

ARC Grants in FoR 15: Trends, Issues And Challenges

Professor Stephen Taylor
Chair, BARDSNet and Associate Dean (Research)
UTS Business School

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- How important are ARC (type) grants
- What drives research reputation internationally?
- What are the funding models we compete against internationally?
- A possible solution

HOW IMPORTANT ARE ARC (TYPE) GRANTS REALLY?

- Some UTS Business school evidence 2012-2014 on ARC and similar (NHMRC via CHERE):

New ARC / NHMRC Funds 2012-2014

	2012	2013	2014
ARC DP	0	1,688,000	1,631,000
ARC DECRA	750,000	375,000	383,312
ARC LP	300,559	0	0
NHMRC	30,000	154,060	703,048

- UTS Business School top line budget is approximately \$65m

HOW IMPORTANT ARE ARC TYPE GRANTS REALLY?

- Why do we (Australian universities) place so much weight on inputs (research grants)?
 - Obsession with performance measurement (government as “sole shareholder”) – grants are easy to measure!
 - Prestige
 - Financial need (many university activities are “grant dependent”)
 - Researchers like financial flexibility
- Every Australian university wants:
 - More research income (from a shrinking pot re government funding)
 - More/better publications (from existing staff track records?)
 - More HDRs (from less scholarship funds?)

WHAT DRIVES RESEARCH REPUTATIONS?

- Is there a link between government “control” of universities and focus on inputs? My guess is yes.
- What determines the ability of an individual faculty member to attract an offer from a prestigious international university?
- How many top US Business Schools do any of the following:
 - Publish information about external research grants won?
 - Have a grant success component to tenure decisions?
 - Fund PhD places by external scholarship schemes?
 - My guess is NONE

WHAT ARE THE FUNDING MODELS INTERNATIONALLY?

- All researchers need some sort of infrastructure. For example, I need databases which are my “laboratory”.
- Much of the infrastructure is not project-specific so it gets paid for from recurrent funding – grants shouldn’t have to keep basics “going”.
- In leading international business schools, basic infrastructure is a given, not a wish
- Research “funding” revolves around incremental resources (RAs etc) and dissemination (travel etc). Core research requirements including technical support are a given.
- Very few leading business schools expect faculty to be writing lengthy grant proposals, and in fact would discourage this practice among less experienced faculty (i.e., focus on outputs).

A POSSIBLE SOLUTION

- How much money (in total) do Australian business schools get from ARC each year?
- Would this be “better” spent on “science” and “humanities” where there is no underlying viable business model to pay for research?
- Could business schools retain an equivalent extra amount of teaching revenue if they agreed not to chase money from ARC etc but self-funded?
- This would create a massive time saving on grant applications which could be directed towards additional outputs?