The current ARC research direction and facts and figures about ARC funding

Presented by Dr Fiona Cameron, ARC Executive Director, 2016.

RAO notes

- The new [Science and Research Priorities (SRPs)](#) have replaced the old National Research Priorities (NRPs). SRPs are not critical to the assessment criteria for ARC applications.
- Make sure you apply for the appropriate scheme. Linkage (success rate about 40%) is generally for translational research and Discovery (success rate about 20%) is for blue sky research.
- The first thing that is checked on applications is eligibility. ;If you are not eligible, your application will be dismissed regardless of how good the rest of the proposal is.
- The DP16 panel met last week and it looks like the success rate will be about 18% again (hasn't gone up).
- The amount of funding available is declining, although the amounts awarded per grant are going up.
- There are less female applicants than male, though the success rates are similar
- FedUni's ARC success has dropped over the past couple of years. Our success rate is less than that of the other RUN Unis.

- **Secrets to success**
  - Focus
  - Clear research problem
  - Mature plan
  - Clear writing/easy to read – you need to grab the assessors' attention on the first page!
  - Innovation – you want a balance of an innovative project that is not too high risk.
  - Before you begin make sure you are familiar with the following:
    - [Funding rules and selection criteria](#)
    - [Assessment and peer review process](#)
    - [College of Experts](#)
    - [ARC website](#)
  - ROPE
    - ROPE is moderated by the CoE if the assessors do not consider it fully
    - For career disruptions make a case, not excuses. Give an explanation but not every detail is necessary
  - Convince the assessor of your capability – why are you the best person to carry out this research?
  - Distinguish your project from previous work. Show that you are not just doing the same thing again
  - FOR codes
    - Choose these carefully. Don't use '99' codes – if you don't even know your research you can't expect the ARC to.
    - Don't use a different code because you think you will have a better chance with that panel – your application could be put aside because the assessors don't fully understand it or (if you're lucky) the ARC will allocate it to the appropriate panel
    - Seek advice from experts about FOR codes
    - When a proposal has two totally different FOR codes associated with the project, it is assessed across panels. The primary panel rank takes precedent, however the secondary panel is brought into the room if the proposal is boarder-line.
  - Budget
    - A strong justification for your budget is essential (the ARC have mentioned this many times before).
      - If you ask for 4-5 years, your budget has to be extremely well justified
      - 4-5 year projects must be phased or stage research only

- The ARC will fund 2 great 2-3 year projects over a badly justified 4-5 year project
  - Workshops that are directly essential to the project are now allowed for Linkage
  - Your teaching load is unlikely to be considered unless you are teaching only
  - If you are not given enough money to do your project, then you need to modify the scope. Seek a [Variation to a Funding Agreement (VFA)](#) if there are major changes.
- RMS 2.0 – automatically creates a word cloud with key words. These are no longer asked for on the applications because they were often spelt incorrectly or were phrases rather than words.
- Rejoinders – don't waste words with personalised comments towards the assessors, remember they don't see it! Give as much information as possible addressing the assessors concerns. Strong rejoinders can make a big difference.
- College of Experts members must be interdisciplinary
- Research Environment (RE):
  - The ARC educate the assessors and CoE to avoid any bias
  - RE should be detailed and specific to the project
  - Align with the direction of the Institution
  - CoE moderates RE scores
  - RE is only worth 15% - not often the deciding factor, though still important

This presentation is not available on the ARC website, but to see similar presentations that include facts and figures about LP and DP please go to http://www.arc.gov.au/presentations