



# Eligibility and Career Interruptions Statement

<b>Policy Name:</b>	<b>Eligibility and Career Interruptions Statement</b>		
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Branch Manager, Research Evaluation and Policy		
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# Context

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The Australian Research Council (ARC) is committed to ensuring that all eligible researchers have fair and equitable access to competitive funding through the [National Competitive Grants Program](#) (NCGP).

The ARC promotes and encourages, within the NCGP, approaches to eligibility and assessment that take into account the diverse career and life experiences of researchers.

## Purpose

This policy relates to the extension of eligibility periods for early and mid-career researchers under the ARC's NCGP. Schemes for early career researchers (ECR) are Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA) and Early Career Industry Fellowships, with mid-career researcher (MCR) schemes being Future Fellowships and Mid-Career Industry Fellowships.

## Principles

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Under a number of NCGP schemes, the number of years between the conferral date of a PhD, or equivalent, and the submission closing date for an application, is a key element of eligibility.

Under the ECR schemes, researchers are eligible to apply within five years of the conferral date of their PhD or equivalent research higher degree, as certified by the Administering Organisation.

Under the MCR schemes, researchers are eligible to apply within five to 15 years of the conferral date of their PhD, equivalent research higher degree or professional equivalent, as certified by the Administering Organisation.

The ARC recognises career interruptions can have a significant impact on the period between conferral of a researcher's PhD, or equivalent, and a subsequent application for ARC funding. The ARC, therefore, allows extension of the eligibility periods for these schemes for eligible career interruptions, which occur after the conferral of a researcher's PhD, or equivalent.

### ***Eligible career interruptions***

The following significant, and not overlapping, career interruptions can be included:

<b>Eligible Career Interruptions</b>	<b>Period of time that can be claimed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Disruption due to international relocation</li></ul>	A period of time commensurate with the interruption, not exceeding three months per international relocation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Caring responsibilities</li><li>• Disability</li><li>• Disaster management and recovery</li><li>• Limited or no access to facilities and resources—such as through workplace interruptions</li><li>• Medical conditions</li></ul>	A period of time commensurate with the interruption.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-research positions, not concurrent with research employment</li> <li>• Parental leave</li> <li>• Unemployment</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary carer of a dependent child</li> </ul>	Up to two-years, inclusive of parental leave, for each dependent child. If required, an additional period of time commensurate with the interruption.

## Implementation

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The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) of the Eligible Organisation must certify that the researcher meets the career interruption eligibility criteria, under the relevant scheme, as set out in the [Grant Guidelines](#). The ARC reserves the right to request evidence relating to an application for extension of an eligibility period.

## Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence

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Researchers applying under any of these named schemes may utilise the Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) assessment criterion to describe the impact of any career interruption, including an eligible career interruption under this policy, in an application.

The ROPE criterion enables evaluation of a researcher's activities, outputs and achievements, in the context of career and life opportunities and experiences, including, where relevant, significant career interruptions.

## Contact details

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## Document control

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Number	Date Approved	Approved By	Brief Description
Version 2021.00	March 2021	Chief Research Officer	This policy statement relates to the extension of eligibility periods for early-career awards and mid-

Number	Date Approved	Approved By	Brief Description
			career fellowships.
Version 2024.00	July 2024		Amendment to include Industry Fellowship Program schemes as falling under this eligibility issue.