

Facility Access Panel Member Selection at the ISIS Neutron and Muon Source

Philip King, August 2018

Introduction

The ISIS Facility Access Panels (FAPs) review all proposals (currently 1200 – 1500 per year) coming into the ISIS Neutron and Muon Source and recommend a science programme to the ISIS director. There are currently seven FAPs each composed of senior and experienced members of the science communities that ISIS serves. FAP members serve for a period of 3 years (FAP Chairs may serve a longer term). Members are currently chosen for their expertise in specific science areas, together with experience in using neutron or muon techniques.

A revised process for member selection will be introduced in 2019. This process will further ensure openness and transparency of member selection, and specific monitoring of processes to support diversity on the panels. This process will also be in sympathy with the STFC mechanism for member selection of advisory and grant peer review panels, whilst recognising that peer review panels for ISIS proposals have different requirements from other STFC panels.

This paper describes the process that will be used from the start of 2019 for ISIS FAP member selection.

FAP membership selection process for the ISIS Neutron & Muon Source

The aim of a revised process is to enable ISIS FAPs to have greater openness in member selection and to ensure that diversity is fully considered as part of the process, whilst also enabling relevant expertise of members to be maintained.

1. The process will happen once per year – normally in January.
2. FAP members whose time on a panel will come to an end during the year are identified, and the key areas of expertise that they provide are described in a few sentences for each.
3. Any other gaps in expertise or areas where panels feel they need additional support are identified and also captured in a few sentences.
4. A call is publicised through the ISIS website, email to the community, etc., which lists all of the above vacancies. Community members are invited to apply for FAP membership by filling in a short web form to give their details, which area(s) of expertise they feel they meet and a short paragraph on why they feel they are appropriate. We should aim to publish the call by the end of January, with submissions by end of February.
5. It is likely that ISIS staff, in discussion with the existing FAP, will also have ideas of community members who can fill expertise gaps in the panels. These individuals can be approached by ISIS staff or by the existing panel chair and asked to complete the web form if they would be willing to be considered for FAP membership.

6. This will lead to a pool of researchers who are in principle available for selection for FAP membership.
7. In March a panel of ISIS science group leaders and division heads will meet to review all the applications that have come in and to make decisions on who to appoint to FAPs from the pool of possible researchers. The expertise of the applicants will be the primary consideration, and how this matches the expertise gaps identified for each FAP; however, diversity will also be taken into account and actively monitored. It is noted that current STFC guidelines are for at least 20% female representation on advisory panels, rising to at least 30% from 2019. ISIS FAPs as of Oct 2018 have 25% female members with 3 out of the 7 chairs being female. Panel chairs will be consulted before a final decision on panel membership is made.
8. By end of March a selection from the pool of researchers will be confirmed, with those to be appointed to a FAP then being invited to the June FAP meetings. Researchers from the pool who have not been selected will be informed of this and kept in the pool for future selection rounds if they would like this.
9. It is possible that this process won't identify people to fill all the gaps, in which case further direct approaches to research community members will be made, continuing to bear diversity in mind alongside expertise.
10. Information on the above process and its outcomes would be reported on to the STFC Nominations Panel for monitoring purposes.