

PAWSEY SUPERCOMPUTING CENTRE MERIT ALLOCATION COMMITTEES TERMS OF REFERENCE

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These Terms of Reference are prepared by the Pawsey Supercomputing Centre as a guide as to the roles and responsibilities of the Pawsey Merit Allocation Committees and may be amended from time to time.

1. Background

The Pawsey Supercomputing Centre is supported by \$90 million funding as part of the Australian Government's measures to support national research infrastructure under the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy and related programs through the Department of Education.

The Project Plan which formed the basis of the 2009 EIF Super Science Funding Agreement between the Pawsey Supercomputing Centre (iVEC, as was known at the time) and the Federal Government stated that the parties agreed to assign a 60% share of systems' usage to the Commonwealth and the remaining 40% share to the Partners (CSIRO, Curtin University, Edith Cowan University, Murdoch University and The University of Western Australia). The Project Plan also dictated that radio astronomy should have first call on a share of up to 25% of the total Pawsey services drawn equally from Commonwealth and Partner shares.

The funding agreement announced the establishment of the Pawsey Allocation Committee (PAC) which would "advise [Pawsey] concerning the development and management of allocation processes", and the PAC endorsed the general principle outlined in the Pawsey Project Plan that allocations within any of the access categories are made on merit.

Consequently, the Pawsey Supercomputing Centre needs to establish allocation committees for any merit schemes under its direct control, and these include merit schemes accessible solely to the Partners or other stakeholders with dedicated shares of resources, as well as schemes targeted at specific research areas or science domains.

2. Objective

To help ensure that supercomputing resources are used effectively and efficiently, Pawsey allocates compute time to researchers through project awards. Proposals for projects may be submitted through any of a number of schemes that Pawsey operates or participates in.

Through these allocation schemes, Pawsey strives to:

- maximise the research impact of Pawsey supercomputing resources.
- promote scientific advantage in priority domains, including radio astronomy and other targeted areas.
- provide leading-edge, supercomputing resources for researchers in Pawsey Partner institutions.
- enable wider adoption of and benefit from supercomputing across Australia.

In order to ensure timely access to Pawsey resources for meritorious proposals, merit schemes which are not one-off special opportunities will typically have a call for proposals issued once every six months.

3. Scope

The Pawsey Supercomputing Centre provides access to research infrastructure through a number of allocation schemes. These schemes can include but are not restricted to:-

- *National merit schemes with contributions from multiple research infrastructure providers*
 - *These schemes are typically **out of the scope** of this document*
- Targeted merit schemes to specific research areas or science domains
- Schemes where stakeholders who own a number of shares in the infrastructure wish to attribute resources to meritorious projects
- *Opportunistic schemes where resource is available for allocation at the Director's Discretion*
 - *These schemes are typically **out of the scope** of this document*

The purpose of this document is to clearly set out the purpose, structure and responsibilities of the Merit Allocation Committees that relate to the stakeholder (Partner) and targeted schemes.

4. Purpose of the Merit Allocation Committees

The primary purpose of the Merit Allocation Committees is to allocate shares of the machines to meritorious research projects. The committees should make considerations regarding project requirements, merit of the project and overall resources available.

Specifically in 2017 there are two Merit Allocation Committees which need to be constituted according to these Terms of Reference:-

- a committee to award time through the Pawsey Partners share
- a committee to award time to projects in the specific targeted area of Energy and Resources

In 2017 the resources to be awarded relate primarily to compute time on the Magnus supercomputer.

5. Pawsey Merit Allocation Committee Membership 2017

There are two assessments of the applications: one for the scientific excellence of the project and the other for the technical relevance for the Pawsey resources requested.

The Science Review Committee for each call will be the relevant Merit Allocation Committee. The Technical panel will provide information and assessments to the Merit Allocation Committee.

5.1. Science Review Committees

At the foundation of a Science Review Committee, members will be appointed for periods of one year (half of the members) or two years, and subsequent appointments will be for periods of two years, or in the case of replacements up to the end period of the replaced member.

Committee Members will be drawn from a pool of researchers endorsed by the Pawsey Allocation Committee (a sub-committee of the Pawsey Board) for that scheme, and they will have the following attributes:

- Each member is to have at least a doctoral qualification
- Each member is to have previous experience as a user of Pawsey services

Members of the committee will be appointed taking into account diversity of research domains, research institutions, and diversity of the individuals.

Committee Members may be unappointed by the Executive Director where necessary to ensure that the responsibilities of committee positions are met.

5.1.1. Science Review Committee - Stakeholder Schemes

The Science Review Committee for a stakeholder scheme is composed of individuals who represent the stakeholder institutions. The Committee members should possess knowledge of fields of research that are most commonly covered by users.

The Committee and its members should have the following attributes:

- Be comprised of at least seven individuals
- Each member is to be a current staff member of a stakeholder institution

5.1.2. Science Review Committee - Targeted Schemes

The Science Review Committee for a targeted national scheme is composed of individuals who represent research from across Australia. The Committee members will possess knowledge of fields of research appropriate to the targeted scheme.

The Committee should have the following attributes:

- Be comprised of at least five individuals
- Each member is to be a current staff member of a research institution in Australia

5.2. Chair of a Merit Allocation Committee

As well as the attributes listed for Committee members, a Chair of the Merit Allocation Committee will be engaged in a university at least at academic classification level D (Associate Professor) or else be a recognised research leader in a national science agency, and the chair will be appointed by the Pawsey Allocation Committee for a period of two years.

5.3. Technical Review Panel

The Technical Review Panel is appointed for each call and is comprised of members of the Supercomputing Team, delegated by the Head of Supercomputing. There will be a minimum of two reviewers per panel to provide technical evaluation.

6. Key Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Merit Allocation Committees are as follows:

- Read and assess applications.
- Attend meetings of the Merit Allocation Committee.
- Make recommendations on allocations of time on Pawsey services in relation to the particular call that they are allocating to.

- Inform the Committee of any conflicts of interest.
- Keep applications and discussions confidential.
- Advise the Executive Director of recommendations made by the group.

7. Meetings

Quorum and attendance at meetings

- Meetings are held once per call
- A quorum consists of at least two thirds of the members.
- An acting Chair will be elected by those committee members present at the meeting in the case that the Chair is absent.
- Facilities should be made available to ensure that the meetings can be conducted by teleconference, video conference, or face to face.
- A secretary will be appointed to take minutes regarding any discussion points.

Out of Session Requests

- Out of Session applications to a Scheme may be determined via electronic means such as email
- A quorum consists of at least two thirds of the members.

Resolutions

- The Merit Allocation Committees will make recommendations to the Pawsey Executive Director for allocations under the Scheme
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- Records of all resolutions and proceedings of the Merit Allocation Committees will be retained by the Pawsey Centre.
- The Executive Director may, in extreme circumstances, use his discretion to overrule a decision made by the Merit Allocation Committees.

Agenda items and supporting documentation

- A specific agenda and relevant supporting documents will be circulated to members prior to each meeting.
- Meeting minutes will be sent out to members within a week following each meeting.