



# The Proposal Review and Observing Process

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# Process of distributed peer review



A reviewer is nominated by each proposal group



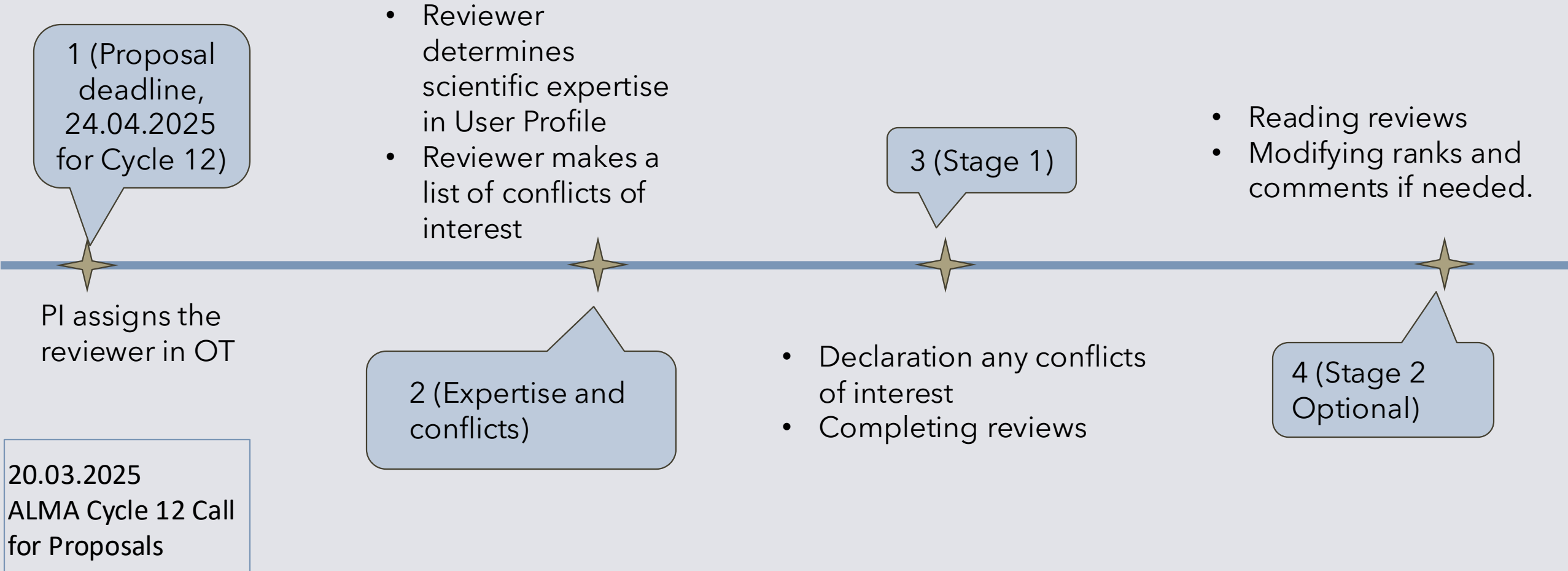
Proposal Handling Team (PHT) assigns 10 proposals to the reviewer



Proposals are ranked and commented by the reviewer

The ALMA Proposal Review Committee reviews Large Program proposals.

# Steps for each ALMA cycle

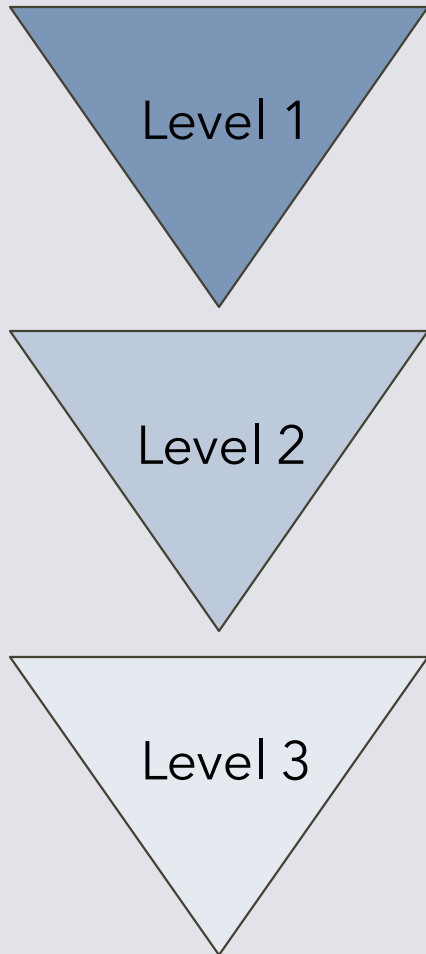


# How does the proposals' assignment progress?

## 1) Defining scientific expertise

### Priorities

### Proposals' assignment reasons



- With the same keyword as the reviewer's selected keywords
- Same scientific category with the reviewer's expertise
- Other scientific categories

### Defining reviewer expertise\keywords

ALMA science portal:  
[almascience.eso.org](http://almascience.eso.org)

ALMA

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

Account info Project delegation Demographics **Expertise** Conflicts of interest Confirm

### Expertise

Please select the category/keyword pair/s that best match your scientific expertise. You may select keywords in more than one category. If you are a reviewer for Distributed Peer Review (DPR) you will preferentially be assigned proposals that match your selected keywords.

- > Cosmology and the High Redshift Universe
- > Galaxies and Galactic Nuclei
- > ISM, star formation and astrochemistry
- > Circumstellar disks, exoplanets and the solar system
- > Stellar Evolution and the Sun

# How does the proposals' assignment progress?

## 2) Conflicts of Interest



When a reviewer's work interests benefit if under reviewed proposal is accepted/ejected.

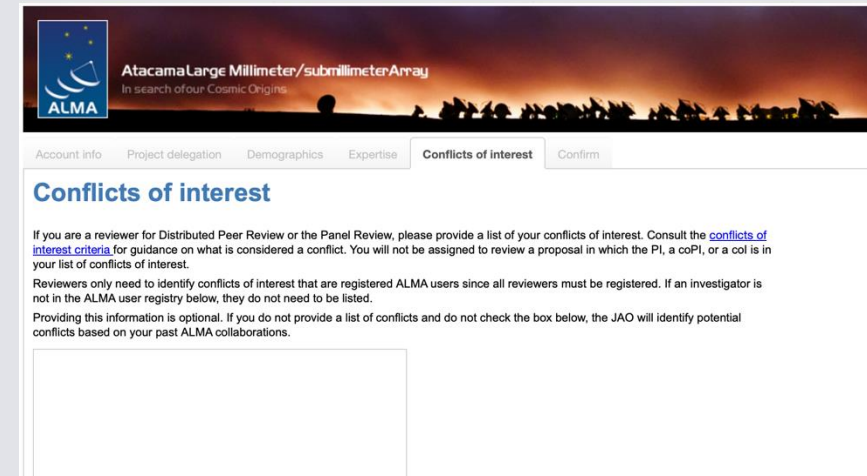


Close collaborators within the past three years or an active collaboration on a current project.

- Students and postdocs under supervision of the reviewer within the past three years
- A reviewer's supervisor
- Close personal ties

### Defining conflicts of interest

ALMA science portal:  
[almascience.eso.org](http://almascience.eso.org)



The screenshot shows the ALMA science portal interface. At the top, there is a banner for the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array with the tagline 'In search of our Cosmic Origins'. Below the banner is a navigation menu with options: Account info, Project delegation, Demographics, Expertise, Conflicts of interest (selected), and Confirm. The main heading is 'Conflicts of interest'. The text below reads: 'If you are a reviewer for Distributed Peer Review or the Panel Review, please provide a list of your conflicts of interest. Consult the [conflicts of interest criteria](#) for guidance on what is considered a conflict. You will not be assigned to review a proposal in which the PI, a coPI, or a col is in your list of conflicts of interest. Reviewers only need to identify conflicts of interest that are registered ALMA users since all reviewers must be registered. If an investigator is not in the ALMA user registry below, they do not need to be listed. Providing this information is optional. If you do not provide a list of conflicts and do not check the box below, the JAO will identify potential conflicts based on your past ALMA collaborations.' There is a large empty text box for input.

\*If a reviewer does not indicate their conflicts, the PHT will specify conflicts based on the reviewer's proposal history.

# Stage 1: Reviewing Proposals

- Declaration any conflicts of interest
- Completing reviews

- Ranking the proposals from 1 (highest) to 10 (lowest)
- Writing comments
- PIs receive comments
- !!! Cancellation of proposal in the case of reviews not being submitted on time.

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# Stage 1: Reviewing Proposals

- Declaration any conflicts of interest
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## **Writing comments /reviews**

- Summarizing both strengths and weaknesses
- Making sure strengths and weaknesses do not contradict each other
- If there is no clear weaknesses, do not make a reason just to write
- The reviewer may include a brief summary which the main contents need to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal
- Comments have to be based on the explicit contents of the proposal' not on assumptions about the proposing team



# Stage 1: Reviewing Proposals

- Declaration any conflicts of interest
- Completing reviews

## Writing comments >>> Technical Justification



- Observing tool performs technical validations
- Reviewers evaluate if proposed setup is sufficient to achieve goals
- Observing parameters e.g., sensitivity, angular resolution
- Authors of proposals are responsible for justifying the setup with references if eligible.



## Stage 2: Optional

- Reading reviews
- Modifying ranks and comments if needed.

- Reading comments from the others reviews on your proposal.
- Updating your ranks and comments
- !! Phase 2 is optional. The Stage 1 will be considered as a final decision if there is no completed Phase 2 by a reviewer.

If the proposal is accepted...  
(Results are announced in July/August)

# The ALMA Snooping Project Interface (SnooPI)

- SnooPI allows PIs and Co-PIs to follow their ALMA projects from the stage of proposal submission to data delivery.

The screenshot shows the SnooPI interface for user John Smith. The dashboard includes a navigation sidebar on the left with options like Home, My Projects, My SBs, User Manual, Science Portal, Archive Query, and Helpdesk. The main content area displays six project status cards: 3/18 PI Projects, 47/113 PI Scheduling Blocks, 3/23 Co-I Projects, 24/131 Co-I Scheduling Blocks, 0/2 Delegee Projects, and 0/13 Delegee Scheduling Blocks. Below these cards is a news section with a 'More news...' button and a search bar for projects or scheduling blocks.

SnooPI also allows Contact Scientists to track all the ALMA projects supported by their node, by accessing exactly the same information that is made available to the PIs.



The screenshot shows the ALMA Science Helpdesk interface. It features a search bar with the text "How can we help you today?". Below the search bar are navigation links for "Help Center", "TOO", and "Search Sci Portal". There are four main service tiles: "Knowledgebase" (View all articles), "Submit Helpdesk Ticket" (Get in touch for help), "My Tickets" (View your tickets), and "Face to Face Visit" (Arrange a visit). The footer says "Welcome to the ALMA Helpdesk".

From ALMA SnooPI User Manual

<https://help.almascience.org>

- PIs should view proposed observations with Schedule Blocks

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

About Science Proposing **Observing** Data Processing Tools Documentation Help

### Configuration Schedule

Cycle 11 - by Block

Block	Start date	End date	Purpose	Approx. Config.	min - max baseline (m)	beam <sup>1</sup> (")	maximum recoverable scale <sup>1</sup> (")
01	2024-10-01	2024-10-07	PI ( <a href="#">Observing Report</a> )	C-3	15-500	1.4"	16.2"
02	2024-10-07	2024-10-14	PI ( <a href="#">Observing Report</a> )	C-3	15-500	1.4"	16.2"
03	2024-10-14	2024-10-21	PI ( <a href="#">Observing Report</a> )	C-3	15-500	1.4"	16.2"
04	2024-10-21	2024-10-28	PI ( <a href="#">Observing Report</a> )	C-2	15-314	2.3"	22.6"
05	2024-10-28	2024-11-04	PI ( <a href="#">Observing Report</a> )	C-2	15-314	2.3"	22.6"

**ALMA Observing Activity from 2024-10-01T18:59:00 to 2024-10-07T18:00:00**  
QA0 pass executions

2024-10-07	Start (UT)	End (UT)	Project Code	SchedBlock	Project Title	PI	Executive	Array	Band
	15:42:26	16:49:18	2024.1.01463.S	ngc4268_a_03_7M	Pre-processing of galaxies in two groups near the Virgo cluster	Lee	EA	7-m	3
	15:36:06	16:49:35	2024.1.00132.S	QSO_J124_a_03_TM1	ALMA exploration of star-forming galaxies near enriched cosmic gas structures at cosmic noon	Pensabene	EU	12-m	3
	14:07:32	14:41:35	2024.1.00579.S	jet_6_b_03_TP	Quest for the formation mechanism of Tsubo the molecular cloud by the relativistic jet		EA	Total Power	3
	12:50:13	13:46:52	2024.1.00534.L	3D-HSTv4_v_03_TM1	ALMA Chemical Evolution (ACE) Survey: A Full Census of the Cycle of Gas, Metals, and Dust at Cosmic Noon	Shivaei	EU	12-m	3
	12:38:13	13:30:37	2024.1.00117.S	6-Core_I_a_03_7M	A survey of Zeeman sensitive molecules, in total intensity, towards star forming regions	Cortes	NA	7-m	3
	11:02:29	12:13:03	2024.1.01482.S	WB89_793_a_03_7M	Constraining 12C/13C and 16O/18O from direct measurements of 13CO, C18O and 13C18O in the Galactic outer disk	Tanaka	EA	7-m	3

<https://almascience.nrao.edu/observing/observing-configuration-schedule>