

Northwestern | CORE FACILITIES

Fall 2025 Equipment Grant / ReLODE Proposal Preparation

Proposals that do not follow the Proposal Format and Preparation instructions below will be returned for prompt revision or declined without review if unresolved before the review date.

Note: Limit of only **2** proposals per core.

The Proposal Must Contain

- **Cover Page** (available as a Word file - [here](#)) (1 page)
 - Note: Signatures of the Facility Director and Chair of the Faculty Advisory Committee are required; these signatures will constitute acknowledgment that the request has been discussed and approved by the Faculty Advisory Committee.
- **Overall Project Description** (1-2 sentences)
 - Include request amount, instrument name, and high-level description of research supported.
- **Justification of Need** (1/2 page)
 - Describe the research need for the proposed project.
 - Describe the fundamental capability that is added/preserved through this project. What is the research need being addressed?
 - Describe the expected impact of the requested project on research at Northwestern including research projects that require this equipment/services (provide a list of likely users in Appendix 1 and letters of support from faculty documenting this need in Appendix 2). Include, in general terms how groups will benefit from the new capability and **either how they are currently meeting this need or how the lack of access is impacting their research**. If appropriate, include details of preliminary data demonstrating feasibility in the Appendix 5.
 - Describe the service lines that will utilize the proposed equipment or new service line(s) that will be created.
 - Describe why the program chosen is the most appropriate funding source. Were other sources considered? Have you applied for external funding? If so, summarize feedback in Section 6 (Resubmission) and include reviews in the Appendix 6.
- **Project Description and Selection Process** (1/2 page)
 - Describe each requested item in sufficient detail *so that a non-expert reviewer can understand what it is and how it will be used*.
 - If appropriate, describe decision methodology to choose specific vendor/model (technical / price / software performance). Include detailed testing information in the Appendix as appropriate. If any accessories are required, identify the specific groups that require each accessory. Describe need here or in letters of support (a table in the Appendix 3 is acceptable).
 - If appropriate, describe service to be created. Summarize samples/data to be provided by service requestor and deliverable from the core (materials / data / other outputs).
 - Provide a high-level budget for the project; describe cost sharing support as appropriate. The detailed budget should be included in Appendix 3.
 - Provide information as to whether similar equipment or services are available somewhere else at Northwestern and why this equipment/service cannot meet the needs of your users. Include letters from owners of similar equipment indicating that the proposed equipment meets an unmet need in Appendix 2.

- **Administration and Operational Budget** (1 page)
 - Describe the location where the requested equipment will be housed and operated or where services will be performed; discuss any renovation required to make the space suitable; if renovation of existing space is necessary, indicate who will fund the renovation costs and include letter of commitment in Appendix 2; describe process to intake new requests for services and process to complete requests (include examples of reports or details on deliverables in an Appendix 7).
 - Describe how the core facility will handle technical support for the project; if expertise does not exist in the facility, outline how this expertise will be achieved (e.g., through training of existing personnel or hiring of new personnel) and paid for; if technical support is provided by existing personnel, explain how these new responsibilities will affect existing responsibilities.
 - Describe how the facility will maintain the instrument/service financially and briefly explain rationale behind creating a new service line vs. combining operational costs with existing service lines. If the instrument maintenance, repair, and calibration will be funded through a new service line, provide unit of sale, estimate usage and provide initial rate(s). Estimate costs for repairs, consumables, and staff in budget included in Appendix 3. Estimate initial rate. If maintenance cost will be included in existing service lines, identify service lines and estimate impact to rates (i.e. determine annual cost for accessory and divide by usage of existing equipment). If using existing service lines, show user base of those service lines in the Appendix.
 - For ReLODE, explicitly indicate sources of repayment revenue (i.e. increased usage, increase rates or both); the strongest applications will include letters of support from largest users indicating that they support a rate increase or intend to increase usage if the proposal is funded.
- **Resubmission** (1 page) or proposal submitted previously to a federal agency
 - If this proposal is a resubmission, clearly address the concerns of the previous review.
 - If this proposal was previously declined or incompletely funded by a federal agency / foundation, explain why you are requesting internal support and address any criticisms of the Study Section (include Summary Statement in the Appendix 6).
- **Appendix** required (no page restriction)
 - Appendix 1: User base analysis / Potential Users
 - i. For new equipment proposals, provide a list of potential users arranged and grouped alphabetically by PI last name. Highlight PI's that cannot complete proposed experiments using existing or other equipment.
 - ii. For ReLODE proposals, show past 2 years of revenue and usage (use appropriate unit) for service lines that will be used to recover loan costs. Sort by PI last name.
 - Appendix 2: Letters of Support and Financial Commitments (email okay)
 - i. Provide letters of support from faculty members endorsing the request; a few good letters explaining how this equipment will benefit their research is preferable to a string of identical letters.
 - ii. Provide letters documenting financial commitments
 - iii. Provide letters from similar equipment owners explaining why the existing equipment will not meet the fundamental need articulated in the proposal.
 - Appendix 3: Capital and operational budgets
 - i. Complete a long-term purchase and operational budget (templates found here: [2024 Equipment Grant Budget](#)). For new service lines, refer to the “**New Service**” tab. For capabilities impacting existing service lines, refer to the “**Single Service-Historical Budg**” or “**Multi Service- Historical Budg**” tab; estimate new

- costs associating with equipment and explain how costs will be distributed between services.
- ii. For ReLODE, include a budget describing the purchase, long term maintenance plan, and loan repayment for the equipment - use [ReLODE Repayment Template](#). Contact CoreFacilities-Finance@northwestern.edu for additional assistance if needed. If the provided templates are inappropriate because the piece of equipment is not directly generating revenue (i.e. supporting service lines) and has minimal sustaining costs, indicate so in body of proposal.
 - iii. If needed, provide a table including accessories included and indicate which PI's require accessories for currently planned work.
- Appendix 4: Quotes
 - i. Provide competitive quotations from manufacturer or supplier for each instrument requested. For proposals expected to be completed in FY24 quote should include delivery terms of less than 90 days or be accompanied by an email from the vendor indicating instrument can be delivered and installed by July 30th.
Verify that shipping and installation costs are included in quoted price.
 - Appendix 5: Vendor Supplied Data
 - i. If appropriate, provide data used in equipment selection process.
 - Appendix 6: Previous feedback from internal / external grant submissions
 - Appendix 7: Other