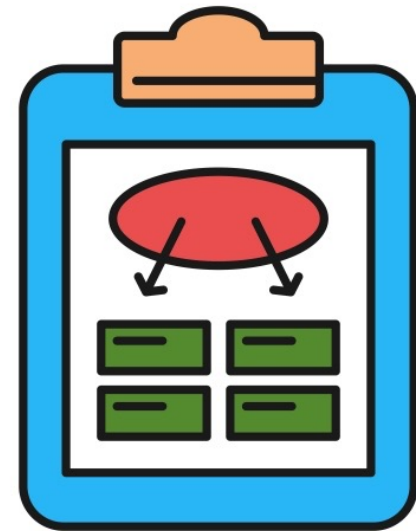# ALMA Proposal Review Process

EA community meeting

Pei-Ying Hsieh on behalf of Proposal Handling Team
March 22, 2024

What's new for Large Programs Review

- Proposals for Large Programs are required to submit a management plan as part of the Scientific Justification (which must follow dual anonymous guidelines)

- Large Programs also require a one-page "Team Expertise" document, separate from the Scientific Justification. The document is allowed to include names and institutions, and should be uploaded to the OT at the time of submission.

- The ALMA Proposal Review Committee (APRC) will read the "Team Expertise" document only after completing the scientific ranking of the proposals.

Goal of presentation

ALMA distributed peer review (DPR)

Large Programs review

Dual anonymous review

Basics of DPR

One member of each proposal team* commits to participate in the review process

Each reviewer reviews 10 proposals (Proposal Set) for each submitted proposal
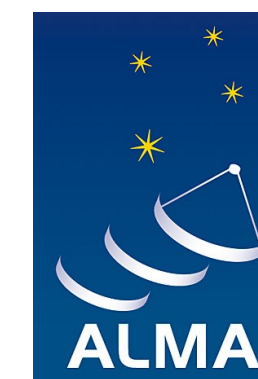
The process
- Stage 1
  - Reviewers identify conflicts of interest
  - Reviewers rank the proposals from 1 to 10 (best to weakest) and provide a comment
- Stage 2
  - Access to anonymized reviews made by other reviewers.
  - Have chances to modify ranks and comments.

* Excluding Large Programs

Reviewer timeline for Cycle 11

April 25
Proposal deadline

1) Proposal PI designates the reviewer in Observing Tool (OT)

April 30
Expertise & conflicts

1) Reviewer specify scientific expertise in Preferences
2) Reviewer provide list of conflicts of interest in Preferences
3) Deadline to provide alternative reviewer, if necessary

May 8 - June 5
Stage 1

1) Plenary sessions May 9-14 (optional, and highly recommended)
2) Declare any conflicts of interest in assigned proposals by May 15
3) Complete reviews by June 5 @ 15 UT   **(MANDATORY!)**

June 6 - June 20
Stage 2

1) Read reviews from other reviewers
2) Modify your ranks and comments as needed

PI must designate the reviewer

1) Proposal PI designates the reviewer in Observing Tool (OT)

Reviewer Information

Please designate a reviewer who will participate in the distributed review process. The reviewer may be the PI of the proposal or one of the other investigators.
A student (without a PhD) may serve as the reviewer only if they are the PI of the proposal and a mentor (with a PhD) is identified.
The mentor does not need to be an investigator on the proposal.

Reviewers are requested to update their user profiles with combinations of scientific categories and keywords which describe
their area(s) of expertise using the new 'Expertise' tab in https://asa.alma.cl/UserRegistration/secure/updateAccount.jsp.
Available expertise information will be used in the distribution of proposal assignments.

Reviewer has a PhD? ● No ○ Yes

Select Mentor

Mentor name [   ]

Mentor has a PhD? ● No ○ Yes

Student PIs can be reviewers, but need to specify a mentor who will assist in the review.

PI designates the reviewer

1) Proposal PI designates the reviewer in Observing Tool (OT)

Reviewer Information

Please designate a reviewer who will participate in the distributed review process. The reviewer may be the PI of the proposal or one of the other investigators.
A student (without a PhD) may serve as the reviewer only if they are the PI of the proposal and a mentor (with a PhD) is identified.
The mentor does not need to be an investigator on the proposal.

Reviewers are requested to update their user profiles with combinations of scientific categories and keywords which describe
their area(s) of expertise using the new 'Expertise' tab in https://asa.alma.cl/UserRegistration/secure/updateAccount.jsp.
Available expertise information will be used in the distribution of proposal assignments.

Reviewer has a PhD? ● No ○ Yes

Select Mentor

Mentor name

Mentor has a PhD? ● No ○ Yes

A single reviewer can be assigned a maximum of **FIVE** Proposal Sets for DPR
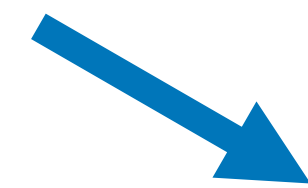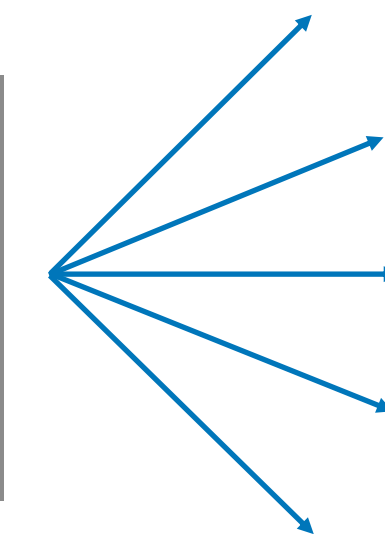
How are proposals assigned to reviewers?
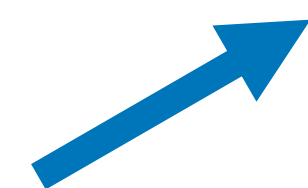
Providing Reviewer expertise

April 30 UTC 15:00 Expertise & conflicts	1) Reviewer specify scientific expertise in Preferences 2) Reviewer provide list of conflicts of interest in Preferences 3) Deadline to provide alternative reviewer, if necessary

Account info | Project delegation | Demographics | **Expertise** | Confirm

Expertise

⟵ Previous   ⟶ Next

Please select at least 3 category/keyword pairs that best match your scientific expertise. You may select keywords in more than one category.
If you are a reviewer for Distributed Peer Review (DPR) you will preferentially be assigned proposals that match your selected keywords.

> Cosmology and the High Redshift Universe

> Galaxies and Galactic Nuclei

∨ ISM, star formation and astrochemistry

☐ Outflows, jets and ionized winds

☑ High-mass star formation

☑ Intermediate-mass star formation

☑ Low-mass star formation

☑ Pre-stellar cores, Infra-Red Dark Clouds (IRDC)

☑ Astrochemistry

☑ Inter-Stellar Medium (ISM)/Molecular clouds

☐ Photon-Dominated Regions (PDR)/X-Ray Dominated Regions (XDR)

☐ HII regions

☐ Magellanic Clouds

> Circumstellar disks, exoplanets and the solar system

> Stellar Evolution and the Sun

1) Log in to the ALMA Science Portal

2) Edit your "Preferences"

3) Go to the **Expertise** tab

4) Select keywords that match your scientific expertise

5) Go to the **Confirm** tab to save

Reviewers can specify their conflicts of interest

April 30 UTC 15:00
Expertise & conflicts

1) Reviewer specify scientific expertise in Preferences
2) Reviewer provide list of conflicts of interest in Preferences
3) Deadline to provide alternative reviewer, if necessary

| Account info | Project delegation | Demographics | Expertise | **Conflicts of interest** | Confirm |

Conflicts of interest

⬅ Previous   ➡ Next

If you are a reviewer for Distributed Peer Review or the Panel Review, please provide a list of your conflicts of interest. Consult the conflicts of interest criteria for guidance on what is considered a conflict. You will not be assigned to review a proposal in which the PI, a coPI, or a col is in your list of conflicts of interest.

Reviewers only need to identify conflicts of interest that are registered ALMA users since all reviewers must be registered. If a close collaborator is not in the ALMA user registry below, they do not need to be listed.

Providing this information is optional. If you do not provide a list of conflicts and do not check the box below, the JAO will identify potential conflicts based on your past ALMA collaborations.

I have no conflicts of interest to declare ☐

⊕ Add collaborator   ⊖ Remove collaborators   ☐ Clear selection

1) Log in to the ALMA Science Portal

2) Edit your "Preferences"

3) Go to the **Conflicts of Interest** tab

4) Identify ALMA users for which you have a conflict

5) Go to the **Confirm** tab to save

What is considered a conflict of interest?

- In general, a reviewer has a major conflict of interest when their personal or work interests would benefit if the proposal under review is accepted or rejected.
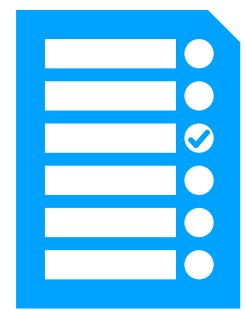
- Close collaborators, which are defined as a <u>substantial</u> collaboration on three or more papers within the past three years or an <u>active</u>, <u>substantial</u> collaboration on a current project. Co-membership in a large team on its own does not constitute a conflict of interest.
- Students and postdocs under supervision of the reviewer within the past three years
- A reviewer's supervisor (for student and postdoc reviewers)
- Close personal ties (e.g., family member, partner) that are ALMA users
- Any other reason in which a reviewer believes a major conflict of interest exists
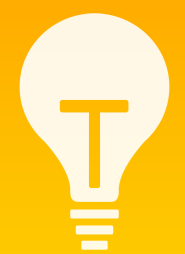
If a reviewer does not provide their conflicts, the PHT will determine conflicts based on the reviewer's proposal history for the past three cycles.

Alternative reviewers

1) Reviewer specify scientific expertise in Preferences
2) Reviewer provide list of conflicts of interest in Preferences
3) Deadline to provide alternative reviewer, if necessary

A single reviewer can be assigned a maximum of **FIVE** Proposal Sets

- After the proposal deadline, the PHT will contact those reviewers who have selected to receive more than five Proposal Sets
- It is expected that for these cases, the reviewer identifies a new reviewer among the proposal co-Is
- If no alternative has been identified by the deadline (April 30 UTC 15:00), the PHT will cancel the reviewer's highest code(s) proposals
- Email address --> the PHT will communicate with the reviewers using the email address registered in the science portal, so it is important that it is up to date and valid as soon as possible

Stage 1: Review assigned proposals

May 8 - June 5
Stage 1

1) Plenary sessions May 9-14 (optional, and highly recommended)
2) Declare any conflicts of interest in assigned proposals by May 15
3) Complete reviews by June 5 @ 15 UT   **(MANDATORY!)**
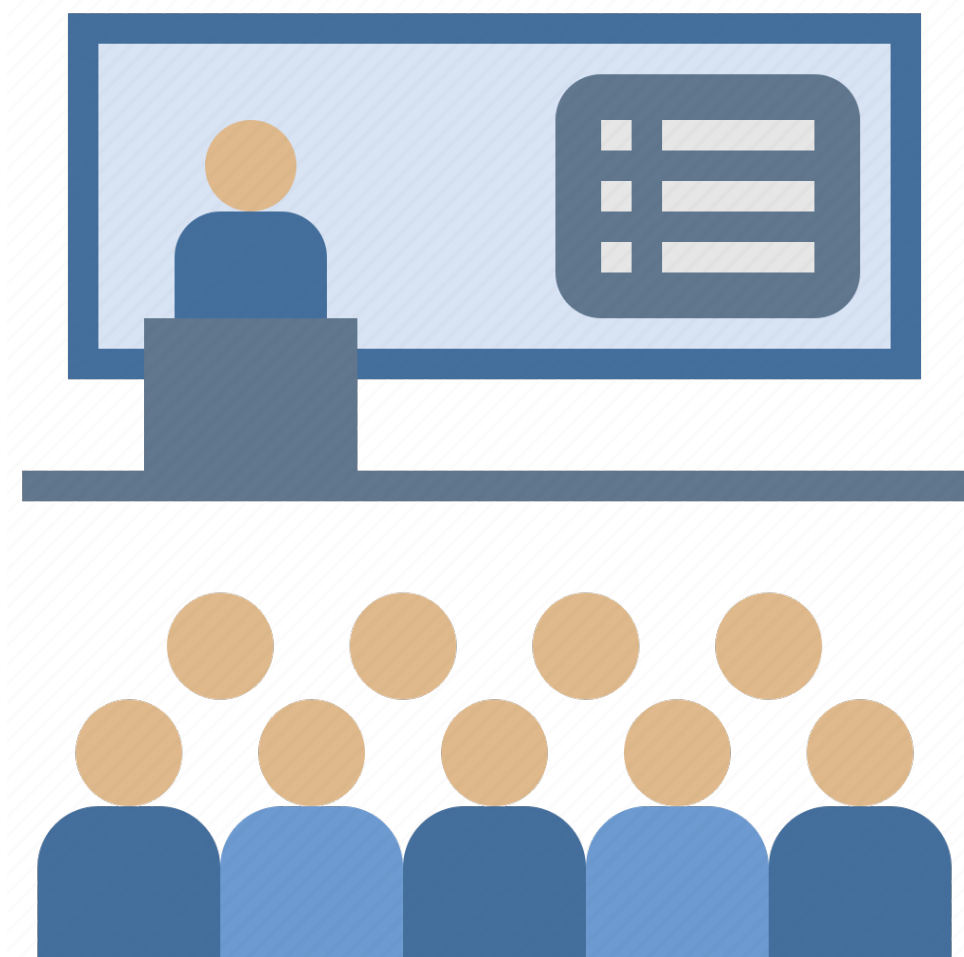
- The PHT will host three Webinars (links can be found in the ALMA Science Portal (Proposing -> ALMA Proposal Review)
  - Session 1: Thursday May 9, 17:00 UTC
  - Session 2: Friday May 10, 13:00 UTC
  - Session 3: Tuesday May 14, 2:00 UTC
- During this sessions, the PHT will explain the different aspects of distributed peer review, and will be available to answer questions
- The presentation and slides will be posted in the ALMA Science Portal before the Webinars
- Attending one of the sessions is not mandatory, but it is highly recommended
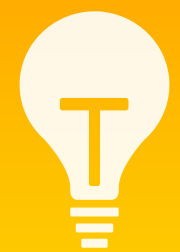
Stage 1: Review assigned proposals

May 8 - June 5
Stage 1

1) Plenary sessions May 9-14 (optional, but highly recommended)
2) Declare any conflicts of interest in assigned proposals by May 15
3) Complete reviews by June 5 @ 15 UT **(MANDATORY!)**

Declare any additional conflicts in your assigned proposals by May 15 (in the reviewer tool)
- for example: observing the same object(s) with the same goals
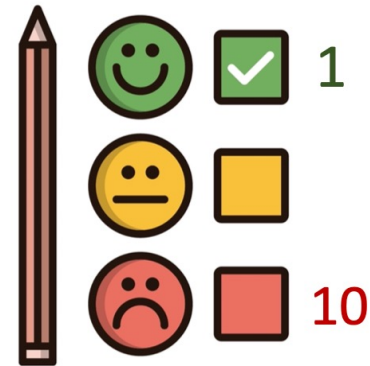
If you identify a conflict after you submitted your conflicts in reviewer tool, create a Helpdesk ticket to be assigned another proposal.

Stage 1: Review assigned proposals

May 8 - June 5
Stage 1

1) Plenary sessions May 9-14 (optional, but highly recommended)
2) Declare any conflicts of interest in assigned proposals by May 15
3) Complete reviews by June 5 @ 15 UT   **(MANDATORY!)**

- Rank the proposals within a proposal set from 1 (strongest) to 10 (weakest) based on scientific merit.

- Write comments that summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal
- **Comments will be sent to the PI verbatim.**

- **Reviewer's proposal will be canceled if the reviews are not submitted on time!**
- Extensions will not be granted since Stage 2 starts on June 6.

The reviewer can be changed after the proposal deadline in exceptional circumstances by having the proposal PI submit a Helpdesk ticket. The Stage 1 deadline remains the same.

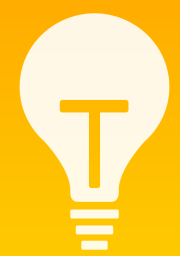# Stage 2: Finalize the ranks and reviews

June 6 - June 20
Stage 2

1) Read reviews from other reviewers
2) Modify your ranks and comments as needed
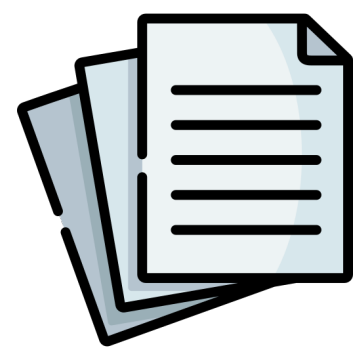
The reviewers can read comments of the other 9 reviews per proposal within a proposal set. This is to see if you overlook any critical strengths or weaknesses.

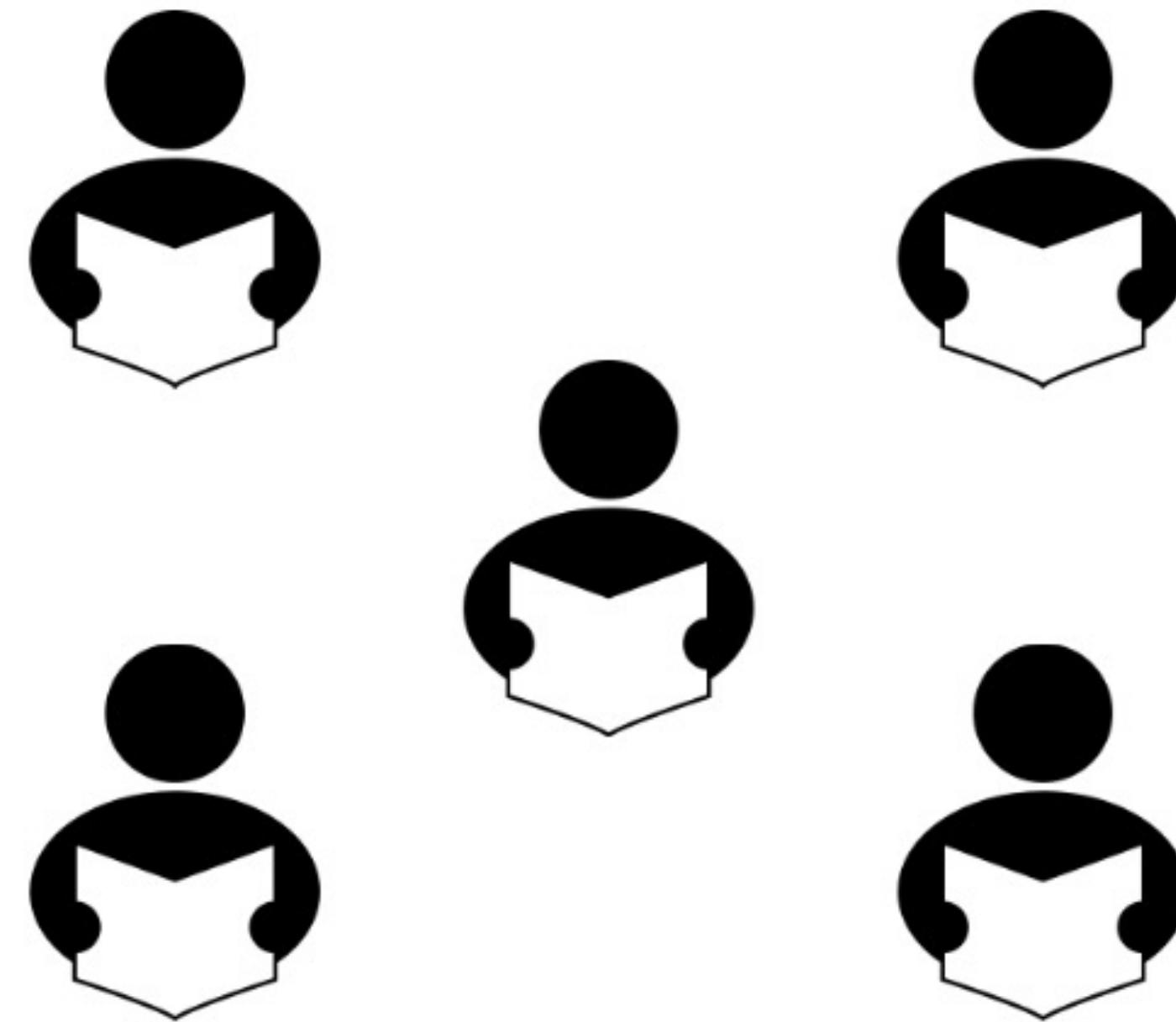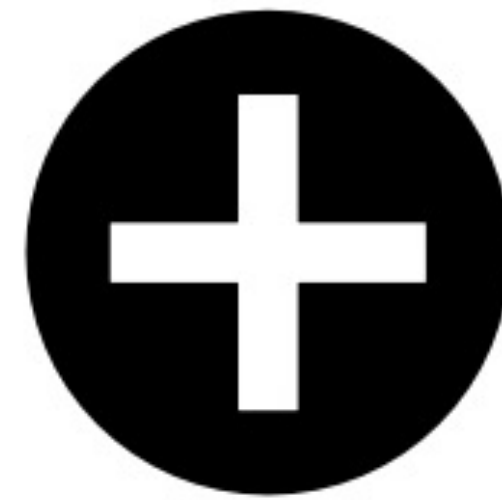You have chance to update your ranks and comments as needed.

Stage 2 is encouraged! However, if a reviewer does not complete Stage 2, the Stage 1 ranks/comments are considered final.

Cycle 11 Large Programs Review

ALMA Proposal Review Committee (APRC)

External Science Assessors

- The APRC will attend the virtual meeting (June 24-28) and prepare the list of recommendation (16-18 people).

- They attend only stage 1 (May 5-June 8) : read 1-3 proposals and write the reports (<4000 words) to the APRC (~90 people).

Review Criteria Large Programs

Overall scientific merit

Suitability of the observations to achieve the scientific goals

Specific for Large Programs (LP)

- Does the LP address a strategic scientific issue and have the potential to lead to a major advancement or breakthrough in the field that cannot be achieved by combining regular proposals?
- Are the data products that will be delivered by the proposal team given the scope of the proposal and will the products be of value to the community?
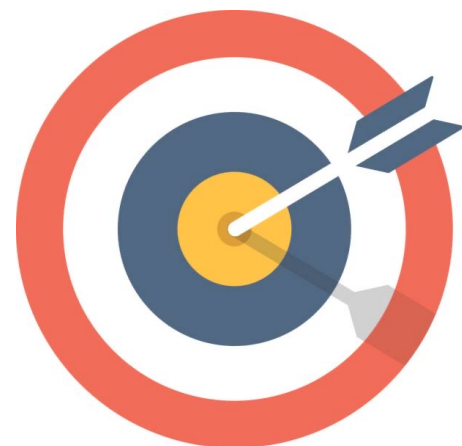- Is the publication plan appropriate for the scope of the proposal?

Dual anonymous: overview

All proposals must be written following the dual anonymous review guidelines

- Basic principle is that the proposal should not reveal the proposal team

- Reviewers should focus on the proposed science, and not the proposal team

Guidelines provided on the ALMA Science Portal (Proposing => ALMA Proposal Review).

Do not reveal the teams!

- Do not list the PI, co-PIs, or coIs anywhere in the proposal

- Includes abstract, Scientific Justification, and Technical Justification
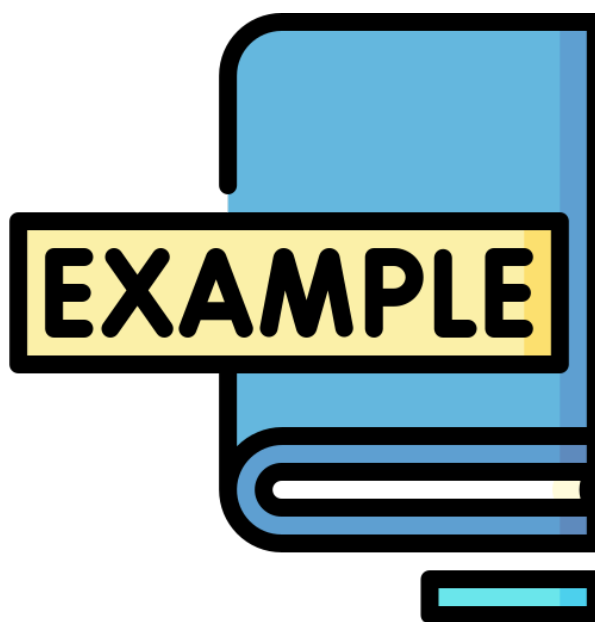
Use third person phrasing

- Reference your own work in the third person

~~In Smith et al. (2018), we demonstrated …~~
~~Our study (Smith et al. 2018) showed that …~~

As demonstrated in Smith et al. (2018), …
Smith et al. (2018) showed that …

Referencing data and software anonymously

- Do not refer to software or data from ALMA or other observatories in a self-identifying fashion

  - If software or datasets are available in a public repository (e.g., GitHub) or in a public paper, they can be referenced per normal practices

  - If software or datasets are not public reference them as "obtained via private communication" or similar language

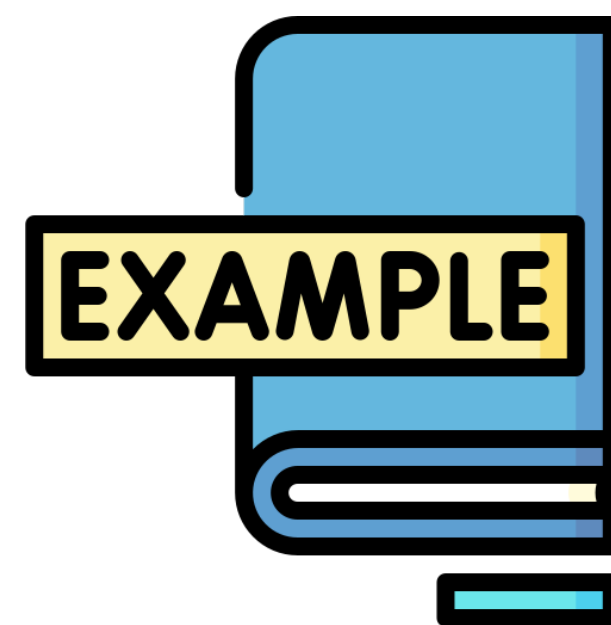*The proposed ALMA observations will be combined with our HST data (code, PI) ...*

We use our group's line identification package STAR ...

The proposed ALMA observations will be combined with available HST data (private communication) ...

We use the line identification package STAR (obtained via private communication) ...

Do not list PIs of other proposals

- Do not name the PI when listing a project code, even if it is not your own project
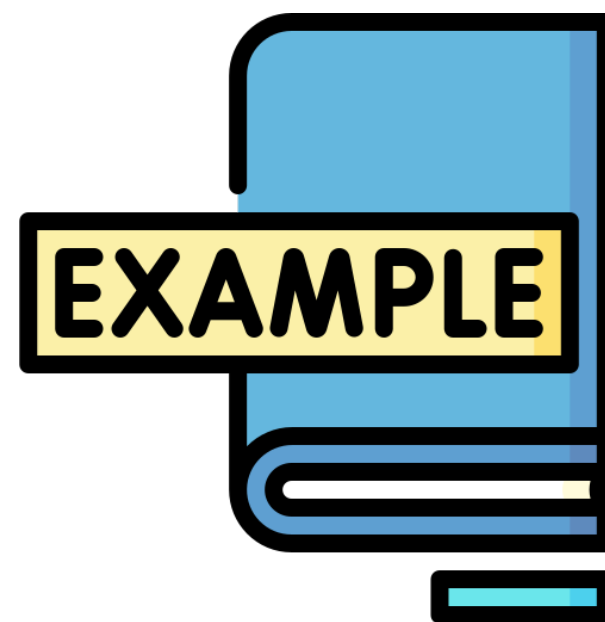
❌ *Figure 1 shows the image from the Cycle 7 program (2019.1.02045.S, PI Pérez).*

✅ *Figure 1 shows the image from the Cycle 7 program (2019.1.02045.S)*
Figure 1 shows the image from the Cycle 7 program (private communication)

EXAMPLE

Referencing papers in preparation

- Papers in preparation need to be referenced as private communication without an associated name.

❌ *Figure 1 shows the CO image from Gómez et al. (in preparation)*

✅ *Figure 1 shows the CO image (private communication)*

Referencing submitted papers

- References to submitted papers are not permitted (use "private communication")

- If a submitted paper has been posted on the archive (e.g, arXiv), the archive paper can be referenced per usual practices

❌ *Our sample was obtained from a recent survey (Chang et al. submitted).*
Our sample was obtained from a recent survey (Atro-ph 123).

✅ *Our sample was obtained from a recent survey (private communication).*
*The sample was obtained from a recent survey (Astro-ph 123).*

Resubmissions

- Proposers may note if they are resubmitting an ongoing proposal. This is usually done in the "duplication" box on the cover sheet.

- Do not list the proposal code, ranking, priority grade, or the PI of the previous proposal in the resubmission statement.

- If data from the previous proposal are presented in the Scientific Justification, it must be presented in a dual anonymous fashion.
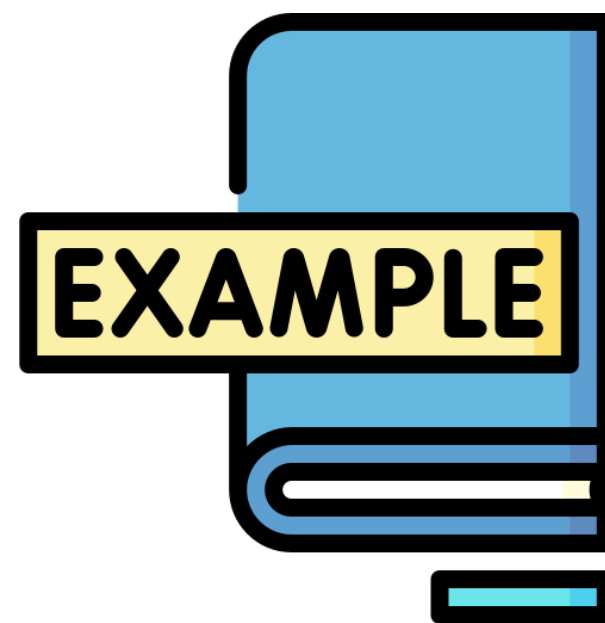
❌ *This is a resubmission of our ongoing program 2021.1.02045.S (PI: Smith). Half of the targets have been observed and we are resubmitting the proposal to observe the remaining half.*

✅ *This is a resubmission of our ongoing program. Half of the targets have been observed and we are resubmitting the proposal to observe the remaining half.*

More information

🔗 https://almascience.org/proposing/alma-proposal-review

- Dual-anonymous guidelines
- Description of the distributed peer review
- Detailed guidelines for the reviewers
- FAQ

For proposal and review help

HELP https://help.almascience.org

- "Proposal Handling" department
- "Proposal Review Support" department