

SESS report 2020: Guidelines for applicants

Background

The Svalbard Integrated Arctic Earth Observing System (SIOS) produces the annual State of the Environmental Science in Svalbard (SESS) report. The SESS report is a summary of the knowledge about the current state and development of key parameters as well as analysis of how different parameters interact.

For more information about the SESS report and previous issues refer to the SIOS website (<https://www.sios-svalbard.org/SESSreport>). Contributions to the SESS report are regularly sought through calls for SESS contributions. These guidelines are intended to support applicants to these calls.

Organisation

The SIOS Knowledge Centre (SIOS-KC) administrates the preparation of the SESS report and carries out the necessary administrative tasks. These include:

- Establishing a task force for development of the current call for contributions to the SESS report. The task force acts also as selection panel.
- Promoting the call and disseminating relevant information and guidelines.
- Providing support and guidance for applicants during the application process and during the preparation of the SESS report chapters.
- Administering the proposal evaluation process.
- Communicating the decisions to the applicants.
- Establishing an editorial board for the current SESS report.
- Administering the external review process of the submitted contributions.

The call text and accompanying documentation are developed by SIOS-KC in cooperation with the task force for the current SESS report, and input from the Science Optimisation Advisory Group (SOAG) and the Board of Directors (BoD).

Procedure for proposal evaluation

SIOS-KC will carry out a pre-screening of proposals to ensure the eligibility criteria outlined in the call text are met. The scientific excellence of review and data summary proposals that meet the eligibility criteria will be evaluated with support of SOAG. Based on these evaluations and the evaluation criteria outlined in the call text and this document, the selection panel will rank the proposals (report cards will be ranked separately). The selection process will be fair, impartial and transparent. The final decision will be made by the BoD.

The general evaluation criteria for SESS contribution proposals are:

- **Scientific excellence:** Proposals must demonstrate that the proposed SESS contribution will be of a high scientific standard and that the topic(s) addressed are scientifically valid and important.
- **Relevance to SIOS:** SESS contributions must be consistent with the goals of SIOS to optimise the observing system and promote advancement in Arctic Earth system science. Proposals that can clearly demonstrate a benefit to the observing system in line with SIOS goals will be prioritised. Such benefits may include making new observational data available, analysis of existing data, integration of datasets, creating new data products that are made available to other researchers, better utilising existing research infrastructure, enhancing cooperation between research groups within the same field over entire Svalbard, and developing cross-disciplinary cooperation.
- **Innovation:** Proposals that promote or enhance innovative techniques and methodologies for reducing the environmental impact of research and monitoring are particularly sought after. Innovation with regards to making data useful and available to researchers also from other disciplines is also highly valued.

General information

- **Eligibility criteria**

The detailed eligibility criteria are stated in the call text. Applicants must make it clear in the application that these criteria are met; otherwise they risk the application being rejected.

The eligibility criteria will specify how many countries must be involved in a SESS contribution and how many of the authors must be from SIOS member institutions. Provided these criteria are met, there is no restriction on the number of non-members that may be co-authors.

- **Instructions for SESS contribution authors**

Applicants may refer to the documents and web forms on the SIOS web page (https://sios-svalbard.org/SESS_Issue3) for details on what is expected from SESS contributors.

- **GDPR**

In order to be compliant with the EU's data privacy law, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), SIOS would like to inform you how we use your personal information. You find our GDPR policy [here](#).

- **How to apply**

Applicants must complete the online application form (https://sios-svalbard.org/SESS_ApplicationForm_2020).

The mandatory attachments which must accompany the form are listed in the application form and in the call text.

Guidance for writing the project description

The project description must not exceed 2 pages of minimum size 10 font and should include information about:

- General scientific background;
- Specific aims of the contribution;
- Contribution to SIOS / ESS / observing system in line with SIOS priorities;
- Methods and expected outcome;
- Datasets that will be described, generated or made available;
- Collaboration across institutions / countries / scientific disciplines;
- Involvement of young scientists;
- If you are applying for funding for meetings or workshops as part of your proposal then the need for these must be explained in the project proposal. Details, including a list of participants, should be included in the application form.

Guidance for data management

Datasets used in the SESS report must be submitted to the SIOS Data Management System. Applicants must describe how the datasets presented in the SESS report are or will be available in databases and what the level of data processing is:

- What type of datasets will you make available through SDMS?
- Level of data processing (collected, processed, stored, published etc.);
- Are datasets available in an open repository (if yes where?)
- If the data are not in an open repository, do you plan to store data (where?) or only submit information about metadata to SMDS?

Guidance for writing the budget

The details of what applicants can apply for funding for and the maximum amount of funding per contribution is stated in the call text for each call. Applicants are asked to

provide a basic budget in the application form, and submit a detailed budget as an attachment. The budget must include:

- The expected number of hours of writing time per contributing author.
- The cost per hour for each contributing author – this should be set to no more than 0,16% of annual salary.
- Cost of meetings or workshops, if applicable (the need for these must be justified in the application).
- Other costs related to working with data, if applicable (the need for these must be justified in the application).

Person hours may be included as billable costs, or be provided as an in-kind contribution to SIOS. Please indicate the number of hours that will be in-kind in the budget. An example table is shown below.

EXAMPLE: Overview of person hours:

Contributing authors	Total hours	In-kind hours	Billable hours	Cost per hour (NOK)	Total cost (NOK)
Person 1	40	40		X	X*0
Person 2	20		20	Y	Y*20
Person 3	40	20	20	Z	Z*20
Total	100	60	40		C

The person hour costs can then be included in the full budget. An example is shown below.

EXAMPLE: Project budget:

Item	Budgeted cost (NOK)
Workshop costs (total)	A
Travel	a1
Meeting room	a2
Accommodation	a3
Other costs	a4
Data management costs	B
Person hour costs	C
TOTAL	A + B + C

All cost estimates must be given in NOK. If, at the finalisation of the chapter, there were costs exceeding the total sum allocated to the project, these will be counted as an in-kind contribution to SIOS if specified in the financial report.

Reimbursement of costs will be in the form of invoice from the institution of the lead author to SIOS. Instructions will be given upon acceptance of the proposal.

Conditions

Funding for SESS contributions is granted on the understanding that it is used for the purpose stated in the proposal. A financial report, containing a breakdown of projected (based on the budget submitted with your proposal) and actual costs has to be submitted together with the invoice for reimbursement of expenses.

Final payment from SIOS will only be released once all parts of the contribution to the SESS report have been received and approved.

By submitting a proposal to the SESS call, the applicant agrees to adhere to the SIOS Data Policy (<https://www.sios-svalbard.org/Documents#docSDMS>).

Details of obligatory workshops and meetings for SESS authors are given in the call text. By submitting an application, the applicant commits to ensuring the presence of the stated number of authors at such events.

SIOS encourages researchers to register their projects in the Research in Svalbard (RiS) portal. Data used in the SESS report are expected to be linked to one or more projects in RiS.

Users are required to share information with SIOS about external publications related to their SESS report contributions. The contribution made by SIOS and SIOS member institutions must be acknowledged in such publications. Reporting of publications may be done in RiS.