

**Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Additional Estimates 2013-2014**

**Agency - Australian Research Council**

**Department of Education Question No. ED0315\_14**

**Senator Ludwig provided in writing.**

**Question**

***ARC - Gender and EMCRs***

1. What is the organisation doing to support early- and mid-career researchers (EMCRs)?
2. What is the organisation doing to support female scientists especially EMCRCs?
3. What is the organisation doing to support scientists with parental responsibility especially EMCRCs?
4. Please provide the length of EMCRCs contracts supported under grants administered by your agency?
5. Does the organisation have contact with universities and research institutes regarding the length of contracts offered to EMCRCs under grants?
6. What impact does the grant structure have EMCRCs contracts of periods such as 6, 12, 18 months? Please answer with specific reference to impact on researcher's ability to take maternity leave, maintain work continuity, gain promotion and seek permanent residence.
7. What is the organisation doing to make funded institutions support scientists with parental responsibility especially EMCRCs?

**Answer**

The Australian Research Council provided the following response.

1. The ARC administers the Discovery Early Career Researcher Award scheme to support early-career researchers and the Future Fellowships scheme to support mid-career researchers.
2. The ARC has a number of mechanisms to support female researchers under the funding schemes of the National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP).
  - Under the Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA) scheme eligibility requirements are five years since PhD or up to nine years commensurate with career interruptions which include maternity and/or parental leave.
  - Under the Future Fellowships scheme eligibility requirements are five to 15 years since PhD or up to 22 years commensurate with career interruptions which include maternity and/or parental leave.
  - Fellowships under the DECRA and Future Fellowships schemes can be awarded on a full-time or part-time basis and may be converted to (or from) part-time at any time to enable fulfilment of family and/or carer responsibilities.
  - Schemes granting a salary provide allowances for maternity leave of up to 14 weeks and an extension of the grant period for the same time.
  - The Australian Laureate Fellowships scheme grants two named awards for exceptional female researchers who also undertake an ambassadorial role to promote women in research.

- The quality of Investigators involved in Proposals for funding under the NCGP (who meet the eligibility criteria) are assessed on the basis of their **Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE)**, and other scheme dependent criteria. ROPE aims to ensure the assessment processes accurately evaluate an Investigator's career history relative to their current career stage, and considers whether their productivity and contribution is commensurate with the opportunities that have been available to them.
3. The ARC supports researchers with parental responsibilities by allowing the award of part-time fellowships. Fellowships may be converted to (or from) part-time at any time to enable fulfilment of family and/or carer responsibilities. Maternity/paternity leave arrangements and requirements for additional leave are included within the Funding Agreements signed by Administering Organisations.
  4. The duration of grants awarded under the funding schemes of the NCGP are listed in the following table. The fellowship grants are salaried awards provided to Administering Institutions to support individual researchers. Under the project grants, an allowable budget item is the employment of research personnel. The length of contract offered to these employees is determined by the Administering Organisation.

Scheme	Type of grant	Length of grant	ECR/ MCR
Discovery Projects	Project	Up to five years	
Discovery Indigenous	Project	Three years	
	Fellowships	Three years full-time Six years part-time	All career stages
Discovery Early Career Researcher Award	Fellowships	Three years full-time Six years part-time	ECR
Future Fellowships	Fellowships	Four years full-time Eight years part-time	MCR
Australian Laureate Fellowships	Fellowships	Five years	All career stages
	Postdoctoral research associate	Five years	ECR
	Postgraduate researcher	Four years	ECR
Linkage Projects	Project	Up to three years	
Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities	Project	One year	
ARC Centres of Excellence	Project	Up to seven years	
Industrial Transformation Research Hubs	Project	Up to five years	
Industrial Transformation Training Centres	Project	Up to three years	
	Postgraduate researcher	Three years	ECR

5. No.
6. The ARC does not provide grants of 6, 12 or 18 month duration.
7. The ARC includes within its Funding Rules and Agreements with Administering Organisations requirements to provide maternity and parental leave as well the ability to take awards part-time.