

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGY CORE FACILITIES IN LIFE SCIENCES

How to improve Technology Core Facilities (TCF) management and stimulate activity?

This document is part of a larger study on TCFs business models in Europe which aim is:

- to better understand the various business models of TCFs in the life science sector,
- to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of each of these models,
- to propose perspectives of evolution in terms of financial autonomy and international visibility.

This leaflet presents eight principles for TCFs management and business development established through literature review and interviews conducted with 15 TCF directors, managers or coordinators in Europe.

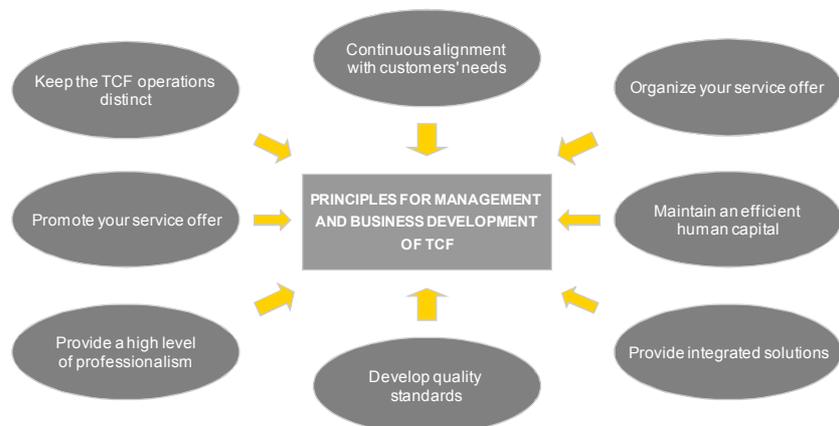
In the life sciences sector, companies' request for routines services, contract research activities, consultancy, training, collaborations with Contract Research Organizations (CRO), equipment supplier, private or public companies... is constantly growing. This trend can be explained by the globalization of the research world, the uninterrupted desire for the newest cutting-edge technology and the will to reinforce the scientific knowledge.

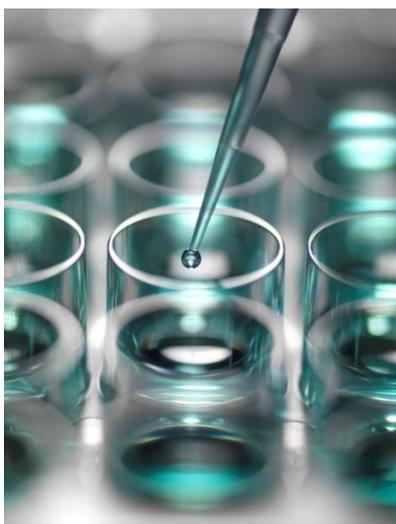
The consequence of this evolution is a real opportunity for TCF which have the capacity to answer clients' demand and expectations.

To make sure seizing this opportunity, a non-exhaustive list of principles is provided in this report. These practices reflect advice collected through interviews with the aim of improving the TCFs day-to-day management and helping them to develop further their activities.

Top 8 principles for management and business development of TCF

1. Continuous alignment with customers' needs
2. Organize your service offer
3. Maintain an efficient Human capital
4. Provide integrated solutions
5. Develop quality standards
6. Provide a high level of professionalism
7. Promote your service offer
8. Keep the TCF operations distinct



Top 8 principles**1** Continuous alignment with customers' needs**2** Organize your service offer**3** Maintain an efficient Human capital**4** Provide integrated solutions**5** Develop quality standards**6** Provide a high level of professionalism**7** Promote your service offer**8** Keep the TCF operations distinct**1** Continuous alignment with customers' needs

To develop TCFs' activity and maintain a high level of quality in the services provided to customers, a regular monitoring of the market and clients is essential. By doing this, you ensure your offer meets their current needs and you even can anticipate future requests. Admittedly, this activity is time-consuming but it will allow to communicate on the TCF specific competitive advantages, and to identify clients' issues allowing the development of adapted global solutions.

Building a close relationship with clients is also an important ingredient for success: TCF staff should maintain a constant communication with potential clients through meetings, lunches... In particular for biotech parks hosting companies, leader group meetings regularly organized are a good lever for researchers to acquire a customer-oriented approach.

2 Organize your service offer

The service offer proposed must be very well organized to guarantee quality and responsiveness to external clients.

This organization includes:

- A person (facility manager and/or business developer) in charge of the customer relationship (expectations, follow-up, quality of service provided...).
- A standardized process, particularly for routine services or TCF access (booking system, quotation on request...).
- A pricing strategy based on TCF set objectives (making profit for future investment vs giving an affordable access to the research community...) and a specific model of costs coverage.
- Dedicated operational staff allowing better responsiveness, flexibility and confidentiality.

3 Maintain an efficient human capital

The added value of a service comes not only from the provision of state-of-the-art equipment but above all from the expertise and competences of the scientists who perform the service. It is, therefore, extremely important to invest in human capital.

The TCFs may also have an important role in the training of students and researchers in order to expand expertise and knowledge in their specific field.

4 Provide integrated solutions

This principle applies essentially to non routine contract research services. It is frequently pointed out that private companies are looking for a broader approach offering them an integrated solution. Thus, the development of networks of TCFs within a park or a region, which have complementary fields of activities and competencies, can be a real asset for attracting new and large clients.

5 Develop quality standards

There is an increasing demand for quality standards expressed by customers. For example, CROs only subcontract analyses to TCFs holding several certificates of conformity. Therefore some TCFs' directions reacted by hiring a quality manager in charge of all these aspects and others decided to charge an employee with the responsibility for quality management.

6 Provide a high level of professionalism

Private companies in the industry, in particular large laboratories, have high expectations on service delivery, which require a service-oriented attitude. The services should guarantee:

- *Sound contract management*: Private clients are awaiting serious management of legal matters meeting industry standards.
- *Responsiveness*: TCFs must show their awareness of time constraint if they consider developing a service offer for private companies. They must prove an ability to be reactive and to answer requests in the set timeframe.
- *Flexibility*: Be ready to take up new challenges.
- *Confidentiality*: The guarantee of confidentiality is crucial for private companies. The signature of non disclosure agreements, which is usually done at the beginning of a project, is a first step. TCFs cannot count on working with private firms if they cannot ensure the confidentiality of the data and samples.

7 Promote your service offer

To keep a certain level of activity or to attract new clients, it is important to let them know your different equipment and service offer and to develop a brand image, even for a non-profit organization.

Researchers are used to publish their findings and to participate in international conferences with the objective to gain international scientific recognition at the individual and institutional level. However the development of an international visibility necessitates also specific competences and above all constant vigilance and monitoring.

The best solution, when possible, is to appoint someone with a scientific background to the role of business developer, who will be able to promote the TCF offer, approach new clients, stay close to the market and client's future expectations

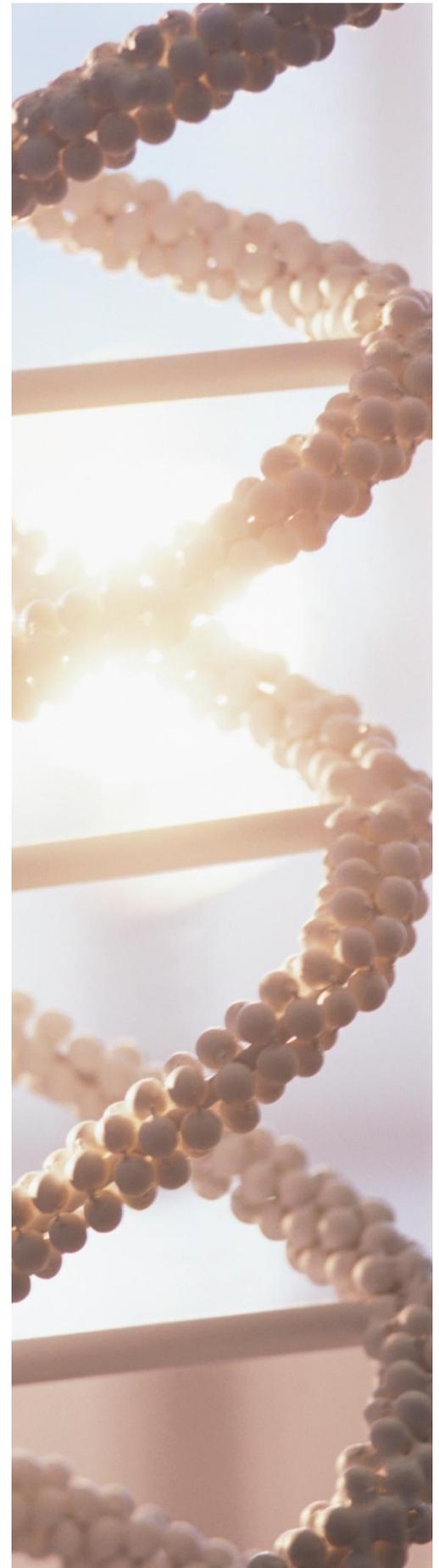
Some TCFs have set up a training program with advanced courses and workshops on new technologies, which serve as a kind of advertisement. Indeed most people who attend the courses become new TCF clients.

8 Keep the TCF operations distinct

Practical feedbacks show that a good operational functioning of TCFs requires dedicated space and staff, with a TCF manager who deals with the day-to-day tasks and with clients' relationship.

Providing a distinctive area to the TCF separated from other laboratories is important to develop the activity. Indeed it can facilitate the establishment of quality standards (e.g. good laboratory practice) and ensure confidentiality of the clients' data and samples.

Moreover, the system of seconded employees (researchers working part-time at the University and part-time at the TCF) seems to be not very efficient. Typical issues are: a lack of availability to discuss with clients / to perform standard analyses, an insufficient involvement in standard analyses service even if financial incentives are offered, a possible lack of confidentiality due to the research programs lead in parallel by the researchers and especially due to their objectives of scientific publications.



List of the interviewees			
Technology Core Facilities	Geographic location	Contact	Position
Animascope	France	Mr Christ Serra	Business developer
AROS Applied Biotechnology	Denmark	Mr Thomas Thykjaer	Chief operating officer
Barcelona Science Park	Spain	Mr Jesus Purroy	Scientific director
Biocant	Portugal	Prof Carlos Faro	Scientific director
Biocenter Oulu	Finland	Dr Pirkko Huhtala	Biocenter Oulu coordinator
Cell Imaging Unit (UIC)	Portugal	Mr José A. Feijo	Director & Professor at the University of Lisbon
CIMNA	France	M. Regis Josien	Scientific director
Fondazione Filarete	Italy	Mr Mario Salerno	Business developer
Genoscreen	France	Frédéric Antigny	Business developer
GIGA	Belgium	Mrs Christina Franssen	Business developer
Max Planck Institute of Molecular Cell Biology and Genetics (MPI-CBG)	Germany	Mr Ivan Baines	Chief operating officer
Technology & Innovation Centre (University of Strathclyde)	Scotland	Catherine Breslin	Development manager
The Biotechnology Centre of Oslo - University of Oslo (UiO)	Norway	Elisa Bjorgo	Project manager
Spinovation	The Netherlands	Mr Frederic Girard	CEO and co-founder
UCD Conway Institute of Biomolecular and Biomedical Research	Ireland	Mr Brendan	Prof comparative genomics

This study was also supported by the interview of two experts (Mr Mangematin, Grenoble Ecole de Management and Mr Mendoza, Boehringer Ingelheim GmbH).

ShareBiotech

ShareBiotech is an INTERREG IVB Atlantic European Project which contributes to the first priority of the program aiming at promoting transnational entrepreneurial and innovation networks. Led by French organizations, the project is implemented by a consortium of 10 partners from 4 Member States (France, Ireland, Portugal and Spain) and 7 regions.

Ernst & Young

Assurance | Tax | Transactions | Advisory

Ernst & Young is a global leader in assurance, tax, transaction and advisory services. Worldwide, our 152,000 people are united by our shared values and an unwavering commitment to quality. We make a difference by helping our people, our clients and our wider communities achieve their potential.

Ernst & Young refers to the global organization of member firms of Ernst & Young Global Limited, each of which is a separate legal entity.

For more information about our organization, please visit www.ey.com.

© 2012 EYGM Limited. All Rights Reserved.

