

User Administration Report

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USER ADMINISTRATOR

Administrative Services

User Administration provides many services for our new and continuing users. Our primary goals are to facilitate site access, process user appointments, ensure safety training compliance, oversee the general user proposal process, organize the annual Users' Meeting, assist the Users' Executive Committee in its efforts, maintain beamline-specific information, and generate statistical reports.

PASS System

Proposal Allocation Safety Scheduling

Thanks to our applications developer Brian Bindert, the User Administration staff, and more than 30 NSLS staff and users, we proudly announced the debut of the new web-based Proposal, Allocation, Safety and Scheduling (PASS) system in May for general user proposals for the fall 2004 cycle.

PASS provides a single, web-based source for proposal submissions, feasibility and peer review, allocation and scheduling of beam time, safety review, and maintenance of beamline information. The proposal review panel (PRP) structure has changed and is now more closely associated with the synchrotron technique and field of research for the proposed experiment. A new safety measure incorporated into the system requires assignment of a lead experimenter during onsite experimental work.

Priorities for 2005 are to integrate proprietary proposals, provide rapid access to beamtime, and improve scheduling capabilities.

User Statistics

In FY04, 2,299 users from academia, government, industry, and other institutions performed experiments at the NSLS. More than a third were first-time users.

During the registration process, users select their primary field of science. In FY04, the majority of users came from the materials and life sciences arenas. Slight increases in applied science/engineering and in geosciences/ecology were noticed between FY03 and 04. At the same time, life sciences and non-specific areas decreased slightly. Other areas remained stable.

Education and employment levels vary. Over 44% of users are scientists, faculty members, or other professionals. Graduate students account for 36% and post-docs make up 13% of our population. Age levels vary, with 34% in the 20-29 age bracket and 33% in the 30-39 age bracket. In FY04, 383 unique academic, government, non-government laboratory, and industrial institutions sent users to the NSLS. Nearly 240 were academic institutions.

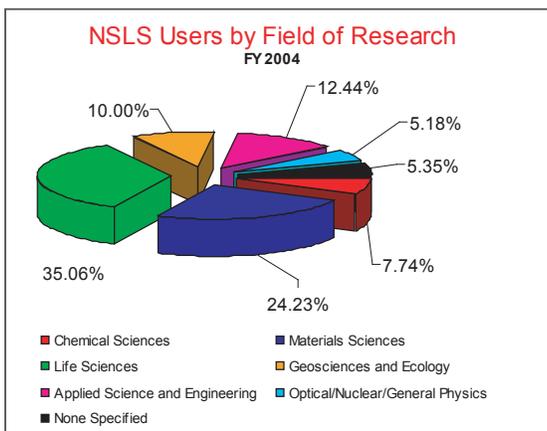
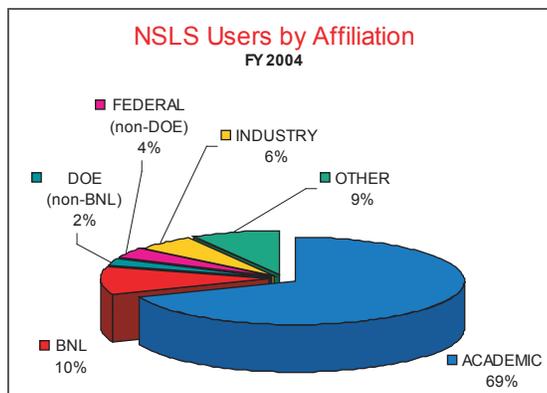


Experimental Statistics

During FY04, 1,374 experiments were performed, up from 1,145 in FY03. Just over 32% were materials science experiments; life sciences accounted for slightly under 32%. Funding comes primarily from the Office of Basic Energy Sciences within the DOE Office of Science, the National Science Foundation, and the National Institutes of Health.

Paperless Office

A milestone was achieved this year in converting User Administration into a paperless office. Over the last three years, as time and resources permitted, existing records were scanned. New records are now generated electronically. This accomplishment resulted in an \$8K budget savings and eliminated the need for 280 cubic feet of office space. We exceeded DOE and BNL's



goals in reducing consumption and waste and are at the forefront in electronic records retention, significantly facilitating audits. Factors that helped us to achieve this goal include the web-based development of BNL's Guest Information System, the End of Run Form, and the PASS System.

Conferences & Workshops

Thanks to a tremendous effort by Gretchen Cisco, this year's Users' Meeting was as administratively successful as the last, with nearly 400 attendees and eight workshops. Limited funds for meals, entertainment, and other unallowable expenses come primarily from corporate vendor and sponsor support. To provide up-to-date information on allowable and unallowable funds to the Users' Executive Committee and for simplified maintenance and reporting, we entered all financial data into Microsoft Money. Though vendor space is very limited, User Administration staff worked diligently to accommodate six additional vendors, increasing revenue by \$5.6K (our special thanks to Liz Flynn).

User Administration also handled the registration process for the NSLS-II Workshop in March. In May, we assisted with the coordination of and processed registrations for the CFN Users' Meeting, which occurred back-to-back with the NSLS Users' Meeting. With Liz's efforts, \$30K was secured through vendor contributions to cover meals and related expenses.

Badge Scanning for Site Access

Site access policies require that users produce valid BNL identification badges or have active or pending appointments. A badge-scanning system notifies the officer at the gate of problems with a user's appointment or visa status. These users are asked to check in at User Administration and work cannot begin until the user has done so. However, though approved for site access, some users had difficulty on arrival. Our office was instrumental in providing feedback for improvements to several laboratory systems to ensure access. We have seen significant improvements since that time.

Check-In/Check-Out System

To minimize problems getting onsite, users are asked to complete BNL's check-in/check-out online form in advance. User Administration generates daily reports to verify users have arrived, have valid appointments, are in visa status, and to input user departure dates. Check-in at User Administration is only necessary when the report indicates a problem or the departure date is missing. In FY05, the check-in/check-out system will be upgraded to notify users of expiring appointments and visas.

Visas for Foreign Nationals

Foreign national users must possess work-type visas. Users who obtain B2 and WT visas are not permitted to perform experiments and are required to return to the port of entry within 24 hours to get corrected documents. Visa lengths vary from 90 days to several years. As a convenience, users are issued two-year appointments, sometimes extending beyond their visa expiration date, but must provide a new visa each time the documents we have on file expire. Users with short-term visas should schedule beam time during the workweek to ensure they will be permitted to work on arrival. We urge all foreign national users to bring valid passports, visas, and supporting documents during each visit. Several users have had to return home to retrieve their documents before starting their experiment.

Instances of non-compliance resulted from users who were out of visa status and began their experiments without checking in at User Administration, after being informed by BNL officers that they needed to do so. To minimize



The User Administration Group (from left): Mary Anne Corwin, Liz Flynn, Melissa Abramowitz, and Gretchen Cisco.

Modifications to the PASS system were made to ensure that experimenters are listed on safety approval forms and are in compliance. And, the laboratory's training record database (BTMS) now generates automatic emails to users whose training has expired.

On-Site Housing for Foreign Nationals

Last year's change in housing policies made it impossible for foreign national users with pending appointments to make reservations. User Administration worked with BNL Housing to correct a misconception that such users had not yet received approval to visit BNL. We have seen significant improvements since that time.

Vehicle Identification

New security policies require all users to obtain vehicle stickers or placards. To eliminate an unnecessary trip to Security for our users, User Administration received permission to acquire the stickers and placards in the same manner that we obtain identification badges.

Benefits to Compliance

With limited resources, we're very grateful to our users who help us maintain compliance with DOE directives. By eliminating non-compliances, we can focus more on user-related quality-of-life issues. We encourage our users to contact User Administration at (631) 344-USER (or nslsuser@bnl.gov) with any additional recommendations to eliminate non-compliances or with any questions.

these problems, User Administration recommended modifications to the Guest Information System to inform foreign national guests of their expiration dates by email. Implementation is tasked for FY05.

In June, DOE issued a new Foreign Visits and Assignments order for which all laboratories must comply. Most requirements mimic those previously issued, but BNL is required to implement additional requirements in FY05.

Experimental Floor Access

We found instances of safety non-compliance where users accessed the experimental floor with expired or no training. To eliminate these problems, as well as non-compliances by foreign nationals, User Administration now provides "timed-access" to expire with the first expiration of training, ID badge, passport, or visa status dates.