Instrumentation Resource Facility
School of Medicine Columbia
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

New User Guide

All users must be trained by IRF staff before using any equipment housed in the IRF.
All reservations are managed by an online calendar system, iLabs.

0. **Consultation.** Email or stop into the IRF to discuss your experimental plan and core capabilities, if necessary. This can include what piece of equipment to use, proper staining techniques, etc.
1. **Set up user account**. You will need to enter some basic information to create an iLabs account. Create an account here. ILab accounts are organized by PI and are used to request training/services, track spending and invoices are sent to PIs at the end of each month.
2. **Requests**
    a. **Training Request**. Complete a training request by navigating to the desired equipment in iLabs and clicking "Initiate Training". Scheduling Equipment.
    b. **Service Request**. If you are looking to request one of our services, you can submit a service request here.
3. **Scheduling**. Once a request has been made, you will be contacted by an IRF staff member. Do not be surprised if the request cannot be fulfilled immediately. Staff members maintain numerous responsibilities and requests enter a queue in the order they are received.
4. **Lab safety**. Please make sure that all laboratory safety requirements are met. If you are unsure about a specific certification, please ask an IRF staff member prior to training.
5. **Training**. Meet the IRF staff member at the designated time and location for your training session.
    a. If you are more than 15 minutes late, IRF staff maintains the right to reschedule your training to another time.
    b. When you arrive for your training, please have important information about your sample or imaging requirements available to provide to your trainer.
        i. I.e. for microscopy, please know what fluorophores you used, their emission spectrum, desired magnification, etc.
    c. Please bring your own sample to be properly trained.
6. **Independent Use.** After you have demonstrated competence and been certified on the equipment, you will be granted the right to book the system for independent use via our online calendar. Booking policies vary per instrument.
7. **Additional iLab Help.** If you need additional help with the iLab, please check out the iLab Help Site or the FAQs.
    a. Users – please see the User Account Management section.
    b. PIs – please see the Lab/Group Management section.

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Training FAQs

What to expect at training?

We will go through the proper startup/shut down procedure, how to use the software and equipment, and proper care. For imaging, we will image the sample you bring. Be sure to know exactly what fluorophores are in your sample.

What to expect of a service request?

Once you have been contacted by an IRF staff member, you will drop off your sample(s). The IRF staff will take care of everything to your specifications and let you know when it is time for you to pick the finished product up.

What if I need more help?

If you encounter technical trouble during your session, we will make every effort to be available to help. However, if you know beforehand that you will need more help either with basic function or a more advanced feature not covered in training, we offer assisted sessions. Contact us to learn more or to set one up.