

Requesting Liquid Nitrogen For Experimental Use: Procedure

DOCUMENT NAME	Requesting Liquid Nitrogen for Experimental Use				INT 6	
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ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSIBLE			CONTACT INFORMATION			
APPLIES TO Apply group names to define applicable areas of staff.						
GROUP 1	Principle Investigators – all institutes	GROUP 2	Laboratory Researchers – all institutes	GROUP 3	Research Operations	
GROUP 4		GROUP 5		GROUP 6		

VERSION HISTORY					
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1.0	Research Committee	tbc	New documentation	Research Operations Working Group	N/A



Reque	Requesting Liquid Nitrogen For Experimental Use: Procedure		
Proce	Procedure Purpose		
Definit	tions	2	
Conte	nts	2	
1.1	Scope of Document	2	
1.2	Describe the Task	2	
1.3	Health and Safety Considerations	2	
1.4	Steps to Take	3	
1.5	Contact for Further Advice	3	

PROCEDURE PURPOSE

To ensure that Liquid Nitrogen (LN_2) for experimental use is readily available to researchers at St George's, University of London (from now on referred to as St George's) while adhering to strict health and safety standards.

DEFINITIONS

St George's	St George's, University of London
The Institutes	Infection and Immunity Research Institute (IIRI)
	Molecular and Clinical Science Research Institute (MCSRI)
	Institute for Biomedical and Medical Education (IMBE)
	Population Health Research Institute (PHRI)
Cryostorage	Storage of samples in liquid nitrogen at -196°C
Dewar	A suitable flask in which LN ₂ can be safely contained
Cryosectioning	The cutting of thin sections from a block of frozen tissue

CONTENTS

1.1 SCOPE OF DOCUMENT

This procedure applies to everyone involved in laboratory-based research and teaching at St George's, including research groups in IIRI, MCSRI, IMBE and PHRI. It is also applicable to Research Operations staff.

1.2 DESCRIBE THE TASK

At St George's, LN_2 is mainly used for cryostorage. Cryostorage takes place within a specialised facility on the basement floor of Jenner wing. In the laboratories of Jenner Wing, however, LN_2 is mainly used to snap-freeze samples for storage at -80°C or during cryosectioning. Requests for LN_2 are made to Research Operations staff whose LN_2 distrubuters deliver the LN_2 to the laboratory.

1.3 HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

NB. Always follow the advice given in the LN_2 guidelines provided by the SHE Office.



20210210 Requesting LN2 For Experimental Use - Procedure v1.4 (1)

Further information can be found in the local-rules template which is available on the <u>SHE Office webpages</u>. A copy of the local rules should also be present within the laboratory.

- LN₂ may cause asphyxiation and must be handled in well-ventilated areas.
- LN₂, at a temperature of -196°C, can cause severe cold burns and permanent eye damage even by brief exposure. <u>Appropriate PPE</u>, including goggles and cryogenic gloves, must be worn when handling LN₂.
- Use pincers to withdraw objects immersed in LN₂.
- Use only approved containers able to withstand very cold temperatures, such as Dewars (carbon steel, plastic and rubber become brittle at these temperatures).
- Only use containers with loose lids. **NEVER SEAL LN₂ IN A CONTAINER**; pressure will build up and the container could potentially explode, forcefully discharging LN₂ with potentially devastating consequences.
- Unused LN₂ should be left to evaporate at room temperature in a fume hood with the extractor fan running A notice should be placed on the fume hood, stating that liquid nitrogen is present.
- **NEVER POUR LIQUID NITROGEN DOWN THE SINK** as this could lead to serious damage to pipework.
- NEVER store liquid nitrogen in a sealed room such as a cold room, a lift or a room without adequate ventilation.

1.4 STEPS TO TAKE

- 1. Send an email, 24 hours in advance, to both Technical Assistants, <u>Gavin Linkson</u> and <u>Michael Aidan</u> <u>O'Reilly</u>. This communication will ensure that at least one of them will be available to assist when required.
- 2. The email must contain your name, the laboratory that the LN₂ should be delivered to and the date and time that you require the LN₂.
- 3. In addition, you should arrange where you will leave the empty LN₂ container for the distributors to pick up and fill or when you will deliver the container.
- 4. LN₂ will be delivered to the laboratory as arranged or may be collected at the point of distribution.
- 5. A response will be given within 24 hours. If on the day of requirement the email isn't answered, contact Head of Laboratory Services, <u>Dr Priva Madhou</u>.
- 6. If after delivery the LN_2 needs to be used elsewhere, follow the <u>LN_2 guidelines</u> provided by the SHE office. **REMEMBER, LN_2 MUST NEVER BE ACCOMPANIED WHILST BEING TRANSPORTED IN A LIFT.**

1.5 CONTACT FOR FURTHER ADVICE

Head of Laboratory Services – Dr Priya Madhou



Technical Assistant - Michael Aidan O'Reilly

Research Operations Help Desk – email to be confirmed.

SHE Office - health@sgul.ac.uk