



ARDC Discovery Activities: Data and Services

Application information

Version 2 (updated 9/04/2019)

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Key dates

- **1 April 2019:** Applications open
- **11 April 2019:** FAQ/Q&A Webinar
- **1 May 2019 5pm AEST:** Applications close
- **15 May 2019:** Applicants notified of the outcome of their submission

Open call information

Information

All applicants are encouraged to read through all the documentation related to the Data portfolio of the ARDC Discovery Activities. This includes this open call information document as well as the application forms.

Key application points:

- Applicants should use the supplied template
- For program 2 (Institutional role in a data commons) applicants are asked to submit only one application form per lead organisation. If a lead organisation submits more than one proposal for program 2 only the highest scoring will be considered.
- Applications should address the selection criteria (both content and organisation criteria)
- Applications should be no longer than 2 A4 pages in length (excluding overview information page)

If you have any questions please contact submissions@ardc.edu.au

Submission

Applicants are asked to submit their fully completed documentation via the online submission page by 1 May 2019 5pm AEST. Applications that are received after this date will not be considered for funding.

Selection

A selection panel of representatives from ARDC, NCRIS, university infrastructure and university library, will convene to assess and select projects against the selection criteria.

Applicants will be notified by email on the 15 May 2019.

Questions

The ARDC will set up a FAQ register to answer any questions that we receive about the open call. A Q&A webinar will be run by the ARDC on 11 April 2019. FAQs and other relevant information will be shared at this event.

If you have any questions please contact submissions@ardc.edu.au

Program information and application criteria

Background

The Australian Research Data Commons has identified “[Data and Services: Maximising the Value of Australia’s FAIR Data](#)” as one of its strategic themes¹. The ARDC would like to fund a number of investigative activities to identify issues, needs, gaps and requirements within this Data Portfolio. The outputs of these relatively short “discovery” activities will be used in the preparation of a national data summit to be held in Q3 of 2019 and to inform future ARDC long-term data initiatives.

The ARDC will fund projects of up to \$50,000 with a completion date of September 15 2019. A maximum of \$2.1m is allocated to this portfolio (i.e. up to forty two projects were they all to be funded to \$50K).

This open call intends to elicit broad involvement from throughout the sector as part of building collective vision and engagement in a data commons. The projects are not meant to be academic reports but rather “doing and then sharing learnings”. The projects themselves should provide meaningful outcomes for research communities and organisations as well as broader learnings for ARDC and the sector.

Two programs have been identified:

1. Transformative data collections
2. Institutional role in a data commons

All proposals must be informed by the [FAIR principles](#).

¹ The five (draft) strategic themes are:

Theme 1 - Coordination and Coherence: Facilitating an Australian research data commons

Theme 2 - People and Policy: Transforming culture and community

Theme 3 - Data and Services: Maximising the value of Australia’s data assets

Theme 4 - Software and Platforms: Enabling research insights

Theme 5 - Storage and Compute: Providing foundation infrastructure

Program 1: Transformative data collections

Aim of the funding program

ARDC is looking to help establish, develop, or improve the sustainability of significant data collections that will drive innovation in Australian research. These collections should have strong community support, have a scope that is clearly beyond a single institution, and enable new (kinds of) research. Through this “discovery” program of work ARDC seeks to investigate with the sector the following questions:

- What is needed to build/sustain community ownership of a collection?
- What is the appropriate content strategy for transformative collections (to ensure coverage)?
- What role does standardisation play in a transformative data collection?
- How might models of institutional participation relate to sustainable national and community collections?

Areas of fundable activity

Therefore ARDC invites project proposals for activity in any or all of these areas:

1: Building or sustaining community ownership of a collection

Example of fundable activities in this category might include (but are not limited to):

- Workshops to establish a credible set of leaders and key stakeholders for a future collection.
- Establishing new community governance for an existing collection
- Alignment of collection with research challenges and programs of a designated community
- Identifying or addressing the interests of providers and consumers of data

2. Content strategy for a transformative collection

Example of fundable activities in this category might include (but are not limited to):

- Audit of pre-existing datasets upon which a new transformative collection can be built
- New collection development policies for a transformative collection (e.g. for longitudinal studies) including versioning, change management, scope.
- Aligning the ‘big ticket’ community decadal research challenges/ initiatives to a collection’s coverage

3. Data Standardisation in a transformative data collection

Example of fundable activities in this category might include (but are not limited to):

- Establishing/ improving distributed collections empowered by standard formats, agreed protocols and well-defined data properties
- Improvements to or support for emerging community standards
- Data interoperability with tools and analytical platforms
- National and international data aggregation

- Improvements to support:
 - Meta-analysis
 - Integration
 - Artificial Intelligence/Deep Learning/Machine Learning

4. Models of institutional participation for a more sustainable national and community collection

Example of fundable activities in this category might include (but are not limited to):

- Creating or improving a distributed multi-institutional collection
- Establishing/improving multi-institutional collaborations supporting a transformative collection
- Analysis of successful models and good practice internationally
- Alignment of a collection with an institutional specialisation or mission

Criteria for assessment of proposals under Program 1

Content related criteria

1. How effectively does this project address one or more of the areas listed above? (max 14 points)
2. Does the collection (have the potential to) support new research areas or approaches? (max 14 points)
3. How will data be made more FAIR as a result of this project? (max 3 points)
4. Is the domain a broad area with a large number of potential reusers or a small area with limited number of expected reusers and benefit? Numbers to support the potential reuse are welcome. (A larger area is preferred) (max 6 points)
5. Does this collection have or have potential for impact beyond the research sector? Are there expected reusers in business, education or policy? Does the research from this collection have applications for economic, social or environmental benefit? (max 6 points)
6. Is this in a new area in which there are not already existing collections? (A new area is preferred) (max 6 points)
7. Will this project increase the coverage of disciplines as part of an ARDC portfolio investment? (Is this not yet covered by another earlier project or a project in this round?) (max 8 points)
8. How national is the scope of the collection? (Are more organisations supporting the study, expressed through letters of support) (max 8 points)
9. Is there a clear description of who will be consulted in the investigation? (max 6 points)

Organisation related criteria

1. Is there a clear description of who will deliver the project? (max 3 points)
2. Does/do the organisation(s) have a demonstrated track record of delivering high quality project outcomes on time? (max 5 points)
3. What is the longer term commitment from the organisation(s) to carry the collection forward beyond the project? (Expressed in In-kind investment and commitment statements) (max 6 points)

4. Will this project increase the coverage of research organisations as part of an ARDC portfolio investment? (Is this organisation not yet covered by another earlier project or a project in this round?) (max 3 points)
5. What is the size of the organisation and do they currently play a significant role in the relevant community? (max 6 points)
6. Is there a connection between the collection domain and a strategic area of focus for the main organisation? (max 6 points)

Total points across Content and Organisation criteria = 100

Program 2: Institutional role in a data commons

Aim of the funding program

ARDC wants to partner with research institutions to increase the efficiency and integrity of Australian research across the sector by enabling non-publication research outputs (data, software, models, primary materials etc) to be captured and managed systematically. This will increase the efficiency of the research process to begin with and the reproducibility and verification of research findings subsequently. The aim of these activities will be to understand what the drivers for research organisations are in this regard, and the important role institutions can play in a national and global data commons. Through this “discovery” program of work ARDC seeks to investigate with the sector the following questions:

- What data infrastructure, policies and procedures will support better research?
- How does/could an institution address management of sensitive data?
- How can an institution’s data infrastructure and policy integrate with national, discipline, and international levels?

Areas of fundable activity

Therefore ARDC invites project proposals for activity in any or all of these areas:

1. Institutional data infrastructure, policies and procedures to support better research

Example of fundable activities in this category might include (but are not limited to):

- New or improved policies/procedures for resourcing, disposing and retaining data
- Better tracking data outputs managed inside and outside the organisation
- Improved research data provenance
- Documentation of regulatory and good practice requirements
- Initiatives to promote appropriate data culture through incentives and rewards
- Analysis or implementation of trusted/certified data storage platforms

2. Management of sensitive data

Example of fundable activities in this category might include (but are not limited to):

- Audit of sensitive data risks and capability
- Collaboration arrangements for sensitive data
- Analysis or implementation data storage and analysis platforms for sensitive data

3. Integration of institutionally supported data infrastructure with national, discipline, and international infrastructure

Example of fundable activities in this category might include (but are not limited to):

- Institutional contributions to distributed infrastructure
- Shared infrastructure models

- Institutional specialisation

Eligibility

This program investigates how Australia's research system can enjoy the research efficiency and integrity dividends of better data arrangements. It also explores the key foundational role that long-lived institutions can play in the persistence of the underpinnings of research and the (inter)national system. The program is therefore restricted to higher education institutions (specifically Higher Education Support Act 2003 [Table A providers](#)) and Commonwealth publicly funded research agencies (CSIRO, AIATSIS, AIMS, ANSTO). Only one project (the highest rated application) per institution will be considered for funding, to provide a broad coverage of Australia's research outputs.

Criteria for assessment of proposals under Program 2

Content criteria:

1. How does this project effectively address one or more of the areas listed above? (max 22 points)
2. How will the project help to improve research efficiency and integrity? (max 14 points)
3. How will more data be made (more) FAIR as a result of this project? (max 5 points)
4. Which stakeholders within the institution will be consulted? (the broader and more comprehensive the better) (max 9 points)
5. Is there intent to carry this work forward beyond the project? (max 9 points)
6. Is this a joint project with several research organisations? Will the results be applicable for other institutions? (max 14 points)

Organisation criteria:

1. Describe the track record of delivering relevant high quality studies/activities on time (max 8 points)
2. How will this project increase the coverage of research organisations as part of an ARDC portfolio investment? (Has this organisation not yet been covered by another earlier project or a project in this round?) (max 5 points)
3. How will this project provide an integrity benefit for a larger number of research publications? (max 9 points)
4. Is this activity supported by an institutional policy/policy drive? (max 5 points)

Total points across Content and Organisation criteria = 100