

**Louisiana State University
Office of Research and Economic Development**

**Creation, Evaluation, and Management of
Research Core Facilities**

March 2026

I. Goals and Objectives

The LSU Strategic Framework (Scholarship First Agenda, March 2024) targets Top 50 research university status by equipping faculty with the best facilities and expanding research capacity. To that end, the Office of Research and Economic Development (ORED) has established a division dedicated to Research Core Facilities (RCF) and Research Centers & Institutes (RCI).

RCFs are shared resources operating as cost centers (PS 103) that provide equitable access to instruments, technologies, services, training, and expert consultation to all LSU A&M investigators. Each RCF is a discrete administrative unit within ORED or a College with dedicated personnel, equipment, and space, and requires active scientific and managing directors. User fees charged to investigator funds recover costs; all fiscal operations must comply with PS 103 and applicable federal regulations.

Goals

- Provide students, postdocs, and faculty with state-of-the-art equipment, expertise, and training across all disciplines.
- Govern each RCF via a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between ORED and an Executive Committee comprising participating Colleges and a Faculty Advisory Committee.
- Build interdisciplinary research synergies across academic units.
- Maintain a central ORED web portal listing all campus RCFs.

Benefits

- Optimized use of specialized equipment and services while reducing redundancy; expanded external collaboration and increased proposal competitiveness (RCF as differentiator).
- Skilled workforce development through undergraduate, graduate, and postdoc training.

Financial Sustainability

- Generate cost savings and revenue while maintaining fiscal best practices per PS 103.
- Sustain equipment maintenance and depreciation funding to preserve research productivity.

Supporting Faculty Research Success

- Enable research capacities, including equipment, data acquisition/analysis, and specialized expertise.

- Provide faculty and external entities, including industry partners, access to cutting-edge tools and technologies.
- Create business partnership opportunities and give trainees access to specialized tools and projects.

II. RCF Proposal Process

RCFs may be designated as ORED or College-affiliated facilities providing shared access to research instrumentation and services.

1. Prepare the following proposal documents with an ORED-designated point of contact:
 - a. **Startup Request:** Describe the need and value to the research community, advantages of organizing an RCF, how resources advance LSU's research mission, anticipated users, and space planning (including any space-sharing agreements).
 - b. **Business Plan:** Establish cost basis and budget per PS 103; include any additional business plan options.
 - c. **Letters of Support:** Major users should briefly describe planned utilization and how existing or pending grants will support the RCF.
2. Submit documents to ORED (research@lsu.edu). Review criteria:
 - a. Need and value of specialized instrumentation, techniques, and services for LSU faculty.
 - b. Strength of the business plan.
 - c. Fiscal sustainability (reviewed on a three-year basis or as needed).
 - d. Promotion of LSU's research mission and strategic vision.
3. Competitive proposals are reviewed by the Council on Research and the Associate Deans of Research.
4. The Vice Chancellor of ORED submits a recommendation to the Chancellor of LSU A&M. Approved RCFs will develop an MOU covering:
 - a. An Executive Committee of Deans from key supported Colleges and other campus research units.
 - b. Budget support, organizational structure, and operational decision-making processes.
 - c. A Faculty Advisory Committee.
 - d. *(Recommended)* An External Advisory Committee to stimulate collaborative efforts.

III. RCF Review Process

Regular reviews ensure accountability for research infrastructure investments and that faculty needs are being met. Reviews provide performance measures for continued ORED support and an objective, transparent process for renewal, reclassification, merger, or discontinuation of RCFs.

1. Three-Year MOU Renewal — ORED renews each RCF's MOU on a three-year basis.
 - a. **Three-Year Review:** Describe RCF sustainability (staffing, costing, services), continuing need and value (user base, grant funding, publications), measurable goals vs. achievements, any cost/revenue/service/staffing issues, and how the ORED subsidy model supports operations.
 - b. Submit to ORED (research@lsu.edu). Review criteria: need and value of services, strength of the business plan, fiscal sustainability, and promotion of LSU's research mission.

- c. The Vice Chancellor of ORED submits a recommendation to the Chancellor of LSU A&M.
- 2. External Review — ORED may request an external review based on trends identified in three-year reports.
 - a. **Criteria:** Unmet goals from a prior evaluation; consensus request for review based on faculty/user recommendation; or inability of the Executive Committee to agree on strategy and accomplishments.
 - b. **Documentation** must address one of three outcomes — Renewal, Reclassification, or Discontinuation — and include: financial and space commitments requested of ORED, a revised MOU (for renewal/reclassification), need and value of services, promotion of LSU's research mission, and fiscal sustainability.
 - c. The Vice Chancellor of ORED submits a recommendation to the Chancellor of LSU A&M.