

WISEST INITIATIVES / POSTDOCTORAL PROGRAM

WISEST Post-doc Institute
STARTING A NEW LAB

Developing a Lab Budget

Why do you need to know this now?

- for creating a budget for your new investigator proposals
- for creating a plan for your start-up funding request for personnel support, equipment, supplies, lab space, facilities fees, etc.
- for requesting to see major equipment in core facilities/centers during campus visit

3 major components within a lab budget

- personnel (salary, benefits, meeting travel/registration)
- major equipment
- supplies/consumables

PERSONNEL: make critical hires

- full or part-time lab technicians
- post-doctoral fellows
- graduate or undergraduate students

- fringe benefits
- research/conference travel
- tuition

Why a technician?

- in the lab full time w/o demands of teaching/service
- can provide technical expertise in area new to you
- help train students
- provide continuity

Why a post-doc?

- well-trained
- motivated to be productive to be competitive for a faculty position
- help train students
- can be funded externally (NIH,...) or training grants in your institution
- contingency hire: you can work with post-doc applicants to construct a fellowship proposal specific to your lab (win/win)




Graduate students

- mentoring Ph.D. students is one of your primary functions as a STEM faculty; they count in many ways in your promotion package
- may be supported by TA-ships to begin with
- need grants for further RA support

Undergraduate students

- mentoring undergrads in research is one key part of “Broader Impacts” or outreach function of STEM faculty
- may work for experience (for graduating with distinction or good letter of recommendation) or course credit
- can be funded by REU supplement, institutional training grant, etc.


MAJOR EQUIPMENT

 learn about core and/or shared facilities (not used on regular basis)

Purchasing lab equipment

- receive quotes (scientific supply companies offer specialized new lab start-up programs)
- ask colleagues for spare equipment
- develop relationships with investigators with similar research interests/techniques (share equipment, reagents)
- used or surplus equipment

service contract or not?

 IF equipment critical to your work,
need priority repair, and repairs are
expensive

SUPPLIES/CONSUMABLES

- general rule: plan on spending ~\$1,000/month on pipette tips, tubes, glassware, cell culture supplies, gloves, etc.
- plus specialized kits, isotopes, ...
- find out from an established lab with similar needs what they actually spend (per Ph.D. student basis)

Staying within Budget/Tracking Spending

- need successful budgeting throughout your career
- establish a database of your money sources (start-up, grants, etc), suppliers, and a record of all your purchase orders (e.g., Access)
- learn from colleagues best budgeting strategies

How to get others to help you

- establish good working relationships founded on mutual respect with departmental staff (HR, accounting, secretarial, shops, facilities) & key technical staff in other laboratories