Guidelines for LBT - ITA Proposers

Introduction

LBT-Italia has the responsibility to guarantee that the Italian time at LBT is used to address the best science for the Italian community. In past years, this task was fulfilled by selecting the reviewers among experts of different research fields. However, in recent years, it is emerging that the evaluation of a proposal may be affected, even unconsciously, by the PI identity or even by the composition of the team. For example, STScI has found that proposals with female PI systematically have a lower success rate than proposals led by men. This difference increases with the amount of requested time. Motivated by these recent results, LBT-Italia has conducted a survey on the outcome of the review process over the past 6 years. Our analysis showed that systematic effect do exist, although at a lower rate than HST, I with female PI being less likely to be among the 25% of the proposal with the highest grade.

The main interest of LBT-Italia is to put reviewers in a position to judge the science only and exclusively by removing any reviewer's attitude toward a submission that may be affected, even unconsciously, by the identity of the lead author or principal investigator.

For this reason, since this year, we have decided that the evaluation process will be anonymized following the guidelines drawn from the HST submission policy.

Guidelines

Provided here are guidelines to assist proposers in preparing their proposals, specifically their PDF Submissions, to help conceal the identities of the proposers, and ensure a fairer proposal evaluation process. The anonymous review does not mean proposals will be accepted from anonymous sources. As with previous calls, proposers must still enter the names and affiliations of all investigators into the PIT Interface.

The PIT will generate a PDF document whose version for the reviewers will be properly obscured. It will not contain names and affiliation of the authors (cover page) as well as the "Report about previous use of LBT time" Section (Last Page of the form).

While this process will largely obscure the proposing teams identities in cover materials, it will not change or alter information contained in the PDF submission. **Thus, it is necessary for proposers to take additional steps to further anonymize their PDF attachment before it is uploaded to the PIT**.

Below are some guidelines to accomplish this:

● Do not include author names or affiliations anywhere in the PDF attachment. This includes but is not limited to, page headers, footers, diagrams, figures, or watermarks. This does not include references to past work, which should be included whenever relevant (see below).

● Referencing is an essential part of demonstrating knowledge of the field and progress. When citing references within the proposal, use third person neutral wording. **This especially applies to self-referencing**. For example, replace phrases like "as we have shown in our previous work (Rossi et al. 2010)" with "as Rossi et al. (2010) showed..." Do not refer to previous campaigns using LBT or other observatories in an identifying fashion. For instance, rather than write "we observed another cluster, similar to the one we are proposing under LBT call YYYY," instead write "LBT program call YYYY has observed this target in the past...". **Explicitly describe previous usage of LBT in Section 8 of the form ONLY.**

- We encourage references to published work, including work citable by a DOI. It may be occasionally important to cite exclusive access datasets or non-public software that may reveal (or strongly imply) the investigators on the proposal. We suggest proposers use language like "obtained in private communication" or "from private consultation" when referring to such potentially revealing work.
- Do not include acknowledgements, or the source of any grant funding.

It takes some effort by authors to anonymize their PDF submissions. As the guidelines show, grammar and structure are expected to be different than in previous calls. **Take sufficient time to prepare the manuscript, especially if one plans to resubmit a proposal from a previous calls or other submissions**.

Proposers should make an effort to describe the past work in the field, and how this proposal will improve, build-upon, or complete that past work. Many successful proposals include a discussion of stated-sample goals or statistical completeness and how this proposed work fits into this broader context. Similarly, proposals may also discuss the uniqueness of the sample, and goals in comparison to similar work.