

REGIONAL STUDENT HANDBOOK

WELCOME TO BHEARD

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on successful application to the university of your choice. We are very pleased that you are now part of the BHEARD vision.

As a reminder, funding for BHEARD scholarships is provided by USAID-Washington and participating USAID missions in [Feed the Future](#) countries. The main goal of this program is institutional capacity-building for priority institutions in these countries. As such, while individual students are granted scholarships, programs of study and research topics are selected to create and maximize scientific capacity at these priority institutions, and must reflect the goals of the Feed the Future program in each trainee's home country. All areas of study and dissertation proposals must be approved by BHEARD.

This handbook is provided to better understand the requirements and expectations of this scholarship program. It will offer guidance on the country process from receiving admission to the successful completion of training and beyond.

Trainees are responsible for reading and understanding the information detailed in this handbook, and in the documents to be signed before beginning training; these include the rules and regulations of both BHEARD and USAID. Please note that each USAID mission may also vary in its regulations for participation in the BHEARD program.

It is our wish that your studies progress as smoothly as possible, and we will do our best to help you adjust to the country and the institution in which you will be training.

For other general information and updates from the BHEARD program, please visit <http://bheard.anr.msu.edu/>.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	4
1. BHEARD AFRICA COUNTRY COORDINATORS	4
2. "TERRA DOTTA" STUDENT DATABASE.....	5
PRIOR TO DEPARTURE	5
1. AGREEMENTS TO BE SIGNED	5
2. STUDENT SETTLEMENT REQUIREMENTS	5
3. PASSPORT & VISA APPLICATION.....	6
4. HOUSING.....	7
5. BANK ACCOUNTS.....	8
6. TRAVEL TO COUNTRY OF STUDY.....	8
UNIVERSITY STUDY	8
1. MEDICAL INSURANCE.....	8
2. SETTLING-IN AND MONTHLY MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE	9
3. SUPPLEMENTAL ALLOWANCES AND PROVISIONS	10
4. TUITION AND FEES.....	11
5. ACADEMIC PROGRAM.....	11
6. CONFERENCES AND SHORT-TERM TRAINING.....	12
7. RESEARCH PLANS.....	13
8. TRAVEL.....	14
9. BHEARD CONFERENCE.....	15
10. OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION	15
HOME RESEARCH	15
1. INITIAL REQUEST	15
2. RESEARCH ACKNOWLEDGMENT	16
3. FUNDING FOR RESEARCH EXPENSES	16
4. HOME LIVING ALLOWANCE.....	17
5. RESEARCH EVALUATIONS.....	17
6. RETURN TO UNIVERSITY.....	17
POST-COMPLETION	18
1. SUBMISSION OF FINAL DOCUMENTS	18
2. POST-COMPLETION GRANT.....	18

3. FINAL EVALUATIONS	18
4. FOLLOW-UP MONITORING SURVEY OF REGIONAL BHEARD TRAINEES	18
5. ADDITIONAL ALUMNI MONITORING ACTIVITIES	19
EXTENSIONS.....	19
1. GENERAL EXTENSION POLICIES.....	19
2. DEFINITIONS	20
3. EXTENSION CRITERIA.....	21
4. REQUEST PROCEDURES	22
ANNEXES:.....	23
RESEARCH BUDGETS.....	23

INTRODUCTION

1. BHEARD AFRICA COUNTRY COORDINATORS

The main BHEARD office is located at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan. Regional Coordinators (Coordinators) located in Africa and India as representatives of BHEARD. Below are the official representatives who will implement BHEARD policies, and support students stay while in their country of study.

- a. All requests should be made via email to the appropriate Coordinator, with the main BHEARD Office (BHEARD@anr.msu.edu) copied on all requests. *Please allow at least a 3-7 working day turnaround time on all matters raised with the Coordinators.***
- b. Coordinators are available (during typical business office hours only) Monday-Friday for BHEARD-related matters;** in case of an emergency (injury/death or unforeseen emergency), please contact them and copy the BHEARD Office.
- c. Questions handled by Coordinators include all local maintenance issues (general university issues, housing, transportation, etc.);** Coordinators may also seek additional input from the main BHEARD Office prior to responding.
- d. For policy questions related to program design, Coordinators will seek additional input from the main BHEARD Office.** Students should refer to the USAID Conditions of Sponsorship form, the BHEARD Stakeholder Compact, and this handbook, for policy-related questions. Policy questions include changes of field of study, location of study, program length, etc. If needed, the BHEARD Office will seek additional input from USAID. Answers to policy questions will be relayed to the Coordinators, who will in turn implement policies with students.

COUNTRY OF STUDY	NAME	CONTACT INFORMATION
SOUTH AFRICA ZIMBABWE	Thoko Mpumlwana Thando Mpumlwana	thando@bigafrica.co.za Cell: +27 74 425 9600
KENYA UGANDA	George Barack Otieno	otienoge@msu.edu Cell: +254721997953
MOZAMBIQUE BRAZIL	Cynthia Donovan Antonietta Nhamusso	donovanc@anr.msu.edu anhamusso@gmail.com
GHANA	Saviour Badohu	saviour.badohu@gmail.com +233243341071/+233201538320
BANGLADESH INDIA	Vibha Dhawan	vibha.dhawan@yahoo.com Cell: +91 8377005289

2. “TERRA DOTTA” STUDENT DATABASE

All students must create and regularly update their account in TerraDotta, the BHEARD student portal and database. This database will be the main storage place for student documents (including signed agreements, progress reports, academic documents such as thesis proposals, etc.). Students should also update their profile in TerraDotta if there are any changes to their contact information, emergency contacts, and contact information for their program advisor. If you have any other technical issues with the database, please email the BHEARD Office.

MAIN LINK: <https://msu-bheard.TerraDotta.com>

PRIOR TO DEPARTURE

1. AGREEMENTS TO BE SIGNED

- a. BHEARD Stakeholder Compact
- b. USAID Conditions of Sponsorship for Third Country Training*
- c. USAID Participant Biographical Data Form[†]
- d. Training Implementation Plan

2. STUDENT SETTLEMENT REQUIREMENTS

- a. Please follow carefully the instructions outlined in your University admission letter regarding additional materials you are required to submit (e.g. recommendation letters).
 - i. A copy of your admission letter must be uploaded in TerraDotta.
- b. Universities may host “**orientation week programs**” where they share important information relevant to your University, as well as Faculty-specific matters.
 - i. Check with your Professors when classes resume for your term of entry; in some cases, certain courses start well before the official opening date for post-graduate studies.
 - ii. Familiarize yourself with the university program/dates relevant to your area of study.
- c. Coordinators will inform you of when you will be expected to travel to the country of study.

** In-Country trainees (those attending a university in their home country) do not need to fill out the USAID Conditions of Sponsorship or USAID Participant Biographical Data forms*

- d. You may be required to arrive a couple days/weeks prior to the start of term for settling-in and orientation from your Coordinator; students attending the same university will be expected to arrive at the same time.
- e. If you have not already done so, **upload** a copy of your passport, acceptance letter, and two emergency contacts (full names, detail on how they are related to you, email address, cellular contact and physical address) from your home country to your TerraDotta account.

3. PASSPORT & VISA APPLICATION

- a. Students must have a **valid, unexpired passport** in order to participate in the BHEARD program, and must maintain passport validity throughout the duration of the program.
 - i. Any passport-related fees (issuance, renewal, etc.), as well as arrangements to obtain or renew a passport, are the responsibility of the students; no costs will be covered or reimbursed by BHEARD.
 - ii. A copy of your passport must be uploaded to TerraDotta.
- b. Coordinators can assist you with the **visa requirements** of the country where you will be training.
 - i. Some countries allow you to obtain visas on arrival at port of entry; others require that you obtain the visa first before travel; yet others may not require you to have visa at all.
 - ii. There may also be additional entry requirements, such as proof of Yellow Fever vaccination.
- c. Students may be required to pay for their **visa, study permit, pupil permit and/or temporary residence permit** costs at the time of application; for reimbursement for application or issuance fees, please check with your Coordinator.
 - i. If you must apply for a visa prior to travel, please be aware of time needed for processing and issuing.
 - ii. Where possible, ensure that it covers the duration of your allowed study period (up to 2½ years) within your country of study.
 - iii. It's the responsibility of the student to renew when necessary.
- d. Many African countries also require that you register with an immigration office (sometimes for a fee) upon entry. This registration would be renewable after a certain duration (e.g., every 3 months) depending on the country. Your Coordinator will give you details on the appropriate offices to contact if applicable.
- e. Once received, **upload** a copy of your country of study visa or permit in TerraDotta; if you need to renew your visa or permit, please make sure a copy of the renewed visa is also uploaded in TerraDotta.

4. HOUSING

- a. Your Coordinator will let you know whether you may choose to make use of university housing, or find private accommodation. All housing choices and relocations must be approved by BHEARD in advance for safety and policy reasons.
- b. Payment of rent will be handled by BHEARD with the assistance of your Coordinator, depending on the country of study. In these countries students will not be given a housing allowance in cash, nor will students recoup the difference in cost should they choose to live in less expensive housing. BHEARD will also establish the monthly rent maximum for the country of study.
 - i. In general, payment of utilities (gas, electricity, water, Internet, etc.) will be the responsibility of the student, to be paid from the student's monthly maintenance allowance.
- c. Housing decisions must be made prior to arrival in the country of study. Once your decision is made you may **not** relocate yourself to other housing without prior approval from BHEARD; changes in residential address must also be promptly reported in TerraDotta.
- d. Please advise your Coordinator in advance as to whether you have applied and have been approved for university housing, and if so, provide the name of your residence. Please check with your University on where to collect your keys on arrival; be sure to have a contact person, address and contact details in this regard. It is advisable to have secondary contacts in case of an emergency.
- e. Where private housing is preferred, contracts entered into by the student may also be under BHEARD surety for the duration of your stay within the country.
 - i. PLEASE NOTE THAT BHEARD DOES NOT OWN THESE CONTRACTS. They remain your contracts while you are a student within your country of study.
 - ii. Any required security or breakage deposits, or charges made by the landlord, will be the responsibility of the student, to be paid from the student's monthly maintenance allowance.
 - iii. Students are responsible for maintenance, cleanliness, damages, etc.
- f. All private housing deposits will be paid from your settling-in allowance (see [University Study, Section 2e-i](#)) and are the responsibility of the student.

5. BANK ACCOUNTS

- a. If you do not already have one, you must open a local banking account in your home country prior to departure for study. This account will be used for research funds at the appropriate time. Details must be **uploaded** into TerraDotta.
- b. Upon arrival in your country of study, you will also be required to open a bank account there. We recommend that you open your account with the same bank used by the BHEARD Coordinator for that country. Details must be **uploaded** into TerraDotta.
- c. In some cases, payments to these accounts will be handled by the main BHEARD Financial Office, rather than the Coordinators. The account must be able to accept deposits in US dollars so that distributions are received promptly.

6. TRAVEL TO COUNTRY OF STUDY

- a. BHEARD will provide transportation for you from your home country to the country of study at the beginning of the program, and return transportation to your home country at the end of your degree program.

Coordinators will inform you of pickup arrangements for arrival at the port of entry, travel to University, arrival, registration, and accommodation.

- b. For travel during university study:
 - i. Research Travel: One additional round-trip travel funded by BHEARD - will be arranged when travel is approved to conduct research (see [University Study, Research Plans Section 6-c](#) and [Home Research](#)).
 - ii. Personal Travel: See [University Study, Section 7](#).

UNIVERSITY STUDY

1. MEDICAL INSURANCE

- a. BHEARD will cover the cost of medical insurance for each student. Insurance will be provided for the duration of your studies, and renewed as necessary by the main BHEARD Office or Coordinators.
 - i. Only the premium (cost of enrollment) is covered as part of the BHEARD Program; as mentioned in the USAID Conditions of Sponsorship, all other costs and expenses related to medical care are the responsibility of the student.
 - ii. Supplemental insurance coverage, such as vision or dental insurance, is not covered by the BHEARD Program, nor will students be reimbursed for coverage or supplemental expenses. Students are advised to have any supplemental work done before beginning study (such as having your vision checked and obtaining glasses; a thorough dental cleaning and examination, etc.).

- iii. It is the responsibility of the student to process claims against their insurer; neither the Coordinators nor the BHEARD Office will process such claims on behalf of students.
- b. During the home research period students will receive travel medical coverage. If the student's academic advisor visits during this period, travel medical coverage for the advisor will also be provided.

2. SETTLING-IN AND MONTHLY MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE

- a. A one-time “**settling-in allowance**” will be provided to allow students to purchase basic essentials upon arrival in the country of study, and may be used for the security deposit for private or university accommodations.
 - i. Depending on the country of study, the student will receive approximately half of the settling-in allowance cash upon arrival in the country of study.
 - ii. The balance is paid with the student's initial, pro-rated[‡] maintenance allowance and is deposited electronically once banking accounts are established and uploaded into TerraDotta (see [Before Departure, Section 5](#)).
- b. The **monthly maintenance allowance**:
 - i. Is intended to cover personal expenses such as food, local transport, clothing, non-required textbooks, photocopying, etc., in the country of study.
 - ii. Is designed to support one single person only, according to USAID regulations.
 - iii. Is not considered a salary.
 - iv. The amount of this allowance is determined by the BHEARD Office in consultation with the local USAID offices and Coordinators, and varies from location to location depending on the relevant cost of living.
 - v. This allowance payout will differ monthly depending on the prevailing local exchange rate used at the time of transfer from USD to local currency. The allowance will not be paid on current exchange rates, but on the rate used by the bank at the time of transfer by the BHEARD.
 - vi. Payments will be in USD.
 - vii. Should you send money home, or use it for other purposes in this regard, you will not be provided with additional funds, nor will BHEARD enter into stipend advance arrangements in this regard.
- c. Students must officially acknowledge receipt of the monthly maintenance allowance at the time of delivery, or submit by email to your Coordinator, within seven (7) working days of having received funds in your bank account.
- d. If there are other required costs for which the university *cannot* invoice BHEARD, students may be asked to pay these costs out of their monthly maintenance allowance.

[‡] If arriving mid-month.

You are strongly advised to consult with your Regional Coordinator before incurring any costs with the University. Reimbursement will only be provided with prior approval from BHEARD.

- e. Consult Coordinator about bank accounts that will be convenient for immediate clearance of funds.

3. SUPPLEMENTAL ALLOWANCES AND PROVISIONS

- a. **Supplemental Allowance:** BHEARD will provide an allowance to be used for books and supplies, conference attendance (subject to pre-approval), and/or additional research funding.
 - i. On October 1 of each year, BHEARD will distribute \$950 directly to students upon their request.
 - ii. These funds are available to support the following:
 - 1.a.ii.1. Any textbooks or supplies needed to successfully complete lecture courses or semester training.
 - 1.a.ii.2. Attending of regional conference for the purpose of networking or scientific presentation. All travel must be requested through TerraDotta and is subject to review and approval from BHEARD prior to the start of travel. Travel requests must be submitted at least 30 days before your expected departure.
 - 1.a.ii.3. Allowance can be added to research funding to supplement additional research related expenses where the research budget is inadequate.
 - iii. The decision on how to appropriately use these funds is at the discretion of the student. Students are strongly advised to consult their Regional Coordinator prior to deciding how to best use these funds to support their successful completion of their training and the BHEARD Program.
 - iv. Additional requests for travel, supplies, or research funding outside of these funds if not used responsibly will be denied.
- b. **Computer:** BHEARD will provide up to \$1,200 in reimbursement for one computer per student.
 - i. The laptop specifications will be the same for all students in the country of study.
 - ii. Students will be required to sign the BHEARD “Computer Use Letter” prior to reimbursement of the computer; a copy of the signed letter must be emailed to your Coordinator and the BHEARD Office. You are required to abide by the rules and regulations set forth in this letter.
- c. **Software:** BHEARD will provide a allowance of up to \$300 for required software, or software recommended by your advisor or program, for use in your coursework or BHEARD research.

- i. This allowance will not be provided directly to the student. Instead, students must purchase the software themselves, then submit the receipt along with proof of requirement or recommendation.
 - ii. Students can be reimbursed up to \$300 during the program for software.
- d. **Thesis Printing**
- i. BHEARD will reimburse up to \$200 total (for MS students) or \$250 total (for PhD students) towards the cost of final submission to the university, printing, and binding of the thesis.
- e. **Publications**
- i. BHEARD does not reimburse students for the cost of submitting research publications to journals at this time.
- f. **Return Baggage Allowance**
- i. BHEARD will provide students a flat rate of \$300 USD to cover excess luggage expenses and fees. This one-time allowance can be used either at completion of the program (one-way return to home country) or when the student returns home for their research period.

4. TUITION AND FEES

- a. Tuition and standard required fees or levies imposed by the university will be paid directly to the university by the BHEARD Financial Office upon receipt of an invoice to BHEARD for the costs.
- b. All monies paid into university student accounts are managed as part of BHEARD accounting processes. Students may not withdraw funds from their university student account without written consent from their Coordinator; in such a case, you must provide a written request for consideration.

5. ACADEMIC PROGRAM

- a. The scholarship covers funding for **up to 2 years** of coursework, research, and other academic requirements at the university for master's students, and **up to 3 years** for Ph.D. students.
 - i. If the university expects students to finish a degree program in less than 2 years for an M.S. (or 3 years for a Ph.D.), BHEARD will abide by university guidelines.
 - ii. For information regarding return to the university after research has been completed (as required by the university), see [Home Research, Section 4](#).
 - iii. For information on time limits for research, please see [Section 6c](#) below.

- b. The USAID mission for your home country decides which programs of study will meet the country's [Feed the Future](#) needs.
 - i. Change of programs initially authorized by BHEARD and USAID must be requested in writing to BHEARD, including citing justification for the change.
 - ii. Students must wait for the final decision by BHEARD before making any formal changes with the university.
- c. Students must **upload** a Degree Completion Plan, including a timeline of courses (“plan of study”), in TerraDotta. Ensure you have registered for all the relevant courses for the semester, according to the plan you have provided to BHEARD. The Degree Completion Plan components can be **updated** by the student as needed.
- d. Students are required to “carry a full-time student course load or be engaged in program-related activities on a full-time basis” throughout the duration of the scholarship program.[§]
- e. Students must maintain satisfactory academic and research progress, according to university and BHEARD standards.
 - i. BHEARD has no recourse should your university terminate your studies due to below average performance, and you will be sent back home immediately.
 - ii. Students **must upload** academic transcripts and report grades on an annual basis in TerraDotta, in the Academic Progress Evaluation questionnaire. A copy of the transcript should also be provided to your Coordinator, and the Coordinator is authorized to request these records if not provided in a timely manner by the student.
- e. It is important that you understand and comply with the types of examination administered within your program and the grading system used by the university.
- f. Students must provide academic advisor contact details to their Coordinator; this information must also be **uploaded** in your TerraDotta profile. Coordinators can communicate BHEARD expectations as needed.

6. CONFERENCES AND SHORT-TERM TRAINING

- a. Funding for conference and short-term trainings is available through the supplemental allowance provided by BHEARD. (See Supplemental Allowances and Provisions 3.) Students are encouraged to seek external funding in addition to the funding BHEARD is able to provide.
- b. Attendance is limited to in-country meetings or trainings while the student is active on their university campus.

[§] In the event of a non-violent disruption (e.g. academic strike), students are still expected to meet this requirement to the best of their ability, and should maintain contact with their BHEARD Regional Coordinator for updates.

- c. International meetings or trainings are not currently permitted, and subject to availability of funding from the student's home country USAID mission. However, in instances where an external source or supplemental allowance is funding conference attendance, students still must have their travel submitted and approved in TerraDotta.
- d. Requests for conference and short term training attendance must be submitted through TerraDotta to BHEARD **at least 30 days** prior to proposed start date.

7. RESEARCH PLANS

- a. Research topics must be approved by the BHEARD Office prior to beginning your research. The process begins when the student **uploads** all required documents into TerraDotta's Final Research Application. Applications must be submitted at least 60 days prior to the desired start date.
- b. All research work must be conducted in your home country; exceptions to home country research will be handled on a case-by-case basis by BHEARD and USAID.
- c. BHEARD supports up to six months of research and writing in your home country for MS students, and up to 12 months for Ph.D. students; expected research timelines must be **uploaded** in TerraDotta.
 - i. This time allotted for research only applies to students who do research in their home countries.
 - 1. If the university permits research to be performed concurrently with coursework in the country of study, and this research is approved by BHEARD, master's students will be limited to 24 months total for research and academic requirements (coursework, defense, publications, etc.), and Ph.D. students will be limited to 36 months total.
 - ii. The "Initial Research Summary" questionnaire in TerraDotta must be completed for review by BHEARD and your home country USAID mission before you begin your research work or finalize your thesis proposal.
 - 1. BHEARD also recommends early submission of your proposal (before graduate committee approval) so that you can incorporate any requested changes.
 - iii. No change in the research topic or location may happen without written consent from BHEARD.
 - iv. For more information on Home Country Research, please see [Home Research](#).
- d. BHEARD expects responsible and ethical research conduct (**academic dishonesty, plagiarism, and research misconduct will not be tolerated**).
 - i. Research proposals will be run through plagiarism detection software prior to obtaining BHEARD approval.

- ii. Students are responsible for obtaining the legal and proper permissions for research work, such as shipping permits, IRB approval, etc.
 - iii. For more information on scientific integrity, please see <https://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity/resources/> and <https://msu.edu/unit/ombud/academic-integrity/plagiarism-policy.html>
- e. Research budgets must undergo review and be approved by the BHEARD Office, and may be subject to review by USAID.
- i. For more information on the process for research funding, see [Home Research Section 3](#)
 - ii. For budget expectations, see [Annex A](#).

8. TRAVEL

- a. **USAID and BHEARD expect that students are “engaged in program-related activities on a full-time basis” – this includes, but is not limited to attendance at all required seminars, lectures, our courses and the duties associated with that attendance.**
- b. All travel must be submitted through TerraDotta at least 30 days before your expected departure. Even if travel was mentioned in conversation, by phone, or in another document (such as the “Degree Completion Plan”) students must still submit a travel request through TerraDotta.
- c. BHEARD will review requests within two weeks, provided all necessary documentation has been submitted.
- d. If all travel requirements are met, the Travel Requests status will be changed to “Approved” and the TerraDotta system will send an automated email to the student, advisor, and Regional Coordinator regarding the status change and approval from BHEARD.
- e. Coordinators must be notified of all overnight travel away from your campus prior to its start; for personal international travel, please also notify the BHEARD Office.
- f. Students will be responsible for local transportation costs out of their monthly maintenance allowance or supplemental allowance. Acquaint yourself with local travel logistics, including taxis and other means of public transport, for your convenience. It is important to note pick-up/drop-off points and charges.
- g. Students’ academic advisor (one) is entitled to one round trip to visit the student’s home country, if and when the student goes home for the research period.
 - i. The purpose of this trip should be both to assist the student with research, and for institutional capacity building (such as giving a seminar at the student’s home institution).

- ii. Limitations for this trip (such as maximum duration, amount for per diem and lodging, etc.) will be set by BHEARD. The student should ensure arrangements are made through the Coordinator for the trip.

9. BHEARD CONFERENCE

If a BHEARD conference is planned, regional scholars who are currently active on-campus at their training university are expected to attend, unless attendance would interfere with program completion (such as by delaying thesis defense). Scholars who have returned to their home countries for research are exempt from participation.

10. OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- a. All students must own a basic cellular phone for contact.
 - i. Students must **upload** their local information, including contact number in TerraDotta, and provide the Coordinator with their contact details within 3 days of arrival.
 - ii. A student Whatsapp group may be used for announcements and any group related matters.
- b. Students are not to purchase any immovable or large assets while on study; students are also reminded that USAID policy strictly prohibits purchase of a vehicle for third-country trainees.
- c. You are also discouraged from entering into credit arrangements such as applying for credit cards during your stay; BHEARD will not stand surety for you.
- d. BHEARD may organize excursions for students as part of academic enrichment. Please participate in these events as often as possible.

HOME RESEARCH

1. INITIAL REQUEST

At least 30 days prior to departure or the start of research studies:

- a. Students must fill out the following questionnaires in the [TerraDotta](#) “ Final Research Application” before being approved to begin the “[home research period](#)”:
 - i. Home Health Insurance
 - ii. Home Research Credits (if applicable)
 - iii. Bank Information
 - iv. Final Dissertation Proposal Documents
 - i. *Including advisor-approved proposal, budget, budget justification, work plan, and advisor letter of support*

- v. Study Leave Pay*
- vi. W8-BEN Form
- b. Students must update the “itinerary” dates and location in the Research Application to reflect the timing and location of their research.
 - i. For students [approved](#) to conduct research at the training university, please enter the university’s location.
- c. Students must notify the main BHEARD office by email (bheard@anr.msu.edu), and their Coordinator, once items “a” and “b” above have been completed so that the information can be reviewed by BHEARD for research approval.

*Note: It is the responsibility of the student to **upload** and maintain an updated employer release letter in TerraDotta, which must provide the following information:

- Duration of study leave provided by your institution
- If you have access to your laboratories and infrastructure during final research period
- If your salary will be maintained, how much per month?
- Any additional financial benefits besides salary
- Job security

2. RESEARCH ACKNOWLEDGMENT

- a. **All research acknowledgements (such as in your final thesis/dissertation, or in publications) must include the following statement:** *“This material is based upon work supported by the United States Agency for International Development, as part of the Feed the Future initiative, under the CGIAR Fund, award number BFS-G-11-00002, and the predecessor fund the Food Security and Crisis Mitigation II grant, award number EEM-G-00-04-00013.”*

3. FUNDING FOR RESEARCH EXPENSES

- a. Please refer to [Annex A](#) for more specific information on research budget requirements.
- b. Please check with your Coordinator and/or BHEARD on the disbursement of funds. In general, a research advance amounting to 50 percent of the approved research budget is distributed to cover the first set of expenditures. The researcher is provided the remainder of the budgeted allowance once fully accounting for the first advancement.
- c. All reimbursement for research expenses will be made through your Coordinator and/or BHEARD, and every expenditure must be accompanied by an original receipt. All receipts should contain the following:
 - i. The date of expenditure
 - ii. The item or service that was purchased and why
 - iii. The name of the person providing the item or service
 - iv. The signature of both you and the person providing the item or service

If students are conducting research in very rural areas where the person providing goods or services does not furnish a receipt, please check with Coordinators or the BHEARD Financial Office on correct procedure.

- d. **Any amount spent above or outside of your approved budget will be the responsibility of the student; advances on maintenance or home living allowances will not be provided in this regard.**
- e. BHEARD is not responsible for bank charges, exchange rates, etc., when students withdraw research funds.

4. HOME LIVING ALLOWANCE

- a. If the student will not be receiving employer-paid study leave during the home research period, BHEARD will pay a “home living allowance” for a maximum of six months to one year depending on his/her program.
 - i. Students are only eligible for home living allowance if they provide an updated employer release letter that specifies they do not receive study pay from their employer.
 - ii. The amount for this allowance is set in accordance with each country’s USAID mission, and the allowance is:
 - 1. Only meant to cover the individual student, not his/her dependents.
 - 2. Designed to be generally appropriate for a graduate student, not dependent on prior/future employment position.
 - 3. Meant to cover individual personal expenses such as local rent, transportation, food, etc., but not research expenses.
 - iii. Students will not continue to receive the university maintenance allowance while home for research.
 - iv. This home living allowance will be paid in USD to your bank account of choice by your Coordinator or the BHEARD Financial Office.

5. RESEARCH EVALUATIONS

- a. During the research period, students may be required to submit an evaluation in TerraDotta regarding the progress of their research.

6. RETURN TO UNIVERSITY

- a. Upon completion of home country research (if applicable), students may be permitted to return to their training university for completion of analysis, writing and thesis defense, as well as submission of publications if *required* by the university for graduation.

- i. The maximum time allotted for this final university training period will be determined by university regulations and by the BHEARD Office.
 - ii. In general, this time will not exceed six months, and will count toward the maximum allotment of time in the BHEARD program (see [University Study, Section 6c](#)).
- b. After the final on-campus academic requirements have been met (e.g. thesis defense), students will be required to return home immediately. Unless on-campus presence is required by the university, thesis corrections will be made from the student's home country without additional BHEARD funding.

POST-COMPLETION

1. SUBMISSION OF FINAL DOCUMENTS

- a. Students are required to **upload** the following documentation in TerraDotta, upon completing all BHEARD and university degree program requirements.
 - i. Final defended thesis
 - ii. Final degree certificate (once available)
 - iii. Final transcript (once available)

2. POST-COMPLETION GRANT

The Post-Completion Grant is intended to start the students on their career research in their home country/institutions.

- a. Students must submit the "Post-Completion Grant" questionnaire in TerraDotta, including providing a proposal and budget according to the guidelines provided in TerraDotta.
- b. The amount of this grant is \$1,000 for MS students, and \$2,000 for PhD students. BHEARD Financial Office will not disburse funds until final documents have been received in TerraDotta.

3. FINAL EVALUATIONS

Upon completion of the program, students will be asked to complete the following surveys in SurveyMonkey:

- a. Final Research Evaluation
- b. End-of-Program Individual Development Plan
- c. BHEARD Program Exit Survey

4. FOLLOW-UP MONITORING SURVEY OF REGIONAL BHEARD TRAINEES

- a. Students will be asked to participate in this follow-up survey in SurveyMonkey, approximately 6 months after program completion and return to employment, and on an annual basis afterwards to the program's completion date.

5. ADDITIONAL ALUMNI MONITORING ACTIVITIES

- a. Students are requested to participate in alumni monitoring activities, such as surveys, as needed.
 - i. Students' local contact information should be provided, and kept up-to-date, in their TerraDotta profiles for this purpose.

EXTENSIONS

1. GENERAL EXTENSION POLICIES

Students are expected to complete their programs on time as stipulated in the BHEARD contract.

Students should thoroughly review the Program Extension Policies document before requesting an extension to determine if they are eligible prior to submitting a formal request to BHEARD.

Students are eligible for ONE no-cost extension OR ONE extension with funding in order to successfully complete their programs, depending on the criteria. No student will be eligible for more than ONE extension.

If a student has been granted an extension and fails to complete their program of study by the end date of the extension period, they will be suspended from the BHEARD program, will no longer be entitled to BHEARD funding, and will not be classified among BHEARD alumni.

Students who are in the research phase of their program of study will typically not be considered for extensions given that research does not depend on normal university course scheduling and is not typically subject to strikes or other work related interruptions.

Extension requests from students in Cohort 5 and Cohort 6 will not be considered due to time constraints.

Students who have been suspended from the BHEARD program but are able to complete their degree program before September 30, 2020, may appeal to be reinstated as a BHEARD alumni. The student will receive no further funding support, but his/her name will appear in the registry of BHEARD alumni, he/she will receive BHEARD alumni communications, and will be eligible to participate in BHEARD alumni events.

2. DEFINITIONS

Funding*

Funding includes the following items:

- Tuition
- Thesis Printing/Binding
- Publication Fees (if required by university policy)
- Post-Completion Grant Monies
- Graduation Fees
- Student Monthly Stipends
- Home-Living Allowance (HLA)
- Research Funds that exceed the original budget
- Health Insurance Fees
- Transportation/Travel
- Accommodation and Housing

*Note: BHEARD may provide specific information on which funding a student is/not eligible for.

No-Cost Extension (NCE)

An NCE is an extension of time for study for students who provide valid criteria (listed below) but without additional funding from the BHEARD program. This is a one-time extension granted for completion of degree supported by the BHEARD Program for a period not to exceed six months.

- I. If degree is completed during NCE the release of funds* associated with degree completion and post-award are approved, and alumni status is awarded.
- II. If the degree is not completed during the NCE, no further extensions will be granted. The student is still eligible for alumni status upon successful completion of the degree, but is no longer eligible for completion and post-completion funds.

*Thesis Printing/Binding, Publication Fees (if required by university policy), Post-Completion Grant Monies, Graduation Fees, and Transportation/Travel

Extension with Funding (EWF)

An EWF is an extension of time and funding as specified by the BHEARD program as described below. The availability of an EWF will depend on the amount of funds available from the funding country. Since the amount of funding available is not equal for all countries, some countries may have more funding available than others. An EWF will only be considered if the student is prevented from completing the normal course of the degree program by circumstances beyond the student's control and if there is funding available through the account of his/her respective country. This is a one-time extension granted for completion of degree supported by the BHEARD Program for a period not to exceed four months:

- I. If the degree is completed during EWF the release of funds associated with degree completion and post-award are approved, and alumni status is awarded.
- II. If the degree is not completed during the EWF, no further extensions will be granted. The student is still eligible for alumni status upon successful completion of the degree, but is no longer eligible for completion and post-completion funds.

3. EXTENSION CRITERIA

Extension requests will be considered for the following reasons:

Valid Reasons for Extension Requests

(Note: Valid reasons for extension requests may or may not justify an extension with funding and is at the full discretion of the BHEARD Program and USAID.)

Personal Health Concerns

- I. Personal Health Concerns must be accompanied by a valid medical diagnosis and a doctor's signature.
- II. Long-term and chronic health conditions that will make it impossible for a student to complete by the expected program end date will not be considered for extension. This is referenced alongside the USAID Conditions of Sponsorship and the BHEARD Stakeholder Compact.

Limited Course Offerings at University

- I. Students must provide BHEARD with a valid document from their University's Registrar or Administration indicating that a required course could not be taken due to circumstances outside of the student's control.
- II. BHEARD has the right to review, interpret, and ultimately approve the validity of such requests.

Changes to Degree Programs

- I. If the requirements for the degree program are changed, making it impossible for the student to complete the program in the allotted time.
- II. BHEARD reserves the reserves the right to review, interpret, and ultimately approve the validity of such requests.

University Closure

- I. University closure that results in students losing a minimum of one entire concurrent academic term (e.g., semester, trimester).
- II. If courses for a particular academic term are delayed or rescheduled, extension requests will not be considered by the BHEARD Program.

Invalid Reasons for Extension Requests

(Note: If a student has an invalid reason for requesting an extension they will not be considered for an extension with or without funding.)

- I. Delays resulting from any violation of BHEARD or USAID policy.
- II. Delays resulting from any violation of academic or ethical rules and regulations at an institution of study or research that result in censure.
- III. Delays resulting from unauthorized absences from university.
- IV. Delays resulting from unauthorized travel.
- V. Delays resulting from failure to meet academic requirements.
- VI. Delays resulting from failure to maintain full-time student status.
- VII. Delays resulting from failing grade reports/markings.

4. REQUEST PROCEDURES

Request Procedures

If a student has read and understood the Program Extension Policy and fees that they meet valid criteria for requesting an extension, he/she may do the following:

- I. Students must email BHEARD with their Regional Coordinator (if applicable) and major academic supervisor/advisor carbon copied (CC) with the initial extension request demonstrating their understanding of how they meet the extension criteria.
- II. BHEARD Staff will make a Program Extension Application available to the student in TerraDotta.
- III. Students must submit required documentation in Program Extension Application (TerraDotta) by a date specified by BHEARD.
- IV. Required* documentation is as follows:

- Justification letter
- Advisor support letter
- Updated timeline/work plan
- Informal progress report
- Copy of proposal
- Support of Regional Coordinator (if applicable)

*BHEARD may request additional information if provided documentation is not sufficient.

ANNEXES:

RESEARCH BUDGETS

1. FUNDING

The total amount of the BHEARD thesis research allowance is approximately **\$3,000 USD for master's students and \$6,000 USD for Ph.D. students**, unless otherwise determined by the USAID missions for students from each BHEARD country.

- a. Please see [Home Research, Section 3](#) for how these funds will be handled and disbursed.
- b. **All research budgets will be subject to review by BHEARD.**
- c. **Budgets should be submitted in spreadsheet format (such as a Microsoft Excel file).**

2. FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY

Full transparency regarding the use of funds is required, therefore projected expenditures should be specific, and include:

- a. Currency (USD or local)
- b. Unit measurement (km, days, pieces, etc.)
 - i. Units needed
 - ii. Unit costs
- c. Subtotals and totals
 - i. If you choose to subdivide sections of your budget (travel, materials, etc.)
- d. External funding (if used)
 - i. If you will also be using non-BHEARD funding (such as money from your professor, university, etc.), please include this in your budget, specifying which costs will be covered by BHEARD or your other source(s).

3. PhD STUDENTS

If you intend to use any of your “thesis research allowance” on your pre-dissertation trip, you must:

- a. Submit a budget for your entire allowance **and**
- b. Indicate which expenditures will occur on your pre-dissertation trip versus during your final home research period

- 4. BHEARD may request additional justification if the purpose for requested materials is unclear, or if the requested materials are not obviously intended solely for research use.**

5. Please review the lists below for items that should not be included in your research budget, or which will require additional justification; please note that this is simply a common list of unallowable items.

Not Allowed	Justification Required	Not Part of “Research” Budget
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BHEARD student wages and/or <i>per diems</i>¹ • Chemical Fertilizers and Pesticides • “Contingencies” • “Miscellaneous” costs • Large equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel² • In-country transportation (car rental, fuel, air tickets, etc.) • Accommodation at field research sites • Small electronic equipment (tablets, recorders, printers, etc.) • Participant incentives³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel Costs (Country of Study-Home Country) • Internet connectivity fees⁴ • Thesis printing costs • Publication fees

6. Students cannot pay themselves a wage for their BHEARD research work.
- a. If students will not be receiving study leave pay from their home employer, a BHEARD home living allowance will be provided (see [Home Research, Section 4](#)).

7. PERSONNEL

USAID discourages students from hiring personnel for work the students could or should be expected to perform themselves. Therefore, justification is required for each type of personnel the student wishes to hire. The BHEARD office will review all personnel justifications.

- a. Personnel include:
 - i. Research assistants/Researchers/Research attendants**
 - ii. Data entry clerks
 - iii. Lab technicians
 - iv. Enumerators
 - v. Students (e.g., undergraduates)
 - vi. Field workers/laborers
- b. Justification must include:
 - i. Why that number of assistants are needed?
 - ii. Why the work cannot be completed by you (the student)?
 - iii. How will you go about selecting personnel?
 - iv. What specific tasks will required of the personnel?
 - v. What benefit the personnel provide to the project?

** Research assistants/Researchers/Research attendants will be permitted in only in very rare circumstances

- c. Students can budget a daily wage for personnel, but other allowances (meals, lodging, etc.) are not permitted.
- d. Some personnel may require additional paperwork in order to hire – the BHEARD Financial Office will contact you if this is the case.

8. PARTICIPANT INCENTIVES

Each person will need to sign that they received payment (in some form) and can either use their official signature or their thumbprint. Due to IRB regulations, you can (and should) remove participants' names before submitting to your university for reimbursement.

9. INTERNET CONNECTIVITY FEES

BHEARD will provide reimbursement for up to \$50/month for Internet during the home research period. The student would be responsible for payment upfront for these costs, but can submit receipts for reimbursement to the BHEARD Financial Office.