Questions to Consider Before Setting up a Recharge Process or Center

When a service or product will be made available, predominately to internal WU customers, but potentially also to external non-WUSTL customers, a consistent process should be followed in development of the rate schedule, income and expense management, and annual reporting. Consideration of these Checklist questions, and gathering of the pertinent information to answer these questions, will help facilitate the establishment and management of an efficient and compliant financial management process.

1. What is the overall purpose of the center or facility that will be providing services/products?

2. What specific service or product will be offered? What is the measurable unit of output that can be easily and accurately measured and tracked?

3. What will the customer base be? Is there a market for such service/product?
   a. Estimate internal (WUSTL) number of customers – what is the percent of total customers and what type of funding do they have?
   b. Estimate external type and number of customers – what is the percent of total customers?
   c. What other service providers (both internal and external) are available to your anticipated customer base?
   d. Will your RC/SFF pricing be competitive with pricing of other service providers?

4. What is the expected volume of use by customer type (internal/external)?

5. What is the current capacity of the RC/SSF to provide the defined service/product in light of available:
   a. Labor/Personnel
   b. Equipment
   c. Space
   d. Data
   e. Other resources

6. What are the total costs required to operate this RC/SSF to provide the defined service/product?
   a. Labor/personnel (salary and fringe)
   b. Non-personnel (materials and supplies, service contracts)
   c. Equipment (cost > $5,000)
   d. Identify fixed cost vs. variable costs
7. How will the RC/SSF operations be funded? Identify current and proposed internal and external revenue sources.
   a. Regular (monthly) billings to customers
   b. Sponsored project (grant or contract) support
   c. School or department funds
   d. Other

8. What is the break-even point for providing the service/product?

9. If any of the operations will be funded by a grant or contract during the life of the RC/SFF, what are the specific program income requirements pertaining to the particular funding agencies?

10. Is there a need to provide a subsidy to any customers/user groups based on?
    a. center affiliations/membership
    b. targeting a user group (e.g. junior faculty)
    c. costs too high to recover full cost billing rate from customers

11. What additional institutional (dean/school overhead) and departmental (administrative) fees need to be added to the service cost for external (non-WUSTL) customers?

12. What is the estimated amount of annual billings?
    a. Under $250K (Minor Recharge Center)
    b. $250K – $1M (Major Recharge Center)
    c. Over $1M (Specialized Service Facility)

13. What is the estimated life of the RC/SSF?
    a. Same as sponsored project (grant or contract) support
    b. Other measurable time period
    c. As long as RC/SFF is self-sustaining
    d. As long as there is a demand for services even if the core must be subsidized by school/department

14. What staff member(s) will be responsible for non-financial management – personnel, database management, procurement of equipment, supplies, materials, licenses, data safety and monitoring?

15. What staff member(s) will be responsible for financial management – invoices, accounts receivable, program income monitoring and quarterly/annual reporting?