

Computation and Data Committee Report to the CASCA Board, Dec. 2021

Current Committee Membership:

Catherine Lovekin (Mount Allison) (chair)	Term ends: 30 June 2024
Natasha Ivanova	Term ends: 30 June 2024
J.J. Kavelaars (HIA/NRC/CADC)	Term ends: 30 June 2024
Adrian Liu (McGill)	Term ends: 30 June 2022

Two of our members finished their terms at the end of June, and only one new member has been recruited to replace them. The majority of the current membership has a term ending in 2024, and if new members are recruited for a 3 year term, their terms will end at the same time. In order to provide continuity and smooth future transitions, we should work towards a more staggered rotation.

Compute Canada/Digital Research Alliance

The Digital Research Alliance of Canada (formerly NDRIO) has completed its consultation process and is working on the new service delivery model. As such, the working groups focusing on the Needs Assessment have finished their activities. The Alliance is currently on track to take over operations from Compute Canada in April as scheduled.

Dr. Erik Rosolowsky has ended his term on the Researcher council as of August 2021. There was a nomination process for new members in August, but the new members have not yet been officially announced.

Tri-Council Data Management Policy

NSERC and the other granting agencies have now announced a new data management policy. The policy is mainly focused at an institutional level, but it may be useful for the committee to look at the impact on astronomy. It may be helpful for CASCA to provide templates members can use in explaining their data management to institutional research offices.

COVID-19

As with the rest of activities outside and inside astronomy the Computation and Data Committee has experienced a work slow-down due to COVID issues. In particular, and highly justifiably, the focus of Compute Canada compute centres and SSC support shifted rapidly to supporting the development of research programs for COVID. This pivot, coupled with social distancing and work-place isolation, has put a number of projects on hold or slowed them considerably. The immediate impact has been a slowing of development of new capabilities for CANFAR and significant slowdown in the development of new archive capacity within the CADC.

The telescopes and projects that CANFAR/CADC serve have also seen a substantial drop in their data rates and extensions of project deadlines. As such, the delays which are being seen in deploying new computing and storage have largely been compensated for in delays seen at the data provider ends. The Computation and Data Committee expects that in the end normalcy will return and there will not be any long term negative impacts due to COVID shutdowns.