

THE BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH CORE FACILITIES GUIDELINES AND OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Presented by the

Research Core Facilities Committee

The purpose of a core facility (or “Shared Resource facility”) is to provide state-of-the-art scientific services required for scientists to conduct innovative research that are too costly, in terms of equipment and scientific technical support and expertise, for an individual investigator or department to support.

Guiding principles for the development, management, monitoring, and funding of cores are as follows:

- Cores must serve users from multiple disciplines, departments and/or schools. They should be open to all users in the University.
- A leading scientist, who has expertise in the relevant field and requires such services to conduct his/her personal research, should serve as the Core Director.
- An experienced, senior-level technician or key operator should serve as the Technical Director, directing the day-to-day service activities.
- Cores should have an educational mission, educating faculty and students in learning new research techniques, and in applying the services of the core to their research.
- Cores should not be clinical services. Rather, cores should be research-oriented only, limiting their effort to helping investigators to conduct their innovative research projects. Clinical services should be organizationally and functionally distinct from cores.
- Cores should be cost neutral, net of funding provided through grant mechanisms (e.g., P01’s, Cancer Center Core Support Grant, Diabetes Center grant) or department contributions. Institutional (school/department) support should be available for start-up costs, special major expenditures (e.g., new equipment) and on a continuing basis in special circumstances. The generation of profits in order to support other departmental or center initiatives are prohibited. When there are excess revenues, they should be used for the core which generated the funds and core prices should be lowered.
- Cores that are no longer needed or sufficiently active will be phased out.
- Cores will be regularly evaluated to ensure that they provide state-of-the-art services, have advanced equipment, are operating efficiently, and have set prices that are attractive to provide a high level of user satisfaction. This evaluation should be performed by a Research Core Facilities Committee that is comprised of representatives from multiple departments, centers, and institutions on the Penn campus. The Research Core Facilities Committee may elect to accept the annual review conducted by centers in order to prevent duplication of effort.

Guidelines and Operating Principles

- The PSOM Research Core Facilities website should be kept up-to-date as a resource and a core facility directory.
- Consolidation of department-funded facilities that provide the same services should be facilitated.
- Department chairs, and center/institute directors should be encouraged to seek the advice and counsel of the Research Core Facilities Committee before approving plans or committing funds to a department-specific service.
- Only those cores that have been reviewed and approved by the Research Core Facilities Committee will have access to available funds (excluding sponsored research funds) from the Perelman School of Medicine.
- Competitive grants that include funding of core research facilities should come to the attention of the Research Core Facilities Committee. The intent of this process is to prevent the proliferation of new duplicative cores. Instead, investigators are encouraged to provide incremental funding to existing relevant cores so that they can provide the needed services.
- The space occupied by cores reviewed and approved by the Research Core Facilities Committee should be excluded when calculating departmental/center research revenue and expenditures per square foot.
- Every core should establish an Advisory Committee to provide oversight, direction, policy-making, and advice to the Facility Director. Advisory Committees should meet regularly, and should submit a report annually to accompany the overall core annual report.
- Oversight of the cores will be provided by the Research Core Facilities Committee. The Research Core Facilities Committee is advisory to the Dean through the Office of the Executive Vice Dean.

November 10, 2015