

# ARIA – Ethics and Social Responsibility Policy

## CONTEXT

ARIA's mission is to pursue new technological options that are currently intractable but have transformative potential for humanity. But research at the edge of the possible often means there is currently little or no research or societal consensus and, therefore, requires a highly responsible approach. This document covers ARIA's approach to ethics and social responsibility in the design and delivery of programmes, and ARIA's approach to the professional ethics and integrity of the research we support.

## ETHICS AND SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF OUR PROGRAMMES

### Core principles

- We do not advance science and technology for their own sake; our mission requires that everything we do be considered in a social context.
- At the very early stages of R&D, we cannot define with certainty how a new scientific and technical breakthrough will impact society. But we can and must consider and anticipate the expected social benefits and the potential social risks.
- Consideration of social benefits and risks requires broad engagement, beyond ARIA's team and across institutions, disciplines, and communities.
- ARIA's job is not to determine what is best for society, but rather to pave new scientific and technological pathways that can be further developed by the public and private sectors, who will ultimately be responsible for governance and deployment.

## GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT

ARIA ensures that oversight of ethics and social responsibility runs through the core of our governance model, from the Board, the Accounting Officer and its Programme Directors, in the following ways:

1. To facilitate broad engagement around the social implications of ARIA's work and ensure that we are considering perspectives beyond our team, we publish and openly solicit feedback on our programmes before launch, and publicise who and what we are funding.

2. Programme Directors must engage with the ethics and social issues and stakeholders in their respective opportunity spaces, as part of the discovery and beyond, in order to develop an informed hypothesis of the intended benefit and potential social or ethical risks of their programmes.
3. Programme Directors' assessments of social benefits and risks are considered by ARIA leadership and external evaluators as part of the approval process for every programme.
4. ARIA's Board Ethics and Social Responsibility sub-Committee is responsible for reviewing and sharing recommendations on ethical and social aspects of all programmes and research activities to the Board, the Accounting Officer and the Programme Directors.

## GUIDELINES ON RESEARCH INTEGRITY

- All ARIA staff must follow the **Seven Principles of Public Life** (known as “the Nolan Principles”) which set out ethical standards to which those working in the public sector are expected to adhere, including for integrity. The 7 principles are: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, and Leadership.
- The **Concordat to Support Research Integrity** (“Concordat”) is an interpretation of the Nolan principles within the research context, providing a national framework for good research conduct and its governance. ARIA subscribes to the principles of the Concordat, which are to:
  - uphold the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research
  - ensure that research is conducted according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards
  - support a research environment that is underpinned by a culture of integrity and based on good governance, best practice, and support for the development of researchers
  - use transparent, timely, robust and fair processes to handle allegations of research misconduct when they arise
  - work together to strengthen the integrity of research
- We expect all individuals involved with R&D ARIA supports – including researchers, research support staff, research managers and administrators – to abide by the Concordat's research integrity principles and to work with due respect for one another within a supportive and open environment.