Establishing a Research Service Center

Before a research service center can be established, a need for the proposed operation must be demonstrated and validated. The following criteria must be considered:

➢ The activity complies with the definition and intent of a research service center.
➢ A demand exists within the University community for the goods and/or services to be provided.
➢ A significant volume of services, both in dollar amount and number of transactions, will occur annually justifying the need for the research service center.
➢ The proposed research service center is related to the instructional, research, or public service mission of the University.
➢ Goods and/or services are provided on a regular, recurring basis for a fee.
➢ Goods and/or services are measurable.

Service Center Application/Renewal Form

A written request to establish a research service center must be submitted to the Financial Services Cost Analyst via the Service Center Application/Renewal Form. The form includes general information, billable services information, annual costs and rate development, approval signatures. The following documentation must accompany the form:

▪ Business Plan
▪ List of all capital assets to be used in the research service center operations, including tag number, physical location, and percentage of usage for billable services.
▪ Rate Development Workbook
After the Service Center Application/Renewal Form has been reviewed and approved by all appropriate parties, including the Financial Services Cost Analyst, the Cost Analyst will assist with establishing an appropriate fund for the research service center financial activity.

**Operating Fund**

All research service centers must have a designated and unique organizational code to account for operational financial activity. The financial activity includes (1) generated revenue from the research service center charges to users, and (2) disbursements of research service center expenses. Comingling of research service center revenue and expenses with other nonrelated activity is prohibited. After Financial Services review of the research service center’s business plan and financial activity, it will be determined whether the designated fund used will be an institutional trust fund or a state fund.

**Billing**

Research service centers must bill all users for the goods and/or services provided. All billings should be processed on a timely basis and users will be charged at approved rates. Generally, (1) billing practices must be consistent and accurate, (2) advanced billing for services or products is prohibited, and (3) non-federal external users may be billed at a higher rate than internal users.

Our website: [http://www.ecu.edu/cs-admin/financial_serv/service_centers.cfm](http://www.ecu.edu/cs-admin/financial_serv/service_centers.cfm)

Contact Information
Tereasa Hopkins, CPA
Cost Analyst
Accounting Services
H202, 3800 E. 10th Street
MS 203
252-737-5811
hopkinst@ecu.edu

ECU Financial Services