



UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES

Diliman Los Baños Manila Visayas Open University Mindanao Baguio Cebu Tacloban

11 March 2025

REQUESTED BOR ACTION: APPROVAL OF REVISIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES OF THE UP BALIK-PHD RECRUITMENT PROGRAM

BACKGROUND:

Approved by the UP Board of Regents in its 1275th Meeting on 24 November 2011, the Foreign-trained Filipino PhD Faculty Recruitment Program (Balik PhD Recruitment Program) with implementing guidelines was instituted under the UP Expanded Modernization Program. The BPhD Recruitment Program has been envisioned to directly benefit the units in terms of increased research capacity, enhanced graduate mentoring, and the formation of research groups by recruiting foreign-trained PhD researchers. The BPhD Program is open only to those who have not taught previously in UP.¹

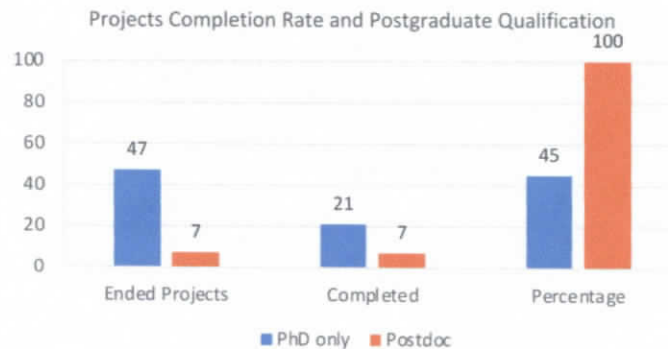
Over the years, OVPAA has experienced various cases in its implementation of the BPhD Program, both with unique and recurring issues. As the Program remains very valuable for the University, our Office believes that it is an opportune time for the guidelines to be updated for the Program to deliver its purpose. The 2011 *BOR-approved Implementing Guidelines* were reviewed by the OVPAA-constituted Ad Hoc Committee from February to March 2022. The recommendations in the Ad Hoc Committee and the ensuing consultations that were conducted comprise the basis for these proposed revisions.

SITUATIONER:

- For the period 2012-2023, the BPhD program has had a total of 70 recipients, 54 of whom have their projects ended, while 16 recipients have projects that are still ongoing at present. Of the 54 recipients with projects ended, 28 (or 52%) have completed their deliverables in terms of the required publications, while 26 (or 48%) still have incomplete deliverables, to date.
- **ELIGIBILITY TO THE PROGRAM:** Current guidelines stipulate that the applicant must have a PhD degree and several high-quality publications. However, to understand the crucial factors leading to the low project completion rates described above, here the ability to complete the project is correlated with the postgraduate qualifications.

¹ In contrast to the BPhD program, the general recruitment of PhD holders is open to previous UP faculty members. A separate but related aspect is the need for additional faculty plantilla items. Requesting for items is based mainly on the unit's manpower gap which, in turn, is the difference between fulltime academic personnel and manpower complement needed to deliver the university-approved program offerings. If warranted, plantilla items may be earmarked by the unit for its general recruitment of PhD holders or for the BPhD program application.

- The figure below shows the BPhD project completion rate in relation to the postgraduate qualifications of the recipients. Of the 54 recipients with projects ended, 47 are PhD degree holders only (ie, without postdoc training), while 7 have PhDs and further research training in terms of postdoctoral fellowships. Of the 47 recipients without a postdoc, 21 (or only 45%) have completed the BPhD project deliverables, while 26 (or 55%) still have pending deliverables, to date. On the other hand, of the 7 recipients with postdoc training, all or 100% have completed the required deliverables.



- Furthermore, for those who have completed their projects, on-time submission of deliverables (ie, within the approved project duration) was correlated with postgraduate qualifications. Among those without postdoc training, 33% submitted the required output and reports on time. While among those with postdoc training, 86% have submitted the required output and reports on time. Evidently, hiring PhDs with postdoctoral training guarantees project completion and timely submission of deliverables.
- **PROJECT PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS:** One of the findings of the Program review was the long waiting time before the grant application is eventually approved. This was due to the difficulty of finding potential reviewers for the project proposals because of the highly specialized nature of the research topics. In this regard, the quality of the project proposals may be assured if the proposal is co-developed with the host unit, especially in terms of technical feasibility of the project and required logistics, assessed at the CU level, before a final review and endorsement by OVPAA for the UP President's approval.
- **SUPPORT TO SET UP LAB OR STUDIO/ UNIT SHARE:** Another recommendation from the Program review was that the host unit must provide a venue and create a nurturing environment for the BPhD faculty. Provided with a venue for laboratory or studio, the BPhD can start doing research right away and be supported by faculty members with related expertise/ interests and research students. To ensure an appropriate venue is provided, funds are needed by the host unit to set up the laboratory or studio. In this regard, the unit must receive a share of the Grant to prepare the facility or studio where the research activities and mentoring will be conducted.
- **SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH COLLABORATION:** The grant must include funds for collaborations, hosting of international experts, and participation in international conferences and networking. The funds will help strengthen partnerships with international collaborating institutes, facilitate exchange of ideas and best practices, and enable researchers to address complex challenges with global significance.

- Based on the recommendations of the Ad hoc Committee that reviewed the BPhD Program, and upon consultation with the Academic Affairs Committee and the Research, Creative Work, and Innovation Committee, including those who have worked in foreign research laboratories, analysis of the data favors recruiting foreign-trained PhDs with postdoctoral training. A prospective Balik-PhD with postdoctoral training, having worked in a research environment for at least 1 year after obtaining PhD, explored related research topics more independently, and with an increased network of collaborators, is deemed more prepared to serve our University for the best. Thus, postdoc training will be included in the eligibility requirements. Furthermore, the correlation between the number of publications and the performance of the BPhD is high, thus, the minimum number of publications for each faculty rank must be also clarified in the revised guidelines.

Under the proposed revised guidelines, the University requires an additional Php30 million over the next three years. This funding is not merely a financial necessity; it represents the University's commitment to bolstering its research capabilities and enhancing its academic reputation. Securing this additional budget will enable the University to attract top-tier candidates, significantly elevating the University's standing in the academic community. With more top-tier BPhD grantees, we will foster groundbreaking research outcomes that can lead to innovative collaborations with industry and open doors to further grant funding.

The proposed revisions are attached as Annex 1 for your reference.

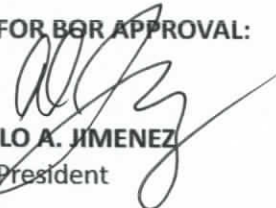
RECOMMENDING APPROVAL:



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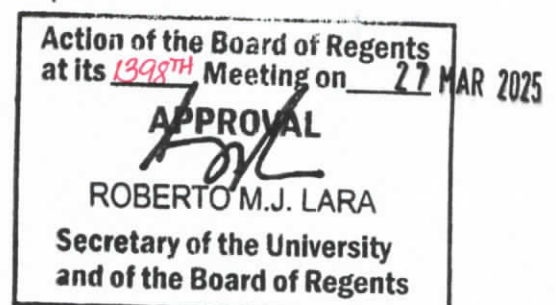
Vice President for Academic Affairs

ENDORSED FOR BOR APPROVAL:



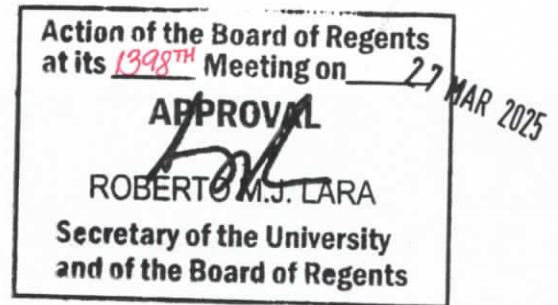
ANGELO A. JIMENEZ
President

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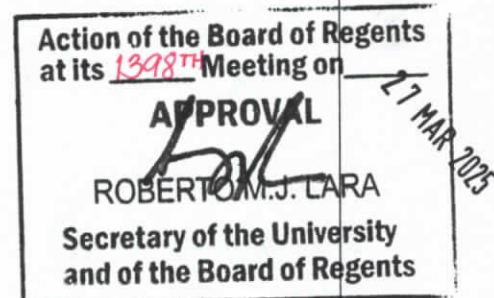
ANNEX 1

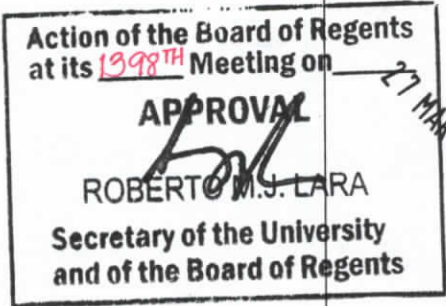
Proposed Revisions to the Balik PhD Recruitment Program:



Implementing Guidelines (1275th BOR Meeting on 24 November 2011 and 1317th BOR on 28 April 2016)	Proposed New Implementing Guidelines	Remarks (on changes made from BOR Guidelines to Proposed New Implementing Guidelines)
Eligibility		
Can be given as Assoc. Professor 1 rank as long as the PhD recruit has several high-quality publications. The rank given to a Balik PhD should follow the APFC/APC criteria.	A doctoral degree holder with at least one year of postdoctoral fellowship training and who have been recently hired by the University (within one year following their postdoctoral training, the applicant must indicate their interest and submit the required documents to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (OVPA). The minimum number of publications to be eligible to the BPhD Program depends on the rank. Prospective Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor must have at least 5, 8, and 10 publications, respectively.	Minimum qualifications for eligibility are updated, based on the results of the BPhD Program review. The proposed revision allows applicants affected by the program review to apply for BalikPhD funding, provided they meet the program's eligibility requirements. This also extends to the benefits and research funds offered by the program.
Recruitment Process		
The recruitment is based on the academic and technical expertise needed by the CU of the University. The applicant may consider applying in one or two UP campuses and browse the websites of the various CUs of the UP System – UP Diliman, UP Manila, UP Los Baños, UP Visayas, UP Cebu, UP Mindanao, UP Baguio, and UP Open University.	Pre-Application Stage 1. The dep't/ institute identifies and recruits a prospective applicant or any interested individual may initiate contact and express interest through the dep't/ institute. PhD faculty recruitment is contingent upon the availability of a faculty plantilla item in the unit. 2. The applicant prepares and co-develops a project proposal with the dep't/ institute. 3. Following the hiring procedure described in the Faculty Manual, the unit/CU evaluates the documents for faculty appointments. 4. Once the faculty appointment recommendation is approved, the Balik-PhD Program application process may proceed. Note: The Balik-PhD Program does NOT provide faculty items nor process faculty appointments.	The pre-application stage is articulated to ensure a strong project proposal is submitted.
2.2 OVPA-BPhD Form 8.0 can be downloaded at the Academic Programs & Research Section (OVPA link) of the University of the Philippines System website @ www.up.edu.ph .	4. Application Procedure 4.1 The following documents must be submitted by the applicant through the host unit:	One of the findings of the program review is the long process of grant application due to the difficulty of securing external technical experts/ reviewers for the project

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2.3 The application together with the CV, letter of intent, and capsule concept proposal, can be emailed to the Head of the unit, Dean, or Chancellor, (email addresses are found in their websites) of the CU, and cc'd to the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs.	4.1.1 Application letter addressed to the UP President through the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA); 4.1.2 Balik-PhD Recruitment Program Application Form (OVPA-BPhD Form 8.0); 4.1.3 Balik-PhD Full Research Proposal Form (OVPA-BPhD Form 3.0); 4.1.4 Line-item budget (LIB) duly reviewed by the CU's Accounting Office (OVPA-BPhD Form 4.1) 4.1.5 Gantt chart 4.1.6 List (with links) of the 5-10 relevant publications in journals indexed in WoS or Scopus, or books published by reputable publishers, or patents that demonstrate the expertise and competence of the proponent to conduct research and mentor graduate students; For the prospective appointment as assistant professor, associate professor, and professor, the applicant must have at least 5, 8, and 10 publications, respectively. 4.1.7 Certification of postdoctoral training or research experience (at least 1 year) from a post-doctoral supervisor abroad. 4.1.8 A copy of the faculty appointment 4.1.9 The applicant's latest comprehensive curriculum vitae 4.1.10 Copies of academic credentials such as transcript of records and diploma/certificate of graduation or certificate of degree/program completion 4.2 The host unit identifies a tenured faculty member with related research interests, to collaborate with the applicant in developing and revising as necessary the project proposal. The unit then carries out further review of the updated proposal to ensure that the project proposal is sound and polished before being submitted. 4.3 The applicant and host unit transmit the application documents with attachments to the Dean's Office for endorsement to OVCRD. 4.4 The OVCRD assesses the completeness of the documents and transmits the application documents with attachments to the Chancellor for endorsement. 4.5 The Chancellor endorses the application to OVPA.	proposal. In this regard, it is proposed that instead of a System level review, a CU-level review of the proposal will be accepted for evaluation provided that the proposal is vetted by the proper authorizing units.



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	4.6 The OVPAA may tap an external expert for a final review, and schedule a one-on-one interview with the UP VPAA and AVPAA (Research) 4.7 The VPAA recommends the approval of the BPhD Research Grant to the UP President. 4.8 After the approval of the President has been received, the OVPAA will prepare the transfer of the full amount of the grant to the CU, to be released by the implementing CU Research Office following the entitlements stated in the Benefits/Entitlement of the Grantee and the Unit. Note: A conferment ceremony with the UP President will also be held to award the BPhD grantee.	
Benefits/Entitlements		
Relocation package, max. Php 0.5M The OVPAA will provide a relocation package of Php 0.5M maximum, as an incentive to the BPhD Recruit to cover for an economy airfare, based on the lowest of three quotes, from place of origin to the Philippines; transfer of personal effects; shipment of lab materials; and if necessary, provide a reasonable amount of advances for living expenses while the host unit arranges the salary and housing. Start-up grant of Php 2.5M for research will be granted to the BPhD Recruit	Note: The implementing CU has the authority to determine the requirement and percentage of release for the given period. However, the implementing CU must comply with the deliverables required for submission to the UP System. Grantee One time relocation package amounting to Php 0.5M to assist the Balik-PhD grantee in settling in the Philippines The BalikPhD grantee is only eligible for the relocation package if, at the time of application, the same is still based abroad or up to one (1) year from arrival in the Philippines Balik-PhD start-up research grant worth of Php 2.5M for a two-year project implementation. The research grant of Php 2.5M will be released in tranches by the implementing CU. Note: A new PhD faculty recruit can only apply for the Balik-PhD start-up Research Grant within one (1) year of receiving the faculty appointment from the University.	The relocation package has been part of the BPhD Program as approved by the BOR (1275th meeting on 24 Nov 2011). The proposed revision allows applicants affected by the program review to apply for BalikPhD funding, provided they meet the program's eligibility requirements. This also extends to the benefits and research funds offered by the program. The start-up research grant has been part of the BPhD Program as approved by the BOR (1275th meeting on 24 Nov 2011).

Implementing Guidelines (1275th BOR Meeting on 24 November 2011 and 1317th BOR on 28 April 2016)	Proposed New Implementing Guidelines	Remarks (on changes made from BOR Guidelines to Proposed New Implementing Guidelines)
Grant for Research Collaboration, Php 1M Foreign Balik-PhD faculty recruitment and collaboration (1317th BOR on 28 April 2016) This research collaboration grant will be used primarily to support foreign postdoctoral fellows to spend 4 to 6 months in the BPhD grantee's laboratory to help establish various research activities, training, mentoring of postgraduate students, and it can also be spent on other MOOE and equipment. Being an outright grant, budget items need not be approved and expenses need not be liquidated on an individual basis.	The Php 1M-grant for research collaboration will be released in tranches by the implementing CU. The grant can be used as funds to cover visits of experts and postdoc fellows to UP, holding and participation in international conferences, research activities of the grantee with a growing network of collaborators. Grant to set up research laboratory/ studio facility, Php 1M The grantee and the host unit will receive a Php 1M outright grant that will be used by the grantee in setting up the infrastructure for the laboratory or creative studio needed to carry out the research or creative work activities, and student mentoring for the project. This setting up grant can be used to develop the venue for the research lab or creative studio and may include aircon units, tables and chairs, cabinets and other furniture, lab office equipment, appliances, implements, carpentry/ electrical services, and similar items. Being an outright grant, budget items need not be approved and expenses need not be liquidated on an individual basis.	The research collaboration grant has been <u>approved by the BOR</u> (1317th meeting on 28 April 2016) Action of the Board of Regents at its 1398TH Meeting on 27 MAR 2025 APPROVAL ROBERTO M. J. LARA Secretary of the University and of the Board of Regents This setting-up grant for a lab/ studio will enable the BPhD grantee to implement the research project and to mentor students. As an outcome, the established lab or studio will increase the chance to complete the project on time, sustain the research activities beyond the project duration, and develop innovations for public good. The grant to set up a research laboratory/studio facility is a new grant proposed to support the research management, maintenance, and enhancement of physical infrastructure and common facilities that support research and improve the conduct of research. The additional grant may be charged against the MOOE or Capital Outlay expense classification.
Deliverables		
The applicant is encouraged to produce as much output before leaving, which can contribute to a new high-quality (ISI-listed) publication within the first year in UP.	<u>Grantee</u> The grantee must co-author with a mentored student at least two publications in a Web of Science-indexed or Scopus-listed	

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	journal from the Balik-PhD grant or patents within the duration of the project. The Balik-PhD Grant should be acknowledged in the publications in order to be accepted as outputs of the grant. At the end of the project implementation, the grantee will submit the terminal financial report and return the unexpended funds to the UPSA Reprogrammed Funds. <u>Host Unit</u> <u>During Pre-Application Stage</u> 7.1 The host unit shall facilitate the recruitment as stipulated in Section 3 (Pre-Application Stage) in securing a faculty appointment. 7.2 The host unit assigns tenured faculty member(s) with related research interests to co-develop the project proposal with the Balik-PhD applicant. 7.3 Provides assistance in accomplishing the required forms, supporting documents, and securing necessary endorsement of the Balik-PhD application. <u>Upon approval of the grant</u> 7.4 The host unit shall facilitate the setting up of the grantee's laboratory or studio. 7.5 Discuss with the grantee the tenure requirements of the unit. <u>During project implementation</u> 7.6 Extend support and guidance to the grantee, including giving 3-units of research load credit, thereby increasing the chance of the grantee's future renewal of faculty appointment for the duration of the project. 7.7 Facilitate continuous collaboration of the grantee with other faculty members and/ or research groups with related interests. If warranted, assist the grantee in setting up his/ her own research group or creative studio. 7.8 Provide support in the administrative, accounting/ auditing,	Action of the Board of Regents at its <u>1398TH</u> Meeting on <u>27</u> MAR 2025 APPROVAL <i>[Signature]</i> ROBERTO M. J. LARA Secretary of the University and of the Board of Regents

Implementing Guidelines (1275th BOR Meeting on 24 November 2011 and 1317th BOR on 28 April 2016)	Proposed New Implementing Guidelines	Remarks (on changes made from BOR Guidelines to Proposed New Implementing Guidelines)
	and procurement activities during the conduct of the Balik-PhD project. 7.9 Monitor the progress of the BPhD grantee in terms of satisfying the requirements of the Balik-PhD project and for obtaining tenure, among others. <u>OVCRD/E or equivalent office</u> 8.1 The OVCRD/E or equivalent office should provide support in the administrative, hiring, accounting/auditing, and procurement activities during the conduct of Balik-PhD project. 8.2 The OVCRD/E must ensure the timely release of the benefits and entitlements stated in Item 5 Benefits/Entitlements. 8.3 The OVCRD/E must provide an annual report to OVPAA pertaining to the implementation of the BPhD grant including but not limited to the percentage of transfer of funds, progress of the research projects etc. 8.4 The OVCRD/E, as the implementing institution, is expected to handle appeals related to the implementation of the Grant.	Action of the Board of Regents at its 1398TH Meeting on <u>27 MAR 2023</u> APPROVAL  ROBERTO M.J. LARA Secretary of the University and of the Board of Regents

- Under the proposed revised guidelines, the University requires an additional Php30 million over the next three years. This funding is not merely a financial necessity; it represents the University's commitment to bolstering its research capabilities and enhancing its academic reputation.
- Securing this additional budget will enable the University to attract top-tier candidates, significantly elevating the University's standing in the academic community. With more top-tier BPhD grantees, we will foster groundbreaking research outcomes that can lead to innovative collaborations with industry and open doors to further grant funding.
- In essence, this investment is not just about meeting financial requirements—it's about positioning the University for long-term success and leadership in research.
- Further, the proposed revision allows applicants affected by the program review to apply for BalikPhD funding, provided they meet the program's eligibility requirements. This also extends to the benefits and research funds offered by the program.