

Advanced Photon Source

User Policies and Procedures

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Partner User Beam Time

Changes made in this revision:

- Consolidates the policies Use of the APS Beam Time Access System (APS Policy and Procedures [Procedure #] 3.1.115, rev. 0) and APS User Administrative Policies and Procedures (Procedure # 3.1.101, rev. 0).
- Updated and elaborated.

Comments for future revisions:

This document has several sections that are identical (or nearly so) with sections in the other beam time access policies cited in Beam Time Access Framework (Procedure # 3.1.115), Section 3.1/Access Modes. The information is duplicated so that each policy can stand alone for ease of reference by users. Changes to this policy should also be made in the other policies as appropriate.

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Partner User Beam Time

POLICY

1 PURPOSE

The objective of this policy is to provide a mechanism for access for projects that (1) require guaranteed beam time over multiple cycles and (2) will ultimately benefit the General User community. This access is available through a competitive, proposal-driven, peer-reviewed system. The principle underlying this system is peer review that is fair, clear, expedient, and sensitive to the needs of users.

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to all users of APS Partner User beam time. For the overarching policy for access to beam time, see [Beam Time Access Framework](#), [Procedure # 3.1.115](#).

3 POLICY

3.1 Definition

The Partner User mode provides access for projects that (1) require guaranteed beam time over multiple cycles and (2) will ultimately benefit the General User community, for example, by providing new instrumentation or capabilities that will be available to all users or by creating or expanding a user community. Any beamline operated by the APS is open to Partner User proposals. APS staff members may participate in Partner User projects, with the approval of their division director. Partner User proposals must provide the information listed in [Appendix A](#).

3.2 Available Time

Partner User access can be requested on any beamline operated by the APS that offers 80% of beam time to General Users. Users may request up to 30% of the available time on a beamline for a period of up to three years (typically about 180 shifts or 60 days per year). If the proposal is initially approved for two years or less, the users may request an extension to a maximum of three years. The time available to Partner Users is established within the context of all beam time access at the APS, as described in Section 3.6/Available Time in [Beam Time Access Framework](#) ([Procedure # 3.1.115](#)).

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3.3 Calls for Proposals

Requests for Partner User beam time access are solicited, reviewed, and accepted three times a year, in conjunction with the three run cycles. The deadline is the same as for General User requests.

3.4 Proposals and Beam Time Requests

Time is requested through the Web-based Beam Time Access System. This online system enables the APS and beamline management to collect and document beam-time usage and provides the basis for DOE-mandated usage reports.

In this system, a *proposal* describes the work to be performed, and a *beam time request* (BTR) against the proposal identifies where and when the user wants to do that work. The proposal and the first beam time request are created together. For subsequent visits for the same work, a new request must be created against the original proposal; thus, a proposal can have multiple beam time requests.

The Beam Time Access System (in combination with the Beamtime Scheduling System) associates each beam usage with a specific

- Proposal
- Beam time request (BTR)
- Beam time attribute set (e.g., proprietary/nonproprietary, General User, rapid access, beamline commissioning/start-up, National User Facility, etc.)
- Experiment Safety Assessment Form (ESAF).

3.5 Proposal Lifetime

Partner User proposals (PUPs) are eligible for time for up to three years (nine run cycles).

3.6 Scientific Review

Proposals for Partner User access are reviewed and scored by the relevant General User Proposal Review Panel (PRP) according to the review criteria in General User Beam Time ([Procedure # 3.1.46](#)), Table 1. (The proposer selects the PRP when creating the proposal; the proposal can be shifted to another PRP at the discretion of the panel chair.) The proposal is then further reviewed by the APS Scientific Advisory Committee's subcommittee for Partner User proposals, which makes a recommendation to the APS. The criteria for evaluation of Partner User proposals are (1) PRP rating, (2) positive impact of the partnership on General Users, and (3) input from the sector management of the requested beamline(s).

The SAC Subcommittee for Partner User Proposals consists of three members of the SAC; the Chair of the SAC (or designee), *ex officio*; and the Chair of the APS Users Organization Steering Committee (or designee), *ex officio*.

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3.7 Beamline Comment

The User Office solicits a review from the beamline requested in the proposal. The beamline review can address any issue that bears on the decision whether beam time should be awarded, including (but not limited to) environment, safety, and health issues; the past performance of an investigator; specific outreach on the part of the beamline management; or a unique suitability of the beamline to accommodate the proposal.

3.8 Allocation

APS senior management makes the final decision on whether to accept a Partner User proposal. At each cycle, the guaranteed time assigned to a Partner User group is subtracted from the baseline available shifts on the beamline for that cycle (see Section 3.6/Available Time in [Beam Time Access Framework, Procedure # 3.1.115](#)). Beam time requests on Partner User proposals are made directly available to the beamline for scheduling in the Beamtime Scheduling System.

3.9 Scheduling

The beamline on which the request was allocated is responsible for scheduling and coordinating the visit. Visits must be scheduled in the Beamtime Scheduling System.

3.10 Alternative Experimental Modes

Some experiments are carried out by “remote users,” that is, users located elsewhere who control the beamline through computer access. Some beamlines accommodate “mail-in users”: the users send samples by mail and local staff collect the data on the users’ behalf. Although mail-in and remote users are subject to slightly different administrative requirements (see [Site Access by Users and Visitors, Procedure # 3.1.43](#)), for the purposes of beam time allocation and reporting, the present policy holds just as it does for conventional experimental visits.

3.11 Responsibilities of Users

Users must complete training, have a user agreement in place, submit forms for safety review in a timely manner, acknowledge the APS and the beamline(s) in publications, and submit publications to the APS. Users who damage equipment owned by a CAT or APS after receiving appropriate training in its use will be held liable for damage, according to the provisions of their institutional user agreements. For a full statement of user responsibilities, see [Beam Time Access Framework, Section 3.10 \(Procedure # 3.1.115\)](#).

4 DEFINITIONS

Beamline: All instrumentation and facilities that extend from the source in the storage ring to an experiment station.

Beam Time Access System: Web-based proposal submission and management system used for requesting all types of beam time.

Beam Time Allocation Committees (BACs): Committees that determine which beamlines will host which beam time requests and how much time each request will receive.

Beam time request (BTR): A web form (and the resulting electronic record) associated with a specific proposal, used to request beam time during a particular cycle on a particular beamline. This form is used both when the proposal is initially submitted and for subsequent cycles as long as the proposal is active.

Beamtime Scheduling System: Web-based system used by beamline staff to schedule all APS beam time. A specific beam time request is associated with each unit of beam time.

Cycle: One of three periods of beam time access each year, referring generally to all the phases of submission, review, allocation, and scheduling. Also called “run” or “scheduling period” when referring to the dates of actual beam availability.

General User: An investigator who applies for beam time through the APS peer-review proposal process for General User time.

General User (beam) time: The standard access mode for external experimenters. All beam time in this mode is allocated through the APS General User proposal process.

Mail-in service/users: An experimental mode in which users send samples by mail and local staff collect the data on the users’ behalf.

Partner User: In general (and for DOE reporting), all external users and user groups that enter into an agreement with the APS to provide new facilities or capability. Also used more restrictively to refer to partnerships of limited scope for which time is requested through the Beam Time Access System.

Proposal: Electronic document comprising the description of the proposed research and all associated beam time requests (BTRs). Created in the Beam Time Access System.

Proposal spokesperson: Person identified on the proposal submission form as the primary point of contact for communication about the proposal.

Proposal Review Panels (PRPs): Peer-review groups, organized by technique or scientific discipline, that evaluate the scientific merit and technical feasibility of proposals and provide a rating for each.

Remote access/users: Experimental mode in which a researcher uses remote computer access to conduct experimental work at the APS.

Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC): High-level advisory body to the Director of the APS.

5 ASSISTANCE

The initial point of contact for questions about this policy is the APS User Program Manager.

6 REVISIONS

The point of contact for changes to this policy is the APS User Program Manager. Changes can be made in response to suggestions from any stake holder in user activities.

Modifications of APS Policies and Procedures shall be managed according to Managing APS Facility Procedures ([Procedure # 3.1.05](#)). The policy and procedure owners will work with the APS Procedure Administrators to keep policies/procedures current in the APS electronic document system (ICMS).

The current revisions of any policy/procedure will be available through the APS electronic document system (ICMS); users of a policy/procedure should ensure that they are using the current version.

7 RELATED POLICIES

- Parent policy: [Beam Time Access Framework \(Procedure # 3.1.115\)](#)
- [User Access and Administration Framework \(Procedure # 3.1.101\)](#)

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APPENDIX A: Required Content of Partner User Proposals

Partner User proposals must contain, at a minimum, the items listed below:

- Title of the proposed partnership.
- Name and contact information (name, title, affiliation, address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address) for the Principal Investigator/CAT Director.
- Names and affiliations of additional major partners, accompanied by brief descriptions of their relevant scientific and technical experience.
- Scientific impact/justification for the proposed partnership (approximately 5 pages). This section should form the major thrust of the proposal. Clearly describe how the scientific community and the APS will benefit. Also describe the relationship to existing facilities at the APS and the amplification and or enhancement of these facilities.
- Description of partnership arrangement. Describe the proposed instrument, capability, research program, or contribution to the APS. Indicate and justify which sector or beamline will be involved, as well as the amount of time required on the sector/beamline. Clearly outline the contributions to be made by the proposers and the expectations for APS contributions. Indicate which team members will carry out each program element. Include supporting letters for contributions from proposed partners. (Note: If an APS staff member is one of the partners, a supporting letter from that partner's Division Director is required.)
- Preliminary budget and proposed source(s) of funding for capital items, fabrication, assembly, and operations. Assess the likelihood of obtaining the funds. (For limited-scope partnership proposals, it is assumed that funds are committed or available.)

The total length of these documents must not exceed 10 pages.

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Partner User Beam Time

PROCEDURE

1 INTRODUCTION

Establishing access to beam time involves navigating interactions with the various data systems the APS uses to manage and report on user activity. Two numbers are key to these interactions: the user **badge number** and the **proposal number**. Once a badge number is assigned to an individual, he or she keeps that number forever. The badge number is used both for authorizing site access and for associating an individual with specific experimental activity. The proposal number is key to scientific review, safety review, scheduling, and evaluation.

1.1 Purpose

This procedure establishes how users, User Office staff, and beamline staff interact with APS data systems so that, in the end, a specific Partner User user group is scheduled to do a specific experiment at a specific beamline at a specific time.

1.2 Scope

The procedure does not address the choice of an appropriate beamline, proposal development, or processes internal to individual beamlines.

1.3 References

The APS User Calendar, published on the APS web site, lists deadlines for proposal submission, run start and end dates, and schedules for proposal review and beam time allocation.

2 BACKGROUND

As a national user facility and publicly funded resource, APS has a responsibility to ensure that beam time is utilized efficiently and to best effect. As a result, APS must document, monitor, and report on the usage of the facility and the impact of the science carried out. Because of the volume of activity and the specificity of reporting requirements, the APS relies on many complex and interconnected data management systems to track and report on people, time, experiments, and experimental resources. Each request for beam time follows a path through these systems.

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3 PRECAUTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The following are ways to avoid common errors that result in confusion or missed opportunities:

- [1] **Choose the correct individual as the proposal spokesperson.** The proposal spokesperson is the person to whom all official correspondence about the proposal is sent. Thus, it should be someone who has some responsibility for the project and who is able to respond promptly to communication about it. An externally led group should not list a local beamline staff member as the proposal spokesperson.
- [2] **Have the spokesperson register and get a badge number well in advance.** A spokesperson badge number is required to create a proposal.
- [3] **Submit a request for each cycle in which time is needed.** After the initial proposal submission, the user must explicitly submit a beam time request for consideration in later cycles.
- [4] **Click the “submit” button to send completed proposal or beam time request to APS.** The APS cannot act on a proposal or request that is complete and saved but not submitted.

4 PREREQUISITE ACTIONS

- [1] Team Leader See the Team Leader procedure in [User Access and Administration Framework](#) (Procedure # 3.1.101) for an overview of the process of managing an experiment at APS.
- [2] User Office Establish and maintain review bodies:
 - Scientific Advisory Committee subcommittee for Partner User Proposals.
- [3] User Office Manage expired proposals in the Beam Time Access System. Before each proposal deadline, update the eligibility of existing proposals based on proposal lifetime and notify spokespersons.

5 PROCEDURE

5.1 Create Proposal

- [1] User group Prepare proposal file containing the material listed in Appendix A: Required Content of Partner User Proposals.

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NOTE An APS badge number is required to access the proposal submission system.

- [2] User Obtain badge numbers for proposal spokesperson and anyone else who will need to view the proposal online. See [Site Access by Users and Visitors: Procedure \(Procedure # 3.1.43\)](#), Section 3.

NOTE The same web password is used for all APS web-based systems, e.g., the system for processing Experiment Safety Assessment Forms, which you will use later.

- [3] User Log in to the Beam Time Access System at http://beam.aps.anl.gov/pls/apsweb/gup0005.start_page. If you are a **first-time external user**, enter your badge number as both your username and password, and follow the prompts to create a password. The screen Beam Time Request - Main Menu is displayed (hereafter Main Menu).
- [4] User On the Main Menu, on the panel Create a New Proposal, click the Partner Users button to start the proposal. Once you save the proposal, you can return to it later. **Make a note of the proposal number** for future use in this and other APS systems. Complete the proposal form, attaching the PDF of the proposal contents, **and submit the proposal**. See tips below.

GENERAL TIPS

- When you click a different tab, information on the current screen is saved.
- On the Experimenters screen, the APS strongly encourages use of the “Find” link, which permits automatic entry of existing user contact information.
- The proposal document is attached on the Abstract/Full Proposal screen.
- If you want to use two different beamlines for different parts of your experiment, indicate the beamlines on the General screen of the proposal, and complete a separate beam time request for each beamline on the Beam Time Request screen.
- **The APS cannot act on your request until you send it by clicking on the Submit button.**

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5.2 Conduct Scientific Review

- [1] User Office Request review from beamline [automated in Beam Time Management System, with manual follow-up].
- [2] User Office Request review from General User Proposal Review Panel indicated by proposer [automated in Beam Time Management System].
- [3] Panel Chair Assign primary reviewer (by personal communication).
- [4] Panel Formulate consensus review comments on science and potential benefit to user community and give a score based on the General User review criteria.
- [5] User Office Transmit PRP and beamline reviews to the APS Scientific Advisory Committee's subcommittee for Partner User proposals.
- [6] SAC Subcom. Formulate recommendation to APS.
- [7] APS Sr. Mgmt. Make decision to accept/reject proposal.
- [8] User Office Record review comments, decision, and (if accepted) total beam time commitment in Beam Time Access System.
- [9] User Office Notify user of outcome.

5.3 Allocate Beam Time

- [1] User Office Before Beamtime Allocation Committee meeting for General User time, confirm amount of time assigned to Partner User Proposals for a given cycle; reduce available General User time on affected beamlines by that amount for the cycle. See Section 3.6/Available Time in Beam Time Access Framework ([Procedure # 3.1.115](#)) for details.

5.4 Schedule Beam Time

NOTE BL Coord.: Beamline Coordinator.

- [1] BL Coord. Schedule user visit in APS Beamtime Scheduling System, in upcoming run if at all possible, and notify user.

5.5 Conduct Experiment

- [1] User See [User Access and Administration Framework \(Procedure # 3.1.101\)](#) for the requirements for site access, safety, and follow-up.

5.6 Request Time in Future Cycles

NOTE If you cannot locate an existing proposal, contact the APS User Office, apsuser@aps.anl.gov, 630-252-9090.

- [1] User For each cycle for which you need beam time (during the approved duration of the proposal), access the existing active proposal and create **and submit** a new beam time request from within that proposal.

6 DOCUMENTS/RECORDS CREATED BY THIS PROCEDURE

The documents/records listed below will be created in the execution of this procedure. The documents created will depend on the type of proposal concerned.

Description of Document/Record	Custodian	Storage Location and Medium
Proposal	User Program Manager	Beam Time Access System
Beam time requests	User Program Manager	Beam Time Access System
Peer review comments	User Program Manager	Beam Time Access System
Beamline comments	User Program Manager	Beam Time Access System
SAC subcommittee comments	User Program Manager	Beam Time Access System
APS decision comments	User Program Manager	Beam Time Access System
Decision notification to user	User Program Manager	ICMS
Scheduled beam time record	AES/Project Specialist	Beamtime Scheduling System
Scheduled beam time notification email	Beamline Coordinator	Beamline email server, with backup in Information Services if sent from Beamtime Scheduling System

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7 TRAINING REQUIRED

No training is required to execute this procedure.

8 FEEDBACK AND IMPROVEMENT

If you are using this procedure and have comments or suggested improvements for it, please go to the [APS Policies and Procedures Comment Form](#)* to submit your input to a Procedure Administrator. If you are reviewing this procedure in workflow, your input must be entered in the comment box when you approve or reject the procedure.

Instructions for execution-time modifications to a policy/procedure can be found in the following document: Field Modification of APS Policy/Procedure ([APS_1408152](#)).

* http://centraldocs.aps.anl.gov/comment_form.php