



# Guidelines for Core Facilities Collaborations

## Defining Core Resources

A **core facility** is a centralized, shared resource that provides biomedical and behavioral investigators with access to instruments, technologies, and services as well as expert consultation. **Core Facility Directors** can provide researchers with expertise in a particular scientific or technological area. Many core facilities provide these experts as a service to the biomedical research community.

## RCMI Core Resources

**The RCMI Program supports core facilities at the UPR Medical Sciences Campus**, using funds from grant awards (**National Center for Research Resources: 2G12 RR003051** and **National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities: 8G12MD007600**), including:

- Translational Proteomics Center  
<http://rcmi.rcm.upr.edu/resreso/corefacnetwork/tpc>
- Center for Genomics and Health Disparities and Rare Diseases  
<http://rcmi.rcm.upr.edu/resreso/corefacnetwork/cghdrd>
- Translational Neuroscience Program  
<http://rcmi.rcm.upr.edu/resreso/corefacnetwork/tnp>
- Infectious and Global Diseases Research Program  
<http://rcmi.rcm.upr.edu/resreso/corefacnetwork/igdp>
- Center for Information Technology and Telecommunications – CentIT2  
<http://rcmi.rcm.upr.edu/resreso/corefacnetwork/centit2>
- RCMI Affiliated Facilities
  - Central Electron Microscopy Unit  
<http://rcmi.rcm.upr.edu/resreso/corefacnetwork/affiliatedfacs/cemu>
  - Flow Cytometry Unit  
<http://rcmi.rcm.upr.edu/resreso/corefacnetwork/affiliatedfacs/flowcyto>
  - Shared-Instrumentation Facility  
<http://rcmi.rcm.upr.edu/resreso/corefacnetwork/affiliatedfacs/sharefac>

RCMI core facilities operate according to the following principles:

- Each facility is headed by a Key Activity Director and evaluated annually by external evaluators
- Each Core Facility has a budget from the RCMI grant for technical support, basic materials, and maintenance contracts (equipment acquisition and upgrading depends on availability of funds)
- RCMI Core Facilities costs of services are recharged to users through a back-charge system, according to institutional and federal regulations
- RCMI Core Facilities are open to non-RCMI and external users according to established guidelines and/or collaborative agreements

## Core Facility Guidelines

It is required that each RCMI-supported facility develops its own guidelines according to the needs of its users and to their particular resources. The specific guidelines should include a description of the facility, its physical location, the available staff, the services provided, the available equipment, the rules of operation, safety precautions, and all the necessary forms to document activities conducted in the facility, including a comprehensive user registry. Users of RCMI facilities are required to be in compliance with requirements of the Biosafety, IRB, IACUC and Radioactive Material Committees and to certify that the corresponding assurances are active.

Guidelines are available on-line on the webpage of each RCMI-supported facility listed above.

## Advanced Management Program

The RCMI Program implemented an electronic service request (E-ticket) system in March 2012 to facilitate, document and track research support services provided by the facilities associated with the program. Initially, the system requires users to fill an electronic survey form to register in our user database. Users receive a user name and password to access the electronic ticket system. After a ticket is created, all communications related to the requested service are managed by regular email. Once the service is completed, the ticket is closed (resolved). RCMI-supported facilities are required to use this system to document services provided.

The E-ticket system will be complemented by a bar-coding system which will track the use of specialized instrumentation associated with a particular facility.

## Authorship Considerations

Core facilities must charge for services rendered according to cost accounting practices set up at each facility following institutional and federal regulations. Charging for services does not preclude authorship by core-facility investigators resulting from research activities supported

by the Core laboratory, if individuals have contributed to the research in a substantial way. If authorship of Core facility personnel is anticipated, it should preferably be discussed and decided at the beginning of the project so that both the customer and the Core researcher are cognizant of each other's criteria.

For additional information on this topic, users are referred to the *Recommended Guidelines for Authorship on Manuscripts* published by the Association of Biomolecular Resource Facilities (ABRF) <http://www.abrf.org/index.cfm/page/resources/Authorship.htm>.

## Collaborative Agreements

The RCMI Program Core Facilities allow research scientists shared access to sophisticated and expensive technologies that would be hard or impossible for the UPR Medical Sciences Campus to provide to each research group independently. RCMI Core Facilities are open to all researchers at the UPR-MSC and also to external users through collaborative agreements. They are encouraged (1) to be a meeting point for scientists from different departments, research programs and disciplines, (2) to foster exchange and integration of expertise, and (3) to create and conduct interdisciplinary projects. Additionally, the Core Facilities are central to the training infrastructure of the UPR-MSC. They organize seminars, workshops and trainings for scientists and graduate students in order to make them familiar with the technologies.

RCMI Program Core Facilities are required to establish collaborative research agreements with external users and research programs. The objective of writing a collaborative research agreement is to clarify for both parties what they are trying to accomplish together and to clearly set forth the rules that will govern the collaborative effort. A good partnership must be mutually beneficial, and an effective collaborative research agreement will help both parties understand and accept mutual benefit as a goal.

It is required that the collaborative research agreement includes the following sections:

- 1. Statement of objectives:** Description of what the parties want to accomplish together and why the collaboration is important.
- 2. Statement of work:** Explanation of the research activities that the parties propose to conduct, including which approaches will be undertaken, what services and equipment will be available and/or required, and which methodologies are expected to be used. Most importantly, this part of the agreement specifies who is responsible for what and specifies the duration of the agreement.
- 3. General provisions:** Information on important details, as applicable, such as the mechanisms of collaboration and the rules by which the collaboration will be conducted regarding authorship, public disclosure and publication policies; acknowledgement of RCMI award (see below); disclosure and management of any conflict of interest, confidentiality agreements;

intellectual property; dispute resolution plans; provisions for termination; compliance with local and federal regulations, and any other relevant issues.

**4. Budget:** Resources that each party requires (i.e. fee for services) and contributes (i.e. funding for personnel, seminars, workshops, etc.) to the collaborative research project.

**5. Approval by RCMI, Principal Investigator:** All collaborative research agreements should be submitted to the RCMI, Principal Investigator for revision and approval before signature.

## Acknowledgement of RCMI Award

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) requires that users of the instruments or services of the RCMI Core Facilities acknowledge RCMI support by including the following sentence in their publications:

**“Infrastructure support was provided in part by grants from the National Center for Research Resources (2G12 RR003051) and the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (8G12MD007600).”**

## Contact Information

Emma Fernández-Repollet, Ph.D.  
Principal Investigator  
RCMI Program, Office 621-A  
UPR Medical Sciences Campus  
Telephone: (787) 763-9401  
E-mail: [e.fernandez@upr.edu](mailto:e.fernandez@upr.edu)