

# The 2007 ABRF Survey: Service Laboratory Funding

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## Objectives

- To query the ABRF membership and scientists at-large concerning the current state of funding in service-oriented laboratories.
- Questions were designed to elicit responses concerning service offerings, cost recovery, capital equipment funding, and future outlook.

## Materials and Methods

- The survey was web-based utilizing the on-line survey software "SurveyMonkey" (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/>).
- The survey was open for 3 weeks, with weekly reminders sent out to assist participation.
- Data was analyzed via on-line software provided by SurveyMonkey as well as Excel (Microsoft).

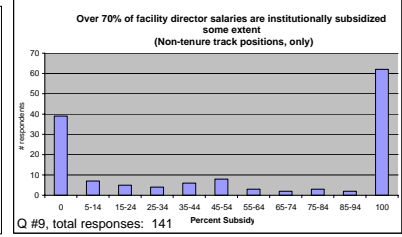
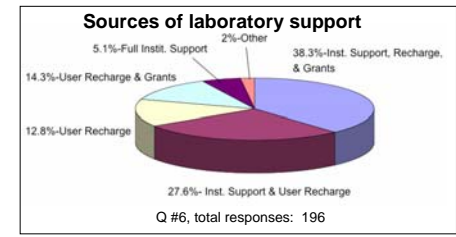
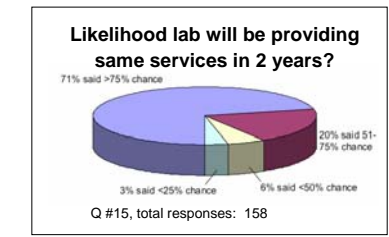
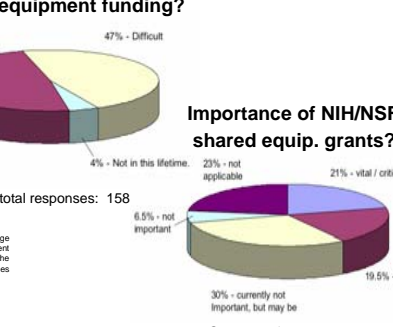
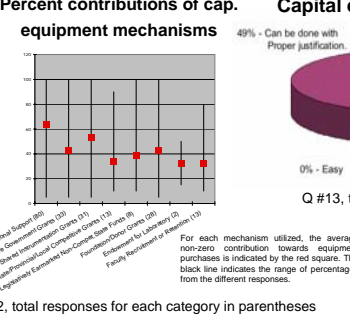
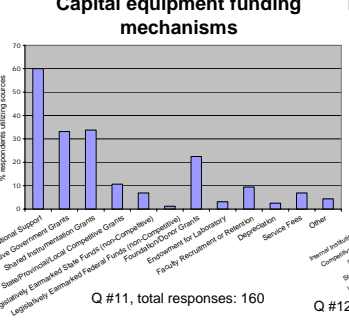
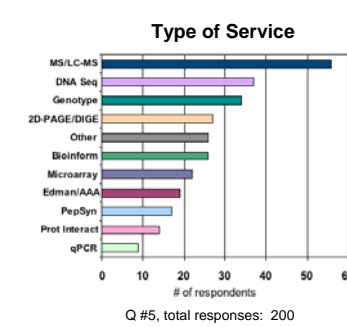
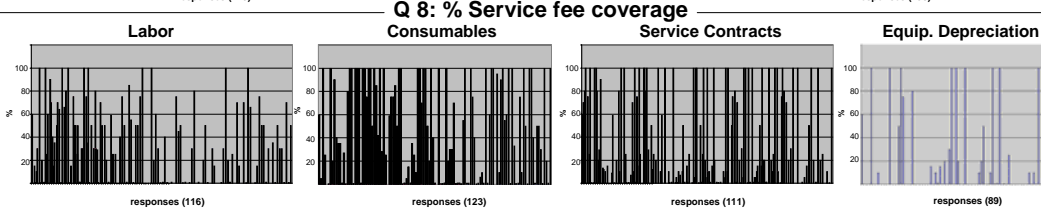
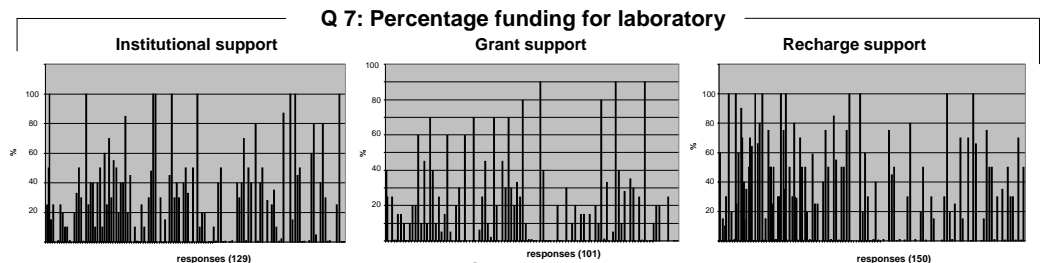
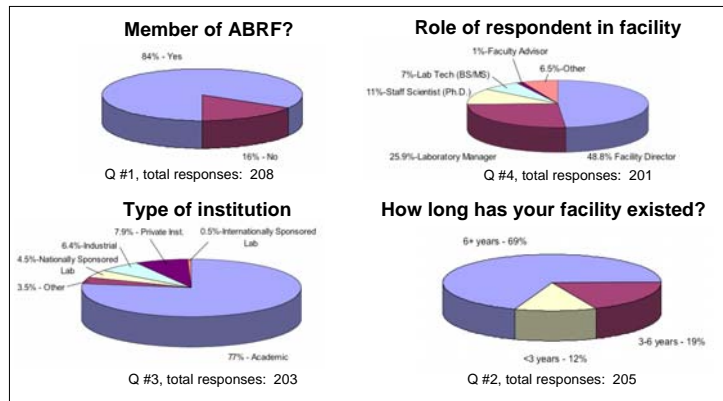
## Selected comments from survey respondents

- We would not exist outside of a strong "subsidy" from the research program of the director, through which equipment maintenance and upgrading is possible.
- I have always hoped that someday NIH or NSF would provide a grant structure that would separately fund core facilities for costs other than instruments. It would be a better research investment than any ROI I've read in the last 10 years.
- Change back is a real pain in the neck - more useful factor is the number of users. This has helped justify institutional funding for capital equipment. And of course, that people are satisfied and publishing papers because of the core lab.
- Funding for academic service labs depends heavily on the number of similar labs at the institution and the number of clients expected to use the service lab. Too many academic labs "die" because multiple academic units set-up competing service labs. Also, the dependence on NIH/NSF shared instrumentation programs is far too high for academic institutions. Not many universities have viable plans for long-term support of service labs.
- governor (I just vetoed state program for matching funds for federal grant appl. and for cap equip. assistance in recruiting faculty, this will be disaster if not reversed. State/university operational support has dropped 20% over last 5 years.
- I try to guide the institution to follow the excellent guide, ANGELETTI, Research Technologies: Fulfilling the Promise, FASEB 595 Vol. 13 April 1999. I circulate this to all faculty hires. This article is the most important I have ever read. It is my mantra! Yet do not share the vision, inspiration & wisdom.
- Our institution has a good record of supporting instrumentation purchases for resource facilities, but a woeful record in providing/maintaining personnel support (salaries).
- NIH shared instrumentation grants are absolutely indispensable. Other NIH funding also.
- Difficult times.

## Conclusions

- The survey had 209 respondents and good international participation with laboratories from 13 different countries represented.
- The majority of the respondents were ABRF members (84%) and from academic laboratories (77%). In addition, 75% were laboratory directors and/or lab managers.
- The greatest source of laboratory support rose from a mixture of institutional support, user recharge, and program grants (38%).
- Institutional Support was the most utilized mechanism for acquiring capital equipment by a nearly two-fold margin.
- NIH and NSF shared instrumentation grant programs were considered critical to meeting future needs and many laboratories felt these programs, while not currently being utilized, would be needed in the future.

## Who Took the Survey?



## References

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## Acknowledgments

- The folks who took the survey!!!
- The ABRF Membership Committee
- The ABRF Executive Board
- Carol Ann Short - ABRF Business Office
- Tony Fong of ProteoMonitor for providing a link to the survey
- JTS - Funded by NCI Contract No. N01-CO-12400