Research Instrumentation Program for Research Core Facilities

Description: The Research Instrumentation Program is designed to help Research Core Facilities acquire new and repair, upgrade or replace existing instrumentation critical to UO’s research infrastructure. The Program will enable Research Core Facilities to continue to provide world class service to both internal and external users.

This internal program is distinct from, and complements, the OVPRI’s support of proposals to federal agencies and foundations to acquire major instrumentation. Prospective PIs are encouraged to request matching funds when needed for those proposals. This program recognizes that some instrumentation is not appropriate for external funding programs despite a strong need from the research community. Further, repairing, upgrading or replacing high use instrumentation can be difficult or impossible via external funding mechanisms even though the equipment is essential to ongoing research at the University.

Emergency funds can be requested at any time by contacting Research Development Services. For non-emergency requests, the OVPRI will issue an annual call for proposals each fall, so Research Core Facilities will know the outcomes of these requests prior to finalizing their budgets for the coming fiscal year.

All requests should address the following key points for the requested equipment.

1. Brief statement identifying the piece of instrumentation and its function.
2. Type of research that will be enabled: What are the capabilities of the requested equipment and how broadly beneficial is it to the UO research community? When requesting funds to replace or upgrade existing instrumentation, please provide a list of active awards for projects that rely on the requested equipment.
3. Current availability: Does similar equipment already exist on the UO campus? If so, why is existing instrumentation unable to meet current needs?
4. Current and projected user base: How widely used and/or how many labs anticipate a need for the requested instrumentation?
5. Plans for cost sharing (from Departmental, Institute, Core Facility, external partners, for example), if applicable.
6. Suitability for external funding opportunities: Why are internal funds needed? What makes the requested instrumentation a poor fit for external programs such as the NSF Major Research Instrumentation Program or the NIH Shared Instrumentation Program?
7. Technical specifications, equipment costs and business plan to manage the instrumentation within the core facility.

Application: Please fill out the online application form. The deadline for non-emergency applications in 2017 is January 5. The deadline will be October 15 in subsequent years.

Budget: Requests for awards in excess of $50,000 will be considered only under extraordinary circumstances. Before making such a request, the Director should discuss the request with an AVPRI or the VPRI.

Eligibility: These grants can only be used to support instrumentation housed in our Research Core Facilities. The director or manager of a research core facility will be the applicant and requests must be approved by the facility’s Faculty Advisory Committee Chair. Individual faculty members wishing to purchase particular pieces of instrumentation should reach out to the
facility director/manager and engage with the facility’s Faculty Advisory Committee to develop a proposal that fits within the focus and business model of that facility.

Given the limited availability of resources to meet instrumentation needs, the OVPRI will prioritize awards to Research Core Facilities based, in part, on the funding previously received through this program.

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of: 1) likely impact on research productivity; 2) breadth of use across multiple research groups; 3) likely impact on UO researchers’ ability to successfully compete for external funds; and 4) the lack of availability of other public or private foundation funding opportunities.

The VPRI will appoint a recommendation committee of approximately 5 members to review proposals within this program. Committee members will include Research Core Facility directors and Associate Vice Presidents for Research and Innovation. Awards will be announced publicly every year in January. The purpose and amount of each award will be posted on the OVPRI web site.

Funds granted through this competitive program should be spent within one year of the award.