The ALMA Proposal Preparation Process



Statia Cook

Credits: NRAO, M. MacGregor











This talk is for you if...

- You have a fabulous science case that is essential to follow-up with ALMA!
- You are new to ALMA and/or you have not used the ALMA Observing Tool (OT) before.
- You were familiar with past cycles and wonder what Cycle 6 capabilities are now available, and/or want a refresher on how to use the OT.





| TIME | | | |
|------|--|----------|--|
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| | | | |

March 20 Call for Proposals

Apr. 19@15UT* Proposal Deadline

End of July Results to Pls

August 2018 Pls submit SBs

Oct. 2018 Start of Cycle 6

Sept. 2019 End of Cycle 6



*15 UT is 11AM East Coast time (EDT)!

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- ✓ Make use of Helpdesk & Knowledgebase
- ✓ Submit!



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Cycle 6 Documentation

Call for Proposals (1 page)
Proposer's Guide (50 pages, vital facts)
ALMA Primer (40 pages, broad overview)
ALMA Tech Handbook (220 pages, detailed)

OT Documentation (many tutorials)

MASTER LINK:

https://almascience.nrao.edu/documents-and-tools



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Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array

In search of our Cosmic Origins









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Observing

ta Processing

Tools Documentation

Help

Search Site

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Feb 01, 2018

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More...

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Magnetic Fields or Turbulence Feb 06, 2018

AAAS - The Chemistry & Physics of Nascent Planet Formation Feb 17, 2018

NRAO/LBO Community Day at Caltech Mar 27, 2018

More...

Status

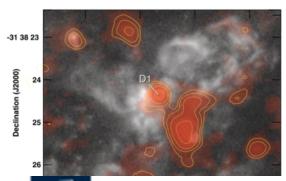
ALMA Cycle 5 Config Schedule

Refereed publications: 916

Last observed source: W43-MM1 Current configuration: C43-5

More...

Science Highlights - Molecular Gas Within the Supernebula of the Dwarf Galaxy NGC 5253



One of the areas of extragalactic research which makes great use of ALMA's resolution and sensitivity is the study of the molecular gas properties of dwarf galaxies. In a recent study by Dr. Jean Turner and her collaborators, they make use of Band 7 ALMA observations to detect warm ¹²CO(3-2) and ¹³CO(3-2) emission (Cloud D1) from the core of a giant star-forming

region, in the dwarf galaxy NGC 5253. This "supernebula" is the source of one-third of the galaxy's infrared luminosity and is in proximity to optical clusters with measured stellar ages of ~ 1 Myr. From radio recombination line analysis, the region is estimated to have 1400-1800 O stars..

Full Summary...

www.almascience.org ALMA Science Portal @ NRAO

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Downloading the ALMA OT





Observing Tool

The ALMA Observing Tool (OT) is a Java application used for the preparation and submission of ALMA Phase 1 (observing proposal) and Phase 2 (telescope runfiles for accepted proposals) materials. It is also used for preparing and submitting Director's Discretionary Time (DDT) proposals. The current Cycle 4 release of the OT is configured for the present capabilities of ALMA as described in the Cycle 4 Call For Proposals. Note that in order to submit proposals you will have to register with the ALMA Science Portal beforehand.

Note that preparation of Cycle 3 Phase 1 and DDT proposals needs to be done using the Cycle 3 version of the Observing Tool. This version of the OT can be found in the DDT page, or the Phase 2 menu.

Download & Installation

The OT will run on most common operating systems, as long as you have **Java 8** installed see the troubleshooting page if you are experiencing Java problems). The ALMA OT is available in two flavours: Web Start and tarball.

The **Web Start** application is the recommended way of using the OT. It has the advantage that the OT is automatically downloaded and installed on your computer and it will also automatically detect and install updates. There are some issues with Web Start, particularly that it does not work with the Open JDK versions of Java such as the "Iced Tea" flavour common on many modern Linux installations. The Sun/Oracle variant of Java should therefore be installed instead. If this is not possible, then the tarball installation of the OT is available.

The **tarball** version must be installed manually and we complete with a recommended version of the Java

Webstart Tarball

Using webstart is easier and has the advantage that it checks for and will download a newer version at startup

es. For Linux users, we also provide a download rball install with your default Java.

OT Video Tutorials



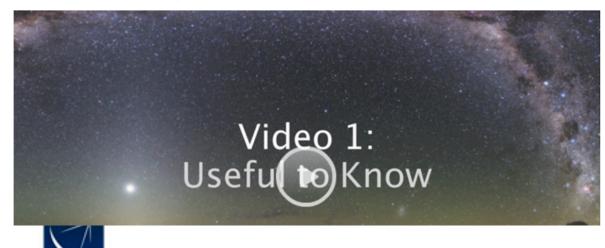


OT Video Tutorials

The OT video tutorials provide an audio-visual demonstration of different aspects of proposal preparation in the OT. Novice users should start with the first video and work their way down, while more experienced users may want to jump straight to one of the specialised videos.

OT Video Tutorial 1: Useful to Know

This video will help you get started with the OT and introduce you to some handy tips and tricks. Topics covered include navigating the OT, using the help function, the template library, time estimation, validation, opening & submitting projects including re-submissions, and the concept of non-standard modes. **Note**: this video is from Cycle 4, some things have changed slightly in Cycle 5. In particular, time constraints can now also include simultaneous 12-m and 7-m observations, and re-submissions are no longer defined by the user. Also, the time estimate interface has changed a bit.



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Science Case



Free-form PDF document

- 12+ font, English only
- 20 MB file size
- 4 pages (6 for Large Projects)

Must include:

- Astronomical importance
- Estimated intensity, S/N

May include:

- Figures
- Tables
- References

Should include:

Why ALMA?!

Several Types of Projects/Proposals

Regular Projects

- Observations than can be fully specified by the regular proposal submission.
- Includes standard and non-standard modes.





Large Projects

- 15% of available time
- Any 12-m project >50 hours, or standalone ACA > 150 hours
- Standard observing modes
- Automatic 'A' grade
- +2 pages for Science Case
 - Data/Project management plans
 - Enhanced Data Products



ToO (Target of Opportunity)

- Transient events occurring at frequent and unpredictable intervals (e.g. gamma ray bursts).
- Regular proposal submission.
- Target list may be left unspecified, observing modes and sensitivity requests must be specified
- Triggers needed and maximum response time

VLBI

- 5% of available time
- ALMA VLBI programs must have been submitted to the appropriate VLBI network by their independent deadline.



DDT (Director's Discretionary Time)

- 5% of available time
- Submission at any time, for current cycle
- 1. Immediate (<3 weeks) observation of a sudden and *unexpected* astronomical event.
- 2. Observations of a highly competitive scientific topic, motivated by developments that have taken place after the regular proposal submission deadline.
- 3. Follow-up observations of a program recently conducted with ALMA or any other observing facility, quick implementation is expected to provide breakthrough results.





When Preparing Your Science Case, Don't Forget the Capabilities and Constraints of Cycle 6!

- LST range available for each configuration.
- Source declination, particularly for compact configurations: antenna shadowing.
- Capabilities, especially new capabilities: circular polarization (with restrictions), Band 8 ACA, larger Band 6 IF bandwidth.
- Data rate (70 MB/s limit).
- Duplication checks.



Checking for Duplication: Proposal is a Duplication If ALL Conditions Met:

- Frequency:
 - Continuum: rms better by a factor of ≤ 2, frequency is within a factor of 1.3 or –
 - Spectral line: central freq. in any FDM window within prev. window, sensitivity per channel better by factor of ≤ 2
- Angular resolution:
 - Differs by a factor of ≤2
- Coverage:
 - Single-field: position coincides within the half-power beam width of the other observation – or –
 - Mosaic: more than 50% of the proposed pointings are within the half power beam width of other observation



Checking for Duplication



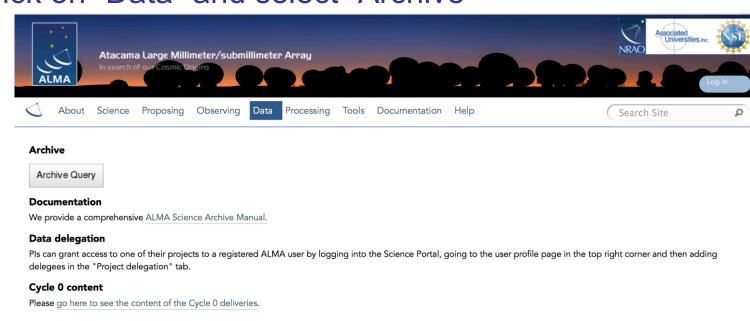
- Duplications are not allowed, unless scientifically justified
- Pls are responsible for checking their proposed observations against the Archive and the list of Grade A programs:
 - https://almascience.nrao.edu/proposing/call-forproposals/duplications.
- PIs will not be penalized for proposing duplications of previous cycle observations if they had no way to know about them.





The ALMA Archive

Go to the science portal: https://almascience.nrao.edu Click on "Data" and select "Archive"



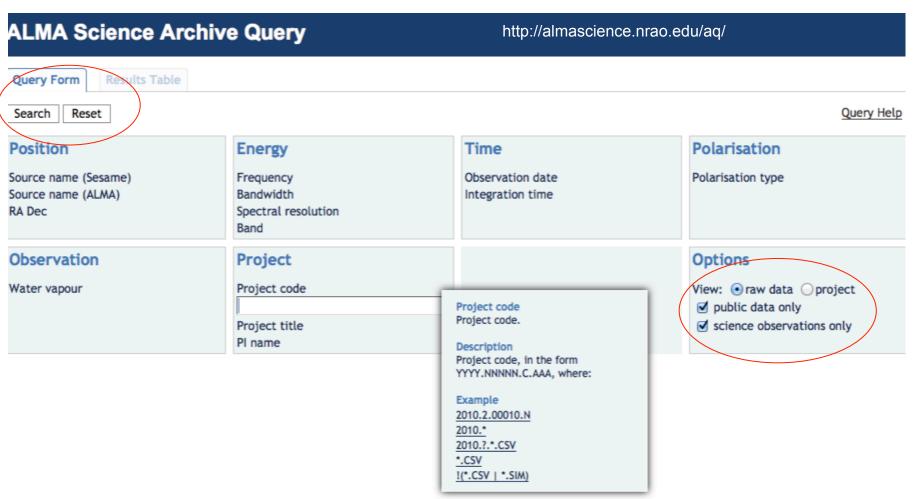
Use the archive to check for duplication, get your own data, or download publicly available data



Find data in archive:

Archive Query









Archive Query

Query Form

Results Table

Submit download request

Results Bookmark Export Table Results Help

| Showing 30 rows (30 before filtering). More columns | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|------|-------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--|--|
| • | Project code | Source name | RA | Dec | Band | Integration | Release date 🛎 | Velocity resolution | Frequency support | | |
| Filter: | | | | | | | | m/s ‡ | | | |
| ⋖ | 2012.1.00090.S | S2CLS_UDS110 | 02:18:48.44 | -05:18:05.0 | 7 | 9.326 | 2014-11-07T09:35:00.000 | 27236.96 | 336.00351.99GHz | | |
| ⋖ | 2012.1.00090.S | S2CLS_UDS156 | 02:18:24.23 | -05:22:53.4 | 7 | 8.836 | 2014-11-07T09:35:00.000 | 27236.96 | 336.00351.99GHz | | |
| ⋖ | 2012.1.00090.S | S2CLS_UDS160 | 02:18:23.86 | -05:11:36.2 | 7 | 8.842 | 2014-11-07T09:35:00.000 | 27236.96 | 336.00351.99GHz | | |
| | 2012.1.00090.S | S2CLS_UDS168 | 02:18:20.34 | -05:31:41.6 | 7 | 8.843 | 2014-11-07T09:35:00.000 | 27236.96 | 336.00351.99GHz | | |
| ⋖ | 2012.1.00090.S | S2CLS_UDS199 | 02:18:07.38 | -04:44:11.7 | 7 | 8.812 | 2014-11-07T09:35:00.000 | 27236.96 | 336.00351.99GHz | | |
| | 2012.1.00090.S | S2CLS_UDS204 | 02:18:03.01 | -05:28:39.8 | 7 | 8.873 | 2014-11-07T09:35:00.000 | 27236.96 | 336.00351.99GHz | | |
| | 2012.1.00090.S | S2CLS_UDS216 | 02:17:56.80 | -04:52:39.6 | 7 | 8.82 | 2014-11-07T09:35:00.000 | 27236.96 | 336.00351.99GHz | | |
| | 2012.1.00090.S | S2CLS_UDS252 | 02:17:37.79 | -05:20:10.2 | 7 | 8.827 | 2014-11-07T09:35:00.000 | 27236.96 | 336.00351.99GHz | | |
| | 2012.1.00090.S | S2CLS_UDS286 | 02:17:25.76 | -05:25:36.5 | 7 | 9.657 | 2014-11-07T09:35:00.000 | 27236.96 | 336.00351.99GHz | | |
| | 2012.1.00090.S | S2CLS_UDS292 | 02:17:21.85 | -05:19:03.3 | 7 | 8.815 | 2014-11-07T09:35:00.000 | 27236.96 | 336.00351.99GHz | | |
| | 2012.1.00090.S | S2CLS_UDS298 | 02:17:19.90 | -05:09:36.4 | 7 | 9.55 | 2014-11-07T09:35:00.000 | 27236.96 | 336.00351.99GHz | | |
| | 2012.1.00090.S | S2CLS_UDS334 | 02:17:02.81 | -04:57:24.9 | 7 | 8.856 | 2014-11-07T09:35:00.000 | 27236.96 | 336.00351.99GHz | | |
| | 2012.1.00090.S | S2CLS_UDS408 | 02:16:22.59 | -05:11:06.0 | 7 | 8.819 | 2014-11-07T09:35:00.000 | 27236.96 | 336.00351.99GHz | | |
| | 2012.1.00090.S | S2CLS_UDS421 | 02:16:17.62 | -05:09:02.0 | 7 | 8.803 | 2014-11-07T09:35:00.000 | 27236.96 | 336.00351.99GHz | | |
| | 2012.1.00090.S | S2CLS_UDS47 | 02:19:24.97 | -05:09:19.9 | 7 | 8.785 | 2014-11-07T09:35:00.000 | 27236.96 | 336.00351.99GHz | | |





Downloading the data: Request Handler

- All data downloaded as tar files
- Large data sets may be broken into several pieces
 - Name is [project_code]_[OUS_ID]_m_of_n.tar
 - Raw data packaged as one tar file per execution block (EB)
 - name is [project_code]_[EB_ID].asdm.sdm.tar
- For Cycle 0-5 projects, cannot directly download individual data products but potentially coming in Cycle 6...
 - FITS images
 - Diagnostic plots, etc.

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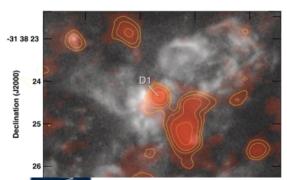
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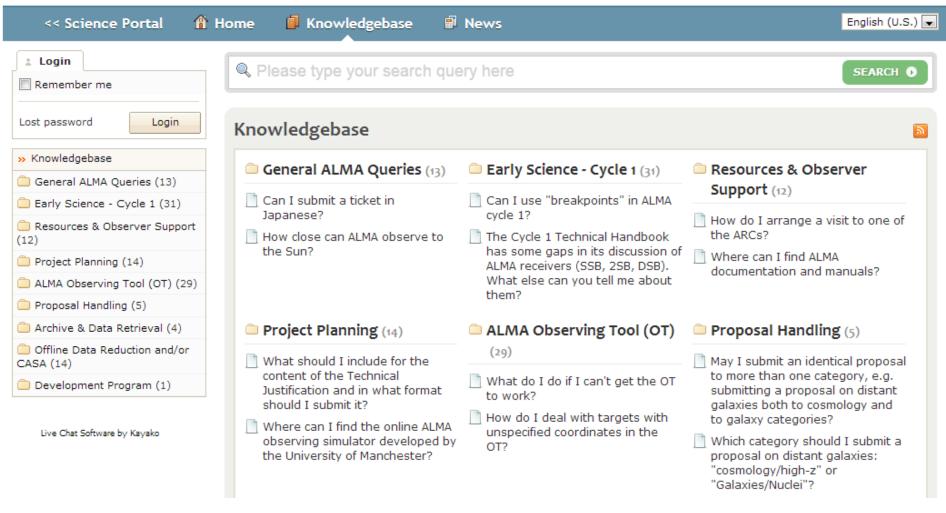
www.almascience.org **ALMA Science Portal @ NRAO**

I could use a hand...





Have no fear, the ALMA Helpdesk is here...





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Submission

- Can resubmit as often as needed, server is busy right before the deadline!
- Standard and ToO proposals reviewed by the ALMA Proposal Review Committee (APRC) and the ALMA Review Panels (ARP).
- Proposals assessed for overall scientific merit of proposed investigation and potential contribution to the advancement of scientific knowledge.
- All proposals subject to Technical Assessment by JAO and ARC experts.
- Outcome of the Proposal Review Process communicated to Pls end of July 2018.



After submission

- A: Proposal was assigned the highest priority and will be carried over into Cycle 7 if it is not completed in Cycle 6.
- B: was assigned a high priority but will not be carried over into Cycle 7.
- C: Scientifically fruitful proposals, will be observed if a higher-grade proposal is not available for current conditions.





After submission

Phase II

- Pls review their scheduling blocks
- Change requests go to the Helpdesk, and possibly a formal change request
- Being prompt helps ensure your project can be observed!
- Then wait dynamic scheduling means your Contact Scientist doesn't know when your project will run. As observations are made, updates are shown in the SnooPI tool on the Science Portal:

https://almascience.nrao.edu/observing/snoopi





Goals of Quality Assurance (QA) Process

- Ensure reliable final data product
- Desired sensitivity, resolution (as specified by PI)
- Ensure calibration and QA imaging free from major artifacts
- •Warning: Errors in PI-supplied parameters are outside scope of QA process, including:
 - Incorrect source coordinates
 - Inadequate frequency specification
 - Inadequate sensitivity limits





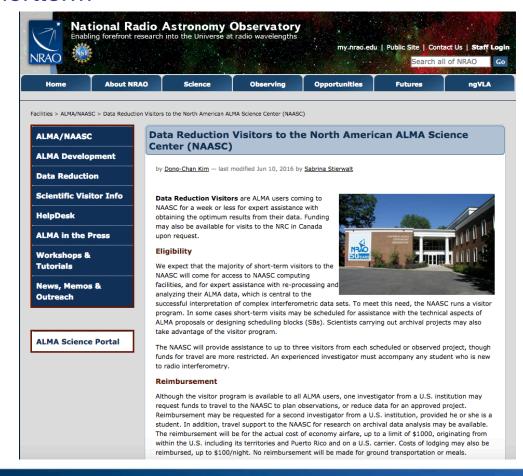
Data delivery

- Data delivered after passing Quality Assurance (QA)
- •Download data from *Archive Query* and *Request Handler* tools on the ALMA Science Portal
- Delivered data include:
 - Calibration tables and diagnostics
 - •Preliminary images (better products may be possible with more careful continuum identification & interactive cleaning)
- For more information, see Sections 11, 12, 14, and Appendix C of ALMA Technical Handbook



Resources After Data Delivery

- HelpDesk
- •Face-to-face visits in Charlottesville: https://science.nrao.edu/facilities/alma/visitors-shortterm





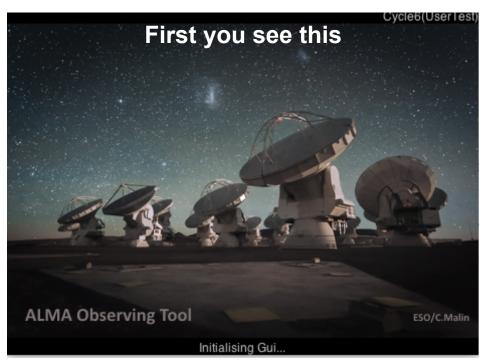
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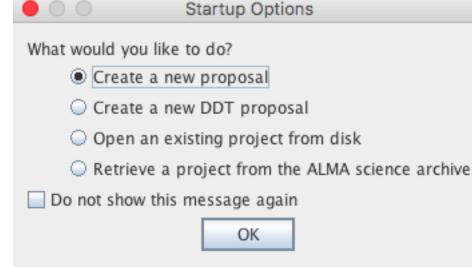


When the ALMA OT starts

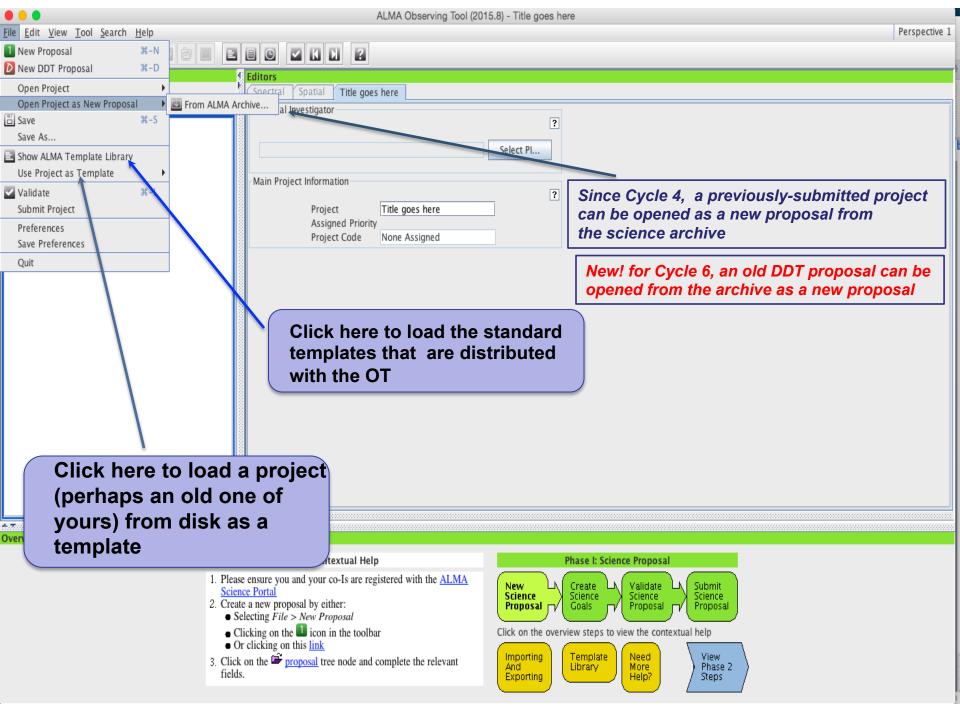


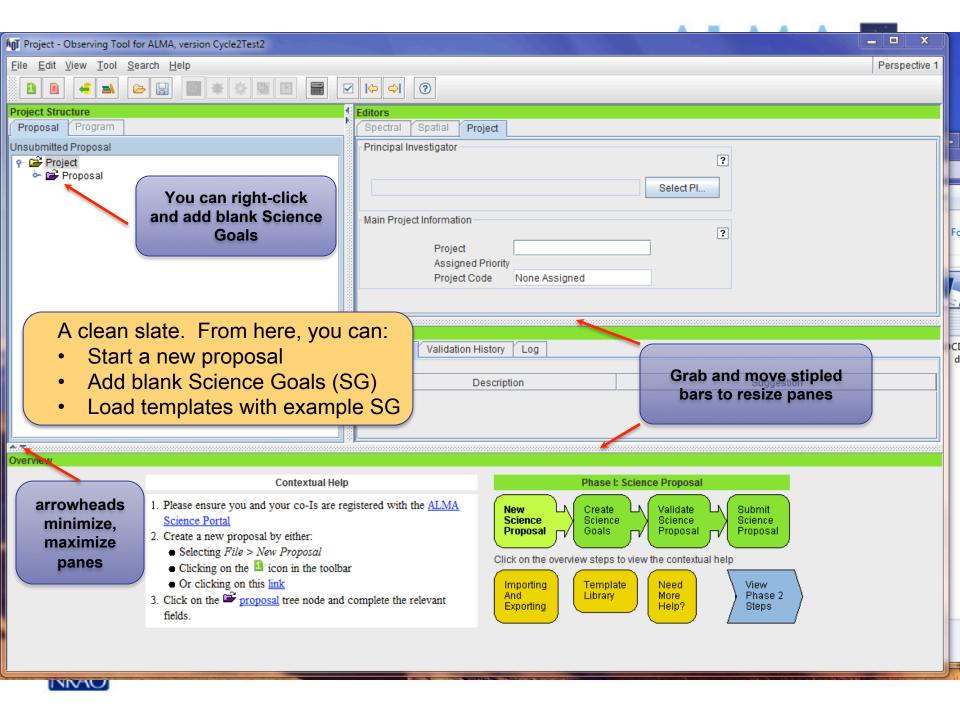


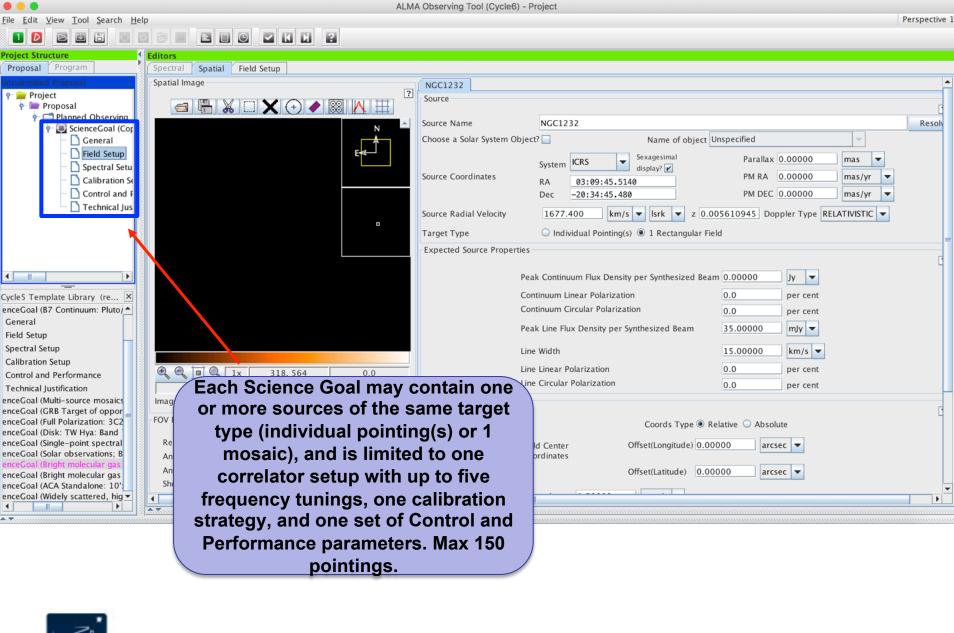
Then you see this



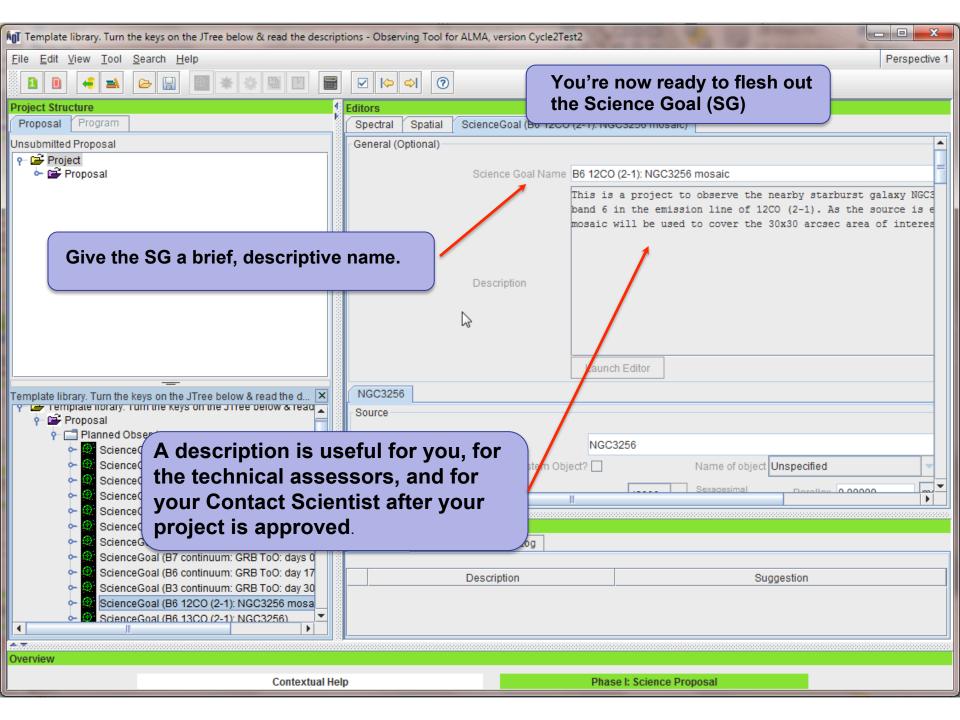


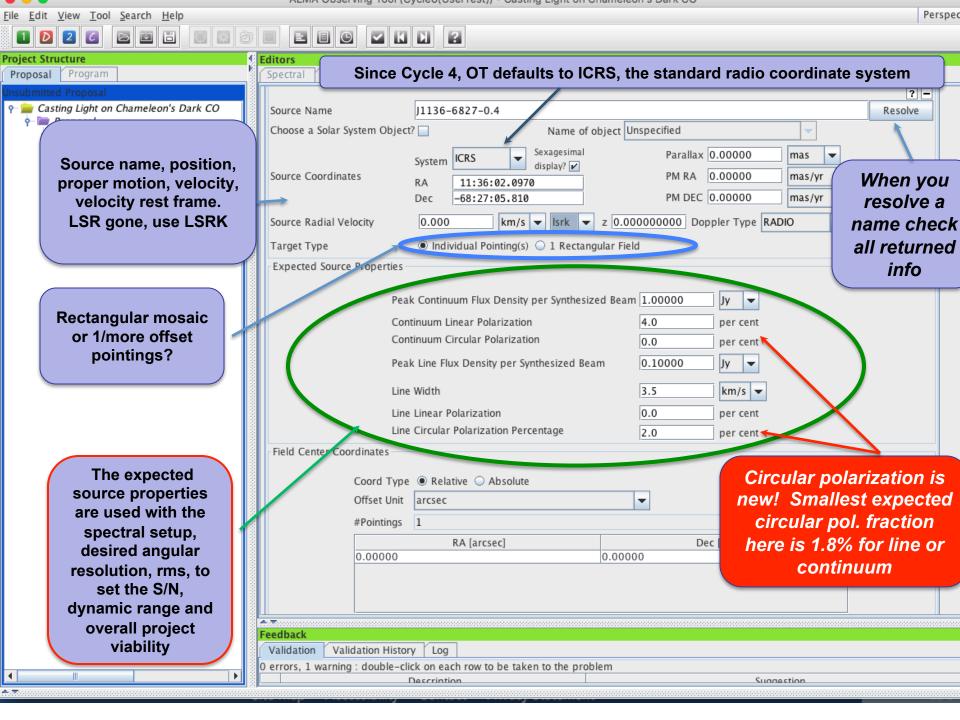


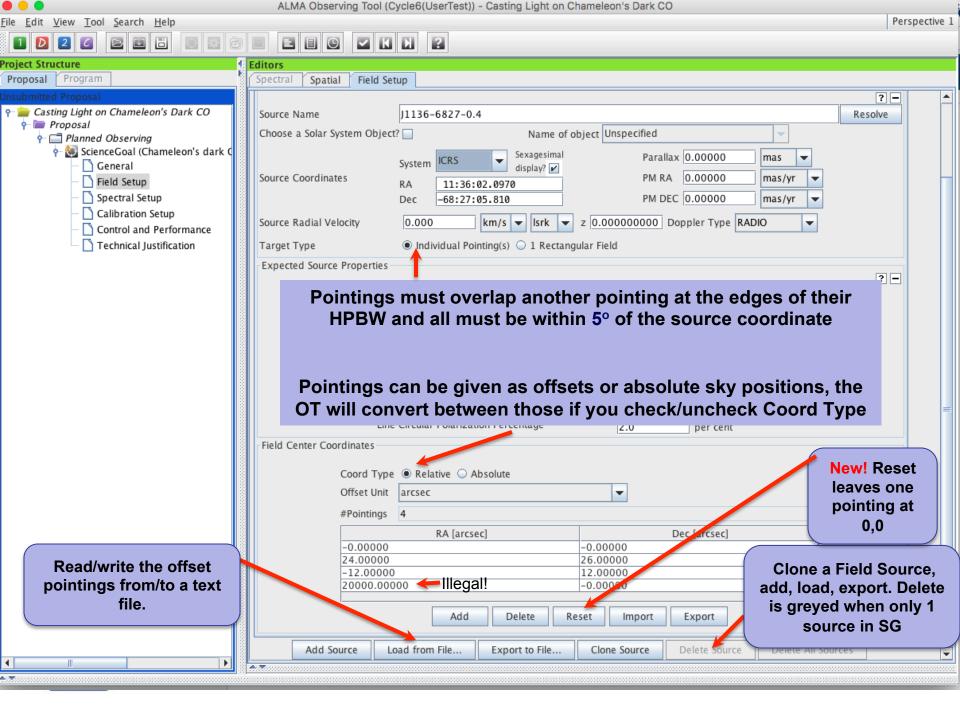


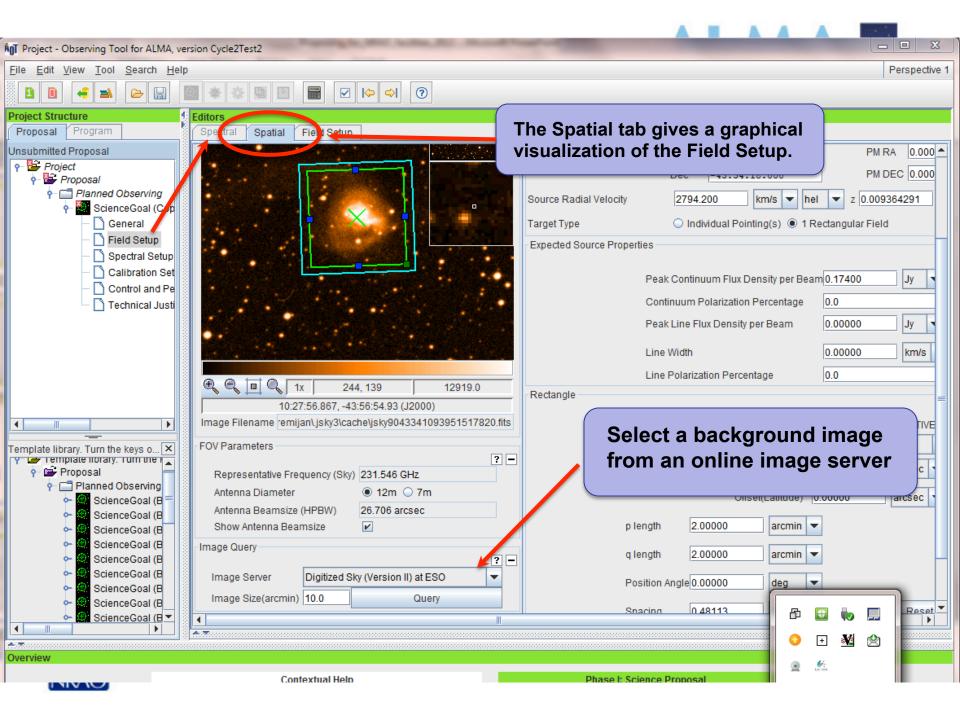


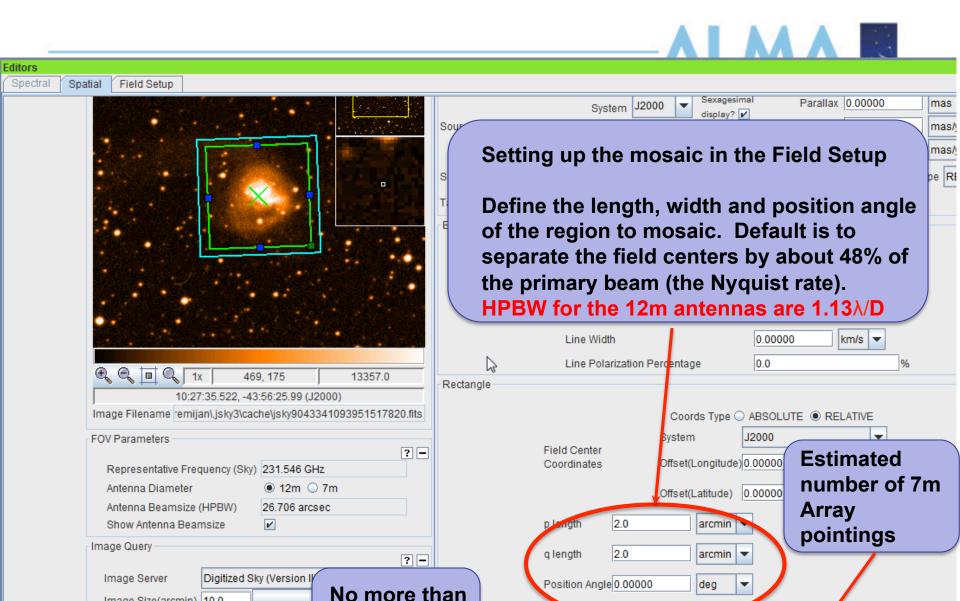












150 12m Array

pointings.

0.48113

12m Array 105

fraction of main beam

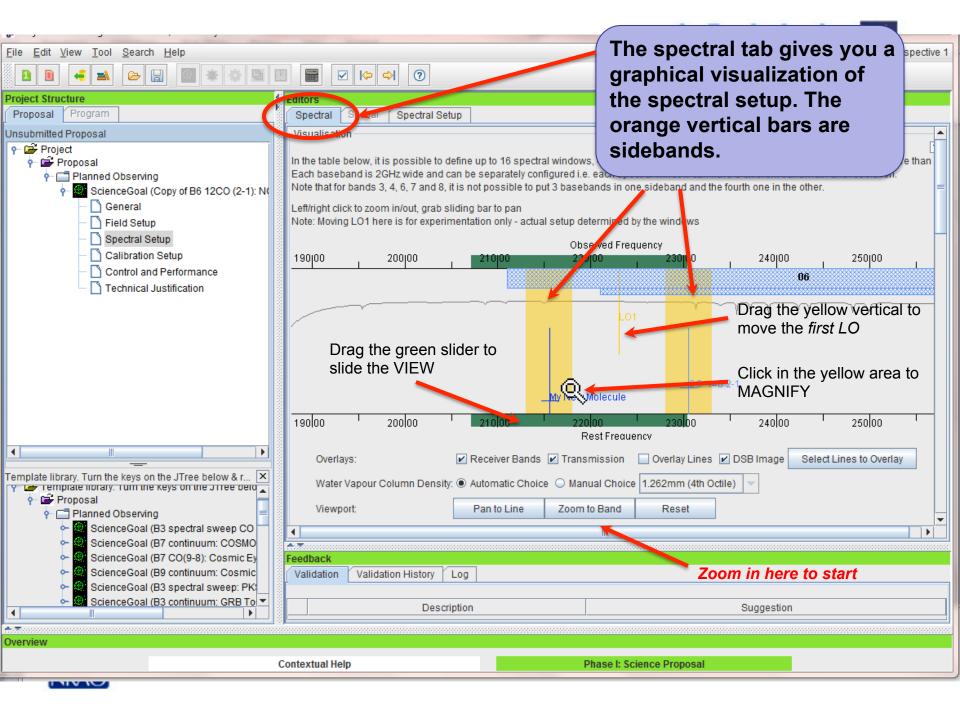
7m Array 39

Reset to Nyquist

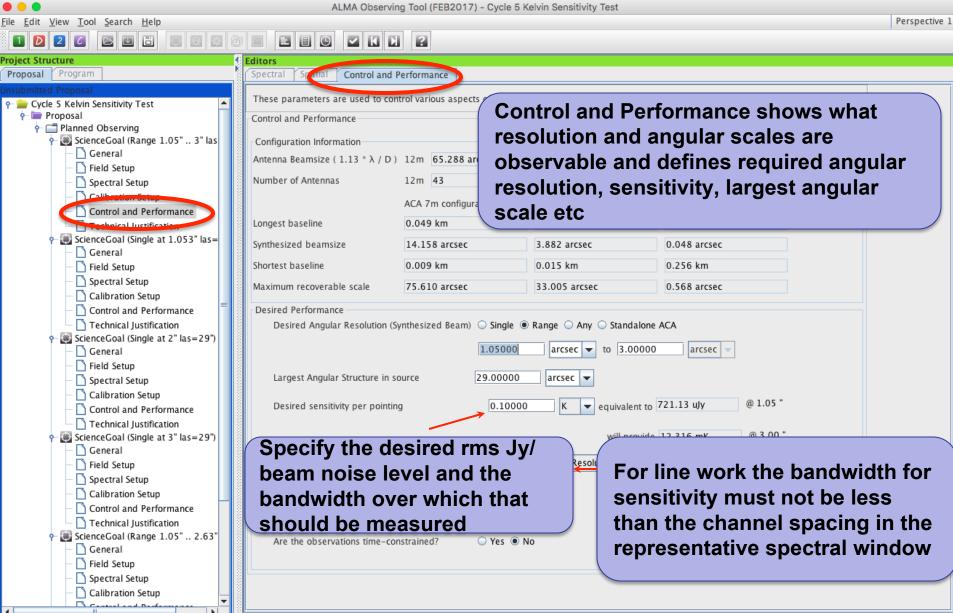
Export

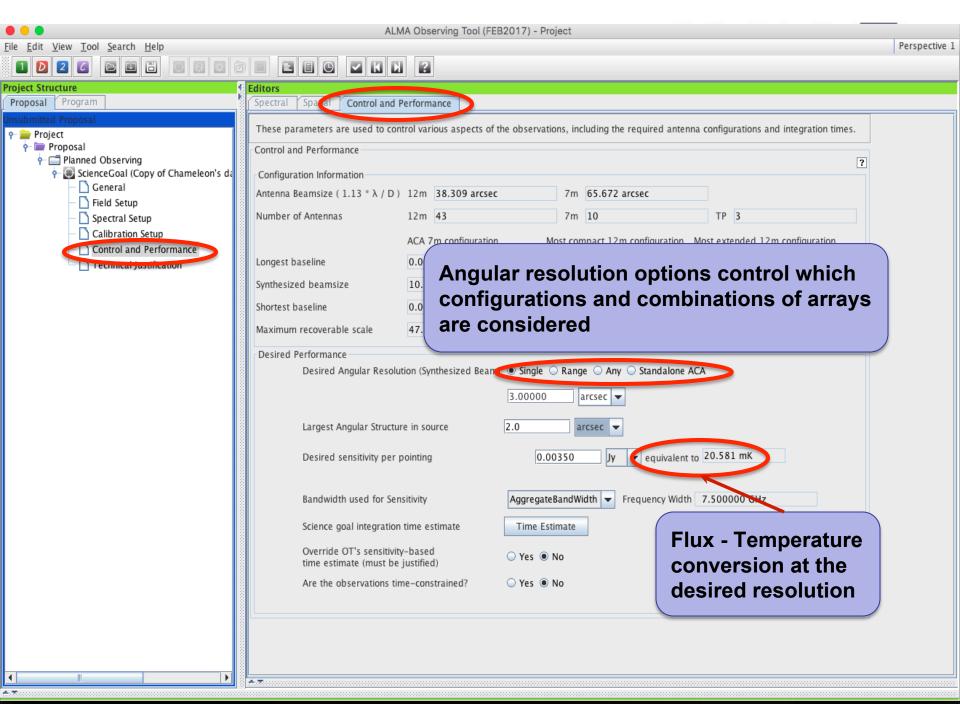


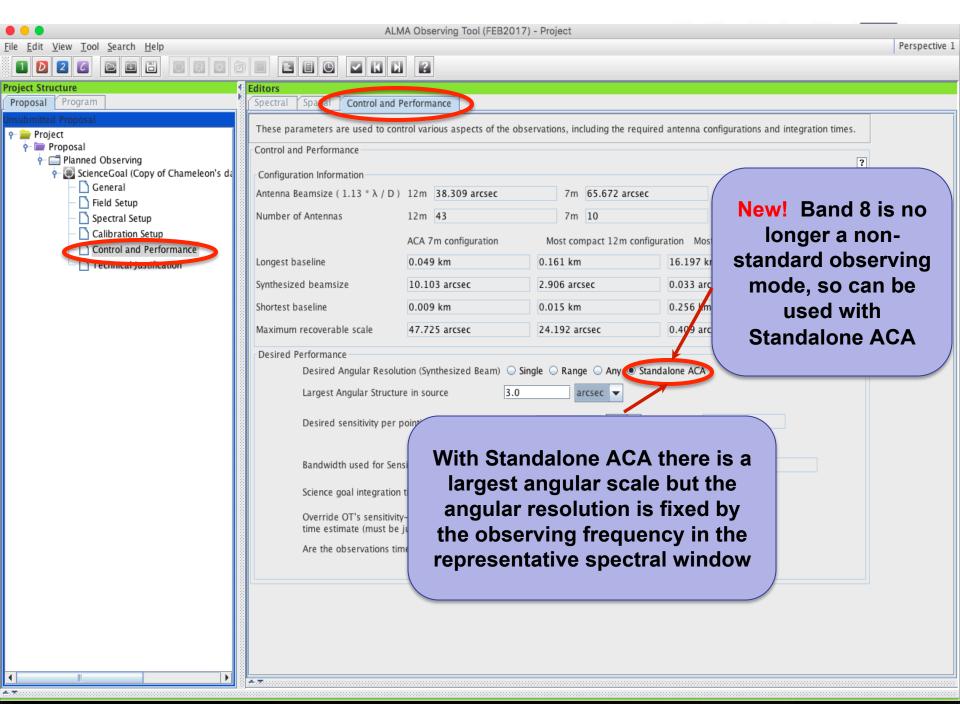
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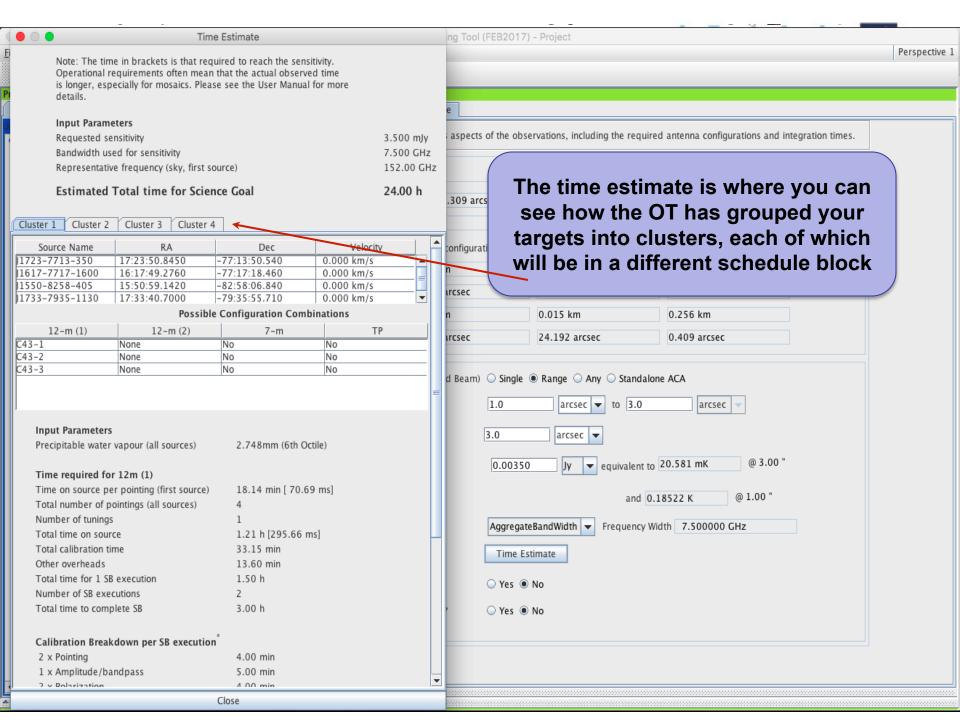


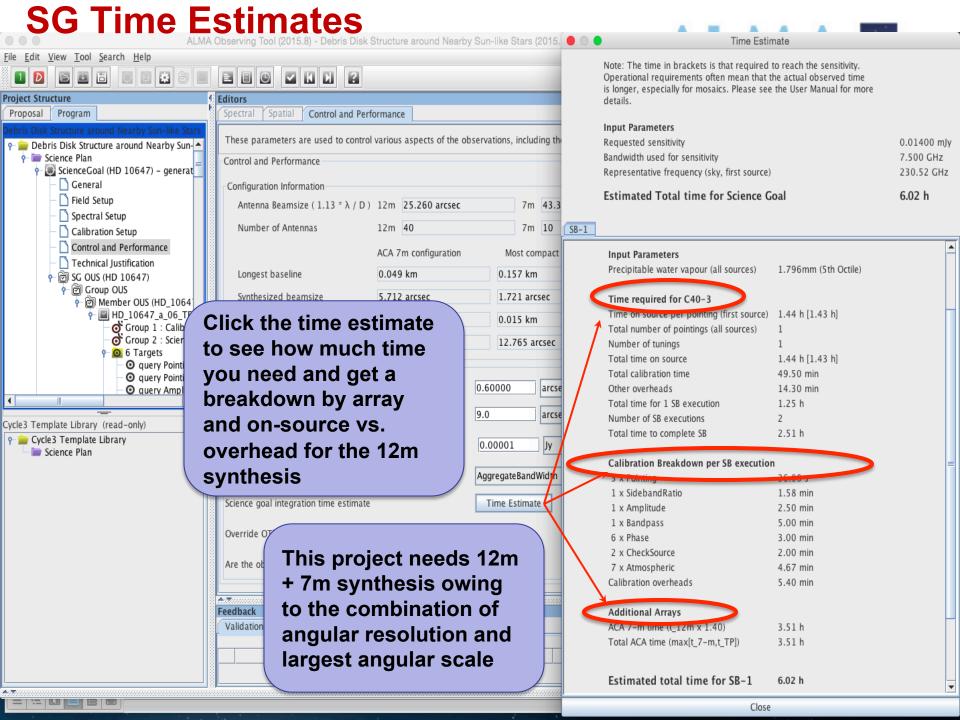


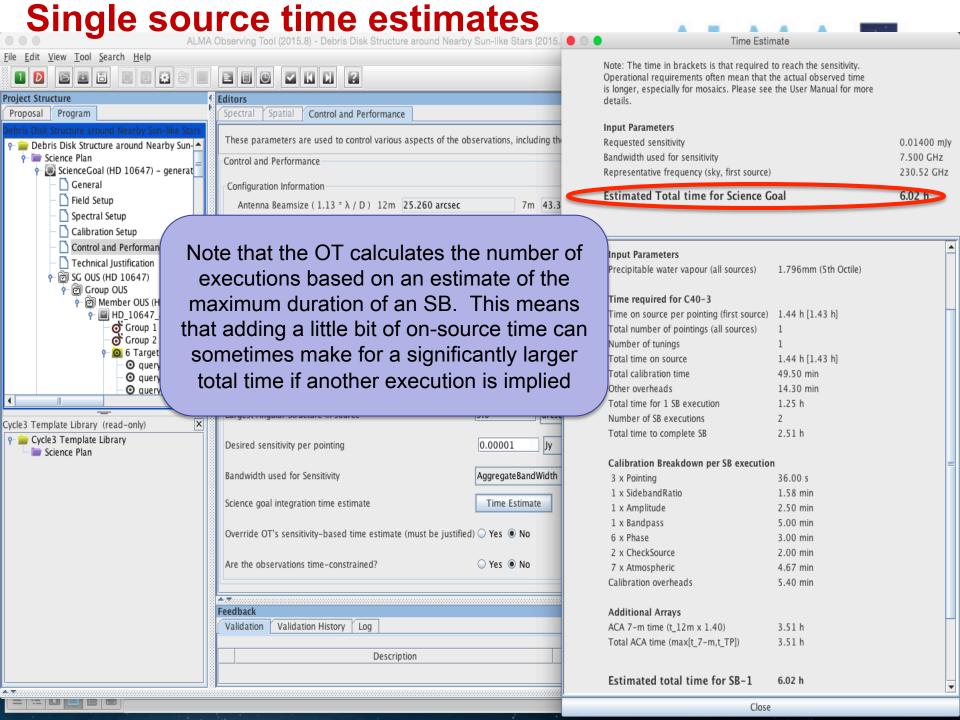


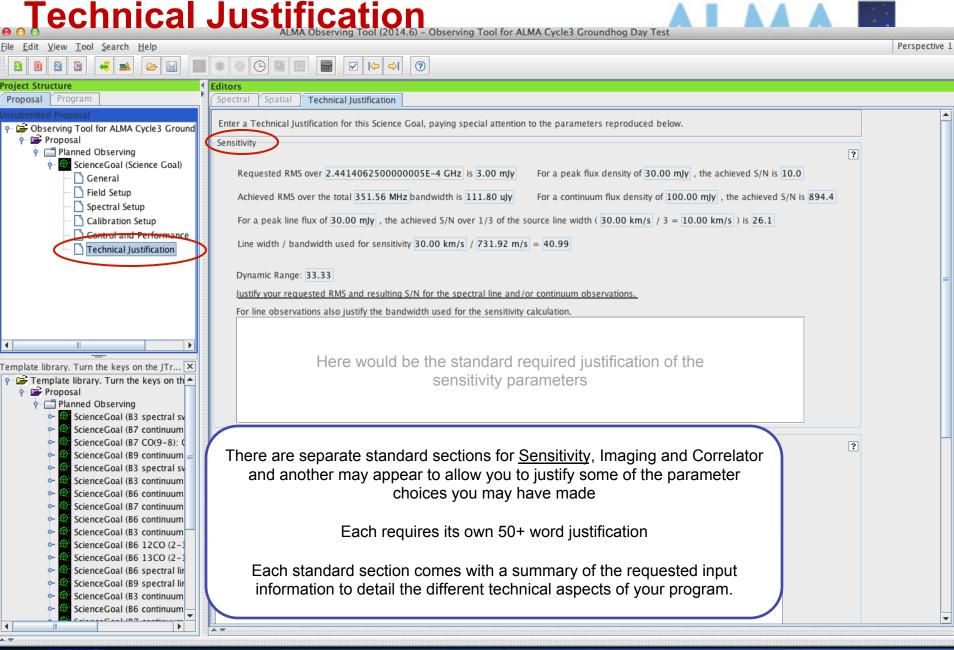






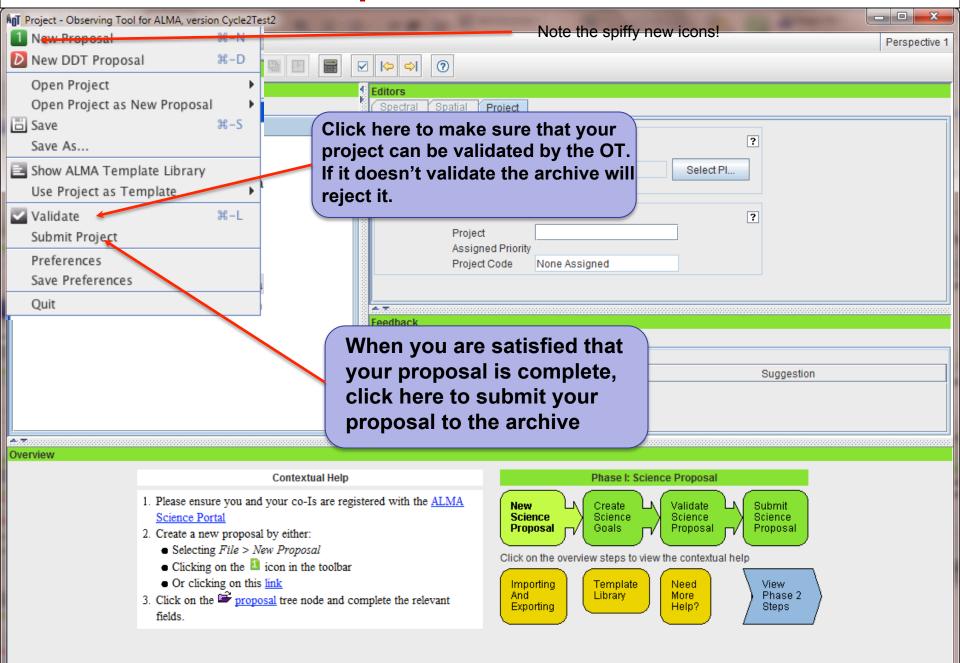


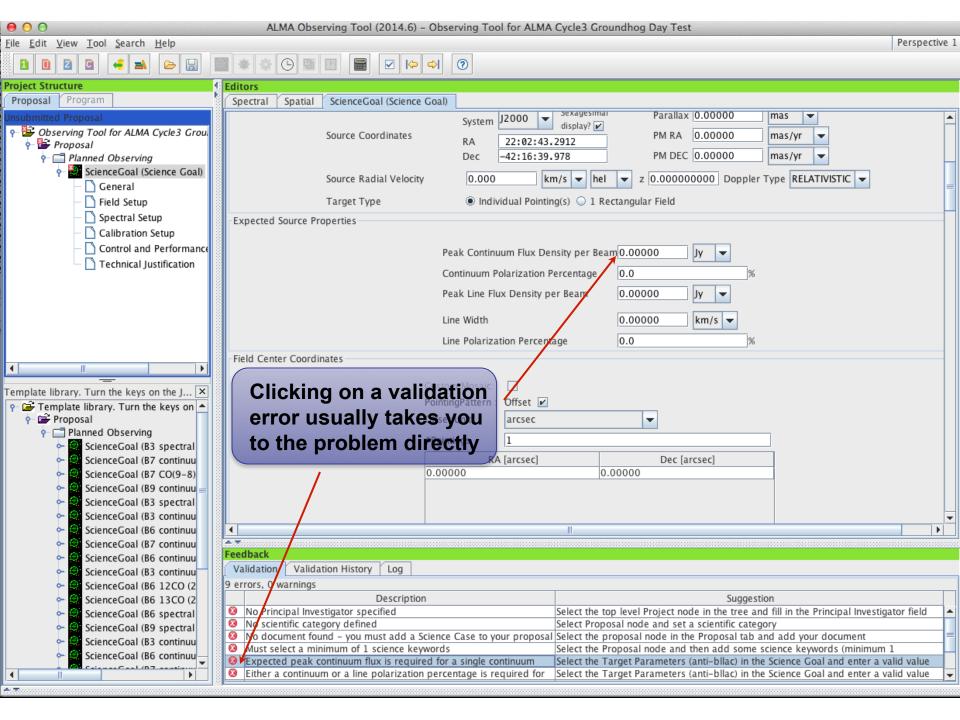






When the time is ripe ... validate & submit

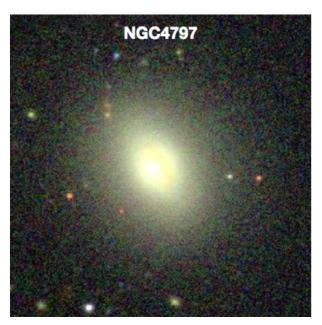






ALMA OT Hands-On Session!

Case Study: Gas and dust in local minor merger remnants





Case study developed by Kate Rowlands (JHU)