FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
Cross-Scheme Eligibility for schemes under the

*Linkage Program* (2017 edition)

**Version 1 - Release date: 27 September 2017**

- All participants should read the *Funding Rules for schemes under the Linkage Program (2017 edition)* available on the [ARC website](https://www.arc.gov.au).

- The scheme specific *Instructions to Applicants* documents available on the [ARC website](https://www.arc.gov.au) also contain important information for Research Office staff and individual participants preparing Proposals.

- The Australian Research Council (ARC) does not respond to queries from individual participants. Individual participants should direct all queries regarding ARC funding schemes to their Administering Organisation’s Research Office (or equivalent). If further information regarding any of the National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP) schemes is required, the Research Office should contact the NCGP inbox at [ncgp@arc.gov.au](mailto:ncgp@arc.gov.au).

- Information regarding the Research Management System (RMS) is available at the [ARC website](https://www.arc.gov.au), or by contacting [arc-systems@arc.gov.au](mailto:arc-systems@arc.gov.au) for assistance.

- Please note that this FAQ document addresses the eligibility of proposals submitted under the *Funding Rules for schemes under the Linkage Program (2017 edition)* (the Funding Rules). Please ensure that your proposal is eligible in accordance with the 2017 rules, which may differ from Funding Rules applying to proposals made in previous years.

- Questions regarding limits for currently held funding can be directed to your research office, who can contact ARC Post-award if necessary.

This Frequently Asked Questions document will be updated as required. Details of any amendments will be appended to this document.
1. **Cross-Scheme Eligibility**

1.1 **Will the ARC write to my Administering Organisation to seek clarification about eligibility issues?**

No. The ARC will no longer be contacting Administering Organisations requesting clarification around eligibility. All the information that the ARC Eligibility Committee will use to decide if a Proposal is eligible MUST be contained in the Proposal.

Applicants are expected to manage validations that appear in the Proposal form when applying. Information provided in the Proposal (e.g. CI/PI roles, medical statements etc.) MUST clearly address the issue at time of submission.

1.2 **Which scheme’s Projects or Proposals count as a Linkage Program Project?**

As per A3 of the Funding Rules, for the purposes of eligibility the Linkage Program refers to the following schemes:

- *Industrial Transformation Research Hubs*;
- *Industrial Transformation Training Centres*;
- *Linkage Projects*;
- *Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities*;
- *Learned Academies Special Projects*;
- *Supporting Responses to Commonwealth Science Council Priorities*;
- *ARC Centres of Excellence*;
- *Special Research Initiatives*; and
- other schemes as updated from time to time.

1.3 **For eligibility purposes, how is the number of Projects and Proposals with which I am involved counted?**

As per subsection A6.4.5 of the Linkage Program Funding Rules (2017 Edition), the ARC will calculate limits of Projects and Proposals as at the closing time of submission of Proposals, or when a Proposal is submitted for Linkage Projects (and may re-calculate this rule as other scheme rounds’ funding announcements are made and End of Year Reports are submitted) by totalling:

a. the number of Linkage Program CI and Director roles that the participant will hold on Active Projects as at the scheme-specific Active Project Assessment Date; and

b. the number of Linkage Program Proposals currently under assessment by the ARC which include that participant as a CI.

Notwithstanding the above

i. Proposals for *Industrial Transformation Research Hubs, Industrial Transformation Training Centres, Special Research Initiatives, Learned Academies Special Projects, Supporting Responses to Commonwealth Science Council Priorities* or any other Linkage Program scheme not included in the Linkage Program will not count towards limits in this subsection A6.4.

ii. Named Participants on a successful *Industrial Transformation Research Hubs, Industrial Transformation Training Centres, Special Research Initiatives, Learned Academies Special Projects, Supporting Responses to Commonwealth Science Council Priorities* or any other Linkage Program scheme not included in the Linkage Program will be required to meet the Project limit requirements by relinquishing existing Project(s), or relinquishing role(s) on existing Projects, or withdrawing Proposal(s) that would exceed the Project limits. The Project(s) and/or role(s) to be...
relinquished and/or Proposal(s) to be withdrawn must be nominated in the Proposal.

Note that eligibility may be checked at any stage of the assessment process.

Discovery Projects do not count towards the cross-scheme eligibility limits for the Linkage Program.

1.4 What is an Active Project? What is the Active Project Assessment Date?

An **Active Project** means a Project that is receiving funding according to the terms of the original Funding Agreement, or has any carryover funds approved by the ARC, or an approved variation to the Project End Date. The Active Projects, which affect your eligibility to apply for funding, are determined based on the Project’s End Date in RMS captured in the Proposal at submission.

The number of Active Projects that a participant is considered to have is counted as at the scheme-specific **Active Project Assessment Date**. The Active Project Assessment Date is six months after the Funding Commencement Date.

Note that the term Active Project Assessment Date is new to the Funding Rules for the Discovery Program (2017 edition).

1.5 How do I find my Active Projects?

You can see the list of all current **ARC Projects** on which you are named CI/Candidate in RMS. To find this list, go to the **Person Profile** section of RMS and click the link to **Current ARC Projects**. The Projects will appear in a format like the below example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identifier</th>
<th>Scheme Name</th>
<th>Investigators</th>
<th>Admin Organisation</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>End Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LP1434567</td>
<td>LP 2014</td>
<td>Dr Joe Bloggs</td>
<td>The University of X</td>
<td>Example Project Title</td>
<td>$876,543</td>
<td>30/06/2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This list from your Person Profile is pre-populated into the Personnel section of your Proposal Form.

If you believe that any of the Project information on your Person Profile page is incorrect, contact your Research Office, who will contact ARC Post-award to submit a **Variation to Funding Agreement (VFA)** if required.

For the purposes of eligibility, the Project’s **End Date** is used to determine whether it is an Active Project according to the scheme-specific Active Project Assessment Date.
1.6 **Can I withdraw a person from a Proposal that is currently under assessment?**

No, it is not possible for a named Participant to be removed from a Proposal once it has been submitted. If any participant named on a Proposal breaches the Project and Proposal limits specified in subsection A6.4 of the Funding Rules, the entire Proposal may be considered ineligible, and be required to be withdrawn.

1.7 **Can I defer the start date of the proposed Project to avoid cross scheme limits?**

No, as per subsection A6.1.4 of the Funding Rules, all participants must meet the Project and Proposal limits as at the scheme-specific Active Project Assessment Date in order to be able to apply.

As per subsection A6.1.5 of the Funding Rules, all participants named on the Project must also meet the Project and Proposal limits in order to start the Project.

You can request to defer commencement of a Project through the VFA process for other reasons as long as all investigators remain compliant on all eligibility limits.

1.8 **Can I wait until after I submit a Proposal to change the End Date of an existing Project so it doesn’t count towards the cross-scheme eligibility limits?**

No. Project End Dates must be updated via the VFA process to accurately reflect when the Project will end. Applicants must ensure all Project End Dates are correct prior to submitting Proposals to the ARC. The ARC may check eligibility at any stage of the assessment process.

It is not permissible for a Chief Investigator (CI) on a *Linkage Projects* or LIEF Proposal to apply for more than they can hold and then relinquish an awarded Project following announcement. Participants named on an *Industrial Transformation Research Hub* and/or *Industrial Transformation Training Centres* Proposal may apply for more than they can hold, but must meet Project and Proposal limits on award as per subsection A6.4.5(ii) of the Funding Rules.

Note: It is the Deputy Vice Chancellor–Research or equivalent that has responsibility to certify that all information in the Proposal is true and correct. This extends to Project End Dates. If you are aware that an Active Project will need to extend its End Date, contact the ARC Post-award team by requesting a VFA in RMS to extend the End Date for eligibility purposes prior to submission of a Proposal.

Subsection A12.6.2 of the Funding Rules states “If the ARC considers that a Proposal is incomplete, inaccurate or contains false or misleading information, the ARC may in its absolute discretion decide to recommend that the Proposal not be approved for funding.”
1.9 Do Projects or Proposals on which I am a Partner Investigator count toward cross-scheme eligibility limits?

No, as per subsection A6.4.1 of the Funding Rules, Project “limits do not apply to Partner Investigators or to unnamed participants on Projects such as Higher Degree by Research students and research assistants”.

Please note that a participant eligible to apply as a CI may no longer be eligible as a PI on an existing Project as eligibility criteria must be met throughout the Project Activity Period. Where circumstances have changed, a VFA must be submitted to change the existing Project.

1.10 Can the same research Proposal be submitted for different schemes?

Yes. However, note in accordance with subsection A7.1.4 of the Funding Rules, “the ARC will not fund the same research activities, infrastructure or Project previously funded or currently being funded through any other Commonwealth funding”. Assessors also take into account criteria such as value for money and originality when considering a Proposal.

If a Proposal is submitted under more than one ARC funding scheme, this must be included in the relevant section of the Proposal form. If both Proposals are successful, you will be required to manage any potential financial duplication either through an ARC-approved VFA or by relinquishing one of the successful Projects.

1.11 I have just been awarded funding, what should I do if my eligibility for other ARC Projects and/or Proposals has been affected?

Generally, as per subsection A6.1.4 of the Funding Rules, a Proposal may only be submitted for funding that the participant(s) would be eligible to hold.

However, if the newly awarded funding or any Post-award request causes the cross-scheme eligibility limits to be exceeded, as per subsection A6.4.5(ii) of the Funding Rules “Named Participants on a successful Industrial Transformation Research Hubs [or] Industrial Transformation Training Centres... Project will be required to meet the Project limit requirements by relinquishing existing Project(s), or relinquishing role(s) on existing Projects, or withdrawing Proposal(s) that would exceed the Project limits.”

Named Participants on a successful Industrial Transformation Research Hubs [or] Industrial Transformation Training Centres should be aware that the announcement of successful Projects may impact on the eligibility of other Linkage Program Proposals where they are listed as a CI and these schemes are currently being assessed.

1.12 Can I apply for a Linkage Program Project with more than the limit of Projects and Proposals, and relinquish a Project when I find out if I have been successful?

Yes, but only for certain schemes. Proposals submitted under the Industrial Transformation Research Hubs (IH) and Industrial Transformation Training Centres (IC) schemes will not count towards limits in subsection A6.4. As per subsection A6.4.5(ii) of the Funding Rules, named participants on successful IH and IC Projects “will be required to meet the Project limit requirements by relinquishing existing Project(s), or relinquishing role(s) on existing Projects, or withdrawing Proposal(s) that would exceed the Project limits. The Project(s) and/or role(s) to be relinquished and/or Proposal(s) to be withdrawn must be nominated in the Proposal.”

Please note that as per subsection A6.1.4 of the Funding Rules a Proposal for the Linkage Projects (LP) or Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities (LE) schemes, may only be submitted for funding that the participant would be eligible to hold under the Funding Rules as at the scheme-specific Active Project Assessment Date.
Further, as per subsection A6.1.5 of the Funding Rules, “A Project cannot commence until all CIs, PIs and Directors meet the eligibility criteria in these Funding Rules.”

This indicates that all limits must be met before any Project can commence.

2. Cross-Scheme Eligibility Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I want to apply for</th>
<th>What limits apply to me?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LP18 by 30 June 2018</strong></td>
<td>I can hold a maximum of three other Linkage Program Projects (excluding LIEF) as a CI or Director that will be Active Projects on 1 January 2019.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LP18 from 1 July 2018</strong></td>
<td>I can hold a maximum of three other Linkage Program Projects (excluding LIEF) as a CI or Director that will be Active Projects on 1 July 2019.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **IH18 or IC18** | I can hold a maximum of three other Linkage Program Projects (excluding LIEF) as a CI or Director that will be Active Projects on 1 July 2018.  

*Please note:* Participants can be funded for a maximum of one Director role (including Research Hub Director, Training Centre Director or Centre Director).  
IH18 or IC18 Proposals will not be ruled ineligible due to Project limits in A6.4 of the Funding Rules. However, if successful all named participants will be required to meet the limits by relinquishing existing Project(s), relinquishing role(s) on existing Project(s), or withdrawing Proposals. |
| **LE19** | I can hold a maximum of one other LIEF Project as a CI that will be an Active Project on 1 July 2019. |
| **More than one LP18** | On the Active Project Assessment Date, I can hold a maximum of four Linkage Program Projects (excluding LIEF) as a CI or Director including the Proposal/s currently being assessed. I cannot apply for more proposals than I can hold. |