**FEINBERG SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Application to Fund a Newly Created Core**

The Research Office of the Feinberg School of Medicine (FSM) supports core facilities that serve the needs of FSM investigators. Funds are limited and are awarded on a competitive basis. To be successful, an application to fund a new core must clearly articulate both the need for the services to be provided and the feasibility of establishing a cost-effective and well-utilized core.

The basis for establishing core facilities will vary, as will the details of each core’s operation. However, in thinking about whether creating a new core makes sense, consider the following criteria:

* There must be a latent or active user base that will use the core at the proposed rates,
* The core must provide services that are not commercially available, are otherwise beyond the means of individual investigators or which can be provided most efficiently on-site,
* The core must facilitate research in a way that transcends the work of an individual laboratory or group. A minimum of three departments or centers must be served but the broader the user base the more likely a core is to be successful,
* Each core must have a sponsoring department or center that will manage the core’s recharge account and will thus be responsible if the core runs a deficit,
* The financial request to FSM should be proportional to the benefit to FSM investigators.

Additional information can be found on the FSM Cores Program web site:

<http://www.feinberg.northwestern.edu/research/cores/about/index.html>

The following outline is a recommended starting point for organizing the application. Additional materials may be provided if they will help the reviewers to assess the value of the core.

**A. Background**

Introduce the reviewer to the research needs that are to be met with the new core. Include:

* A brief history of how the application arose,
* The justification for creating a core:
	+ Have new technologies become available?
	+ Are there new research areas, new faculty, or new funding opportunities that demand these new services?
	+ Are commercial services unavailable?
	+ Is there a clear cost or research efficiency in providing the services locally?
* If the needs are not new, how were they met previously?

**B. Administrative structure**

Describe how the core will be organized administratively. Specifically:

* Who will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the core?
* In which Department or Center will the core’s recharge account be located?
* Will the core receive any administrative support from the host department or center; e.g. for billing, payroll, ordering or other administrative activities?

**C. Academic Governance**

Describe how the core will be organized academically. Specifically:

* Will there be a faculty advisor? If so, please name this person and note how much salary support (if any) they will receive from the core,
* Name the chair and all members of the scientific advisory committee (required); include department affiliation and e-mail address for each member,

**D. Facilities and Location**

List the space that will be occupied by the core. Provide campus, building, room number, and approximate square feet for each space. Also note the administrative unit (e.g. department or center) to which the space is currently assigned.

**E. Business Plan**

This is a critical part of the application.

The application must provide a clear plan for establishing the core, as well as evidence that a sufficient user base exists to support the core’s operation. Items that should be addressed include (but are not limited to):

* List all activities for which the core will bill its users. This list should include services provided, access to shared instrumentation, reagents sold, consulting, etc.,
* List your proposed rates and describe how the rates were determined,
* List all services to be provided without charge. These may include services provided as a courtesy (e.g. advice or software access) or time & resources spent in anticipation of revenue-generating activity (initial consultations, pilot experiments),
* Describe the potential user base and expected activity for the first year. These projections must be based on current usage data or other tangible evidence. Letters of support should include realistic usage expectations for the first year and the funding sources for that activity. If funded, your first annual report will be expected to contain a comparison of these projections with actual usage,
* Describe your outreach plan, i.e. how you will make this service known to potential users.

**F. Budget Justification and Requested Funding**

The FSM Research Office has developed a standardized budget spreadsheet for renewal of existing cores, entitled “*FY25\_core\_budget\_template*.” Guidance for completing the budget spreadsheet is provided in the document entitled “*FY25\_core\_budget\_guide*.” The template provides space for a three-year budget (previous, current, and projected) but new cores are only required to complete the projected budget for fiscal year 2025.

In addition to completing the spreadsheet, the applicant should describe the major budget items as follows:

* *Personnel*. For each position requested, please list:
	+ Planned university job title and/or faculty rank,
	+ Specific responsibilities,
	+ Percent effort in the core,
	+ Approximate salary.
* *Major equipment and instrumentation*. List:
	+ equipment owned or to be acquired by the core that will be made available on a fee-for-service basis,
	+ unique instrumentation owned or to be acquired by the core and central to providing the core’s basic services, regardless of cost,
	+ any maintenance contracts that will be necessary.

**Do not include common laboratory equipment.**

* *Income*. In addition to projected recharge revenue, many new cores cover some percentage of their expenditures via support from other institutional sources (departments, centers, NU Office for Research) and/or grants. Please estimate income for each source, and note clearly whether the income is pledged, has been applied for, or will be applied for. It should also be noted whether the income/funding is a one-time commitment or recurring.
* *Requested funding*. How much money are you requesting from the FSM Research Office, and how was this amount determined? Be specific.

**G. Advisory Committee Approval**

As chair of the advisory committee, I certify that the committee has reviewed and approved this request.

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Chair Signature Date