

Agreement for Joint VLA-ALMA Observing Proposals

The National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO), operated under cooperative agreement by Associated Universities Inc., provides state-of-the-art radio telescopes for use by the international scientific community.

The Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA), an international astronomy facility, is a partnership of ESO (representing its member states), NSF (USA) and NINS (Japan), together with NRC (Canada), MOST and ASIAA (Taiwan), and KASI (Republic of Korea), in cooperation with the Republic of Chile. The Joint ALMA Observatory is operated by ESO, AUI/NRAO and NAOJ.


NRAO and the Joint ALMA Observatory (JAO) are entering into an agreement to support joint proposals for observations with the Jansky Very Large Array (VLA) and the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA).

1. A Joint Proposal requests time on both ALMA and VLA and may be submitted for review by either the NRAO Telescope Allocation Committee or the ALMA proposal review process for scientific peer review. Effectively, these Joint Proposals would allow for one of the two observatories to award observing time on both telescopes, avoiding the “double jeopardy” of having to submit proposals to two separate reviews.
2. By agreement, NRAO/VLA will be able to award up to 50 hours on the ALMA 12-m array, 50 hours on 7-m array, and 50 hours on the Total Power array per year and JAO will be able to award up to 5% of the available time on the VLA per year to highly rated proposals. These time allocations could be updated in future cycles, subject to agreement between both partners.
3. NRAO and ALMA shall apply their usual review criteria; however, they will ensure that the projects submitted as joint proposals require both sets of data to meet the science goals.
4. NRAO and ALMA shall apply their respective users’ policies, as relevant.
5. ALMA time will only be awarded by NRAO in conjunction with new VLA observations and may not be requested for programs to which time is already granted. NRAO and JAO may set additional constraints regarding the total time available for particular types of observations, such as time-constrained observations, Targets of Opportunity or other observations requiring particular technical constraints or observatory configurations.
6. Proposals for joint NRAO and ALMA observations must be submitted to the observatory where more observing time is being requested or, in case the time requested is the same, other objective condition to be defined in the Proposal Call documentation. The same proposal may not be submitted to both observatories for review at the same time. NRAO and JAO reserve the right to disallow observations that duplicate those approved via any other approved program unless the duplications are justified in the original proposals.
7. All proposals will be subject to technical and scheduling review by both observatories and may not be recommended if the observations are not deemed feasible by either observatory. Any ALMA observations recommended for acceptance by NRAO are subject to approval by the ALMA Director’s Council and a Chilean representative following the procedures described in ALMA’s Principles of the Proposal Review Process. VLA observations recommended for acceptance by ALMA are subject to approval by the NRAO Director.

8. Both observatories undertake to apply their own privacy policies and to keep their normal standards of confidentiality for their own time allocation processes and to keep this confidential information secure with the highest degree of care with which they protect the confidentiality of their confidential information of a similar nature.
9. Data obtained as part of a joint observed program shall be subject to the respective proprietary policies of the instrument on which it was taken. Each observatory will ensure that their own data is archived according to their own standards.
10. Publications that use VLA and ALMA results shall include both relevant acknowledgment statements, according to their relevant policies.
11. Joint observing proposals will be available starting with NRAO Semester 23B (proposal deadline February 2023, with observations commencing in October 2023) and ALMA Cycle 10 (proposal deadline April 2023, with observations commencing in October 2023). Joint proposals will be permitted only for the main call for ALMA and the semester A and B calls for NRAO.
12. The agreement shall enter into force upon signature by all Parties on the date of the last signature, shall continue to be in force and renewed automatically for subsequent observing cycles, but may be modified at any time by mutual agreement of both parties. This agreement may be terminated by either party by notifying the other at least four months in advance of the next release of the Call for Proposals from either observatory.
13. Each observatory will establish the implementation details for joint proposals for each cycle into relevant implementation documents that shall be agreed upon between the NRAO Director and the ALMA Director.

For ALMA,

For the National Science Foundation,

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For the European Organisation for Astronomical Research in the Southern Hemisphere,

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For the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan,

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For the National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO),

Anthony J. Beasley Director tbeasley@nrao.edu Phone: +1 (434) 296 0221	Signature:	Date:
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