

SEM SRF Core Facility Publication Policy

This publication policy is based on that suggested by the RMS at: <https://www.rms.org.uk/network-collaborate/core-facilities-publication-policy.html>

The core facility provides 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 these facilities and their expert 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 level of contribution provided by the facility and its staff.

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

1. Core facility staff are scientists and experts in their own fields. When they make an intellectual and/or experimental contribution to a publication they deserve to be recognised and acknowledged appropriately, as any other scientific collaborator to a project would be.
2. The ongoing existence of the core facility depends in part on acknowledgment and recognition in scientific publications. This is an important metric of value to the core facility, i.e. impact.
 - a. Proper acknowledgment of the facility enables them to obtain financial/other support to continue to provide much needed laboratory services to the scientific community.
 - b. It aids the core facility staff to advance their careers, adding to the overall health of the facility and wider research environment.
3. If core facility staff have co-authorship where deserved, it will avoid the risk of data misinterpretation, and help ensure the data are accurately utilised, conveyed and described.

The core facility must charge for services rendered according to agreed cost accounting practices within their institution. These rates are often calculated outside of core facility control, according to actual costs & associated overheads involved in running the core facility. However, the emphasis on cost recovery is at risk of damaging the scientific reputation of the core facility 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, the core facility are not just instruments provided in a room; they are populated by highly-skilled, expert and experienced individuals who make complex experiments possible, and provide essential support in very specialized technologies, and thus provide an intellectual contribution to the research projects that make use of the facility and their expert staff. Charging for these services helps bring awareness of the investment in a project but does not preclude acknowledgement or co-authorship on research publications. Core facility staff should have the opportunity to participate in drafting the appropriate parts of a research publication to give final approval to the wording and conclusions drawn before it's publication, as any other contributing researcher would.

We risk widening the gap between academic and expert technical staff if practices such as non-acknowledgement continues. Technical staff are not *lesser* individuals of the research community and are not simply service providers 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. Acknowledgement of everyone's efforts in presentations and publications must be an accepted baseline.

Acceptance of SEM SRF Core Facility Publication Policy

As a core facility within an academic institution, The SEM SRF follows the same internationally established guidelines as Departments or Schools throughout The University of Liverpool, stipulated by journals and the publication houses themselves. We have therefore, implemented the following publication policy within the SEM SRF:

1. All publications resulting from the use of instruments within the facility should, at the very least, formally acknowledge the SEM Shared Research Facility as a whole, e.g. ***'the authors gratefully acknowledge the SEM SRF for their support & assistance in this research'***
2. Where users have had significant help from a particular member of SEM SRF staff, or SEM SRF staff have played an important part in generating the research data, or SEM SRF staff have generated additional data personally, this individual staff member should be acknowledged by name, alongside the centre if applicable, e.g. ***'the authors thank *** of the SEM Shared Research Facility for their support & assistance in this work'***
3. If scientists from the SEM SRF contributed more than just routine techniques, they should be included as **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. However, if the acquisition of data leading to publication would not have been possible without the assistance\expertise of a facility specialist then inclusion of the SEM SRF specialist as a co-author should be considered.*

Formal and appropriate acknowledgement provides a visible measure of the impact and success of the facility and helps the facility to secure support and funding so it can continue to service the research community.

Authorship decisions are generally made at the preparation stage of a manuscript, rather than at the initiation of the work. If you are uncertain about co-authorship or have any questions or concerns about this, please discuss this issue with the SEM SRF Manager\Academic Lead(s)

Please send a reprint of the paper, or e-mail including the reference information for the publication, to the facility concerned. We also politely request that you remember to acknowledge use of the facility in your presentations and cite the core facility in grants, as appropriate.

Please sign below to confirm that you have read, and have understood, the SEM SRF Publication Policy, and that you agree to abide by it in future publications resulting from your collaborative efforts with the SEM SRF facility & staff:

Name _____ Date: _____

User Signature: _____