

Panel for Allocation of Telescope Travel (PATT) Awards

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

Introduction

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

Aim of the scheme

The aim of the scheme is to fund access 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 Applicant and should be used in support of UK based observers only. PATT applications can only request travel and substance to support competitively awarded science observation time. Any other costs associated with the research, such as post-doc salaries, equipment, and Applicant time, are assumed to be covered by relevant research grants awarded. Support for commissioning work or for observing with private facilities is to be covered by research grants, where 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-System
- Requesting 2 years funding

PATT Travel Claims:

- 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

Eligibility of Applicants and Observers

Applicants are eligible to apply for travel funds if 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 if they are:

- The Principal Investigator or Co-investigator or a nominated representative
- A member of academic or research staff within the Institution of the Principal Investigator
- A student attached to the Institution of the Principal Investigator whose credentials have firmly established them as bona fide observers – see below.

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

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 run 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 or for data reduction visits 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. Please note such requests will only be awarded in exceptional cases – for most programmes the default is that PATT is not the appropriate source. Applicants should seek guidance from the Office before applying.

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.

PATT Travel Grants

It is expected that most Applicants will apply for funding via this route. As of October, 2020 STFC will operate just ONE closing date a year. The closing date will be set for October and Grants must start on April 1st 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 options: Document type: Standard Proposal

Scheme: PATT Travel

Call: PATT Travel Grants

Please note the deadline for submission is 4.00pm on the announced closing date

Requests should be for a 2-year period and only for travel funds, which will be paid at 100%. Please do not include any salary information on the JeS form or any request for Applicant time. Applicants are advised to only add the name of the Principal Investigator on the JeS form.

Case for Support

The case for support should not exceed 6 pages but must include the following:

- A list of the academic and research staff who are expected to make use of the proposed award.
- An expenditure breakdown for all PATT-funded observing, or other trips over the past two years. This must be in tabular form and include the actual dates of travel, the names of all observers, the destination, the number of nights spent at the telescope, the costs of travel and accommodation, and the total cost of the trip. An expenditure template can be found [here](#). If a trip is not yet finalized but is expected to be carried out before the end of the current grant, estimated costs should be given. The total PATT-funded expenditure should be listed at the bottom of the table.
- If an existing grant is held, justification for any change to the requested amounts relative to the amount awarded on the existing grant. Applicants should explain the rationale behind such requests (e.g. group expansion, increased observing time etc.)

Please justify the expected number of future trips and destinations, and the requested costs for the period of the application. Please also provide justification for the use of, and costings for, any telescope not on the [PATT Approved Telescope list](#), and for any data collation/reduction visits where an observer is not required. If appropriate a request may be made in the proposal for a facility to be added to the approved list.

The Panel expects Applicants 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 to the guidance below. Applicants who already hold a PATT Grant should note that if there has been a significant underspend on the existing award it may be preferable to extend the award for 12 months rather than submit a new proposal. Applicants who may be considering this option should contact the office for further advice.

Additional Funding Stream 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 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

PATT Travel Grant applications will be considered by the PATT Panel.

PATT Travel Claims will be dealt with by the Office except for claims in relation to observing runs on non-approved telescopes which will be considered by the PATT Chair.

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

Using the PATT Grant

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

- Facilities in direct receipt of STFC funds (e-MERLIN, ING,LT)
- PATT Approved Telescopes, 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 MUST be sought from STFC.

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

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 observing run. The e-mail should simply indicate a request for PATT travel funds but must have the following documents attached.

- A completed [PATT travel and subsistence request 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 appropriate claim form attached. Please note that claims must be submitted within 3 months of the observing run and include all relevant receipts as unfortunately un-receipted claims will not be reimbursed by STFC.

Panel Remit, Terms of Reference, and Constitution

Remit

The Panel for the Allocation of Telescope Travel (PATT) is an advisory body set up to consider the allocation of telescope travel and subsistence costs in support of those allocations for a range of Astronomy facilities for the UK community. Applications for ESO facilities are dealt with directly by ESO. It may on occasion be asked for input to policy and related matters.

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. 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 representatives of 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 once a year usually by teleconference.

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 [Peer-review and assessment - Science and Technology Facilities Council \(ukri.org\)](https://www.ukri.org/peer-review-and-assessment/)

Equal 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 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.