

Applying for Telescope Time

Applications for telescope time for the ING, Liverpool Telescope and e-MERLIN are submitted directly to the observatories, which allocate time according to two semesters per year.

Semester A running from February to July

Semester B running from August to January

The closing dates are available from each of the following sites

[ING LIVJM](#)

[MERLIN](#)

PATT Travel Application Guidelines

Introduction

The following notes are intended to provide guidance and instructions to Applicants when preparing an application for travel funds (travel and subsistence) and the rules and regulations by which such awards are governed.

1. Aims of the scheme
2. Eligibility
3. General Information
4. PATT Travel GRANT
 - How to Apply
 - Case for support
 - Additional funding guidance
 - Peer Review
 - Using the PATT Grant
5. PATT Travel CLAIM
 - How to Apply
6. Membership and Terms of reference

1 - Aim of the scheme

The aim of the scheme is to fund access (travel and subsistence only) to a range of astronomy facilities for the UK community. All these facilities are free at the point of access. PATT travel funds will only be awarded to a UK Principal Investigator and should be used in support of UK based observers only. PATT awards will fund travel and subsistence only and will be paid at 100%. Any other costs associated with the research, such as post-doc salaries, equipment and investigator time, is assumed to be covered by relevant research grants awarded.

There are currently two separate routes to apply for travel funds:

PATT Travel Grants:

- For groups that exceed expenditure of £5k per annum
- Submission against set closing dates via the Je-S system
- Requesting 2 years funding

PATT Travel Claims (From May 2016):

- For Applicants that neither hold nor have access to a PATT Travel Grant at their Institution
- For occasional observing trips only
- Submission via e-mail with the required attachments

2 - Eligibility of Applicants and Observers

Applicants are eligible to apply for travel funds provided that they are permanent members of staff or otherwise hold a fully tenured post within an eligible UK Institution, please refer to the [Research Grants Handbook](#)

Observers are eligible to use the funds awarded in support of an approved programme of observations provided that they are:

- The Principal Investigator or Co-investigator or their nominated representative
- Employed as a Research Assistant or Researcher Co-Investigator on a research grant
- A student attached to an eligible Institution whose credentials have firmly established them as bona fide observers

Applicants should note that they must be satisfied as to the experience and qualifications of their nominated representative to use or operate the facility on which an allocation of time has been awarded. A Principal Investigator **MUST** not authorise the use of travel funds to support any students undertaking observations that will form part of their PhD preparation. If there is any doubt as to the status of the student please contact the office

3 - General Information

STFC would not normally expect to provide funds to support more than one observer. PATT travel funds should only be used when the presence of a UK observer is essential to the observing programme or required by the facility. Requests for a second observer will need explicit approval from the office. The Applicant should e-mail the office at least 4 weeks in advance of the observing time for approval.

Applicants are reminded that STFC funding for visits to both approved and non-approved telescopes is not guaranteed and that STFC is not obliged to approve last minute proposals on the grounds that air flights have been booked, or that not to approve funding would be a breach of faith with the awarding body.

Applications for the collection/collation of data following an award of 'remote and/or serviced' observing time on ground based facilities should be accompanied by a case for support of the need for a physical journey, e.g. complexity of data, difficulties in the transport of data etc.

All grant holders/Applicants must be aware of the requirement to exercise economy with the funds awarded. Claims for reimbursement should be in accordance with the Institution's current rules on Travel and Subsistence. If there is a change to, or cancellation of an agreed observing programme any alternative programme should be referred to the office.

4 - PATT Travel Grants (formerly named PATT Linked Grant)

It is expected that most Applicants will apply for funding via this route. STFC operates two closing dates per year April and October. Please refer to the [Funding Calls](#) page for closing dates. Proposals submitted to the April closing date MUST start on the 1st October; those submitted to the October closing date MUST start 1st April of the following year.

Applicants proposing to submit a Travel Grant for the first time are advised to contact the office for advice.

How to apply for a PATT Travel GRANT

Proposals must be submitted via the Je-S system, selecting the following:

Document type: Standard Proposal

Scheme: PATT Travel

Call: PATT Travel Grants

Please note the deadline for submission is 4.00pm

Requests should be for a 2 year period and only for travel funds, which will be paid at 100%.

Case for Support

In this instance the case for support should not exceed **6 pages** but must include the following:

- An [Expenditure Breakdown](#). This is a list of observing runs supported by STFC over the last 2 years. The actual dates and total cost for each run must be provided.
- Justification for any increase to the requested amounts. Applicants should explain the rationale behind such requests (e.g. group expansion, increased observing time etc.).
- A summary of trips made in the current grant period, including observers, costs of travel, accommodation, number of nights and destination.

Please justify the expected number of future trips and destinations, and the requested costs for the period of the application.

In particular, the Panel finds it useful for PIs to highlight significant changes in the expected spending, and to include details of new facilities being used, or when other facilities are being used less, so that they can gauge the changes in the request. Science cases should not be included in the application; rather the nature of the programmes involved and their mapping to an outline of the expected number of future trips should be included.

Applicants are advised to be realistic with their requests and anticipate demand with careful consideration as **Additional Funding** to the original request during the lifetime of the grant will only be considered once. (Please refer Additional Funding Guidance)

Additional Funding Guidance

Exceptionally, if during the grant award period an Applicant is awarded time on a telescope that wasn't included in the original grant or where other exceptional circumstances significantly increase the demands on the award, (such as large increases in staff numbers etc) STFC will consider a request for additional funds (Additional funding stream) in consultation with the PATT Chair. However Applicants should be mindful that only **ONE** such request will be permitted during the lifetime of the award, it is therefore essential that careful consideration be given to the amount requested to ensure ALL potential additional trips and exceptional circumstances are included. If approved, the additional funds will be added to the existing award. All requests should be e-mailed directly to the office in the first instance.

Peer Review

New and renewal PATT Grant applications are considered by the PATT Panel. PATT Travel Claims will be dealt with by the office with the exception of claims in relation to observing runs on non-approved telescopes, they will be considered by the PATT Chair.

Current membership

Professor Andrew Blain – Leicester University
Dr Meghan Gray - Nottingham University
Professor Martin Hardcastle – Hertfordshire University

Once a decision has been reached Applicants will be provided with appropriate feedback. In addition to the award details the Offer letter will include (where appropriate) the name of an approved telescopes, which may not be listed as a PATT approved telescope (e.g.SAAO 1.0m).

Using the PATT Grant

Funds awarded on a PATT travel grant may be used (without prior approval) to support observing runs to the following;

- STFC – Facilities in direct receipt of STFC funds (e-MERLIN, ING,LT)
- PATT Approved - Where the peer review is considered in line with that of STFC

Should funds be required to support observing runs on non-approved telescopes prior approval from STFC MUST be sought.

5 – PATT Travel Claims

Applicants that neither hold nor have access to a PATT travel grant at their institution may apply to the STFC for funding via this route

How to Apply for PATT funding via Travel Claims

Requests for funding via this route should be e-mailed directly to the office at least 4 weeks in advance of the run. The e-mail should simply indicate request for PATT travel funds but have the following documents attached.

- A completed [PATT T&S Form](#) following the [Guidance](#) provided
- The original proposal against which the time was awarded
- A copy of the time allocation letter from the awarding body

The office will e-mail confirmation of approval, with an STFC travel and subsistence form attached. Claims for Flights travel and subsistence must be submitted within 3 months of the observing run. All expenditure claimed must be officially receipted. Un-receipted claims will not be reimbursed by STFC.

Please be advised travel under this scheme should not be undertaken without prior approval from STFC.

6 - Membership of the Panel for the Allocation of Telescope Time and Time Allocation Groups

The Panel for the Allocation of Telescope Time (PATT) comprises an overall Chair and members / Technical secretaries of the time allocation groups (TAGS)

Panel for the Allocation of Telescope Time

Chair

Prof A W Blain - University of Leicester

Members

Dr M Gray - University of Nottingham

Prof Martin Hardcastle - Hertfordshire University

The Isaac Newton Group (ING) time allocation group

Chair

Dr C Watson – Queens University of Belfast

Members

Dr N Hatch - University of Nottingham

Dr N Jackson - University of Manchester

Dr R Napiwotzki - University of Hertfordshire

Dr M Collins – University of Surrey

Dr C Snodgrass – Open University

Liverpool Telescope Time Allocation group

Chair

Prof M Sullivan - University of Southampton

Members

Dr D.R. Anderson - University of Keele

Dr D Bersier – Liverpool John Moore

Dr C Villforth - University of Bath

Dr K Wieresma – University of Leicester

Merlin Time Allocation group

Chair

Dr M Sargent - University of Sussex

Members

Prof D Gabuzda – University of Cork

Dr J Greaves - University of St Andrews

Dr A Scaife – University of Manchester

Technical Secretary Dr T W B Muxlow - Jodrell Bank, University of Manchester

Remit, Terms of Reference and Constitution

Remit

The Panel for the Allocation of Telescope Time (PATT) is an advisory body set up to consider the allocation of telescope time and associated travel and subsistence costs in support of those allocations for a range of astronomy facilities for the UK community. These include those where the UK Community has priority access to time via an agreement (such as the ING, LT and e-MERLIN) and those where the UK community is able to compete via open access (such as facilities owned and operated within the US, Chile or Australia). Applications for ESO facilities are dealt with directly by ESO. It may on occasion be asked for input to policy and related matters. PATT includes the Time Allocation Groups (TAGS) which consider applications for the use of the ING, LT and e-MERLIN and advise PATT and the telescope directors/schedulers on the allocation of telescope time to users, in accordance with policy laid down by the STFC Executive.

Terms of Reference

1. To advise the executive on the award of travel and subsistence expenses consistent with allocated telescope time
2. Take account, as appropriate, of any strategic advice provided by STFC
3. Take account, as appropriate, of the recommendations of external reviewers
4. Provide clear concise feedback to Applicants
5. Advise the Executive as required on all issues relating to PATT
6. Liaise with other bodies as necessary

Constitution

The PATT comprises a grant awarding body and time allocation groups (TAGS). Members will be drawn from the wider academic community and will be overseen by an overall chair.

The Grant Awarding Body will be appointed by the Executive and will comprise of the overall chair plus members from the TAGS (usually no more than 3). It will meet twice a year usually by teleconference.

The TAG meetings may include telescope schedulers and/or technical experts, by invitation of the chair and will usually meet twice a year, in advance of the semester being applied for.

The secretariat for PATT is provided by STFC

Guidelines for managing conflicts of interest in the peer review process

The STFC, as a publicly funded organisation, is accountable to Government and the public for its actions and for the way it conducts its business, which must be undertaken in a way that is transparent and guards against conflicts of interest influencing the outcome of decisions. Further information for managing conflicts as a STFC Panel member can be found at: <http://www.stfc.ac.uk/funding/research-grants/peer-review-and-assessment/>

Equality of opportunity

STFC is fully committed to ensuring that all Applicants receive equal treatment throughout the peer review process, and will provide the necessary training and support to Panel members and peer reviewers. STFC policies on inclusion and diversity are available on the STFC website. STFC will keep these policies under review in order to ensure that its policies and practices reflect best practice and enable full compliance under the Equality Act 2010.

Confidentiality

The STFC will distribute peer review papers via a secure intranet and everything must be considered as confidential i.e. the contents should not be disclosed. The confidential nature is intended to ensure that the contents of the proposals, reviews etc. are not made known more widely than is necessary for proper consideration by the peer review Panels. Names of reviewers are not disclosed to Applicants and neither are those of the lead introducer for the proposals.