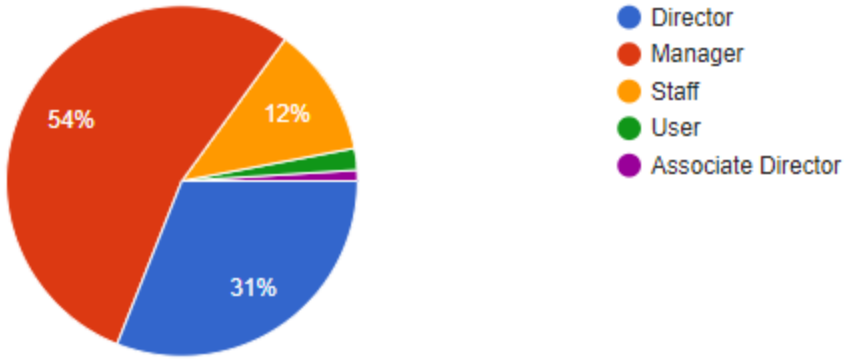
Stocking Reagents in a SRL Survey Results – Jan/Feb 2021

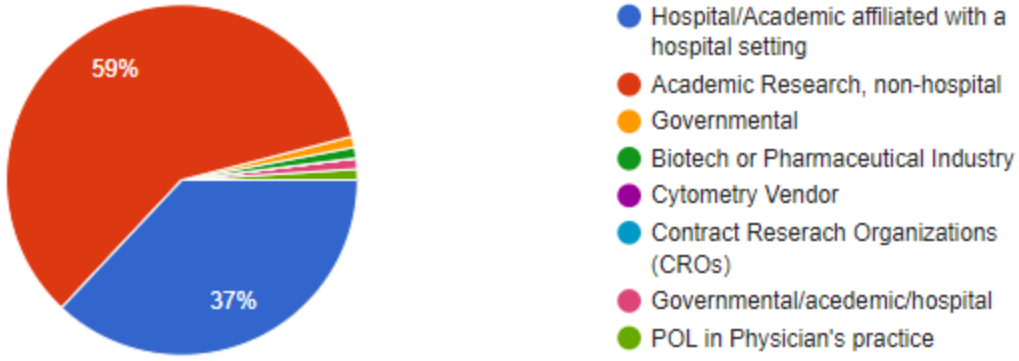
What is your position in the SRL?

100 responses



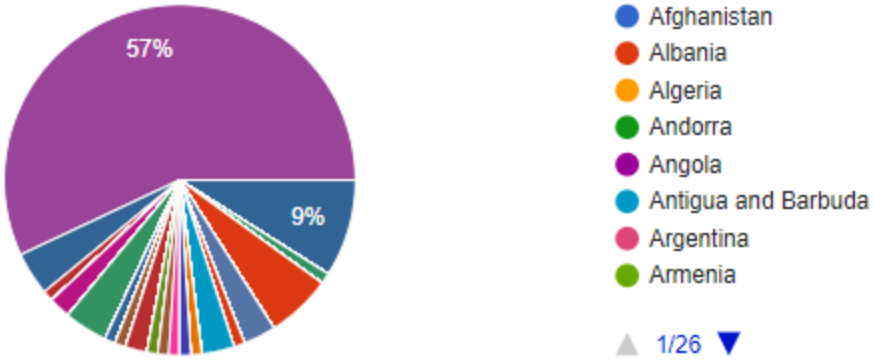
What setting best describes where your facility is located?

100 responses



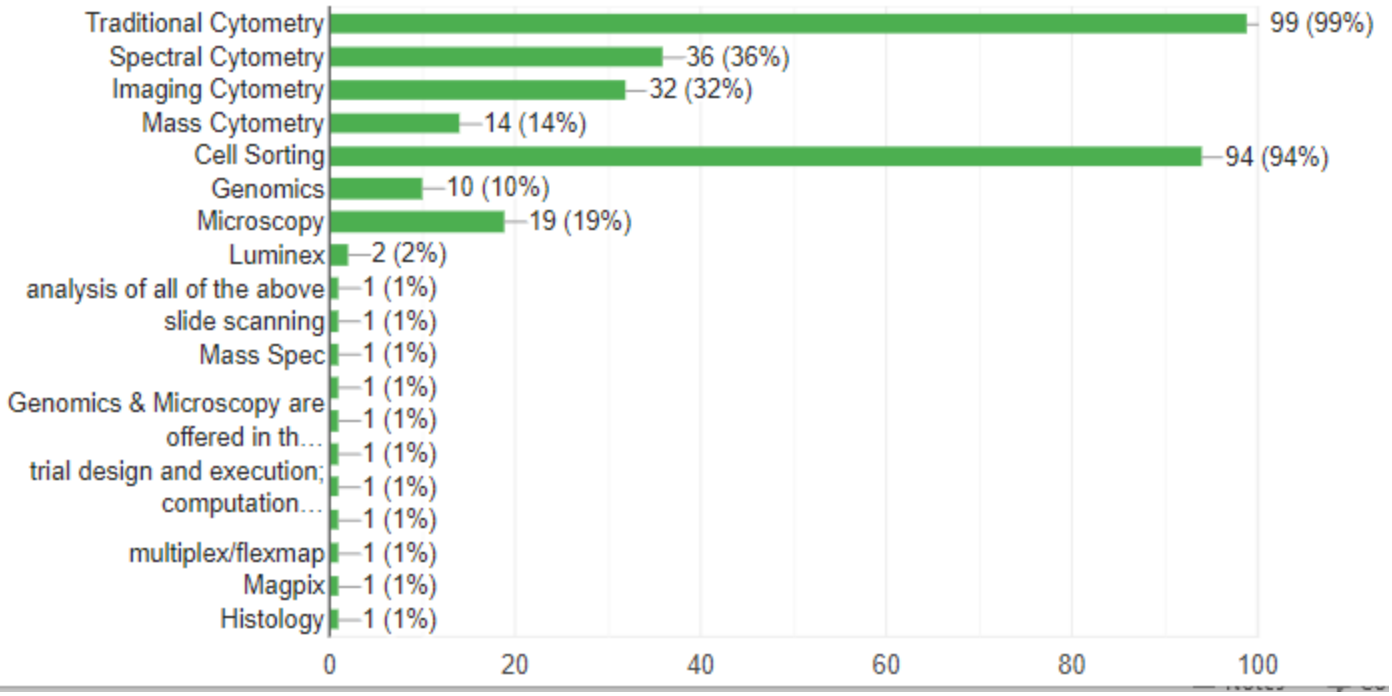
Where are you geographically located?

100 responses



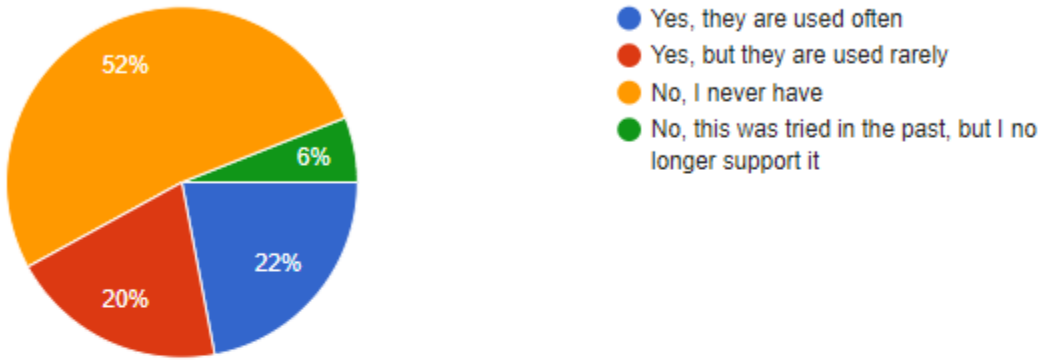
What services does your SRL offer? (Select all that apply)

100 responses



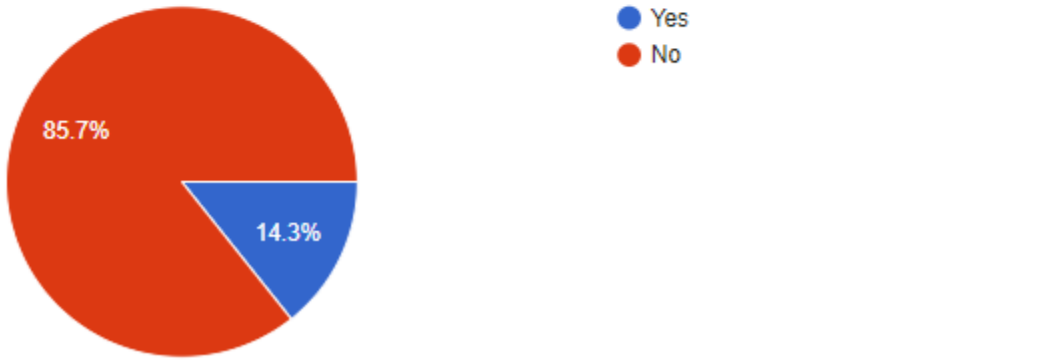
Does your SRL have a pool of common reagents that are available to users aside from Sheath/Cleaning buffers, tubes and/or Quality Control Beads?

100 responses



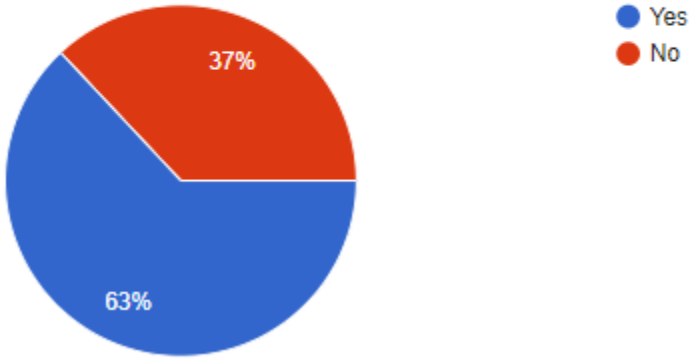
Does your institution/department/center stock flow cytometry reagents in a common stock room?

98 responses



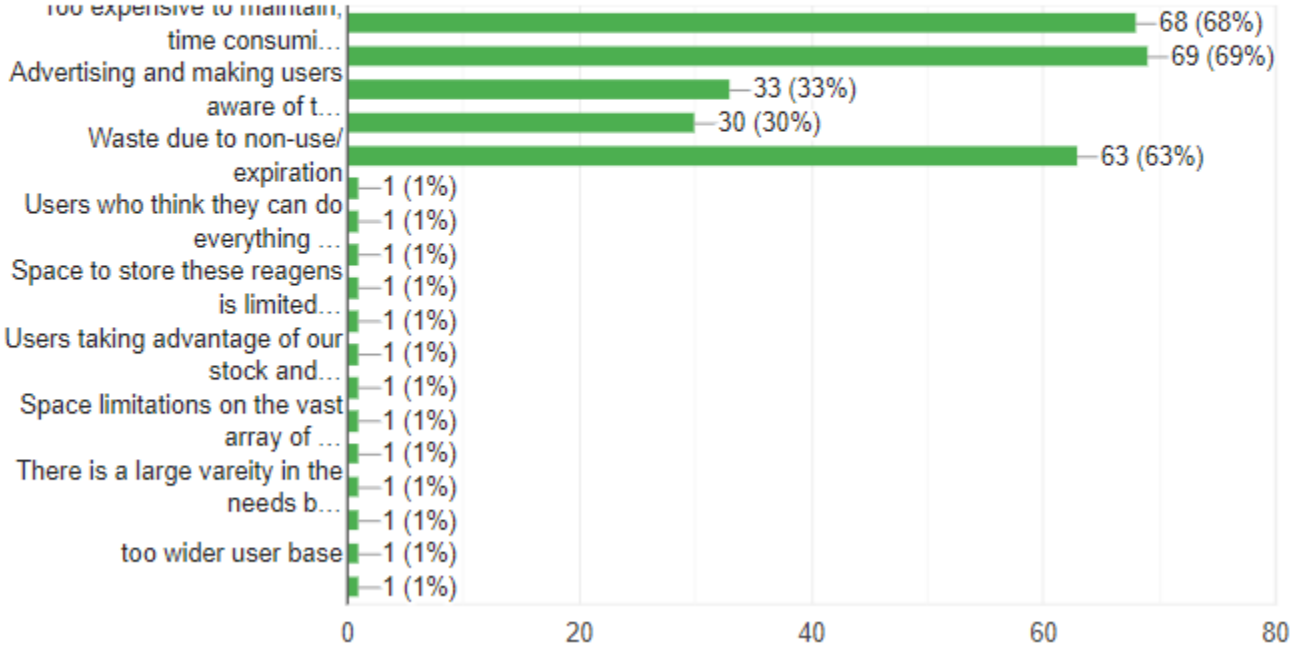
Do you think that stocking reagents is/would be beneficial to users?

100 responses

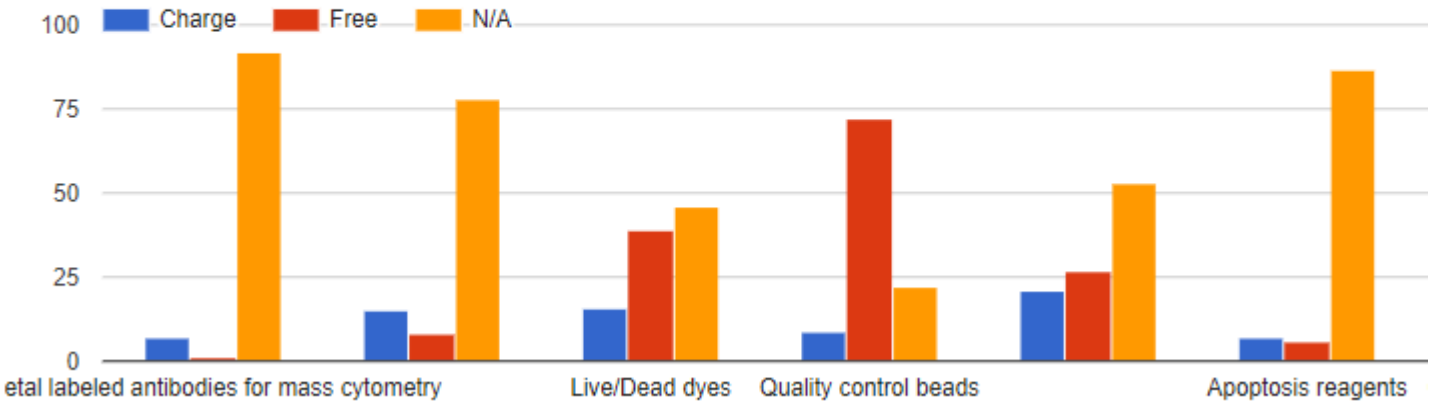


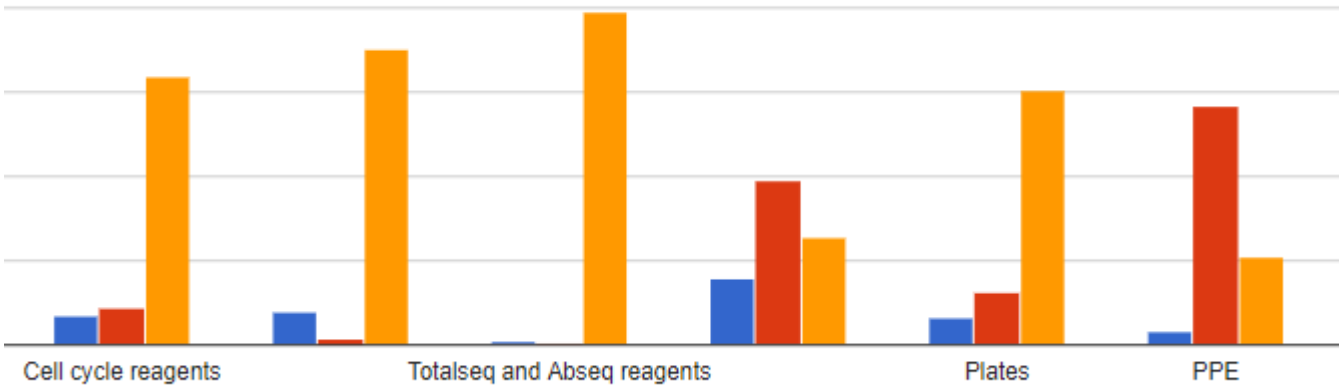
What is the most challenging aspect, about maintaining common resource stocks in an SRL? (Multiple selections possible)

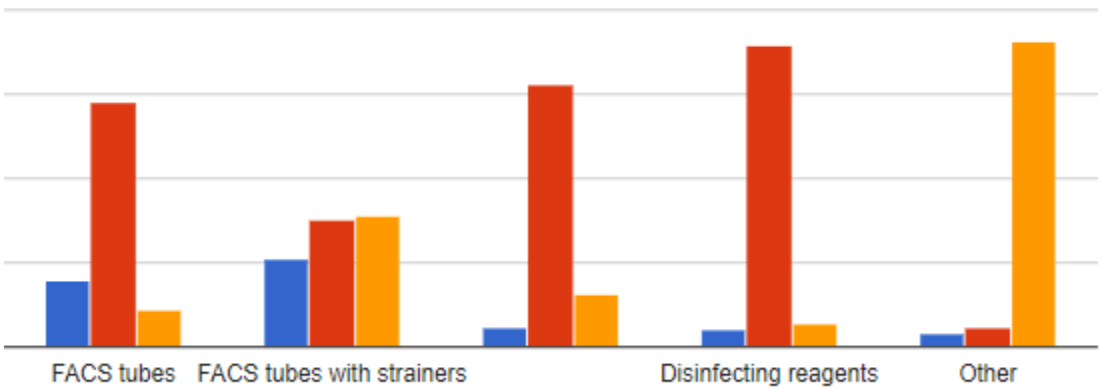
100 responses



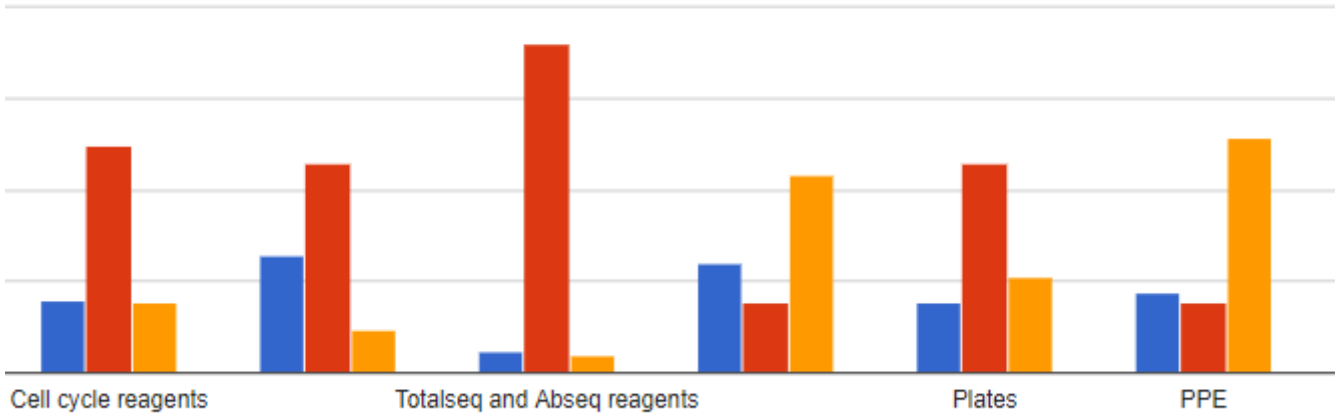
Which reagents/consumables listed below does your SRL provide? Please indicate if there is charge or not.

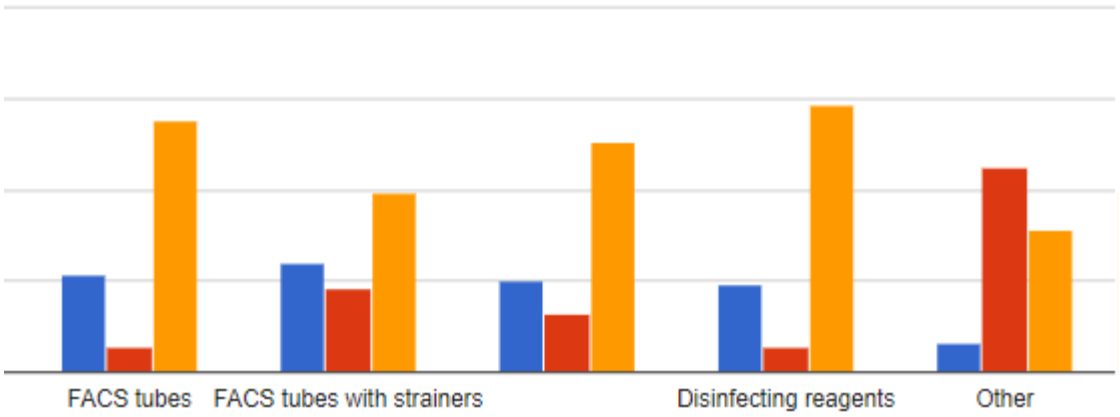






Which of the reagents/consumables listed below would you like your SRL to stock?





What are the benefits for stocking reagents/consumables in a SRL?
Encourages people to try things they normally wouldn't
The benefit is accessibility and quick availability especially for new users that may not have known to have certain reagents, like a live/dead stain or have poor single stain controls. Having comp beads that they can use can save an experiment. However, my facility only stocks comp beads (oneComp and UltraComp) and a few live/dead stains, lack of storage space and cost of expired reagents when not used limits what I stock..
Have on hand for when others run out
Availability to resource users, but responsibilities become incumbent upon the SRL and time may not exist to carry out such functions
It would be beneficial to smaller labs that may not have as much funding to purchase bulk quantities or labs that may only need to perform experiments only a few times
Quick access and potentially save on shipping
Easy access to reagents
Reduce cost to users and makes it easier for users to try out new assays and antibodies.
They need them we got them!
Have something on-hand in fee per service/sort bookings that are necessary for appointment. i.e. filters for cells that would clog the instrument if not filtered.
Tracking lots, titers, bulk ordering to save costs
Some reagents such compensation beads, viability dyes, filters... that are commonly used by everyone, independent of species, research are great to have, because people tend to run out of them more often
Convenience and costs for pilot experiments - for commonly used reagents, i.e. comp beads, core panel antibodies for CyTOF
Could reduce costs for bulk purchasing
Makes the SRL to run smoothly , makes the SRL staff life easy
None - it is just a bad idea except for maybe live dead stains
Mainly for spectral Cytometry to offer a blackbone panel
Stocking consumables is a must , but not reagents
Availability of tested and working reagents, less costs per grooup.
I think its a nice idea but the reality of maintaining a stock of antibodies with a varied user base would end up with a lot of waste and be costly
They're immediately available.
You can use them as you need them, specially nice for verification purposes. Optimization of panels...
availability for all, ensuring supply
positive: they can be titrated and optimised negative: they can become contaminated
I actually think this is only valuable if you have a predictable and rather limited user base. In today's world each panel is often unique and stocking reagents will likely lead to waste as it will be hard to predict usage.
Consistency in studies
They don't need to go looking for them
You can control the quality of certain reagents our clients use and there is consistency for reproducibility.
cost, ease of access
Allowing users to "test drive" reagents before committing to purchasing them for their own lab
For the most part these act as emergency back-ups for our users. It also gives us piece of mind that a user will not put something onto or into our instruments that could damage them.
Some expts are trials, a central stock will encourage one-off tests
Price, availability,
quality assuramce

What are the benefits for stocking reagents/consumables in a SRL?
The risks outweigh the benefits.
same time when users need them
Benefits would be to the labs who are just starting out or run into a temporary supply issue.
Ability to quickly correct compensation controls, determine cell viability, expand fluor options for panels
quick access
We don't stock reagents, but if we did, it would probably be viability dyes (we do have some PI). That would be helpful if someone has a noticibly dead sample, but no viability marker to show this.
The main consumables that I stock are comp beads and viability dyes (both standard drop in reagents and fixable viability dyes). The benefits are that users can still complete quality flow experiments even if they run out of something. This acts as a bail out for them but still gets time booked on your instrument vs a canceled experiment.
none. plan ahead or borrow. I support lab darwinism
emergency, lower threshold for new labs to try things,
quick use of reagents, in some cases a lower price
Encourages users to comply with best practices
They would be available when needed.
Might be easier and more cost effective to try new things for new users.
Saves money as most users do not need to buy a full vial
Give more option and support for the costumers, especially the ones that are not very familiarized with the technique.
Ensure they are stored properly
Can't think of any besides giving the SRL more work to do
Antibodies would be pre-tested and clones/colors chosen to stain as well as possible
Immediate access.
quality control of reagents/consumables, a centerize place for PI completely new to flow
Top ten antibodies involved with T & B cells. Not much more though.
helps out if user is stuck otherwise
They improve experiments by using something they are too cheap to pay for themselves
Better pricing
For Spectral flow antibodies bank would be beneficial because of purchasing many antibodies for large panels is problematic for our users
I prefer not stocking comsumables for end users.
Better pricing
Good point of contact with staff who know how to use them
We can avoid troubles and save time.
When customers need beads or other supplies, it keeps our schedule on track because they can grab them from us.
It gives our users the ability to use small amounts of antibodies for one off experiments or to develope new panels without purchasing entire vials of antibodies.
Reduced pricing due to bulk ordering
Using reagents that are known to work
It helps to make sure that users are doing things properly if you provide things like viability dyes or proper mounting media
Access to some of the more common antibodies would be useful during panel development while I decide which Abs, clones and fluors are optimal would be really useful. Having access to alternate nuclear dye would also be great, many of these are available in large pack sizes which I don't need so being able to buy an aliquot would be very useful and cost effective.
confidence they were stored properly, already know they work, hopefully used enough so they dont expire
cost is spread out between all laboratories

Any other comments?

This is Michael testing it

Tubes, plates, cell strainers are available as a back-up only, they are not provided for all users assays, users need to come with the samples fully prepped in general but there are always situations where they need the correct tubes of they didn't filter their samples. These supplies are available to help make sure they have a successful experiment. Cell Cycle reagents are limited to PI and DAPI.

no

We don't offer reagents/consumables generally, but I do have consumables readily available free of charge for folks that will need it on a one off basis (one of their tubes has a crack or their samples need a second run through a strainer, etc). A new lab did approach us asking if they could just buy a pack of 25 strainer capped tubes since they weren't planning on performing sorts often and we just charged them what we paid for it.

Haven't looked in a while, but never found affordable tools that would allow for inventory management that I actually liked.

Several reagents (e.g. LD dyes, PPE, plates) are stocked on site by our vendors and site managers. I keep nearly all standard panels stocked. It's made things far easier for me to chase down problems, and has saved us tens of thousands of dollars annually. Most end users do seem to appreciate the costs saved or time I spend taking care of their ordering issues. I would never have had the time to devote to this in my prior academic core settings - too much sorting to do, and too many different end users to deal with. I wish we had more options for vendor pick-up fridges so I wouldn't have to deal with it. At least Thermo can stock our LD dyes, apoptosis kits, comp beads, and blocking reagents...

This Survey makes no sense at all - plastics should be present to be functional and strainers, too. Common sense. Everything else is affected by shelf live, iser demand or fashion in science...and such. By the way, you offered genomics as part of the activities but nothing except limited application antibodies are asked for. Seqkits, library preps, qcs, etc...

we have a few tubes and cell strainers for people to use if they need them in the lab but we expect users to buy their own from our central stores. What I would love and have suggested to many vendors is that they do core facility packs of things for a flow experiment. So a mini vial of comp beads, some live dead dyes, staining buffers, cell strainers and some tubes. That way we can give them to users when they start and we can ensure they use the correct items. I have frequently given away vials of comp beads to users who have promised to return them and i have never seen the vial again. this ends up costing the core in the end.

Having common stocks of expensive reagents free of charge makes it hard to get cost-recovery. Expensive reagents must be charged (PPEs, FACS tubes, tips, etc being less expensive, can be available free of charge with little impact on the cost-recovery, and with the benefit of facilitating workflow and good practices). Another note is: a common stock of expensive reagents, like antibodies, can be available to users, but being fully controlled/manipulated and managed by the facility. Meaning: the users request a certain amount of reagent and the facility staff prepares it and make it available for pick-up. This way, it is easier to manage stocks and prevent contamination of common reagents.

No.

time, space and costs means we can't

Our approach is to negotiate a large institutional discount. We will order for clients as a pass through cost, but they get the same discount. If someone needs an "emergency" reagent, the call goes out to the community via FB and email, and with a large community, more often than not, someone has the needed antibody and can share. Other than custom products, we find our lead time in getting reagents is not bad. The work done in our core is so diverse it really would be impossible to have a stock...even CD3 could be used in one of 25 colors routinely!

As a core director/manager I personally do not think it is not fiscally effective to stock for users as for all of the above "challenging aspect"s listed above

Any other comments?

Lovely idea, but in the end totally impractical for most items.

The diversity of projects that come through our SRL coupled with the limited storage space we have mean that we cannot offer to stock many reagents for labs. We encourage our users to help each other and share when then can, and this has worked so far. Users and we would like to do more, but the space issues are the major constraint, but ultiamtely I would be worried about contamination, expiry dates, inventories, etc., if we were to carry and offer more.

Generally we openly provide consumables, cell cycle reagents, and viabilities dyes. We will also provide antibodies, compensation beads, counting beads, and other reagents in special situations when users cannot get them in time, but we typically ask that they replace the Core's stock when their order arrives.

Some SRLs are too small to make this work. The variety of reagents used is too wide to make it worth stocking.

We include charges for things like disinfecting reagents, tubes, and QC beads in the service charge for the instrument. We don't hand out tubes for researchers to use for their samples (unless they're in a bind/the stockroom is out), and tubes that are used in the facility are meant for to be used to clean the instrumentation internally. We include the charge for disposable gloves in our rates, but not safety glasses, lab coats, and other PPE that are a 1 time purchase and can be cleaned and reused. We're lucky to have a departmental store where researchers can purchase items such as tubes, strainers, etc. If a product were ordered a lot by our researchers, we'd ask if the departmental store would be willing to stock it.

Ultimately a lot of the lists above should be stocked as the costs should be recovered with the instrument recharge time. We factored in general lab consumables (PPE, Tips, Tubes and to a lesser extent plates) into how much it costs to operate the instrumentation.

You forgot calibration beads, which are different than QC or compensation beads.

If there are a number of cores who stock reagents for users, I would be interested to know what benefits they find from it, how they keep track of inventory & use, and where the funding comes from for such an endeavor.

Unless the reagents are for quality control purposes I believe the onus and cost should be on the users to purchase and use appropriate reagents - this should not be a responsibly of an SRL

It's a tough balance between shelf life and cost. Some users will do anything to wrap a failed experiment around an SRL so the SRL must do what is needed to protect itself, sadly.

I think a key question to consider here is the facility size (number of clients) and the variety of research. For our large facility with very varied research areas, providing reagents (antibodies, dyes, etc) would be difficult. Whereas, for a smaller facility with fewer clients all of whom have a similar research focus, I could see how the facility providing reagents would be beneficial to researchers, particularly from a financial point of view. I think providing PPE, cleaning/disinfecting reagents and sheath fluid are basic consumables that all facilities should provide - though I've heard of smaller facilities requiring users to bring/make their own sheath fluid!

for other above, lyophilised cells would be good for QC in relation to supplying Ab's. Would only offer Ab's if I had a robot to pipette it to make master mixes. That way charging/QC easier and Ab stock cross contamination would be reduced. Need some $$ to set it up though. Never tried to cost it to see if it was feasible either.

We have maintained a stock of fluorescently labeled antibodies for years. Originally we had mostly antibodies grown in-house and labeled with FITC, and alexa-fluors in-house, but now we purchase most anything. We periodically test to confirm the antibody still works in older stocks regardless of date of manufacture or expiration date.

The system that Jared Burks has set up at MD Anderson is pretty ideal. I recommend you reach out to him for more details. I am very envious.

Greetings from the frigid NorthEast!