# Procedures for Core Facilities

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<th>PROCEDURE TITLE</th>
<th>PROCEDURES FOR CORE FACILITIES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Executive Sponsor</td>
<td>Vice-President (Research and Innovation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Approval Date</td>
<td>December 14, 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Last Review</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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## 1. Purpose and Scope

### 1.1 Across the University, research infrastructure, such as equipment, tools, and laboratory facilities, has been acquired for use by multiple researchers, normally housed together and managed as shared research platforms, herein referred to as Core Facilities. Such Core Facilities are essential to McGill’s research and training resources and provide access to equipment and services to multiple researchers and research groups. Research funding agencies are now mandating institutions to foster a culture and practice of shared equipment to avoid duplication, enhance access to shared infrastructure for research and training, and to optimize cost efficiency and financial sustainability of infrastructure. The present Procedures serve to implement the formal designation requirements for Core Facilities.

### 1.2 In support of the Policy on Research Entities (“Policy”), the Procedures for Core Facilities (“Procedures”) set out the procedures for McGill Faculties to recognize, oversee, manage, and operate Core Facilities and to develop and implement Faculty-based guidelines and directives.

### 1.3 The Procedures are to be read in conjunction with the Policy. All items identified in these Procedures will have the meaning given to them in the Policy.

### 1.4 The Administrative Handbook for Core Facilities (“Handbook”) sets out protocols related to financial best practices, staffing, maintenance, and equipment.

## 2. Definition

### 2.1 As established by the Policy, Core Facilities are research platforms that provide access to specialized equipment, expertise, training, services, technologies, and scientific and technical personnel that are accessible to multiple investigators. Core Facilities are meant to foster collaborations, maximize the use of equipment and services and lead to increased scientific productivity, while aiming to facilitate cost efficiency of operations and management. Generally, a Core Facility is housed within a Faculty and is accountable to a Lead Faculty, however, there may be some exceptions.
2.2 Core Facilities at McGill University have the following general characteristics:

- Physical location on McGill downtown campus or Macdonald campus or a virtual resource managed by McGill,
- Utilized by researchers and their trainees (i.e. more than 10) to conduct their research,
- Accessible either to any McGill researcher (unrestricted) or to a defined group of researchers (restricted or privileged access), their immediate collaborators and external (non-McGill) partners, including industry and private sector,
- Provide services on a fee-for-service basis,
- Led by a Director and supported by a governance structure appropriate to their scope, size, and complexity
- Have dedicated support staff for operations and maintenance, such as a manager, highly qualified and specialized personnel, and technical and administrative support appropriate to their scope, size, and complexity.

2.3 Research laboratories and services are not considered to be Core Facilities if they have the following characteristics:

- Departmental shared service facilities,
- Individual researcher labs,
- Non-research resources (e.g., teaching units or units holding collections not for research purposes),
- Facilities outside of campus at affiliated hospitals or field stations.

3. Faculty Guidelines

In line with the Policy, each Faculty must develop guidelines present to implement processes for the establishment, operation, review, and termination of Core Facilities. These guidelines will be adapted to the scope, needs and particularities of each Faculty.

4. Recognition

4.1 Recognition as a Core Facility aims to facilitate institutional planning, organization, visibility, and applications for external funding by encouraging a culture and practice of shared equipment that avoids duplication, enhances access to unique infrastructure for research and research training, and optimizes cost efficient sustainability of infrastructure.

4.2 To obtain recognition, faculty members in charge of a facility will prepare and submit all relevant and detailed information as required by the Lead Faculty, such as scientific and research mission, description of the services offered including an availability analysis for similar services, space planning, detailed equipment list, staffing information including roles and duties, performance indicators, usage statistics, business model and user fees, budget projections, financial and sustainability plan and governance structure, in accordance with the relevant Faculty Guidelines.

4.3 The Lead Faculty will assess and approve each request for recognition as a Core Facility based on the criteria outlined in sections 2.2 and 2.3, and any additional requirement outlined in the relevant Faculty Guidelines.
4.4 The Lead Faculty will submit a Core Facility Checklist for each recognized Core Facility, which will include information on services offered, business model, types of equipment, and number of staff, to the Office of the Vice-President (Research and Innovation) to ensure alignment with the Policy and for record keeping with the objective of planning for research infrastructure funding opportunities as well as supporting the promotion and visibility of Core Facilities. The Core Facility Checklist, with required headings and content, will be available through the Office of the Vice-President (Research and Innovation) to facilitate the guidelines and processes.

5. Governance, Management and Operations

5.1 A Core Facility will be under the purview of the Lead Faculty Dean.

5.2 A Core Facility must have a governance structure appropriate to its size and complexity in order to provide strategic guidance in terms of operational needs and quality of service delivery as well as overall direction of the Core Facility.

5.3 A Core Facility must be led by a Director, who is appointed by, reports to, and is accountable to the Lead Faculty Dean for the overall direction of the Core Facility.

5.4 The Director of a Core Facility will hold an academic appointment at McGill with conditions of employment determined by the Lead Faculty Dean such as, stipend and teaching release, if any. If the appointment of a Director involves external recruitment, it will follow all established University policies, procedures, and protocols for such recruitment.

5.5 The Director is responsible for forming and appointing members to the governance body, which shall be approved by the Lead Faculty Dean.

5.6 The governance body must meet as needed, and at least annually, to receive the annual report (Section 8), review activities, users and finances, and provide guidance for any issues that may arise.

5.7 A Core Facility must have a public website with information about their mission statement, research activities, offered services, and fee structure.

5.8 A Core Facility must have written Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) developed by the Director and approved by the governance body that align with this Policy and these Procedures for matters such as:

- management and financial matters such as business model, user fees, billing, budget, and allocation of funding, safety and classification of users
- operations of equipment and other assets;
- governance matters such as mandate of governance bodies as applicable, nominations and appointments to governance bodies as applicable;
- reporting and review.

5.9 A Core Facility may also have Associate Directors as needed and will follow the same protocols under sections 5.3 and 5.4.
5.10 Personnel for operations and maintenance of a Core Facility, such as a manager, technical and administrative staff are hired by the Lead Faculty and report to the Director.

6. Cost Model

6.1. A Core Facility must have a business plan with a cost model in place that ensures that the Core Facility is financially sustainable over time with secured revenues to cover the costs.

6.2. The cost model must consist of cost-recovery in the form of fee-for-service such as user fees or membership fees. In addition, the cost model may also include a diverse nature of additional sources of cost-recovery, such as external grant funding including equipment grants, donations, and philanthropic support and/or Faculty and institutional support (see Section 7).

6.3. The fee-for-service structure must be publicly available and follow all established University policies, procedures, and protocols as well as federal Tri-Agency regulations.

6.4. The Administrative Handbook for Core Facilities sets out protocols related to financial best practices, including fund management, usage logs, overhead rates on service contracts and billing records.

7. Resource Allocation

7.1 The Lead Faculty Dean will determine the space allocated and level of Faculty financial support to the Core Facility as well as criteria for such funding and, as relevant, performance metrics. If applicable, Deans of other Faculties involved will determine their level of contribution.

8. Reporting

8.1 The Director of a Core Facility will submit an annual report (May 1 to April 30 of previous year) to the Lead Faculty Dean and the Core Facility’s governance body to ensure accountability and progress of the research activities of the Facility.

8.2 While the overall formats of annual reports are generally at the discretion of the Lead Faculty, each annual report must contain an appendix with information related to finances and research activities that is submitted to the Office of the Vice-President (Research and Innovation) in July of a given year. The appendix will be available through the Office of the Vice-President (Research and Innovation).

9. Review

9.1 The Lead Faculty is responsible for conducting regular reviews (minimum of one every five years) of Core Facilities that fall within its purview in order to ensure sound operations and sustainability of finances and cost-recovery. The Lead Faculty may choose to collaborate with the Office of Academic Reviews within the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice-President (Academic) pursuant to the Regulations on Academic Reviews.

9.2 Review assessments and any recommendations will be submitted by the Lead Faculty to the Facility’s governance body with a copy to the Office of the Vice-President (Research and Innovation).
9.3 The Office of the Vice-President (Research and Innovation) will provide an update on the status of all Core Facilities to the Senate and Board of Governors annually.

10. Termination

10.1 The Lead Faculty Dean, in consultation with other Deans of Faculties involved, can elect to terminate the activities of a Core Facility following a review.

10.2 The recommendation to terminate a Core Facility will be communicated in writing by the Lead Faculty Dean to the Director, with a copy to the Vice-President (Research and Innovation).

10.3 A reasonable phase-out period from the termination end date based on a phase-out plan prepared by the Lead Faculty may be granted to conclude affairs with due consideration to human resources, assets, policies, contractual obligations, and employment standards.

10.4 The Vice-President (Research and Innovation), following consultation with the relevant Faculty Dean, reserves the right to terminate a Core Facility at any time due to institutional risks such as those involving financial exigencies, non-compliance with regulations, or any other serious concerns, with due consideration to human resources, policies, contractual obligations, and employment standards.