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User Support & Documentation

Allocations and Accounts

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An allocation is a grant of computing time or data space on TeraGrid resources that is given to a researcher who serves as the principle investigator (PI) of an approved project. An account is the specific method through which an individual (or community, in the case of Science Gateways) logs in to a resource to utilize the time or space that has been granted in the PI's allocation.

New Allocations

If you are new to the TeraGrid or to high performance computing and data storage, we recommend your starting with the [TeraGrid Getting Started Guide](#) for a streamlined summary designed for users with smaller, start-up needs for computation time and storage. Although the information is covered below, the Getting Started Guide focuses on information specifically for developmental and educational allocations.

To use TeraGrid resources, you must submit a request for an allocation of computing time or data storage space. To make such a request, you need to have an understanding of the type of codes you will be running or the amount and type of data storage you will need, the amount of time you'll need to complete the simulations you plan to conduct, and any special data needs that accompany a computing time request. Allocation requests are subject to a review process, which varies according to the size of your request.

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**TERAGRID GETTING
STARTED GUIDE**

Researchers may request either start-up allocations (referred to as [DAC allocations](#) because they are reviewed by the Development Allocations Committee) or larger, peer-reviewed allocations. Applications may be submitted through the [Partnerships Online Proposal System \(POPS\)](#), and approval is handled by committees that meet regularly throughout the year. Medium allocations are handled by the Medium Resource Allocations Committee (MRAC), which meets quarterly, and larger requests are reviewed by the Large Resource Allocations Committee (LRAC), which meets semi-annually. The process for requesting start-up allocations is shorter than for the larger requests. For definitions of the ranges of the requests and a timetable for submitting requests, see [Award Types and Deadlines](#) below.

Eligibility Requirements

To qualify for an award, the principal investigator (PI) must be a researcher or educator at a U.S. academic or non-profit research institution. A qualified advisor may apply for an allocation for his or her class, but a high school, undergraduate or graduate student may not be a PI. A postdoctoral researcher can also be a PI. (After receiving an award, PIs can request that students be granted accounts to use the PI's allocation.)

In general, TeraGrids follow the guidelines outlined in the current [NSF Grant Proposal Guide](#). However, investigators with support from any funding source, not just NSF, are encouraged to apply. If your institution is not a university or a 2- or 4-year college, special rules may apply. Contact help@teragrid.org for details.

Computational Resources

TeraGrid resource providers (RPs) offer a variety of high performance computing (HPC) systems for allocation. The computing platforms include clusters, scalable-parallel systems, and shared-memory systems with various CPU, memory, communication, and storage configurations. It is important that the platform you choose is a good match for your computational plans. For more information about available machines, including TeraGrid capabilities, please visit the [TeraGrid Resources Catalog](#); view recommended use guidelines for individual resources or search for a resource that meets your criteria.

- [Requesting a DAC Step-by-Step for 1st-time user](#)
- [Tips on Writing a Good Proposal](#)
- [Proposal Examples, LRAC](#)
- [Proposal Examples, MRAC](#)
- [How to Write a Winning Gateway Proposal](#)
- [NSF Allocations Policies](#)
- [Monitoring Your Account](#)
- [POPS User Guide](#)

**APPLY NOW
FOR AN ALLOCATION**

Need Help?

- Phone Toll-free
1.866.907.2383
- [Submit a Ticket \(online form -- *fastest!*\)](#)
- [Submit a Ticket via email](#)
- [TeraGrid Knowledge Base](#)

NEW! As an experiment, with encouragement from NSF, TeraGrid would like to make up to 10% of the computer resources allocable at each MRAC and LRAC meeting available for use by NIH-funded academic researchers. Starting with submissions to the September 2007 meetings, PIs will notice updates in the Partnerships Online Proposal System (POPS) to help us collect information about their supporting grants for this experiment.

Time on compute resources is allocated in "service units," or SUs. One SU is currently defined as one CPU-hour (wallclock time) on a given platform. One SU of TeraGrid Roaming Access is defined as one CPU-hour on the TeraGrid Cluster. Computing power on machines may differ. To compare SUs on different platforms, see the [SU Conversion Calculator](#).

Storage Resources

All TeraGrid computing allocations include access to disk and archival storage to accomplish the project's goals. In addition, several RPs currently offer storage platforms to serve other data and storage needs, such as data management, hosting data collections, and large-scale persistent storage. These allocations are independent of computation allocations

Space on storage resources is allocated in terabytes (TB). These resources are now allocated via POPS and the LRAC/MRAC process; SDSC's DataCentral site has information on [how to write a strong request for storage allocations](#).

- Allocated storage resources: see [Data Resources page](#) of the TeraGrid Resource Catalog.
- Storage that accompanies an allocation for computation resources: see the specifications in the [TeraGrid Resource Catalog](#) for each resource.

In addition, TeraGrid partners are making a number of data collections available to the community. Researchers interested in making use of those specialized resources should visit the [Data Collections page](#). Using an existing collection does not require an allocation.

Advanced Support Program

Interested researchers can now request support from TeraGrid's ASTA program and similar programs at various TeraGrid sites as part of the LRAC/MRAC process. In POPS, submitters will find the "Advanced Support Program" listed among the available resources. The Advanced Support Program offers collaborations between technology experts at selected TeraGrid Resource Provider institutions and users of TeraGrid computational and data resources to identify and pursue opportunities to improve researchers' codes. Gateway support may also be requested through this program.

Special proposal requirements apply for these requests. Please see the [Advanced Support Program page](#) for details on what to include in this type of proposal.



Award Types and Deadlines

The timeline for requesting and obtaining access to TeraGrid resources differs depending upon the size of the allocation. DAC allocations are reviewed continually throughout the year and are the fastest way of getting started on the TeraGrid. MRAC and LRAC allocations are reviewed at specific meetings (quarterly and semi-annually, respectively ¹). The table below summarizes the three levels of committee: Development Allocations Committee (DAC) for startup allocations, Medium Resource Allocations Committee (MRAC), and Large Resource Allocations Committee (LRAC). All allocations are made for one year, although multi-year awards are possible to experienced PIs to streamline the annual reporting requirements.

Please see the TeraGrid Resource Allocation Policies for guidelines on selecting the committee you should submit your request to and for a description of the review process and criteria. A successful request to the MRAC or LRAC requires a detailed proposal explaining how the resources will be used.

In most cases, investigators should only have one MRAC or LRAC award active at any time. The rare exception would be a researcher or research team conducting separate projects in different fields of science. If submitting more than one proposal, the PI must indicate in each one why they cannot be combined. If the need for separate proposals is not sufficiently explained, the review board may consolidate the proposals and make a single award.



Allocation Cycle

Meeting	Service Units (SUs) of Computation Time Requested (Computation Allocation)	Terabytes (TB) of Data Space Requested (Data Allocation)	Open submissions	Close submissions	Allocations begin	Review Cycle
Development Allocations	1 – 30,000	1 – 5 disk and/or	Any time	n/a	Usually 2-3 weeks	Year round

Committee (DAC)		1 – 25	tape				after submitted	
Medium Resource Allocations Committee (MRAC)	30,001 – 500,000	6 – 25 and/or 26 – 100	disk and/or tape	Dec. 15, 2007	Jan. 15, 2008	Apr. 1, 2008		Quarterly
				Mar. 15, 2008	Apr. 15, 2008	Jul. 1, 2008		
				Jun. 15, 2008	Jul. 15, 2008	Oct. 1, 2008		
				Sept. 15, 2008	Oct. 15, 2008	Jan. 1, 2009		
Large Resource Allocations Committee (LRAC)	> 500,000	>25 and/or >100	disk and/or tape	Dec. 15, 2007	Jan. 15, 2008	Apr. 1, 2008		Semi-annually
				Jun. 15, 2008	Jul. 15, 2008	Oct. 1, 2008		

¹ The MRAC and LRAC Meetings schedule is available for reviewers on the [POPS Review page](#).



Writing Your Proposal

Medium and large projects require a full proposal; requests for smaller, development allocations require only an abstract. A well-written proposal will contain all the information that the review panel will require to assess your project's qualifications. Details for writing a proposal to use any NSF-supported resource are available in the [TeraGrid Resource Allocation Policies](#). Reviewers particularly have noted the following characteristics of a well-written MRAC or LRAC proposal:

- The proposals summarized the research in the context of the current state-of-the-art, outlined the computational algorithms to be used, and related these algorithms to the research subsections.
- The reviewers were provided sufficient information but not overwhelmed by details.
- Justification for the request was clear and closely coupled to the computational experiments/needs, so that if the committee needed to reduce the original request, it could be done rationally with minimum disruption to the investigator.
- Results from previous allocation awards, including manuscripts published, accepted, submitted, or in preparation, were

summarized and related to the request in the current proposal.

Tips for writing strong proposals for gateway, computation, and data allocations, as well as examples of well-written, successful proposals, are available at the links below. Many of the tips in each article are applicable to all types of requests. See the next section for information on submitting your request.

- [Requesting a Development Allocation: Step-by-Step for the First-Time User](#)
- [Writing a Successful MRAC or LRAC Proposal](#)
- [Samples of Well-Written MRAC Proposals](#)
- [Samples of Well-Written LRAC Proposals](#)
- [How to Write a Strong Proposal \(Data\)](#)
- [How to Write a Winning Gateway Proposal](#)

Submitting Your Proposal

Proposals for computing allocations must be submitted electronically via the [Partnership Online Proposal System \(POPS\)](#). This includes allocation requests for all TeraGrid systems. POPS accepts PDF, HTML, Microsoft Word, and PostScript file formats, though PDF format is preferred. If you have never submitted a proposal via POPS before, please follow the steps in the [POPS User's Guide](#) as you go through the process. If you are familiar with the process, you may go directly to [POPS](#).



Account Information Packet and User Responsibility Form

After a proposal has been reviewed and accepted, the PI of the project will receive a packet via conventional mail that contains his or her account information. The packet should arrive ***by the beginning of the next quarter after the allocation has been awarded.*** The packet will contain login information for each authorized site, a TeraGrid-wide login that can be used in the TeraGrid User Portal, and the **User Responsibility Form**. Each account holder must sign and return the last page of this form by mail or fax within 30 days or the account will be deactivated. (View [sample form in HTML format](#) or [sample form as PDF](#)).

Users may start using their accounts to access TeraGrid resources and to log in to the User Portal immediately upon receiving their packets. Contact the [TeraGrid Help Desk](#) if your account information is taking longer than the expected time to arrive after proposal acceptance.

Adding Users to Allocations

Once the PI has received the Account Information packet, he or she may authorize additional users by completing the Add User Form, available after logging in to the TeraGrid User Portal using the TeraGrid-wide login.

- [Go to TeraGrid User Portal](#)
- Click on the "My TeraGrid" tab
- Select "Add/Remove User."

After your application has been reviewed and accepted, your users will receive their respective Account Information packets via conventional mail in about two weeks. Each user must sign and mail or fax in his or her own User Responsibility Form.



The TeraGrid project is funded by the [National Science Foundation](#) and includes 11 partners: [Indiana](#), [LONI](#), [NCAR](#), [NCSA](#), [NICS](#), [ORNL](#), [PSC](#), [Purdue](#), [SDSC](#), [TACC](#) and [UC/ANL](#).

Please email help@teragrid.org with questions or comments.

This site is [XHTML 1.0 Transitional](#), [CSS](#) compliant.

