RULES FOR RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES AT UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

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1. Description

The aim of these rules is to ensure the overall coordination of research infrastructures at Umeå University that are accessible to more users than an individual research group.

This document clarifies the criteria for a research infrastructure to be defined as a "research infrastructure at Umeå University", the University's coordination regarding the Swedish Research Council's process for funding research infrastructures of national interest, and the funding of research infrastructures at Umeå University.

2. Background

Research infrastructures[2] are a key condition for conducting high-quality research at Umeå University's faculties and the Umeå School of Education. Certain infrastructures are funded by the Swedish Research Council's Council for Research Infrastructures (VR-RFI) funding model, which involves higher education institutions providing co-funding at an equal level to the allocation from VR-RFI, while other infrastructures are funded by the University or other funding bodies. This means that higher education institutions must have a strategic plan for funding and prioritising research infrastructures. For Umeå University to provide researchers with access to the best research infrastructure, common principles for internal management must therefore be in place to clarify planning, prioritisation, and funding.

Questions relating to research infrastructure are handled by the Council for Research Infrastructure at Umeå University (RIS) in accordance with the Council's instruction.

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[2] "Facilities, resources and related services that are used by the scientific community to conduct research in their respective fields, and covers scientific equipment or sets of instruments, knowledge-based resources such as collections, archives or structured scientific information, enabling information and communication technology-based infrastructures such as grid, computing, software and communication, or any other entity of a unique nature essential to conduct research. Such infrastructures may be 'single-sited' or 'distributed' (an organised network of resources) in accordance with Article 2(a) of Council Regulation (EC) No 723/2009 of 25 June 2009 on the Community legal framework for a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC)." (Source: European Commission, Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014, declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty Text, Official Journal of the European Union 26.6.2014, p. L 187/25).

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3. Research infrastructures at Umeå University

3.1 Definition of research infrastructure

A research infrastructure at Umeå University is defined as:

- a facility (equipment, installation, database, knowledge base, virtual resource or other resource) and the associated human competence necessary to carry out research of the highest quality;

and which

- can be used by more than one research group at Umeå University or other higher education institutions/external partners;
- is available to all researchers at Umeå University on the same terms;
- can offer user support, training courses or education at different levels that are linked to the research infrastructure;
- has a responsible host department or faculty, and a clear management and organisational structure;
- has a long-term plan for usage, development, evaluation and decommissioning.

Research infrastructures that meet the above criteria are given increased visibility through presentation on the university-wide webpages for research infrastructure.

Annual inventorying, as described in greater detail in Section 3.2, determines which research infrastructures are granted the status of a research infrastructure at Umeå University.

3.2 Annual research infrastructure inventory at Umeå University

Research infrastructures that meet the above criteria should be registered or updated in the Research Infrastructure portal, which is open annually between 1 January and 31 March. RIS decides in April each year which of the registered infrastructures meet the criteria. The decision is announced in May. These research infrastructures at Umeå University will be presented on dedicated webpages. The information that these presentations must contain is described in greater detail in Appendix 1. Figure 1 depicts the annual inventory process.
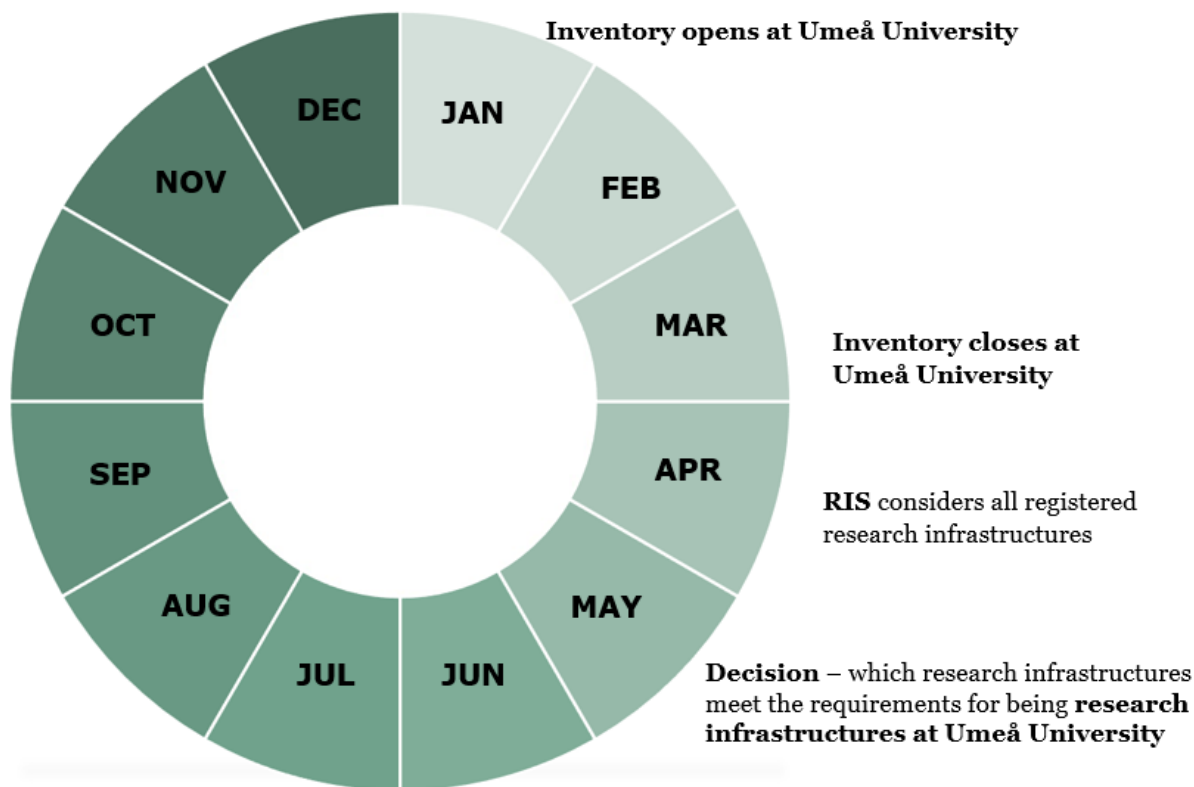
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Figure 1: Annual cycle for research infrastructure inventory at Umeå University.

4. The University's coordination of VR-RFI's funding process

The Swedish Research Council funds research infrastructures of national interest across all scientific fields via a two-year process consisting of a needs inventory, the prioritisation of these needs, and a call for proposals aimed at prioritised infrastructures. At the level of higher education institutions, applications are submitted by organisations, with the Vice-Chancellor needing to grant final approval for applications in a letter of intent. Detailed information about the process can be found on the Swedish Research Council's website. The Swedish Research Council also publishes a guide to research infrastructure, which is updated regularly.

At the national level, higher education institutions' processes for grant applications and prioritising needs are coordinated by the Universities' Reference Group for Research Infrastructure (URFI), which also holds regular meetings with VR-RFI.

At Umeå University, VR-RFI's funding process is coordinated and prepared by RIS to ensure university-wide strategic prioritisation and planning of research infrastructure. RIS is responsible for ensuring that the coordination process and timelines for Umeå University are communicated well in advance.

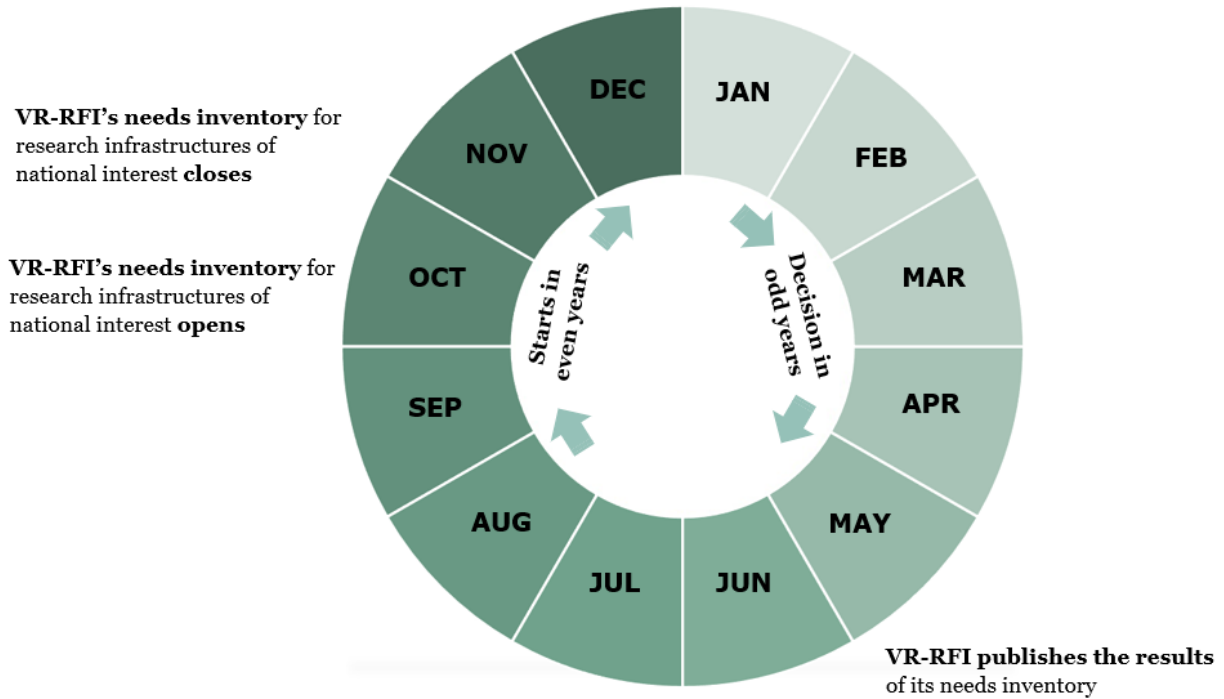UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

Figures 2 and 3 illustrate VR-RFI's process:

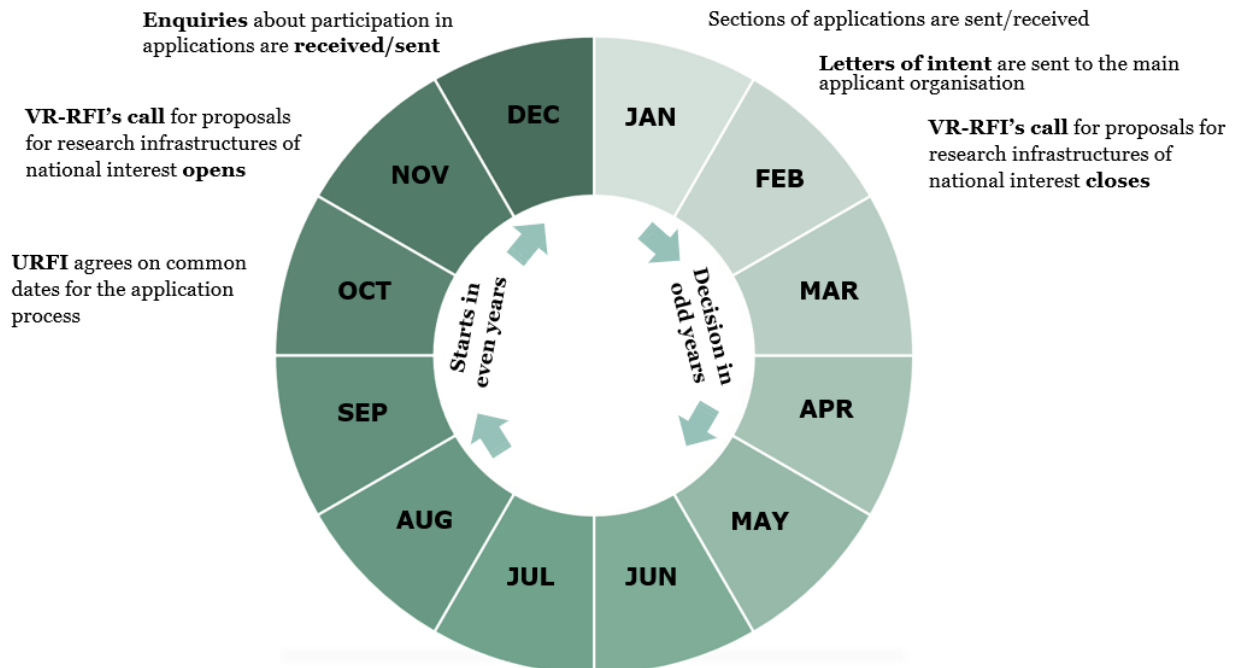*Figure 2: VR-RFI's needs inventory for research infrastructures of national interest.*

Figure 3: VR-RFI's call for proposals for research infrastructures of national interest.

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5. Funding of research infrastructures at Umeå University

The status of a research infrastructure at Umeå University does not mean that the research infrastructure in question is entitled to university-wide funding. Before applying for national funding, co-funding from the University should be discussed and ensured at an early stage of the application process.

The following applies to those research infrastructures at Umeå University that are co-funded centrally by the University and the faculty:

- 70% of the University's cost for co-funding is financed at the university-wide level, and 30% by the faculty.
- According to the Vice-Chancellor's decision (reg. no. 2012/1357 approved on 17 December 2013), all new decisions on internal university-wide initiatives must cover all costs, including funding for university-, faculty- and department-wide costs (*gemensamma kostnader*). This means that funding granted from the budget item for research infrastructure must cover costs for both the initiative's core operations and its support operations at all three levels.

Umeå university co-funds research infrastructures of national interest with the same amount that the university receives from VR-RFI.

- This principle applies to research infrastructures that were granted funding from 2023 onwards. Previously granted co-funding is not affected.
- If an infrastructure is granted a lower amount than it applied for, Umeå university's co-funding must be adjusted accordingly. The adjustment must be documented in the research infrastructure's updated budget before VR-RFI's special conditions are signed by the host organisation. The infrastructure's contact person at UMU is responsible for ensuring that the amount is correct and signed off by University Management.

Every year, all faculties are given the opportunity to submit requests for co-funding of research infrastructure. The process is illustrated in Figure 4, and consists of the following steps:

- University Management informs the faculties about the current year's process and timeline in March.
- The faculties then begin collecting requests to be submitted in April.
- The Council for Research Infrastructure at Umeå University (RIS) processes each faculty's requests.
- The proposals are coordinated with University Management both before and after the faculties' final meeting on the issue, which takes place in June.
- The proposed decision on co-funding is agreed upon in August.
- The final proposed decision is then sent to the faculties.
- The Vice-Chancellor decides on co-funding of research infrastructure in September.
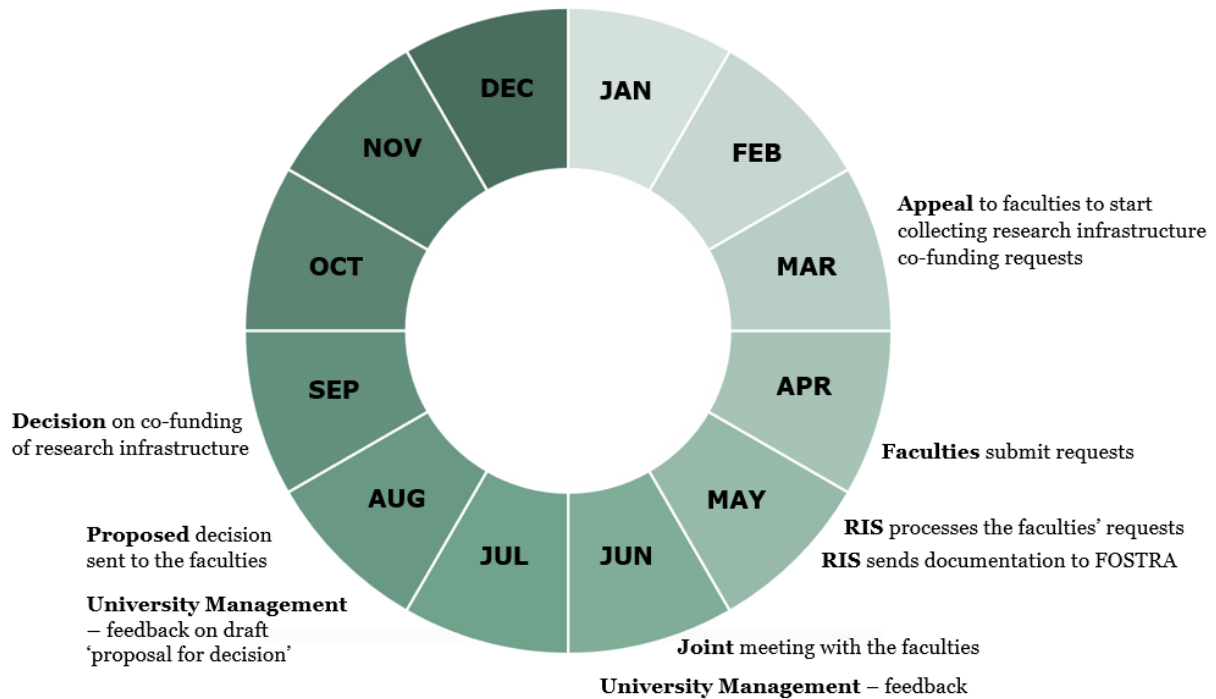
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Figure 4: Annual cycle for the co-funding process for research infrastructure at Umeå University.

6. User fees

Research infrastructures at Umeå University may charge user fees. For external users, i.e. those who do not belong to Umeå University (for example, researchers from other higher education institutions, public authorities, or companies), the legal basis for charging such fees is the "Fees for Research Infrastructure Ordinance" (2022:1378). To be legally allowed to charge fees, the following requirements apply: the research infrastructure must be wholly or partly under the control of the higher education institution charging the fees, the use of the research infrastructure must be provided within the framework of the higher education institution's tasks, and criteria for access to the research infrastructure must be established and documented.

These criteria for access need to clarify which of the higher education institution's research infrastructures are available to external users, how external users can gain access to them, and what fees apply. Umeå University has established the following criteria[3] and responsibilities:

- Register of externally available research infrastructures:
    - At Umeå University, research infrastructures register their external availability in the annual research infrastructure inventory (see 3.2). The RIS

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[3] The criteria follow the recommendation in SvEnsk SAMverkan för tillgång till labbinfrastruktur (SESAM):s "Guidance concerning criteria for access to research infrastructure under the Fees for Research Infrastructure Ordinance (2022:1378)"

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administrator is responsible for ensuring this information is visible on the University's dedicated research infrastructure webpage.

In turn, each research infrastructure is responsible for providing the following information on its individual webpage (for more information about individual webpages, see Appendix 1):

- Requirements and conditions for accessing the research infrastructure:
  - For example, ethical requirements, requirements to publish the resulting findings in open access scientific journals, mandatory training for external users before access, or assistance from personnel with expertise. Such requirements and conditions may result from external funders' stipulations.
- Access to the research infrastructure, i.e. how an external user can get access:
  - For example, links to an online booking system, information on which person or function to contact, or where to find information on how to formulate an application or an expression of interest regarding use of the research infrastructure.
- Principles for prioritisation of external use in the event of limited access:
  - If demand for a particular research infrastructure exceeds its capacity, an order of priority for access is necessary. For example, a simple queuing system can be established, or priority can be given based on purpose (e.g. academic research can be given priority over other purposes). There may also be requirements or conditions from external funders regarding such prioritisation principles. For example, the Swedish Research Council states in its requirements for funding that research infrastructure should be openly accessible primarily to researchers, and that when access is limited, prioritisation shall be based primarily on scientific excellence. For SciLifeLab infrastructures, access and priorisation are regulated by an ordinance.
- What fees are charged, or principles for determining fees for external use:
  - Each research infrastructure decides what fees to charge, up to full recovery of costs. This means that fees can be based on the total cost of offering access to external users, including, for example, different types of staff or competences, equipment or consumables that are needed for its operation, as well as premises, depreciation, service agreements, electricity, and indirect costs. The University's Financial Office provides a template and advice on how to calculate user fees.
  - Different fees may be charged for different user groups. How these fees are determined must be clearly stated and based on objective criteria.
  - To avoid distorting market competition when selling to private actors, the fees should be market-based.
  - Note that the University may, but does not have to, charge fees to external users.

Research infrastructures that are not normally externally accessible and therefore have not established criteria for access as stated above may, by way of exemption, charge a fee for one-off external users if needed. The legal basis in such cases is §4 of the Fees Ordinance ("Avgiftsförordningen", 1992:191). Please note that certain limitations apply in these cases, for example, restrictions on the costs that the fees can cover and their scope (no more than 5% of administrative costs).

For use of research infrastructure as part of contract research, user fees based on full recovery of costs must be charged according to Umeå University's public service agreement.

User fees need to be registered on different base accounts ("baskonton") depending on their legal basis. The financial officer at the research infrastructure's organisational host unit (institution, department, faculty, or similar) is responsible for ensuring correct accounting.

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Appendix 1: Presentation of research infrastructures on Umeå University's website

Research infrastructures that have been granted the status of *research infrastructure at Umeå University* should be presented on the university-wide research infrastructure webpage https://www.umu.se/en/research/research-infrastructure/

Roles and responsibilities for research infrastructure webpages

RIS' administrator is responsible for:

- The university-wide webpage, i.e., making suggestion for its development and ensuring that all approved research infrastructures at UMU are visible on the webpage.
- Ensuring close cooperation with the Communications Office and individual communications officers.
- Webpages for European/international research infrastructures that are not assigned to a specific host department or faculty.

RIS:

- Decides on development suggestions prepared by the administrator.
- Submits requests for the development of the webpage.

The communication officer at the hosting department, faculty or other organisational home of a research infrastructure is responsible for:

- The content and layout of its webpage(s).

The Communications Office is responsible for:

- Providing detailed instructions to web editors on how research infrastructure pages are added to the UMU homepage, their layout and content. The instructions must be in line with this appendix.
- Evaluating and prioritizing RIS' requests for webpage development.

Presentation of research infrastructure on the university-wide research infrastructure webpage

The presentation of a research infrastructure can include the components listed below. Some components are mandatory, while others are optional. The presentation should be available in both Swedish and English.

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Mandatory components:

- Title, i.e., the name of the research infrastructure and potential acronym in parentheses. For example, "Biochemical Imaging Centre Umeå (BICU)".
- A summary that briefly describes the research infrastructure (maximum 500 characters) that is shown in the page's introduction.
- A more detailed description of the infrastructure, for example under the heading "about [name of the infrastructure]".
- A clear explanation of what the infrastructure offers and can be used for, for example under the heading [services and offerings].
- Availability according to point 6 above:
  - Requirements and conditions for accessing the research infrastructure,
  - Access to the research infrastructure, i.e. how an external user can get access,
  - Principles for prioritisation of external use in the event of limited access,
  - What fees are charged, or principles for determining fees for external use:
- A link to the research infrastructure's own website or webpage if one exists. For example, many national research infrastructures have their own websites.
- Logo, if available.
- Contact details.
- Funder logo(s) if the research infrastructure has external funding.

Optional components:

- Representative, high-quality images showcasing, for example, different types of equipment and facilities offered by the infrastructure.
- Publications related to the infrastructure.
- Research projects related to the infrastructure.
- Presentation of organisation and staff.
- Links to:
  - Specific documents such as policies, FAQs, funding information, etc. The documents must be accessible.
  - Training (courses, seminars, workshops).
  - Websites or webpages about specific techniques/databases that are related to the research infrastructure but not part of it.