

Research Services

Research Services are highly complex or specialized services that support a select group of investigators, inside or outside of USC.

When providing Research Services, the activity of the involved University personnel is highly predictable. The experiments to be undertaken are set out in the project description, and the research report contains the results of the tests.

A Research Services or Technical Services Agreement obligates faculty or staff to provide specified services or “deliverables” that do not demand original work on the part of the faculty or staff member. While these agreements may have research or scholarly benefits, those are a secondary aspect, not the primary purpose of the activity. These agreements are most often used when delivering laboratory or testing services or providing use of University equipment, in each case reporting results back to the sponsor. Research service agreements are not used when USC is developing original intellectual property under the agreement or expects to conduct original analyses or interpretations of data going beyond known methods. Thus, work funded through research service agreements is not by itself scholarly activity.

Characteristics

1. Use of existing know-how to provide the service;
2. Know-how utilized by the University in the course of providing the services is owned by the University;
3. Use of University facilities, resources, time;
4. Service results are the property of the sponsor; the University has the right to use results for teaching and non-commercial research projects; and
5. Not appropriate for students to work on these projects in furtherance of their theses or educational requirements because sponsor owns results and because publication is not always permitted.

Process and Approvals

Government funded Research service agreements are submitted through the Cayuse SP system at time of award and are reviewed, signed and negotiated by the Office of General Counsel. Cayuse SP is not required for Non-Government funded Services Agreements.

An industry sponsored research service agreement may be submitted with an overhead that differs from the federally negotiated rate for other activity type, and may be either higher or lower than that federal rate, subject to dean approval.