



Organization for Tropical Studies

An explanation of STATION SERVICES and SERVICE FEES

Researchers do not get charged a service fee for room and board at the three OTS research stations in Costa Rica (La Selva, Las Cruces, and Palo Verde) or at OTS' fourth station in Kruger National Park, South Africa. Whether a researcher pays in cash, check, or credit card, or requests an invoice for his or her university to make payment, OTS does not charge a service fee for room and board at its sites.

Forms of payment:

Advance payment: A researcher must coordinate with the Accounting office at OTS' North American Office (919.684.5774) to obtain a customer number (CN). Once a CN is established, the researcher should transfer funds to his or her CN, and it will be restricted to the researcher's research project. Every month the researcher will receive a statement of charges made to his or her CN. ***OTS accepts cash, checks, and/or credit cards. Payments of cash must be made with cash receipts for the researcher, the station, the Accounting Offices in San Jose and North America. Regardless of method of payment advance payment of three months is required for researchers hiring station personnel unless otherwise arranged through the North American Accounting Office. Researchers paying through their universities or research institutions should state up front for the Accounting Office to invoice their institution when establishing or reactivating their CN.***

Payments with Invoice: A researcher must coordinate with the Accounting Office at OTS' North American Office (919.684.5774) to obtain a customer number (CN). Every month the researcher will receive an invoice of charges made to his or her CN. ***Payment to OTS should occur no later than 30 days after receiving an OTS invoice. Interest will be applied if an invoice is more than six months in arrears. If the accumulative debt reaches \$10,000, the researcher must discuss with the station Accounting Office before additional charges can be incurred. A credit card number is required to secure this method of payment. Credit Card numbers will be secured at the North American Office.***

Subcontract: A subcontract between OTS and the researcher's institution will have an indirect cost of 25% on allowable costs. Many researchers who establish subcontracts, formally highlight OTS' services within of their grant proposals, such as to NSF. However, it is not necessary to include OTS in a proposal to obtain the services needed at one of the OTS field stations, including field hands and technical staff. ***Please contact the OTS Development Office or the research station Accounting Office for details.***

Service Fees:

A service fee is charged for any service provided by the OTS staff in Costa Rica, South Africa, or the U.S. When staff is engaged at one of the OTS research stations or in the central office to provide a service for a researcher, a fee is charged. ***This fee is to pay the OTS employee for his or her time and effort.***

The cost of this service fee depends on how this is paid:

- ***Advance payment (prepaid when the service is requested): 14%***
- ***Payment with invoice (OTS bills after the service is provided): 22%***
- ***A subcontract with OTS: included in the 25% indirect cost rate.***



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Types of services OTS provides:

A. With Service Fee:

- **In Country Assistants.** A researcher cannot set the rate of pay for individuals in-country to work at an OTS research station. This policy is to standardize salaries between research projects and ensure taxes and benefits are handled correctly, as OTS liable for all employees at its stations. OTS will hire individuals in-country on behalf of a project and charge a service fee for this service. Governments, such as Costa Rica, revise minimum wages every six months; therefore, in Costa Rica, OTS is required to make small salary adjustments twice a year. **For an estimate of the cost of an assistant in country, contact the research station Accounting Office.**
- **Purchases.** OTS can make purchases on behalf of a researcher, from both in country and US vendors. OTS can transport and handle custom requirements of purchased items. Service fees are charged over the total cost of transportation and importation. In Costa Rica, OTS is exempt from import taxes and that can be applied to all purchased items. **For more information please contact the research station Accounting Office.**
- **Car rental and hotel rooms.** OTS can rent a car or book a hotel room on behalf of a researcher. **Please contact the research station Accounting Office or the OTS Reservations staff for details.**

B. Service Fee Optional:

- **Transportation to/from the airport or nearest town or field sites outside the station.** See the station Accounting Office for services provided directly by OTS. However, if OTS arranges transportation with a third party, such as a taxi service, a service fee will be charged.
- **Construction of elements or structures for a research project.** OTS has small shops at each of its stations and has personnel that can help build traps, support structures or other items for a research project. OTS does not charge for small jobs that take less than three hours on a one-time basis. For additional jobs or more time consuming projects, OTS charges a fee per day (see the station Accounting Office for details). The researcher pays for the cost of the materials.
- **Greenhouses.** Greenhouses for the researchers are available at La Selva and Las Cruces. There is no charge if a small space of a few square feet is required and there is space available. Otherwise the researcher may have an exclusive greenhouse built and OTS will charge for the materials and labor.
- **Sensor installation, monitoring and data streaming.** To be defined with the researcher.
- **Office space:** The OTS research stations have shared space available for our researchers and this is included in the station fee. There is no charge for office space or access to computer rooms. No charge for Wi-Fi connection (available throughout the stations). You may coordinate office space with the Science Support staff at each station.
- **Laboratory space.** The OTS research stations are equipped with basic lab space and basic equipment. At La Selva, there is an analytical laboratory and a microbiology laboratory. There is no charge for the use of the shared labs.
- **Energy and Electricity Use.** If your project has high electricity requirements (i.e., long-term soil warming project or long-term use of drying ovens, for example), the cost of the electricity. will be charged to your project.