



Organization for Tropical Studies

An explanation of STATION SERVICES and SERVICE FEES

Updated January 2019

Types of services OTS provides:

A. With Service Fee:

- **In Country Assistants.** OTS requires a contract if a researcher would like OTS to hire an assistant. A researcher cannot set the rate of pay for individual's 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 is liable for all employees at its stations. OTS will hire individuals in-country on behalf of a project and charge a service fee of 24.5% for this service on the total cost of salaries plus benefits. Governments, such as Costa Rica, revise minimum wages every year; therefore, in Costa Rica, OTS is required to make small salary adjustments annually. ***For an estimate of the cost of an assistant in-country, contact the Research Station Administrator.***
- **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. ***For more information, please contact the Research Station Administrator.***
- **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 Administrator or the OTS Reservations staff for details.***

B. Service Fee Conditional:

- **Transportation to/from the airport or nearest town or field sites outside the station.** Contact OTS Reservations staff for services provided directly by OTS.
- **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. 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.



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- **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 shared office space or access to computer rooms. No charge for Wi-Fi connection (available throughout the stations). Please 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 shared lab space.
- **Exclusive use of space:** When available, a researcher may request OTS to assign space for the exclusive use of their project (office, lab, storage). The use of exclusive space has a monthly fee. This situation includes times when a researcher requires space for field technicians to work when the researcher may not be present in Costa Rica. Please coordinate the exclusive use of space with the Science Support staff at each station.
- **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.

Service Fees:

OTS does not charge researchers 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.

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 for the time and effort of the OTS employee.

The cost of this service fee is 24.5%.

Forms of payment:

Advance payment: A researcher must coordinate with the Accounting office at OTS' North American Office (Please call 919.684.5774 or write to Stephen Carrasco at stephen.carrasco@tropicalstudies.org) to obtain a customer number (CN). Once a CN is established, the researcher should transfer funds to his or her CN, and the funds 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 checks and/or credit cards. 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 request up front for the Accounting Office to invoice their institution when establishing or reactivating their CN.**



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Payments with Invoice: A researcher must coordinate with the Accounting Office at OTS' North American Office (Please call 919.684.5774 or write to Stephen Carrasco at stephen.carrasco@tropicalstudies.org) to obtain a customer number (CN). Every month the researcher will receive an invoice of charges made to his or her CN. **A credit card number is required to secure this method of payment. Credit Card numbers will be secured at the North American Office. Payment to OTS should occur no later than 30 days after receiving an OTS invoice. If payment is not received after 30 days, OTS will charge the invoice to the credit card on file.**

Subcontract: Many researchers who establish subcontracts formally highlight OTS' services in 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 technicians or other assistants. **Please contact the Research Station Administrator for details.**