



What is a Centre of Excellence and priorities leading up to the 2023 ARC mid-term review

Elisabetta Barberio – Wed 23rd November



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ARC Centres of Excellence objectives

- a. Undertake highly innovative and potentially transformational research that aims to achieve international standing and leads to a significant advancement of capabilities and knowledge;
- b. Link existing Australian research strengths and build critical mass with new capacity for interdisciplinary, collaborative approaches to address the most challenging and significant research problems;
- c. Develop relationships and build new networks with major national and international centres and research programs to help strengthen research, achieve global competitiveness and gain recognition for Australian research;
- d. Build Australia's human capacity by attracting and retaining, from within Australia and abroad, researchers of high international standing as well as the most promising research students;
- e. Provide high-quality postgraduate and postdoctoral training environments for the next generation of researchers;
- f. Offer Australian researchers opportunities to work on large-scale problems over longer periods of time;
- g. Establish Centres that have an impact on the wider community through interaction with, and beneficial outcomes for, higher education institutions, governments, industry and the private and non-profit sectors.

What success looks like]

- **Culture of self-assessment** - setting up effective performance management of projects/people.
- **Measure your performance**, continually benchmark and celebrate findings.
- **A shared vision** – highly integrated team – a community of practice.
- **Succession planning** is actively managed.
- **Best practice** for gender equality and diversity and a work/life balance culture in the workplace.
- **Exceptional career development** - professional development, coaching, mentoring, co-supervision and other opportunities for Centres staff and ECRs – a future workforce. Utilise an **ECR committee** representing students and postdocs.

Enhancing collaborations and capability

What is your centre now and what is the Centre's legacy you wish to deliver?

ARC Centres of Excellence are unique in leveraging the excellence and networking of individuals. But there is much more to do....

- Maximising prior collaborations as individuals you has formed the Centre.
- Develop new incentives and strategies to bring about a new culture of Centre-level scale of collaborations.
- Develop ideas on medium and longer term gains with key collaborators and build in ECRs participation within these strategic directions.
- Explore a range of mechanisms - for example seed grants with strategic funds, workshops and forums, media and outreach and new narratives to really promote the Centre's success and legacy.

Team Building]

- Building an integrated team can take up to two years (more with a pandemic), particularly with a geographical spread of organisations.
- Leverage strengths and passions.
- Culture of continuous learning, including innovative professional development.
- Culture of effective communication, cross-organisational responsibilities and shared vision of outcomes.
- Annual forums, workshops, videoconferences for regular updates, cross organisational supervision and mentoring.

A few images



The Mid-term Review

What, Why and When

A Mid-term Review is undertaken to:

- Assess whether Centre's progress is satisfactory.
- Determine if the Centre is meeting ARC's expectations in relation to operations and national focus.
- Provides constructive feedback on the Centre's performance and how it could be improved.

A satisfactory review is required for continued funding for the ARC Centre.

Approx Q4 of 2023

The Mid-term Review]

- Demonstrating research excellence is important, but it is not the only focus.
- Panel will be more interested in leadership, governance, capacity building and outreach.
- Interested in integration and how the Centre is operating across nodes or themes.
- Want assurance that the research environment for ECRs is exceptional.
- Expect to see evidence of gender and diversity policies and progress.
- Ask about succession planning and sustainability of the Centre when funding ceases.

The Mid-term Review]

- Written responses from key stakeholders including all partners
- Site visit with interviews with selected representatives* of the following:
 - Students
 - Postdocs
 - Director
 - Chief Investigators
 - Partner Organisations
 - Advisory Boards
 - Professional Staff
 - University of Melbourne DVCR

*selected by us, not the ARC

The Mid-term Review]

What we will be doing in early 2023 to prepare:

- Strategic plans
- Mock interviews in preparation for the site visit
- Contacting stakeholders and providing template for written responses

National Partners



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International Partners

