



The Internationalisation of Research Facilities

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Summary

During the past twenty five years arrangements have been made for sharing the use of major national research facilities amongst the world community of neutron users.

The administrative requirements are simple. Scientists are invited to apply for measurement time. The scientific merit of the application is assessed by a committee appointed by the host organisation. If the application is considered to have sufficient merit time is allocated. The only costs to the user are transport and living expenses.

These arrangements have advantages for users and for hosts. The user can apply for time on the most suitable instrument. The host in the user country is freed from the responsibility of supplying all instruments. It can specialise in those instruments in which it has particular expertise.

The host retains, through its committee, complete control over the use of instruments. The amount of time allocated to international users is dependent on the national demand. The result is efficient use of national facilities.

An equally important result is the interaction between members of the international scientific community.

Australian scientists routinely use overseas facilities however Australia has refused to join the international group. There is international resentment to this attitude. We have, for example, powder diffraction facilities which others wish to use. We have no small-angle scattering facilities and must do our experiments at international centres.

I will argue that we should join the international community now. The capacity of the replacement reactor will be far greater than the internal Australian requirements. We will become the natural host for users from countries in the Asian region.

To enable us to make a smooth transition to this stage we should immediately advertise an international program for HIFAR.
