

## Principles

The NCRIS program is intended to enable access by external users (public-funded and private enterprise) to access capabilities located at public-funded entities (eg. Universities, medical research institutes and CSIRO). Access to TIA-funded capabilities and pricing of projects is guided by the following general principles:

In general, facilities will charge based on a three-tier scheme that is widely adopted by NCRIS capabilities. These tiers are:

- Tier 1 (researchers): Charged to public sector researchers, Tier 1 costings should be based on the actual additional costs to the facility to carry out the project, such as consumables and any additional staff (without overheads) that are not NCRIS-funded. The time of NCRIS-funded staff should not be charged to users.
- Tier 2 (spin-outs and SMEs): Charged to companies spun out of public sector research and SMEs which qualify for the R&D tax cash rebate. The charge would be at the marginal rate to carry out the project plus a loading.
- Tier 3 (industry): Charged to companies who do not qualify as Tier 2. The charge would be at the full commercial rate to carry out the project, i.e. the full cost of salaries plus overheads and consumables.

The terms of access should be transparent to users and potential users.

Each facility operator has a strong 'customer service' ethic and strives to provide a high level of service for users.

Facilities should not put in place arrangements that become de facto barriers to entry for users. Policies on pricing, the treatment of intellectual property, compliance with industry standards, insurance, OH&S issues etc should not deter researchers from using a facility.

Facility Users / Researchers will need to comply with reasonable security requirements and access standards where appropriate.

Access regimes will need to clearly specify those instruments and/or facilities within the institution, and the proportion of their capacity, that will be made available to users under special terms and conditions (based on a reasonable assessment of the circumstances in each case).

## Pricing policy

- It is expected that pricing for meritorious researchers should not exceed the marginal cost of providing access. The precise level of charging for these users at a particular facility will however need to take account of the cost structure applying in that instance.
- Marginal cost represents the cost of accommodating one additional user at the facility. In most instances, this will equate to the avoidable costs related to that extra user, such as consumables and any additional support staff.
- It is not intended that pricing for meritorious researchers will recover depreciation expenses.

## Intellectual property

- Neither TIA nor the Department of Education (as funders of the NCRIS program) will take or demand any beneficial interest in projects carried out using NCRIS-funded staff members or equipment.
- Facilities operate under their own policies regarding IP, however, facilities undertaking fee-for-service projects (for all Tiers) would not take an IP interest.
- Depending on the project, facilities may (at their own discretion) enter into arrangements that share the IP arising with the project in return for sharing the project costs and the risk of failure.

## Need more help?

If you need help or advice on access or pricing in a TIA-supported facility please [contact us](#).