



# BUP PI HANDBOOK

A guide to BUP's procedures and personnel for  
researchers working in Botswana

This document offers an overview of everything you will need to know to do research at BUP, from budget crafting and proposal submissions to hiring personnel and regional compliance.

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BUP Operations Team (September 2025)

<https://www.med.upenn.edu/botswana/about.html>

BUP Director	Farouk Dako, MD, MPH	Oversees all BUP operations, including research and vital regional partnerships
BUP Associate Director, Head of Research & Lead Pediatric Clinician	Merrian Brooks, DO, MS	Manages BUP research engagements and pediatric activity
BUP Director of Financials and HR Operations	Phodiso Tshireletso, MBA	Manager for all finance and HR related activity, from grant submissions to local labor law
Finance Officer	Mogametsi Setswamorago	Point person for all finance inquiries, including funding submissions and budget development
BUP Compliance Officer, Research Directors Office	Relebogile Thipe, BSN	Primary contact for local IRB review preparation and regulation
BUP Human Resources Coordinator	Lindiwe Maida	Point person for all HR related inquiries, including hiring research coordinators and staff
BUP Information Technology	Oratile Papadi	Point person for IT troubles and inquiries, including borrowing and use of equipment
BUP Global Health & Program Coordinator	Josephine Thankane	Manages arrival and departures of visiting faculty, students, and researchers, as well as operational activities and agreements
Joint Molecular Biology Lab Director	Giacomo Maria Paganotti, PhD	Directs joint UB/BUP molecular biology laboratory
BUP Operations Officer	OL Khunong	Manages BUP fleet, drivers, facilities, as well as customs clearance/importation of goods and materials
CGH Global Operations Coordinator	Charlotte Beaver	Penn-side primary contact for all BUP-related inquiries and requests

## Steps to Proposal Submission (Pre-Awards):

**We cannot guarantee BUP support if you do not register your funding proposal with BUP/CGH at least two weeks prior to submission.** The earlier you notify us the better. If you have any questions regarding this process, please reach out to Charlotte Beever.

The process for registering your funding proposal with BUP/CGH is as follows:

- As early as you are able, and no less than two weeks prior to the submission deadline for your funding award, **email Center for Global Health’s Global Operations Coordinator Charlotte Beever ([charlotte.beever@pennteam.upenn.edu](mailto:charlotte.beever@pennteam.upenn.edu))** to notify her that you are working on an application for funding and plan to submit soon.
- Charlotte will reply to you with a request for further information. This will request be shared as an electronic form, the **“BUP Grant Registration Form”**. Please complete this form asap- it can be completed by you (the PI) or your BA. The form takes less than 10 minutes to complete.
- Once you have completed the form, congratulations! Your funding proposal has now been officially registered with BUP/CGH.
- If you have not already been in touch, Charlotte will connect those of you who work in the Department of Medicine with Lisa Franklin, who will work closely with the BUP Finance team and provide support in building your budget.
- Those of you who work in Departments other than Medicine and institutions other than the Perelman School of Medicine should contact your BA for international grants and link them to Charlotte.
- As you build your budget it is critically important that you follow the guidelines for BUP operations support.
- Charlotte will follow up with you around the time of your award notification to inquire as to whether your proposal has been accepted.
- If your submission has been successful and you’ve received funding, Charlotte will ask for more precise budgetary and timeline information. We ask that you please provide these updated details in a timely fashion.
- Botswana-based budgets **must** use BUP’s budget template. This template is available on [BUP’s research webpage](#). Dr. Brooks can assist with the development of your Botswana-based budget. Please complete a draft of this budget using the required template and share with Dr. Brooks for edits and approval.

## Steps to Study Initiation (Post Awards):

1. Contact Mma Thipe, Compliance Officer ([thiper@bup.org.bw](mailto:thiper@bup.org.bw)) to obtain your IRB approvals and research permit letters. All must be current before participant-facing work can begin.
2. Meet with Dr. Merrian Brooks, Associate Director ([bupresearch@bup.org.bw](mailto:bupresearch@bup.org.bw)) if needed for BUP Orientation. You **must** have completed the **BUP pre-submission form** mentioned above and **Botswana-based Budget** and **Scope of Work** (template attached) to start spending. Send your budget template and SOW drafts to Dr. Brooks, who will edit as needed before sending back for your approval.
3. Once you’ve received and approved this edited budget, please send it to Phodiso Tshireletso, BUP Finance Director ([tshireletsop@bup.org.bw](mailto:tshireletsop@bup.org.bw)) and Mogametsi Setswamorago

([setswamoragom@bup.org.bw](mailto:setswamoragom@bup.org.bw)) who will also share it with the Center for Global Health (CGH) Finance Team.

4. Preparation research work can be done once your account is approved for spending. Participant-facing work begins once the account is approved **and** IRBs are all in.
5. Once your project has begun and you are spending, please send amendments through Mma Thipe as needed.
6. When closing out, please consider presenting results to the clinics recruited from and other stakeholder groups.

### Budget Pointers

- BUP can assist with the budget of the in-country **Botswana** expenses for the duration of the project.
- Some funds should be allocated to cover the operations costs (percent effort of one operations staff or flat rate to be provided by BUP team (RD in partnership with ED).
- If you will be paying from 2 or more funds for your project, please make a note of that in your budget, and ensure BUP finance is aware.
- At least 8% of Botswana direct costs should go to core operations. See below for an overview of direct costing guidelines. Please contact Phodiso Tshireletso with any questions.
- The current EB rate for research in Botswana is 12.5%.
- As Penn charges its own indirect rate, there is no additional indirect rate for BUP.
- Grants that require use of operations staff for more than a few hours a year (or for prescribed tasks like IRB submissions) must provide specific salary support above the overhead. For example, if working as a study coordinator or project manager. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis and underscores the need to review the budget prior to grant submission.
- A fee will be charged for non-PENN affiliated trainees who use BUP services.
- Costs of certain materials are higher in Botswana. The BUP finance staff can help you budget for these in-country expenses.
- Please consider transportation costs when drafting your budget. Many hired research staff will not have cars and will need either a study car or funds for transportation expenses. BUP can assist with purchasing an affordable car for your study.

## Direct Support Guidelines

Amount/Year Spent in Botswana*	Percent of Budget Devoted to Direct Support of BUP Operations**			
	PSOM, CHOP, Other Penn Institutions			Non-Penn Institutions
	≤10% Indirect	10.1-27.9% Indirect	≥28% Indirect	
\$0 - \$9,999/year	0	0	0	0
\$10,000 - \$24,999/year	5%	0	0	5%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	7.5%	5%	0	7.5%
\$50,000 - \$149,999	12.5%	7.5%	0	12.5%
\$150,000 - \$299,999	15%	10.0%	0	15%
≥ \$300,000/year	15%	10.0%	5%	15%

**\*Amount/Year Spent in Botswana includes:**

- (a) 50% of PI salary support covered by grant<sup>^</sup>
- (b) salary, benefits, per diem of staff in Botswana;
- (c) equipment, supplies, and consumables in Botswana;
- (d) travel, housing and other logistical/administrative expenses in Botswana of Penn faculty/students engaged in the grant;
- (e) other logistical/administrative expenses in Botswana (transportation, rental, licensing, training, meetings, etc.)

<sup>^</sup>Different parameters may apply to junior faculty with a K award or a grant that provides mostly salary support

**\*\*Direct Support of BUP Operations includes:**

(a) *In Botswana:* Percent effort/salary support for Director, Director of Finance and Human Resources, Finance Officer, Human Resources Coordinator, Global Health Coordinator, Executive Assistant to the Director, IT Coordinator, and other BUP staff as needed

(b) *In Philadelphia:* A percent effort/salary support for the PSOM/CGH Coordinator and the PSOM/CGH Accounting Manager or PSOM/CGH Financial Analyst

**\*\*Direct Support of BUP Operations does NOT include:**

- (a) Fees for laboratory center (please refer to laboratory center guidelines)
- (b) Fees for community advisory board (flat fee of \$200 recommended)

## Hiring, Promotion and Management of Research Staff

Hiring, promotion, and employee management are executed by the BUP HR department. **BUP's Conditions of Service** governs interactions with employees, and includes detailed information regarding promotion, , benefits, disciplinary action, and special circumstances. Below are some key mandates from BUP's Conditions of Service. Your study coordinators are encouraged to read the entire conditions of service document.

- Hiring is done strictly by BUP HR, who ensure positions and contracts align with local labor law.
- Salaries are standardized to position-based ranges. BUP HR can provide more details.
- Please contact BUP HR or reference BUP's conditions of service if you would like to adjust the salary of an employee.
- Please note that annual salary adjustments are provided to reduce the burden of inflation.

## Procurement of Study Materials and In-Country Payments

BUP Finance administers accounts, confirms fund matrices, ensures personnel are paid, and pays local vendors for research materials. Attached are the relevant documents that govern the flow of funds for BUP. Your study

coordinators are encouraged to familiarize themselves with each of these documents. Key information from these documents is listed below.

## Finance: Important Dates and Payments Schedule

- **1<sup>st</sup> TO 5<sup>th</sup> OF EVERY MONTH:** Finance Office reconciles BUP accounts. **No transactions** are carried out during this time.
- Salary pay-out is between the 20<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> of every month
- **25<sup>th</sup> OF THE MONTH:** Crediting of monthly airtime to the staff. Any termination of the staff member from airtime must be communicated to Finance 1 month in advance.
- **LAST PAYMENTS OF THE MONTH:** The last payments of the month are done 2 days before month's end. No payments are processed on the final day of the month.
- **REIMBURSEMENTS:** If an officer has used his/her own money to buy study materials and therefore seeks reimbursement, they must complete **the BUP Expense Form** in full. Please include the relevant invoices/receipts as well as written approval from the Study PI stating the grant to charge. These materials are to be submitted to the BUP Finance Office.
- **END OF FINANCIAL YEAR:** BUP End of Financial Year is **30<sup>th</sup> June**. Any funds to be used in the given Financial Year must be accounted for in that year. Expenses will not be backdated.

## Finance Procurement Procedures Overview

- The PI assigns a team member familiar with relevant technical and logistic needs, to serve as project purchaser. The project purchaser identifies sources or suppliers for needed goods. If required, they seek three competitive quotations for the goods or goods of comparable quality and utility. All quotations MUST be billed to:
 

The University of Pennsylvania  
PO Box 45498  
Riverwalk Gaborone, Botswana.
- Purchases from a domestic supplier (in Botswana) should also include our **VAT Registration number: D63TA0001111**, on invoices and quotations.
- Some payments are processed at the US office, either because the amount is deemed too high OR the supplier is US-based.
- For Botswana-based suppliers, the supplier will need to complete a **BUP Payment Details Form** and tax declaration forms and submit to the local office, which will forward to Penn on behalf of the supplier.
- The project purchaser must present 3 competitive quotations from the shortlist of suppliers to the PI OR justification in the case of one quotation. The PI gives written approval (in writing or by email).
- **Written approval must include ALL of the following four (4) elements:**
  1. Supplier name, address, VAT number and contact details.
  2. Concept: the goods or service being approved
  3. Total amount: the total amount approved for purchase

4. Fund to charge: the name of the fund with adequate budget to charge for the purchase; approvers should refer to the name indicated by their BA or BUP Director of Finance
    - **If there is a non-PENN PI approving expenses as a co-PI, the PENN PI must secondarily approve**
- The winning quotation, 2 additional quotes, and PI approval are submitted to the BUP finance office (by hand delivery or email).
  - Approval should be sent to Ms Mogametsi Setswamorago ([setswamoragom@bup.org.bw](mailto:setswamoragom@bup.org.bw)), who will issue a purchase order. Mogametsi Setswamorago will then send a copy of the purchase order to the project purchaser.
  - The program purchaser then follows up with the supplier about the delivery of the goods.
  - If the goods are international, it is important for the program purchaser to acquire a copy of the (1) pro-forma invoice and (2) shipping waybill and send them to Mr. Khunong ideally 2-3 days before it reaches a port of entry into Botswana. This ensures adherence to local custom procedures.
  - Once the program purchaser has received delivery of the goods purchased and is satisfied with the delivery, s/he should sign at the bottom of the purchase order, indicating all items were received in good condition.
  - The program purchaser then delivers a signed copy of the purchase order and invoice to the Finance Officer confirming receipt.
  - BUP Finance Officer Mogametsi Setswamorago will organize payment to the supplier.

The University of Pennsylvania is registered with BURS as a Customs Clearing Agent. **Please see the Procurement Document for details regarding importation of goods purchased outside of Botswana**

## Additional Resources

### Information Technology

The BUP IT team (led by Oratile Papadi: [papadio@bup.org.bw](mailto:papadio@bup.org.bw)) can assist your Botswana-based research team with:

1. Any wifi network need
2. Connection to the commercial printer (billed by the page)
3. Any issue(s) with computers or tablets
4. Advice on hardware purchase

The IT team does not have extensive database experience. It is therefore helpful to teach your research team basic database capacity, or speak to Merrian Brooks, who can connect your team to RedCAP courses via the University of Botswana.

### Transportation

Please contact Josephine Thankane, Global Health Coordinator [thankanej@bup.org.bw](mailto:thankanej@bup.org.bw) if you are interested in renting or purchasing a car for your research or have questions regarding local transportation services.

## Botswana UPENN/Univ of Botswana Joint Molecular Lab

The molecular lab is managed by Dr. Giacomo Paganotti, PhD. Please see the attached Lab Center Charges and Policy document for relevant details pertaining to lab usage. There are two lab spaces, the BUP molecular lab and the NHL lab, with the following supplies:

### UB/BUP Molecular Laboratory

The laboratory is located within the University of Botswana (UB) campus, block 246, room H217. The laboratory is central to multiple ongoing projects including malaria studies, arboviruses research, HPV and breast cancer research.

The laboratory is equipped with:

- an Easy Mag (Biomérieux) automated nucleic acid extractor
- one four-bay and two single-bay thermal cyclers (Bio-Rad Tetrad 2 and T100, respectively)
- real-time PCR facilities are available in a close Biological Sciences lab (Applied Biosystems QuantStudio 6 Flex Real-Time PCR System)
- a gel-imaging system (Bio-Rad Gel Doc XR+)
- a refrigerated centrifuge
- fridge and freezers including -80 C freezer (Thermo Scientific)
- 4 laminar airflow BSL2 hoods
- one micro- and two microcentrifuges, water bath, electrophoresis system, an autoclave
- Primo Star Light Microscope (Zeiss, with camera facilities)
- two ELISA plate readers

### NHL/BUP Laboratory

The laboratory is located within the NHL facility (Microbiology). The laboratory is equipped with:

- two laminar airflow BSL2 hoods
- one cell culture incubator (Lasec)
- water bath, vortex, one micro- and one macrocentrifuge (Thermo Scientific)
- one GeneXpert machine
- 4°C fridge, -20°C and -80°C freezers the freezers are connected to a UB backup system, and monitored also from remote)

### Procedure for Initiating Usage of Lab:

- The principal investigator (PI) or designee of a proposed project must contact the lab director, Dr Giacomo Paganotti (paganottig@bup.org.bw), to discuss the nature of the intended lab work, and determine the lab budget required to cover the proposed work.

- This process will include developing and signing a scope of work for the lab center and should begin a minimum of 4 weeks before the budget is due to be submitted to Penn or other entity for approval.
- The charges will consist of:
  1. Direct lab charges for the project, e.g. reagents, supplies, lab tech time
  2. Equipment to be used
  3. Lab staff effort to run specimens or if the project will hire own lab staff
  4. Lab management and maintenance costs based on usage – both staff and equipment
  5. Contingency costs
- The lab maintenance, management, and contingency costs (Also known as ‘bench fees’) will generally be 25% or less of the direct lab costs, and will be billed at a rate of \$13.00/hour for those using both NHL and UB Lab.
  - If using the UB lab alone, \$17/hr, OR if using the NHL Lab alone, \$8/hr, calculated using the lab tech time for technical work, including any sample finding and processing, but not data entry.
- The direct lab costs include project specific reagents, supplies and specialized lab tech time, as well as any other requisite costs of the proposed work.
- Once the BUP Lab budget is agreed upon by the PI and the lab director, the budget will be reviewed internally.
- If the budget for a proposed project is **NOT** discussed with the lab director and does **NOT** receive lab director approval prior to submission, the project will be charged a minimum of 25% of the estimated direct lab costs as a fee to expedite preparation supply importation, etc. for the project.

## Billing/Invoicing for the Lab

### Billing/Invoicing Contract:

After notice of award, a final updated contract will be provided by the lab director and signed by the PI, Lab Director, and BUP Finance team. It will include total amounts to be billed, intervals of billing, and a clause indicating which procedures to follow in the rare event the quoted amount changes due to extreme price fluctuations.

### If a Price Change Occurs:

Sometimes the quotations for lab costs will change due to the long turnaround time between grant submission and actual activities. If a price change occurs after a final contract is agreed to, a written explanation must be provided which details: 1. Brief explanation of new amounts 2. New quotations from relevant vendors, 3. An updated budget amount that will be agreed upon and signed by all parties prior to invoicing.

When to Add Effort for Lab Tech:

A small percent of the lab techs support is built into the bench fees for all quotations. However, if a project requires more than a few hours a week of time, effort for the lab tech is required. The amount will be negotiated by the PI and the Lab Director and agreed to at the proposal stage. These funds will also be included in the lab contract.

When to Add Effort for Lab Director:

The lab director's basic supervisory efforts are built into the bench fees for all quotations. However, if a PI requires advanced supervision, consulting, or lab director expertise in complex laboratory techniques efforts, additional bench fees will be requested. The amount will be negotiated by the PI and the Lab Director and agreed to at the proposal stage. These funds will also be included in the lab contract.

## Annex A. Template for Post Award SOW and Budget to go to BUP Botswana Office

### Botswana UPENN Partnership Scope of Work and Budget Template

**Instructions:** Below there is a form to help The Botswana UPENN Partnership (BUP) keep needed concise documentation **for funded awards** that involve BUP. Please fill in the entire document. If a section is not relevant please add n/a to that section. Submit to the research director [bupresearch@bup.org.bw](mailto:bupresearch@bup.org.bw) for review. The research director will then send to director of HR/Finance Phodiso Tshireletso [tshireletsop@bup.org.bw](mailto:tshireletsop@bup.org.bw) who will formally initiate the fund at BUP in partnership with the rest of the finance and HR departments. No funds can be disbursed without Phodiso's initiation.

**Notes:** Please speak with lab director before adding UB/BUP Joint molecular lab budget items. Lab SOW and budgets can be attached separately if finalized in any format it was completed in. Also, if the budgeted salaries below are stated in USD, the prevailing exchange rate as of July 1<sup>st</sup> of the new financial year will be used.

#### Scope of Work and Budget

This is an agreement between [PI: ] and the Botswana University of Pennsylvania Partnership (BUP).

**Title of Project:**

**Dates of Grant (start and expiration):**

**Principle Investigator and Co-Principal Investigators who will be in contact with Botswana Team:**

**Any other relevant investigators who will be receiving effort in Botswana:**

**Main Points of Contact:**

**Name and contact information of Business Administrator: Name - Contact -**

**Scope of Work:** *Please provide a brief overview of expectations from BUP. They might include things like hire and manage staff, dispense funds, procure supplies, computer accounts, printing, office space, paying local vendors, lab\* etc.*

**Official Penn Grant Name and Fund Number (if applicable):** *Account funds are to be charged to (if CHOP please note it is a CHOP account and add Grant number for Invoice):*

**Name:**

**Fund number:**

**Personnel:** *Please list the positions you are hiring for, start date, duration of contract and proposed salary and percent effort you are hiring for in the table below.*

Position	%effort	Start Date	Duration of contract	Budgeted Salary	Name of person (if applicable)	Position type( Full-Time/Part-time/consultant

**Additional Budget Items (including consultants):**

Item	Explanation	Projected Expense

**Total Amount Requested (in USD or Pula):**

**Additional information:**

## Annex B: Cover Page for Funded Lab Center Projects

**Date:**

**Brief Review of Lab Services:**

**Attached is the detailed budget lab services.**

**I will be invoiced for services:  Quarterly  Monthly  In a single invoice for \$\_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_\_\_ payments**

**The following will be paid as actual costs instead of quoted estimates (shipping etc):**

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**I, \_\_\_\_\_(PI) agree to the attached budget and invoicing scheduling for my study.**

**Signed,**

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**PI                      Lab Director                      PI Business Admin                      Finance (BUP)                      Finance (Penn)**