

## Guidelines for applicants to the SIOS Access Programme

The SIOS Access Programme plans, facilitates and supports access to the research infrastructure (RI) owned by SIOS members. Access will be in accordance with the SIOS Access Policy (<https://www.sios-svalbard.org/Documents>).

### Call management

The SIOS Knowledge Centre manages the programme and carries out the necessary administrative tasks, including:

- Preparing the call for access.
- Promoting the call and disseminating relevant information and guidelines.
- Providing support and guidance for applicants during the application process.
- Organising the evaluation of applications (scientific review and feasibility assessment).
- Communicating the decision of the selection panel.

The call text and accompanying documentation are developed with input from the Research Infrastructure Coordination Committee (RICC) and Board of Directors (BoD).

SIOS-KC will run webinars for applicants during the period the call is open. These will be open to all interested parties and will include a general introduction to the access call, an explanation of the application form, and an opportunity to ask specific questions. Details of the dates and times of webinars will be posted on the SIOS website ([https://sios-svalbard.org/AccessCall\\_2024](https://sios-svalbard.org/AccessCall_2024)).

### Application process

It is recommended that applicants contact and discuss their application with the nominated contact person at the facility they wish to access before applying. The contact details may be found on the SIOS website: [https://sios-svalbard.org/AccessCall2024\\_RIavailable](https://sios-svalbard.org/AccessCall2024_RIavailable)

Proposals must be submitted electronically through the application form at [https://sios-svalbard.org/AccessCall2024\\_application](https://sios-svalbard.org/AccessCall2024_application), and must include a project description (not exceeding 5 pages), a completed budget template (available on the call webpage) and CV of the principal investigator (up to 2 pages) attached.

### Access types

The SIOS access programme includes two access types:

**Physical access** involves the users being hosted at facilities or the project renting the facility, including observatories, laboratories, stations, platforms, research vessels, instruments, as well as associated logistical support. Applicants wishing to apply for the UiB ocean glider must note that in this call SIOS facilitates access to the glider, but not ship time, and so this would be best suited to applicants with additional funding sources and access to a ship. Upon coordination with the facility operator and the

operation schedule of the facility, a user may request physical access to extend ongoing operations funded by other projects.

**Remote access** is the non-physical access of a user to a facility, including access to sensors, calibration facilities, machine time, sample collection, field work support, distribution of reference samples etc. In this call, SIOS is offering remote access to The Norwegian University of Science and Technology's Small Satellite Lab, and support from SIOS field stations (sampling, deployment or recovery of equipment etc.).

Applications may be for one access type, or for a combination of both access types (e.g., physical access for project set up followed by remote access for continued sampling).

### Guidance for writing a project proposal

The project proposal must not exceed 5 pages of minimum size 12 font and should include:

- General scientific background.
- Specific aims of the project.
- Methods.
- Relevance to mission and vision of SIOS
- Datasets that will be generated.
- The access requirements of the project (location, timing, data etc.). Please be as specific as possible.
- A logistical plan for the project (dates, travel plans, equipment, support from facility staff etc.). Please be as specific as possible.
- Collaboration across institutions / countries / scientific disciplines.
- Training of young scientists / public outreach (if applicable).
- A paragraph describing the relevant expertise of the project members.

### Budgeting

This section explains how to complete the sections in the budget template for the access call (download it from [https://sios-svalbard.org/AccessCall\\_2024](https://sios-svalbard.org/AccessCall_2024)). Make sure to read the 'READ ME' sheet of the budget template. Applications that ask for funding in '4. Travel' or '5. Additional costs' will not be accepted unless they have also filled in either '2. Physical Access' and/or '3. Remote Access'. The budget template contains the following sections:

1. Project information. Mandatory for all applications.
2. Physical Access. This sheet automatically calculates the cost of physical access, including meals and accommodation. Please note the following exceptions:
  - For the **ocean glider, NTNU Uncrewed Aerial Vehicle Lab, NTNU Applied Underwater Robotics Lab and Longyearbyen: Norwegian Polar Institute**, there is no automatic calculation in '2. Physical Access' and

applicants **need only fill out columns A-D**. All costs associated with these facilities must be accounted for manually by the applicant in '5. Additional costs'.

3. **Remote Access**. To be filled in if you are applying for any remote access. The purpose of this sheet is to gather the proposed dates of remote access. Any costs associated with remote access must be added in '5. Additional costs'.
4. **Travel**. This sheet is to be filled out for applicants needing to travel to their proposed facility (for physical access). SIOS will reimburse the cost of travel from the applicant's home institution and back, and accommodation enroute. The details of the planned travel and the estimated cost must be provided in this section. Applicants **must** choose the cheapest reasonable travel option.
5. **Additional costs**. These are costs not included in access to facilities, such as consumables, cargo shipping, specific logistics. Costs related to remote access, the NTNU UAV Lab, use of the ocean glider and Longyearbyen: Norwegian Polar Institute should be listed here.

**Non-eligible costs:** The following costs are not eligible and are NOT REIMBURSED by SIOS. Therefore, do NOT include these in the budget: Overhead, insurance costs and (applicants) personnel costs of any kind. Vaccination and health care costs. Daily allowances (per diems), km allowances, telephone and internet costs, purchase of equipment or chemicals, customs costs, bar bills and other extra services at place of accommodation.

Questions regarding eligible costs may be addressed to the SIOS Observing Network Infrastructure Officer ([eleanor.jones@sios-svalbard.org](mailto:eleanor.jones@sios-svalbard.org)).

### Procedure for assessing applicants

SIOS-KC will carry out a pre-screening of applications to ensure the eligibility criteria outlined in the call text are met. Applications that meet the criteria will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria outlined in the call text. A selection panel consisting of representatives from the SIOS working groups (<https://sios-svalbard.org/WorkingGroups>) will evaluate the submitted applications.

The selection process will be fair, impartial and transparent, and the focus of the selection panel is on scientific excellence and relevance to SIOS.

The detailed eligibility and evaluation criteria are described in the call text. In the interest of transparency, the guidance for reviewers is available on the call web page.

The feasibility of proposed access projects will be assessed by the access provider. Key considerations of the feasibility assessment are:

- **Availability:** Is the RI available at the time requested?
- **Scale:** Can the facility accommodate a project of the scope and size proposed?
- **Staff:** Does the proposed project make unrealistic demands on staff time at the facility?

- **Safety and permission:** Is there sufficient safety training included, and is the project likely to be granted the necessary permits?

Access providers may, if relevant, suggest amendments to the project plan that would increase the feasibility.

## Conditions

In principle, SIOS members cannot withdraw access to their facility once an access project has been accepted. There may however be exceptional circumstances under which access must be withdrawn. SIOS does not accept liability for any losses incurred under such circumstances. The employers of the applicants are responsible for insurance covering the fieldwork.

Access is granted on the understanding that it is used for the purpose stated in the application.

Applicants are responsible for obtaining the necessary permissions to conduct their proposed work.

All users of the SIOS Access Programme are responsible for participating in safety training appropriate to the planned project.

All users of the SIOS Access Programme must register their project on the Research in Svalbard (RiS) database.

Users are responsible for organising their own travel and cargo freight but may seek guidance from the SIOS Observing Network Infrastructure Officer if required. SIOS does not accept liability for any losses incurred due to transport delays or similar circumstances. Users must have adequate insurance to cover such losses.

All projects must submit a final report to SIOS at the end of the project. The final report must contain:

- A financial report, containing a breakdown of expected (based on the budget submitted with your application) and actual costs. A template will be provided.
- A project summary, with a brief description of how successful the project was in carrying out the activity and achieving the aims stated in the application. If there were any delays or difficulties, these should be described. If samples collected during the project are still being processed (or similar), then there is no need to provide data from these in the summary.

In addition, we encourage projects to 'Tell a story from the field' (the more fun the better): 1-2 attractive photos that we can share on social media, plus text.

Final payment from SIOS to the project will only be released once the final report has been received and approved.

Users of the access programme commit to making their data available to SIOS, in accordance with the SIOS data policy. Both discovery metadata and the actual data generated using SIOS infrastructure must be submitted to a data centre integrated with the SIOS Data Management System. When non-SIOS data are used, discovery metadata must be provided to the SIOS Data Management System. Guidance on data sharing and a metadata collection form may be found on the SIOS website: <https://sios-svalbard.org/sites/sios-svalbard.org/files/common/sdms-guidelines4providers.pdf> and <https://sios-svalbard.org/metadata-collection-form>.

Users are required to share information with SIOS about external publications resulting from the access. The contribution made by SIOS and by the facilities accessed must be acknowledged in any such publications.

**Important!** By applying to the SIOS Access Programme, the applicant confirms that they have received authorisation from their employer for their planned activity and that they will comply with the conditions outlined in this document.