



**Australian Government**  
**Australian Research Council**

# General Assessor Handbook

A guide for **General** Assessors on the selection and assessment under the Linkage Program grant opportunities for

- Industry Laureate Fellowships (IL25)
- Mid-Career Industry Fellowships (IM25)
- Early Career Industry Fellowships (IE25)

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# 1. Overview

This Handbook provides instructions and advice for **General Assessors** on the assessment process for:

1. Industry Laureate Fellowships (IL)
2. Mid-Career Industry Fellowships (IM)
3. Early Career Industry Fellowships (IE)

These schemes are part of the Linkage Program of the Australian Research Council's (ARC) [National Competitive Grants Program \(NCGP\)](#).

The Industry Fellowship Program's schemes provide support for early, mid-career and senior researchers in establishing careers in industry, and industry-based researchers to work in university settings, with the aim of increased two-way mobility and skill-building in research collaboration, translation, and commercialisation. The Schemes will also drive research collaboration, translation and commercialisation outcomes across a range of industry settings. The ARC does not fund experimental development.

The specific objectives and assessment criteria for each of the grant opportunities covered in the Handbook are listed in the [Appendix](#), and are also available in the relevant Grant Guidelines on [GrantConnect](#).

## 2. The assessment process

Peer review is the method used to assess ARC applications and is undertaken by 2 groups of experts known as General and Detailed Assessors. Experts from each group assess applications against the relevant grant opportunity assessment criteria and contribute to the process of scoring and ranking research applications. Detailed Assessors comments should be useful for both General Assessors and applicants. Detailed Assessors' comments and scores are considered by General Assessors as part of their assessment of applications, while Detailed Assessors' comments are treated in applicants' rejoinders. The objective of the assessment process is to ensure that the highest quality research applications are recommended to the ARC Accountable Authority for funding.

The [Research Management System \(RMS\)](#) is the online system used for the preparation and submission of research applications, assessments and rejoinders for the ARC. The [RMS User Guide for Assessors](#), assists **General** and **Detailed** Assessors to navigate the RMS assignment and assessment process. This User Guide is available on the ARC [Assessor Resources](#) page. Here, assessors can also find additional information about the peer review process.

General and Detailed Assessors have different roles in the peer review process. Key aspects of the role of General Assessors are outlined in [Section 2.1](#).

General Assessors' scores and ranks are now available to eligible applicants once grant outcomes are announced in RMS. General Assessors need to be aware that the scores released to applicants are those submitted by General Assessors prior to the RMS Meeting Application being finalised for the SAC meeting.

## 2.1 General Assessors

### RMS profile

It is important that General Assessors ensure that their RMS profile is up-to-date and contains the following details:

1. **Expertise text:** Please outline your expertise briefly. The following format is suggested “My major area of research expertise is in a, b, c. I have additional research experience in q, r, s. I would also be able to assess in the areas of x, y, z. The research facilities, techniques and methodologies I use are l, m, n”.
2. **Field of Research (FoR-2020) Codes:** Please include between 6 and 10 FoR codes at the 6-digit level that reflect your key areas of expertise.
3. **Employment History:** Please ensure that your employment history is kept up to date, to enable your organisational conflicts of interests to be identified in RMS.
4. **Personal Details:** Please ensure your personal details are up to date, including conflicts of interest and personal material interest declarations.

This information will be used to match assessors with applications and should accurately represent your research expertise.

### The Selection Advisory Committee

The Selection Advisory Committee (SAC) is responsible for reviewing applications, Detailed Assessors' assessments, and applicants' rejoinders, and for final deliberations and recommendations to the ARC Accountable Authority.

For each grant opportunity, Executive Directors select General Assessors to form a SAC. SAC members have a crucial role in the peer review process. SACs may include members from the ARC College of Experts (CoE) and other eminent members of the wider research community as well as members from research end-user communities such as Industry Experts. SACs may also be divided into panels of different disciplines depending on the scheme under assessment. SAC members are chosen to provide a combination of relevant expertise and experience to support the objectives of the grant opportunity.

Following the deadline for submission of applications, ARC Executive Directors assign each application to General Assessors. The lead General Assessor (Carriage 1) is usually closely associated with the application's academic field and other General Assessor(s) (Other Carriage) have supplementary expertise. Carriage 1 has primary responsibility for the application, which will include speaking to the application and its assessments and rejoinder at the SAC meeting. Other Carriages have a responsibility to assist Carriage 1 in resolving initial recommendations, often through discussions in advance of the SAC meeting, and adding their evaluation to Carriage 1's during the SAC meeting.

**Note:** General Assessors are not required to agree on or align their scores for an application, but if the scores are disparate, they need to understand why their opinions differ to facilitate discussion at the SAC meeting.

Detailed Assessors are assigned by either Carriage 1 or an Executive Director at the ARC depending on the scheme under assessment. The number of Detailed Assessors required to be assigned for each specific grant opportunity, including reserves, is shown on the assignment page in RMS and communicated to General Assessors via email.

If Carriage 1 is required to assign Detailed Assessors, they are asked to select assessors to achieve a gender-balanced and discipline appropriate evaluation of the application.

We ask General Assessors to ensure that multiple assessors from the same organisation are not assigned to the same application.

After assigning the required number of assessors in RMS and following the ARC's announcement of assignments, the Carriage 1 may notice that some applications appear to need more assignments. This is due to the previously assigned assessors rejecting the assessment or not responding, but no further action is required from the Carriage 1. The monitoring of assignments, acceptance, rejection, and submission is

managed by ARC staff. If the assigned Detailed Assessors and reserves become unavailable, an ARC Executive Director will assign additional Detailed Assessors.

## General assessment process

All General Assessors must declare any conflicts of interest (COI) and reject the assignment as soon as possible if a COI exists. This will assist the ARC with the timely re-assignment of applications (see [Section 4.1](#) for further information). If a General Assessor is unsure of whether a COI exists, they must seek advice from the ARC before proceeding with accepting an assignment by emailing [ARC-College@arc.gov.au](mailto:ARC-College@arc.gov.au) as soon as possible.

When assessing applications General Assessors must rely solely on the information provided within the application including referenced publications and preprints and should not seek additional information from any sources. This includes following any hyperlinks that may have been provided in the application. The inclusion of webpage addresses/URLs and hyperlinks is only permitted under certain circumstances such as publications (including preprints) that are only available online and Letters of Support. Webpage addresses/URLs and hyperlinks should not be used to circumvent page limits, nor should they provide information that is not contained in the application. All information relevant to the application must be contained within the application.

## Saving preliminary assessments

Following the assignment process, General Assessors independently read and assess all of their assigned applications against the relevant assessment criteria, based on an [A to E Scoring Matrix](#) (although the matrix provides guidance on the expected averages across the entire set of applications, each application must be marked on its own merits). These preliminary assessment scores should be saved as drafts in RMS (**but not submitted**). General Assessors enter scores into RMS; they do not enter text.

In the rejoinder process, applicants receive anonymised Detailed Assessors' comments only without the commensurate scores. The applicant then has an opportunity to provide a rejoinder to address any issues raised by the Detailed Assessors.

After the rejoinder process has closed, General Assessors review the Detailed Assessors' comments and scores and the applicants' rejoinder text. Detailed assessments and rejoinders will inform General Assessors' scores and at this point General Assessors can review and if necessary, revise and save their preliminary scores. General Assessors then ensure that their draft scores are entered in RMS (**but not submitted**) before the preliminary assessment due date determined by the ARC, enabling their co-Carriages to view the scores and to facilitate discussion and ensure that all co-Carriages have an opportunity to understand the reasoning behind any differences in Carriage scores.

## Revising and submitting final assessments

For applications that have a difference in scores between the General Assessors, Carriage 1 is responsible for contacting the other Carriage(s) to discuss their scores. General Assessors are not required to agree on or align their scores for an application, but if the scores are disparate, they need to understand why their opinions differ to facilitate discussion at the SAC meeting. Following this discussion, final scores and ranks should be **submitted in RMS** by the required final due date.

When all final scores are submitted, RMS produces a ranked list of all applications (see [Section 2.2](#) for further information). This list is used at the SAC meeting to assist with the identification of applications that are of sufficient quality to be fundable. The ranking of applications on this list is not final and the meeting process provides several opportunities for the SAC to discuss and review all applications, as outlined below.

## Inappropriate assessments

If General Assessors are concerned about the appropriateness of any assessment text or comments that do not match scores from Detailed Assessors, or identify a potential COI or potential breach of confidentiality, including but not limited to, the use of generative Artificial Intelligence technology<sup>1</sup>, then they **must** contact the ARC by sending an email to [ARC-College@arc.gov.au](mailto:ARC-College@arc.gov.au) as soon as possible. The ARC will investigate the concerns and decide whether an assessment should be amended by the Detailed Assessor or removed

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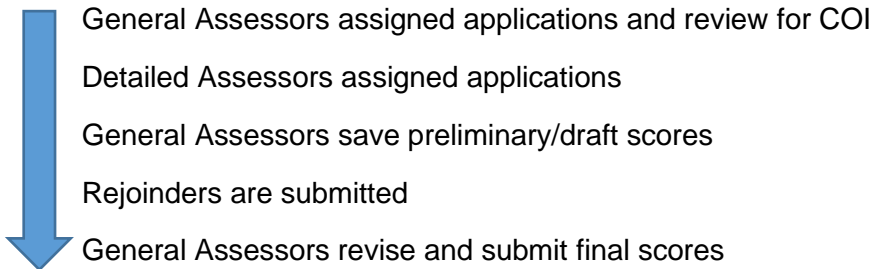
<sup>1</sup> [Policy on Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in the ARCs grants programs 2023.pdf](#)

from the process. The latter happens only in rare circumstances and requires ARC Senior Executive approval.

## Order of the assessment process

The following diagram provides an overview of the General Assessor's assessment process.

### Diagram 1: Overview of the General Assessor Assessment Process



## 2.2 Scoring and ranking assessments

### Scoring

When applying the Scoring Matrix, General Assessors should have regard for the specific grant opportunity objectives (see [Appendix](#)) and assessment criteria for the Fellowship type.

Scoring applications against assessment criteria can be a difficult exercise when Assessors might only look at a small sub-set of applications. Bands within the Scoring Matrix ideally represent a distribution across all applications submitted to a grant opportunity.

Only the very best applications should be recommended. As a guide, approximately 10% should fall into the top scoring band ('A'). These would have been assessed as near flawless applications across all assessment criteria.

A Scoring Matrix for the scores A to E is provided in the [Appendix](#) for **each grant opportunity** and should guide scoring by both Detailed and General Assessors.

### Ranking

Each application must have a unique rank. Although RMS will use the **overall application scores** to automatically rank an Assessor's assessments as these are completed in RMS, if multiple applications have the same **overall application scores**, these applications will be flagged and the Assessor must assign a unique rank to differentiate equally scored applications. Differentiation should be based on how you compare the applications in relation to the Scoring Matrix.

Assessments should be submitted when all applications have been assigned 1) a score and 2) a unique ranking.

## 2.3 Important factors to consider when assessing

### Objectives and assessment criteria

Each grant opportunity has specific objectives and assessment criteria. Assessors must have regard to both the objectives and the assessment criteria as outlined in the relevant Grant Guidelines and the [Appendix](#) of this document.

### National Interest Test (NIT)

Applicants must provide a NIT statement, which outlines the national interest of their research proposal. This statement is provided with other elements of an application recommended for funding for final consideration by the ARC Board.

The NIT statement provided by the researcher is part of their application, is required to be certified by the DVCR and will be available to all assessors. It should be considered as part of the assessment of the

application. The National Interest Test is to be used with the rest of the information in the application to inform an assessor's assessment of the Assessment Criteria as included in the [Appendix](#).

The ARC will accept the DVCR's certification as final and will not review or make requests for changes to a NIT. Additional information regarding the National Interest Test is available on the [ARC Website](#).

### **Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE)**

The ROPE assessment criterion requires all Assessors to identify and consider research excellence relative to a researcher's career and opportunities for research. It aims to ensure that NCGP assessment processes accurately evaluate a researcher's career history relative to their current career stage and consider whether their productivity and contribution is commensurate with the opportunities that have been available to them.

The required elements of ROPE vary according to the objectives of each grant opportunity. All General Assessors should be familiar with the full [ROPE statement](#) located on the ARC website.

### **Interdisciplinary research**

The ARC recognises the value of interdisciplinary research and the ARC's commitment to supporting interdisciplinary research is outlined in the [ARC Statement of Support for Interdisciplinary Research](#).

Interdisciplinary research can be a distinct mode of research, or a combination of researchers, knowledge and/or approaches from disparate disciplines. Under the NCGP, examples of interdisciplinary research may include researchers from different disciplines working together in a team; researchers collaborating to bring different perspectives to solve a problem; researchers utilising methods normally associated with one or more disciplines to solve problems in another discipline; and one or more researchers translating innovative blue sky or applied research outcomes from one discipline into an entirely different research discipline.

Assessors are required to assess all research on a fair and equal basis, including applications and outputs involving interdisciplinary and collaborative research. To assist with this, the ARC facilitates consideration of applications by relevant General Assessors with interdisciplinary expertise or where not feasible, applications are allocated to General Assessors who have broad disciplinary expertise regardless of discipline grouping. Interdisciplinary applications should be allocated to Detailed Assessors with specific interdisciplinary expertise or to Detailed Assessors from the different disciplines covered in the application.

### **Preprints or comparable resources**

General Assessors should consider the merit of publications including preprints and comparable resources that are listed in the application. Assessors may access hyperlinks and evaluate if a citation included in the application is a crucial part of the research discourse, and evaluate the suitability, quality and relevance of the research output to help them determine the quality and novelty of the proposed research. However, Assessors should not use online search engines to identify or evaluate applicants' publications that are not included within the application.

Preprints or comparable resources can be included in any part of an application. This includes within the Research Outputs list and the body of an application. An application will not be deemed to be ineligible for the citing and listing of preprints or comparable resources.

A preprint or comparable resource is a scholarly output that is uploaded by the authors to a recognised publicly accessible archive, repository, or preprint service (such as, but not limited to, arXiv, bioRxiv, medRxiv, ChemRxiv, Peer J Preprints, Zenodo, GitHub, PsyArXiv and publicly available university of government repositories etc.). This will include a range of materials that have been subjected to varying degrees of peer review from none to light and full review. Ideally, a preprint or comparable resource should have a unique identifier or a DOI (digital object identifier). Any citation of a preprint or comparable resource should be explicitly identified as such and listed in the references with a DOI, URL or equivalent, version number and/or date of access, as applicable.

Inclusion of preprints or comparable resources within the body of the application should comply with standard disciplinary practices for the relevant field.

### 3. General Assessors: Selection Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting preparation

#### 3.1 Roles and responsibilities before the SAC meeting

After the assessment period has closed General Assessors will:

1. be unable to access applications for a short period whilst ARC staff undertake administrative functions to prepare for the SAC meeting.
2. be advised by the ARC when the RMS Meeting Application (App) opens.
3. have access to all applications allocated to their panel in the RMS Meeting App where they do not have a COI.
4. be required to attend a pre-meeting videoconference to be updated on the SAC meeting processes.

#### Carriage 1: Reviewing applications in the RMS Meeting Application

The RMS meeting application will contain a ranked list of applications. Prior to the SAC meeting, Carriage 1 should review the Detailed and General Assessors' assessments and scores, and the applicant's rejoinder, and consider whether they believe there are any applications that have received an inappropriate ranking.

Particular attention should be given to applications where a ROPE case (see [Section 2.3](#)) has been made that has been neglected by Detailed Assessors, where an application has received less than the desired number of detailed assessments, or where an anomalous Detailed assessment may materially affect the ranking of the application. Carriage 1 should identify such applications by emailing [ARC-College@arc.gov.au](mailto:ARC-College@arc.gov.au) and prepare a recommendation for consideration by the SAC.

ARC staff will also identify applications with disparate scores and will flag these for the attention of SAC members, noting that these applications are not automatically discussed at the selection meeting. SAC members can request these (or any other) applications to be tagged for discussion at the meeting. Carriage 1 will be expected to lead discussion on these applications.

It is recommended that SAC members read the summary of all highly ranked applications and those tagged in RMS as 'To Discuss by SAC' (accessible through the RMS Meeting App) as they are expected to contribute to discussions for all applications during the meeting.

#### Carriage 1: Preparing a draft budget recommendation

For highly ranked applications or applications tagged for discussion in RMS as 'To Discuss by SAC', it is Carriage 1's responsibility to recommend a draft one-line budget amount for each funding year of the application to the SAC (Please note: IFP schemes require budgets to separate salary and project funds). The draft budget recommendation is entered directly into RMS (details are in the section below) prior to the SAC meeting.

The draft budget recommended for each year must not exceed the amount requested in the application. Budget recommendations are discussed by the SAC members and the recommended budget is forwarded to the ARC Accountable Authority as part of the SAC's funding recommendations.

Carriage 1 may need to discuss or justify their budget recommendation at the SAC meeting and should therefore bring their own notes to the meeting on how they arrived at their final recommended funding amount.

To prepare a one-line budget for each year of funding, Carriage 1 should consider the following:

1. The extent to which specific budget items are well-justified
2. Whether the budget items are supported or not supported as outlined in the Grant Guidelines for the relevant grant opportunity
3. The minimum/maximum funding amounts relevant to the specific grant opportunity's Grant Guidelines
4. The costs of any recommended remunerated participants
5. Whether they are satisfied that the project can still be completed with the recommended budget



- Whether the budget for the application has been considered on merit and not compared to other applications.

### **Carriage 1: Entering draft budgets in RMS Meeting Application before the Selection Meeting**

Following the ARC email confirming that RMS Meeting Application is opened, Carriage 1 can enter the draft budgets directly in RMS.

- Prepare draft budgets for your Carriage 1 applications that have an overall application rank from 1 to the bottom of the Discussion Range Filtering on these applications are provided in Step 4 below.
- Prepare a draft budget figure (\$) for each year of funding of your Carriage 1 applications.
- In RMS, open specific scheme Meeting Application, e.g., IE24.

ARC Meetings ^		
Scheme Round	Panel	Actions
IE24 Round 1	Engineering, Information and Computing Sciences	<input type="button" value="Open"/>

- Under 'Carriage' select and filter the Carriage 1 applications, under 'Tags' select 'Draft Budget' and select 'Apply'.

**Application Id**

**Grant Status**

**Awards**

**Discipline Groups**

**Carriage**

**Vote Types**

**Tags**

- Additional\_read
- Assessment\_quota
- Assessor\_issue
- Benchmark\_proposal
- Discussion\_Range
- Disparate\_scores
- Draft\_Budget
- Provisional\_funding\_line
- Revisit
- ToDiscussBySAC

5. Click on the application to enter the draft budget:
  - a) Before you populate budget click on the hyperlink for the Fellowship under 'Personnel'.

Personnel	\$112,897	\$112,897	\$112,897	\$112,897	\$112,897	\$112,897
<a href="#">(Early_Career_Industry_Fellowship)</a>	\$112,897	\$112,897	\$112,897	\$112,897	\$112,897	\$112,897

- The pop-up window will appear. You must only alter the status on 'Carriage 1 Award Support' to 'Supported/Not supported' the salary for funding. You cannot change the 'Supported Funding as' level.

- If you selected 'Supported' the Fellowship/Award salary (\$) will be automatically populated into the budget table.

**Draft Budget**

Save Draft

**Editing Instructions:**  
Before entering a total budget please address the requested award(s)/fellowship(s) by clicking on the hyperlinked name of the requested awardee or fellowship and select either 'Supported' or 'Not Supported'. Please then update for a total draft budget in the Funded field in the Total line (the top line of the budget) for each applicable year. Only enter in whole dollars to total field per year. Note: A red box will appear if you enter more than the requested amount. A blue box will appear if you enter less than the minimum amount of funding required.

Supported \$778,160 / \$1,015,488 (76%) Requested

Description	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4	
	Requested	Funded	Requested	Funded	Requested	Funded	Requested	Funded
Total	\$253,575	\$194,540	\$252,837	\$194,540	\$254,538	\$194,540	\$254,538	\$194,540
Personnel	\$241,934	\$194,540	\$243,637	\$194,540	\$245,338	\$194,540	\$245,338	\$194,540

The salary will now populate in the funded cells.

b) Enter the draft budget total for each year, then select 'Save Draft'.

**Draft Budget**

Save Draft

**Editing Instructions:**  
Please enter your draft budget in the Funded field in the Total line (the top line of the budget) for each applicable year. Only enter in whole dollars to total field per year. Note: A red box will appear if you enter more than the requested amount. A blue box will appear if you enter less than the minimum amount of funding required.

Supported \$0 / \$359,997 (0%) Requested

Description	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
	Requested	Funded	Requested	Funded	Requested	Funded	Requested	Funded	Requested	Funded
Total	\$118,306	\$0	\$117,846	\$0	\$123,845	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Personnel	\$96,681	\$0	\$98,581	\$0	\$100,510	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Enter a total figure for each year in the top line of the budget table, then select 'Save Draft' at the top left of the budget table.

**Note:**

**Draft Budget**

Save Draft

**Editing Instructions:**  
Please enter your draft budget in the Funded field in the Total line (the top line of the budget) for each applicable year. Only enter in whole dollars to total field per year. Note: A red box will appear if you enter more than the requested amount. A blue box will appear if you enter less than the minimum amount of funding required.

Supported \$274,000 / \$359,997 (76%) Requested

Description	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	
	Requested	Funded	Requested	Funded	Requested	Funded
Total	\$118,306	\$100,000	\$117,846	\$125,000	\$123,845	\$125,000
Unspecified Funding	\$0	\$100,000	\$0	\$125,000	\$0	\$0

Pink highlighting indicates unsaved changes.

A red box indicates you have entered more than the requested amount, you will need to reduce your draft total for this year.

### 3.2 Roles and responsibilities at the SAC meeting and information on the Selection Meeting

Each SAC meeting will comprise a Chair, Deputy Chair, SAC members (Carriage 1, Other Carriages and panel members) and ARC Staff.

The role of the Chair is to:

- lead the committee through the process to make a recommendation on the applications

2. call the panel to a vote for applications when necessary and
3. ensure the meeting runs in a timely manner

For applications where the Chair is conflicted or is Carriage on an application, the Deputy Chair will act in the role. Where the Chair and Deputy Chair are conflicted, other SAC members will be called on to be acting Chair.

When you are Carriage 1 on an application, your role is to:

1. lead discussion for that application giving a brief summary of the strengths and weaknesses, and then making a recommendation to support, not support or vote
2. recommend a one-line budget for applications that are recommended for funding (the draft budget should already be entered in RMS).

All other Carriages and panel members will contribute to discussions of whether an application should be supported, not supported or voted on.

ARC staff are responsible for:

- providing secretariat support for meetings
- providing procedural advice to the SAC
- ensuring that correct administrative procedures are followed
- ensuring COIs and any potential inappropriate discussions are managed correctly

## 4. Ensuring integrity of process

### 4.1 Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest (COI)

The [ARC Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy](#) is designed to ensure that all COIs are managed in a rigorous and transparent way. It aims to prevent individuals from influencing decisions unfairly and to maintain public confidence in the integrity, legitimacy, impartiality and fairness of the peer review process.

Any individual who is reviewing material for the ARC must agree to comply with the confidentiality and COI statement and must clearly disclose any material personal interests that may affect, or might be perceived to affect, their ability to perform their role.

All Assessors must maintain an up-to-date RMS profile, including personal details, current employment details and previous employment history within the past 2 years. This information will assist the ARC with the identification and management of organisational conflicts of interest.

Assessors reviewing ARC grant application who have identified a conflict of interest must reject the grant application assigned in RMS to assist the ARC in the management of conflicts of interest.

Examples of material personal interests that are considered by the ARC to be COIs include holding funding with a named participant within the past 2 years or having been a collaborator or co-author with a named participant on a research output within the last 4 years. For more information on disclosure of COIs, including material personal interest declarations, please refer to the [Identifying and Handling a Conflict of Interest in NCGP processes](#) document.

In RMS, Assessors will be asked to indicate their willingness to comply with this policy before proceeding to assess. They can do this by selecting the 'Accept' button.

#### **Extract from the ARC [Policy on Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in the ARC's grants programs](#) (July 2023):**

The [ARC Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy \(2020\)](#) requires that all officials and individuals carrying out ARC business, including assessors and peer reviewers, are required to preserve the principles of confidentiality outlined in the policy. **Release of material into generative AI tools constitutes a breach of confidentiality and peer reviewers, including all Detailed and General Assessors, must not use generative AI as part of their assessment activities.**

Assessors are asked to provide detailed high quality, constructive assessments that assist the Selection Advisory Committees to assess the merits of an application. The use of generative AI may compromise the integrity of the ARC's peer review process by, for example, producing text that contains inappropriate content, such as generic comments and restatements of the application.

## 4.2 Research integrity and research misconduct

If in the course of undertaking an assessment you identify or suspect a potential research integrity breach or research misconduct, please notify the ARC Research Integrity Office ([researchintegrity@arc.gov.au](mailto:researchintegrity@arc.gov.au)) in accordance with Section 5 of the [ARC Research Integrity Policy](#). Please do not mention your concerns in any assessment comments.

The ARC Research Integrity Office will consider whether to refer your concerns to the relevant institution for investigation in accordance with the requirements of the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research \(2018\)](#). You should provide sufficient information to allow the ARC to assess whether there is a basis for referring the matter to the institution and to enable the relevant institution to progress an investigation into the allegation (if required).

Foreign financial support, foreign affiliations and foreign honorary positions. Participants applying for ARC grants are required to answer questions in their application relating to foreign financial support and foreign affiliations, including current and previous associations. Participants are required to declare:

- foreign financial support (cash or in kind) for research related activities
- current or past associations or affiliations with a foreign sponsored talent program (for the last 10 years)
- current associations or affiliations with a foreign government, foreign political party, foreign state-owned enterprise, foreign military and/or foreign police organisations

If in the course of undertaking an assessment you identify or suspect a potential issue of foreign interference, please send an email highlighting your concerns to the ARC via [ARC-College@arc.gov.au](mailto:ARC-College@arc.gov.au) as soon as possible.

In RMS, Assessors will be asked to indicate their willingness to comply with this policy before proceeding to assess. They can do this by selecting the 'Accept' button.

## 4.3 Applications outside the General Assessor's area of expertise

The ARC receives applications from many scholarly fields. Occasionally you will be asked to assess an application that does not appear to correspond closely with your area of expertise. As a General Assessor, your views are valuable as they are being sought on the entire application, drawing on your expert knowledge as a researcher. If you are concerned about a particular application's research area and your ability to provide a robust assessment, **please contact the ARC via [ARC-College@arc.gov.au](mailto:ARC-College@arc.gov.au) before rejecting the assignment.**

## 4.4 Eligibility

If, while assessing an application, you have concerns about eligibility, ethics or other issues associated with an application, **you must not include this information in your assessment.** Please send an email highlighting your concerns to **the relevant scheme team via [ARC-College@arc.gov.au](mailto:ARC-College@arc.gov.au)** as soon as possible. The ARC is responsible for investigating and making decisions on these matters, and Assessors should not conduct investigations at any point. Please complete your assessment based on the merits of the application **without** giving consideration to the potential eligibility issue.

## 4.5 Unconscious bias

General Assessors should also be aware of how their unconscious bias could affect the peer review process.

Unconscious biases are pervasive and may relate to perceptions about a range of attributes including:

1. gender and/or sexuality
2. social/cultural background

3. career path
4. institutional employer
5. discipline

The ARC encourages Assessors to recognise their own biases and be aware of them in their assessments. A selection of short, online tests for identifying unconscious biases is available via Harvard University's ['Implicit Social Attitudes' demonstration sites](#).

## **5. Contact details for queries during the assessment process**

For **all** queries relating to assignment and assessment, accessibility, SAC and SAC meetings, please email [ARC-College@arc.gov.au](mailto:ARC-College@arc.gov.au)

## Appendix: Industry Fellowships Program Scoring Matrix and assessment criteria considerations

Assessors assign a score and do not have to consider the weighting of a criterion as this is applied automatically within RMS. The tables below provide ready access to assessment criteria set out in the *Industry Fellowships Program Grant Guidelines (2024 edition)* (available on [GrantConnect](#)) and the Scoring Matrices outlined in this handbook. Assessors should use their judgement and experience to assess the appropriate score within the context of the relevant discipline.

### Industry Laureate Fellowships (IL25)

#### Key Dates and Notes

##### General Assessors

Task	IL25 Dates	Detail
<b>Assessment Period</b>	29 November 2024 – 17 February 2025	<b>Carriages 1, 2, 3 and 4</b> Assess applications independently to determine preliminary and provisional scores and ranking.
<b>Rejoinder</b>	4 February 2025 – 17 February 2025	Applicants to read comments from Detailed Assessors and submit a rejoinder.
<b>Review and finalise assessments</b>	18 February 2024 – 07 March 2025	<b>Carriages 1, 2, 3 and 4</b> Review Detailed assessments and rejoinders. Revise and finalise scores and ranks in RMS.
<b>SAC Selection Meeting</b>	15 April 2025 – 16 April 2025	SAC members discuss shortlist and recommend applications.

#### Grant Guidelines

The objectives and assessment criteria below are from the *Industry Fellowships Program Grant Guidelines (2024 edition)* which are available on [GrantConnect](#).

#### Overview

The Industry Laureate Fellowships scheme creates a pathway to support academic researchers in establishing careers in industry, and industry-based researchers to work in university settings, with the aim of increased two-way mobility and skill-building in research collaboration, translation and commercialisation. The scheme encourages applications from the highest-quality researchers by providing eligible Industry Laureate Fellows with project funding in addition to salary and salary related (on-cost) support.

#### Objectives

There are three levels in the IFP. All levels seek to:

- increase the pipeline of researchers in Australia with capabilities in industry-focused and/or industry-based research collaboration, translation and commercialisation;
- open up and maintain a diversity of two-way career pathways traversing university and industry settings;
- increase strategic engagement and alignment between universities and industry;
- contribute to the solving of industry-identified challenges and opportunities; and
- create commercial, economic, environmental, social and/or cultural benefits for Australia through enhanced translation and/or commercialisation, including the development of start-up companies.

Specific aims for Industry Laureate Fellowships are:

- attract and retain, within Australia, outstanding researchers and research leaders of international reputation with demonstrated capacity for industry-focused and industry-based collaboration, translation and commercialisation;
- deliver significant programs of research that create step-change across a variety of industry settings;

- provide leadership in the development of high quality and impactful collaborations between university and industry personnel; and
- provide an excellent research training environment and exemplary mentorship to nurture the development of industry-focused and industry-based collaboration, translation and/or commercialisation skills among ECRs and HDR students.

### Scoring Matrix – Industry Laureate Fellowships (IL25)

Assessment criterion	(A) <b>Exceptional</b> Of the highest quality and at the forefront of research in the field. Approximately 10% of Applications should receive scores in this band.	(B) <b>Outstanding</b> Of high quality and strongly competitive. Approximately 15% of Applications should receive scores in this band.	(C) <b>Excellent</b> Interesting, sound and compelling. Approximately 20% of Applications should receive scores in this band.	(D) <b>Very Good</b> Sound, but lacks a compelling element. Approximately 35% of Applications are likely to fall into this band.	(E) <b>Good</b> Has significant weaknesses. Approximately 20% of Applications are likely to fall into this band.
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### Assessment criteria – Industry Laureate Fellowships (IL25)

Assessment criteria and weightings	Assessment criteria details
Investigator/ Capability 40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE), including a track-record of outstanding research outputs and achievements appropriate to the discipline/s;</li> <li>▪ Evidence of the candidate’s capacity to lead a high-quality program of ground-breaking, internationally competitive industry-focused or industry-based research undertaken by a diverse research team with world-class research translation and/or commercialisation capabilities in collaboration with industry and/or other research end-user groups;</li> <li>▪ Demonstrated ability to develop research collaboration, translation and/or commercialisation skills in HDR students, ECRs and/or industry staff through supervision and mentoring; and</li> <li>▪ The candidate's potential to create an enduring legacy through acting as a senior academic- or industry-based end user ambassador.</li> </ul>
Project Quality and Innovation: 25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contribution of the project to address an important gap in knowledge or significant problem identified by the Key Industry Partner;</li> <li>▪ Innovation and significance of the proposed program of research in the context of recent international research in the area, and its potential to transform current bodies of knowledge and practices for the Key Industry Partner and research end-users;</li> <li>▪ Cohesiveness and clarity of the design and implementation plan for the program of research (including the appropriateness of the aim(s), conceptual framework, method, data and/or analyses); and</li> <li>▪ Clear involvement of the Key Industry Partner in the design, method and delivery of the research, and relationship to previous collaborative projects between the candidate and the Key Industry Partner.</li> </ul> <p><u>If the project involves Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander research, additional criteria include:</u></p>



Assessment criteria and weightings	Assessment criteria details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The project’s level of collaboration, engagement, relationship building and benefit sharing with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and First Nations Organisations and Communities;</li> <li>▪ The project’s strategy and mechanisms for Indigenous research capacity building within the project;</li> <li>▪ The project’s adherence to the <a href="#">Australian Indigenous Data Sovereignty Principles</a>; and</li> <li>▪ The project’s understanding of, and proposed strategies to adhere to, the <a href="#">AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research</a> and NHMRC’s guidelines on <a href="#">Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities</a>.</li> </ul>
Benefit 10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strength of engagement between the candidate and the Key Industry Partner, including previous projects (where applicable), and interactions to date on the proposed project;</li> <li>▪ The extent to which all parties demonstrate a commitment to the success of the project, and to developing and expanding a collaborative relationship, including the necessary facilities, resources and development opportunities that the organisations will provide for the candidate;</li> <li>▪ The feasibility of the research in terms of the project’s design, participants, requested duration, required resources/facilities, risk management, and appropriateness of the budget; and</li> <li>▪ The cost-effectiveness of the research and its value for money.</li> </ul>
Mentoring and Capacity Building: 25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Extent to which the candidate demonstrates exceptional leadership and organisational skills to ensure successful completion of the program of research;</li> <li>▪ Extent to which the candidate will provide exceptional leadership for supervision and mentoring of HDR students and ECRs, to enable their development of industry-focused and industry-based collaboration, translation and/or commercialisation skills, and careers;</li> <li>▪ The extent to which the program of research will build new teams and create world-class research capacity, collaboration and innovation across the relevant industry setting(s);</li> <li>▪ The extent to which all parties demonstrate a commitment to establish enduring Australian and international research collaborations or links between academia and industry; and</li> <li>▪ Evidence of the candidates’ potential to attract sustained financial resources to continue and expand the capacity of the program of research, including beyond completion of the Fellowship.</li> </ul>

## Mid-Career Industry Fellowships (IM25)

### Key Dates and Notes

#### General Assessors

Task	IM25 Dates	Detail
<b>Detailed Assessors Assignment Period</b>	21 November 2024 – 27 November 2024	Carriage 1 assign 6 Detailed Assessors and 6 Reserves

<b>Assessment Period</b>	21 November 2024 – 21 February 2025	<b>Carriages 1, 2 and 3</b> Assess applications independently to determine preliminary and provisional scores and ranking.
<b>Rejoinder</b>	10 February 2025 – 21 February 2025	Applicants to read comments from Detailed Assessors and submit a rejoinder.
<b>Review and finalise assessments</b>	24 February 2025 – 11 March 2025	<b>Carriages 1, 2 and 3</b> Review Detailed assessments and rejoinders. Revise and finalise scores and ranks in RMS.
<b>SAC Selection Meeting</b>	10 April 2025 – 11 April 2025	SAC members discuss shortlist and recommend applications

## Grant Guidelines

The objectives and assessment criteria below are from the *Industry Fellowships Program Grant Guidelines (2024 edition)* which are available on [GrantConnect](#).

## Overview

The Mid-Career Industry Fellowships scheme creates a pathway to support academic researchers in establishing careers in industry, and industry-based researchers to work in university settings, with the aim of increased two-way mobility and skill-building in research collaboration, translation and commercialisation.

## Objectives

There are three levels in the IFP. All levels seek to:

- increase the pipeline of researchers in Australia with capabilities in industry-focused and/or industry-based research collaboration, translation and commercialisation;
- open up and maintain a diversity of two-way career pathways traversing university and industry settings;
- increase strategic engagement and alignment between universities and industry;
- contribute to the solving of industry-identified challenges and opportunities; and
- create commercial, economic, environmental, social and/or cultural benefits for Australia through enhanced translation and/or commercialisation, including the development of start-up companies.

Specific aims for Mid-Career Industry Fellowships are:

- strengthen the industry collaboration skills of mid-career researchers;
- develop and supervise research, which may include the participation of Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students and early-career researchers (ECRs), that fosters the development of industry collaboration, commercialisation and translation skills; and
- deliver significant, actionable outcomes for industry partners and research end-users.

## Scoring Matrix – Mid-Career Industry Fellowships

Assessment criterion	(A) <b>Outstanding</b>	(B) <b>Excellent</b>	(C) <b>Very Good</b>	(D) <b>Good</b>	(E) <b>Uncompetitive</b>
	Of the highest quality and at the forefront of research in the field. Approximately 10% of applications should receive scores in this band.	Of high quality and strongly competitive. Approximately 15% of applications should receive scores in this band.	Interesting, sound and compelling. Approximately 20% of applications should receive scores in this band.	Sound, but lacks a compelling element. Approximately 35% of applications are likely to fall into this band.	Has significant weaknesses. Approximately 20% of applications are likely to fall into this band.

## Assessment criteria – Mid-Career Industry Fellowships

Assessment criteria and weightings	Assessment criteria details
Investigator/ Capability 50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE), including a demonstrated track-record of excellent research outputs appropriate to the discipline/s</li> <li>▪ Demonstrated capability to lead research projects in collaboration with industry; and</li> <li>▪ Demonstrated capability to effectively supervise and mentor HDR students and ECRs in industry and/or university settings.</li> </ul>
Project Quality and Innovation 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contribution of the project to address an important gap in knowledge or significant problem identified by the Key Industry Partner;</li> <li>▪ Novelty and innovation of the project in the context of recent international research in the area;</li> <li>▪ Cohesiveness and clarity of the project design and implementation plan (including the appropriateness of the aim(s), conceptual framework, method, data and/or analyses); and</li> <li>▪ The clear presence of the Key Industry Partner in the design, method and delivery of the research.</li> </ul> <p><u>If the project involves Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander research, additional criteria include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The project’s level of collaboration, engagement, relationship building and benefit sharing with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and First Nations Organisations and Communities;</li> <li>▪ The project’s strategy and mechanisms for Indigenous research capacity building within the project;</li> <li>▪ The project’s adherence to the <a href="#">Australian Indigenous Data Sovereignty Principles</a>; and</li> <li>▪ The project’s understanding of, and proposed strategies to adhere to, the <a href="#">AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research</a> and NHMRC’s guidelines on <a href="#">Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities</a>.</li> </ul>
Feasibility and Strategic Alignment 15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strength of engagement between the candidate and the Key Industry Partner, including previous projects (where applicable), and interactions to date on the proposed project;</li> <li>▪ The extent to which all parties demonstrate a commitment to the success of the project, and to developing and expanding a collaborative relationship, including the necessary facilities, resources and development opportunities that the organisations will provide for the candidate; and</li> <li>▪ The feasibility of the research in terms of the project’s design, participants, requested duration, required resources/facilities, risk management, and cost-effectiveness of the budget.</li> </ul>
Benefit 15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Delivery of significant, actionable outcomes for the industry partner(s) and research end-users;</li> <li>▪ Significant new or advanced knowledge expected to result from the project;</li> <li>▪ Appropriateness, completeness and effectiveness of proposed pathways for short-, medium- or long-term adoption, translation, and/or commercialisation of the project outcomes, including IP management, by the industry partner(s) beyond the Fellowship completion;</li> </ul>

Assessment criteria and weightings	Assessment criteria details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demonstration of the mutual benefit to the candidate and the Key Industry Partner including potential to lead to longer-term collaboration; and</li> <li>▪ The potential for significant commercial, economic, environmental, cultural and/or social benefit for Australia.</li> </ul>

## Early Career Industry Fellowships (IE25)

### Key Dates and Notes

#### General Assessors

Task	IE25 Dates	Detail
<b>Detailed Assessors Assignment Period</b>	21 November 2024 – 27 November 2024	Carriage 1 assign 6 Detailed Assessors and 6 Reserves
<b>Assessment Period</b>	21 November 2024 – 21 February 2025	<b>Carriages 1 and 2</b> Assess applications independently to determine preliminary and provisional scores and ranking.
<b>Rejoinder</b>	10 February 2025 – 21 February 2025	Applicants to read comments from Detailed Assessors and submit a rejoinder.
<b>Review and finalise assessments</b>	24 February 2025 – 11 March 2025	<b>Carriages 1 and 2</b> Review Detailed assessments and rejoinders. Revise and finalise scores and ranks in RMS.
<b>SAC Selection Meeting</b>	7 April 2025 – 9 April 2025	SAC members discuss shortlist and recommend applications

### Grant Guidelines

The objectives and assessment criteria below are from the *Industry Fellowships Program Grant Guidelines (2024 edition)* which are available on [GrantConnect](#).

#### Overview

The Early Career Industry Fellowships scheme creates a pathway to support academic researchers in establishing careers in industry, and industry-based researchers to work in university settings, with the aim of increased two-way mobility and skill-building in research collaboration, translation and commercialisation.

#### Objectives

There are three levels in the IFP. All levels seek to:

- increase the pipeline of researchers in Australia with capabilities in industry-focused and/or industry-based research collaboration, translation and commercialisation;
- open up and maintain a diversity of two-way career pathways traversing university and industry settings;
- increase strategic engagement and alignment between universities and industry;
- contribute to the solving of industry-identified challenges and opportunities; and
- create commercial, economic, environmental, social and/or cultural benefits for Australia through enhanced translation and/or commercialisation, including the development of start-up companies.

Specific aims for Early Career Industry Fellowships are:

- develop the industry collaboration skills of early career researchers;
- support early career researchers to achieve translatable and/or commercialisable outcomes for industry; and
- deliver actionable outcomes for industry partners and research end-users.

## Scoring Matrix – Early Career Industry Fellowships

Assessment criterion	(A) <b>Outstanding</b> Of the highest quality and at the forefront of research in the field. Approximately 10% of applications should receive scores in this band.	(B) <b>Excellent</b> Of high quality and strongly competitive. Approximately 15% of applications should receive scores in this band.	(C) <b>Very Good</b> Interesting, sound and compelling. Approximately 20% of applications should receive scores in this band.	(D) <b>Good</b> Sound, but lacks a compelling element. Approximately 35% of applications are likely to fall into this band.	(E) <b>Uncompetitive</b> Has significant weaknesses. Approximately 20% of applications are likely to fall into this band.
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## Assessment criteria – Early Career Industry Fellowships

Assessment criteria and weightings	Assessment criteria details
Investigator/ Capability 35%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE), including a demonstrated track-record of high-quality research outputs appropriate to the discipline/s;</li> <li>▪ Demonstrated capability to undertake research projects in collaboration with industry and/or other research end-user groups; and</li> <li>▪ Alignment of the candidate’s skills and experience to the project.</li> </ul>
Project Quality and Innovation 35%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contribution of the project to address an important gap in knowledge or significant problem identified by the Key Industry Partner;</li> <li>▪ Novelty and innovation of the project in the context of previous research in the area;</li> <li>▪ Cohesiveness and clarity of the project design and implementation plan (including the appropriateness of the aim(s), conceptual framework, method, data and/or analyses); and</li> <li>▪ The clear presence of the Key Industry Partner in the design, method and delivery of the research.</li> </ul> <p><u>If the project involves Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander research, additional criteria include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The project’s level of collaboration, engagement, relationship building and benefit sharing with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and First Nations Organisations and Communities;</li> <li>▪ The project’s strategy and mechanisms for Indigenous research capacity building within the project;</li> <li>▪ The project’s adherence to the <a href="#">Australian Indigenous Data Sovereignty Principles</a>; and</li> <li>▪ The project’s understanding of, and proposed strategies to adhere to, the <a href="#">AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research</a> and NHMRC’s</li> </ul>

Assessment criteria and weightings	Assessment criteria details
	<p>guidelines on <a href="#">Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities</a>.</p>
<p>Feasibility and Strategic Alignment 15%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strength of engagement between the candidate and the Key Industry Partner, including previous projects (where applicable), and interactions to date on the proposed project;</li> <li>▪ The extent to which all parties demonstrate a commitment to the success of the project, and to developing and expanding a collaborative relationship, including the necessary facilities, resources and development opportunities that the organisations will provide for the candidate; and</li> <li>▪ The feasibility of the research in terms of the project’s design, participants, requested duration, required resources/facilities, risk management, and cost-effectiveness of the budget.</li> </ul>
<p>Benefit 15%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Delivery of actionable outcomes for the industry partner(s) and other research end-users;</li> <li>▪ New or advanced knowledge expected to result from the project;</li> <li>▪ Appropriateness, completeness and effectiveness of proposed pathways for short-, medium- or long-term adoption, translation, and/or commercialisation of the project outcomes, including IP management, by the industry partner(s) beyond the Fellowship completion;</li> <li>▪ Demonstration of the mutual benefit to the candidate and the Key Industry Partner including potential to lead to longer-term collaboration; and</li> <li>▪ The potential for economic, commercial, environmental, cultural and/or social benefit for Australia.</li> </ul>