

BANFF INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH STATION

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

THE BANFF INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH STATION
FOR MATHEMATICAL INNOVATION AND DISCOVERY
WELCOMES PROPOSALS ¹
FOR ITS 2003 OPERATING YEAR
(MARCH - DECEMBER 2003).

A JOINT CANADA-US INITIATIVE COORDINATED BY
The Pacific Institute for the Mathematical Sciences (PIMS)
The Mathematical Sciences Research Institute (MSRI)

PENDING THE SUPPORT OF THE
Natural Science and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC)
US National Science Foundation (NSF)
Alberta Science Research Authority (ASRA)

¹All BIRS activities are subject to expected financing

About The Banff International Research Station (BIRS)

- BIRS is a collaborative Canada-US venture that provides the infrastructure for hosting workshops and meetings for creative interaction and the exchange of ideas, knowledge, and methods within the MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES and their related areas.
- BIRS is a self-contained facility located on the site of the Banff Centre in Banff, Alberta. It offers (single-room) accommodation, meals, lecture and discussion rooms, high-speed internet connection, and leisure space for 40 to 50 people in a magnificent mountain setting.²
- The objective of BIRS is to support **research and innovation, dissemination, and educational activities** in all areas of science, and technology involved with the mathematical and statistical sciences, including, though not necessarily restricted to, algebra, number theory, geometry and topology, analysis, foundations, classical and modern applied mathematics, industrial mathematics, theoretical and applied statistics, the mathematics of risk, the mathematics of information and computer science, mathematical physics, biomathematics and environmental mathematics, and mathematics of the geological and atmospheric sciences.
- Accommodation and travel: The use of facilities is provided *gratis* for all Programs run through BIRS. The meal costs are included in most but not all BIRS activities. Currently, travel expenses to and from the Banff Centre are the responsibility of the participants/organizers. An effort is being made to find funds for the partial support of travel.
- Banff is served by the Calgary International Airport. Regular shuttle service runs between the Airport and Banff, a trip of about 1.5 hours.

Guidelines for Proposals

- Proposals are reviewed on a competitive basis by the BIRS Scientific Advisory Board on the criteria of excellence, relevance, and timeliness.
- Each program should have a minimum of two Organizers, preferably including at least one from a Canadian and one from a US institution.
- Proposals should be restricted in length to 5 pages and should contain:
 - (i) A short overview of the subject area.
 - (ii) A statement of the objectives of the workshop/program and an indication of its relevance, importance, and timeliness.
 - (iii) A list of possible participants and their institutions.³
 - (iv) Indications of preferences for dates, and also impossible dates.
- Though it is not required, BIRS would appreciate a one page **Letter of Intent**, from prospective applicants, preferably before June 15, 2001, including the title and list of organizers, and one paragraph description of the topic and mode of the workshop.

²Library connectivity and service with the University of Calgary is also available.

³Participation in the programs run at BIRS is by invitation only. The process of invitation is through BIRS at the advice of the organizers.

5-Day Workshops:

- The 5-Day Workshops, are the basic program format of BIRS. They run Sunday through Thursday (arrival Saturday pm, departure Thursday pm).
- Accommodation, the use of the facilities of BIRS (lecture halls, internet facilities, etc.) and most meals will be provided at no cost to the participants of the workshops.
- Number of participants: up to 40.
- A few Half-sized Workshops with up to 20 people will be considered.
- The organizers are required to submit, at the completion of their program, a 10-15 page article (possibly written by one of the participants) surveying the status of the subject in the context of the events of the Workshop. These will be bound into annual volumes documenting the activities of BIRS. In addition a number of the main talks will be video-taped for dissemination through video-streaming, and for archival purposes.

2-day Meetings:

- 2-day meetings are normally run Friday and Saturday (arrival Thursday pm, departure Saturday pm).
- Number of participants – flexible, up to 40.
- Accommodation, the use of the facilities of BIRS (lecture halls, internet facilities, etc.) will be provided at no cost to the participants of the workshops. Unless indicated otherwise, meals are the responsibility of the organizers and participants.⁴

Research in Teams:

- This program offers teams of 2 to 4 researchers the opportunity to live and work at the BIRS facility for periods of 2 to 4 weeks, in order to concentrate on their research or to finish major projects.
- Teams should consist of individuals from different institutions.
- Accommodation (single room), meals and a dedicated discussion room with a computer work-station are provided⁵.
- Proposals should detail the area of collaboration, list the team members and their institutions, and justify the case for using BIRS.

Focused Research Groups (“Aspen Mode”):

This is the opportunity for larger groups of researchers to collaborate over an extended period of time around a coherent group of problems or ideas.

- A typical configuration might be groups of 10 to 15 mathematicians each working at BIRS for a period of 2 to 4 weeks. Up to 8 of them are guaranteed to be in residence at BIRS while others – especially those with accompanying families – could use the extensive accommodation facilities in the Banff area. The membership of the team is also permitted to roll-over to allow more flexible arrangements.
- Accommodation (single room), meals, and 2 dedicated discussion rooms with computer work-stations are provided.

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⁴The Banff Centre has a dining facility that operates a buffet style service (breakfast, lunch, and dinner). This is available on a pay-as-you-go basis. The main townsite of Banff (10 minutes walk) has many restaurants.

⁵Participants with families should arrange accommodation and meals elsewhere in the Banff Centre or in near-by guest houses, at their own expense.

- Typically, up to 4 focused research collaborative groups may share the BIRS facilities at a given time or one group would share the facility with the participants of a basic workshop.
- Proposals should detail the area of collaboration, list the team members and their institutions, and justify the case for using the BIRS.

Summer Schools and Training Camps

Schools are pedagogical by definition, but may be aimed at any level from elementary or high school students or teachers, through undergraduate and graduate levels, or preparation for Institute thematic programs, etc.

- BIRS welcomes proposals for schools of 1 week to 12 days in duration.
- Maximum number of participants 40.
- Season: normally, but not necessarily, summer.
- Schools are typically organized by institutes and professional societies and a financial contribution to BIRS may be requested from the sponsoring organizations.

Important Information

- DEADLINES

- All proposals for 5-day Workshops and Summer Schools must be received by October 1, 2001.
- Proposals for Research in Teams and for the 2-Day Workshops are also requested to be submitted by October 1. However, BIRS is prepared to consider requests for such events on the fly, assuming availability of space.

- SPECIAL NEEDS

- BIRS and the Banff Centre are both wheel-chair accessible institutions.
- BIRS is not set up for family or guest situations. Individuals who have special requests should enquire with the Program Coordinator. The Banff Centre has extensive accommodation facilities beyond those offered by BIRS. These may be used for families/couples, etc, and also for extending visits to the Banff area for personal reasons. Please check the Banff Centre web-site.

- ADDRESSES

All proposals should be sent to one of the following addresses:

BIRS Program Coordinator
PIMS
1933 West Mall Annex
Vancouver, BC, V6T 1Z2
Canada

BIRS Program Coordinator
MSRI
1000 Centennial Drive
Berkeley, CA, 94720-5070
United States

- WEB-SITES

- <http://www.msri.org>
- <http://www.pims.math.ca>
- <http://www.banffcentre.ca>