

## Annex E2

### Support for University-based astronomy from the National Competitive Grants Program

Australian astronomers are quite successful in accessing support for their research under the National Competitive Grants Program managed by the ARC. The following information has been derived from information on the ARC's website at [www.arc.gov.au](http://www.arc.gov.au).

#### 1. Grant funding for Astronomy

Australian astronomers (RFCD code 24010000) have been successful in obtaining research support from a number for the ARC's programs

- Significant funds have been garnered from the from the Discovery Projects, Discovery Fellowships and Federation Fellowships programs (post their starting in 2001), and prior to that from the Large Research Grants and Fellowship programs
- Smaller amounts of support have been provided from the Special Research Initiatives programs through seed funding for ARC Research Networks (in 2003) and E-Research (in 2005-2006).

**Discovery, Large Research Grants and Fellowship** programs typically run for three years (or in a few cases 5 years). The following table summarises successful grants as reported by the ARC web site for grants with funding start dates from 2000 onwards. 'AWARD' is the total awarded in all future years from funding rounds in that year. 'SPEND' is the spend in each calendar year, based on the ARC reported spend profiles for each grant. (As a result the 'SPEND' column is incomplete for years 2003 and earlier, though 2003 is only likely to be incomplete by a very small amount (<5%). Similarly the Spend in 2006 is incomplete, since it does not reflect awards that will be made from the current round for grants starting in 2006).

ARC Discovery, Fellowship & Large Research grants in astronomy							
AWARD		Totals (A\$)		SPEND		Totals (A\$)	
2000	\$	1,210,000		2000	\$	342,000	
2001	\$	3,225,500		2001	\$	1,341,500	
2002	\$	5,339,492		2002	\$	2,533,269	
2003	\$	6,809,011		2003	\$	4,469,753	
2004	\$	5,324,000		2004	\$	5,132,530	
2005	\$	4,369,882		2005	\$	5,978,724	
				2006	\$	3,987,534	

**Federation Fellowships** have been awarded since 2002 – one in each of 2002, 2003, 2004 and two in 2005. Budgets for these grants are not reported by the ARC, so they have be accounted for with an average value of A\$300k per annum, and assuming the two awarded in 2005 will be half funded in 2005. In addition one of the 2005 fellows is eligible for a 'startup' grant reported to have value of A\$240k in 2005/06 and A\$159k in 2006/07 – it is assumed these will be spent in 2006 and 2007 respectively.

Federation Fellows	
SPEND	(A\$)
2002	\$ 300,000
2003	\$ 600,000
2004	\$ 900,000
2005	\$ 1,500,000
2006	\$ 1,740,000
2007	\$ 1,659,000

**ARC LIEF** awards to astronomy can be found on the web for the past four years and are as follows. The LIEF awards have been separated into “Gemini” and “Non-Gemini” components. The latter component specifically funds Australia’s access to the international Gemini facility, and so is not relevant for a calculation of the total NCGP support for research support of University-level facilities:

Year	Gemini (\$k)	Non-Gemini (\$k)
2002	1600	450
2003	1860	1172
2004	1850	0
2005	1460	782

**Special Research Initiatives and Network Seed Funding** funding for these initiatives was as follows

Year	Funding (\$k)
2003	40 (network seed)
2004	
2005	182.8 (e-research)
2006	182.8 (e-research)

Australian astronomy has not received any funding under the **Linkage Projects** scheme.

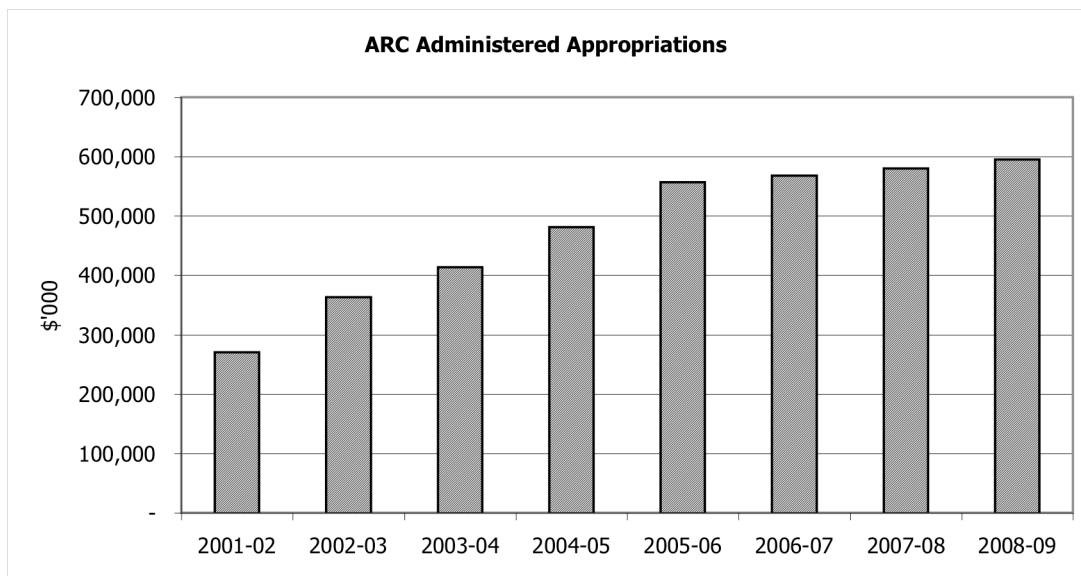
With the exception of the Gemini LIEF awards, these grants have all directly contributed to support of research in Australia’s universities, so we have the following annual SPENDS on university research support from 2003 onwards

Year	Funding (\$k)
2003	6.28
2004	6.03
2005	8.44

## 2. Size of the ARC’s National Competitive Grant Programme.

The ARC Budget for 2005-2006 ([http://www.dest.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/E030628F-AA94-4CA4-A6E7-2873371CD82A/5403/200506\\_DEST\\_PBS\\_11\\_ARC.rtf](http://www.dest.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/E030628F-AA94-4CA4-A6E7-2873371CD82A/5403/200506_DEST_PBS_11_ARC.rtf)) reports its past funding for the NCGP, and budgets through to 2006-2007 (Figure 2) together with forward estimates out to 2008-09 (Table 5.8). These have been combined to produce the following figure and table. It is notable that over the period 2001-02 to 2005-06 the NCGP will have grown at an average of A\$69m/yr.

ARC Administered NCGP funds							
2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
270732	363301	413858	481406	556467	567700	579900	594700



From these totals we can estimate that over the period 2003 to 2005, the NCGP spend on support of research in universities (not including Gemini) has averaged 1.53% of the available ARC funds in that year (or alternatively, 1.66% of the ARC funds available per annum in the previous three years when most commitments are made).

Chris Tinney, 1 September 2005