

**Patron: His Majesty King Charles III**

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## Iwokrama Research Guidelines

Updated: June 2025

### Objective of the Guidelines and Research Agreements

The objective of these Guidelines is to ensure that research is conducted in a collaborative manner, and where possible incorporates the research priorities and objectives of Iwokrama. Research should promote and assist in the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use of its components and should not cause damage to biodiversity. The guidelines and agreements seek to ensure that research is conducted in a manner respectful of local traditions and cultures, and that the informed consent of involved stakeholders - including Iwokrama, local communities, and the Government of Guyana - is received prior to the initiation of any research programme, and that benefits are equitably shared among contributors.

### Prior Informed Consent:

Prior to initiating research, researchers must submit an application to Iwokrama for approval for collaborative research. Once approval is given by Iwokrama's internal Research Committee the researcher/s can then apply to the Environmental Protection Agency for the formal Environmental Permit. Should research involve any Indigenous communities, researcher/s must also acquire the informed consent of relevant community and Ministry of Amerindian Affairs.

### Iwokrama: Research Application

In order to establish the basis for collaboration, researchers should submit to Iwokrama a completed Research Proposal. Elements to be included in the proposal are as follows:

1. A Title (may be provisional)
2. Short abstract of research aims
3. List of specific objectives

The Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development is an autonomous non-profit institution established by Guyana and the Commonwealth. The Centre manages the nearly one million acre (371,000 hectare) Iwokrama Forest in central Guyana to show how tropical forests can be conserved and sustainably used for ecological, social and economic benefits to local, national and international communities.

4. General description of research

- The location of any research activity within the forest, if unspecified, can be arranged with the Centre, who will provide geographic assistance, including guidelines on appropriate transect-cutting, and information on the location of prohibited areas and the access protocols associated with them. If the research activity is to be conducted outside of the forest, specific geographic locations of the activity must be given, including the names of communities in or around which it will take place. For research within specific communities, please refer to the Community Research Application process outlined below.
- A statement of actual and proposed linkages with local institutions. Capacity-building and information-sharing are important outcomes of any research activity. The researcher is therefore advised to forge links with local institutions, for example University of Guyana, whether on a collaborative level or solely on an information-transfer basis, in order to contribute to national development and biodiversity conservation. Consultation with local institutions is mutually beneficial, and can provide the researcher/s with valuable background data relevant to the research activity.
- The manner in which local communities will be involved in the research process. The participation of local communities in all domains of activity is crucial for the realization of Iwokrama's mandate. Researchers must include Iwokrama's rangers in their research activities. Once communities are involved, they must include local communities in their research activity, on a level which reflects fair and equitable compensation. This may range from employment of local community members as forest guides, research assistants, etc. to their involvement as subjects in interviews. Consent processes must be involved for social research.

5. Hypotheses to be tested (if appropriate)

6. Outline and schedule of activities to be undertaken

- The dates requested for the research activity refer to the date of commencement (when the researcher/s will arrive at the aforementioned location), and date of departure (when the researcher will leave the aforementioned location). Anticipated return to the location(s) of the research activity must be declared, as follow-up of research forms part of the research process.

7. Outline of methods to be employed

- The methodology employed during the research activity must be given. In the case of biological research, this might include collecting practices, transect-cutting techniques, treatment of collected resources, etc. In the case of non-biological research, this might include modes of interview, consent processes, etc.

- Type of information/data to be collected and in what form (i.e. biological material and/or associated knowledge, anthropological data, etc.): The researcher/s must outline the type of information to be researched. Biological material must be specified, such as the part of the plant to be collected, etc., in particular if the researcher is collecting for purposes of compound extraction. The nature of information to be collected must be specified (e.g. oral or written, public or private, etc.) Any anticipated removal of physical material, whether biological or cultural, must be explicitly declared.
8. Names and contact information of team members and supervisor.
  - Disclosure of any affiliations with other institutions, private or public entities on whose behalf, or in collaboration with whom, the research is being conducted, and their institutional policies.
  9. Summary curriculum vitae of each team member (no more than 1 page)
  10. Pathways chosen for disseminating results
- The ways in which the material and/or information collected will be used in the short and long term, including whether it is for academic or commercial purposes: The researcher/s must ensure transparency throughout all stages of the research process. Any transfer of material or information must be based upon mutually agreed terms, with clear horizons established for the use and dissemination of the material/information. The researcher must specify whether the research activity is for academic or commercial purposes, as well as any potential commercial applications of research findings.
  - Forms of benefit sharing anticipated in the short, intermediate, and long term: The researcher should ensure that benefits from the research are directed equitably towards collaborators, participants and those indirectly affected by the research activity, such as local communities.
  - Budget (may be provisional) and source of funding.
  - Information on the funding agency, and their conditions attached to research results: A brief outline of the funding agency's mission must be given, as well as an explanation of their proprietary rights over research data and collected material. The extent of foreseen information dissemination and accessibility must also be divulged. Any time restrictions, placed by the funding agency on the research activity, must be declared.
  - All research applications should be accompanied by a budget and include funding for local counterpart (s), honorariums, fees to interview communities' members, etc.

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- All researchers conducting work within the Iwokrama Forest or in the local rural communities must be accompanied by a certified Iwokrama Ranger and thus the necessary cost must be budgeted.

### **Submitting Your Proposal:**

Please send queries or your completed research proposal to [training@iwokrama.org](mailto:training@iwokrama.org)

### **Local Communities: Consultations and Agreement (written or verbal)**

Iwokrama has worked for many years in close collaboration with the local communities living around the forest and requires their participation in decision-making on issues that affect their land, resource management strategies, and knowledge. In the case of research outside of the forest, researchers must receive the full prior informed consent of the specific communities with whom, or on whose lands, they will work and whom their research will affect. Researcher-community relationships should be designed to protect local communities' rights over their intellectual property and traditional resources, and should promote benefit sharing and the achievement of sustainable use objectives relevant to the community. Communities have the right to veto, or say 'no' to a collaboration or research project, either by declining involvement in the research or forbidding any specific research activity on their traditional lands.

Following receipt by the North Rupununi District Development Board and the individual communities, initial consultations will take place with the concerned local communities, in order to obtain their prior informed consent on the realization of the research proposal. Information distribution is not a sufficient means by which local communities can grant informed consent for any research activity. Ongoing dynamic consultations demonstrate Iwokrama commitment to equitable dialogue and a research relationship which is prosperous for all parties. Initial consultations will be initiated upon the community's receipt of the Research Proposal, and will be carried out in conjunction with Iwokrama staff. Added elements to be included in the Research Proposal include:

- Discoveries made in the course of the activity which might affect the willingness of the community to continue to cooperate;
- Destination of knowledge or material that is to be acquired, its ownership status, and the community's ability and rights to control its use once it has left the community;
- Agreement on a protocol of acknowledgement, citation, authorship, inventorship as applicable, either citing local innovators/guardians of knowledge, and respecting requests for anonymity or confidentiality;
- Any commercial interest that the researcher or sponsors have in the research, or material and knowledge collected;
- The nature of resulting benefits for the community, e.g. copies of reports or documents, training, employment, etc.

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Before distribution of the final report, or any publication, or contact with the media, the community will be consulted once again as to whether it agrees to share this data in that particular way.

Research focused on or include work in the local rural communities within the vicinity of the Iwokrama Forest must be approved by the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs, the North Rupununi District Development Board (NRDDB) and the respective Village Leaders.

#### **Contact Details:**

North Rupununi District Development Board: [northdevboard@gmail.com](mailto:northdevboard@gmail.com)

For approval and information on costs within the various communities, please contact NRDDB. The NRDDB and the respective community leader would be able to provide you with the fee for interviewing its members.

### **Iwokrama Review of Research Applications**

Iwokrama has established internal institutional structures to facilitate efficient review of research applications. Research applications are submitted to the relevant Research Officer, who then reviews the applications. The application is then submitted to the Director of Resource Management and Training and Research Committee with recommendations.

If research is approved the Director will provide the researcher with a Letter of Support to submit to the Environmental Protection Agency.

Once granted the research permit by the Environmental Protection Agency, a copy must be lodged with the Iwokrama Centre (Electronic preferred).

### **Government: Research Permits**

#### **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**

To conduct research, researchers must enter the country on a research or business visa. In the case of scientific or biodiversity-related research, researchers must obtain a research permit from the Guyana Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) before beginning research. Please see the EPA's website: <http://www.epaguyana.org/> For more information you can send queries to Iwokrama's email: [training@iwokrama.org](mailto:training@iwokrama.org) for direct contact to EPA's Senior Environmental Officer

You are required to submit your EPA application at **least three (3) months in advance** and an application fee of US\$75.00. Once process is completed and permit granted a research permit fee is required and that is dependent on the research and number of team members.

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All collecting and export permits, phytosanitary certificates, certificates of origin, and CITES export permits are the responsibility of the researcher.

### **Ministry of Amerindian Affairs (MOAA)**

A letter of permission from the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs (MoAA) to work or visit local communities are required. Contact the MoAA person to discuss your request, and submit your application for permission to work in a local community:

Ministry of Amerindian Affairs, Georgetown, Guyana  
Tel: (592) 227-5067

You can contact Mr. Anil Roberts. Email: [arobertsz@yahoo.com](mailto:arobertsz@yahoo.com)

## **The Research Process**

While undertaking research, researchers are required to adhere to “best practice” research behavior, collecting methods, and benefit-sharing. All researchers must report regularly to the designated Iwokrama Research Officer. The Iwokrama Research Officer also serves as the clearing house for any community concerns which may arise during the research process, and in such cases, will immediately notify the researcher responsible for those concerns. Any non-community persons accompanying or associated with the researcher(s) must also adhere to the standards set forth below.

Researcher/s will sign a simple research agreement with Iwokrama prior to starting research work.

### **Researcher behaviour**

Researchers are required to behave in a way which is respectful of local culture and traditions, customary laws, and the integrity of the environment. This will include:

#### Within the forest

- collection of all garbage and depositing in a suitable site agreed by Iwokrama;
- use of only existing fallen wood for making fires;
- minimize disturbance to stream sediments;
- use biodegradable soap in streams and other natural water bodies;
- refrain from eating bushmeat and endangered species;
- avoid sacred and environmentally-sensitive sites unless authorized by Iwokrama/NRDDDB;

#### Outside of the forest

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- adherence to local cultural norms and the terms of the prior informed consent (PIC) agreement with communities in conducting interviews and research in villages or surrounding areas; rights to privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity should be respected;
- use of only those campsites designated by local communities;
- pay agreed-upon rates for employment, and do not negotiate rates down;
- ongoing communication of research objectives, methods, findings and interpretation, from inception to completion of the research activity, in a manner readily understandable by the local community. The extent of data accessibility that the community can expect should be clearly stated and agreed upon.
- Avoid sacred and environmentally-sensitive sites unless authorized by local communities;

### **Collections**

No more material than is strictly necessary should be collected, with the amount determined and itemized by Iwokrama in conjunction with the researcher.

Collections should always be done in a manner that does not cause extensive damage to or depletion of local populations, and should exhibit particular sensitivity in collecting any material used by local people.

Collections should not include any known rare and endangered species unless with the permission of Iwokrama, NRDDDB and EPA.

Destructive harvesting - such as removal of roots, bark, bulbs, or whole plants – must be made clear, and done only with the permission of Iwokrama, and local communities if outside of the forest. Only agreed-upon species, types, and quantities may be removed.

Iwokrama must be informed of the location, preferably digital, of rare and endangered species.

Transect cutting may take place only with the approval of Iwokrama, and of local communities if outside of the forest; if undertaken, researchers should make use of minimally-destructive, alternative transect-establishment techniques.

A duplicate of all specimens collected, and their label information, must be lodged in the National Herbarium. If only one specimen (unicate) is collected, it must be returned to the National Herbarium as soon as identification has been made. All specimens are to be lodged in the National Herbarium and Museum as per requirements of the EPA bioprospecting regulations of 2001 (part iv).

Before plant material is dispatched overseas, the sender/researcher must ensure that all required documents (phytosanitary certificate, certificate of origin, and CITES export permits) are acquired

## **Benefit-sharing**

During the research process, benefits should be shared with Iwokrama and local communities where appropriate.

The object of benefit-sharing is to achieve fairness and equity and to create incentives for the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components. In the case of research outside of the forest, the first and foremost benefits derived by communities from research activities should be training, education and capacity-building, and should include assistance in the practical application of the researcher's findings, thereby translating scientific data into concrete technical assistance. Benefits should strengthen the local community as a whole, not individuals.

Specific benefits to be shared and a schedule for their disbursement will be identified prior to initiation of the research, and in cases of community research, during the 'prior informed consent' consultation with the local communities. Benefits will vary by case and circumstance, and will be included in each Research Agreement. An indicative list of benefits that flow from the research process follows:

### Non-monetary

- Training of Iwokrama and/or local community collaborators in scientific techniques, use of equipment, methodologies, etc; each project is required to involve at least one Iwokrama staff member in order to build capacity within the institution;
- Training of local community members;
- Co-authorship of publications, reports, articles, etc.
- Supply of equipment, and infrastructure support;
- Iwokrama must be acknowledged in all publications;
- Supply of interim reports on preliminary findings before leaving the area, publications and written or photographic materials;
- Copies of all reports and publications resulting from research must be shared, as soon as they are available, with Iwokrama;
- Citation/acknowledgement of intellectual contributions of local innovators, communities and groups in research publications;
- Production of manuals and other documents in forms usable by the communities;
- Building of local commercial capacity or community-based industries;
- Provision of medical services;
- Transfer of technology such as hardware, soft-ware, and know-how associated with their use;
- Training in information technology and management;

### Monetary

- Employment of staff and local community members;
- Where possible, joint authorship of publications with Iwokrama staff or local community members will be encouraged, with ensuing royalties;
- Small grants to village development and other community funds;

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- Provision of an institutional overhead fee as a % of the project budget will be required for larger research projects. The provision of an overhead fee, and calculation of the rate, will be dependent upon the scale and nature of the research project, the status of the researcher – e.g. student or professional, national or international - and other factors. The provision of in-kind and non-monetary benefits can be supplied to off-set the fee.

## **Post-Field Research Follow-Up**

The research relationship does not end with the collection of data and material in the field. Researchers will continue to hold obligations regarding the disposition of collected material/knowledge/data, benefit-sharing, and reporting to Iwokrama.

### **Disposition of collected material**

All required documents (phytosanitary certificate, certificate of origin, CITES export permit) must be acquired prior to the dispatch of collected material, and copies lodged with Iwokrama.

Duplicate specimens may only be deposited in those institutions agreed to, as part of the prior informed consent process, unless written approval is subsequently received by Iwokrama.

Researchers may not:

- i. Transfer any biological material or any progeny or derivatives thereof to any third party;
- ii. Commercialize any biological material or any progeny or derivatives thereof; without the prior informed consent, in writing, of Iwokrama, and then only under a legally binding written agreement containing terms no less restrictive than those contained in the Research Agreement.

Commercialization of any non-biological data or material (such as photographs, sound recordings, cultural or spiritual artifacts, etc.) acquired during the research activity is prohibited without the prior informed consent of Iwokrama and/or the local communities (where appropriate). In cases of desired commercialization of a photograph depicting an individual or individuals, his/her/their prior informed consent must be acquired.

According to a schedule included in the Research Agreement, Iwokrama and local communities, where appropriate, must be updated regularly on the status of data analysis and publication.

Research data – and not only publications – (e.g. photographs, fieldnotes, etc.) should be shared with Iwokrama and, where requested, local communities which have been involved in the research activity.

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Researchers must adhere to restrictions placed by both Iwokrama and local communities on the publication and commercialization of traditional knowledge, practices and innovations, as set out in the signed Research Agreements.

### **Continued Benefit-Sharing**

Benefits to be shared with Iwokrama and local communities where appropriate following field research, and as agreed by researchers and Iwokrama, might include:

- Copies of publications in English;
- Copies of photographs or slides taken during field research;
- Analysis of data in a manner that is of value to Iwokrama and local communities;
- Continued supply of publications relevant to Iwokrama, based upon the specific fieldwork carried out, and assistance with information and networking (including notification of impending conferences and publications of importance to Iwokrama);
- Transformation of scientific findings into a form useful for education, outreach, and other programmes – e.g. educational materials and manuals on the management of useful species for local communities, and field guides for visitors and tourists to the area;
- Summary of the policy implications of research findings to promote the sustainable management and conservation of the species and ecosystems studied.

### **Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation**

Researchers should update Iwokrama on the status of the research process, data analysis, publication, and key findings according to an agreed upon schedule. Reports of 1-2 pages, providing an update on activities and any preliminary findings should be submitted every six months until final publications or reports are available.

### **Research Fees**

Fees are worked out on case by case basis with researcher depending on needs, but basic costs are outlined below: Rates as of 2025 but are subject to change annually.

### **Notes**

1. Interns, Volunteers and Researchers spending an extended period at Iwokrama River Lodge and Research Centre will get a discount to be worked out on case by case basis.
2. All prices are quoted in United States Dollars (USD)
3. Prices are subjected to change without notice.
4. A 10% Administrative Fee will be charged on all invoices and quotations.

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<b>ITEMS</b>	<b>INTERNS, VOLUNTEERS &amp; RESEARCHERS - US\$</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Forest User Fee	\$ 15.00	Compulsory (one payment
Meals	\$ 50.00	Per Day (Bfast \$14, Lunch/Dinner \$18)
<b>ACCOMODATION</b>		
Researcher room	\$40.00	Per Person Per Night Per Bed
Research Open area	\$30.00	Per Person Per Night Per Bed
Camping (Turtle Mountain)	\$ 10.00	Per Person Per Night
Cabins (Tourist Rates Apply)	\$ 180-280	Single/Double/Triple occupancy
<b>FIELD ASSISTANCE</b>		
Iwokrama Ranger	\$ 50.00	Daily Rate
Iwokrama Cook (Camping)	\$40.00	Daily Rate
Camp Assistant/Porter	\$30.00	Daily Rate

**More Information, please contact:**

**Learning Services Unit**

Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development

49 Barrack and High Street, Kingston

Georgetown Guyana

Tel: 592-225-1504

Email: [training@iwokrama.org](mailto:training@iwokrama.org)

Website: [www.iwokrama.org](http://www.iwokrama.org)