

3. Assessment of Proposals

(See Section 4 on Selection Criteria also.)

The **ICMS** Programme Committee (current membership below) is charged with overseeing the peer-review process. Although it is designed to be balanced and broadly based, it is not possible for any committee such as this one (or similarly the editorial board of a major journal) to cover the entire range of the mathematical sciences with equal authority. The Programme Committee will take the necessary steps to assess proposals properly by seeking outside expert advice on the correct choice of referees when necessary. Therefore proposers are encouraged to apply, even when their topic is in an area not obviously covered by the membership of the Programme Committee. The Scientific Director can call upon any member of the EPSRC Peer Review College, and beyond, for advice and judgement.

<http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/ResearchFunding/AssessingProposals/CollegeSystem/NominationAndSelection.htm>

Programme Committee Membership

Prof J Bona	Convenor (University of Illinois)
Prof J F Toland	<i>ex officio</i> (Scientific Director)
**Prof J M Ball	University of Oxford
Prof M Chaplain	University of Dundee (Ed Math Soc nomination)
Prof J Elgin	Imperial College (EPSRC nomination)
Prof M Hyland	University of Cambridge
Prof DT Lê	ICTP (Trieste)
Prof A J Macintyre	Queen Mary and Westfield
Prof N Manton	Cambridge University (London Math Soc nomination)
Prof A B Movchan	Liverpool University
Dr M Singer	Edinburgh University
Prof A Stuart	University of Warwick (London Math Soc nomination)
Prof U Tillmann	University of Oxford
Prof D M Titterton	University of Glasgow (Ed Math Soc nomination)
** Prof M-F Vigneras	Univeristé Paris Jussieu
Dr S Zachary	Heriot-Watt University

(**also a member of the Scientific Steering Committee of the Isaac Newton Institute for Mathematical Sciences. Common membership of committees is a mechanism by which **INI** and **ICMS** keep in touch.)

Meetings

The Committee meets in person only once a year. In order to react quickly to proposals, decisions are made outside meetings at two other times each year (see 'Procedures and Mechanisms'). In addition to assessing new proposals, at their annual meeting the Committee is tasked to

- review and evaluate proposals made over the past 12 months
- evaluate workshops held in previous 12 months
- discuss topics where workshops should be encouraged.

Conflict of Interest

Committee members are asked to disqualify themselves from participation in the decision-making process if there is a possible conflict of interest, for example if a proposal comes from a personal friend, departmental colleague, a current or very recent collaborator, or a student (<3 years ago).

PROCEDURES AND MECHANISMS

Submission

A proposal is submitted to the **ICMS** office, where the Centre Manager (CM) acknowledges it and passes it on to the Scientific Director (SD).

Appointment of referees

The SD consults all members of the Programme Committee by e-mail. A minimum of three referees will then be asked to comment on the proposal. (See 'Choice of Referees' below.) The CM requests referees' reports, collates responses and passes them to the SD.

Feedback to proposer

The SD sends the referees' comments to the proposer and invites a response. The SD may ask for a proposal to be revised in the light of the referees' comments.

Decision-making

- Decisions will be made by the Programme Committee three times a year in December, March, and July (the July meeting will be the main annual meeting).
- The Programme Committee will be presented with the proposal (and revision where this has been requested), the referees' comments and proposers' responses. One of the Committee will be asked to act as 'Reader' for a specific proposal. Each member will be asked to score all proposals on the basis of the referees' comments, the selection criteria and **ICMS** Scientific Policy. The scores are:
 - 1 – Excellent. Meets all criteria and is likely to have a high impact
 - 2 – Very good. Meets all criteria
 - 3 – Satisfactory. Meets most criteria but is unlikely to be funded without revision
 - 4 – Does not meet criteria.

General comments are also invited. (new line)

Decisions will be reached by email in March and December. The CM will collate the Programme Committee members' scores and comments and pass them to the SD, Chairman and Readers who will use this information to make a preliminary recommendation. This recommendation will be circulated to the Committee, inviting immediate email discussion.

- Once a consensus is reached, the SD will recommend to the **ICMS Management Committee** (link) those proposals that should be funded, bearing in mind the resources available and the need to produce a balanced programme.

- Should the number of highly-rated proposals exceed the Management Committee's capacity to allocate funds for a given year, some proposals may have to be turned away or offered a later date.

Choice of Referees

A minimum of three referees are asked to comment on the proposal. In the case of novel or interdisciplinary proposals, a greater number is likely to be invited to comment. Referees are appointed on the basis of their area of expertise, both national and international referees will be used as a matter of course.

- One referee will be chosen from the list supplied by the proposer.
- The remaining referees will be chosen by the Scientific Director on the basis of suggestions from members of the Programme Committee (or members of the EPSRC Peer Review College if the subject is too far from the areas of expertise of Committee members).

A full record of all emails, letters etc will be kept at **ICMS** for 5 years.