



GOISWAN INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

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GUIDELINES FOR POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

1. Background

Postdoctoral Fellows (PDFs) form an integral part of the University community and contribute significantly to strengthening the research focus and impact. The University recognizes the academic status of Postdoctoral Fellows and is committed to create and maintain an academic environment to encourage and support their academic activities. The appointment of Postdoctoral Fellows is aligned with the vision and mission of the University, as well as the strategic goal to foster research and innovation excellence.

2. Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to set out the values and principles underpinning the Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme at the Botswana International University of Science and Technology (BIUST) and to set up a framework for appointing and hosting of Postdoctoral Research Fellows.

3. Definitions

Postdoctoral Fellow: is a PhD graduate who is establishing his/her academic research career by primarily conducting research but can also undertake other academic activities such as lecturing and co-supervision of students, under the supervision of a host at the University. Being appointed as a Postdoctoral Fellow is a transitional phase, designed to bridge the gap from PhD graduation to permanent employment in academia or industry.

Fellowship: is the payment to the Postdoctoral Fellow for his/her personal expenses for the duration of the postdoctoral research period.

Department: is the academic department, division, centre or institute at BIUST where the Postdoctoral Fellow is registered.

Host: is an academic staff member in the relevant academic department, centre or institute at BIUST, who acts as supervisor, research partner and mentor to the Postdoctoral Fellow.

Head of Department: is the head of the academic department, centre or institute where the Postdoctoral fellow is registered.

Contract: are the conditions between the host and the Postdoctoral Fellow on the one hand and the Postdoctoral Fellow and the University on the other, defining the expectations of each by the other, including remuneration.

- ### **5. Offices for Research Development and Innovation (ORDI) and Dean of the School of Postgraduate Studies (DSPGS):** are the entities at BIUST responsible for the administration of the postdoctoral research fellowships and ensuring that appointments, activities, and terminations comply with the regulations of the Funding Institution and the University as well as the terms of these guidelines and the Contract.

6. Goal

The goal of these Guidelines is to establish the rights, obligations, and associated requirements for the activity of postdoctoral fellow at BIUST.

7. Objectives

The objectives of the guidelines are:

- a. To provide established researchers and academic departments with the opportunity to host Postdoctoral Fellows to strengthen their research impact.
- b. To provide Postdoctoral Fellows with the opportunity to develop and strengthen their research and professional skills and to transfer their acquired skills to researchers and students at BIUST.
- c. To provide BIUST with the opportunity to expand its research portfolio through new areas of research and to enhance its research productivity through increasing scientific publications and technology transfer.
- d. To develop research capacity at BIUST.
- e. To strengthen internationalisation at BIUST and expand collaborative research networks through the hosting of international Postdoctoral Fellows.

8. Scope

The scope of the Guidelines covers all academic or research Departments at BIUST that will require Postdoctoral Fellows, who will be either national or international scholars.

9. Principles

9.1. *General*

- 9.1.1. With appropriate supervision, Postdoctoral Fellows can make a significant contribution towards developing capacity in research and innovation at the University and the country.
- 9.1.2. International Postdoctoral Fellows will contribute towards internationalisation of BIUST and have the potential to become important international collaborators in future.
- 9.1.3. The main goal of a Postdoctoral Fellowship is to develop and hone the research and professional skills of the Postdoctoral Fellow in preparation for their future academic or other professional career.
- 9.1.4. Each Postdoctoral Fellow is supervised and mentored by a host and accommodated within a department at the University. The host must lead and guide the Postdoctoral Fellow to become an independent researcher and academic.
- 9.1.5. Postdoctoral Fellows may be involved in teaching and co-supervision of postgraduate students, depending on the terms agreed upon in the Contract between the Postdoctoral Fellow and the host.
- 9.1.6. Postdoctoral Fellows denote a separate category of researchers in the University system.
- 9.1.7. A postdoctoral fellow may join BIUST with his/her own funding, and in that case, the host will have sole discretion to accept the fellow provided that other conditions of these guidelines are met. A postdoctoral fellow will be appointed after the post has been advertised and interview conducted if: (1) BIUST provides the funding (2) the funding organization makes provision for such interview.

9.2. *Roles and Responsibilities of a Postdoctoral Fellow*

Although there will be variations in the expectations from a Postdoctoral Fellow, as agreed upon in individual contracts, the University's expectations include the following:

- 9.2.1. To keep an accurate and meticulous record of research activities and the regular provision of research data to the host.
- 9.2.2. To undertake output-driven research and disseminate it in journals, books, or book chapters that are recognized by BIUST.
- 9.2.3. To contribute to the research ethos of the host department, including participation in meetings and research seminars, as well as knowledge transfer to colleagues and students.
- 9.2.4. To spend a significant proportion of his/her time on the University campus.
- 9.2.5. To contribute to the operation of a research laboratory where appropriate and as agreed with the relevant host.
- 9.2.6. To contribute towards the University's mission to become an internationally acclaimed research-intensive university.
- 9.2.7. To submit progress reports to funders, where and when required.

9.3. *Roles and Responsibilities of the Host*

The host of the Postdoctoral Fellow accepts the following responsibilities:

- 9.3.1. To provide the Postdoctoral Fellow with a research environment and facilities.
- 9.3.2. To keep an ongoing record of the research done.
- 9.3.3. To meet with the Postdoctoral Fellow on a regular basis and to provide research guidance.
- 9.3.4. To familiarise the Postdoctoral Fellow with relevant institutional research policies.
- 9.3.5. To ensure the availability of sufficient research funding for the Postdoctoral Fellow to complete his/her research project(s).
- 9.3.6. To define research milestones and the methods and deadlines to attain them in agreement with the Postdoctoral Fellow before commencement of the fellowship and put them in a contract form.
- 9.3.7. To initiate the termination of the contract when the PDF fails significantly in the attainment of research milestones for personal reasons, and to dismiss the PDF from the project.
- 9.3.8. To inform, in writing, the Office for Research Development and Innovation and the Postdoctoral Fellow of the premature termination of a fellowship for whatever reason.
- 9.3.9. To inform the Office for Research Development and Innovation in writing when a fellowship is extended and adhere to the required administrative process for the extension period.
- 9.3.10. To structure the proposed research project in such a way that the desired outputs are achievable within the duration of the fellowship.

9.4. *Roles and Responsibilities of the host department*

A postdoctoral fellow may work across department but must identify a host department that will be responsible for:

- 9.4.1. Provision of research facilities including office space and equipment.

- 9.4.2. Provision of intellectual engagement fora. The HoD in consultation with the host will ensure that postdoctoral fellow has access to seminars, other researchers, students and technical staff as situation may require.

9.5. *Roles and Responsibilities of the University*

The University, as represented by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research Development and Innovation, accepts the following responsibilities:

- 9.5.1. To provide an enabling institutional environment to Postdoctoral Fellows.
9.5.2. To administer Postdoctoral Fellowships.

9.6. *Eligibility Criteria*

Prospective Postdoctoral Fellows should meet the following criteria:

- 9.6.1. The Fellowship should be taken up within three years of completing their doctoral studies or an earlier postdoctoral project at a recognised higher education institution.
9.6.2. If not yet in possession of a doctoral degree certificate, the applicant needs to submit a written statement from the Registrar (or equivalent) at the issuing university confirming satisfactory fulfilment of the university's requirements for a doctoral degree at the time of acceptance of a Postdoctoral Fellowship.
9.6.3. A Postdoctoral Fellow may not already be employed at BIUST when commencing with the Postdoctoral Fellowship.

9.7. *Duration of Fellowship*

- a. The duration of a Postdoctoral Fellowship depends on funder's stipulations. A Postdoctoral Fellowship may be extended by the host department, provided that sufficient funding is available, and the host deems this to be desirable based on the research outputs.
b. The extension of a Postdoctoral Fellowship beyond this two-year period will be subject to written approval by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research Development and Innovation.

9.8. *Advertisement for Postdoctoral Fellow Positions*

- 9.8.1. The relevant academic host and his/her department is responsible for drafting an advertisement for Postdoctoral Fellow positions. The advertisement must be submitted, through the relevant academic and human resources administrative channels at BIUST, to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation for approval. The advertisement may be international.
9.8.2. From the applications submitted, a selection committee will select a suitable candidate based on project-specific qualifications and in consideration of any criteria imposed by the donor.
9.8.3. The selection committee, which will be appointed by the DVC: RDI will be composed of the host, Director: HR; Director: RD; HOD, Dean School of Postgraduate studies and any other representative(s) as may be found necessary.
9.8.4. Postdoctoral positions where Postdoctoral Fellows have secured their own funding from external sources (Botswana or international) do not need to be advertised.

9.9. Funding

- 9.9.1. Postdoctoral Fellowship funding may be sourced in a variety of ways but is generally awarded to:
 - a. the host via internal university funds or an external funding agency; or
 - b. directly to a prospective Postdoctoral Fellow by the relevant department or an external funding body.
- 9.9.2. Should funds from contract research be used for a postdoctoral fellowship, the contract must clearly identify the funding as that of a Postdoctoral Fellowship and should fit within the scope of a BIUST Postdoctoral Fellowship.
- 9.9.3. The host must ensure that sufficient Postdoctoral Fellowship funding is available from a bona fide funding source for the duration of the written agreement.
- 9.9.4. Each funding body has its own set of specific regulations that may result in an additional contractual agreement between the funder and the Postdoctoral Fellow.
- 9.9.5. The minimum level of funding for a full-time Postdoctoral Fellowship sponsored will be revised annually by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research Development and Innovation.
- 9.9.6. If allowed by a funder, a Postdoctoral Fellowship may be topped-up with institutional or other funds at the discretion of the academic host.
- 9.9.7. The Postdoctoral Fellow must ensure that he/she does not violate the fellowship or visa conditions regarding additional funding. The Office for Research Development and Innovation is obliged to report any such contraventions to the relevant funding organisations (in terms of signed undertakings) and University auditors.
- 9.9.8. The minimum and maximum amount of funding for a Postdoctoral Fellowship is not prescribed in the University policies, should be at the discretion of the relevant funder.

9.10. Status at BIUST

A postdoctoral fellow will be treated as a staff member at BIUST. However, for admission purposes they will be required to apply for and obtain a student study permit.

9.11. Admission and registration of postdoctoral fellow

- 9.11.1. Once accepted by the selection committee or if the fellow has own funding, the application for postdoctoral fellowship will be submitted through the host-HOD to the Directorate of Research and Development, who will issue acceptance letter.
- 9.11.2. National applicants will use the acceptance letter for registration while international applicants will use the acceptance letter to apply for a student study permit.
- 9.11.3. With the permit, for an international applicant, or acceptance letter for a national applicant, the applicant will then be issued with a student card.

9.12. *Postdoctoral Contract*

- 9.12.1. The Postdoctoral Fellow must enter a legally binding individual contract with the University, to be signed by the host, the Head of Department, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research Development and Innovation, and the Postdoctoral Fellow. This Contract serves to provide a framework for the research to be done and serves as a means of monitoring the agreed-upon expectations of both host and Postdoctoral Fellow. The Contract must clearly state that the Postdoctoral Fellow is required to comply with the University's code of conduct and all relevant University policies.
- 9.12.2. The Contract does not imply that an employment offer shall be made in the future.

9.13. *Facilities and Benefits*

- 9.13.1. The Postdoctoral Fellow will be provided with adequate working space and access to departmental research equipment; university-wide analytical facilities; regional research facilities; basic administrative facilities, including IT network access, printing, internet use, an institutional email address, library facilities and access to Campus Health Services.
- 9.13.2. Facilities provided to the Postdoctoral Fellow through his/her host department must be described in the Contract.

9.14. *Induction/Orientation*

The host is required to provide Postdoctoral Fellows with orientation to the Department and University. The host is expected to provide ongoing advice and guidance to the Postdoctoral Fellow. Further orientation related to settling into the broader University environment will be provided in its various aspects by Human Resources Directorate.

9.15. *Code of Conduct, Grievance Procedures and Complaints*

- 9.15.1. The Postdoctoral fellow must subscribe to the University's code of conduct and all relevant institutional policies, as well as the conditions set out in the Contract between the host and the Postdoctoral Fellow.
- 9.15.2. In the event of any dispute, the Postdoctoral fellow and/or the host will have recourse to the normal dispute resolution processes of the University. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research Development and Innovation will serve as the last point of contact for Postdocs and their hosts in complaint or grievance processes.

9.16. *Professional Development*

- 9.16.1. A Postdoctoral Fellow may not register for any degree at BIUST or another higher education institution during the term of the Postdoctoral Fellowship, without written permission from the host and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research Development and Innovation.
- 9.16.2. Postdoctoral Fellows can register for skills development workshops or short courses offered at BIUST, subject to approval by the host and availability of funds.

9.17. Termination of Fellowship

- 9.17.1. A Postdoctoral Fellow should give at least thirty days' written notice to the host should he/she wish to terminate the Fellowship prior to the date agreed upon in the Contract.
- 9.17.2. Should the host wish to terminate the hosting of a Postdoctoral Fellow, he/she needs to inform the Director Research and Development and the Postdoctoral Fellow in writing, (electronic or hard copy), at least thirty days in advance. If required, the host and Postdoctoral Fellow will have recourse to the dispute resolution processes of the University.
- 9.17.3. A Postdoctoral Fellow and his/her host are required to inform the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research Development and Innovation, and submit an "exit form", when the Postdoctoral Fellow terminates his/her contract at the University. Where such termination occurs before the Postdoctoral Fellow has completed her/his research or full contract period, the University reserves the right to recover all or some of the funds that have been paid to the Postdoctoral Fellow in advance.

9.18. Income TAX

Since postgraduate fellows will be expected to have a valid study permit, the fellowships paid to them will be treated in a similar way as other postgraduate students.

9.19. Other Academic Activities and Additional Remuneration

- 9.19.1. Postdoctoral Fellows may teach undergraduate/postgraduate students and supervise postgraduate students. However, the core activity is research and detailed expectations of the host and Postdoctoral Fellow will be stipulated in the Contract.
- 9.19.2. Like any academic staff, a Postdoctoral Fellow may be further remunerated for services rendered at or through BIUST, for example, undertaking contract research or professional consultation.
- 9.19.3. Where extra work is permitted in terms of the postdoctoral fellowship contract, a total of up to 12 hours weekly of additionally paid work may be undertaken. This includes all other additionally remunerated academic activities and is to be paid for at the normal University rates.
- 9.19.4. International Postdoctoral Fellows may also work in Botswana, in line with the above stipulations, provided that this is allowed by their individual visa conditions.
- 9.19.5. Postdoctoral Fellows may be involved in the supervision of undergraduate and postgraduate student projects.
- 9.19.6. Postdoctoral Fellows may serve as co-supervisors and not primary supervisors. The host approves the role of the Postdoctoral Fellow as co-supervisor on condition that:
 - a. The co-supervision role is considered an integral part of the Postdoctoral Fellow's academic training, and that they receive appropriate guidance regarding their role as co-supervisor from the student's primary supervisor as well as the host (if the host is not the primary supervisor).
 - b. There is no additional payment for this role as co-supervisor.

- c. The duration of the Postdoctoral Fellow's tenure will be carefully considered vis-à-vis the projected study period of the postgraduate student, prior to approving the Postdoctoral Fellow as co-supervisor.

9.20. Leave of Absence

- 9.20.1. Postdoctoral Fellows are entitled to leave on national holidays and during periods when the University is officially closed.
- 9.20.2. Postdoctoral Fellows will be allowed leave as stipulated in their Contract.
- 9.20.3. Maternity and paternity leave will be given according to funder stipulations and in agreement with the host.
- 9.20.4. Postdoctoral Fellows are subject to the normal terms and conditions of service in all other matters.

9.21. Medical Insurance

This will normally be included in the funds for the position as stipulated in the Contract.

9.22. Personal Accident Insurance, Liability and Indemnity

This will normally be included in the funds for the position as stipulated in the Contract.

9.23. Application for Research Grants

Postdoctoral Fellows may apply for any grant as Principal Investigator provided that:

- 9.23.1. The fellowship and grant funder have no restrictions on Postdoctoral Fellows as grantees.
- 9.23.2. The host approves the application.
- 9.23.3. The duration of the Postdoctoral Fellow's tenure corresponds with the duration of the grant.

9.24. Intellectual Property:

According to the BIUST Policy on Intellectual Property the University owns all rights, titles, and interest in all intellectual property generated, created, or developed in facilities operated or controlled by the University, supported by funds administered by the University, and/or performed in the course of regular duties by University members, including Postdoctoral Fellows, unless exempted by other provisions of these guidelines.