

Core Facilities Publication Policy

Core facilities provide the wider research community with state-of-the-art instrumentation and expertise, which not only adds to, but also improves research outputs and funding bids. It is important to recognise the contributions of facility staff to the advancement of scientific research, both formally and informally, in all instances of technical assistance. The type of recognition that is most appropriate will vary dependent upon the contribution provided.

Important reasons for acknowledging contributions from core facilities in publications, by co-authorship or by formal mention in the acknowledgments section, include:

1. Core facilities staff are scientists. When they make an intellectual and/or experimental contribution to a publication they deserve to be recognised and acknowledged, just as any other co-author would be.
2. The existence of core facilities depends in part on proper acknowledgment in publications. This is an important metric of value to most facilities, i.e. impact.
 - a. Proper acknowledgment of facilities enables them to obtain financial/other support.
 - b. It aids core facilities staff to advance their careers, adding to the overall health of the facility and research environment.
3. If core facilities staff have co-authorship where deserved, it will avoid the risk of data misinterpretation, and help ensure the data are accurately conveyed and described.

Core facilities must charge for services rendered according to agreed cost accounting practices within their institution. These rates are often calculated outside of core facilities control, according to actual costs & associated overheads involved in running the centre. However, the emphasis on cost recovery is at risk of damaging the scientific reputation of core facilities by diminishing their efforts. They could be seen by the research staff merely as a straightforward service they have to pay for, analogous to hiring an electrician.

In reality, core facilities are not just instruments provided in a room; they are populated by highly-skilled and experienced individuals who can make complex experiments possible, and provide essential support in very specialized technologies, often with an intellectual contribution to the project. Charging for these services helps bring awareness of the investment in a project but should not preclude authorship on manuscripts. Core facility staff should have the opportunity to participate in drafting the pertinent part of the paper, and give final approval to the wording and conclusions drawn before publication, as any other contributing scientist would.

We risk widening the gap between academic and technical staff if prior practices and non-acknowledgement is allowed to continue. Technical staff are not *lesser* individuals; they are not purely a service without the necessity of recognition or advancement within a defined career structure. Instead, the research community as a whole, academic and technical alike, should work towards the mutual goal of research excellence across the institution. Acknowledgement of everyone's efforts in presentations and publications must be an accepted baseline.

Proper acknowledgement provides a visible measure of the impact and success of the facilities and helps to secure support and funding.

Acceptance of Core Facilities Publication Policy

As a core facility within an academic institution, **[inset name here]** follows the same internationally established guidelines as departments or schools throughout **[institution name]**, stipulated by journals and the publication houses themselves. We have, therefore, implemented a new publication policy within the centre.

1. All publications resulting from the use of instruments within the facility should, at the very least, acknowledge the **[insert core facility name here]** as a whole, e.g. *'the authors gratefully acknowledge the **[core facility name]** for their support & assistance in this work'*
2. Where users have had significant help from a particular member of **[core facility]** staff, or **[core facility]** staff have generated additional data personally, this staff member should be acknowledged by name, alongside the centre if applicable, e.g. *'the authors thank *** of **[insert core facility name here]** for their support & assistance in this work'*
3. If scientists from **[core facility name]** contributed more than just routine techniques, they should be co-authors of papers that use data.
 - a. *Development or adaptation of protocols to suit samples or materials, (re)designing experiments, extensive data analysis and interpretation are not routine and constitute contributions meriting co-authorship.*
 - b. *Simple acquisitions of raw data or routine sample preparations alone normally would not merit co-authorship but should still be acknowledged.*

We appreciate that authorship decisions are generally made at the preparation stage of a manuscript, rather than at the initiation of the work, however **[core facility name]** staff will now ask what the desired outcome of any new research project is and expect to be informed of any potential publications resulting from the work. If you are uncertain about co-authorship or have any questions or concerns about this, please discuss this issue with the facility manager in advance.

Please send a reprint of the paper, or an e-mail including the reference information for the publication, to the facility concerned, where a **[core facility name]** publication number will be generated. We also politely request that you remember to acknowledge use of the facilities in your presentations and cite core facilities in grants, as appropriate.

This publication policy has been compiled by Natasha Stephen (Plymouth Electron Microscopy Centre) after discussions with the RMS EM-UK community. Dr Stephen gratefully acknowledges all contributors, particularly Kim Findlay of the John Innes Centre, whose contribution was used as an early model of this document.

Please sign below to confirm that you have read, and have understood, the **[insert core facility name here]** Publication Policy, and that you agree to abide by it in future publications resulting from your collaborative efforts with **[core facility name]** facilities & staff;

Name:

Signature:

Date: