NATIONAL SEA SIMULATOR FUNDED ACCESS PROGRAM APPLICATION PORTAL USER GUIDE

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Contents

1 NATIONAL SEA SIMULATOR FUNDED ACCESS APPLICATION PORTAL

To apply for funded meritorious research opportunities in the National Sea Simulator located at the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) and supported by the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy, visit the AIMS website using the following instructions for the National Sea Simulator funded access application portal.

The portal is open to all researchers from universities, research organisations, and industry. Research applications received will undergo a comprehensive review process covering technical feasibility, risk, impact and scientific competitiveness. Before commencing the application, it is advisable to consult with the SeaSim team to leverage their expertise in facility capabilities and optimise your proposal. Email us at seasim@aims.gov.au and we'll schedule a mutually agreed time. Merit-based access proposals should sufficiently address all submission requirements to facilitate a thorough review.

Following the consultation and application development, submit your proposal through the portal. The applications will undergo two review periods: SeaSim staff will review each proposal for technical feasibility before the proposals are submitted to an external, independent advisory committee for review. The external panel will review and rank the applications, this information will be forwarded to the AIMS Chief Executive Officer who will have the final say on project approvals. Successful applicants will meet with the SeaSim team to confirm operational requirements before a contract signing stage. Please adhere to application deadlines and seek assistance from the SeaSim team for any inquiries or guidance throughout the process.

2 APPLICATION PORTAL USER ACCOUNTS

2.1 Registering for the first time

To gain access to the SeaSim funded access application portal and submit a proposal, you must register using a pre-existing Microsoft/ Office 365 account. Select the "Microsoft" option and enter your work/university login details.

Please note that the application portal is optimised for use in Microsoft Edge and Google Chrome browsers.

1. Go to SeaSim Application Portal | AIMS Select the Application Portal tile under the text to launch the portal.
2. Select the **Sign in** button in the top right-hand menu of the portal page.
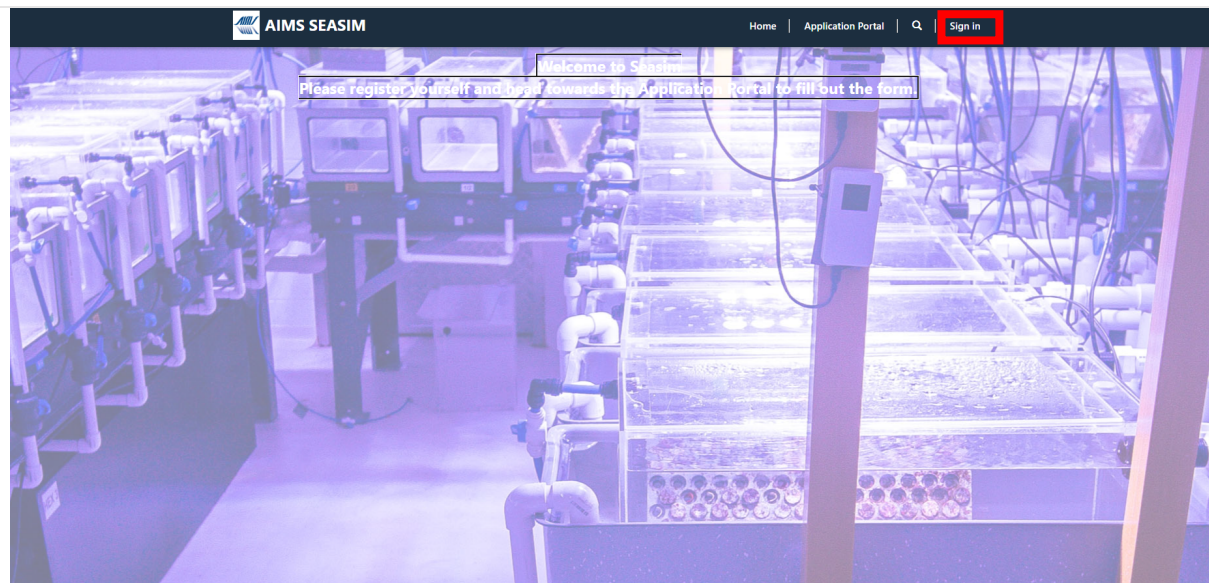
3. Select *Register* on the left.
4. If you are **external** to AIMS, please use the Microsoft authentication access on the left-hand side. If you have an **AIMS Login**, use the Azure AD option on the right-hand side.
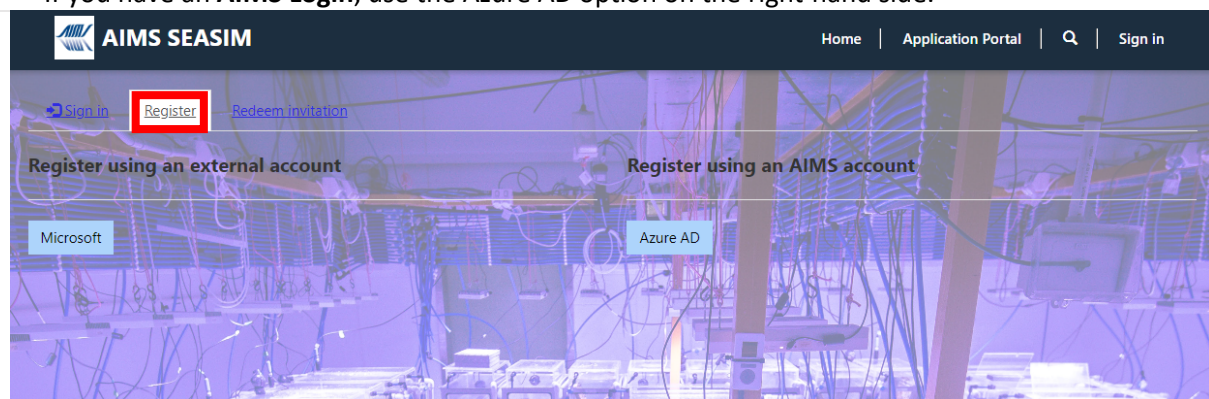
5. The page will refresh to a profile page. Please check the details on the profile page are correct, the information will be drawn from the authentication website. Click save/update at the bottom once complete.

2.2 Signing into the application portal after registering

1. Select the *Sign in* button in the top right-hand menu of the portal page.
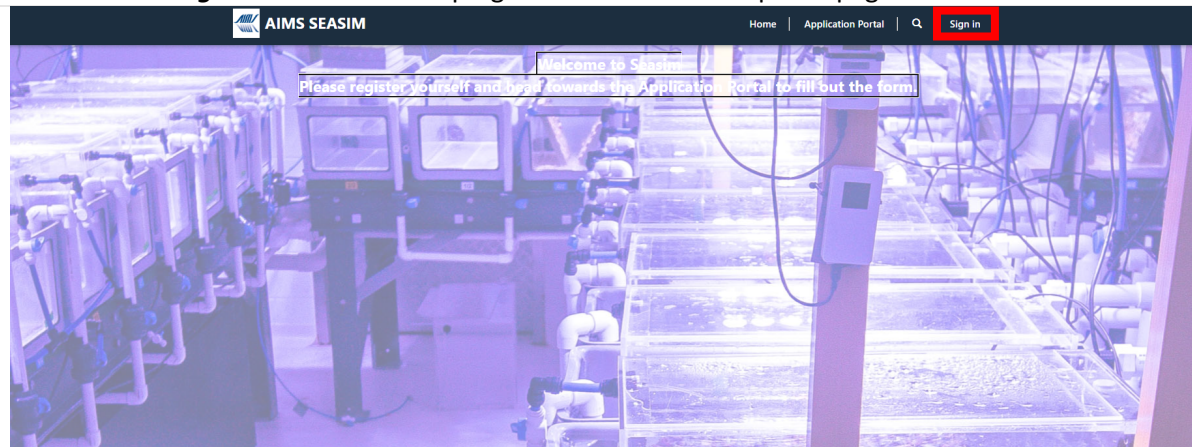
2. External applicants will need to select **Microsoft,** internal (AIMS) applicants will need to select **Azure AD**.
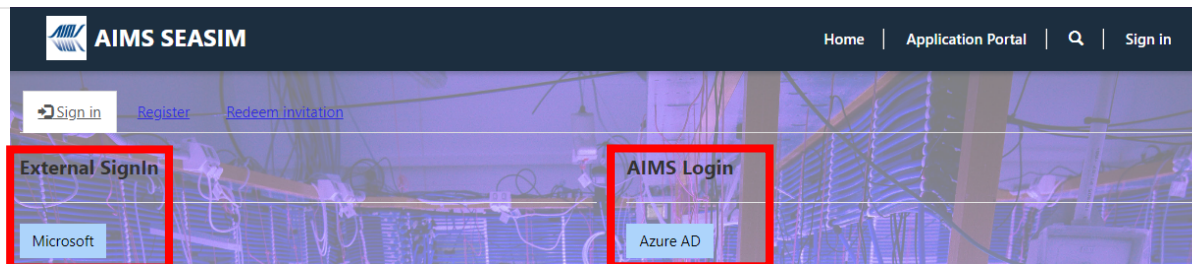
2.3 Creating an application

1. To start a new application, select *Application Portal* from the top right menu (you must be signed in), then select the **New Application** button.
2. To progress an existing application, select the application from the list by clicking on the title or by using the drop down menu on the right hand side to edit the application.
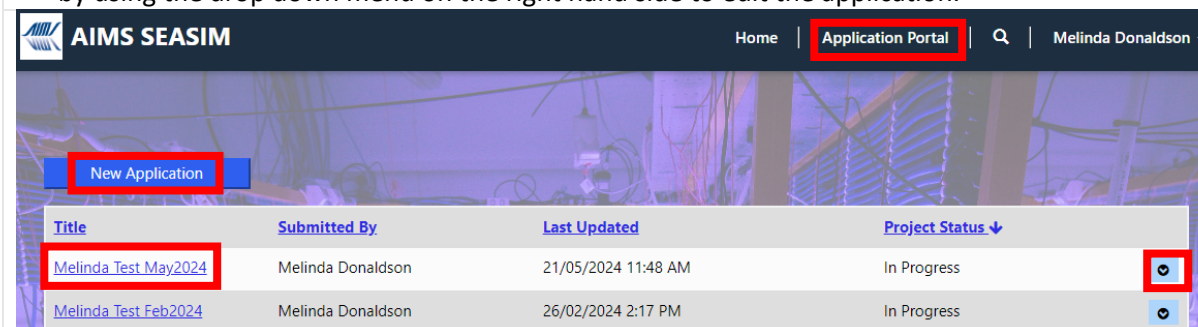
For instructions on how to complete an application, navigate to Application Details.

3   APPLICATION DASHBOARD

After signing into the application portal, users can access the application dashboard by selecting *Application Portal* in the top right of the page. From this page you can create a new application or select any existing application you may have already created.

Applications that have been created by others where you have been nominated as a coinvestigator will also appear in this list. Please take note of the title and the submitted by name as projects from other chief investigators will have their name under the submitted by column.

3.1   Project Application status

- *In progress*: with the researcher to complete and submit
- *AIMS Review*: SeaSim staff to review application to ensure all necessary data is included and project is feasible.
- *Awaiting Assessment*: application is with the committee for review and scoring and will be read only.
- *Awaiting response*: committee has responded with requests for additional information, application will be read only.
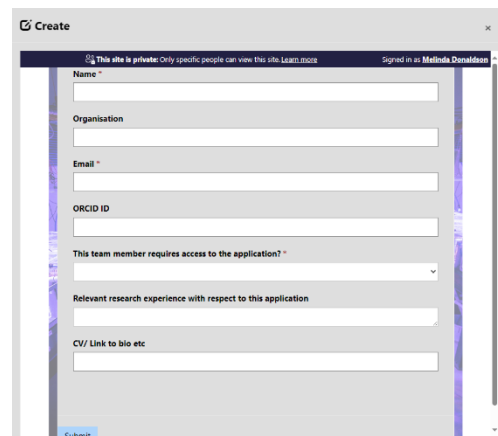- *Awaiting Approval*: committee scores are with AIMS CEO for review and approval
- *Approved*: application has been awarded access by AIMS CEO
- *Conditional Approval*: project specifics, such as the amount of time the researcher has allocated to work on their experiment, are being confirmed by SeaSim staff.
- *Not approved*: application has not been accepted.

3.2   Giving another user access to your application

When assigning project team members for your application you may give members of your team access to this application by indicating this with their details. The team member will be emailed access to this portal for contribution to the project application. They will not be able to submit the application. Please note, all project team members must provide a CV/ Bio and explanation of their relevant research experience.

If an AIMS Collaborator is included in your project, their name and email address will need to be entered into this section as well as answering Yes to give them access to the application.

4   FORMAT AND REQUIREMENTS OF AN APPLICATION

Applications to access the SeaSim will be assessed by an external independent advisory committee. The questions in the application portal are formatted such that each of the tabs correlate with the

criteria that the Committee will use to apply their scores. A weighting out of 100 has been assigned to each of the criteria. Submitted proposals will be evaluated against these criteria:

- Scientific quality and feasibility of meeting research outcomes (weighting = 30%)
- Capability and experience of the Project Team (weighting = 20%)
- Alignment with, and relevance to, International and core Australian tropical marine research priorities (weighting = 20%)
- Outcomes and research impacts (weighting = 20%)
- Likelihood of achieving stated outcomes/risk (weighting = 10%)

The format of the application portal pages is as follows:

Project Details Project Team Strategic Alignment Outcomes and Impacts Risks Project Requirements Acknowledgement & Submission	**Project Details** *Scientific quality and feasibility – 30%* - Abstract - Public Summary - Background and Rationale - Experimental Design and Key Methods
	Project Team *Capability and experience of the Chief Investigators – 20%* - Chief investigator CV/ Bio, experience, funding and publications - Project Team members.
	Strategic Alignment *Alignment with, and relevance to, International and core Australian tropical marine research priorities – 20%* - Alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals - Alignment with Australia's National Science and Research Priorities - Alignment with AIMS Research Themes - National benefit
	Outcomes and Impacts *Outcomes and research impacts – 20%* - Scientific outcomes - Data Management Plan - Communication Plan
	Risks *Likelihood of achieving stated outcomes and research impacts – 10%* - A risk assessment for the project detailing any potential risks and mitigation steps.
	Project Requirements *No weighting* - Preferred start date and number of experimental days - Resources requiring collection

	Acknowledgement & Submission
	No weighting
	- Acknowledgement of T&C's and submission of application

Applicants should complete each tab with enough detail to enable the committee to assess the scientific merit of their experiment. For a full overview of the program please review the National Sea Simulator Governance Framework and the National Facility Access Program Guidelines (provide links to each).

5   APPLICATION DETAILS

After signing into the National Facility application portal follow the steps under Creating an application to start an application or progress working on an application.

Applicants must accept the privacy notice to continue with their application.

! **Please note** to save information that has been entered in the application, you must complete the fields on the page you are working on and select *Save* or *Save & Close.* If you lose connection or are logged out you may lose the information you have completed, so please save regularly.

5.1   Project Details

To be granted access to the National Sea Simulator, research proposals must be of the highest scientific quality and be feasible. For more information on what should be included here please refer to the AIMS SeaSim Access Guidelines and Collaboration Framework.

1. **Project Title*:** Provide a short descriptive title without acronyms (200-character limit).
2. **Chief Investigator (CI) and affiliation* and supplementary questions*:** The Chief Investigator is the main project proponent and will be the project contact and its leader. The CI will be responsible for the final submission of the proposal. Please complete fields using the full name of your organisation and country, please do not use abbreviations and/or acronyms.
3. **Abstract*:** In plain language, summarise the aims and significance of expected outcomes (200 words or less).
4. **Public Summary*:** Provide a summary, using simplified, plain English, that is suitable for the media, publicity material or the internet. It should indicate the purpose of the work, expected outcome and significance to Australia/Internationally. It should be written in a way that the general public, with no background in marine science, could understand. If the application is successful, the Public Summary may be used on the AIMS/SEASIM webpage to give the public an understanding of the research being conducted (100 words or less).
5. **Background and Rationale*:** Provide project background, including details regarding the ongoing developments on a national and international scale within the respective field. Highlight the critical knowledge gaps and how they may be addressed by this project. Elaborate on how this project will contribute to and expand upon existing published works. Clearly outline the significance, anticipated outcomes, and potential benefits of this research endeavour (1,000 words or less).

6. **Experimental Design and Key Methods*:** Outline the methods you intend to use, considering the following: (1,000 words or less).
    - Describe the experimental/sampling design
    - What are the experimental variables (including replication)
    - List measurement methods
    - What, if any, are your experimental organisms
    - Please reference where appropriate and provide full reference details in the literature cited question below.
7. **Keywords*:** Select all preset keywords in the drop-down menu that might apply to your application.
8. **Literature cited*:** Provide the details of up to 10 key references to support this proposal.
9. **Relevant Documentation**: Upload any relevant documentation to support the project, this may include a detailed description or experimental design (the page needs to be saved before this option is available).

! Applicant must click **Next** or **Save & Close** for the data they have entered to be saved into the system. Once this occurs, the application will be accessible via the Application Portal list as an *In Progress* application.

! Applications cannot be saved at this stage until all fields on the Project Details tab with a red asterisk ('*') have been completed. See Error correction for more information.

! With the exception of the Chief Investigator details this part of the application will be given a mark out of 10 by each committee member (10 being exceptional). This tab has a weighting of 30% toward the final score.

5.2 Project Team

It is essential that the project team demonstrates significant capability and experience, for more information on expectations for this section please refer to the SeaSim Access Guidelines and Collaboration Framework.

1. **Attach CV:** Please upload Curriculum Vitae (CV) detailing relevant experience and education of Chief Investigator (if not employed at AIMS). Ensure it is focused on the research proposed to be undertaken in the SeaSim.
2. **CI Bio Link/s:** Please provide website link/s to the Chief Investigator organisation/ university/ google scholar (or similar) bio/s.
3. **Relevant Research Experience:** If not included as part of your CV or Bio please describe your relevant research experience with respect to this application (500 words).
4. **Research Funding:** If not included as part of your CV or Bio please list recent relevant research funding. Include the granting body, year, period and title of the grant.
5. **Recent Publications:** If not included as part of your CV or Bio please list recent publications relevant to the application (past 5 years).
6. **Project Team Members:** Please provide the details for your project team by selecting the **Create** button and completing the fields, include all research partners, including students, who may be part of this study. You may give members of your team access to this application

by indicating this with their details. The team member will be emailed access to this portal for contribution to the project application, they will not be able to submit the application. Please note, all project team members must provide a CV/ Bio and explanation of their relevant research experience. List all team members who will be part of the project including those that may not be directly involved in the running of the experiment. For example, all people who may be listed on any potential publications. Any AIMS Collaborators should be included in the project team and be provided access to the application.

! The fields in this part of the application are not all mandatory. You may choose to upload a CV with the information included or provide a Bio link and complete the other sections or do a combination of all to provide the information. All non-AIMS project team members will need to provide their relevant research experience and CV/Link to Bio.

! Note this section, including the CI and Team Members, will be scored out of 10 by the Committee (10 being exceptional) and this score will be weighted at 20% toward your total score.

5.3   Strategic Alignment

This part of the application assesses how your project aligns with national and international research priorities. A detailed explanation of the priorities can be found in the [AIMS SeaSim Access Guidelines and Collaboration Framework](#).

1. **Alignment to United Nations Sustainable Development Goals**

   The [UN SDGs](#) are a set of 17 goals adopted by the United Nations Member States to provide overarching goals for tackling worldwide issues. AIMS, through its research, contributes to the SDGs for 1. no poverty, 2. zero hunger, 3. gender equality, decent work and economic growth, 13. climate action and 14. life below water. Each of the goals have a number of targets aligned with them. If you feel your project aligns with any of the other goals not listed, we encourage you to include this information in your justification.

   A. Select which **goal(s)** your project aligns with by using the drop-down menu and selecting the goals. Goals that have been selected will have a tick to the left in the drop-down list and will show up in the box as selected.
   B. Once a goal(s) has been selected an additional field will pop up with a list of targets that relate to that goal. Please select any **target(s)** that relate to your project.
   C. **Justification** – Describe in 250 words or less how this proposal aligns with the chosen goal(s) and target(s).

2. **Australia's Science and Research Priorities**

   Please refer to [Australia's Science and Research Priorities](#) prior to completing this section. Please select the most relevant area(s).

   A. Select which **priority/priorities** your project aligns with by using the drop-down menu and selecting the priority. Priorities that have been selected will have a tick to the left in the drop-down list and will show up in the box as selected.
   B. **Alignment** – Describe in 250 words or less how this proposal aligns with the chosen research area.

3. **AIMS Research Themes**

   Please refer to the AIMS Research Themes prior to completing this section. Please select the most relevant area(s) and provide a justification.

   A. Select which **theme(s)** your project aligns with by using the drop-down menu and selecting the theme(s). Theme(s) that have been selected will have a tick to the left in the drop-down list and will show up in the box as selected.
   B. **Alignment** – Describe in 250 words or less how this proposal aligns with the chosen research theme.

4. **How will the nation benefit from the research?**

   Describe (in 300 words or less) how this project adds value to Australia's national interest by influencing marine science, encompassing potential benefits such as environmental, commercial, social, and cultural advantages for the Australian community.

! All fields in this part of the application are mandatory.

! Note this section will be scored out of 10 by the committee members (10 being exceptional) and this score will be weighted at 20% toward your total score.

5.4   Outcomes and Impacts

1. **Scientific Outcomes*:**
   The AIMS National Sea Simulator strives to support research that contributes to, and is significant, in advancing Australian and international marine science. We report regularly throughout the year to AIMS and NCRIS on a number of metrics which are outlined in the AIMS SeaSim Governance Framework.

   Describe the likely scientific outcomes of the project, including the likely contribution and significance to advancing Australian and international marine science.

2. **Data Management Plan*:**
   The National Sea Simulator is dedicated to optimising the advantages derived from sponsored research through the promotion of fair and equitable access to research data. Describe (in 300 words or less) your approach to data management to guarantee alignment with the data management principles outlined in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018. It is essential to consider and specify details such as the types of data and materials to be collected or acquired, their formats, secure storage methods, backup procedures, and controlled access to your data or materials by other parties.

3. **Communication Plan*:**
   How will you disseminate the results of your project beyond published research papers? Describe if you plan to use social media, websites or another digital/printed communication piece (in 300 words or less).

! All fields in this part of the application are mandatory.

! Note this section will be scored out of 10 by the committee members (10 being exceptional) and this score will be weighted at 20% toward your total score.

5.5   Risks

The Committee and the AIMS Sea Simulator team will be assessing risks associated with each application and its likelihood of completion. Please consider the reasonably remote location of the facility, along with the impacts of adverse weather conditions which can occur in Northern Queensland, Australia. Also consider the potential risks in working with live animals, which can be difficult to source, might not tolerate being removed from their natural habitat and/or might require difficult negotiations to gain appropriate collection approvals. These are examples, you are expected to think broadly about the risks associated with your proposed experiment and complete the risks tab with as much detail as possible.

Using the create button, add any potential risks for your project (before, during and after). Please include any mitigation steps on how you might minimise consequences as part of the description.

! All risk fields in this part of the application are mandatory.

! Note this section will be scored out of 10 by the committee members (10 being exceptional) and this score will be weighted at 10% toward your total score.

5.6   Project Requirements

Please note this section only refers to the project requirements that the committee require to evaluate your proposal. The finer details will be discussed and determined if your application is successful. There are no scores/weightings applied to this section of the application.

1. **Number of days required for your experiment* and preferred start date***
   Only provide dates for actual experimental days. Additional days will be required for acclimation of organisms prior to experimentation if field collected; SeaSim staff can assist in this determination. Additional days will be required for system set-up and demobilisation, and this will be determined once the project has been approved. At times, space within the SeaSim may be fully utilised. To assist in scheduling your work, please provide alternative start dates that you are available to undertake the project or note dates when you are unavailable in the "Reasons" section.

2. **Resources Requiring Collection***
   AIMS maintains a basic level of coral holdings in the form of nubbins or explants. Any whole specimens of animals will need to be collected. Please use the create button to complete a list of organism(s) (coral, sponge, seagrass, fish etc.), species; quantity (whole colony, fragment, size etc.); number, region of collection (southern, central, northern, far north Great Barrier Reef or other) that you will need for your experiment.

   * SeaSim may be able assist with organism collection. This must be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.
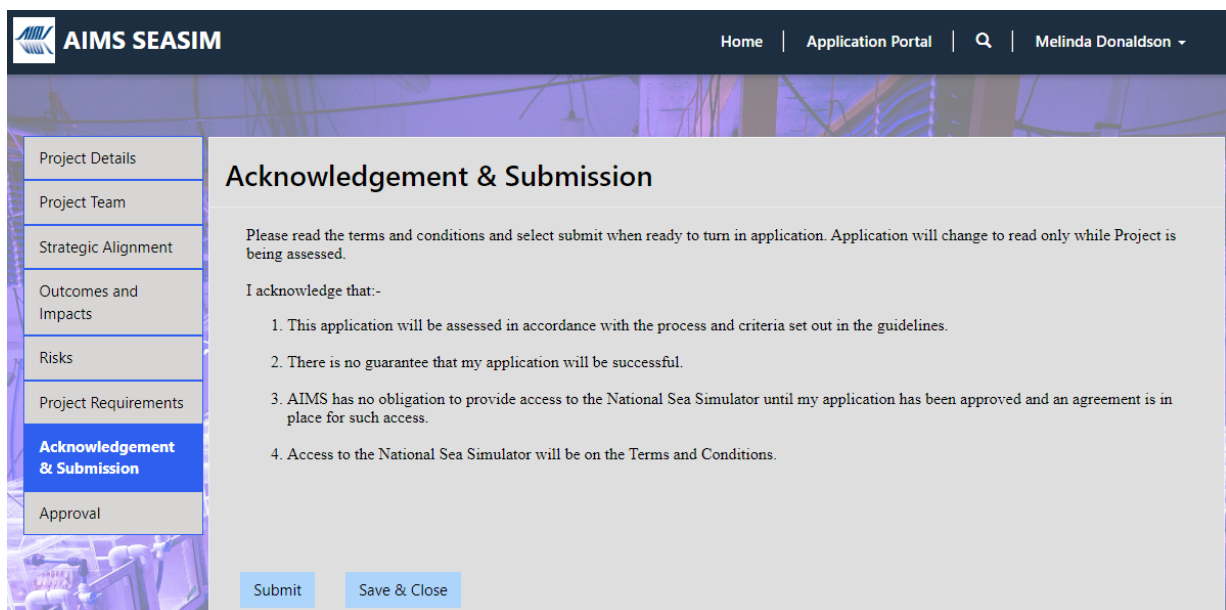
** Some organisms may require animal ethics approval (e.g., fish). It is the proponent's responsibility to obtain said approvals from the appropriate authorities using their Institution's Animal Ethics Committee. For international researchers where animal ethics approval is required SeaSim may assist in this process.

! All fields in this section of the application are mandatory. If you are unsure of exact dates and amounts, please estimate as close as possible.
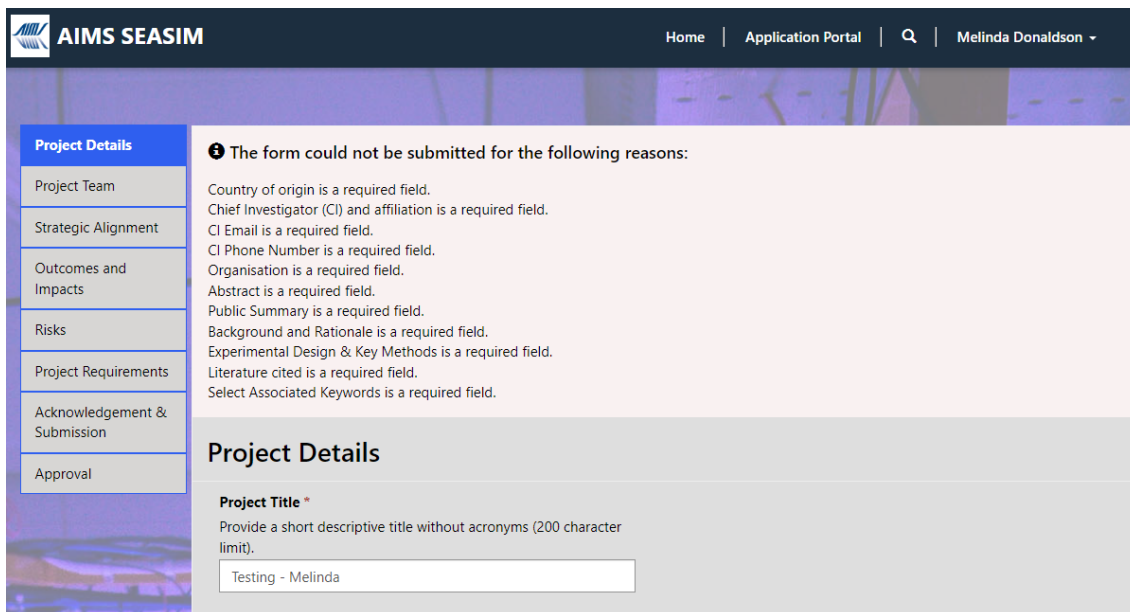
5.7 Acknowledgement and Submission

Applicants must read the terms and conditions <link to be included once available> and acknowledge them before submitting the application. Once submitted the project status on the dashboard will change to **AIMS Review**. This will require an AIMS Administrator to approve the application to progress it to the Committee for review.

If changes or additional information are required, the AIMS Administrator will contact you using the email provided in the Chief Investigator information on the first tab.

5.8 Error correction

If there are missing compulsory fields (indicated throughout by a red asterisk ('*'), error messages will be highlighted at the top of the page. Fix any omissions if you see any error messages, as you will not be able to submit the proposal until it is done.

6   CONTACTS

Please contact seasim@aims.gov.au if you have any questions or experience any issues with the application portal.

7   USEFUL LINKS

Governance Doc

Access Doc

Link to portal page on AIMS website

Capability Docs

Terms and Conditions and Contract

8   REVISION OF USER GUIDE RECORD

Rev	Description	Date
0	Original issue	TBC