

Block Allocation Groups (BAGs)

January 2023

Overview:

Block Allocation Groups (BAGs) are a mode of beam time access at NSLS-II intended for groups of researchers that want to combine their short beam time requests into a single proposal in order to permit greater flexibility in beam time allocation and scheduling. BAG proposals may be motivated by shared scientific interest, geographical location, affiliation, common experimental setup, or other synergistic reasons. Combining the beam time of individual groups permits greater flexibility in the choice of projects and samples during a given allocation period and offers the individuals in the BAGs the benefit of access to more regular allocation of beam time.

Currently, BAG proposals are accepted on 8-ID (ISS), 11-BM (CMS), 16-ID (LiX), 17-ID-1 (AMX), 17-ID-2 (FMX), 17-BM (XFP), 28-ID-1 (PDF), and 28-ID-2 (XPD). Only measurements based on existing, standard setups available at these beamlines will be considered for the BAG beam time.

BAG Organization:

Groups interested in forming a BAG should identify a Lead Principal Investigator that will be responsible for managing all aspects of the BAG proposal, beam time, and reporting. Specifically, s/he will be responsible for:

- all contact between the BAG and NSLS-II (e.g. User Office, beamline and safety staff)
- submission of the initial BAG proposal and all subsequent beam time requests
- coordination and scheduling of the BAG beam time amongst the members
- ensuring that members of the BAG are ready to perform experiments and have submitted all Safety Approval Forms
- delivering all required reports at the appropriate time

For practical reasons, provisions may be made for the appointment of an Alternative Contact for each BAG who will be included in all correspondence. However, the Lead Principal Investigator will always have final responsibility. BAG members are not permitted to apply for additional beam time on the beamlines included within the BAG proposal except when the scientific project and/or experimental setup requirements are outside of the scope of the BAG proposal. Proprietary research is not permitted under the BAG beam time.

Beam Time Proposals:

The term of a BAG proposal is 2 years (6 beam time cycles). Proposals must describe the synergistic nature of the BAG members and give a scientific justification for the proposed research over the lifetime of the proposal, including the broader scientific context. The proposal must also include details of the proposed experiments and a justification of the beam time

requested for the lifetime of the proposal. All BAG proposals must be discussed in advance with the beamline staff for each beamline requested. BAG proposals are submitted online via the NSLS-II Proposal, Allocation, Safety and Scheduling (PASS) system.

Review & Beam Time Allocation:

New BAG proposals are reviewed by the Proposal Review Panel (PRP) and given a score. If a BAG proposal scores better than the cutoff, this will result in an initial beam time allocation. Every cycle, the PI of the BAG proposal is required to submit a Beam Time Request (BTR) for every beamline where the BAG requests time. The BTR will be reviewed at the PRP meeting and an allocation for the next cycle will be considered.

Midterm Report:

The BAG is required to submit a midterm report after 1 year (i.e. 3 cycles of operation). It will include a 2-3 page summary that details the results obtained, any publications from the work, and any problems encountered. This report must include any additional projects, sample information, and new PIs who have joined the BAG. The BAG may also remove members at the time of this report. The report must also contain a shift request and justification for the next year (3 cycles) of beam time.

NSLS-II Management may add or remove groups, or change the shift allocation according to performance, which will be assessed through the midterm report. NSLS-II Management reserves the right to terminate a BAG prior to the end of its two-year term if recommended by the PRP.

Further instructions for online proposal submission and a BAG proposal template can be found in the [NSLS-II User Guide](#).

For more information on BAG proposals, please contact [Sean McSweeney](#) at (631) 344-4506 for the Structural Biology beamlines or [Lisa Miller](#) at (631) 344-2091 for the other participating beamlines.