

To: Assistant/Associate Dean for Facilities Management, Facilities Manager, or equivalent
From: Nathan Manges, Senior Director, Real Estate
Date: April 16, 2025
Re: Space Management and Guiding Principles for Research Spaces - Indianapolis

Overview and Context:

A critical part of Purdue's mission is to perform revolutionary, world-changing research along with undergraduate and graduate education. Facilities for research (laboratory and offices) are expensive to build, maintain, and operate. Further, while research space amounts to a small fraction of the Indianapolis campus' total assignable square feet (ASF), it accounts for much of its energy usage. Finally, new construction and renovation costs continue to rise. These factors require Indianapolis faculty and staff to be careful stewards of physical space.

Research space within the Indianapolis portfolio has traditionally been managed by departments or the colleges to which space was assigned, or through a close collaboration of both. Tight coordination between facilities and research leadership leads to more informed decisions regarding the allocation, renovation, or construction of research space. However, even good decisions are often ad-hoc and isolated with little institutional learning taking place. There is a need for over-arching principles to guide such decisions and provide a solid basis for continuous improvement.

It is in this context that the following principles and guidelines were formalized to assist in space management and stewardship. Application of this guidance will improve the allocation, maintenance, and utilization of existing space, and assist in the creation of new space. Units should use these guidelines when assigning, allocating, or discontinuing use of current space, or when creating new research space. Colleges, departments, or faculty members should utilize these guidelines when requesting space in Indianapolis. **All space requests must be submitted by a college-level Assistant/Associate Dean for Facilities Management, Facilities Manager, or equivalent.**

Guiding Principles:

1. **Space As a Strategic Resource:** Space is a valuable resource and must be managed to align with strategic programmatic needs. Space allocations are based on activities, not individuals, and assignments are not permanent. As space is freed-up, it will be reassigned or repurposed to support evolving university priorities. Underutilized spaces will be prime candidates for repurposing and reassignment.
2. **Transparent Governance and Allocation:** As designated by Purdue University policy (Delegation of the President's Authority (V.B.5)), the assignment of space and space management is delegated to the Senior Vice President for Administrative Operations to assist and act for the President. In Indianapolis, this will be accomplished in collaboration with the Senior Vice Provost for Indianapolis and the Associate Vice President for Research Development. Metrics, including external sponsored research funds, will be used to evaluate space utilization. Units must coordinate with the Associate Vice President for Research Development to develop additional metrics that can aid in the evaluation and optimization of space utilization.
3. **Efficient Use and Planning:** Existing space should be utilized efficiently before considering renovations or new construction. Plans must align with Purdue University approval processes. Shared resources, equipment, and facilities should be optimized to support collaboration and strategic goals.
4. **Compliance and Safety:** All space, equipment, and materials must adhere to Purdue University policies, safety regulations, and Purdue Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) guidelines. Assignments and alterations must comply with university policies and support Purdue's interests and relationships.

Considerations for Allocation or Reassignment of research space:

To optimize the allocation of research space and avoid costly renovation or new construction cost, the following questions should be considered:

- Will the allocation bring the space into alignment with programmatic needs and priorities of the Unit, Department, College, University, Institute, or Center?
- Is the research interdisciplinary and/or mission driven?
- What is the length of the space commitment?
- What are the one-time and recurring costs that are associated with the new allocation?
- Are there any operational partners or individuals that would benefit from colocation? Is there opportunity for collaboration because of space allocation, or to share core space and equipment?
- Are there funded programs, anticipated initiatives, or other factors that will impact the size of the group using the space?
- Are there teams, operational partners, or individuals within the Unit subject to regulatory compliance guidelines?
- What type of specialized technology or infrastructure support does the department need, if any (e.g., generators, UPS, LAN/WAN)?
- Does the department have any special security needs (e.g., security, hours of operation)?
- How will space assignment, equipment placement, and/or infrastructure affect health, fire, environmental, life safety, and compliance?

Considerations for Allocation or Reassignment of research space:

The primary measure for productivity of research space is the amount of externally-sponsored research funds that are generated through the use of the space. However, some productive research requires less external funding (e.g. computational work). Units should develop or identify other data that can aid in assessing productivity of existing or future space assignments, assuming they align with the other information included in this document. These can be quantitative or qualitative but should aid in establishing the goals that support the unit's needs and priorities. Examples of additional information units may consider could include the following:

- Number of external research proposals submitted, including total budget and F&A rate.
- Number of publications and citations generated.
- Number of PhD students and postdoctoral fellows participating in research.
- Alignment of research activity with the priorities or needs of the Unit, Department, College, or University.
- Collaborative nature of the research, either through use of existing core facilities or partnership with other unit faculty or strategic partners.

Each research space will be assigned under a space use agreement, and the unit leasing the space is responsible for returning the space in usable condition. Terms for space use will vary but, in most cases, will last for 1 year after signing the space use agreement. For faculty members with long-term grants and a proven track record of external funding, the term may be extended to 3-5 years. These agreements will typically expire on the last day of the fiscal year (i.e., June 30). It is the responsibility of the College to track faculty productivity and to provide a report to the Associate Vice President for Research Development and Administrative Operations. Within the 3 months prior to this expiration date, meetings must be scheduled with college-level Assistant/Associate Deans for Facilities Management or Facilities Managers to review faculty productivity. Terms may be redefined during these meetings, including extensions or grace periods.

Appendix – A
Important Reference Information

- [Space Request form and policies](#)
- [Assignment, Construction, Alterations, Improvements and Maintenance to Facilities \(IV.B.4\)](#)
- [Requesting Work Orders and Projects](#)