Australian Government
Australian Research Council

ARC | RGS RESEARCH GRANTS SERVICES

National Intelligence and Security Discovery Research Grants (NISDRG) Program Round 4

Expression of Interest Information Webinar
31 August 2023

Australian Government | Office of National Intelligence

Introductions

Key agencies

- Office of National Intelligence (ONI) – Policy Owner / Funding Entity
- Australian Research Council (ARC) – Research Grants Services (RGS), Grants Administration

Webinar Agenda

- About the National Intelligence and Security Discovery Research Grants (NISDRG) program
- Research Grants Services (RGS) and ONI roles
- The Intelligence Challenges
- The Technological Readiness Level
- The available grant funding
- Eligibility, including personnel requirements
- How to apply
- The EOI Assessment Process
- Common questions

About the NISDRG Program

- NISDRG supports excellent research that deepens understanding of **emerging science and technology** and addresses intelligence and national security interests.
- The grant program aims to **facilitate innovation** and **develop national security and intelligence capacity**. It will also enable Australia's National Intelligence and Security Communities to systematically **engage with Australia's research and technology community**.
- NISDRG provides support to priority research areas outlined in the **Intelligence Challenges**.

NISDRG Program objectives

- Support excellent **fundamental research** in areas identified in the Intelligence Challenges
- Build Australia's research capacity and capability in these areas;
- Enhance collaboration
- Support systematic and coordinated engagement between research, science and technology community and the Australia's National Intelligence Communities.

NISDRG Program outcomes

- *Increased scale of Australian research* into emerging science and technology impacting Australia's national security, sovereignty and potential future intelligence capability.
- *Strengthened relationships and greater interaction* between the research community and Australia's National Intelligence and Security Communities.
- Enhanced ability to access and *use relevant knowledge and research to inform policy development* in intelligence and national security related science and technology.
- While NISDRGs are provided to Australian Universities, *collaborative engagement with Australian start-up companies* is also strongly encouraged.

What is Research Grants Services?

- The ARC is providing Research Grants Services (RGS) for Government Agencies
  - Supports the Whole of Government Streamlining Government Grants Administration Program
  - Provides pre-award and/or post-award management of research grants funded by other government entities tailored to the funding entity needs
- RGS provides pre and post award grants administration support to ONI for the NISDRG Program.

ONI vs ARC RGS?

ONI :

- Policy owners and Funding Entities of NISDRG
- Decision makers/approvers of grant applications and most variations etc.
- Enter into Grant Agreements with successful eligible organisations
- Engage with grantees and research teams over the life of projects.

ARC:

- Facilitates the selection process and management of successful grants.

Personnel citizenship requirements

Personnel, as described below, must meet the following criteria:

- Australian citizen or
- Australian permanent resident, or
- New Zealand Special Category Visa holder

- All named personnel;
- Support Personnel and students **receiving an Award, salary or stipend** from the grant; and
- Individuals working on the Project who would be named in publications or would otherwise link their association with the Government funded project.

Grant Funding

- $8 million is available for the grant opportunity commencing in 2024
- **Funding period:** 1 year up to 3 years
- **Funding level per Grant:** min. $400,000 to max. $800,000
- **Funding per year:** min. $100,000 – max. $400,000

NOTE: there is no indexation of funding – build salary indexation into the requested funding

Intelligence Challenges (ONI)

You must select and address one or more Intelligence Challenge:

- Covert collection
- Space-based
- Identity management
- Emerging biological and material science exploitation
- Cyber security, protective security and offensive cyber
- Human behaviour and influence
- Data-driven and real-time analytical
- Situation awareness and multi-source assessment

Technological Readiness Level (TRL)

A scale to identify the maturity of research from Basic Research (TRL1) to System Proven and Ready for Full Commercial Deployment (TRL9).

The scale for self-assessment is located - TRL Explanations 1.pdf (defence.gov.au).

The Technological Readiness Level will help ONI to understand the Research and Development stage of the proposed research.

NISDRG Eligibility

At the EOI stage, only the Project Leader (Lead Chief Investigator) and the Administering Organisation will be added to the form.

The Project Leader must:

- have the capacity to manage the project
- must be engaged by the Administering Organisation for the period of the project activity, including any post project reporting period
- not be undertaking a Higher Degree by Research during the project
- reside in Australia for more than 50 per cent of the project activity period
- be an Australian citizen, Australian permanent resident or New Zealand Special Category Visa holder.

NISDRG Eligibility

Research Offices will certify that researchers are eligible to apply at both the EOI and full application stage.

All eligibility questions will be contained in the full application form. If you are successful in the EOI and are invited to complete a full application, there will be validations within the full application form to assist with eligibility requirements.

Please read the Grant Guidelines for details about eligibility.

Please note – partner orgs cannot be an Australian National Intelligence Community member entity. See the ONI website for a list of these organisations - www.oni.gov.au

Personnel Requirements

- **The Project Leader** or Lead Chief Investigator – must be engaged with the Administering Organisation for the period of the project activity including any post project reporting period.
- At **least one Chief Investigator** – must be an employee for at least 20 per cent of Full Time Equivalent (0.2 FTE) or be a holder of an honorary academic appointment at an Eligible Organisation.
- **Other Chief investigators** – must meet at least one of the following criteria as at the grant commencement date and at any time during the project activity period.:
    - engaged at an Eligible Organisation for the project activity period
    - an employee for at least 0.2 FTE at an Eligible Organisation
    - be the holder of an honorary academic appointment (as defined in the Glossary) at an Eligible Organisation.
- **Partner Investigators –** must not meet the eligibility criteria for CIs at the grant commencement date or at any time during the project activity period.

Those who can draw a salary from a NISDRG grant

Who can draw a salary from the grant?

- Those that meet the citizen eligibility criteria
- CIs with ***less*** than 10 years since the award of earliest PhD, including Allowable Career Interruptions (*Fellowship only*)
- Postgraduate researchers (salary *plus* NISDRG scholarship)
- Other personnel

Who cannot draw a salary from the grant

- Those that do not meet the citizen eligibility criteria
- Chief Investigators with ***more*** than 10 years since the award of earliest PhD, including Allowable Career Interruptions
- Partner Investigators (PI's)

Fellowship and Scholarship Awards

Fellowship

- $80,000, in total, is available to support a named Chief Investigator with **less** than 10 years since the award of earliest PhD, including Allowable Career Interruptions
- must be identified in the budget
- is included in the $800,000 total available

Scholarship

- $60,000 is available to support a postgraduate researcher
- must be identified in the budget
- is included in the $800,000 total available

Fellowship and Scholarship holders must be Australian citizens, Australian Permanent Residents or New Zealand Special Category Visa holders.

Applying for NISDRG grants

- Important dates for the program are on the RGS website

  https://www.researchgrants.gov.au/key-dates-nisdrg

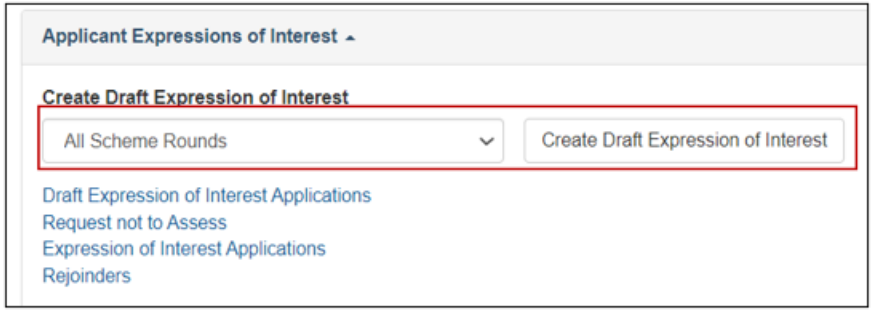
- Expression of Interest supporting documentation is located on GrantConnect

  https://www.grants.gov.au/

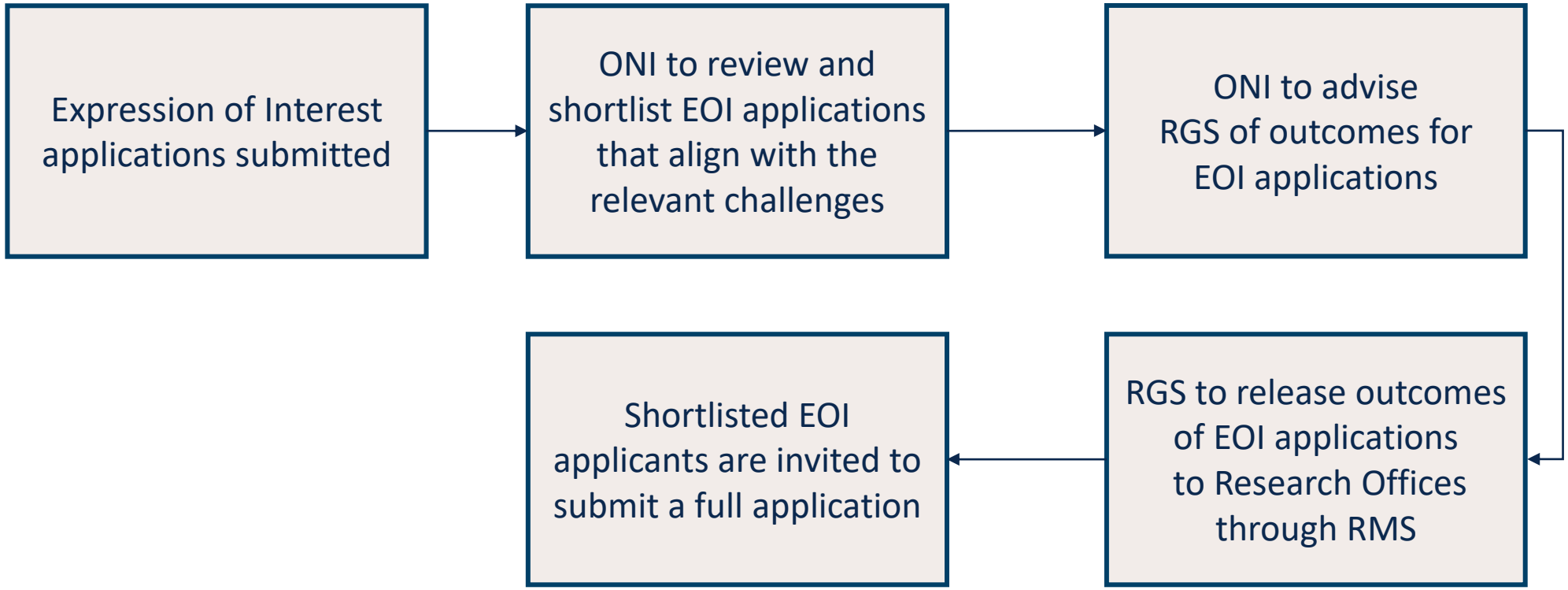
- Expression of Interest applications are available through the ONI RMS portal:

  https://rmsoni.researchgrants.gov.au/

- Expression of Interest Applications close 5.00pm on **25 September 2023**.



EOI Assessment process



Other matters

- Security briefing
- Grantees required to develop KPI’s and a Recruitment plan
- Reporting Requirements:
  - Six-monthly progress reports, incl. all publications
  - Annual End of Year Reporting
  - Final Report six months after the project end date
- Regular outreach

Common Questions

- There are no grant limits that apply to NISDRG.
- The ARC National Interest Test and Medical Research Policy do **not** apply to NISDRG.
- Citizenship eligibility documentation will be captured in RMS.
- All information is accessible through GrantConnect
- Login details for the ONI RMS Portal is the same in the ARC RMS portal

  (You may need to create an account if you do not have an RMS login)

More Details

Check the Grant Guidelines, the draft Grant Agreement, Instructions to Applicants and Frequently Asked Questions

- All relevant documentation is on GrantConnect – www.grants.gov.au

Researchers:

- Contact the Research Office of an Eligible Administering Organisation in the first instance
- Expressions of Interest Applications in RMS are managed by the Research Office
- RMS contacts within Research Offices are on the ARC website: Explore University Partner | Australian Research Council

Research Offices:

- Clarification may be sought from ARC-NISDRG@arc.gov.au

Thank you

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Questions?