

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

Introduction

The ISIS Facility Access Panels (FAPs) review all proposals (currently 1500 – 2000 per year) coming into the ISIS Neutron and Muon Source, and recommend a science programme to the ISIS Director. There are currently ten FAPs each composed of senior and experienced members of the science communities that ISIS serves. FAP members serve for a period of six meetings (FAP Chairs may serve a longer term), with two review panel meetings taking place each year in June and December. 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 was introduced in 2019. This process ensures openness and transparency of member selection, and specific monitoring of processes to support diversity on the panels. This process is also 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 is used for ISIS FAP member selection.

FAP membership selection process for the ISIS Neutron & Muon Source

The aim of this 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. This process will happen annually.
2. Gaps in expertise or areas where panels feel they need additional support are identified and captured in a few sentences.
3. A call is publicised through the ISIS website, email to the community, etc., which lists all available 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.
4. 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.
5. This will lead to a pool of researchers who are in principle available for selection for FAP membership.
6. A panel of ISIS science group leaders and division heads will meet to review all applications that have been submitted 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 30% female representation on advisory panels.
7. Once a selection from the pool of researchers is confirmed, those to be appointed to a FAP will be invited to the June or December 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 wish.
8. 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.
9. Information on the above process and its outcomes would be reported to the STFC Nominations Panel for monitoring purposes.