HOW DO I GET ACCESS TO BEAM TIME
A CHEAT SHEET

MUST HAVE AN IMS ACCOUNT

- create account if doesn't exist (and follow email instructions to activate)
- Log into system and write/submit proposal (can start by making a copy of an old proposal with the "copy" button.
- FOREIGN NATIONALS should register for first time AS SOON AS POSSIBLE - do NOT wait for experiment dates: use TBA) 35 day rule!!!
- When beam time dates are fixed register for visit on those dates (even foreign nationals who registered as above!) REGISTER AT LEAST 3 BUSINESS DAYS AHEAD OF ARRIVAL!!!!!

Types of access:

- Proprietary = must pay full cost recovery – talk to facility (Dan Neuman **dan.neumann@nist.gov** or Paul Butler **butler@nist.gov)**
- Collaborative access (NIST programmatic needs)
- Peer reviewed proposal = Primary method of access described below

Proposals process:

1) write a good proposal
2) Contact NCNR staff for help/advice as needed – DON'T BE SHY
3) Submit on time☺
4) Proposal is reviewed by
    a. 3 to 5 external reviewers for scientific merit
    b. Internally for safety
    c. Internally for feasibility and time requirements
    d. By BTAC committee members
5) Decision made by BTAC committee deliberation based on all input including committee discussions ➔ One "unfair" review does not, of itself, "kill" a proposal, nor does an excellent one guarantee time.

Elements of a good proposal

1) General rules:
    It is the proposer's responsibility to help reviewers easily understand the importance of the proposed work in one reading. Keep it short (hint: if pushing the page limit it is probably too hard to understand) and keep it well organized so thoughts flow clearly etc.
2) 1-3 paragraph Motivation
    Provide a general motivation for the problem and its importance. Keep this brief but provide the seminal outstanding issues. Note: referees will probably not read all the references to understand your proposal and are probably not an expert in your exact sub-field.
    a. 1-2 paragraphs on the general problem and why it is important.
    b. 1-2 paragraphs on the particular aspect of the problem being investigated by the team and how it relates to the larger issue.

3) 1-2 paragraph describing the experiment:
    a. **Question:** What are the specific questions from the problem being investigated that *this* neutron scattering experiment will answer? What are the specific aims of your study? What is the governing hypothesis? How are you going to test the hypothesis? Why are neutrons the most appropriate tool to study this problem?
    b. **The Experimental plan:** Describe the samples and testing conditions that will aim to test the hypothesis. Can the samples be made (and does the team have the expertise for it). Also, provide any preliminary studies using complementary methods or preliminary neutron data if available, that demonstrate that the tests suggested are not simply a fishing expedition. Provide convincing information that the samples are well-defined and behave in a manner that will allow you to interpret your data.
    c. **The Credibility Test (or "how will the Plan answer the Question"):** Is this experiment likely to be able to answer the specific questions being posed: How will you quantify the data and/or test the hypothesis? Provide equations and even model calculations when possible/appropriate to ensure feasibility. Graphs of modeling results and/or preliminary results can be worth the proverbial 1000 words. If awarded previous beam time you should explain why more is needed.
4) 1 paragraph Budget Justification

    Any good proposal should have a budget justification section: Justify the number of samples, number of conditions (concentrations, temperatures, pressures, magnetic fields, shear fields etc) and the time required per condition per sample. Be as clear as possible to justify the request of time.

FINALLY:

1) If in doubt/have questions …. Ask.
2) In the end nothing convinces more than some data – If questions are likely to remain after all due diligence has been done, contact NCNR staff about the possibility of getting a bit of time to run one or two samples as feasibility tests.