

# VUMC Cores: a Complex Funding Environment

*Association of Biomolecular Resource Facilities*  
March 2020



Susan Meyn  
Vanderbilt University Medical Center



# Vanderbilt Reorganization

## Medical Center

Research & cores  
in Clinical Depts  
& Research  
Centers

~65  
cores

*Vanderbilt  
University  
School  
of  
Medicine*

## University

Research & cores  
in Basic Science  
Departments &  
Research Centers

~28\*  
cores

# Multiple sources of funding (subsidy) to VUMC cores

Center for AIDS Research
Cancer Center (Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center)
CTSA (Institute for Clinical and Translational Research)
Diabetes Center
Digestive Disease Research Center
Kennedy Center
Kidney Center (O'Brien Center)
Mouse Metabolic Phenotyping Center
Precision Medicine
Vision Research Center

P30

U

*+ 11 other "P" type grants*

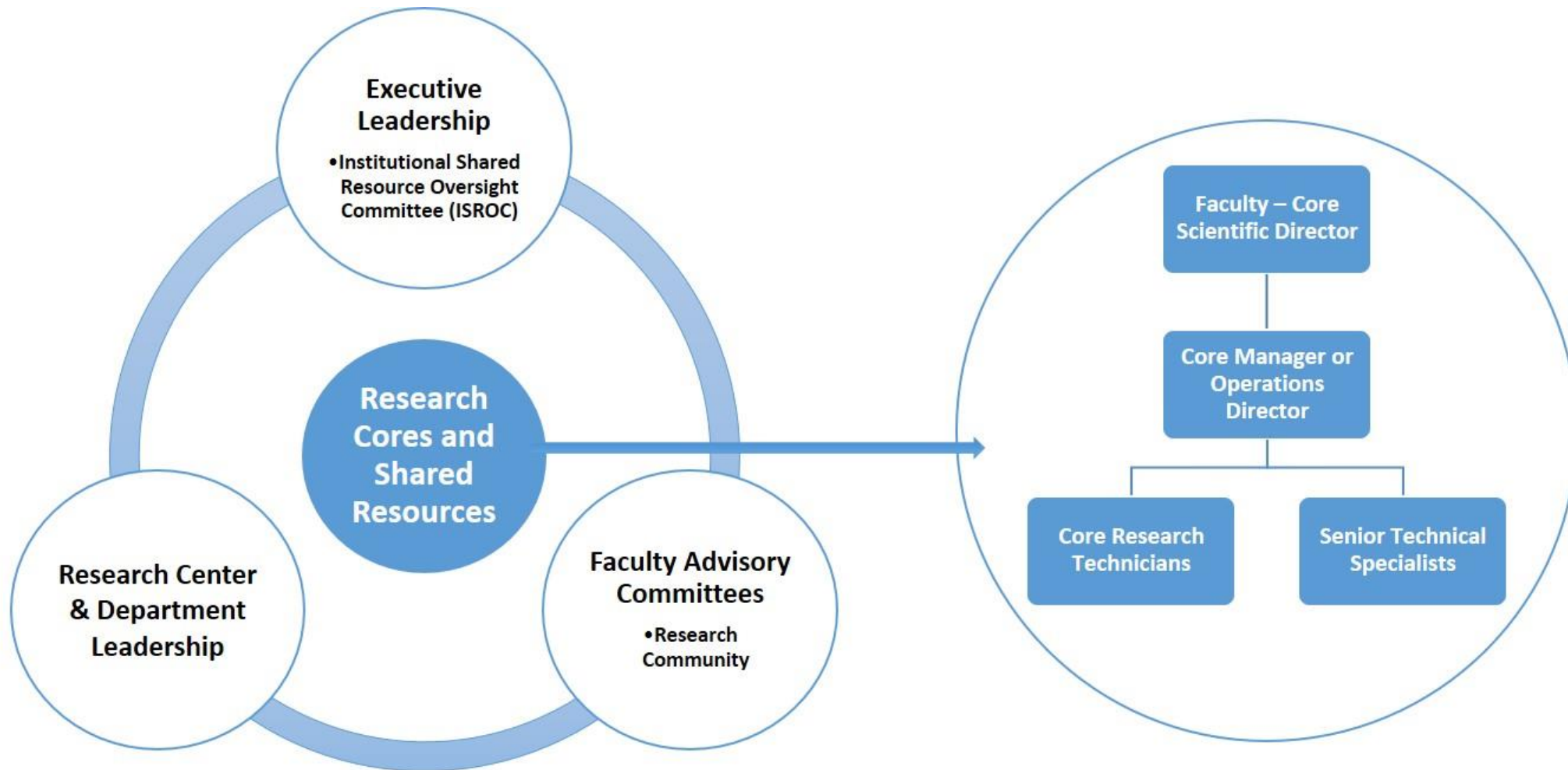
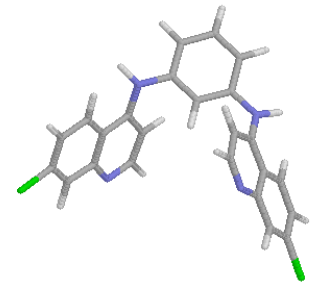
## **Benefits to Cores:**

- Supports staff effort, cost of new method development, new equipment
- Reduces core expense subject to cost recovery, lowers rates for all investigators

***Not limited to Federally funded centers:***

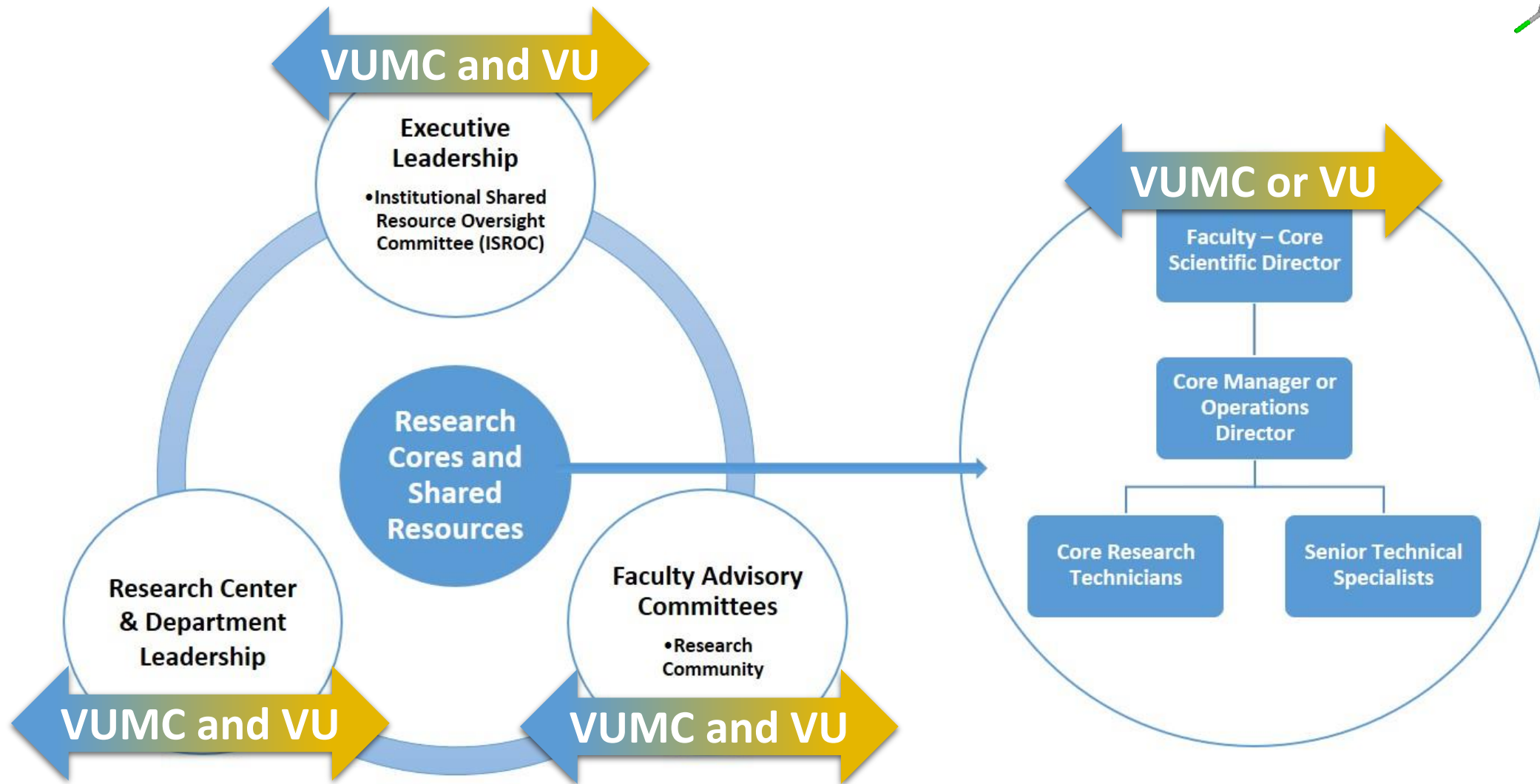
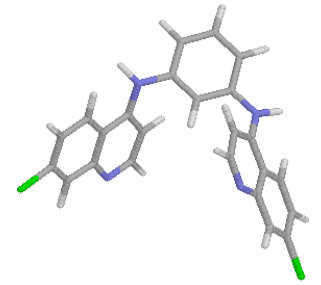
[www.vumc.org/oor/departments-and-centers](http://www.vumc.org/oor/departments-and-centers)

# VUMC Cores: Structure and Governance





# VUMC Cores: Structure and Governance



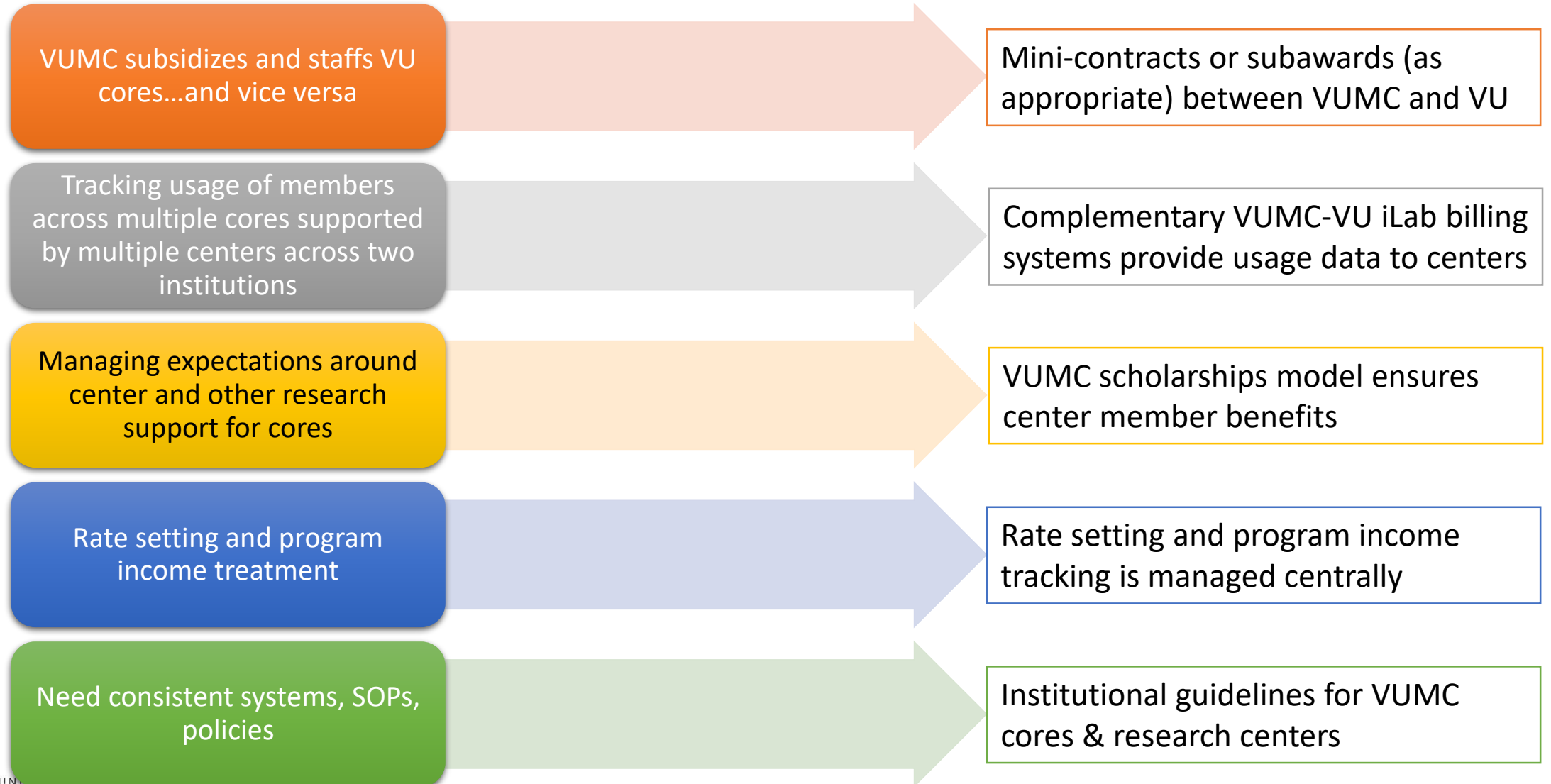
# VUMC Cores: Operating Principles

- Based in **research centers**
- **No duplication of cores**
- Culture of **collaboration**
- **One service, one price**
- **Center** leadership willingness to leverage resources to benefit all
- **All faculty have access** to core services – not limited to certain groups
- Strategic, explicit **alignment of research cores and enterprise mission**
- **Direct Federal grant support is limited** to center & “core” type mechanisms – *e.g. no R01s*



# Managing Subsidies

*Core subsidies: direct funding to offset the cost of core operations*



# Managing center benefits: *Common Strategies*

## ***Priority access***

### *Benefit:*

- Supporting PI(s) “first in line” for service
- No cost to core
- Useful for S10 or grants as a “carrot” to PI

### *Considerations:*

- Limited utility: Only so many priority slots possible
- Core should establish clear, consistent guidelines
- If everyone has priority, no one has priority





# Managing center benefits: *Common Strategies*

## ***Center Member Discounts***

### *Benefit:*

- Members pay discounted prices
- Familiar model

### *Considerations:*

- Different centers may want to apply different discounts
- Difficult to track back to center support
- Many individual faculty have multiple memberships – applying correct center discount can be tricky



# Managing center benefits: *Mechanisms in use at Vanderbilt*

	Vouchers	Co-pay	"Scholarships"
<b>Definition</b>	Award of <b>new funds</b> to an eligible investigator, to redeem in a specific core facility.	<b>Cost sharing</b> between eligible investigator and their affiliated school or department to pay core rates	<b>Credit</b> allocated to an eligible investigator to redeem in a specific core reflecting specific subsidy funding to that core.
<b>Recipient/benefit</b>	Investigator receives <b>funds</b> to spend in core(s).	Investigator pays <b>partial cost</b> of core service.	Investigator receives <b>credit</b> for redemption in core(s).
<b>Conditions</b>	Awarded on a <b>competitive</b> basis.	School or department covers <b>partial cost</b> difference via co-payment.	A <b>subsidy to the core is required</b> before a scholarship can be allocated.
<b>iLab functionality</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Pro</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent Pricing</li> <li>• PI has visibility for true cost</li> <li>• Support is directly tied to utilization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent Pricing</li> <li>• PI has visibility for true cost</li> <li>• Support is directly tied to utilization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent Pricing</li> <li>• PI visibility for true cost</li> <li>• Support directly tied to utilization</li> <li>• Core still receives some direct benefit</li> </ul>
<b>Con</b>	Limited funding available	Each user may pay different effective rate, depending upon affiliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to consider direct, indirect impact on rates.</li> <li>• <i>Difficult to explain!</i></li> </ul>
<b>Used by:</b>	VUMC CTSA	VUMC CTSA VU Schools, Colleges, Departments	VUMC Research Centers

# Managing center benefits: *VUMC Scholarship Model*

**Expectations:** Center members, external reviewers and program officers expect discounted core service rates for center members

**Concerns:** Inconsistent with “one service/one price” principles

**Solution:** Replace center-specific discounts with a system of internal credit: **Scholarships**

## **Outcome:**

Multi-Center support for a single unified core facility → credit vouchers → promote use of core → reduce “out of pocket” costs to center members.

***Centers decide how to distribute scholarships  
to meet programmatic needs.***



# Managing center benefits: *Case Study*

## Amazing Technology Shared Resource (ATSR)

*One core supported by multiple research centers*



VU Core

Cancer (P30)

Diabetes (P30)

Digestive Disease (P30)

Vision (P30)

MMPC (U24)

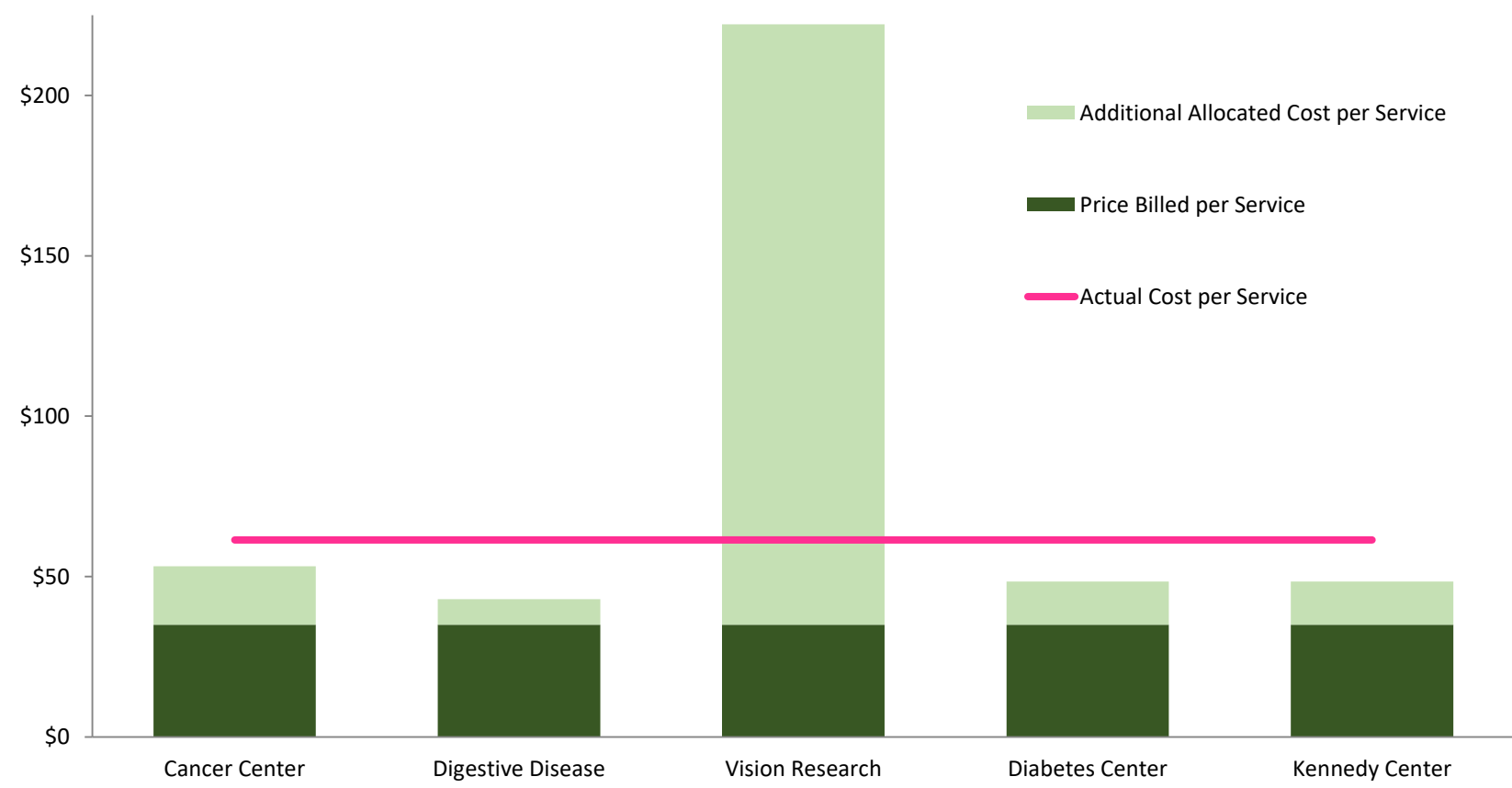
4 of 5  
VUMC Centers

*Benefits center members and all Vanderbilt PIs*

# Managing center benefits: *Case Study*

## Amazing Technology Shared Resource (ATSR)

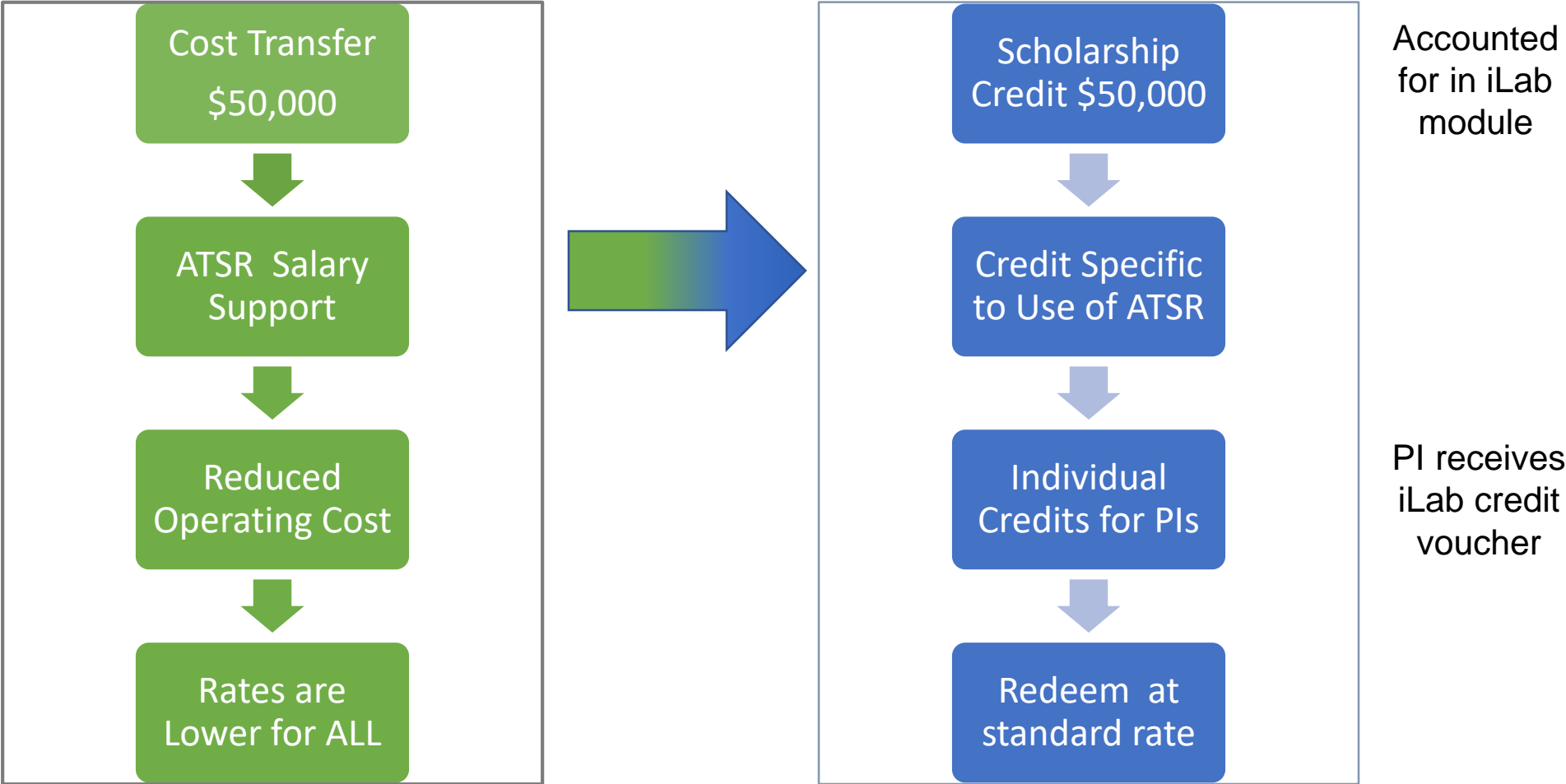
*What is true benefit to centers when they support discounted pricing?*



# Managing center benefits: *Case Study*

## Amazing Technology Shared Resource (ATSR)

*Using scholarships for supporting Cancer Center Support Grant subsidy to ATSR*





# Managing center benefits: *Billing System*

## *iLab Scholarships Module, aka Center Managed Funds*

VUMC  
Editing center: VUMC TESTING CENTER

Hide Filters

Showing 25 results per page

Displaying 25 out of 25 results. (Page 1 of 1)

Start Date	End Date	Fund Number	Core Name	Total Amount	Amount Distributed	Amount to Distribute	Actual Amount Remaining
January 01, 2020	January 23, 2020	Test Emails (Exp 1.23.20)	> Core 4 (DEMO)	\$1,000.00	\$450.00	\$550.00	\$1,000.00
July 01, 2018	June 26, 2019	FY19 Test	>> Core 7 Testing	\$4,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$4,000.00
July 01, 2018	June 26, 2019	FY19 Test	> Core 4 (DEMO)	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,990.00
July 01, 2017	June 30, 2019	Tiffany Scholarship Testing	>> Core 7 Testing	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$0.00	\$100,000.00
July 01, 2017	June 30, 2018	FY18 Scholarship Training	> Core 4 (DEMO)	\$10,000.00	\$6,500.00	\$3,500.00	\$10,000.00
June 01, 2017	May 30, 2018	FY18 Scholarship Balance Test	> Core 4 (DEMO)	\$100,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$90,000.00	\$100,000.00
September 01, 2017	August 31, 2018	Date Test 2	> Core 4 (DEMO)	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$90.00
July 01, 2017	June 30, 2018	OOR (7/1/17 to 6/30/18)	> Core 4 (DEMO)	\$50,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$49,884.35
July 01, 2017	July 31, 2017	Test Scholarship - Alloc. Amt	> Core 4 (DEMO)	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
July 01, 2017	July 27, 2017	Test End Date (Exp 7/28/17)	> Core 4 (DEMO)	\$1,000.00	\$100.00	\$900.00	\$1,000.00
July 01, 2017	July 30, 2017	Test End Date	> Core 4 (DEMO)	\$100,000.00	\$0.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00
July 01, 2017	July 30, 2019	OOR Test Scholarship - VU Demo	> Core 4 (DEMO)	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00
June 27, 2017	August 31, 2017	Test Scholarship Allocation A	> Core 4 (DEMO)	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$90.00

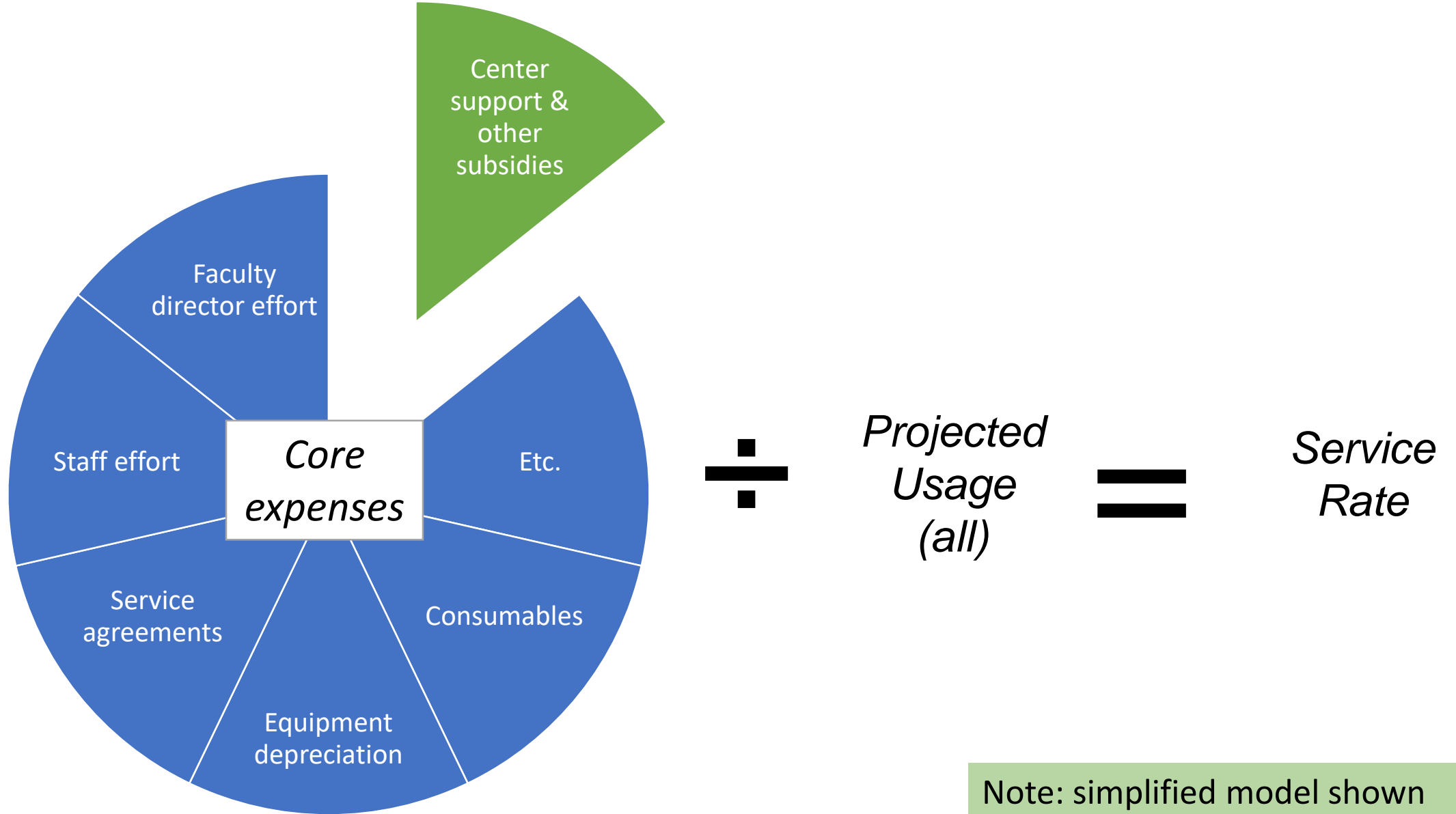
### Module essentials:

- Center administrators can allocate and manage Scholarships directly
- PIs use the Scholarship fund number to reserve equipment or pay for core services
- Cores bill charges to the Scholarship fund number
- Used to allocate ~\$1M in Scholarships each year

Start Date	End Date	Fund Number	Core Name	Total Amount	Amount Distributed	Amount to Distribute
January 01, 2020	January 23, 2020	Test Emails (Exp 1.23.20)	> Core 4 (DEMO)	\$1,000.00	\$450.00	\$550.00
July 01, 2018	June 26, 2019	FY19 Test	>> Core 7 Testing	\$4,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$3,000.00
July 01, 2018	June 26, 2019	FY19 Test	> Core 4 (DEMO)	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$0.00
July 01, 2017	June 30, 2019	Tiffany Scholarship Testing	>> Core 7 Testing	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$0.00
July 01, 2017	June 30, 2018	FY18 Scholarship Training	> Core 4 (DEMO)	\$10,000.00	\$6,500.00	\$3,500.00

Note: OOR central office supports Centers by providing reports of all billing activity as needed

# Managing center support for cores: *Rate Calculation*



# Managing center support for cores: *Program Income*

*For most cores receiving direct grant support where tracking Program Income is required:*

- A dollar of revenue is a dollar reported\*
- Funds remain with the core, further benefitting grant-funded mission.\*
- Use the Additive Alternative method.\*

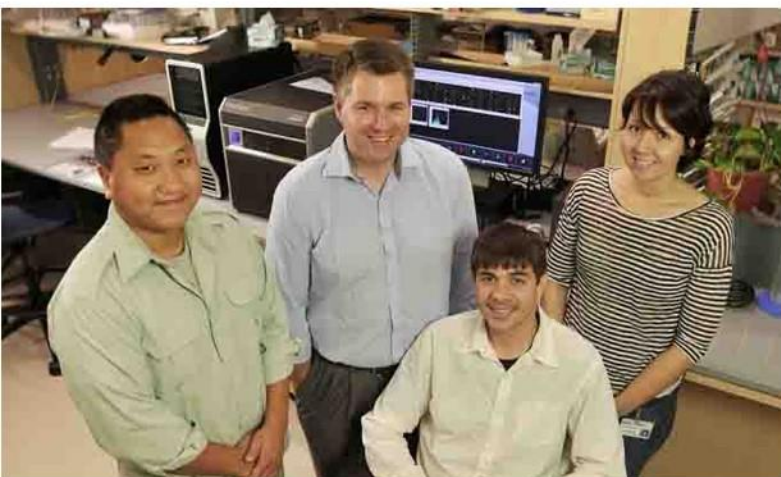
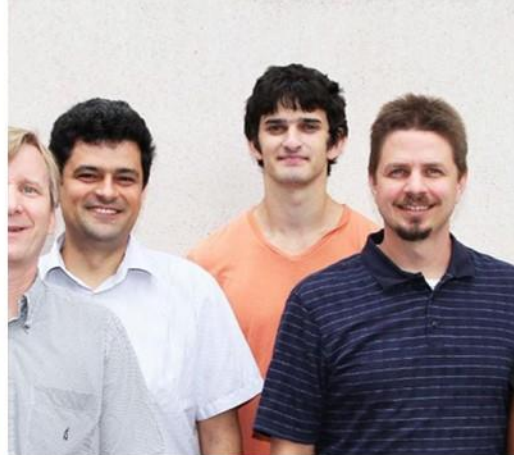
*\*Per T&Cs of the NoGA*

Exhibit 9. Use and Applicability of Program Income Alternatives		
Program Income Alternative	Use of Program Income	Applicability
Additive Alternative	Added to funds committed to the project or program and used to further eligible project or program objectives.	Applies to all NIH awards unless there is a concern with the recipient or activity or the program requires a different alternative.
Deductive Alternative	Deducted from total allowable costs of the project or program to determine the net allowable costs on which the Federal share of costs will be based.	Available for use by NIH programs on an exception basis.
Combination Alternative	Uses all program income up to (and including) \$25,000 as specified under the additive alternative and any amount of program income exceeding \$25,000 under the deductive alternative.	Available for use by NIH programs on an exception basis.
Matching Alternative	Used to satisfy all or part of the non-Federal share of a project or program.	Available for use by NIH programs that require matching.



# Resources

- FAQs for Costing of NIH-Funded Core Facilities  
<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-13-053.html>
- NIH Grants Policy Statement (Program Income)  
[http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps\\_2012/nihgps\\_ch8.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps_2012/nihgps_ch8.htm)
- Your NIH program officer
- Your institutional sponsored program and finance offices
- **ABRF, of course!**  
Check out the Core Administrators Network:
  - website: <https://abrf.org/committee/core-administrators-network>
  - discussion group: <http://list.abrf.org/groups/cancc/>



# Acknowledgements

Vanderbilt Core Directors,  
Managers, Staff and  
Administrators esp. Office  
of Research Team

&



The Association  
of Biomolecular  
Resource Facilities

