

## For all respondents

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**Question 1:** Should the ROPE components be streamlined (see **ROPE consultation paper—Table 1**)?

Select: No

If Yes, what changes would you suggest?

The Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (DASSH) do not see any urgent need to streamline. If any changes were to be made, ROPE components may in fact need to be broadened: for instance, the criteria for the *Industrial Transformation Research Programme (ITRP)* include outcomes from previous industry collaboration. We suggest that this could also be included in the ROPE criteria for *Linkage Projects*. The *Australian Laureate Fellowship* scheme is also the only scheme with criteria related to mentoring; we suggest that this could be added to the criteria for *Future Fellowships* scheme. The scheme criteria do currently emphasise postgraduate supervision outcomes, so extending this to mentoring for postgraduates, postdoctoral scholars and early career researchers would be consistent with the scheme's emphasis on developing research leadership and capacity-building, and recognising the track record of such leadership in the ROPE section. Research indicates that women's careers are affected by significant time spent on supporting and mentoring others: there is therefore a rationale for recognising this in ROPE sections across the board, all *Discovery Projects* and *Linkage Projects*.

**Question 2:** Are the current time periods allocated for consideration of the ROPE components appropriate (see **ROPE consultation paper—Table 2**)?

Select: Yes

If No, what changes would you suggest?

The current time periods/no time periods allocated are appropriate.

**Question 3:** Should the page limits for the common components of ROPE be harmonised across the NCGP funding schemes (see **ROPE consultation paper—Table 3**)?

Select: Yes

If Yes, how?

Harmonizing of page limits across the schemes is desirable but not essential. This is because each scheme places different emphasis on aspects of ROPE – for example, in the *Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA)* scheme the profile of the researcher will be significantly different from that of a Laureate Fellow and it is likely that events such as significant career interruptions may be different in nature and impact depending on where they occur in a career trajectory.

**Question 4:** Are the details of the ROPE components appropriate? See the ROPE statement (see **ROPE consultation paper–Attachment A**) and Instructions to Applicants (see **ROPE consultation paper–Attachment B**)?

Select: No

If No, what changes would you suggest?

The details of the ROPE components are currently appropriate but could be improved. There is a lot of detail in the ROPE components (both statement and instructions to applicants); this is to the benefit of applicants. However, some brief case examples in the instructions could be useful.

**Question 5:** ROPE is a part of the 'Investigator' selection criterion. Is the allocated weighting to this selection criterion appropriate (see **ROPE consultation paper–Figure 1**)?

Select: Yes

If No, why not?

**Question 6:** Is ROPE meeting its objective, that is, do applicants have suitable opportunity to compete on a level playing field by addressing their research performance evidence in the context of their opportunities to conduct research?

Select: No

If No, why not?

Currently, ROPE is meeting its objective. Increasingly, however, we are seeing applicants who have had non-linear academic careers with time in industry/non-academic roles and time away for various carer responsibilities. Even within academia, academic staff are moving more frequently between research-focussed and teaching-focussed roles: the 'standard' research-teaching academic is becoming less common, and we do need to recognise this in assessment of track record in our research funding schemes. While the current ROPE guidelines do address this, it can be difficult for applicants to list their often complex circumstances, especially if applicants are concerned about appearing to complain. DASSH recommends the inclusion of a table providing information with years and a fractional calculator that adds up the proportion of time that has been available for research over the past 10 years for the applicant.

**Question 7:** Does ROPE advantage one discipline group over another, for example, in terms of evidence sought? Is there alternative evidence that could be considered?

Select: No

If Yes, please suggest other evidence.

**Question 8:** Are the ROPE requirements clear and easy to understand?

Select: Yes

If No, why not?

Question 9: Could the structure of the information requested on career interruption be improved? For example, would it be preferable to ask researchers to identify career interruptions in a table like the one below?

From when	To when	Reason
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Select: Yes

If Yes, please provide details:

A table like this would certainly assist the peer-review process of assessing the value and extent to which career interruptions have had an impact on an investigator's career path. As suggested in question 6, if the table also had a feature that calculated the fraction of time available for research for applicants, this would greatly assist in reflecting an applicant's career trajectory.

Question 10: Are there any other comments you wish to make?

ROPE is often seen as gendered, and it should be acknowledged that many female researchers will make use of the ROPE selection criteria. However, the ROPE criterion is of benefit to all researchers. Few researchers today can expect to have unbroken career trajectories. Even a move to a new institution can result in the ending of access to facilities, resources and collaborations and the establishment of new ones. Many of our researchers face periods where their ability to conduct fieldwork, attend conferences, engage in creative practice research or oversee large research projects is affected by carers' responsibilities or family illness. Due to the nature of academic work, but also due to the increasing emphasis universities and employers are placing on engagement and impact outside academia, increasing numbers of researchers in the humanities, arts and social sciences (HASS) disciplines are moving in and out of academic roles. Even within academia, early and mid career academics in HASS may move between teaching-only casual roles, research-only casual/fixed term employment, and teaching-focussed and general academic roles. The ROPE criteria need to remain sufficiently flexible to recognise the increasing complexities of individual researchers' career paths and life choices.