



Guidelines for applicants to the SIOS Access Programme

3 July 2018

Background

The SIOS Access Programme plans, facilitates and supports access to the research infrastructure (RI) owned by SIOS members. Access will be in accordance with the SIOS Access Policy (<https://www.sios-svalbard.org/Documents>).

Organisation

The SIOS Knowledge Centre will administrate the programme and will carry out the necessary administrative tasks. These include:

- Providing support and guidance for applicants during the application process.
- Preparing the meetings of the selection panel.
- Communicating the decision of the selection panel.

SOAG (Science Optimisation Advisory Group) and RICC (Research Infrastructure Coordination Committee) will jointly evaluate applications.

Procedure for assessing applicants

There is a two stage approach to assessing applicants - evaluation for scientific merit by SOAG (and external reviewers if necessary) and a feasibility assessment by RICC. During this process it may be necessary to go back to the applicant to clarify certain details of their application or to suggest changes. Once the selection panel is satisfied that a proposal is both scientifically desirable and technically feasible funding may be granted. The decisions of the panel are made by consensus.

The general principles that are used for assessing applicants are:

- **Transparency:** The detailed criteria for assessing applicants are released in the call. The panel must be able to demonstrate that the successful applicants have met the criteria. The selection process will be fair, impartial and transparent. The focus of the panel is on scientific excellence.
- **Relevance:** Projects must be consistent with the goals of SIOS to optimise the observing system and promote advancement in Arctic Earth System Science (ESS).
- **Scientific feasibility:** The project must be scientifically feasible and the methods proposed must have a realistic prospect of meeting the objectives of the proposal.
- **Innovation:** Proposals that will develop, promote or enhance innovative techniques for reducing the environmental impact of research and monitoring are particularly sought after. Innovation with regards to making data useful and available to researchers from other disciplines is also highly valued.
- **Optimisation of the observing system:** Proposals that can clearly demonstrate a benefit to the observing system will be prioritised. Such benefits may include making new observational data available, analysis of existing data, integration of datasets, creating new data products that are made available to other researchers etc.
- **Contribution to SIOS:** Users of SIOS infrastructure commit to making the data they produce available on the SIOS data portal. Details of the datasets

that will be generated or existing datasets that will be made available to other SIOS users must be included in the application.

- **Adherence to SIOS policy:** Applicants must agree to adhere to the SIOS Access Policy and Data Policy (<https://www.sios-svalbard.org/Documents>).

The feasibility of proposed access projects will be assessed by RICC. RICC members represent the majority of SIOS member institutions and have detailed knowledge of the RI available. Key considerations in this assessment are:

- **Availability:** Is the RI that the applicant wishes to access available at the time they want it?
- **Scale:** Can the facility accommodate a project of the scope and size proposed?
- **Staff:** Does the proposed project make unrealistic demands on staff time at the facility?

Guidance for writing a project proposal

The project proposal must not exceed 5 pages of minimum size 12 font and should include:

- General scientific background
- Specific aims of the project
- Contribution to SIOS/ESS/observing system
- Methods
- Analysis of how the proposed project is congruent with the SIOS optimisation report
- Expected outcome
- Datasets that will be generated
- The access requirements of the project (location, timing, logistical needs, data etc.). Please be as specific as possible
- Collaboration across institutions / countries / scientific disciplines
- Training of young scientists/Public outreach

Guidance on writing a budget

Applicants are asked to provide a budget using the template in the application form.

Those applying for access will receive free access to field stations, including room and board, for a maximum of 14 days per person. SIOS will also reimburse travel costs up to a maximum of 15,000 NOK per person.

SIOS will not cover the cost of transporting equipment or additional costs not normally included in the cost of accessing stations (fuel, chemicals, hire of labs and boats from King's Bay etc.). Details of how such costs will be funded through external financing must be provided in your budget. If you are unsure if something you require is included in the cost for access, please ask the SIOS Access and Logistics Officer (logistics@sios-svalbard.org).

Conditions

In principle, SIOS members cannot withdraw access to their facility once an access project has been accepted. There may however be exceptional circumstances under which access must be withdrawn. SIOS does not accept liability for any losses incurred under such circumstances. All users are responsible for their own insurances.

Access is granted on the understanding that it is used for the purpose stated in the application. Anyone found to not comply with this condition may have access withdrawn.

Most research conducted in Svalbard requires permission from the Governor of Svalbard, and other permissions may also be required depending on the nature of the work. Information is available from Svalbard Science Forum (https://www.forskningsradet.no/prognett-ssf/Research_permissions/1254013737002). The SIOS Access and Logistics Officer can assist with determining which permissions are required, but it remains the responsibility of the user to ensure permissions are in place before embarking on fieldwork.

All users of the SIOS Access Programme must register their project on the Research in Svalbard (RiS) database.

Users are responsible for organising their own travel and cargo freight. Guidance may be sought from the SIOS Access and Logistics Officer if required. SIOS does not accept liability for any losses incurred due to transport delays or similar circumstances. Users must have adequate insurance to cover such losses.

In the event of the user requiring assistance due to unforeseen circumstances they should in the first instance contact the station leader at the facility they have been granted access to. The SIOS Access and Logistics Officer may also be contacted for assistance.

Users are required to share information with SIOS about external publications resulting from the access. The contribution made by SIOS and by the facilities accessed must be acknowledged in any such publications. Reporting of publications may be done on the RiS database.

By submitting an application to the SIOS Access Programme the applicant confirms that they have received authorisation from their employer for their planned activity.

Failure to comply with the conditions listed above will result in access being withdrawn.