

LSST:UK Policy for Selection of Affiliate PIs and Junior Associates

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1. Background

The Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) signed by LSST Corporation and STFC (acting on behalf of the LSST:UK Consortium) defines the basis for UK participation in LSST. In particular, it defines the rights and responsibilities of those holding Affiliate PI (AP) or Junior Associate (JA) status. The MoA specifies that the Consortium may name up to 100 APs and up to 400 JAs through lists that it shall provide to LSSTC on an annual basis. Current and past lists shall be available online at **URL TBD**.

While currently TBC by LSSTC, it is expected that each list will have an effective date of 1 January in the calendar year to which it applies, so annual selection rounds will take place in the final quarter of each calendar year, from 2016 onwards. The selection of the 2015 and 2016 lists are subject to special arrangements, as detailed in Section 4 below.

The ultimate responsibility for the selection of the annual AP and JA lists lies with the Consortium Board. However, the Board has decided to delegate to the LSST:UK PI Selection Committee (LPSC) the task of preparing proposed lists through application of the principles listed in Section 3 below according to the process outlined in Section 2.

2. Process

1. Before the start of each selection round the Board may provide the LPSC with guidance as to the way it wishes to see the principles outlined in Section 3 applied in a particular round – e.g. the number of slots to be filled, particular areas to be favoured in filling them, etc. – and the LPSC may seek further advice from the Board or the LUSC Executive Group at any point.
2. The Consortium Board Chair shall oversee each selection round, advertising the deadline by which nominations must be submitted for consideration by the LPSC.
3. Researchers wishing to be considered for selection as an AP shall complete a form specified by the LPSC on which they shall record information to be considered in their application.
4. Existing and candidate APs will be able to nominate candidate JAs on a form specified by the LPSC.
5. The Consortium Board shall agree annual AP and JA lists based on the proposed lists produced by the LPSC.
6. The Project Leader shall pass the agreed lists to LSSTC and publish them to the Consortium.

3. Selection Principles

3.1 General

1. AP status may be held by researchers with faculty positions in any institution that is a member of the LSST:UK Consortium. JA status shall be open to any researcher affiliated with a Consortium institution who is not eligible for AP status. Further, holders of long-term fellowships (at a Consortium institution) – e.g. RSURFs, ERFs, etc – may apply for either level of status and we encourage them to take full advantage of the opportunities provided to engage fully with the LSST community.
2. The selection of APs and JAs shall be consistent with the overall objectives for UK participation in LSST, as presented in the *LSST:UK Long-Term Plan*, namely:
 - a. *To obtain for the whole UK community the data access required for scientific participation in the LSST survey programme and for enhancing the scientific return from other facilities in the UK astronomy programme through incorporation of LSST data; and*
 - b. *To secure intellectual leadership of the UK community's top priority LSST science areas, by targeting investment in the software and DAC [Data Access Centre] services needed for their success.*
3. The LPSC shall consider how each annual list achieves the balance across science areas and institutions necessary for the attainment of these objectives.
4. The LPSC shall also ensure that each list conforms to the *LSST:UK Policy on Equality and Diversity [TBD]* and shall take into account any information provided on the application form that relates to the career history of a candidate AP or JA, so that no candidate shall be disadvantaged as a result of a period out of full-time employment – e.g. a career break, time spent on parental or carer's leave, or a period of part-time working.
5. As part of their acceptance of an appointment, all APs and JAs shall:
 - a. affirm that they will abide by the conditions imposed upon them by the UK Memorandum of Agreement with LSSTC, plus any further conditions agreed by the Consortium Board and included in the application form;
 - b. agree to follow the *LSST:UK Policy on Collaborative Conduct [TBD]*, which describes standards of acceptable and professional behaviour within the Consortium; and
 - c. undertake to share relevant information within the Consortium (so far as allowed by the rules of external bodies, such as LSST Science Collaborations) in recognition that they enjoy their status thanks to the Consortium whose wider scientific goals they must help advance.
6. APs and JAs shall be appointed for a fixed term, after which they may apply for reselection.
7. Failure to adhere to the conditions listed in item #4 will result in the status of AP or JA being reviewed by the Board and may result in its removal before its term has completed.

3.2 Affiliate PIs

1. The default term for APs shall be three years, but applicants may propose a different term.
2. Candidates shall explain why they require AP status for the proposed period and outline a plan for how they will make use of it.

3. The principal criterion for the award of AP status is the expected scientific contribution made during the term of the appointment. The LPSC may consider past achievements and stated future plans in assessing the expected scientific contribution, and that contribution may be manifest in a personal achievement or the advancing of a collective goal. Examples of relevant contributions include (but are not limited to) the following:
 - a. securing a leadership role in a Science Collaboration;
 - b. providing ancillary data that facilitates a new analysis;
 - c. developing or maintaining software that is important for LSST science;
 - d. undertaking a significant management role within the LSST community;
 - e. generating simulated data used to validate data analysis software and quantify its performance.
4. AP status may also be awarded primarily on the basis of recognition of significant past service, provided that the candidate AP plans an active involvement in LSST activities for the proposed AP term. This means that the LPSC may reward major time-integrated contributions, but that these do not guarantee a continuing presence on the AP list into the indefinite future. In assessing past contributions, the LPSC shall take account of the level of contribution that could have been made at a given stage in the project, e.g. to recognise the relatively limited opportunities available in the early pre-operations phase.
5. The Consortium want to encourage junior researchers to consider a long-term involvement in LSST, so priority shall be given to former JAs who are applying for AP status following appointment to a permanent academic position that makes them ineligible for continuing JA status.
6. APs are encouraged to nominate PhD students and postdocs working with them for JA status where that is necessary for the effective conduct of the candidate JAs' research, but the Consortium wish to retain flexibility in the composition of the pool of JAs, so JA positions are not within the direct gift of APs.

3.3 Junior Associates

1. Every candidate JA shall be nominated by an existing or candidate AP as part of an AP selection round. The nominator shall have a scientific connection to the candidate, who will usually be based at the same institution, although that need not be the case. A candidate JA may seek advice from the LPSC Chair to identify an appropriate nominator if one does not exist at their home institution.
2. The nomination shall include a description of the candidate's plans for taking advantage of JA status.
3. A candidate may be awarded JA status whether or not their nominator is awarded AP status. If the nominator is not awarded AP status, or if the nominator already has four JAs associated with them, then the LPSC shall attempt to find another AP willing to have the JA associated with them. Such an arrangement will only be made if acceptable to both parties.
4. If the AP with whom a JA is associated does not have their term renewed, the LPSC shall attempt to find another AP willing to have the JA associated with them; again, such an arrangement will only be made if acceptable to both parties.

5. We encourage junior researchers to consider long-term involvement in LSST. So, while the default term for JAs shall be three years, the expectation is that a renewal for a further three years will be awarded upon a positive review of their first term.
6. In assessing applications for renewing JA status, the LPSC shall allow for periods of inactivity in LSST-related science caused by appointments to post-doctoral positions in other science areas.

4. Selection of the 2015 and 2016 lists

1. The Board agreed that the 2015 AP list shall comprise the following categories of people:
 - a. The members of the LSST:UK Science Working Group, who shall retain AP status while they remain in the SWG.
 - b. Investigators in receipt of funded effort in Phase A grants for supervision of grant-funded staff, who shall retain AP status during Phase A (i.e. up to, and including, the 2019 list);
 - c. Members of the Executive Group, who shall retain AP status while they remain in the Executive Group;
 - d. One nominee from each Consortium Institution not receiving an AP appointment from (a)-(c), who shall retain AP status in the 2016 and 2017 list.
2. The Board encouraged institutions to make nominations through category (d), but it is understood that some such nominees were “institutional placeholders” who should not be disadvantaged personally in future selection rounds should they not have had the time to make a significant contribution while fulfilling that role.
3. Since the Board had not discussed the JA role in great depth at its November 2015 meeting, the AP nominees for the 2015 list were asked only to nominate for inclusion in the 2015 JA list junior researchers requiring JA status immediately.
4. The additional names to be included in the 2016 AP and JA lists shall be identified in a selection round run in Q1 2016.

Appendix

This list (not for inclusion in the final policy) records what was mentioned at the Board meeting when Tim asked “*are there any other issues the Board wish the Exec Group to consider in drafting the policy?*”

1. Recognising past service as well as future intentions **[See 3.2.5]**
2. Timescales for terms need to be explicit **[See 3.1.5, 3.2.1, 3.3.1, but note comment in 4]**
3. Do all PIs have to have roles in LSST:UK? **[No]**
4. Balance across areas – influenced by leadership opportunities **[3.2.3]**
5. Don’t fill slots too quickly **[2.1]**
6. Scientific timescales – may want to prioritise certain areas at certain times **[2.1,3.2.1]**
7. Applicants should provide a plan for what they would do while a PI **[3.2.2]**
8. There may be different natural timescales in different science areas, so need flexibility in setting term durations appropriate to the case made for each PI **[3.2.1,3.2.2]**
9. Should all the automatic PI allocations continue in the longer run – e.g. are all PoC/Liaison roles equally deserving of PI slots? **[This is something that the Board should keep under review and about which they could issue guidance to the LPSC.]**
10. What happens when juniors become lecturers? **[3.2.4]**
11. Out-of-cycle replacement of PIs **[Not possible; it’s an annual process]**

A further issue that arose after the Board meeting was whether holders of faculty position in non-astro disciplines could be included as JAs. This came up in two places:

1. Ian Shipsey and Pete Clarke both asked whether particle physicists could be considered as JAs during a “warming up” period in which they were learning about, for example, how weak lensing constrains models of dark matter and dark energy; and
2. One of the JAs on the Oxford institutional MoA is a professor in computer science with a side interest in the application of machine learning to astronomy.

I think that the answer to that is no, but also that such people should get the access they require through collaboration with PIs under the terms of the MoA. However, I will get clarification of this from LSSTC. **[The answer from LSST was that non-astro faculty are not eligible for JA positions.]**