD being awarded on or after 1 March 2010. Any career interruptions prior to 1 March 2006 or prior to the PhD award date will not be considered.

Please note that, as well as falling within the allowable timeframe, a career interruption must be of a type described in subsection D7.4.4 of the Funding Rules.

The only way to claim a career interruption is via an Eligibility Exemption Request. The Eligibility Exemption Request will need to be submitted to the ARC by the deadline on the Important Dates page, and approved by the ARC.

1.20 If a researcher was awarded their PhD on 1 June 2009 (nine months prior to 1 March 2010) and had a ten month eligible career interruption from 1 July 2009 to 1 May 2010, would they be eligible to apply for a DECRA?

Yes. The researcher in the example above has a ten month career interruption in the eligible period which accounts for their PhD being awarded nine months prior to the 1 March 2010.

In accordance with subsection D7.3.2 of the Funding Rules, a researcher with a PhD awarded between 1 March 2006 and 1 March 2010 must have had a significant career interruption between 1 March 2006 and proposal submission. Any significant career interruption prior to 1 March 2006 or prior to PhD award date will not be considered.

Please note that, as well as falling within the allowable timeframe, a career interruption must be of one of the types described in subsection D7.4.4 of the Funding Rules.

1.21 If a researcher was awarded their PhD on 1 June 2009 (nine months prior to 1 March 2010) and has a nine month eligible career interruption from 1 July 2005 to 1 April 2006, would they be eligible to apply for a DECRA?

No. The researcher in the example above only has one month of the career interruption in the eligible period of 1 March 2006 to the closing date for submission of proposals, and this is prior to the date the PhD was awarded. This does not account for their PhD being awarded nine months prior to 1 March 2009.

To be eligible to apply for a DECRA, this researcher would need to show at least a nine month career interruption after their PhD was awarded. The time between the PhD award date and the 1 March 2010 needs to be accounted for with a corresponding career interruption as described in subsection D7.4.4 of the Funding Rules. Any significant career interruption prior to 1 March 2006 prior to the PhD award date will not be considered.

Please note that, as well as falling within the allowable timeframe, a career interruption must be of one of the types described in subsection D7.4.4 of the Funding Rules.

1.22 If a researcher was awarded their PhD on 1 June 2009 (nine months prior to the 1 March 2010) and had a six month eligible career interruption from 1 July 2009 to 1 January 2010, would they be eligible to apply for a DECRA?

No. The researcher in the example above only has a six month career interruption in the eligible period which does not account for their PhD being awarded nine months prior to the 1 March 2009.

In accordance with subsection D7.4.4 of the Funding Rules, a researcher with a PhD awarded between 1 March 2006 and 1 March 2010 must have an eligible career interruption between 1 March 2006 and proposal submission. Any significant career interruption prior to 1 March 2006 or prior to the PhD award date will not be considered.

Please note that, as well as falling within the allowable timeframe, a career interruption must be of one of the types described in subsection D7.4.4 of the Funding Rules.

1.23 The restrictions regarding deferment for the completion of another Commonwealth-funded fellowship and applying for another Commonwealth-funded fellowship within six months of the DECRA closing date appear to have been removed from the Funding Rules. What does this mean?

While there is no longer a restriction regarding applications for other Commonwealth-funded fellowships, there are still limitations regarding holding multiple Commonwealth-funded fellowships/awards and the duplication of Commonwealth funding.

The Funding Rules state, in A6.2.4 that ‘...a holder of an ARC Fellowship or Award cannot concurrently hold a Fellowship from another Commonwealth funding agency.’, and in A6.2.6 that ‘A proposal may only be submitted for funding that the researcher would be eligible to hold under these rules as at the Commencement Date of the Project/Fellowship/Award being applied for.’

Successful ARC Awardees will be required to relinquish other Commonwealth fellowships prior to the commencement of the ARC Fellowship or Award as per Subsection A6.2.4 of the Funding Rules.

The Commencement Date for the upcoming DECRA round (DE16) is defined as 1 January 2016. This is a fixed date and for eligibility purposes it is not possible to defer commencement of the Award to avoid this eligibility rule. For DECRA this means that, if a researcher will be receiving funding for another Commonwealth-funded fellowship on 1 January 2016, they would need to relinquish the Commonwealth funded fellowship before the DECRA commenced on 1 January 2016.

1.24 I applied for a DECRA in 2012 but had to withdraw. I also applied for the DE15 round and was unsuccessful. Does my withdrawn application contribute to my eligibility to apply for a DE16?

Yes. D7.1.2 of the Funding Rules states that a researcher may only apply for up to two DECRA's over the period in which they are eligible, unless otherwise approved by the ARC. This includes Proposals which were deemed ineligible by the ARC and Proposals that have been withdrawn.

2. DECRA CANDIDATE – ROLE

2.1 Does a DECRA Candidate need to be employed by the Administering Organisation at the closing time for submission of Proposals?

No. The Candidate does not need to be an employee of the Administering Organisation at the time of Proposal submission but, as noted in subsection D7.2.1 of the Funding Rules, must be an employee at the Administering Organisation for the duration of the Award.

Details of the prospective employment must be included in the Strategic Statement in respect to the Research Environment as required under subsection D5.1 of the Funding Rules.

2.2 Can a DE16 recipient remain on their current employment contract while undertaking their DECRA?

Yes, if the DECRA Recipient's employment contract enables them to be employed in accordance with the Funding Rules and Funding Agreement. The following conditions must be met but are not exhaustive:

- A DECRA Recipient must be an employee at the Administering Organisation for the duration of the Fellowship (subsection D7.2.1 of the Funding Rules).
- The DECRA Recipient is expected to spend a minimum of 20 per cent of her/his time on activities at the Administering Organisation (subsection D7.2.2 of the Funding Rules).
- The DECRA Recipient is expected to spend a minimum of 80 per cent of her/his time on research activities related to the proposed DECRA.
- The DECRA Recipient may not engage in other professional employment for the duration of the DECRA without prior approval from the ARC to pursue exceptional research opportunities (subsection D7.2.4 and D7.2.6 of the Funding Rules).

2.3 Subsection D7.2.2 states that the DECRA Recipient is expected to spend a minimum of 20 per cent of her/his time on activities at the Administering Organisation and subsection D7.2.3 states that the DECRA Recipient is expected to spend a minimum of 80 per cent of her/his time on research activities related to the proposed DECRA. Are these provisions mutually exclusive?

No. Although these two subsections appear together in the Funding Rules and add up to 100 per cent of FTE, they are not intended to be mutually exclusive. For example, research activities mentioned in subsection D7.2.3 can form part of the time spent at the Administering Organisation in subsection D7.2.2.

2.4 Is a DECRA Recipient allowed to teach while holding a DECRA?

Yes. As described in subsection D7.2.9 of the Funding Rules, a DECRA Recipient may spend up to 0.2 (20 per cent of Full Time Equivalent (FTE)) of her/his time annually on teaching activities. Supervision of honours or postgraduate students is not included in this limit. The DECRA will not be extended to accommodate any periods of teaching.

2.5 Can I apply for a part-time DECRA?

The DECRA may be awarded on a full-time or part-time basis, however there is no need to indicate that the DECRA will be undertaken part-time in the Proposal. The Proposal budget and Project Description should be written as if the Award will be conducted on a full-time basis over three years.

As stated in subsection D7.2.6 of the Funding Rules, the DECRA may be converted to (or from) part-time at any time to enable the DECRA Recipient to continue to fulfil family and/or carer responsibilities, or with the approval of the ARC to pursue exceptional research opportunities, provided that the DECRA does not exceed six years from the date of commencement (excluding any approved periods of suspension and/or maternity and/or partner/parental leave).

A DECRA does not have a minimum full-time equivalent (FTE), but the FTE of the DECRA must match that of the DECRA Recipient's employment contract. The

Administering Organisation and not the ARC is to manage changes to the DECRA Recipient's working hours. The Administering Organisation will notify the ARC of any changes to working hours.

2.6 Can a DECRA Candidate be employed full-time by the Administering Organisation but work part-time on the DECRA?

No. In accordance with subsection D7.2.6 of the Funding Rules, the FTE of the DECRA Recipient must match that of the DECRA Recipient's employment contract. For example, if a DECRA is undertaken over six years at 0.5 FTE, the employment contract must be for six years at 0.5 FTE.

DECRA Recipients may convert to part-time arrangements at any time in order to fulfil family and/or carer responsibilities, or with the prior approval of the ARC to pursue exceptional research opportunities. The DECRA Recipient may not engage in other professional employment for the duration of the DECRA without prior approval from the ARC (D7.2.4).

3. CROSS-SCHEME ELIGIBILITY

3.1 A researcher currently holds another Commonwealth-funded fellowship which is due for completion after the Commencement Date of the ARC Fellowship/Award scheme they wish to apply for. Can the researcher defer the start date of the ARC Fellowship or Award to avoid holding concurrent Commonwealth-funded Fellowships/Awards?

No. It is not possible to defer commencement of the ARC Fellowship/Award in order to avoid the eligibility rules set out in A6.2.4 and A6.2.6 of the Funding Rules. As a researcher cannot concurrently hold a Fellowship from another Commonwealth funding agency, successful ARC Fellows and Awardees will be required to relinquish other Commonwealth fellowships prior to the commencement of the ARC Fellowship or Award.

The Commencement Date for DECRA's commencing in 2016 is 1 January 2016.

For eligibility purposes, existing Commonwealth-funded fellowships are considered to be funded for the years set out in the original Funding Agreement or equivalent.

3.2 Are Postdoctoral Research Associates or Postgraduate Researchers on Australian Laureate Fellowships considered to be ARC Fellows or Award recipients?

No. As Postdoctoral Research Associates (PDRAs) and Postgraduate Researchers (PGRs) employed on an Australian Laureate Fellowship are not named on the Proposal, they are not considered to be ARC Fellows or ARC Award recipients.

4. BUDGET

4.1 Publications and dissemination of Project outputs and outreach activity costs are listed as budget items supported (subsection A5.2.1.h of the Funding Rules). Does this mean I should/could enter a line in the budget requesting a sum for publication costs?

Yes. There is no cap on the amount you can request. Applicants may request an appropriate amount for publications and dissemination under the DE16 Project Costs table of the Proposal Form. All funds requested from the ARC must be fully justified under the Budget Justification in the Proposal form.

Please note that applicants should include information in the Project Description section of the Proposal Form regarding their strategies for dissemination.

4.2 My Proposal has requested salary support for a Research Assistant. What kind of increments should I include under Project Cost?

For personnel being funded within the project, such as Research Associates and Research Assistants, do not include indexation, as all project payments are automatically indexed by the ARC at the time of payment for each year of the project. Nor should you include annual pay rises associated with enterprise bargaining agreements and other similar agreements. However, you may include salary/performance increments, such as those within a salary band, that are routinely applied within your organisation. Please refer to the DE16 Instructions to Applicants.

4.3 On the budget page, how do I add/enter cash/in-kind contributions?

In the Project Costs of the Proposal Form, there will automatically be a column to detail funding sought from the ARC. To enter contributions from the Administering Organisation it must first be added as an Organisational Participant. The Administering Organisation will then automatically be added to the budget page. Please refer to the DE16 Instructions to Applicants.

4.4 Can you please clarify subsection A5.3.1.a 'bench fees or similar laboratory access fees' under 'Budget Items Not Supported' in the Funding Rules?

Bench fees are an institutionally applied fee or levy for the provision of general laboratory access. Access to specialised equipment (such as electron microscopes) does not fall into this category and therefore, if this type of access is required for the project, a usage fee may be requested from the ARC under the Funding Rules. All budget requests must be fully justified.

4.5 Can you please advise whether indirect costs can be included? I cannot find anywhere on the budget page to enter them.

The ARC does not fund indirect costs or overheads. The budget is to be presented as direct costs only – this is the level of funding which is being requested. Please refer to section A5.3.1.c of the Funding Rules.

4.6 Can you please clarify whether the Project Cost table must be included under the Budget Justification in the DE16 Proposal form?

While the Project Cost table may be included, this is not mandatory.

The justification should indicate how the project funding will be used each year. This statement should include the need and cost for each item requested from the ARC using the same headings as in the budget in the DE16 Proposal form. Although the budget justification should be broken down into separate headings for each year, applicants may refer back to the description in the first year of funding to avoid duplication.

4.7 Can you define Field Research as per section A5.2.1 of the Funding Rules?

'Field Research' means the collection of information integral to the Project outside a laboratory, library or workplace setting and often in a location external to the researcher's normal place of employment. If the applicant can justify the necessity for the work in relation to the proposed Project, and the Administering Organisation can certify the work undertaken by the applicant, then it can be considered as 'Field Research'. It is the Administering Organisation's discretion to consider what is determined as 'Field Research'. The main purpose of any travel designated as Field Research must be to carry out the research, not to attend a conference or other related meetings.

The applicant should fully justify the costs of field research in the DE16 Proposal Form. Please refer to the DE16 Instructions to Applicants for further information.

4.8 How do I complete the budget table in Part E of the Proposal form if I intend to undertake the DECRA on a part-time basis?

The DECRA may be undertaken on a part-time basis, however the budget and Project Description should be written as if the DECRA will be conducted over three years. As noted under 'Personnel' in the DE16 Instructions to Applicants, the DECRA Candidate's salary component should be entered as '100%-3.0 yrs – starting in year 1', even if he/she intends on taking up the Award on a part-time basis.

4.9 What is the maximum per annum salary a DECRA Candidate can be paid by the ARC? Can project costs be used to supplement a DECRA Candidate's salary?

Subsection D6.1.1 of the Funding Rules states that the per annum salary contribution from the ARC is fixed at \$94,512 (2014\$), including 28 per cent on-costs. Additional salary contributions will not be provided by the ARC, however, the Administering Organisation may 'top up' a successful DECRA Candidate's salary. Project costs cannot be used for a DECRA Candidate's salary.

4.10 The Funding Rules indicate that a PhD stipend should be requested at a rate of \$25,406 (2014\$). Can a higher rate be requested for a PhD student in the proposal?

No. In accordance with subsection D6.2.1.b of the Funding Rules, the stipend rate for higher degree by research students is \$25,406 (2014\$) per annum. As noted in A5.2.1.f, only funding up to this level may be requested from the ARC. The Administering Organisation, however, may provide additional funding to increase the stipend.

4.11 My research requires me to conduct field research in remote areas of Australia and overseas. Will the field research costs come out of the \$50,000 limit on travel over the life of the project?

No, as per D6.2.1.c of the Funding Rules, travel costs related to carrying out Field Research are not included in the \$50,000 limit for travel over the life of the Project. Travel costs associated with Field Research should be requested under the category 'Field Research Expenses'.

Subsection D6.2.1.a of the Funding Rules notes that items associated with Field Research may include technical and logistical support as well as travel and accommodation costs. For the purposes of clarification, accommodation and living costs for the DECRA Recipient in the field would be considered Field Research costs.

Note that all funding requests must be fully justified.

4.12 Where in the budget table do I request travel costs that are related to Field Research?

As per D6.2.1.c of the Funding Rules, travel costs related to carrying out Field Research are not included in the \$50,000 limit for travel over the life of the Project. Travel costs associated with Field Research should be requested under the category 'Field Research Expenses' within the budget table and justified in terms of need and cost in the Proposal form in RMS. The main purpose of any travel designated as Field Research must be to carry out the research, not to attend a conference or other related meetings.

4.13 Can costs related to travelling to the field research site and carrying out the field research be requested for support personnel to assist in the field?

Yes. Expenditure on Field Research essential to the project, including travel and accommodation costs for personnel other than the DECRA recipient, may be requested. The ARC College of Experts considers the justification for each budget item and makes a recommendation as to whether it should be funded. Please note that, if a Budget item is not recommended for funding, the costs associated with that item will be deducted from the total granted for that project.

4.14 In my budget, can I include travel for participants that are not part of the research team to attend my workshop?

No. D6.2.1 of the Funding Rules states that funding for travel is permitted for the DECRA Recipient only. Candidates are able to apply for costs of running workshops, focus groups and conferences but not the travel costs (flights, accommodation, per diem) for participants or speakers.

4.15 Can you please provide the ARC definition of a Higher Degree by Research ('HDR') for the purposes of Higher Degree by Research stipends in subsection D6.2.1b?

Students enrolled in a Higher Degree by Research at an Eligible Organisation listed at Section A12 will be regarded by the ARC as suitable HDR students under these Funding Rules.

5. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Can you please advise what the ARC considers satisfactory evidence to meet the certification requirements? Who must sign, what conditions must they sign to, and do they need to contain original signatures or can the agreement be attested by email?

The Administering Organisation is no longer required to obtain handwritten signatures on an ARC Certification Form to attest to the agreement of all parties necessary to allow the proposed project to proceed. Instead, the Administering Organisation will certify that they have obtained the written agreement of all parties necessary to allow the proposed project to proceed through the Research Management System (RMS). The ARC reserves the right to seek the evidence from the Administering Organisation to support the certification of Proposals.

5.2 Who are the relevant parties, mentioned in the online Proposal Certification, who need to provide written agreement?

Relevant parties are all individual or organisational participants named on the Proposal, excluding any Participant's Current Organisation which is not their Relevant Organisation for the Proposal. Please refer to the DE16 Instructions to Applicants.

The ARC has provided a proforma for obtaining written evidence at [DECRA Certification Proforma](#). However, the use of the ARC proforma is not mandatory. Evidence of agreement from organisations should be from the Head of Department or equivalent level or above. All evidence should include a clear indication of what the actual participation in the conduct of the research will be.

5.3 What does the ARC mean by written agreement?

The evidence held by the Administering Organisation needs to contain firsthand confirmation in written form (for example, handwritten or electronic letters or emails) of agreement to participate in the project from all relevant parties. The evidence could include (but is not limited to) emails from individual researchers agreeing to participate, letters from the employers of participants agreeing to their participation, or letters from other relevant organisations agreeing to contribute the resources outlined in the Proposal. The Administering Organisation can determine the most appropriate format within their organisation.

The ARC has provided a pro forma for obtaining written evidence on each scheme page on the ARC website. **Please note:** The use of the ARC pro forma is **not** mandatory and each Administering Organisation may determine the required format for written evidence.

5.4 What does the Administering Organisation have to certify?

The full certification text is available on the *Discovery Early Career Researcher Award for funding commencing in 2016* [sample form](#) of the ARC website. Please also refer to section A7.4 of the Funding Rules.

5.5 Can I make changes/alterations to my Proposal once it has been submitted?

No. While proposals may be withdrawn under certain circumstances, additions, deletions and modifications will not be accepted after submission to the ARC unless

invited by the ARC. Please refer to subsection A7.1.1 and A7.3.2 of the Funding Rules.

5.6 What does the ‘Award of PhD Date’ mean?

As defined in section A3 of the Funding Rules, the ‘Award of PhD Date’ means the date of conferral of a PhD (that is, the conferral date noted on the PhD testamur). The ‘Award of PhD Date’ is not the date of submission of the thesis, nor the date the thesis was accepted by the examination board.

5.7 I am having trouble sticking to the page limits stipulated in several of the form Parts. Is it okay to use 10 point font size?

No. The DE16 Instructions to Applicants clearly state that, with the exception of references, an appropriate 12 font should be used. Failure to comply with the required format may result in the Proposal being rules ineligible for funding. Only references may be produced in 10 point font size.

5.8 Can an applicant include impact factors and citation counts in their proposal under Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE)?

In addressing questions under Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE), applicants must observe the requirements outlined in the current Funding Rules and the DE16 Instructions to Applicants. In justifying the impact or significance of each publication, each applicant should decide what information is to be included in these sections to best support the selection criteria, while observing eligibility issues such as formatting, word and page limits. Information such as citations, impact factors and/or public recognition may be included.

5.9 I hold an ARC project that was awarded 3 years of funding commencing in 2012. Due to a delayed start some of the project funds for 2014 were carried forward into 2015. Do I need to include this project in my statements of progress?

Yes. If a Final Report has not been submitted you will need to include a statement on progress for this project.

The Personnel section of the DE16 Proposal Form will now be automatically populated with your currently-held ARC Projects information from your profile. Please check your profile to ensure these details are up-to-date and correct. Please refer to the DE16 Instructions to Applicants.

5.10 I have a current project that was approved for funding commencing in 2014, but commencement was delayed. As a result, there has been little progress to report. Do I still need to provide a statement of progress for this project in the DE16 Proposal Form?

Yes. Statements of Progress for ARC-funded projects and fellowships are important elements in ensuring accountability and good management of public funding for research. Reports also assist in drawing our attention, and the attention of the Research Office staff, to concerns and problems that participants face.

Please note that there has been a change to the Statements on progress question. The ARC now requires a statement for schemes where the Final Report has not yet been submitted to the ARC as at the time of submission of the proposal. If you do not

provide statements of progress for ARC DP, IN, LP, and Fellowship/Award grants you hold, your proposal will be deemed ineligible.

5.11 For what type of ARC grants should I provide progress statements?

Statements of progress need to be provided for ARC funded-projects, involving the participant, for which the Final report has not yet been submitted to the ARC as at the time of submission of this Proposal.

Schemes for which progress statements may be required:

- Discovery Projects
- Discovery Indigenous
- Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development
- Linkage Projects
- Or any ARC Fellowship or Award which is a scheme in its own right

5.12 What information am I required to provide in relation to Management of Data in the Project Description question on the DE16 Proposal Form?

In line with responsibilities outlined in the Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research (2007) and international best practice, the ARC has updated wording in relation to the management of data.

The ARC does not mandate open data. However, researchers are encouraged to consider the ways in which they can best manage, store, disseminate and re-use data generated through ARC-funded research. The Project Description question on the DE16 Proposal Form requires researchers to articulate briefly their plans for the management of data generated through the proposed Project. In answering this question researchers need not include extensive detail of the physical or technological infrastructure.

Answers should focus on plans to make data as openly accessible as possible for the purposes of verification and for the conduct of future research by others. Where it may not be appropriate for data to be disseminated or re-used, justification may be provided.

Further information and resources on managing data are available on the [Australian National Data Service \(ANDS\) website](#).

5.13 Is it sufficient to answer the Management of Data section in the Project Description by noting that I will comply with my institution's requirements?

No. Whilst the ARC recognises that some institutions may have infrastructure and/or processes in place for storing, managing and sharing data and that these are valuable resources, to take into account the differences that may exist between institutions, disciplines and research projects, researchers are encouraged to highlight specific plans for the management of their research data in this section.

The Management of Data section in the Project Description aims to encourage consideration of ARC-funded research data at both an individual and institutional level, in accordance with the responsibilities outlined in the *Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research (2007)*. Researchers, in consultation with their institutions, are best placed to consider the management and future potential of their research data.

This approach allows individuals to take into account the differences that may exist between disciplines and research projects as well as to utilise institutional resources and support available.

Details of compliance with institutional requirements should be included in this section, provided that they are supported by a description specific to the data arising from the individual research Project.

5.14 Can other researchers or organisations be nominated on the Proposal in addition to the DECRA Candidate and Administering Organisation?

No. The DECRA Proposal form will only allow one DECRA Candidate and one Administering Organisation to be listed. No other participant or organisational roles will be available.

5.15 Can a Proposal make a reference to additional team members or people who will support them with the project within the Proposal itself?

Yes. Any support from additional team members will be assessed under the selection criterion 'Research Environment'. Support from additional team members at the Administering Organisation should be detailed at the Strategic Statement in respect of the Research Environment of the DE16 Proposal form. For further information please see subsection D5.1 of the Funding Rules and the DE16 Instructions to Applicants.

In addition, the DECRA Candidate can name other collaborators and their contribution to the Project in Part D1 (Project Description) of the DE16 Proposal Form.

5.16 What information should be provided in the impact statement question?

Research impact is the demonstrable contribution that research makes to the economy, society, culture, national security, public policy or services, health, the environment, or quality of life, beyond contributions to academia.

Candidates should provide a statement outlining the intended impact of the proposed research which addresses this definition of research impact. Also see the DE16 Instructions to Applicants.

5.17 Can I include an 'in-press' publication in my reference list in my Proposal?

Publications can be listed in the 'Publications' section of a Proposal if they are 'in press' with an acceptance date (this must be provided).

If proposed publications are not yet 'in press' but are potentially significant, these could be referred to in other parts of the Personnel section of the Proposal such as details on your career and opportunities for research or further evidence in relation to research impact and contributions to the field.

5.18 In the Funding Rules, subsection D7.2.5.a states that I have to acknowledge significant contributions. What is a 'significant contribution' to the Proposal, and where do I have to include the acknowledgement in the Proposal?

If someone who is not named as a Participant on the Proposal provides a significant contribution to the Proposal, they must be acknowledged in the Project Description section of the Proposal (Subsections A11.6.3 and D7.2.5.a). A significant contribution varies between discipline areas but generally if someone has provided input (such as

an idea, or specific advice or guidance, or significant drafting of the Proposal) which has significantly influenced the content or design of the Project, they must be acknowledged by name in the Proposal.

5.19 If I will be working in a country which isn't listed in the drop-down country menu, how do I record it on the Proposal form?

If the proposed research involves international collaboration with a country not specified on the drop-down menu in the DE16 Proposal form, please first check that the country's name has not been changed. Otherwise, please [contact the ARC](#) for assistance.

6. MEDICAL AND DENTAL RESEARCH

6.1 My Project is in the area of medical research. Can I apply for funding to the ARC?

The ARC may fund health and medical research, either in concert with the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) or directly, to address specific Australian Government health and medical research priorities, however, the ARC does not normally fund health and medical research through its competitive funding schemes. The ARC may in its absolute discretion decide whether a proposed project, or elements of a project, falls within the area of Medical and Dental Research. Please refer to the ARC website for the [ARC Medical Research Policy](#).

Proposals which could be considered to be in an area related to medical and dental research should provide justification in support of the eligibility of the Proposal in the Medical and Dental Research Statement within the Proposal form.