**Australian Government**

**Australian Research Council**

ARC | RGS RESEARCH GRANTS SERVICES

# National Intelligence Discovery Grants (NIDG) Program Round 5
# for funding commencing in 2025

Expression of Interest Information Webinar
Date: 21 August 2024

**Australian Government** | Office of National Intelligence

# Change of Program Name

**National Intelligence Discovery Grants (NIDG) Program**

Formerly known as the National Intelligence and Security Discovery Research Grants (NISDRG) Program

# Introductions

Key agencies

- Office of National Intelligence (ONI) – Policy Owner / Funding Entity

- Australian Research Council (ARC) – Research Grants Services (RGS), Grants Management

# Webinar Agenda

- About the National Intelligence Discovery Grants (NIDG) program
- RGS and ONI roles
- The EOI Process
- Personnel requirements
- Available grant funding
- The Intelligence Challenges
- Technology Readiness Level
- Eligibility
- How to apply
- Common questions

# About the NIDG Program

- The NIDG program is run as a two-stage process including a EOI and Full Application processes. EOIs open on **26 August 2024** and closes on **24 September 2024**.

- NIDG supports excellent research that deepens understanding of **emerging science, social science, engineering and technology** that addresses intelligence and national security interests.

- The grant program aims to **facilitate innovation** and **develop Australia's intelligence capacity**. It will also enable Australia's National Intelligence Community to systematically **engage with Australia's research and technology community**.

- NIDG provides support to priority research areas outlined in the **Intelligence Challenges**.

# NIDG Program objectives

- Support excellent **fundamental research** in areas identified in the Intelligence Challenges

- Build Australia's research capacity and capability in these areas by supporting researchers, trainees and contributing to open source research

- Enhance collaboration in research, science and technology

- Support systematic and coordinated engagement between research, science and technology community and Australia's National Intelligence Communities (NIC)

# NIDG 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 Community.

- Enhanced ability to access and *use relevant knowledge and research to inform policy development* in intelligence related science and technology.

While NIDGs are provided to Australian Universities, *collaborative engagement with Australian start-up companies* is also strongly encouraged.

Connecting researchers to opportunity.

# What is Research Grants Services?

- The ARC is providing Research Grants Services (RGS) for Government Agencies

    – Supports the Whole of Government Streamlining Government Grants Management Program

    – Provides support for 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 management support to ONI for the NIDG Program

- All enquiries regarding the program should be directed to the RGS team at ARC-NIDG@arc.gov.au.

Connecting researchers to opportunity.

# ONI vs ARC RGS?

ONI :

- Policy owner and Funding Entity of NIDG

- Decision maker/approver 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 RGS:

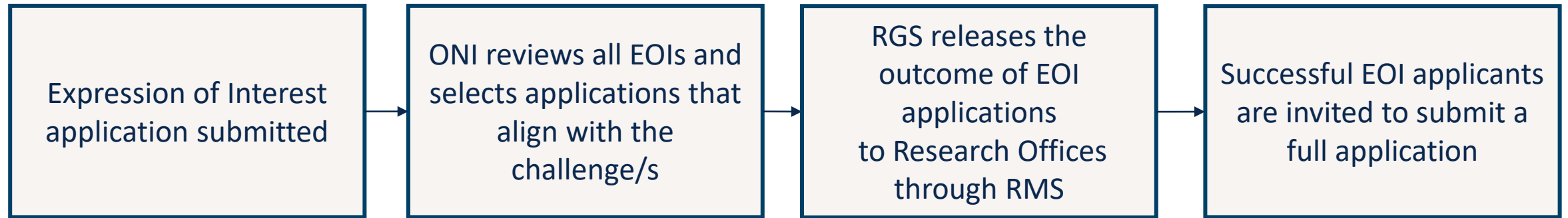- Supports and facilitates the selection process and management of successful grants.

Connecting researchers to opportunity.

# Expression of Interest vs Full Application

| Expression of Interest applications | Full application |
|---|---|
| Lead CI only | All named applicants (CI and PI) |
| Administering Organisation only | All named Organisations |
| One page project description | Full description of the project |
| Intelligence Challenges aligned (up to 3) to the project | Intelligence Challenges aligned (up to 3) to the project |
| The projects current Technological Readiness Level (TRL) | The projects current Technological Readiness Level (TRL) |
| Certification of Eligibility to apply | Upload of Passport, Visa or other documentation and Certification of Eligibility to apply |

# EOI Assessment Process

Expression of Interest application submitted → ONI reviews all EOIs and selects applications that align with the challenge/s → RGS releases the outcome of EOI applications to Research Offices through RMS → Successful EOI applicants are invited to submit a full application

Timeline
- EOI Open 26 August
- EOI Close 24 September
- Anticipated EOI announcement 22 October
- Full application open 22 October
- Full application close 17 December
- Anticipated full application announcement Mid 2025

Connecting researchers to opportunity.

# Personnel citizenship requirements

Grant Personnel 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

- 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 2025

- **Funding period:** 1 year up to 3 years

- **Funding level per Grant:** min. $400,000 to max. $800,000 (previously $600,000)

- **Funding per year:** min. $100,000 to max. $400,000

- **NOTES**:

    o there is no indexation of funding – applicants should build salary indexation into the requested funding

    o ad hoc additional support (top-ups) in earlier rounds will NOT be offered in Round 5

# Intelligence Challenges

You must select and address at least **one** and no more than **three** of the following nine Intelligence Challenges:

- Covert collection challenges

- Space-based challenges

- Identity management challenges

- Emerging biological science challenges

- Emerging material science challenges

- Cyber security, protective security and offensive cyber challenges

- Human behaviour and influence challenges

- Data-driven and real-time analytical challenges

- Situation awareness and multi-source assessment challenges

# Technology 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 (defence.gov.au).

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

# NIDG Eligibility

At the EOI stage, only the Project Leader (Lead Chief Investigator) and the Administering Organisation are to 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.

# NIDG Eligibility

The Administering Organisation's Research Office will certify that researchers are eligible to apply at both the EOI and full application stage.

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 organisations cannot be an Australian National Intelligence Community (NIC) member entity.

See the ONI website for a list of these organisations: [www.oni.gov.au.](http://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 always meet at least one of the following criteria as at the grant commencement date and 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.

# Fellowship and Scholarship Awards

**Fellowship**

- **$80,000** (over the life of the grant) 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 ONI funding available

**Scholarship**

- **$60,000** (over the life of the grant) is available to support a postgraduate researcher

- must be identified in the budget

- is included in the $800,000 ONI total funding available

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

# Drawing a salary from an NIDG grant

**Who can draw a salary from the grant?**

- A CI with *less* than 10 years since the award of earliest PhD, including Allowable Career Interruptions who has been awarded a NIDG Fellowship (*one Fellowship only per grant*)

- Postgraduate researchers (salary *plus* **one** NIDG scholarship only)

- Other personnel (not CIs and PIs), such as technicians and laboratory assistants

**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 (PIs)

# Applying for NIDG grants

- Important dates for the program are on the RGS website: https://www.researchgrants.gov.au/key-dates-nisdrg_nidg

- Expression of Interest supporting documentation is located on GrantConnect: https://www.grants.gov.au/

- Expression of Interest applications must be submitted through the ONI-RMS portal: https://rmsoni.researchgrants.gov.au/

- Expression of Interest Applications

  - Open **26 August 2024**

  - Close 5.00pm AEST on **24 September 2024**

# Accessing RMS



- You do not require an additional account in RMS.

- Log into the ONI RMS Portal: https://rmsoni.researchgrants.gov.au/

- You should see the applicant panels on the Action Centre.

If not, You may need to update your Administrating Organisation in your person profile from Office of National Intelligence.

- Instructions to update your Administering organisation can be found on the Research Grants website General Information about RMS | Research Grants Services.

- The applicant role must be applied to your profile. The Research Office can apply this for you.

- If you are still unable to view the Applicant panels scroll to the bottom of your screen and select *Show all Panels*.
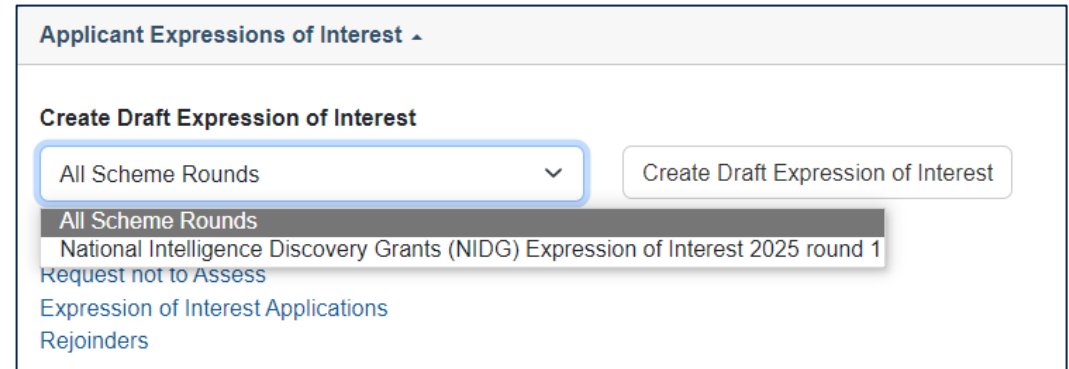
# Locating the EOI application form

- To create a draft Expression of Interest locate the 'Applicant Expression of Interest' panel.

- From the 'Create Draft Expression of Interest' (All Scheme Rounds) drop-down selection Select 'NIDG Expression of Interest' then click 'Create Draft Expression of Interest'.

- The draft application form will appear. Select Form or Edit to review and complete the application form.

- One all questions and form parts are complete, the application state will change to *Ready to submit*, submit the application to your research office for review. After review, the research office will submit the application to ONI.

Applicant Expressions of Interest ▲

Create Draft Expression of Interest

| All Scheme Rounds | ⌄ | | Create Draft Expression of Interest |

All Scheme Rounds
National Intelligence Discovery Grants (NIDG) Expression of Interest 2025 round 1

Request not to Assess
Expression of Interest Applications
Rejoinders

| Scheme Round | Status | Actions | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| EIID25 round 1 | Draft | Edit | Details | Delete | Access |

Connecting researchers to opportunity.

# Other matters

- Security briefing

- Grantees required to develop KPI's, Recruitment plan and Activity budget.

- 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 by ONI

  - Including site visits and attendance by CIs at an Annual NIC Summit in Canberra

# Common Questions

- There are no grant limits that apply to NIDG.

- The ARC Medical Research Policy does **not** apply to NIDG.

- 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 will need to create an RMS account if you do not have one)*

# More Details

Refer to the Grant Guidelines, the Intelligence Challenges, 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

Research Offices:

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

# Thank you
# Any Questions?

Australian Government | Office of National Intelligence

ARC | RGS RESEARCH GRANTS SERVICES | RMS

## Contact Information

Research Grants Services

T | 02 6206 7206

E | ARC-NIDG@arc.gov.au

W | researchgrants.gov.au

Connecting researchers to opportunity.