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## ARC develops a plan to grow its capability and influence in the research sector

Australian Research Council – Capability and culture review



### Summary

The Australian Research Council (ARC) wanted to understand the capabilities required to deliver the strategic priorities of the *ARC Strategy 2022-25* and create a plan to address any gaps. Iceni conducted a capability review that included developing a capability blueprint that defined the future state of individual, leadership and organisational capabilities. This was developed using a comprehensive consultation process with staff and leaders to identify barriers that could impact on their progress. Our work helped the ARC to establish behavioural and performance goals aligned with strategic priorities and create an implementation plan to develop, mature and embed priority capabilities over time.

### ARC's challenge

Following a period of significant change, the ARC recognised the need to build and strengthen the right capabilities to deliver its strategic priorities. To address this challenge the ARC engaged Iceni to conduct a capability review focused on organisational systems, policies and processes, leadership styles and ways of working to identify gaps and opportunities to develop, mature and embed priority capabilities in the agency.

### Our approach

We developed a customised methodology that used co-design workshops with staff and leadership to identify priority capabilities for the agency, benchmark these against best-practice organisations, and expectations of behaviour and performance within the sector. This ensured that the capability blueprint developed was achievable and relevant for a public sector agency.

We then undertook a comprehensive internal engagement process with ARC staff and leadership to identify trends in employee experience of the ARC's operational environment, workplace culture and level of individual access to resources and support. This enabled us to develop comprehensive insights on the ARC's capability ecosystem and design clear and targeted recommendations for change.

### Value-adds

We worked in partnership with the senior leadership team throughout the assignment. This brought them on the journey with us and enabled them to improve their understanding of an employee's experience of the organisation's operational environment. We facilitated a series of workshops and discussions focused on co-designing capability goals and understanding the review findings.

As a result of these workshops, we helped senior leaders build their capability in setting clear expectations of behaviour and performance to support staff development. The targeted actions and implementation approach we co-designed are currently being implemented by the leadership team and will help to inform business planning activities for FY23/24.

### Client outcome

The ARC was able to define its future capability needs and understand the current state of its capability ecosystem to improve outcomes for staff and leaders. They were able to identify and define priority capabilities and provide clear expectations of behaviour and performance to inform individual development and career planning. This will support the ARC leadership team to empower its people, focus on delivering high quality outcomes and grow its capability and influence in the sector.