



SESAME

Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East

SESAME

PROPOSAL REVIEW COMMITTEE (PRC)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

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PROPOSAL REVIEW COMMITTEE (PRC) TERMS OF REFERENCE

Drawn up by the Director in May 2016

Article 1 - Status and responsibilities of the Proposal Review Committee (PRC)

1.1 The Proposal Review Committee (PRC) is an international advisory body set up by the SESAME Director to advise SESAME on the distribution of user beam time. If required, the Committee may be organized in thematic sub-committees.

1.2 The PRC is responsible for evaluating the scientific and technological merit of proposals from the General Users and determining their priority using the following criteria based on IUPAP's Recommendations for the Use of Major Physics Users Facilities¹:

- (a) scientific merit (interpreted as: relevance, impact, innovation, potential of the scientific and/or technological case and/or relevance, and applied importance of instrumental development);
- (b) technical feasibility;
- (c) capability of the proponent(s); and
- (d) availability of the resources required.

1.3 The PRC is also responsible for making recommendations on beam time allocation to the SESAME Director.

Article 2 - Membership

2.1 The PRC members are scientists appointed by the Director after seeking suggestions from the members of SESAME's Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). They serve in an individual capacity and must not be associated with SESAME by contractual arrangement. The term of office of the members of the PRC is three years. An additional appointment of three years is possible, but not automatic.

2.2 Every effort is made to ensure that the main scientific disciplines in which SESAME expects to receive proposals are represented on the Committee, but in order to allow multiple reviews of all proposals the PRC may have recourse to external reviewers.

¹ <http://iupap.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Recommendations22ndGeneralAssembly.pdf>

2.3 The Chair of the Committee is appointed by the Director from among the members of the PRC.

Article 3 - Proposal review procedure

3.1 The PRC will normally meet twice a year, in April and October, to review proposals from General Users.

3.2 Prior to a meeting, the Chair of the Committee, following consultation with the SESAME Director, will distribute the proposals received, together with the initial assessment of SESAME's health and safety officer and the report on the technical feasibility of each proposal by SESAME's relevant beamline scientist, to the Committee members based on their scientific expertise. Each proposal will be sent to a minimum of two reviewers of whom at least one should be a PRC member. Multiple proposals for similar science from a single user or group of users may be treated as a single proposal.

3.3 Each PRC member and external reviewer will provide constructive scientific comments and scoring for the proposals they are to review, as well as comments if appropriate on technical feasibility, the capability of the proponent(s), and the availability of the resources required. Guidelines for scoring are given in Annex 1.

3.4 The Committee as a whole will subsequently compare the scoring for each proposal and will discuss and resolve any large variance in scores, following which it will provide the Director of SESAME with its proposed ranking of the proposals for the allocation of beam time.

3.5 The final decision on the proposals for which beam time is to be allocated will be taken by the Director of SESAME.

Article 4 - Conflict of interest

A PRC member may not take part in the discussion and grading of a proposal if:

- (a) he or she is a primary author, co-author or collaborator in the proposal; or
- (b) the proposal is in direct competition with his or her own scientific programme.

Article 5 - Support for the work of the Committee

5.1 The SESAME Director will provide the PRC with the necessary documents, proposals, reports and information needed for its work.

5.2 The SESAME Director will ensure that the PRC has the necessary back-up administrative and logistical support necessary for implementation of its tasks and organizational and financial support for its meetings.

GUIDELINES FOR SCORING BY THE PROPOSAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Scoring	Scientific Merit
<i>1.0-1.5</i>	Highly innovative research proposal of exceptional quality and outstanding scientific and/or practical relevance. It must be awarded beam time.
<i>1.6-2.0</i>	A well-conceived and original research proposal, with strong potential for making an important contribution to an active field of research. No alternative analytical tool is available. It should definitely be awarded beam time.
<i>2.1-2.5</i>	Very good proposal, with a relevant scientific case and likely to produce significant results. The need for SESAME is evident and it should be awarded beam time under normal circumstances.
<i>2.6-3.0</i>	A potentially excellent proposal which is lacking some information, e.g. preliminary results, further explanations, etc. Although not groundbreaking, it is likely to produce significant results. The need for SESAME is evident. It may be awarded beam time provided there are not too many exceptional proposals.
<i>3.1-3.5</i>	SESAME is required and the science is interesting, although in a well-worked area of research. It is of lower priority in a competitive environment. It may be awarded beam time if the pressure on the beamline is not heavy.
<i>3.6-4.5</i>	Although the science is interesting, it is in a well-worked area of research and SESAME is not strictly essential for the measurements. It is of low priority in a competitive environment. It may be awarded beam time if the pressure on the beamline is not heavy.
<i>4.6-5.0</i>	Doubts exist regarding the scientific content of the proposed project, the validity of the experimental methodology, or the need for SESAME. Under normal circumstances it should not normally be awarded beam time.