



CCEA COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
12 October 2012

AGENCY: AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL — Professor Aidan Byrne (CEO)

TOPIC: CHANGE IN FUNDING FROM 2011—2012

QUESTION No. PAGE 3

DR WASHER - We have heard evidence that the amount of funding for the ARC is inadequate and only 15 per cent of researchers get funding. I want you to comment on that. I have seen these figures but you will probably need to explain them to me. It seems that in 2012 you have \$702 million but back in 2011 you had \$954 million. It has dropped significantly in that period—I understand because times are tough. Can you make a comment on that? We subsidise industries like the car industry, which any sensible person would know is not going to make a profit in the next 30 or 40 years. I have got a bit of spleen about that. I would like you to tell me why you are underfunded to the point where only 15 per ~~son~~ cent of the researchers get money.

ANSWER

The funding awarded by the ARC in 2011 included \$255.9 million awarded under the *ARC Centres of Excellence* scheme, which is the total investment over the life of the projects. This scheme is run infrequently as the centres are large-scale investments over periods of up to seven years. The previous major round for *ARC Centres of Excellence* was for funding commencing in 2005.

If the funding for the *ARC Centres of Excellence* scheme is removed from the 2011 figures (as this funding only enters the system every three to five years), the increase in funding from 2008 to 2012 is more gradual and consistent.

	for funding commencing in				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total funding announced for all ARC schemes (including the <i>ARC Centres of Excellence</i>)	\$490,580,740	\$656,177,639	\$685,145,976	\$954,390,771	\$702,271,099
Total funding announced for ARC schemes (excluding the <i>ARC Centres of Excellence</i>)	\$490,580,740	\$656,177,639	\$685,145,976	\$698,490,771	\$702,271,099

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TOPIC: LINKAGE INTERNATIONAL

QUESTION No. PAGE 5

Ms HALL: I notice in the sheet that you handed out to us that in the funding for biodiversity projects—I am looking at the linkage projects—there are not international linking projects.

Prof. Byrne: Do you mean with international partners?

Ms HALL: I am just going from the table here.

Prof. Byrne: Which one are you looking at?

CHAIR: The table on the front page.

Ms HALL: Biodiversity and conservation focused projects.

Prof. Byrne: I would need to check on that. I am not sure that the international linkage is still an active program.

Ms HALL: Could you just give us some feedback on that, because I think that this is an area where we would need to have international linkages, because it is not—

Prof. Byrne: That is right. Another way of looking at that, perhaps, is through our centres of excellence. I have given some examples—the three there. If you look at the international partners, there, you will see that all of them have international partners on the back end of the sheets. The Centre of Excellence for Climate System Science has a large number of international collaborations. The Centre of Excellence for Environmental Decisions has six Australian and six international organisations. The Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies has a collaboration with Stockholm University. So there is a vehicle for building international relations.

In our discovery program, even though it is not separately reported, we are able to have international researchers. And the majority of our grants do have international researchers on our discovery programs. They are not separately reported. I will try and get the data just to see if we can identify the fraction of international people. If you would find that useful I am happy to try and extract that data.

ANSWER

Funding under the *Linkage International* scheme ceased in 2009 when support for international collaboration and mobility was mainstreamed across ARC funding schemes. An International Collaboration Award has been introduced under the *Discovery Projects* scheme to enhance opportunities for collaboration among researchers, research teams and/or research centres in Australia and overseas. Other measures have included opening the schemes so that overseas researchers are eligible to apply for ARC-funded fellowships, provided they apply through an eligible organisation. International researchers and organisations can also participate in ARC funding schemes as partner investigators and partner organisations respectively, and project funding can be used for overseas travel to support international collaboration.

The ARC collects data on intentions for international collaboration on research projects. Between 2008 to 2012 inclusive, over two thirds of projects funded by the ARC in biodiversity and conservation research involve international collaboration (approximately 67 per cent) (see the tables attached).

ARC funding for Biodiversity and Conservation research, commencement years 2008—2012

Number of Biodiversity and Conservation projects funded by the ARC, commencement years 2008-2012

Scheme	Funding commencing in					Total
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	
ARC Future Fellowships		3	7	5	1	16
Australian Laureate Fellowships		1	1	1	2	5
Centres of Excellence				1		1
Discovery – Projects	3	4	8	19	17	51
Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA)					5	5
Linkage – Infrastructure		1				1
Linkage – Projects	4	7	11	11	12	45
Total Biodiversity	7	16	27	37	37	124
Total of all ARC-funded projects	1452	1632	1675	1678	1705	8142
Biodiversity and Conservation projects as a proportion of all ARC-funded projects	0.48%	0.98%	1.61%	2.21%	2.17%	1.52%
Total number of Biodiversity and Conservation projects involving international collaboration *	2	14	20	26	18	80
Proportion of Biodiversity and Conservation projects involving international collaboration *	28.57%	87.50%	74.07%	70.27%	56.25%	67.23%

* International collaboration data is not collected for the DECRA scheme; therefore these projects have been excluded from the international collaboration calculations.

ARC funding for Biodiversity and Conservation over project lives, commencement years 2008-2012

Scheme	Funding commencing in					Total
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	
ARC Future Fellowships		\$2,059,200	\$5,115,489	\$3,507,666	\$693,858	\$11,376,213
Australian Laureate Fellowships		\$2,985,000	\$1,668,132	\$2,939,883	\$5,025,224	\$12,618,239
Centres of Excellence				\$11,900,000		\$11,900,000
Discovery - Projects	\$1,051,436	\$2,060,000	\$4,178,249	\$7,051,000	\$5,309,000	\$19,649,685
Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA)					\$1,875,000	\$1,875,000
Linkage - Infrastructure		\$100,000				\$100,000
Linkage - Projects	\$983,430	\$2,333,000	4139786	\$2,984,094	\$4,116,056	\$14,556,366
Total funding for Biodiversity and Conservation projects	\$2,034,866	\$9,537,200	\$15,101,656	\$28,382,643	\$17,019,138	\$72,075,503
Total funding for all ARC-funded projects	\$490,580,740	\$656,177,639	\$685,145,976	\$954,390,771	\$702,271,099	\$3,488,566,225
Funding for Biodiversity and Conservation projects as a proportion of total ARC funding	0.41%	1.45%	2.20%	2.97%	2.42%	2.07%
Funding for Biodiversity and Conservation projects involving international collaboration	\$577,796	\$8,695,200	\$11,962,531	\$23,899,549	\$10,793,082	\$55,928,158
Funding for Biodiversity and Conservation projects involving international collaboration as a proportion of all funding for Biodiversity and Conservation research	28.39%	91.17%	79.21%	84.20%	71.27%	79.67%

* International collaboration data is not collected for the DECRA scheme; therefore these projects have been excluded from the international collaboration calculations.

Notes on data

Note 1: Data reflects the number of projects funded and funding allocations (over the lives of the projects) as at the time of Ministerial approval and does not take into account any post-award variations.

Note 2: Researchers are invited to provide up to three 6-digit level field of research (FoR) and socioeconomic objective (SEO) codes for each project and indicate the proportion of the research content attributable to each of those codes when applying for ARC grants. The ARC has not amended or changed the codes or the proportion of any codes. Project data was retrieved from the ARC database using FoR and SEO codes at the 6-digit level (see code list). Projects are only included in this dataset when the combined percentage of relevant codes within a code type (FoR or SEO) is at or above 50.

Note 3: The data has not been vetted for relevance and, therefore, represents an approximation of relevant projects