National Computation Merit Allocation Scheme (NCMAS)

Call for Expressions of Interest in
National Computational Merit Allocation Committee
membership for the period 2020-2023
(first active period August-December 2020)

Expressions of interest are sought in the following fields of research to fill nine (9) positions:

Astronomy

Computational Fluid Dynamics

Engineering

Environment/Climate/Earth System Science

Geosciences

Physics

To be eligible, please submit your EOI to ncmas-secretariat@nci.org.au by

11:59pm AEST on Thursday 30 April 2020

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Introduction

The National Computational Merit Allocation Scheme (NCMAS) provides access, based on research and computational merit, for researchers at Australian universities and publicly-funded research agencies, to resource shares at the major national computational facilities. These facilities have been developed through substantial infrastructure investments in recent years by the Commonwealth Government (under its NCRIS and Super Science programs), with the operations of these facilities being supported by established collaborations which involve research universities and national agencies.

For 2021, NCMAS will allocate HPC resources at the national supercomputer installations: NCI, Pawsey Supercomputing Centre, MASSIVE and FlashLite.

Role of the National Computational Merit Allocation Committee (NCMAC)

Resource allocations are made by an independent peer-review committee (NCMAC), the secretariat services for which are provided by NCI from its base at the Australian National University in Canberra.

Committee members will be appointed for a **four-year term**, with half of the Committee being renewed every two years. A Deputy Chair and Chair will be appointed for a two-year term from the Committee's membership.

The current Chair of the NCMAC is Professor Derek Leinweber, Professor of Physics, University of Adelaide.

The committee considers project applications, which are made online, according to the Assessment Criteria – please see Appendix.

NCMAC Meeting

An annual meeting of the NCMAC is conducted in Canberra to finalise NCMAS allocations. For the NCMAS 2021 call, this meeting will be held on **8 and 9 December 2020** in Canberra at the ANU.

Committee members are required to attend the allocation meeting. Additional meetings of the NCMAC may be convened by teleconference on an ad hoc basis during the call, which operates from August to early December 2020.

Call for Expressions of Interest: Membership of NCMAC

Nine (9) positions in the National Computational Merit Allocation Committee are currently vacant. Applications are welcomed from appropriately qualified researchers in the computationally- and data-intensive research fields of:

- Astronomy
- Computational Fluid Dynamics
- Engineering
- Environment/Climate/Earth System Science
- Geosciences
- Physics

Expressions of interest are sought from suitably qualified and experienced researchers (including early-career and mid-career researchers) who hold substantive appointments at Australian universities or publicly-funded research organisations.

Please note that membership of the Committee is honorary. However, travel and accommodation expenses (including those of Observers), associated with attendance at meetings, of the Committee are provided for.

Observer Program

In addition to the appointment of new Committee members, the NCMAC intends to continue the Observer Program it instigated in 2017, whereby a number of suitably qualified applicants were invited to observe the NCMAC meeting.

Observers do not participate in assessment of NCMAS applications or contribute to discussions during the course of the allocation meeting. The objective of their role is to enhance their understanding of the NCMAS process and responsibilities of committee members.

Selection Criteria for NCMAC membership

Expressions of interest will be assessed, in the first instance, according to the following knowledge and experience criteria:

- Research excellence:
    - o Strength and significance of research achievements, relative to career opportunities, with relevant evidence including a record comprising significant publications in high-impact journals, and success in attracting competitive research funding, in the scientific domains identified in this call;
- Knowledge/experience in computational and/or data-intensive science:
    - o Demonstrated expertise in a relevant field of computational and/or data-intensive science, including personal achievements in the application of large-scale computing facilities and/or data-intensive methods, and, as appropriate, the development and implementation of software.
- Breadth of experience/knowledge:
    - o Capacity to contribute broadly to the work of the committee (in both research and computational assessments), and, particularly, in areas that may be outside of the applicant's immediate field of expertise.

Committee Balance

The NCMAC is required to have a mix of skills to be able to assess the balance of applications that are submitted to the NCMAS. Accordingly, committee balance is an additional criterion which necessarily overlays the knowledge/experience criteria above.

The principle of committee balance will also be influenced by a desire to enhance the diversity of the committee (e.g., with respect to gender, ethnicity and organisational representation of members).

Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Considerations

Members of the NCMAC may be applicants to the NCMAS, and are indeed encouraged to apply, thereby demonstrating currency of their expertise and experience.

However, committee members who are applicants to the NCMAS cannot be associated with the assessment of their own applications, or those of members of their research group(s), or of other applicants with whom they have published recently (i.e., within the past five years). Any such conflicts must be declared when assessment tasks are being assigned.

Members of the NCMAC must treat information contained in NCMAS applications and NCMAC discussions as confidential.

To maintain the integrity of its decision-making processes, the NCMAS operates independently of the operators of the facilities on which resources are granted. While staff members of the individual facilities provide advice to the Committee, they cannot be members of the Committee, in order to avoid conflicts of interest, or perceptions thereof.

Expressions of Interest

If you:

- Believe you are well placed to contribute to the work of the National Computational Merit Allocation Committee in the above-mentioned fields of research; and
- Share the vision of the major national computational facilities, and that of their co-investing partners, of wanting to provide access on research merit to world-class facilities through a respected and transparent allocation process; please consider submitting an Expression of Interest.

EOI Submission

Must comprise:

- A **curriculum vitae** which includes a full list of publications and competitive grant funding; and,
- A **brief statement** - of not more than one (1) page - of your relevant expertise,
    - focusing on the selection criteria,
    - indicating those research fields in which you are particularly well qualified to assess applications, characterised preferably by the standard FoR codes (please specify leading 4 digits only) which are used by the ARC and and NHMRC - information on FoR codes is available at:
        - https://www.arc.gov.au/grants/grant-application/classification-codes-rfcd-seo-and-anzsic-codes

and must be:

- Submitted by email to ncmas-secretariat@nci.org.au; and,
- Received by no later than 11:59pm AEST on Thursday 30 April 2020.

For further information regarding this NCMAC Call for Expressions of Interest, please contact the NCMAS Secretariat at ncmas-secretariat@nci.org.au.

Appendix:

Assessment Criteria for NCMAS projects

The current Assessment Criteria are set out below and may be updated from time to time:

Criterion 1: Project quality and innovation

- Significance of the research
- Originality and innovative nature of the computational framework
- Advancement of knowledge through the goals of the proposed research
- Potential for the research to contribute to Australian science, research and innovation priorities

Criterion 2: Investigator records

- Research record and performance relative to opportunity (publications, research funding, recognition and esteem metrics)

Criterion 3: Computational feasibility

- Adequacy of the time commitment of investigators to undertake the research and utilise the resources successfully
- Suitability of the system to support the research, and an appropriate and efficient use of the system
- Capacity to realise the goals of the project within the resources request
- Appropriate track record in the use of high-performance computing systems, relative to the scale of the resources requested

Criterion 4: Benefit and impact

- Ability of the project to generate impactful outcomes and produce innovative economic, environmental and social benefits to Australia and the international community