

Why 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.

IMCF Acknowledgment & Co-authorship Policy

As a core facility within an academic institution, **Imaging Methods Core Facility at BIOCEV (IMCF)** follows the same internationally established guidelines as departments or schools throughout Charles University in Prague and Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, stipulated by journals and the publication houses themselves, e.g. <https://www.nature.com/nature-research/editorial-policies/authorship> We have, therefore, implemented following publication policy applicable for staff and users of the **IMCF**:

1. All publications resulting from the use of instruments within the facility should, at the very least, acknowledge the **IMCF** as a whole, e.g. *“the authors acknowledge Imaging Methods Core Facility at BIOCEV, institution supported by the MEYS CR (LM2023050 Czech-Biolmaging) and for their support & assistance in this work.”* (Please specify details if needed. e.g. *“For their support with FLIM and cryo-TEM data acquisition”*)*
2. Where users have had significant help from a particular member of the **IMCF** staff, or **IMCF** staff have generated additional data personally, this staff member should be acknowledged by name and their personal contribution to the study in addition to the acknowledgment of the IMCF e.g. *“We thank X.Y. from Imaging Methods Core Facility at BIOCEV, institution supported by the MEYS CR (LM2023050 Czech-Biolmaging), for sample preparation and their support with FLIM and cryo-TEM data acquisition”* *
3. If scientists from the **IMCF** contributed with more than just routine techniques and provided significant intellectual input to the study, they should be co-authors of the paper. Development or adaptation of protocols to suit samples or materials, (re)designing experiments, extensive data processing and analysis and interpretation are not routine and constitute contributions meriting co-authorship. Simple acquisitions of raw data or routine sample preparations alone normally would not merit co-authorship but should still be acknowledged (as in paragraph 2 above).
4. In order to sustain appropriate presentation, technical quality, annotation and interpretation of imaging data in publications (in accord with conventional standards and guidelines in microscopy) our staff reserves the right to review relevant parts of manuscripts containing results generated in the IMCF prior to their submission. The IMCF staff is committed to strict data confidentiality policy.

We appreciate that authorship decisions are generally made at the preparation stage of a manuscript, rather than at the initiation of the work, however the **IMCF** staff expect to be informed of desired outcome of any new research project and 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 head in advance.

Please send a reprint of the paper, or an e-mail including the reference information for the publication, to the head of the **IMCF** and to the **IMCF** staff who contributed to the work. We also politely request that you remember to acknowledge use of the facilities in your presentations and cite core facilities in grants, as appropriate (paragraph 1).

() Where only Flow Cytometry data are used in the manuscript, please omit acknowledgment of the MEYS CR (LM2023050 Czech-Biolmaging)*

This policy is an adaptation of “A generic policy for use in your facility to encourage fair acknowledgement” compiled by Natasha Stephen (Plymouth Electron Microscopy Centre) after discussions with the RMS EM-UK community. <https://www.rms.org.uk/library/core-facilities-publication-policy.html>

Please sign below to confirm you have read and understood the **IMCF** Acknowledgment & Publication Policy and agree to commit to it in future publications resulting from your collaborative efforts with the **IMCF** facility & staff

Name:

Signature:

Date: