ELLIS program submission

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What is an Ellis program?

https://ellis.eu/programs

In addition to ELLIS sites, a European network of top researchers working at locations throughout Europe is being established, organized into ELLIS Programs. These Programs, directed by outstanding European researchers and including leading researchers as Program Fellows, focus on high-impact problem areas that have the potential to move the needle in modern AI.

The ELLIS Programs are inspired by the CIFAR Program model, and closely collaborate with the CIFAR LMB (Learning in Machines and Brains) Program. Each Program has a budget for 2-3 workshops/year to enable meetings of 10-15 Fellows plus guests for intensive scientific exchange. Workshops can be co-located with academic meetings (usually) held in Europe, or organised as stand-alone events, usually at (and with the support of) ELLIS unit sites.

Program directors can invite guests to individual workshops. This ensures that fresh outside ideas are represented, and also that a wider community benefits from the workshops. Fellow Programs are started by a peer review process. There are two deadlines per year to submit a proposal: March 1st and September 1st. Instructions on how to submit a proposal can be found here.

While the first batch of Programs was reviewed by CIFAR LMB, subsequent applications are being reviewed by existing ELLIS fellows. For submissions and questions please email daniela.diaconu@ellis.eu.
CIFAR program: the model for ELLIS programs

https://cifar.ca/research-programs/learning-in-machines-brains/
What is needed


The ELLIS society (https://ellis.eu) is soliciting proposals for ELLIS Research Programs. We welcome programs run by academic and industry researchers alike. In the case of industry researchers, we hope for assistance in approaching their employer for a financial contribution. The program is modelled after the CIFAR research programs and is being launched in close coordination and with the institutional support of CIFAR, including the LMB program (https://www.cifar.ca/research/programs/learning-in-machines-brains) which, along with its predecessor NCAP, played a major role for the field of deep learning. The existing fellowship programs can be found here: https://ellis.eu/programs.

Criteria for program proposals

Successful proposals will

- be written by 2-3 program directors and include a set of around 10-15 outstanding scientists nominated to become ELLIS Fellows and Scholars of their program,
- study a cutting-edge research area in learning AI, i.e., fields driven by machine learning,
- organize two annual workshops, e.g., at ELLIS units, alongside www.dalmeETING.org, or co-located with a major international conference or summer schools held in Europe in that year (e.g., NeurIPS, ICML, ICCV, ECCV, UAI, COLT, AISTATS, MLSS), either as an official conference workshop or as a separate fringe event close in space-time, and
- be provided with funding to run the above workshops, including travel expenses for Fellows and invited guests.

Program Directors should be outstanding senior scientists. Fellows will be at least assistant professors (or equivalent) and need to pass a high academic bar. (In the past, we have found that Fellows usually have an h-index of at least 25. Scholars are promising junior scientists, a.k.a. ‘rising stars’). It is possible (but not required) to include a (more junior) Associate Program Director.

Program Directors, Fellows and Scholars are expected to both (1) drive the development of their program by contributing to the workshops, and (2) to act as ambassadors for ELLIS as well as help guide its strategic development. The program directors’ main responsibility is to run the workshops and ensure high quality. ELLIS, in particular ELLIS units linked to the program, will help with administration.

The ELLIS Fellows Committee will evaluate proposals (which includes individually vetting all proposed Fellows and Scholars). Acceptance of a proposal will not automatically guarantee that all nominated scientists will pass the bar, but we expect proposals to propose a credible list of strong Fellows. Feedback is expected to be given within the next 3 months after the deadline.

ELLIS now includes a number of ELLIS units that will spend money on ELLIS network activities such as Programs. In addition, the ELISE proposal has passed the review bar. Both are possible sources of funding.
Guidelines

Guidelines for proposals

- Proposals should consist of a two-page description of the research area/question.
- In addition, we expect that each proposal outlines funding sources for all travel costs for all fellows and scholars in the program for at least two workshops a year, and a list of proposed Directors, Fellows & Scholars (with home page links, CVs and Google Scholar links) as well as (optionally) names of more junior scientists to be invited as guests to some workshops.
- Note that Directors, Fellows and Scholars can only appear on one funded ELLIS program, since the workshops will sometimes be held in parallel.
- Please ensure diversity in terms of geography and gender, and indicate in your proposal which of the listed Fellows and Scholars have agreed to be part of your proposal.
- Please also indicate when and where/how you would want to run your first workshop.

For submissions and questions please email daniea.diaconu@ellis.eu.
In practice

Starting an ELLIS program is a way for MODE to support its workshops, gain visibility in the CS community, and potentially open the way to more funding.

Downsides? I don’t see any, but maybe you do?

Some of us might be already members of other programs, in that case they could not join this one → Gilles, Atilim?

If we want to do this, we need to
• Identify 2-3 directors meeting the criteria
• Identify O(10) program fellows –these could just be MODE members who agree to be named in the proposal, no strings attached...
• Draft a 2-page proposal where we
  • outline our research program
  • discuss workshops we want to organize
→ We have most of this already as we submitted similar proposals to other bodies (i.e. JENAA)

I can do the drafting but I would need the support of two volunteers