NCMAS

The National Computational Merit Allocation Scheme (NCMAS) is Australia's premier meritorious allocation scheme, spanning both national peak facilities as well as specialised compute facilities across the nation.

The NCMAS is open to the Australian research community, providing significant amounts of compute time for meritorious research projects.

The NCMAS is administered by the NCMAS secretariat. Further information is available at https://ncmas.nci.org.au.

Available Resources

The NCMAS is 35% of the available compute time on Magnus. The NCMAS 2020 call for Magnus has a total of 100,000,000 core hours for allocation to successful projects, over the January to December 2020 period.

Requests for this scheme must be a minimum of 250,000 core hours per project. There is no maximum limit to the amount of time that can be requested. However, partial allocations may be awarded depending on the availability and demand for allocations within the scheme.

Note that 250,000 cores hours in a year is approximately the equivalent of two 16-core workstations. Applications for such small allocations must specify why access to a supercomputer is necessary for the research, and based on the scoring criteria below such uses of the supercomputer are unlikely to be competitive against other applications who demonstrate they need the expensive interconnect. Nimbus, the research cloud at Pawsey is better suited to single-node applications, and has a light-weight application process.

Other non-Pawsey resources are available under the NCMAS, and in particular is the other Australian peak facility, NCI.

Assessment Criteria

Criterion 1: Project quality and innovation

- Significance of the research
- Originality and innovative nature of the computational framework
- Advancement of knowledge through the goals of the proposed research
- Potential for the research to contribute to Australian science, research and innovation priorities

Criterion 2: Investigator records

- Research record and performance relative to opportunity (publications, research funding, recognition and esteem metrics)

Criterion 3: Computational feasibility

- Adequacy of the time commitment of investigators to undertake the research and utilise the resources successfully
- Suitability of the system to support the research, and an appropriate and efficient use of the system
- Capacity to realise the goals of the project within the resources request
- Appropriate track record in the use of high-performance computing systems, relative to the scale of the resources requested

Criterion 4: Benefit and impact

- Ability of the project to generate impactful outcomes and produce innovative economic, environmental and social benefits to Australia and the international community

Application Form and Process

Applications to the NCMAS are via online form at the NCMAS website, https://ncmas.nci.org.au.

Partner Top-up Allocations

Applications to the NCMAS that are not allocated the full request, and have a project leader that is eligible for the Pawsey Partner scheme but has not applied directly to that scheme, will be also be considered in the Pawsey Partner scheme for the remaining resource request. This is subject to the conditions of the Pawsey Partner scheme.