

External Use of Core Facilities During Spring 2021

Background on Core Facilities

Notre Dame [core facilities](#) are shared resources that offer a variety of research services and capabilities. There are more than 30 such facilities, and examples include the [Biophysics Instrumentation Core Facility](#), the [Center for Research Computing](#), the [Engineering and Design Core Facility](#), the [Integrated Imaging Facility](#), and the [Notre Dame Nanofabrication Facility](#). View comprehensive list: <https://research.nd.edu/our-research/facilities-and-resources>

The core facilities are accessed using a cost center model, with (typically) hourly rates for access to a particular service (or tool, room, etc.). For a particular service, the rate that is charged to a user may depend on at least these factors:

- whether the user is internal or external to Notre Dame;
- the extent to which the access is “staff-assisted” – e.g., does the user operate a tool unassisted or does a staff member do some (or all) the work?

Finally, it should be noted that access to Notre Dame’s core facilities by [local industry](#) is a significant part of the vision funded by a \$42 million Lilly Foundation award announced in 2019. The award established a Notre Dame unit called iNDustry Labs – a platform through which local industry can leverage the presence of a research university to enhance economic development in the region. There is substantial funding from the Lilly award to enhance the “outward facing” aspect of the core facilities – e.g., to subsidize access, to create a “frictionless” process for engagement, and to expand and further develop those core facilities that are most beneficial to companies in the region.

Access to Core Facilities Through Spring 2021

Notre Dame core facilities operate under the guidelines established in the [“Phased Reopening of Research” Playbook](#). To the extent that access to the core facilities by [internal users](#) (i.e., ND researchers) is affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, it will primarily be affected by the potential reduction in capacity due to policies outlined in the playbook.

However, external users – e.g., representatives from local (and non-local) companies, other universities, national laboratories – are (potentially) campus visitors and are thus subject to the [university's visitor policy](#). Under those policies, Spring 2021 campus visits will be “significantly limited to essential visitors only” and must be approved by the appropriate dean or VP based on three criteria:

1. the time-sensitivity of the visit (i.e., can it wait until after Spring 2021?);
2. the immediate importance of the requested visit to the University's core teaching/research mission; and
3. the potential long-term consequences to the University of not hosting the requested visit.

The following guidelines will govern the use of Notre Dame's core facilities by external users through Spring 2021:

- To the extent possible, visits to campus by external users should be avoided during the semester.
- To the extent possible, services provided by the core to external users should be “staff-assisted,” thereby reducing (or eliminating) the presence of visitors in the facility. To encourage this, all external users who would, under normal circumstances, access the facilities without staff assistance will be provided with staff-assisted services at unassisted rates through Spring 2021.
- Any visits to campus by external users to make use of core facilities must be approved by the dean of the relevant college (or his/her designee) using the three criteria outlined in the visitor policy. In recognition of the contractual obligations established by the Lilly Endowment grant and for IDEA Center companies, economic development considerations for the region may be used to satisfy criterion #2 in an expedited fashion.
- Visitors must adhere to the conditions of the Visitors Policy and the health and safety protocols of the research core and the building in which the core is located.