

# Facilities & Research Infrastructure Sub-Committee

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*Meeting minutes: June 19, 2019, 1-2:30PM*

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## 1. Welcome and apologies

**Attendees:** David Simmons (chair), Tim Forrest, Darryl Whitehead, Sean Millard, Oliver Rawashdeh, Melanie Flint, Harmony Rose, Melissa Reichelt, Brittany Campbell (RDO)

**Apologies:** Shaun Walters

- Shaun away for 4 weeks
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## 2. Report from Core Facilities

### Histology:

- Overall, facility going well
- 1 Vibratome and 1 Cryostat down at the moment (to be assessed)
- Student work slowed in the last few weeks; Arnault leaving soon, but Darryl has new staff
- Biggest external users at the moment: AIBN and Biological Sciences, CSIRO Canberra and University of Canberra
- Generally speaking facility is running at a negative because of salaries
- Hosting a Histology focus group: ~5-10 academics and external participants to discuss the facility's current work and where we want to go in the next 5 years (to be hosted Thursday June 27<sup>th</sup> 1-3pm); Sarah Piper is developing focus group agenda
- Committee discussed UQ's potential desire for centralized service prices, though the school still has to subsidize facilities as all costs cannot be recovered; Are there strategies to protect benefits of SBMS facilities? Positive is more external users, but this could also have implications for internal SBMS usage

<b>Action:</b> Darryl to report back to committee on focus group outcomes
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## 3. Equipment Asset List/Faculty Replacement

- Harmony working with Alison from Faculty
- Asset Replacement: list developed to identify equipment over 10 years old and highlight equipment that is crucial to replace; this list went to faculty and ~\$400,000 worth of equipment is being replaced; next year there will be another asset replacement program (this previously went around with Kaye's newsletter)
- Committee may wish to consider a formalized procedure for keeping these assessments ongoing, and it would be good to know if the current list is missing anything. Suggested: biannual emails to researchers to identify the status of their equipment and help to plan ahead

to put items into budget. It is getting harder to fix/replace items last minute, so it is important to get the word out for researchers to scan their labs for planning.

- Categorized SBMS asset list includes all equipment worth >\$5,000;
  - This list will be circulated to the school (including CIPDD) and everyone will be asked to make sure that all equipment they own is on the list and to confirm whether or not the following are correct: (1) current categorization, (2) custodians, (3) location
  - David will add a tab to nominate items critical to lab operation (ie. priority items)
  - Where does software/servers go? (over \$5,000 should be included)
  - David will circulate a draft of the school email to sub-committee to get input to confirm it will capture all the information we need to collect

**Actions:**

- David to add priority tab in asset list
- David to circulate school asset email among sub-committee for input

#### 4. Training within the facilities

- Training bottleneck at the beginning of semester
- Shaun is beginning to implement a fortnightly training schedule (the planned schedule may need to be made clear across the school)
- Mel: Tends to be contacted after ethics is completed; an EOI exists with helpful information, but not many referrals are through the website and most don't seem to follow it; there is currently a bottleneck for getting in to the IPF, particularly for getting into the surgery area as it's not always possible to access immediately
- What are the current plans for the top floor of Otto? It is UQBR space. Can this be followed up?
- Current training feedback is that there is typically a lag between training sessions and start of lab work, so training has largely been forgotten and re-training is required; is there a way to minimize this?
  - General training day with hands-on training closer to start?
- Ideas to reduce training load/supervision:
  - Is it possible to get a formalized honour-based system where some (who can demonstrate capability) can work unsupervised and others remain supervised?
    - OHS requires supervisor to be a PhD student or higher
  - Can projects be re-designed to minimize training load (ie. focus on other tasks)?
  - David will speak to Lesley about 1 tutor for the 4 weeks of summer to supervise/or if there are funds Darryl could make one person be there for sci3220/3221
  - Grant to be developed to put together training videos; UQBR is implementing a similar system (modules with risk assessments, SOPs, explanatory videos, multiple choice questions, and records who has participated)
    - David to speak to Charlotte Young

**Action:** David to speak with Charlotte Young about training videos & Lesley regarding tutor

#### 5. Custodianship Program

- Aim to identify portfolios of equipment and identify an expert in the school to oversee training in this area:
  - If one person is responsible this will allow us to keep track of custodians and improve quality control
  - This is will also free up Shaun/Brooke-replacement time
- How do we structure this and pay for it?
  - Can this be a service task? And if so, how can people be compensated for hours? (Postdoc hours spent in service go back to lab leader as hours to use facilities? though technically this would still need to be paid by the school; can we use some research committee money?)
    - Service commitment would need to be for a year, for stability
    - Sub-committee supports the proposal of this system

**Action:** David to propose custodianship program to research committee

## 6. MEI Grants

- Item to be discussed next meeting