

Northwestern | CORE FACILITIES

Fall 2025 Equipment Grant / ReLODE Competition

The Office for Research is inviting Fall 2025 Equipment Grant / ReLODE proposals. If awarded, all PO's must be submitted by **December 15th, 2025** and fully received by **July 15th, 2026**. If purchase orders cannot be submitted by this date, proposals should be submitted for a future competition.

Note that the competition is subject to the [Interim Guidance on Support for Research](#) which requires all purchases over \$25,000 to be supported by the appropriate Associate Dean for Research and approved by the [Chief Financial Officer](#). Therefore, an added section will be required to explain how the project supports existing research and the impact to current research if the project is not funded.

To qualify for this program, the submitter must be a Director or Manager of a university-sponsored core facility and the core must have submitted a FY25 Annual Report/FY26 Request for Operating Support. See "[Expectations for Core Facilities](#)". Exceptions require approval prior to submission.

REQUIRED LETTER OF INTENT

Submission of the [LOI Form](#) is required to receive a link to upload the full proposal. In addition, LOIs assist us in identifying reviewers.

Deadline: September 4 at 11:59 pm

FULL PROPOSAL

Must be submitted online through the link that you will receive upon submitting the LOI.

Deadline: September 25 at 11:59 pm

Program Description

The Office for Research (OR) is accepting Equipment Grant and ReLODE proposals for the purchase of equipment or instrumentation to support core facilities that serve the overall research community at Northwestern University. OR accepts requests that are not likely to be eligible for external funding (*e.g.*, because the instrument does not meet the minimum cost guidelines or in some other way does not qualify for external support) or in cases where the timeline for need cannot be met through external funding requests. **Two** equipment requests per facility will be accepted. Each request must be submitted as a separate proposal and prioritized relative to the other requests.

Types of Funding Requests

1. **Grants for new equipment** costing \$5,000 to \$100,000 will be considered if the proposal includes cost share commitments of at least 10% by key stakeholders (PIs, departments, centers and/or schools). Submitters must justify why the internal funding program is most appropriate and what other options were considered.
2. **Grants for new equipment** costing \$100,000 or more will be considered if the request from OR is \$100,000 or less, key stakeholders provide required 10% cost share, and all funds needed to complete the project are identified in the budget. Proposals for equipment that are currently pending at external agencies will not be considered.

3. **ReLODE – Loans for replacement of old equipment** costing less than \$500,000 will be considered if the old equipment is heavily used, beyond its expected lifespan, and the equipment is not a candidate for external funding. Documentation of usage data and service reports over the previous three years is required. Cost share is NOT required. The loan will be repaid in installments that reflect the depreciation schedule of the equipment.
4. **ReLODE – Loans for replacement of old equipment** costing \$500,000 or more will be considered if the total OR request is \$500,000, or less, and funds are identified to cover project costs in excess of the OR request. The old equipment must be heavily used, beyond its expected lifespan, and the equipment must not be a candidate for external funding. The loan will be repaid by installments that reflect the depreciation schedule of the equipment.
5. **ReLODE – Loans for duplication of existing equipment** costing less than \$500,000 will be considered if the existing equipment is oversubscribed and the duplicate is not a candidate for external funding. Cost share is NOT required. The loan will be repaid by installments that reflect the depreciation schedule of the equipment. The minimum annual repayment amount is \$5,000. Duplication of existing equipment should be thoroughly justified.
6. **ReLODE – Loans for duplication of existing equipment** costing \$500,000 or more will be considered if the total OR request is \$500,000, or less, and funds are identified to cover project costs in excess of the OR request. The old equipment must be oversubscribed and the duplicate is not a candidate for external funding. The loan will be repaid by installments that reflect the depreciation schedule of the equipment. Duplication of existing equipment should be thoroughly justified.
7. **ReLODE – Loans for new equipment providing new capabilities** costing \$25,000 to \$100,000 will be considered if there is an urgent need for the instrument or if an internal grant request was denied and core leadership view the instrument strategic for the core's users. The minimum annual repayment amount is \$5,000.
8. **Grants for new services:** costing \$5,000 to \$50,000 will be considered if the proposal includes cost share commitments of at least 10% by key stakeholders (PIs, departments, centers and/or schools). Proposals should result in the creation of a new service line, or cross-core service, and meaningful ongoing revenue. Funds may be used to cover staff time, training, instrument time, and materials for proof-of-concept experiments. Submitters must justify why the internal funding program is most appropriate and what other options were considered.
9. **Not accepted:** Requests for operating costs, deficit reduction, new personnel, space renovation, etc. will not be accepted under this program.

Urgent requests should be addressed to the [Core Facilities Director](#).

ReLODE Program Procedures

[ReLODE Program Accounting Procedure](#)

[ReLODE Program Flow Chart](#)

[ReLODE Repayment Template](#)

Proposal Preparation Instructions

[Fall 2025 Equipment Grant/ReLODE Proposal Instructions](#)

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.

Proposal Submission

1. Application documents should be compiled into a single, contiguous PDF file; margins should be one inch on all sides, at least 11-point Times New Roman, and single line spacing. Save the file using a name that indicates the facility name and submission cycle (e.g., BIF_Fall_25).
2. Applications must be submitted online.
3. A link to the website will be sent to Directors and Managers upon submission of the LOI.

Review Process

1. Proposals will be reviewed using the following criteria:
 - a) Justification of Need
 - What is the impact of the newly added capability or expanding capacity? Who will benefit from it? How are researchers completing work today in its absence?
 - Does proposed equipment meet technical needs described in the “Justification of Need” section of the proposal? Is the equipment cost reasonable? Are all expenses appropriately justified? Any unjustified expenses included?
 - Is the new capability unique to Northwestern? If capability is overlapping or duplicative, is the need adequately justified?
 - b) Operations and Administration
 - How will the core provide the researchers access to the new capability? Is adequate space and expertise available? If renovations or training is required, are commitments provided?
 - Describe operational budget. Will proposed rates deter use? Is expected usage reasonable? Are expected expenses (consumables and repairs) identified and factored into rates?
 - Is the program (Equipment Grant or ReLODE) the most appropriate program for this submission? What other internal/external sources were considered?
 - c) **New – Is proposal sufficiently urgent to justify exception to the restrictions of purchases greater than \$25,000.**
 - What does research support and what is the impact of not funding the proposal?
 - How does the project support strategic initiatives?
2. Based on the review, proposals will be prioritized for funding by CFA, school leadership, and representatives from core facilities.

Outcomes

Outcomes will be released **mid-November**

Equipment Purchase

If awarded, PO's must be submitted by **December 15th, 2025** and fully received by **July 15th, 2026**. If purchase orders cannot be submitted by this date, proposals should be submitted for a future competition.

Links

[2025 Fall Equipment Grant/ReLODE Cover Page CFA Funding Application](#)
[Fall 2025 Equipment Grant/ReLODE Proposal Instructions](#)
[2024 Fall Equipment Grant Budget](#) (no changes from previous competition)

[ReLODE Accounting Procedure](#)

[ReLODE Flow Chart and Examples](#)

[ReLODE Repayment Template](#) (no changes from previous competition)

[LOI Form](#)