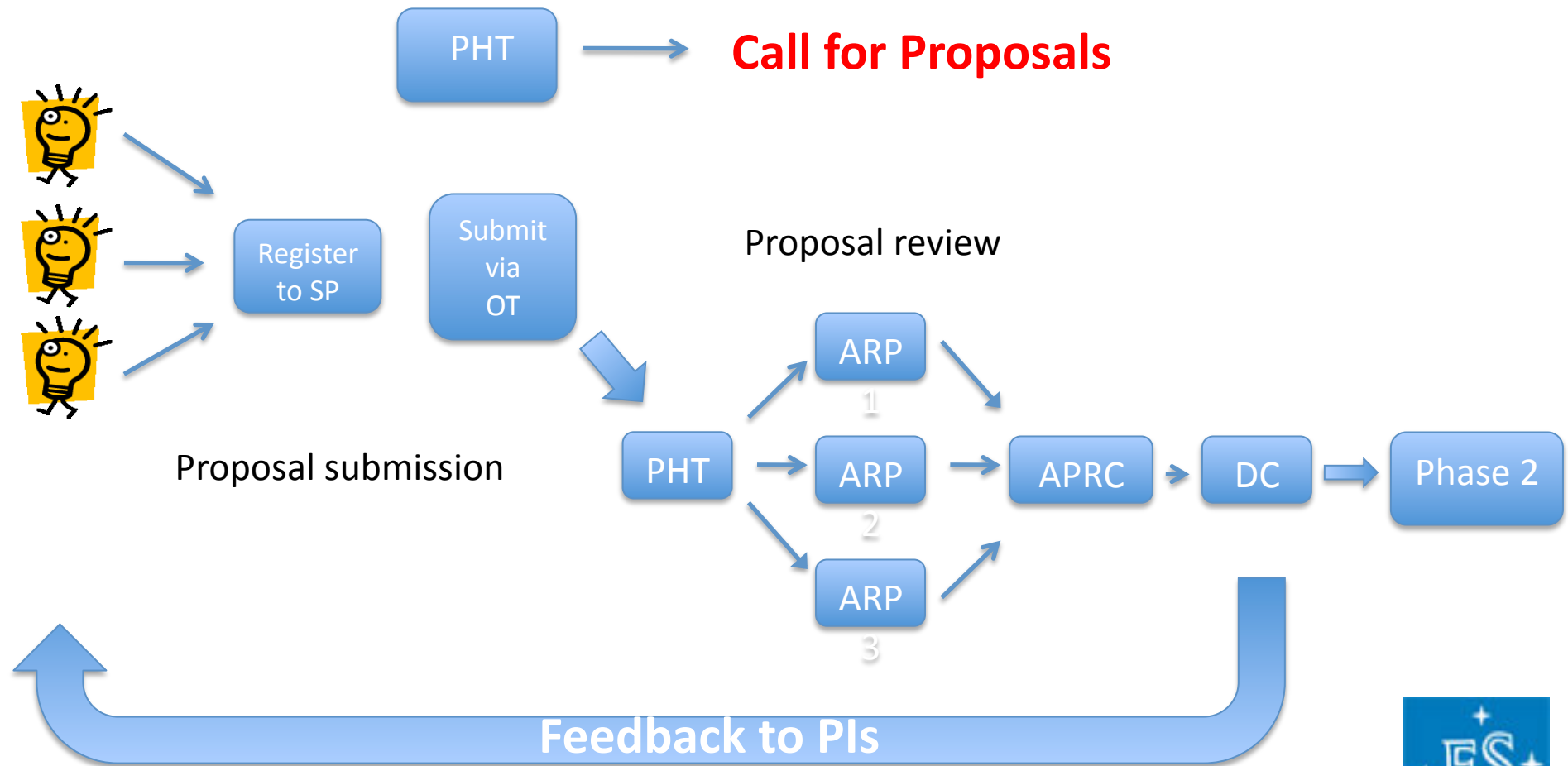


The ALMA Proposal Review Process

M. Díaz Trigo (EU ARC)



The PRP in a nutshell



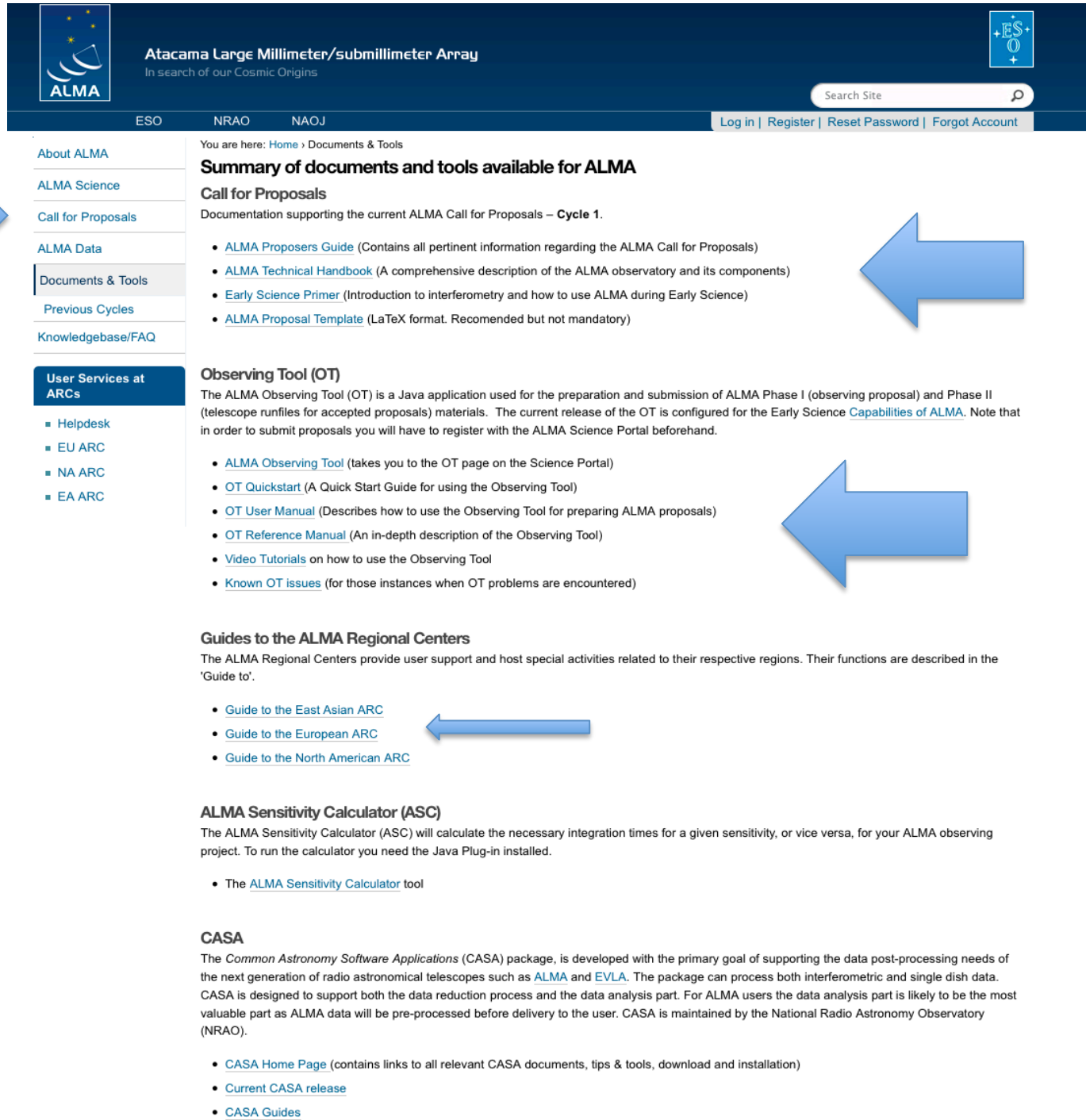
Proposal review process

- Single proposal review process for ALMA
- One Call for Proposals (CfP) per year
- Cycle 0: more than 900 proposals received

Proposal Handling Team (PHT)

- Coordinates the whole PRP from beginning to end, including CfP and proposal submission.
- Distributes the proposals to the assessors taking into account duplications and conflicts of interest.

Relevant documents



The screenshot shows the ALMA website interface. At the top, there is a header with the ALMA logo, the text "Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array" and "In search of our Cosmic Origins", and the ESO logo. A search bar is located in the top right. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for "ESO", "NRAO", and "NAOJ", and a "Log in | Register | Reset Password | Forgot Account" section. The main content area is divided into a left sidebar and a main body. The sidebar contains a "Documents & Tools" menu with sub-items: "About ALMA", "ALMA Science", "Call for Proposals", "ALMA Data", "Documents & Tools" (highlighted), "Previous Cycles", "Knowledgebase/FAQ", and "User Services at ARCs" (with sub-items: "Helpdesk", "EU ARC", "NA ARC", "EA ARC"). The main body contains several sections: "Summary of documents and tools available for ALMA", "Call for Proposals" (with a list of links: "ALMA Proposers Guide", "ALMA Technical Handbook", "Early Science Primer", "ALMA Proposal Template"), "Observing Tool (OT)" (with a list of links: "ALMA Observing Tool", "OT Quickstart", "OT User Manual", "OT Reference Manual", "Video Tutorials", "Known OT issues"), "Guides to the ALMA Regional Centers" (with a list of links: "Guide to the East Asian ARC", "Guide to the European ARC", "Guide to the North American ARC"), "ALMA Sensitivity Calculator (ASC)", and "CASA" (with a list of links: "CASA Home Page", "Current CASA release", "CASA Guides"). Blue arrows point from the "Documents & Tools" menu item to the "Summary of documents and tools available for ALMA" section, from the "ALMA Proposers Guide" link to the "Call for Proposals" section, from the "ALMA Observing Tool" link to the "Observing Tool (OT)" section, and from the "Guide to the European ARC" link to the "Guides to the ALMA Regional Centers" section.

Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array
In search of our Cosmic Origins

ESO NRAO NAOJ

Search Site

You are here: [Home](#) > Documents & Tools

Summary of documents and tools available for ALMA

Call for Proposals
Documentation supporting the current ALMA Call for Proposals – Cycle 1.

- [ALMA Proposers Guide](#) (Contains all pertinent information regarding the ALMA Call for Proposals)
- [ALMA Technical Handbook](#) (A comprehensive description of the ALMA observatory and its components)
- [Early Science Primer](#) (Introduction to interferometry and how to use ALMA during Early Science)
- [ALMA Proposal Template](#) (LaTeX format. Recommended but not mandatory)

Observing Tool (OT)
The ALMA Observing Tool (OT) is a Java application used for the preparation and submission of ALMA Phase I (observing proposal) and Phase II (telescope runfiles for accepted proposals) materials. The current release of the OT is configured for the Early Science [Capabilities of ALMA](#). Note that in order to submit proposals you will have to register with the ALMA Science Portal beforehand.

- [ALMA Observing Tool](#) (takes you to the OT page on the Science Portal)
- [OT Quickstart](#) (A Quick Start Guide for using the Observing Tool)
- [OT User Manual](#) (Describes how to use the Observing Tool for preparing ALMA proposals)
- [OT Reference Manual](#) (An in-depth description of the Observing Tool)
- [Video Tutorials](#) on how to use the Observing Tool
- [Known OT issues](#) (for those instances when OT problems are encountered)

Guides to the ALMA Regional Centers
The ALMA Regional Centers provide user support and host special activities related to their respective regions. Their functions are described in the 'Guide to'.

- [Guide to the East Asian ARC](#)
- [Guide to the European ARC](#)
- [Guide to the North American ARC](#)

ALMA Sensitivity Calculator (ASC)
The ALMA Sensitivity Calculator (ASC) will calculate the necessary integration times for a given sensitivity, or vice versa, for your ALMA observing project. To run the calculator you need the Java Plug-in installed.

- The [ALMA Sensitivity Calculator](#) tool

CASA
The *Common Astronomy Software Applications* (CASA) package, is developed with the primary goal of supporting the data post-processing needs of the next generation of radio astronomical telescopes such as [ALMA](#) and [EVLA](#). The package can process both interferometric and single dish data. CASA is designed to support both the data reduction process and the data analysis part. For ALMA users the data analysis part is likely to be the most valuable part as ALMA data will be pre-processed before delivery to the user. CASA is maintained by the National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO).

- [CASA Home Page](#) (contains links to all relevant CASA documents, tips & tools, download and installation)
- [Current CASA release](#)
- [CASA Guides](#)

Proposal submission

- **Registration** at the **ALMA Science Portal** of PIs and co-Is necessary to submit a proposal.
- Proposal submission via the **OT** (the OT estimates the integration time to reach a given science goal)
- LaTeX template available at the Science Portal for preparation of scientific and technical justifications (5 pages limit).
- To get help, submit a ticket through the **Helpdesk** (see Evanthia's talk). A **proposal emergency department** (manned 24 hours) is available 36 hours before deadline.
- Acknowledgment of submission is sent to the PI and co-Is.
- **Deadline for submission is 12th July 2012 at 15:00 UT**

ALMA Observing time

- Shares of the observing time among the four regions:
 - Europe (EU): 33.75%
 - North America (NA): 33.75%
 - East Asia (EA): 22.5%
 - Chile: 10%
- Open Skies (< 5%)

Accounting of time

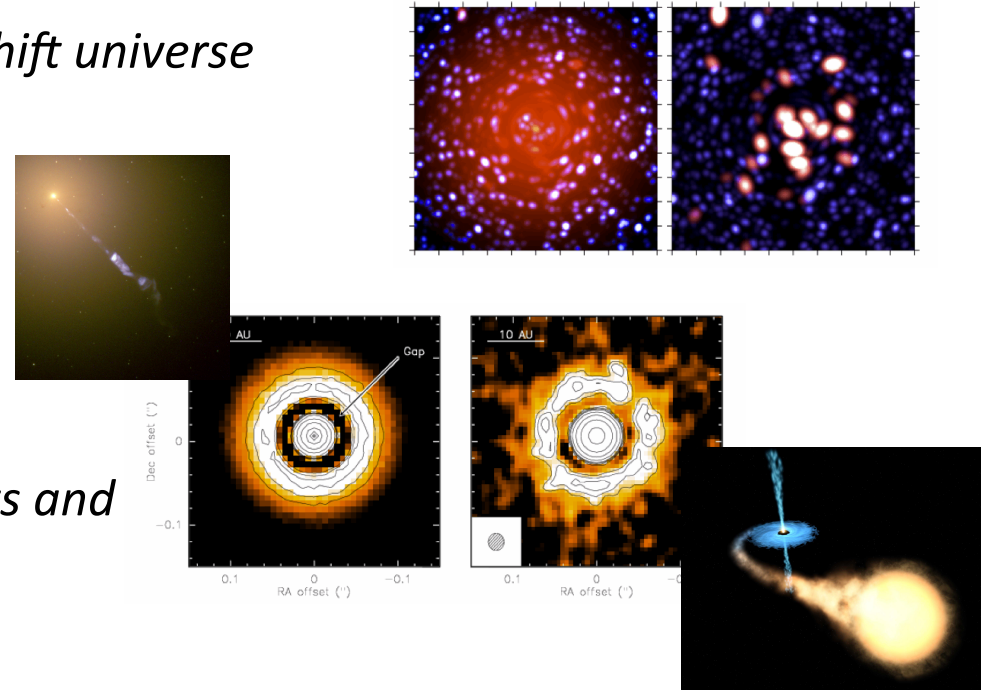
- For the purpose of accounting of time to each Executive, the observing time per proposal will be the total **time needed to complete the proposal**.
- This time may differ from the time initially estimated by the OT due to e.g. atmospheric conditions.

Proposal types

- **Standard**
- **Large programs:** projects with a duration longer than 100 hours (**not allowed in Cycle 1**).
- **ToO:** anticipated Targets of Opportunity (GRBs, SNRs...). Submitted to the normal CfP.
- **DDT** (Director Discretionary Time): unanticipated ToOs. They will be reviewed by the DDT Standing Committee or JAO director (depending on urgency).
- Any of these proposal categories may involve proposals that are **time-critical** (these proposals must be flagged at the OT and the details must be included in the justification)

Science areas in Cycle 1

- *Cosmology and the high redshift universe*
- *Galaxies and Galactic nuclei*
- *ISM, Star formation and astrochemistry*
- *Circumstellar discs, exoplanets and the solar system*
- *Stellar evolution and the Sun*



You will be asked to give one or two keywords within each science area

Assessments

- **Proposals will be only judged by their scientific merit**
- All proposals will receive:
 - a **science assessment** (by the members of the ALMA Review Panels)
- Proposals that may qualify for execution based on the APRC ranking will also receive:
 - a **technical assessment** (by ALMA astronomers)
- A **consensus report** will be sent to the PI for each proposal by the respective ARC including:
 - Scientific assessment report (strengths and weaknesses of the proposal)
 - Technical assessment report (only for proposals that were technically assessed and were deemed unfeasible or affected by technical feasibility issues)
 - Oversubscription factor
 - Overall ranking of the proposal (0-10%, 10-20%, 20-40%, 40-70%, 70-100%)
 - Probability of completion of the proposal (high priority, filler, unlikely to be observed or technically unfeasible)

Proposal ranking

High priority: top ranked proposals (up to 100% of available time in the Cycle)

Fillers: proposals that follow the high priority projects in the list (up to 150% of available time in the Cycle).

Scheduled if none of the high priority projects can be executed.

Unlikely to be observed: proposals that fall below the 150% of available time in the Cycle in the overall ranked list.

Technically unfeasible: proposals rejected on technical grounds

Duplications

- As a general rule, no duplications (observations of same object in the same observing mode) will be accepted.
- Cycle 0 observations do not constitute duplications for Cycle 1 proposals.

ALMA Review Panels (ARP)

- 2 or more panels per science category to minimise the load per reviewer and to accommodate conflicts of interest.
- The ARP panels meet during one week in one location (Chile in Cycle 1).
- **Outcome:** ranked list of observations

ALMA Proposal Review Committee (APRC)

- Members: ARP chairs and APRC chair
- Synthesis of ARP lists into overall ranking and recommends:
 - Projects for observing
 - Resolution of duplications or overlap
- **Outcome:** consolidated list of proposals to be observed with ALMA.
- The Joint ALMA Observatory prepares observing queue based on the APRC outcome and taking into account scheduling considerations and sends it to the Directors Council for approval

Cycle 1

- **Important dates:**
 - Submission deadline: **12th July 2012, at 15:00 UT**
 - Outcome of PRP: November 2012
 - Start of observations: January 2013
 - End of Cycle 1: October 2013
- **Best-effort basis:**
 - No guarantee of project completion (no proposals carried over to following cycles)
 - f2f help at the ARC nodes for data reduction and quality assessment
- Proposals adequate to limited capabilities (consult the Proposers Guide!!!)
- Available time: **800 hours (12-m array) + 800 hours (Atacama Compact Array, only in combination with the main 12-m array)**
- **Time-critical proposals:** execution time must be specified with a tolerance of not less than 3 weeks
- **ToOs** could have a reaction time shorter than 3 weeks, but this is not guaranteed

Start writing proposals!

