Hints for ARC Discovery Applicants – 2013

College contacts for application support:
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Information to assist College of Science, Engineering and Health applicants is available on the web at:
URL:  http://www.rmit.edu.au/seh/grants

This document has been compiled from common feedback and ARC documentation:

1. Read the ARC Discovery Instructions to Applicants and Funding Rules before starting to complete the application form. Refer to them continually as you complete the application form and prepare your proposal.

2. You will need to submit the standard RMIT Coversheet with your application. It may be obtained from the web at: URL: http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=k33ottx95ahx1

3. The Discovery Project Certification Form must be signed by all applicants named on the proposal and an authorised representative of their organisation, excluding:
   - the employing organisation of overseas PIs, and
   - The current organisation of any participant whose relevant organisation for the proposal is not their current organisation.

Form available as part of the 2013 Application Kit on the web at the URL above (point 2)

4. RMIT University’s address is: RMIT University, GPO Box 2476, Melbourne VIC 3001, Australia.

5. All named participants must have an RMS ID and password. Participants must be invited to join your application and may accept or reject the invitation. To accept or reject the invitation they must log into RMS.

6. Ensure the Project Leader is entered first.

7. You must set the edit/access rights for each participant, and can grant edit/access rights to non-participants, but remember to change them back before submission so that you are able to edit the rejoinder.

8. Research codes may be found at http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=frzjsuv5jsex and are added to the RMS application form from a drop down list. The codes must be listed in order of priority with the most important (highest percentages) first. FoR codes are used to determine your assessors so select them carefully.

9. Proposal titles should be memorable, short, precise and informative. They should have impact!!

10. Avoid using acronyms and do not use ALL upper case letters in your title and summaries. Avoid quotation marks in all RMS fields.

11. Project Summary (750 characters, approximately 100 words): Regard the summary as promotional material rather than academic writing. It must grab and maintain the interest of academic readers (assessors) and educated non academic readers!

12. Summary of Project for Public release (350 characters, approximately 50 words) setting out the purpose and expected outcomes of the project. This must be in plain language suitable for the general public.

13. Additional text sections must be uploaded into RMS as PDF documents:
   - The ARC specifies headings to be used in some additional text sections (e.g. C, Project Description; E, Budget Justification; F, Track Record) you must use these headings, in the order specified. Refer to the ARC Discovery Instructions to Applicants document, available at this website: http://www.arc.gov.au/ncgp/dp/dp_instructions.htm
• Avoid using passive or tentative language; use active, confident and positive words and phrases (e.g. “We will investigate…” rather than “In this project, we hope to study…”)

• Keep in mind the weightings of the selection criteria:
  o Investigators track record – 40%
  o Project Quality and Innovation – 25%
  o Feasibility and Benefit - 20%
  o Research Environment – 15%

• NOTE: There is no score for Background so keep it short and succinct (ideally no more than 2 pages, 3 at most). However, it is the first thing assessors read so it must be clear, focussed and well written. It needs to inspire your readers to continue reading. If you lose your readers in the first couple of pages you are unlikely to get them back!

• The Background must place the project into the international context of the discipline. Refer to the work of others to show that you are aware of what else is happening in this research discipline, nationally and internationally.

14. Budget:
  o ARC will pay salary loadings of 28%. Based on last year’s ARC instructions indexation and EBA increases are not to be factored into your budget. Salary calculators (Excel spreadsheets) are available on the web at: http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=t9fq6k9qq25c1 to assist. The salary calculations apply to RMIT researchers or staff to be appointed at RMIT ONLY. You will need to ASK colleagues from other Universities or overseas for an indication of what their salary and salary service rates are; you must not use RMIT University rates for non-RMIT University personnel.
  o Requests for teaching relief (up to a total value of $40,000 per year) must be accompanied by a strong, strategic justification in terms of achieving a successful outcome for the project, to have a chance for success.
  o PhD stipends, at a minimum of $23,728 (2012$)
  o Travel costs essential to the Project must not exceed $50,000 over the life of the Project.

15. Please provide one full electronic copy of your draft application to the College to review (If possible, please provide word versions of additional text sections for ease of providing feedback).

16. The RMIT Coversheet, signed by your Head of School must accompany (or follow shortly after) your draft – an electronic document is acceptable.

17. If in doubt, telephone or e-mail Caroline Northwood for advice (contact details above)

RMS:
1. The ARC Discovery Application form is available in RMS. To access the form go to http://www.arc.gov.au/applicants/system_default.htm select RMS Login - enter your RMS ID and Password and select the appropriate application from the drop down menu;
2. Instructions for using RMS and to request an ID and password may be obtained from: http://www.arc.gov.au/applicants/system_default.htm
3. Don’t use the ‘Back’ button on top of your internet browser while you are in RMS; use the navigation buttons in RMS;
4. Save often. At LEAST every 10 minutes; RMS will time out after 30 minutes of inactivity.

Further tips for using RMS are available at: http://www.arc.gov.au/applicants/rms_info.htm#tips

Good luck!