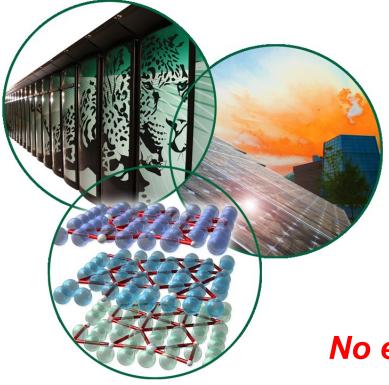
# Proposal Writing: Hints for maximizing your chances for getting beam time

(Scientists spend a lot of time writing proposals, reviewing proposals and giving presentations)



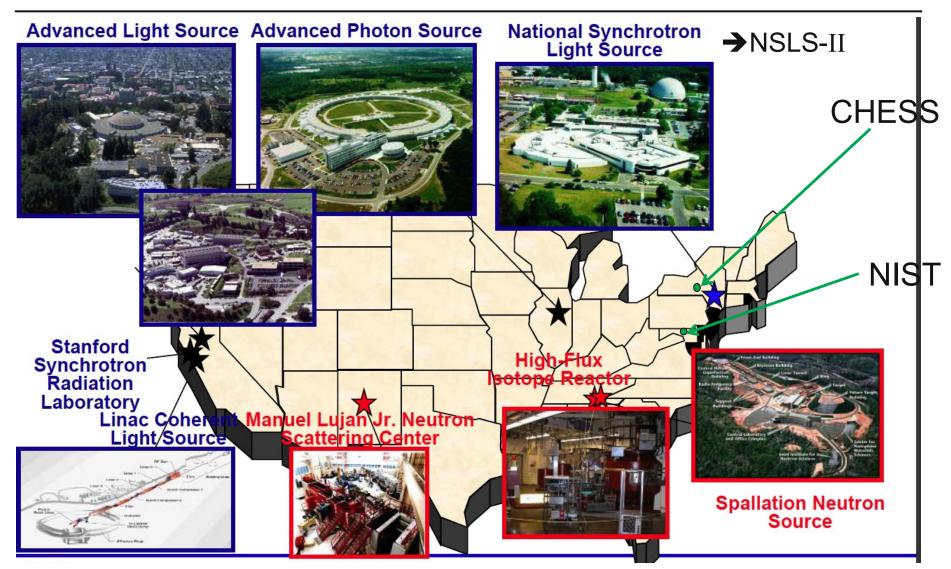
John Budai Materials Science and Technology Division Oak Ridge National Laboratory

Bryan Chakoumakos Neutron Scattering Sciences Division Oak Ridge National Laboratory

## No equations! No guitar playing.

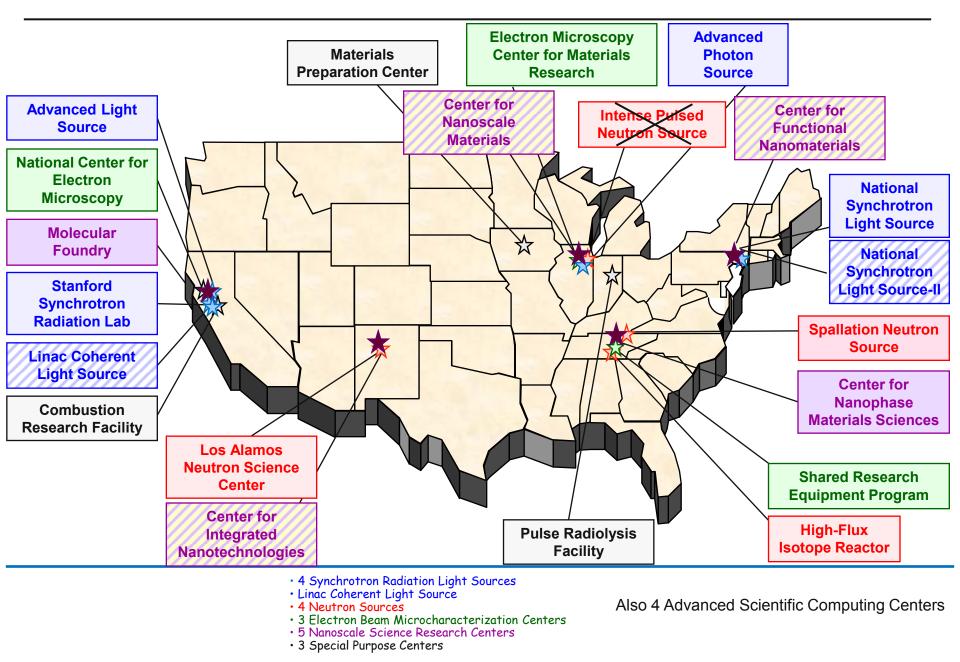
*Neutron X-ray Scattering School June 25, 2010* 

### **DOE X-ray and Neutron Sources**

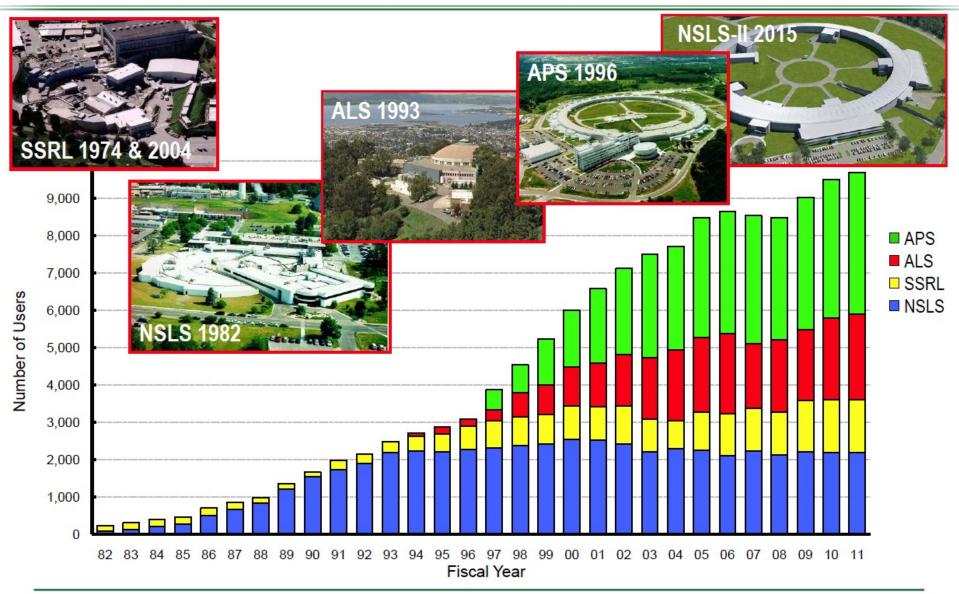


Also 5 DOE Nanoscience Centers (BNL, SNL/LANL, ORNL, ANL, LBNL) 3 DOE Electron Microscopy Centers (ANL, LBNL, ORNL)

#### **BES Scientific User Facilities - (from Pat Dehmer presentation)**

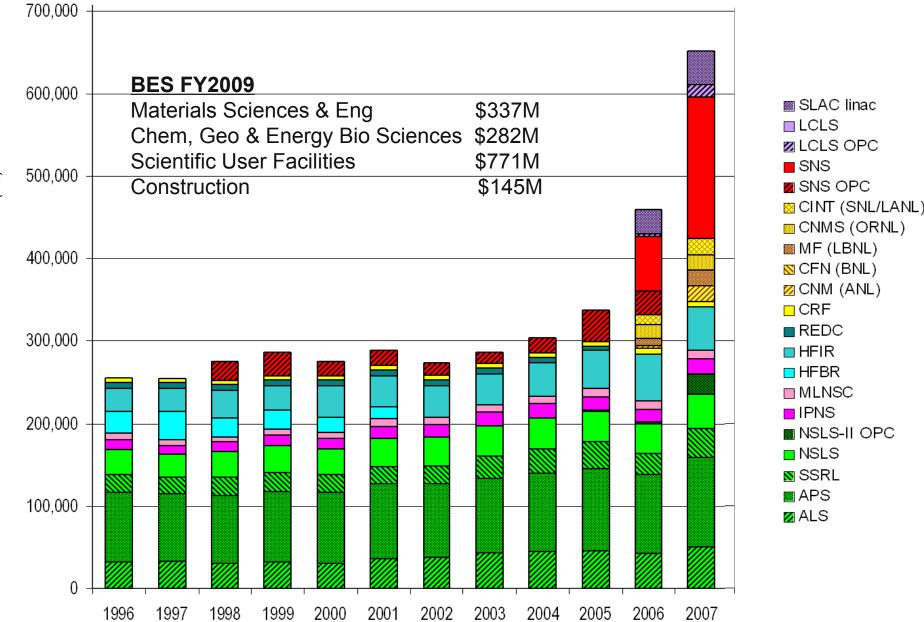


### The 4 BES Synchrotron Light Sources Serve Nearly 10,000 Users





#### **Operating Budgets for the BES Scientific User Facilities**



As-Spent Dollars (K\$)

Building Technologies Research and Integration Center Center for Nanophase Materials Sciences (CNMS) Center for Structural Molecular Biology (Bio-SANS) High Flux Isotope Reactor (HFIR) User Facilities High Temperature Materials Laboratory (HTML) Holifield Radioactive Ion Beam User Facility (HRIBF) National Center for Computational Sciences National Transportation Research Center (NTRC) Oak Ridge Electron Linear Accelerator (ORELA) Safeguards Laboratory (SL) Shared Research Equipment (SHaRE) User Facility Spallation Neutron Source Experimental Facility (SNS)

#### Basics of the facility proposal systems

- All the DOE (NIST & NSF) neutron and x-ray sources offer access to beam time through an experimental proposal system. "General Users (GU)".
- Proposal submission is done through a web-based application. When and how often proposals are submitted varies by facility.
  - APS and NSLS three times ("cycles") per year.
  - SNS/HFIR and ALS two times per year
- All proposals are peer-reviewed and rated, and beam time is allocated using the scores of these reviews. Once time has been allocated, the beamline staff schedule the proposals.

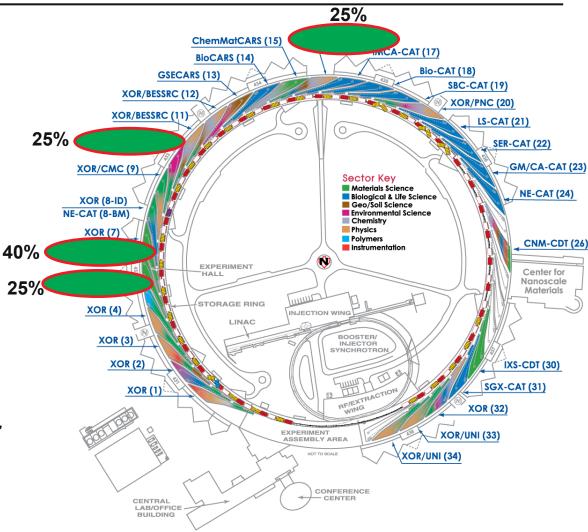
### Amount of general user time available

# APS/NSLS/SSRL/ALS

- ✓ All beamlines offer GU beam time.
- Most DOE/NSF funded beamlines provide 80-100% of their time to general users.

### **SNS/HFIR**

- Amount varies by instrument.
- ✓ ~75% of time will be for general users.



X-ray sources (http://www.lightsources	Deadlines .org/cms/?pid=1000336)
APS	October 26, 2012
ALS	September 5, 2012
NSLS	→ NSLSII (2015)
LCLS	November 13, 2012
Neutron sources	
HFIR/SNS LANSCE	Sept 5, 2012
NIST-NCNR	Sept 10, 2012

Note at most facilities these are hard deadlines:

APS always at Friday midnight (12:05  $\rightarrow$  next cycle)

# Study instrument web pages

Contact an Instrument Scientist to discuss your research

- What is the research problem?
- Which instrument(s) are appropriate?
- How mature is the research project (risk, size)?
- What is the material sample composition, form, size, availability?
- What are the experimental conditions (temperature, pressure, magnetic field, etc)?
- What will be measured?
- Probability of success? Impact? Significance?
- How will results be presented and to whom?
- What is the timeline?



- Provide technical advice, guidance, and assistance
  - Instrument options
  - Sample and experiment preparation
  - Number of experiment days
  - Logistics (scheduling, transporting and storing samples)
  - Proposal preparation tips and assistance
  - Experiment team members
  - Data analysis
  - Publication considerations

### **Submitting a proposal** Facilities have link on home page



### Different types of proposals allow facility flexibility

### Each facility has particular systems or proposal modes:

#### <u>APS</u>

- **GUP** General User Proposal. A "rapid-access beamtime request" against a submitted proposal can be considered for any unallocated general user time during the current run.
- **PUP** Partner User Proposal Groups whose work involves a greater degree of collaboration with the APS. (e.g. major new instrumentation).
- **11-BM User Program** Accepts user proposals for both on-site experiments and for the rapidaccess mail-in service (~60% of user beamtime reserved for mail-in samples). Very easy – they send you capillary tubes. This capability is not obvious on the GUP website.

#### **CHESS - Cornell**

**Express-Mode proposals** are for a single visit of limited duration to CHESS to perform a straightforward experiment. Express-Mode proposals undergo a rapid on-line review process to enable users to quickly gain access to beam time.

Feasibility Study proposals are to test an idea or procedure at one of the CHESS stations.

#### <u>NSLS</u>

#### MAIL-IN EXAFS Service at Beamline X18B

Prepare your samples according to their thickness guide and mount on standard holder. Transmission mode. Charges are ~\$100/hr.

#### NIST NCNR MAIL-IN SAMPLES FOR POWDER DIFFRACTION

We will accept proposals for experiments on the <u>BT1 powder diffractometer</u> on "<u>mail-in</u>" samples. That is, samples may be mailed to NCNR staff, who will execute the data collection.

#### QUICK ACCESS PROPOSALS

If a user feels that beam time is required very soon to carry out important measurements that cannot be delayed, a proposal may be submitted requesting expedited access. The proposal will be reviewed by the BTAC, and held to a substantially higher standard than regular proposals.

Crystallography is somewhat a separate, self-contained community

- A separate proposal system at APS.
- Highly automated for mail-in measurements.
- Beamtime relatively available.

#### **Proposal forms at SNS and APS**

### **SNS/HFIR**



	FAQ Logout A
Inter-Integrated Proposal Tracking System       Inter-Integrated Proposal Tracking System       Inter-Integrated Proposal Tracking System         Integrated Proposal Tracking System       Integrated Proposal Tracking System       Integrated Proposal Tracking System         Integrated Proposal Tracking System       Integrated Proposal Tracking System       Integrated Proposal Tracking System         Integrated Proposal Tracking System       Integrated Proposal Tracking System       Integrated Proposal Tracking System         Integrated Internation       Integrated Proposal Tracking System       Integrated Proposal Transacting System         Integrated Proposal Tracking System       Integrated Proposal Transacting System       Integrated Proposal Transacting System         Integrated Internation       Integrated System       Integrated System       Integrated System         Integrate Integrated System       Integrated System       Integrated System       Integrated System         Integrate Integrate Integrate System       Integrate System       Integrate System       Integrate System         Integrate Integra	
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* Will the data collected be considered classified? O Yes O No	
* Is this research required for a student's thesis? O Yes O No	
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Will Haardous substances, equipment, or procedure     be brought to OFML as part of this proposal depainment?     O Yes O No     If Yes, provide detailed safety procedures in proposal text.	
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Contraction of the contract of the second	neral User Proposal APS APS	APS	APS A	
General	Experimenters Abstract Beamtime Questions Review Panel			
	Proposal : GUP-10325	72		
Proposal Title:				
	Shifts Recommended by PRP: not available or Scheduled by BAC or Scheduled by Beamline (0) in current cycle	Shifts Used (0) to date:	Shifts Remaining: not available	
	Do you want this proposal to be considered for project status? description	Yes 🔿 No 🖲		
	Does this proposal require <u>mail-in service</u> ?	Yes O No O		
	Does this research involve macromolecular crystallography (single crystals) ?	Yes O No O		
	Will the data collected be considered proprietary ?	Yes O No O		
	Will the data collected be considered classified ?	Yes O No O		
	Does this research involve human subjects or materials ?	Yes 🔿 No 🔿		
	Does this research involve live animals?	Yes 🔿 No 🔿		
	Are there known safety hazards associated with the proposed experimental procedures or your samples ?	Yes 🔿 No 🔿		10
	Is this research required for a student's thesis ?	Yes 🔿 No 🔿		-
	Is this proposal related to another general user proposal ? If so, which one(s) and how ?	Yes 🔿 No 🔿		
	(500 characters or less)			
Subject of	Materials science Physics Chemistry			
Research:	Polymers Medical applications Biological and life scie	ences		
	Earth sciences Environmental sciences Optics (excluding x-ra	y optics)		
	Engineering Instrumentation related to user facilities Purchase of specialty	service or materials		
	Other (specify) Specify Other :			
	Generate Report Copy Proposal		Next Page	
	Pressing SAVE will allow you to save this proposal and continue t	to make changes. Notifi	cations will not be sent. Save	
Proposal # : 10	Pressing SUBMIT will save this proposal AND notifications will be sent to 325	the APS. No changes of	can be made thereafter. Submit	
	Criteria   Instructions   Logout			
	and an and a second			~
Done			beam.aps.anl.gov 🔒	

### Each proposal system will ask very similar questions

#### Proposal Title

- General Info (Title, Experimenters, Funding source, etc.)
- Abstract What is the scientific importance of the proposed research?
- Why do you need the facility to do this research?
  - Neutron vs. X-rays
  - Why do you need an insertion device beamline instead of a bending magnet?
  - Spallation source vs. reactor source
  - Hard X-rays vs. Soft X-rays
- Why do you need the beam line (and/or instrument)?
  - Particular technique or sample environment
- What previous experience / results do you have?
- Describe the proposed experiment(s), including samples and procedures.
- Justification of the amount of time requested.

#### **General Information**

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Proposal Number	IPTS-1498	
Status	Saved for Further Editing by Applicant	
Name Email	Suzanne Te Velthuis tevelthuis@anl.gov	
* Proposal Date	23-SEP-2008 15:23	
* User Institution	US - Argonne National Laboratory Search	
* Proposal Title	test	
* Proposal Type	General User	
* Will the data collected be considered proprietary?	O Yes ⊙ No	
* Will the data collected be considered proprietary:	○ Yes ⊙ No	
<ul> <li>Is this research required for a student's thesis?</li> </ul>		
* Does this experiment involve exposure to, or use of,	0103 0140	
biological materials? Such as recombinant DNA, virus or components of a virus, a biological toxin, exposure or		
handling of risk group 1 or 2 microorganisms (dead or alive),	○ Yes ⊙ No	
select agents or toxins (dead or alive) or any other sort of biologically hazardous material, to either plants or animals.		
* Will human cubiecte er laberatory animale he used		
in this experiment, or does this operation involve exposure to,	' ○ Yes ⊙ No	
or handling of, human tissue or body fluids, human cells in culture or animal matter?		
* Will Hazardous substances, equipment, or procedure		
be brought to ORNL as part of this proposed experiment? If Yes, provide detailed safety procedures in proposal text.	○ Yes ⊙ No	
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	This is the abstract	
* Abstract		
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	Download Template Attach Statement of Research (.pdf)	
Last Modified Date	Please use the Template Provided to Prepare your Proposal. 23-SEP-2008 15:23	
Last moullieu Date	23-561-2000-13-23	

- Pick a good title. Specific and to the point is better than spectacular and vague.
  - Good: "XAS study of Fe valence in CaFe2As2 under pressure "
  - Bad: "Understanding superconductivity in iron pnictides"
- Is it thesis related? Is there a deadline?
  - Will push your proposal up if scores are close
- Fill in the abstract. Do not just upload a PDF document!
  - More work for reviewer.
- Do upload a publication from previous work (mention previous proposal).
  - Shows you made good use of beam time.
  - Do not upload a 20 pages of supplemental information (figures often help, couple of plots with text OK)

#### **Proposal: Experimenters page**

Spoke person:	Find				100				
First Name :	1.1.5			Last Nan	ne				
Phone:				Email				Badge	
Institution:									
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•Use the "find" feature

•List everyone involved in experiment

### **Experiment Description**

General Experimenters Abstract	Beamtime Request	Questions	Review Panel			
	Pro	oposal : GUP	10325			
Please specify the funding source(s) fo	r your proposed re	esearch:				
			ances DOE, Office	of Biological and Environmental	Research	
	Foreign (specify)		П ннін			
Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI)	Industry		NASA			
□ NIH	□ NSF		Other U.S. G	overnment		Note guidence
	Other (specify)		Specify Other			Note guidance.
What is the scientific or technical purpo Why do you need the APS for this resea Why do you need the beamline you have	arch? (limit : 100 w	ords)	sed research? (lim	it : 500 words)		Don't write one sentence or 1000 words.

#### **Experimental Details**

- Give background information why it is important.
  - Science at facilities is very diverse. Reviewer is not necessarily an expert on your subject.
  - @ APS each committee gets ~60 proposals each cycle (~700 total/cycle)
- Clearly state what you want to measure and how
  - Give details. Temperature range, X-ray Energy, Sample geometry
  - What sample characterization has been done already? (XRD, SEM, etc.)
  - Reviewer needs to judge if experiment is feasible
    - Does x-ray energy match laser penetration depth
    - % of dilute atoms OK for fluorescence measurements
- Why use x-rays or neutrons?
  - Neutron vs. X-rays
  - TEM, Mössbauer, Laser Raman, etc.
- Justify the amount of beam time requested (ask instrument scientist!)

#### **Beamtime Request**

pid Access Description Make New Request	Proposal : GUP-10325	
pla Access Description Make new Request	T	
	Total 8-hour shifts requested for the LIFE OF THE PROPOSAL	
	Total 8-hour shifts recommended by the Proposal Review Panel for the LIFE OF THE PROPOSAL :	ot available
	Total shifts used to date:0	
	Number of the shifts remaining	ot available
	For which scheduling period are you applying?	Status :
		×
	Techniques Required:	×
		×
	Choice Of Beamline:	
$\rightarrow$	Please select the instrument based on your beamline selection:	For 1st beamline     For 2nd beamline     For 3rd beamline
	Any appropriate beamline	2
	Number of 8-hour shifts requested for THIS scheduling period	
	Minimum number of usable shifts per visit:	
	Do you have specific scheduling requirements ?	
	What equipment is required ? What equipment will you bring ?	
	Please list any new publications resulting from your work at the APS.	
	Describe the progress made during your most recent beamtime. (2000 characters including spaces)	
$\rightarrow$	Unacceptable Dates (MM/DD/YYYY)	From         To           to
ious Page	Generate R	eport
	essing SAVE will allow you to save this proposal and continue to SUBMIT will save this proposal AND notifications will be sent to	

Proposals are valid for two years, but need to put in beam time request each cycle.

Chose multiple beamlines.

- SAXS (12-ID, 5-ID, 15-ID)
- XAFS (20-BM, 10-ID, 12-BM)
- General Diffraction
- Don't list only one week that you can come. Holidays?
- Special sample environment / detectors will place more constraints on schedule.
  - GE amorphous Si detector
  - Magnet
  - ....

### **Ratings for APS Proposals**

	Table 1. Definition of Ratings Used in Reviewing General User Proposals
1 - Extraordinary	The proposal involves highly innovative research of great scientific importance. Proposed research will significantly advance knowledge in a specific field or scientific discipline. Considerable societal relevance is demonstrated. The radiation characteristics of the APS are highly desirable for the success of the proposed work.
2 - Excellent	The proposed research is of high quality and has potential for making an important contribution to a specific field or scientific discipline. The work is cutting edge and is likely to be published in a leading scientific journal. The radiation characteristics of the APS are important to the success of the proposed work.
3 - Good	The proposed research is near cutting-edge and likely to produce publishable results. Impact on a specific field or scientific discipline is likely. Synchrotron radiation is essential to accomplish the intended goals of the research. The proposed work will greatly benefit from access to the APS.
4 - Fair	The proposed research is interesting but may not significantly impact a specific field or scientific discipline. Publication may or may not result from this research. Synchrotron radiation is required, but the proposed work could be performed at other facilities.
5 - Poor	The proposed research is not well planned or is not feasible. Results would not make important contributions to fundamental or applied understanding, and work is not likely to result in publication. The need for synchrotron radiation is not clear.

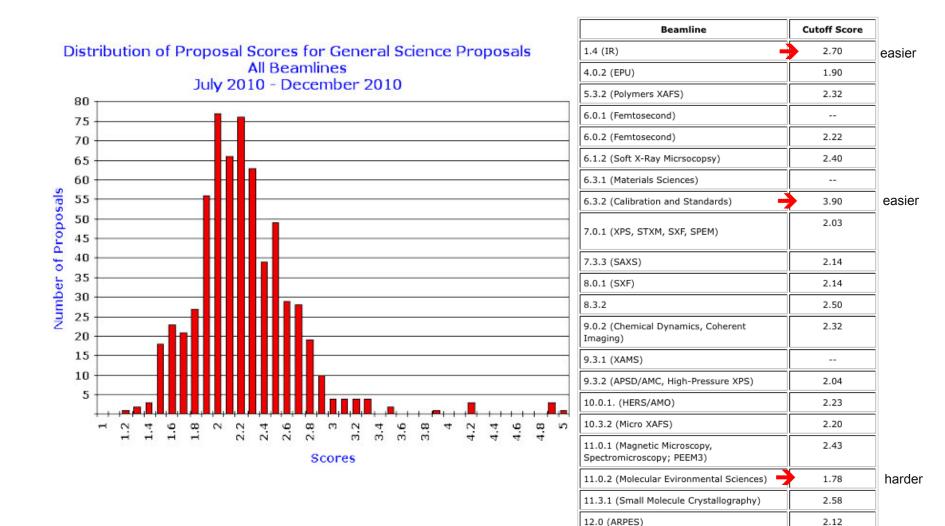
APS proposals are rated on a scale from 1 to 5

Average score is ~2.2

Cut off score for receiving beam time varies by beamline (1.5 - 2.2)

Proposal "ageing" (score improves by 0.2 each cycle it does not receive time). This is needed for getting time at some oversubscribed beamlines, so long-term planning is needed. But you have to remember to request beamtime again for every cycle.

#### ALS provides cutoff scores – Helps you know what to expect



12.2.2 (High Pressure)

\*Total allocation

12.3.2

2.29

2.53

### Tips

- Give a concise explanation of this specific proposal
  - Provide background on importance (i.e., "bigger picture")
  - State clearly and exactly what you are going to measure and why.
    - Reviewer want so assess likelihood of success.
- Include relevant details to experiment but do not get too verbose
  - Reviewer needs to judge not only scientific importance, but also if the experiment is feasible and if you are asking for the right instrument.
- If you are a first time user, talk to the local contact/instrument scientist.
  - Find out about details of the instrument, typical measuring times...
  - Over-subscription rate? Can a less popular instrument do the same measurements?
  - Send them the proposal ahead of time and ask for advice. Collaborate?
- If you have previous results from other experiments include them!
  - Home, other institution, previous experiment.
  - Sample characterization.
- Take advantage of proposal ageing. Plan ahead!

#### Several common pitfalls

- Proposer assumes committee is familiar with their specialty.
- Proposer writes large general proposal asking for multiple weeks of time. Better to write a shorter proposal with a well defined objective. Be realistic with beam time request.
- Proposal deadline (for next cycle) is before scheduled beam time this cycle.

#### Common Reviewer comments:

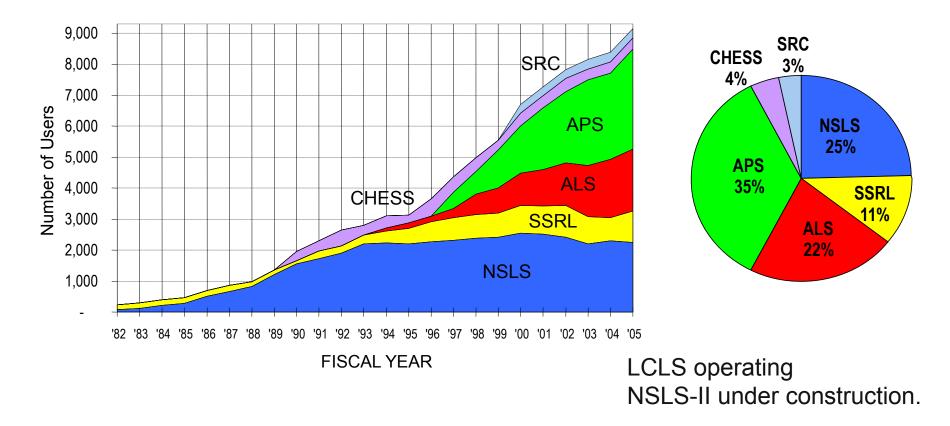
- "Proposers could improve their score by including more experimental details, attaching previous results and expanding on the purpose and importance of the research."
- "Hasn't the proposed research been published previously?"
- "We do not feel that granting 20 shifts/cycle for 2 years is consistent with the history of publication of this work."

Proposer should perform initial characterization with lab sources or TEM."

### After submission

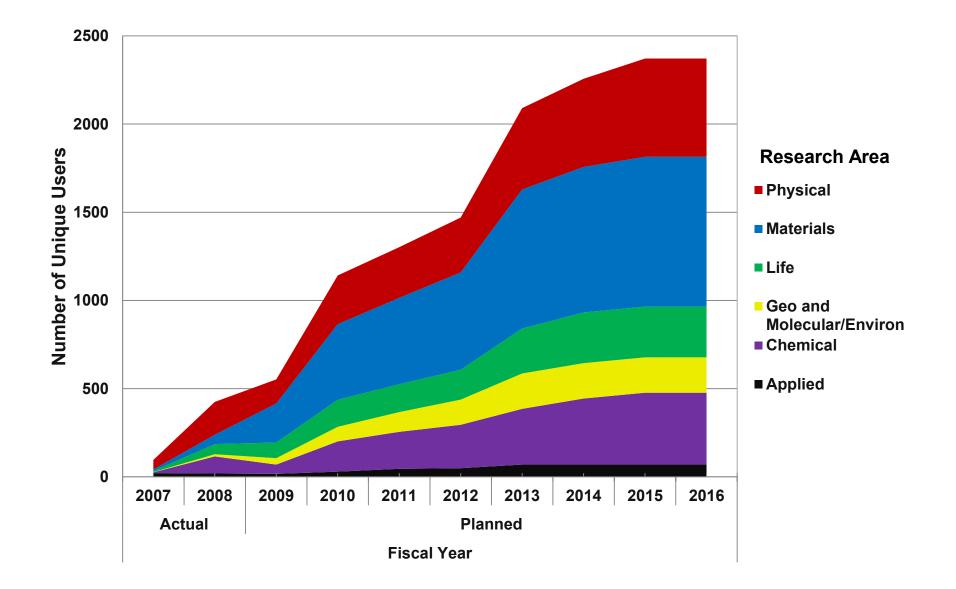
- Allow time for review and revisions
- Expect feedback several weeks from the call close
- Be ready to schedule experiment if approved
  - Identify participating team members
  - Respond to facility access approval information
  - Facilitate execution of user agreements
  - Complete required training
  - Confirm sample availability and description and laboratory needs
- Consider reviewer comments if not approved and plan to resubmit this proposal or a new proposal in the next call. Opportunities (# of facilities and beamlines/facility) continue to grow.

#### The 6 Federally Funded U.S. Light Sources Hosted 9,159 Users in FY 2005



The size and demographics of the user community have changed dramatically since the 1980s when only a few hundred intrepid users visited the synchrotron light sources each year. Here, "user" is a researcher who proposes and conducts peer-reviewed experiments at a scientific facility or conducts experiments at the facility remotely. A user does not include individuals who only send samples to be analyzed, pay to have services performed, or visit the facility for tours or educational purposes. Users also do not include researchers who collaborate on the proposal or subsequent research paper but do not conduct experiments at the facility. For annual totals, an individual is counted as 1 user at a particular facility no matter how often or how long the researcher conducts experiments at the facility during the year.

#### **Neutron User Community and Research Opportunities Growing**



### Join SNS HFIR User Group (SHUG)

Chartered 1998

- Open to individuals interested in using SNS and HFIR
- Provides input to management on user concerns
- Serves as a forum for keeping the user community informed
- Acts as an advocacy group for neutron scattering science

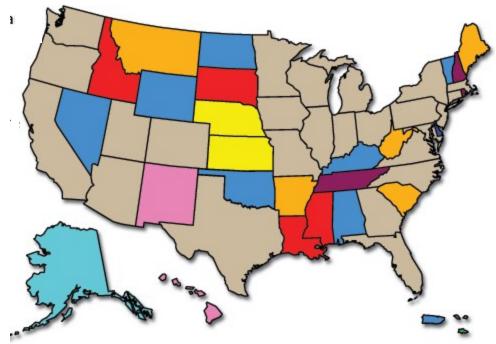


#### **ORNL's Neutron Scattering Facilities HFIR and SNS**

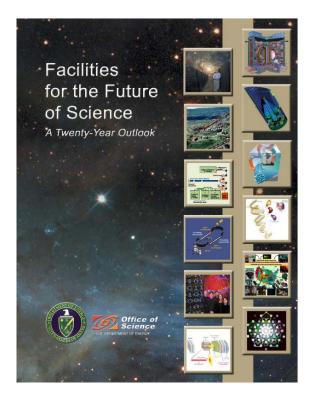
- Numerous opportunities for collaboration
  - Become a user
  - Join SNS/HFIR User Group (SHUG)
  - Have your friends and colleagues apply to the National School on Neutron and X-ray Scattering
  - Attend workshops and conferences
  - Seek EPSCoR grants <u>http://www.nsf.gov/div/index.jsp?org=EPSC</u> and <u>http://www.sc.doe.gov/BES/EPSCoR/about.html</u>
  - Promote ORISE internships, fellowships, and research participation programs <u>http://orise.orau.gov/sep/index.htm</u>
  - Bring student groups to ORNL
  - Invite ORNL scientists to your campus

#### Seek EPSCoR Grants

- EPSCoR State Institutions are eligible for grants to support research
  - <u>http://www.nsf.gov/div/index.jsp?org=EPSC</u>
  - <u>http://www.sc.doe.gov/BES/EPSCoR/about.html</u>
- Travel support for users from UT-ORNL Joint Institute for Neutron Sciences (JINS). Contact Takeshi Egami at egami@utk.edu



#### Scientific User Facilities – (mostly from Pat Dehmer presentation 2007)



BESAC evaluation February 2003 Report released late 2003

Available at

www.science.energy.gov/bes/archives/plans/FFS\_10NOV03.pdf

- Under construction at the time of the evaluation
  - Spallation Neutron Source
  - 5 Nanoscale Science Research Centers
  - SSRL (SPEAR3) upgrade

operating operating operating

- Facilities underway since the evaluation
  - Transmission Electron Aberration Corrected Microscope operating
  - Linac Coherent Light Source

- ~ operating
- National Synchrotron Light Source II
- construction
- Facilities rated longer-term priority at the time of the evaluation
  - Spallation Neutron Source power upgrade (CD-0 signed)
  - Spallation Neutron Source 2<sup>nd</sup> target station
  - Advanced Light Source upgrade
  - Advanced Photon Source upgrade CD-? signed
- What's next in our planning?
  - Future Science Needs and Opportunities for Electron Scattering: Next-Generation Instrumentation and Beyond, March 1-2, 2007
  - BESAC Future Science Needs and Opportunities for Light Sources, 2007

Impact of large Scientific User Facilities has grown significantly in the past ~25 yrs. They now represent more than 50% of BES budget and growth will likely continue. They enable powerful new techniques, but researchers (you) have to do the science.

### Office of Science Early Career Research Program

Investment in FY 2011 will bring 60 new scientists into the program

#### \$16 million requested in FY 2011 to fund about 60 additional Early Career Research Program awards at universities and DOE national laboratories.

**Purpose:** To support individual research programs of outstanding scientists early in their careers and to stimulate research careers in the disciplines supported by the Office of Science

**Eligibility:** Within 10 years of receiving a Ph.D., either untenured academic assistant professors on the tenure track or full-time DOE national lab employees

#### Award Size:

- University grants \$150,000 per year for 5 years to cover summer salary and expenses
- National lab awards \$500,000 per year for five years to cover full salary and expenses

#### FY 2010 Results:

- 69 awards funded via the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
- 1,750 proposals peer reviewed to select the awardees
- 47 university grants and 22 DOE national laboratory awards
- Awardees are from 44 separate institutions in 20 states

#### FY 2011 Application Process:

- Funding Opportunity Announcement issued in Spring 2010
- Awards made in the Second Quarter of 2011

Office of

Science

http://www.science.doe.gov/SC-2/early\_career.htm