

BioInspired Institute Materials Research Core

Instrument Training Policies

Our instrument training program uses the Technical Director and dedicated superuser-trainers (“superusers”) to provide timely access and support to our instruments. The superusers are well-qualified graduate students or postdoctoral associates with substantial experience using their specified instrument.

Definitions and Abbreviations

SOP: Standard operating procedure

1. Users must complete our access form and required safety training(s)

All users of BioInspired Institute space and instruments must first complete the required safety training as detailed in our Safety Training Policy. Additionally, users must also submit the access request form to gain card-swipe access.

2. Format of training program

Training on every instrument consists of a two-step sequence:

- a. The *initial training* covers the scientific and technical background of using the instrument and provides hands-on training with a trainee’s sample. The trainee will follow along with the SOP or standard workflow as provided by the trainer and take notes. The trainee will provide consumables where applicable.
- b. An *observation session* with the trainee and the trainer. The trainer observes the trainee operating the instrument and certifies them for independent use upon satisfactory demonstration of operation. As with the initial training, the trainee will provide a sample and consumables where applicable.

3. Required trainer level

- a. *Graduate students (PhD, MS) and Post-docs* must be observed/certified for independent use by the designated trainer.
- b. *Undergraduate students (REU and others)* must be observed/certified for independent use by the designated trainer.

4. Certification standards

To be certified, each user must satisfactorily follow the instrument SOP or a standard workflow specified during training. The certification requirements and rubric will be shared with new users during initial training sessions.

5. Superuser-Trainers

- a. Graduate student trainers will preferably have started the second year of their studies or later. Postdoctoral trainers will be considered on an *ad hoc* basis.
- b. To provide consistency, designated trainers have this role for 2-2.5 years, transitioning to a new trainer by the start of the third year as a trainer.
- c. Nominations for new trainers will be solicited and coordinated by the Technical Director.
- d. Trainers will be approved by the Technical Director and the faculty advisor of that individual.
- e. The effectiveness of trainers will be assessed with short, standard evaluations to be completed by new users at the end of every training sequence. Consistently poor evaluations will be grounds for intervention by the Technical Director or even replacement of the trainer.