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**Source Document for Establishing and Operating a New Research Core Facility**

A Research Core Facility is a Partners unit that is organized to provide specific goods and/or services on a fee-for-service basis to users within the Partners research community and their collaborators. Cores, like grants, are governed by federal regulations and therefore must be established in accordance to federal and Partners policies.

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to those looking to establish a Research Core Facility. This document will provide an overview of the steps involved in setting up a core along with the ongoing expectations of running a core.

**STEPS TO ESTABLISH A RESEARCH CORE FACILITY:**

**Step 1:** Review the expectations of running a core facility by reading this document and the Partners Research Core Facility Policy.

**Step 2:** Contact the Research Core Facility Office (RCFO) to discuss whether the goods or services you want to provide fit the definition of a core facility.

**Step 3:** Submit a brief written proposal to the RCFO who will review it with the Senior Vice President for Research (SVP) at your institution. RCFO will inform you of the SVP’s decision.

Proposal should include, at a minimum, the following information:

* Brief summary of the new core
* Description of the services to be provided
* Discussion of why this core is needed, focusing on how it is unique in comparison to other cores at your institution and in the area
* Overall budget projections and explanation of how any start up costs and budget shortfalls will be covered. *Cores are responsible for their own deficits. It is required that prior to opening a guarantor fund will be provided to cover any deficits. All cores are expected to have a cash balance within breakeven (15% of annual operating budget) by the end of each fiscal year.*

**Step 4:** Complete a business plan and budget/rate analysis, if the proposal is approved.

Templates and Tools available:

* Checklist of Information to Consider When Establishing a Core – Appendix A
* Business Plan Template

* Core Facility Rate/Budget Template

**Step 5:** Send Business Plan, Core Facility Rate/ Budget Template to the RCFO contact for review.

**Step 6:** Receive feedback from RCFO contact and update as necessary.

**Step 7**: The RCFO will send the final version of the Business Plan, Rate/Budget Template to the Senior Vice President for Research at your institution for final approval.

**Step 8**: Upon approval, please complete the Fund Application form which includes an eligible guarantor account number which will be used to cover un-resolvable deficits and appropriate department signatures.

**Step 10:** Return the completed fund application to the RCFO.

**Step 11:** The applicationwill be processed by the RCFO and you will receive an email from “PHS Research eSubmissions” letting you know your fund has been activated.

**PRIMARY & ON GOING RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CORE FACILITY DIRECTOR / PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI) / MANAGER**

### It is the prime responsibility of those running a core facility to monitor the core financial position to ensure end of fiscal year break-even status and assure adherence to Federal regulations, applicable sponsor and PHS policies.

*Start-up Responsibilities*

* Secure start up funding and funding for any potential annual deficits
* Submit a complete business plan and budget/rate analysis
* Develop a billing and collection process

*Monthly Responsibilities*

* Invoice users and submit journal entries to the RCFO on the 15th business day of the month
* Review profit and loss statement, including the analysis of variance against the budget, and assess projected year-end breakeven status
* Maintain all core facility records for monitoring review and A-133 audit
* Review expenses charged to the core to assure they are correctly allocated as in the annual budget and remove any unallowable costs (e.g. meals, water coolers, etc.)
* Reconcile accounts receivable and follow-up with customers for outstanding payments
* Monitor changes in business, assess whether changes need to be made to the fees or operations and work with the RCFO to make the appropriate changes

*Annual Responsibilities:*

* Submit addendums to the business plan (if any)
* Submit annual budget

**APPENDIX A**

**Checklist of Information to Consider When Establishing a Core**

* To complete the business plan you will need:
	+ Rationale and Mission of the core
	+ Determine who will be the Core Director; Core Administrator; Core Staff and members of the Core Advisory Committee.
	+ Detailed explanation of services to be provided and the costs associated with each
	+ Location of the core – Building, room, square footage
	+ Equipment – create a list including how each piece was funded, its acquisition date and asset ID#
	+ Core standard operating procedures – guidelines users must follow in order to access the core such as, hours of operation, equipment handling, cancellation policy, etc.
	+ Anticipated usage – perform a survey if necessary
	+ Details of local competitors – create a table comparing other providers of your core’s service(s), including institution and price
	+ Details of what needs to be done in order to open the core
* Create marketing plan
* Develop billing and collection process
* Define review process and mechanisms for obtaining feedback
* Description of future needs of the core – new services you want to provide, new equipment that might be needed, etc.
* To complete the rate analysis and budget you will need:
	+ Salaries and percent effort of individuals who will working for the core
	+ Listing of all supplies, service contracts, etc. tied to the service being provided and how much was spent in a prior period of time
	+ Listing of any departmental or institutional subsidies or seed funding that the core expects to receive
* Guarantor Account Number – This is a cost center that may be used to cover core deficits. Please note, this fund will never be used without a discussion with the core director and administrator. Proof must be provided showing that the guarantor account has sufficient funds to cover a deficit, that is, 15% of the cores annual operating expenses.