

Facilities & Research Infrastructure Sub-Committee

Meeting minutes – Inaugural Meeting: April 16, 2019, 1-2PM

Attendees: David Simmons (chair), Tim Forrest, Shaun Walters, Darryl Whitehead, Sean Millard, Oliver Rawashdeh, Melissa Reichelt

Apologies: Melanie Flint, Harmony Rose

1. Members discussed the purpose and aims of this sub-committee:

To maximise support and facilitate structure/communication in coordinating strategies to identify and address needs/priorities and implement change.

Suggested focus areas to include:

- Development of a 5 year plan & strategic direction: guide where we want to go while incorporating facility vision and research needs for internal and external users
 - Wishlists for future procurements, repairs or upgrades: would also be beneficial to hear from users and get an idea of where they're heading to help align with manager needs and identify user issues
 - Training and staffing/roles within facilities: identify areas where support is lacking or improvements can be made
 - Review of costing structures
 - Web pages & information: noted PPMS is up and running and filled with new information (old booking system frozen)
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2. Members discussed the circulated Terms of Reference:

- Discussion around modification to item 3 to clarify: "supporting facility managers within the function of working autonomously"
- Stated that the purpose of this committee is to provide input and develop recommendations while getting academic support; will not function as a "top-down" assessment

Action: Tim to revise point #3 in ToR and circulate; ToR to be adopted with modification

3. Members discussed the development of a 5- Year Plan

- 5 year plan to be developed focusing on review of equipment, core research facility, and training and information.
- Committee would like to identify which items can be achieved quickly
- Further committee discussion on core areas:

Equipment

- Discussion on identifying and classifying equipment “types” to:
 1. Assist in defining responsibility for equipment (custodians of shared equipment) and identify placement
 2. Help determine how it’s maintained, replaced, upgraded, etc.
 3. Help advise on strategies to do/fund this and further develop criteria for these processes
- Proposed headings were discussed:
 - Infrastructure equipment: Highly integrated, almost a part of the building (examples: Milli-Q water, autoclaves, freezers, ultracentrifuge, fume hoods, dishwashers); faculty responsibility in infrastructure/ what is faculty definition of infrastructure?
 - Shared vs. infrastructure equipment: will require different people to pay for its maintenance/replacement (different “pots” of money or funding sources for different equipment types)
 - Core research facility equipment: grey area given shared and basic equipment also present, but the general idea is, (1) physically located in core facility and (2) items that “define” the core facility (examples: cryostats, plate readers)

-grey area between basic and independent (brought in by an individual with ownership/responsibility for equipment)
 - Once identified, examples should be added under each type of equipment and circulated to RC for additional input
- Other suggestions for classifying equipment discussed:
 - Suggested to classify by who is responsible for the equipment rather than the equipment itself?
 - Will # of hours or users be helpful in developing equipment definitions?
- Committee would like to create lists of everything in school and get a better snapshot of what the school owns, has, needs and find out the state of each equipment type.
 - Existing “lists”:
 1. Sarah: audit of all core facilities equipment costing >\$50,000
 2. Harmony: equipment list of items needing replacement
 3. Lizzie: Research Committee list of desired equipment
 - Suggested to develop a table & matrix for different equipment and funding sources

Actions: David to compile existing equipment lists and circulate; David will create a draft table and circulate for others to add examples of each equipment type and edit to definitions as relevant; David proposed questionnaire to committee members; David to subsequently present at research committee meeting

Core research Facility pricing review

- Committee identified aim to review pricing and cost modelling
- look at SCMB website and have a look at facilities and services page; this model could be a good starting point
- Committee would like to identify appropriate levels of cost recovery (currently stands around 40%) while:
 - being realistic as well as transparent with well-justified changes
 - announcing any changes at least 6 months in advance (to allow for researcher budgeted plans)

Actions: Time to be set aside in next meeting to discuss further

Training and information

- Committee would like to get an overview of the current status
- Aim to have training specific to equipment and material being used to maximise safety and promote proper machine maintenance
- Can committee identify a way for training to be creative and efficient?
- Discussion around staffing implications for the development of SOPs, training resources, videos (suggested to start with major pieces of equipment- for training and even advertising purposes)

Committee discussed the following suggestions around staffing for training:

- Can a senior lab member be the trainer? Is this too much responsibility to add?
What happens when staff turnover/leave?
- Recruiting others (long serving staff or others to be certified as trainers)
- Potentially a full time training staff member to generate all training videos and make cheat sheets
- Suggested PPMS could be a potential solution for making training materials available (can separate public and private documents)