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| **IRIS**  **Process for small resource applications** | |
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**History**

As described elsewhere on the website, Iris, by construction (i.e. having only capital), is acting as a sort of ‘underwriter’ to medium to large scale Activities. Iris provides physical resource to such Activities on a “self-service” basis. The requests from such Activities are scrutinised by the RSAP annually. Awards are made, and those Activities are deemed to have the computing person-power to run the services to make use of the physical resources. So much has been the clear headline for a long time.

However, at the beginning of Iris, it was acknowledged that there will be a much more modest[[1]](#footnote-1) category of activity which does not fit the description above, yet is legitimate STFC science, and which we would like to help somehow. These Activities may be characterised as:

* Small activities requiring some 10s to 100s of cores for a short time, whether peer reviewed or not;
* Seedcorn projects;
* Activities starting in year (out of RSAP cycle) who need to get going and then submit full RSAP docs next year;
* and possibly other categories as arise from time to time.

These all require relatively modest resource, generally for a limited time in the first instance. Iris has stated some time ago that such activities should approach the DB member who is “scientifically closest to them”. We said:

*Iris is aware that in time it needs to develop a process to also support other activities, for example: Smaller Astronomy Projects, PRD, Accelerator R&D Projects. These are likely to be small requests, and will be dealt with on a case by case basis for FY19 whilst a more formal arrangement is made.*

A few such cases have been dealt with on an ad-hoc basis, but this is not formally advertised on the Iris web site, and it doesn't specify a proper process anyway. So it is indeed time to re-establish this avenue, and formalise it to avoid doubt in future.

**Proposed Process**

In order to help these “small” projects get started, Iris can make available small allocations of resources on a case-by-case basis, following a lightweight process.  This is not the full RSAP process for large ongoing commitments.  
  
Small means up to ~ 500,000 core hours (roughly 50 cores for a year) and/or up to about ~200 TB of Disk. However, all requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis (e.g. larger allocations may be available for shorter periods).

*[Note that a request at the upper end of the scale, or for resource in perpetuity, will likely to require the RSAP process in a subsequent year. This isn’t a way to bypass RSAP.]*  
To seek access to such resources the following process should be followed:

* Applicant prepares a request using a modified version of the DiRAC seedcorn form.
* This will include how many core hours, how much storage, how long for and what the science to be undertaken is.
* The applicant will be required to provide the assurance that the Activity has the means (software framework and people) to use an allocation, i.e. that their expectation of Iris is realistic.
* The applicant should contact their “Scientifically nearest” member of the Iris Delivery Board to act as sponsor. The DB member should then discuss the case with the Activity.
* When ready the application is submitted to the IRIS project manager (Philip.jackson@stfc.ac.uk)
* The Iris Directors and RSAP Chair will together consider the scale and length of request, whether it is within Iris scope, and use precedent. If the request is small enough then they may approve and notify the DB. If the request is larger, or for any other reason they consider appropriate, they will circulate the request to the DB and possibly the RSAP for comment and eventual approval.
* The approval may require the Activity to agree to submit a full Resource Request Document to the RSAP in the next year. This is likely if there are ongoing requirements.
* Where the case has no prior peer review, they may refer the application to the DiRAC RAC process or take such other action as may seem appropriate.

1. *[Note there is also the class of larger projects which have not been peer reviewed, and for which the process is*

   *clearly stated on the website at* [*https://www.Iris.ac.uk/community/requesting-resources-from-Iris/*](https://www.iris.ac.uk/community/requesting-resources-from-iris/)*. These are not the subject of this document, although this process has always been open to any project no matter what size]* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)