

CAP - NSERC LIAISON COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Canadian Association of Physicists (CAP) and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) established a Liaison Committee in 1995, which has contributed to many years of fruitful interactions between the Canadian physics research community and NSERC.

The CAP-NSERC Liaison Committee operates at arm's length from both the CAP and NSERC. It provides a forum for ongoing dialogue between the Canadian physics research community and NSERC on matters of broad interest to the community and NSERC.

Role of Committee: The role of the Liaison Committee includes, but is not limited to:

- Identification, discussion and analysis of opportunities that the Canadian physics research community could seize or build on, and challenges it may face, in its quest to be at the forefront of research at the international level.
- Communication, discussion and analysis of issues brought forward by the Canadian physics research community and their suggestions concerning NSERC's programs. The procedures for bringing issues forward for discussion are described at Appendix 1.
- Discussion of topics on which NSERC is consulting the community and preparation of responses on these topics
- Discussion of matters that may help to inform the Group Chair for his/her participation in the Committee on Grants and Scholarships (COGS).

Unless otherwise indicated, information that is produced for, and discussed within, the Liaison Committee can be shared with the Canadian physics research community and NSERC. The CAP – NSERC Liaison Committee Procedures for identification of and response to issues are included as Appendix 1.

Membership: The membership of the Liaison Committee must reflect the diversity of the Canadian physics research community that is represented by the CAP's Divisions, and be based on the Research Topics of NSERC's Physics Evaluation Group (EG 1505). The Liaison Committee will thus include one member for each of the following overarching research areas:

- Atomic and Molecular Physics, Optics and Lasers, and Plasmas
- Biomedical and Biological Physics
- Near-Earth and Space Physics
- Quantum and Soft Condensed Matter
- Subatomic Physics
- Theoretical/Mathematical Physics

The CAP will select three members, each representing one of the research areas listed above, in accordance with the CAP's policies and procedures. NSERC, through consultation with the Chair of the Liaison Committee, will appoint three members, each representing one of the research areas listed above. NSERC appointments will normally be members of the CAP. In any given year, the committee will have three CAP-selected members and three NSERC-appointed members. The members' terms are three years, non-renewable.

All of the members will be actively involved in the work of the Liaison Committee. It is expected that the members will act as a conduit for the greater research community and bring matters of common/broad interest to the Committee's attention.

In addition to the above members, the Liaison Committee includes:

- The Chair of the Committee, to be appointed through joint consultations between the CAP Executive and NSERC. The Chair's term is three years, non-renewable.
- NSERC's Research Grants' Team Leader and Director overseeing the Physics portfolio.

The Liaison Committee also includes ex officio members who will be observers and resources for the other members. Ex officio members cannot contribute to the Committee's recommendations and decisions, but they can provide information that is relevant to the Committee's activities. These ex officio members are:

- NSERC's Physics Group Chair (a Section Chair of the Physics Evaluation Group could attend as a substitute).
- The Executive Director of the CAP.
- The Director of Academic Affairs of the CAP, who is a representative of the CAP Board of Directors

On an invitation basis, other NSERC staff and members of the CAP Board of Directors may participate as ex officio members in the Committee's meetings.

Communications: Official communications from the CAP Board of Directors to NSERC or from NSERC to the CAP Board of Directors on issues of importance to the Canadian physics community may be sent to the Liaison Committee for information purposes. The Committee may decide to review and discuss any of these issues and provide its perspective and advice.

The Liaison Committee will maintain a webpage on the CAP's website. The webpage will contain, but is not limited to, the Terms of Reference, the Liaison Committee membership, public summaries of its face-to-face meetings, outreach material, and reports/studies. Liaison Committee recommendations and decisions will be communicated to NSERC, the CAP, and the broader Canadian physics research community.

Meetings: All meetings of the Liaison Committee will be limited to the participation of the Committee members (closed sessions). When agreed upon in advance, other NSERC representatives, CAP representatives, or guests may be invited to participate in all or part of the meeting to provide expertise or input on topics under discussion at the meeting.

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The Liaison Committee will meet face-to-face once a year during the annual Congress of the CAP. At least one meeting, through teleconference, will be held a few months prior to the Congress to prepare the agenda of the Committee's face-to-face meeting. Other meetings, through teleconference, will be held throughout the year, when necessary, to facilitate the activities of the Liaison Committee. Email correspondence will supplement the meetings. Voting on issues by regular members of the Committee will be conducted during the meetings or, if necessary, by email following the meetings.

Following the face-to-face meeting of the Committee, a summary will be prepared and, when approved by both CAP and NSERC, made available to the Canadian physics research community at large, either via a CAP News Bulletin or the Liaison Committee page on the CAP website. Official minutes of Committee meetings will be used as confidential, internal documents, available only to Committee members.

CAP – NSERC Liaison Committee

Procedures for identification of and response to issues

The Committee will look at matters of broad interest to the Canadian physics research community and NSERC, as defined in the Terms of Reference.

1. Routine questions regarding NSERC and CAP programs and policies should be directed to NSERC and the CAP, respectively.
2. Issues may be received from any member of the Canadian physics research community.
3. The issue must be submitted in writing (e.g. email), with supporting documentation, to the Chair of the Liaison Committee.
4. The Chair will then circulate the issue to the LC members.
5. LC members will discuss the issue (by conference call or in person, depending on proximity to meeting dates) to decide if it is within the LC's mandate and it is of sufficiently common/broad interest to warrant further action by the LC.
6. If a majority of LC members agrees that the issue falls within the mandate of the LC and warrants further investigation, it will undertake this study and report the results to the community member(s) who brought forward the issue, the CAP and NSERC.
7. If a majority of LC members agrees that the issue does not fall within the LC's mandate or does not warrant further investigation, a message to this effect would be sent to the community member(s) who brought forward the issue, as well as the CAP and NSERC. Community members may then decide to pursue the issue directly with NSERC, the CAP or other relevant organizations.
8. If the study of the issue is sufficiently complex as to require financial support, the LC will prepare a funding proposal for consideration by NSERC and the CAP.
9. If NSERC and the CAP agree that the study should proceed, they will discuss and agree upon their respective contributions to the cost of the study, allocation of effort and the preparation of the report.
10. Recommendations and decisions of the LC will be communicated to NSERC, the CAP, and the broader Canadian physics research community.