**VU ARC/NHMRC APPLICATION PROCESS**

**OVERVIEW**

This document outlines the application process for all Australian Research Council (ARC) and National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) schemes at VU. The purpose of this process is to improve the quality, competitiveness and support to Applicants when submitting applications to the ARC and NHMRC.

**STAGE 1 - Notification of Intent (NOI)**

All Applicants (including re-submissions from previous rounds) are required to complete and submit a Notification of Intent (NOI) to the Office for Research (OfR) (see Appendix 1 for specific dates for each scheme). The NOI email must be sent to [researchfunding@vu.edu.au](mailto:researchfunding@vu.edu.au) and include:

* Project tittle
* Name of lead chief investigator
* Proposed team members
* FoR codes; and
* College and Institute affiliations.

Applicants **who do not submit an NOI** by the deadline **will not be permitted to submit an application** to the ARC, or the NHMRC in the forthcoming round, **except in** exceptional circumstances that must be approved by the Director, Office for Research.

Applicants can submit **NOI’s for the maximum number of grants they are permitted** to submit in accordance with the eligibility requirements in the funding rules for the funding body they are seeking funding (e.g. two for ARC DP’s or less in the case that the Applicant has relevant active projects, two for the upcoming NHMRC Project Grant round).

The OfR will provide supporting documentation to the Applicant. The Applicant can contact the OfR for advice on eligibility and process at any time by emailing [researchfunding@vu.edu.au](mailto:researchfunding@vu.edu.au).

The OfR will prepare a summary report for each College Research Director (CRD) to assist in coordinating the peer review process.

**STAGE 2 – PEER REVIEW**

This stage is to enable development of the application with sufficient peer-review to ensure the quality of the research proposed.

All Applicants are required to source one discipline expert, preferably an external expert, to review and provide feedback on their application/proposal. The reviewer is required to provide feedback in the form of track changes within the proposal, or in writing on the Peer Reviewer Form obtained from the OfR.

It is expected that the Applicant will seek peer-review from trusted and experienced sources and must amend the application accordingly to the feedback provided by the reviewers, or provide reasons to why the feedback was not incorporated.

As required and determined by the OfR, the OfR *may* make available grant reviewers and writers to assist Applicants with their submissions in regards to expert content advice and/or readability and critical review of how the selection criteria have been addressed. Requests for funding **must** be emailed to: [researchfunding@vu.edu.au](mailto:researchfunding@vu.edu.au).

The (developed) proposal, along with the following documents must be provided by the Applicant to the CRD for endorsement **before** the external deadline (see Appendix 1 for scheme specific dates). The Applicant is encouraged throughout the peer review process to meet with their CRD, to discuss the status of the proposal. The Applicant can submit the proposal to the CRD at any time before the due date, but no later than the due date. CRD endorsement is also required if any additional research time allocation is necessary for preparing applications.

* Copy of the reviewed proposal incorporating all feedback, or a reason why the feedback was not incorporated.
* Grants Coversheet

The CRD will review the documents provided and recommend whether the application has been developed sufficiently and is ready for Stage 3 (i.e. for final submission to the OfR for submission to the ARC/NHMRC).

If the application is endorsed by the CRD, they will sign the ARC/NHMRC Certification Page and Grants Coversheet ready for submission to the OfR (Stage 3) see Appendix 1 for scheme specific dates.

If the CRD (or authorised nominee) does not endorse the application at this stage, the Applicant may obtain approval from the CRD to amend the application and re-submit to the CRD prior to the OfR due date for final submissions.

**STAGE 3 - FINAL REVIEW AND APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

Stage 3 is for the final eligibility and compliance review by the OfR. Therefore, the application submitted at this stage must be the ‘penultimate’ version of the full application. This version is **due 3 weeks before the external funding body deadline** (see Appendix 1 for specific scheme dates).

Final (Eligibility & Compliance) Review:

Once Applicants have incorporated all feedback (from peers and CRD) they must finalise the application in RMS/RGMS. Applicants must advise the OfR via email that the application has been submitted via RMS/RGMS and include in this email all required supporting documentation:

* VU Grants Coversheet
* Costing Tool
* The Peer Reviewer Forms
* ARC/NHMRC Certifications Page signed by all named CI’s, PI’s and their Organisation/s.

The OfR will check the final application against the eligibility, compliance of the appropriate scheme’s Funding Rules and Instructions to Applicants. The Applicant may be required to fine-tune the final application in accordance to the final instructions provided by the OfR and re-submit to RMS/RGMS by a specific date notified by OfR.

Please note: Applicants that meet the 3 week internal deadline will be provided an additional internal critical readership review and feedback at this stage.

Submission to Funding Body:

Once applications have been reviewed for eligibility and compliance and all certifications are received, final endorsement/certification will be sought from the Director of the OfR for submission to the funding body, as per ARC/NHMRC requirements. The Director of the OfR (or nominee) will submit the approved application to the Funding Body on behalf of the Applicant. The Applicant will be notified when the application has been submitted.

**Applications that are not recommended for submission by the Director of the OfR will be notified immediately prior to the ARC or NHMRC closing date.**

**EXEMPTIONS**

All Applicants, irrespective of ARC/NHMRC experience and Academic Level must adhere to the above process. Failure to do so will result in their application not being submitted.

The only exceptions are:

1. Applicants who are part of an Application led by another eligible organisation will not be required participate in this process; however, the Applicant **must** inform the OfR and the appropriate CRD of their inclusion in a submission lead by another institution. The Certification Page provided to the Applicant by another eligible organisation **must** be signed by the CRD or nominee and the Director of OfR before the application is submitted via another eligible organisation. The OfR will organise the signature of the Director of OfR. The Applicant must also provide the OfR with a copy of the final application, VU signed Certification Page and Coversheet.

**UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS AND ALTERNATIVE FUNDING**

Applicants whose applications are declined at any stage of the process can contact the OfR to discuss their options. This may include;

1. Support to finding other funding opportunities via Research Professional (i.e. finding the most appropriate grant scheme to apply for & which is appropriate for the Applicant’s track record).
2. Accessing support from Researcher Development.
3. Discussing ways to improve track record and potential future applications to the ARC or NHMRC.

**Appendix 1: Deadlines for submission of ARC and NHMRC grants in 2018 (for funding commencing in 2019)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ARC Scheme** | **Stage 1: NOI** | **Stage 2: Peer Review submission to CRD** | **Stage 2: Peer Review CRD endorsement** | **Stage 3: Final Review (OfR)** | **Proposal Open (in RMS or RGMS or equivalent)** | **External Deadline** |
| ARC Future Fellowships | 23 Oct 2017 | As required | As required | 1 Nov 2017 | 3 Oct 2017 | 22 Nov 2017 |
| ARC Discovery Projects | 23 Oct 2017 | 1 Dec 2017 | 15 Dec 2017 | 30 Jan 2018 | 13 Nov 2017 | 21 Feb 2018 |
| ARC DECRA | 23 Oct 2017 | 1 Dec 2017 | 15 Dec 2017 | 21 Feb 2018 | 8 Jan 2018 | 14 Mar 2018 |
| ARC Discovery Indigenous | 23 Oct 2017 | 1 Dec 2017 | 15 Dec 2017 | 7 Mar 2018 | 21 Nov 2017 | 28 Mar 2018 |
| ARC LIEF | 23 Oct 2017 | 1 Dec 2017 | 15 Dec 2017 | 7 Mar 2018 | 28 Jan 2018 | 28 Mar 2018 |
| ARC Linkage - Projects | 23 Oct 2017 | As required | As required | 28 Nov 2017 | 1 Jan 2017 | 19 Dec 2018 |

\*NA – proposals can be submitted anytime during an annual funding cycle provided the above process is followed.

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| **NHMRC** **Scheme** | **Stage 1: NOI** | **Stage 2: Peer Review submission to CRD** | **Stage 2: Peer Review CRD endorsement** | **Stage 3: Final Review** | **Applications open** | **External Deadline** |
| NHMRC Career Development Fellowships | 23 Oct 2017 | 1 Dec 2017 | 15 Dec 2017 | 14Feb 2018 | 17 Jan 2018 | 7 Mar 2018 |
| NHMRC Research Fellowships | 23 Oct 2017 | 1 Dec 2017 | 15 Dec 2017 | 10 Jan 2018 | 6 Dec 2017 | 31 Jan 2018 |
| NHMRC Early Career Fellowships | 23 Oct 2017 | 1 Dec 2017 | 15 Dec 2017 | 7 Feb 2018 | 10 Jan 2018 | 28 Feb 2018 |
| NHMRC Project Grants | 23 Oct 2017 | 1 Dec 2017 | 15 Dec 2017 | 20 Feb 2018 | 10 Jan 2018 | 14 Mar 2018 |

NB: This includes applications from NHMRC partners (E.g. Cancer Australia and funding partners, Cancer Council Victoria, Cystic Fibrosis Australia, Duchenne Foundation, HeartKids Australia etc.. ) that must go through the NHMRC process. For full list see: [**https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/grants-funding/partnering-nhmrc**](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/grants-funding/partnering-nhmrc)