**Global and Environmental Health Lab Member Manual**



**York University**

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# Welcome note

Welcome to the [Global and Environmental Health Lab](https://www.gehlab.com/), led by Dr. Godfred O. Boateng! [Dr. Boateng](https://www.yorku.ca/health/globalhealth/faculty-research/our-faculty-members/full-time-faculty-members/godfred-boateng/) is an Assistant Professor at the School of Global Health, a Faculty Fellow at the Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health Research and a Tier II Canada Research Chair in Global Health and Humanitarianism. The lab is housed at the [Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health Research](https://www.yorku.ca/dighr/), an organized research unit (ORU) which supports research on global health at York University. We are happy to have you at the lab, and hope that you will expand your knowledge of environmental health, build your research skills and make valuable connections whether you plan to stay in academia or not.

All new and prospective lab members are expected to thoroughly read this manual. Please discuss any questions or concerns with Dr. Boateng or the lab coordinator, especially if you are unsure about expectations and time commitment. This manual is a guide and not a rulebook – your success depends on you and the effort you put into your work at the lab. That begins with reading, understanding and signing this manual (☺), and trying to build a strong relationship with everyone at the lab.

This manual was inspired by the [Aly](https://github.com/alylab/labmanual/blob/master/aly-lab-manual.pdf), [Barber](https://www.annikabarberlab.com/barber-lab-manual) and [Draganova](https://med.emory.edu/departments/biochemistry/research-labs/draganova/documents/draganova-lab-onboarding-guide.pdf) manuals. You are free to take inspiration from ours as well so long as we are cited.

# What does research at GEHLab look like?

Dr. Godfred Boateng is a mixed methods researcher with expertise in advanced qualitative and quantitative methodologies, and a global expert in measurement theory. This means that you will have support for whatever methodological approach you prefer and will particularly enjoy working at the lab if you like to integrate numbers and narratives in your research. You are also encouraged to learn something new. i.e., if you are more comfortable with qualitative approaches coming into the lab, learn a thing or two about quantitative methods. Dr. Boateng conducts cross-cultural research (i.e., research where data are collected across multiple countries and regions) on resource insecurity, environmental pollution and the social inequities of health, and has datasets from multiple projects conducted in Ghana, Malawi, Kenya, Nigeria, Colombia and other sites. As a Canada Research Chair in Global Health and Humanitarianism and a board director at the Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief (CPAR), Dr. Boateng also leads research projects in humanitarian contexts.

Every intern starts as a volunteer. Funded positions are available for those who show steady progress and a genuine interest in conducting research.

The nature of your output typically determines the kind of work you will do. Interns typically start their work by completing a literature review matrix, synthesizing extant literature on their chosen topic. This informs the introduction and methods section of a manuscript. From there, interns conduct data analysis, write up their results and the rest of the paper, and prepare for knowledge dissemination. Aside standard research articles, other common types of output include rapid, narrative and scoping reviews.

The goal for each intern is a publication in a reputable journal and/or a conference presentation (oral or poster). For postdoctoral fellows, the goal is to leverage your experience at the lab to pursue a career as an independent researcher in and outside academia. Where other opportunities to share your work with the broader scholarly community arise, you are encouraged to discuss them with Dr. Boateng. As your mentor, Dr. Boateng will also share internal and external opportunities for knowledge dissemination. However, participation in these opportunities is not guaranteed, and depends on the **pace and quality** of your work.

# Core values

## Proactiveness

As you grow as a researcher, one of the most important skills you will need is being proactive. This means continuously engaging with your research to resolve road bumps and to develop solutions that can be workshopped with your colleagues/the principal investigator. Tasks at the lab are completed independently, meaning that you are expected to use all the resources available on OneDrive, at the York University Libraries and the Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health Research to complete your tasks. Please do not wait for instruction before you try something new – you won’t know if something works if you never try!

When in doubt, STrAsk. **Search, Try** and **Ask:**

1. **Search:** When faced with a problem, search the OneDrive Resources folder, Google, YouTube and software documentation for a solution. What do you find?
2. **Try:** Try all possible solutions.
3. **Ask:** Discuss the problem and all the solutions you have tried with Dr. Boateng and your colleagues at lab meetings/in one-on-one meetings. What worked and what didn’t? What did you learn from the experience of trying to resolve the problem? Typically, any final resolution you receive from discussing the problem with everyone will be more meaningful if you have tried your hands at solving the problem.

## Dedication

University years are an exciting time with many opportunities to figure out what you want to do in the future. Take full advantage of every opportunity available to you, including those at the lab, the Dahdaleh Institute and your respective faculties. This means committing to getting your work done (on time), actively engaging with the resources provided by Dr. Boateng and being a good steward of the time you have available to work on lab-related tasks. It also means showing up for lab events, particularly weekly meetings and presentations being led by fellow lab members.

## Integrity

The knowledge production process is built on trust. We trust our fellow scholars to conduct research as honestly as possible, accounting for all academic and non-academic factors involved to ensure that the results of any research project help to improve the world we live in. This is why academic integrity is taken seriously at the university. Dishonest research is a waste of time and resources. It also contributes to ongoing crises of legitimacy across numerous areas of study. Be honest about your methods and results. Research is not a linear journey, and it is not mandatory to have bombshell results each time you conduct a study. Modest results are still results, and what you don’t know or struggle to find can often lead to new areas of inquiry. Additionally, please remember that your work reflects on your fellow lab members, Dr. Boateng, and York University at large. Research integrity also has consequences for funding and relationships with grant institutions, which are the lifeline of any research group. Be smart, take your time and remember that good and bad work alike have far-reaching consequences!

Please review the [Tips & Guidelines section](https://www.yorku.ca/research/human-participants/) of York’s Office of Research Ethics website as well as the [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans](https://tcps2core.ca/welcome) module (NB: You can take the TCPS course and receive a certificate if you do not have one already). Anyone interested in working on NIH funded research will also have to take the [Citi](https://about.citiprogram.org/course/biomedical-biomed-basic/) module.

Some best practices for research integrity:

1. Avoid using A.I. tools to write, provide code or generate solutions. Tools like Grammarly and other editing/spellcheck software are fine, anything that generates substantive content isn’t. Please do not take shortcuts with this, as journals are increasingly implementing guidelines on AI use, and AI-authored articles are generally not regarded kindly by the academic community.
2. Do not outsource any part of your research project to paid writing services.
3. Do not manipulate results, graphs or charts to represent ‘significant’ results. **Modest results are still results,** and there are no positive outcomes for fabricating results.
4. Document every step of your literature review process, data analysis and discussion.
5. When in doubt, ask! Research integrity can be a byzantine process because it involves the interests of diverse stakeholders. Ask Dr. Boateng, graduate students at the lab or Faculty Fellows at the Institute if you have questions about maintaining scientific integrity. Even the most experienced researchers learn something new about research ethics with every project, and you will be surprised at how insightful a seemingly ‘silly’ question can be.

**Engagement**

Be engaged with your work. As a researcher, you must know what you are doing, why you are doing it and how it will impact your results. It is up to you to glean from the books available, insight from Dr. Boateng and seminars available through the lab. However, gleaning is futile if you are not deeply interested in the “why” of the work. If you come to appreciate the mechanics of the topic, methods and output you engage with, you are more likely to enjoy your work and find success in your academic career.

# Who’s who and what do they do?

## Principal investigator (Dr. Godfred O. Boateng)

1. Conceptualizes and leads research projects
2. Procures funding to support research activity, including hiring, lab purchases, conferences and publication fees
3. Sets and directs research priorities at the lab, including individual research projects
4. Supports career development by highlighting pertinent skills, providing ongoing training, recommending excellent lab members for grant applications, writing reference letters and encouraging conference attendance
5. Provides feedback on paper ideas, manuscripts, manuscripts and grant applications
6. Chairs weekly lab meetings to receive updates and present on research methods, presentations and other relevant topics

## Lab coordinator

1. Support hiring of new lab members, graduate research assistants and postdoctoral fellows
2. Supports new lab members’ onboarding and adjustment to the lab by answering relevant questions, providing resources and communicating expectations
3. Provides administrative support, including scheduling and documenting meetings, liaising with lab stakeholders and ensuring that all outgoing output conforms to lab and funder standards
4. Ensure that lab members are well-supported to complete their tasks by periodically checking in with them
5. Maintains the lab website, One Drive folder, Outlook inbox and attends to emails

## Postdoctoral fellows and research associates

1. Assist with completion of ethics application packages for new projects
2. Provide ongoing guidance to undergraduate interns by answering questions about research design and methodology and delegating tasks in consultation with Dr. Boateng
3. Support grant preparation, writing and submission
4. Support project implementation by maintaining contact with research partners, attending project meetings and working with data as and when available
5. Co-lead manuscript development with Dr. Boateng
6. Actively pursue grant opportunities

## Graduate research assistants

1. Conduct qualitative and quantitative research related to field of study
2. Assist with completion of ethics application packages for new projects
3. Identify and attend conferences to showcase research
4. Co-lead manuscript development and writing with Dr. Boateng

## Undergraduate interns

1. Conduct research using qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods approaches
2. Assist with data cleaning, data input and interview transcription
3. Provide support to graduate research assistants and postdoctoral fellows as requested, in consultation with Dr. Boateng
4. Attend regular lab meetings to provide updates to the Principal Investigator and lab coordinator
5. Present at internal and international conferences to showcase research
6. Develop manuscripts for publication

# Expectations

## What is expected of you?

1. Completion of onboarding procedures prior to joining the lab
2. Regular attendance at weekly lab meetings (online or at the Dahdaleh Institute’s boardroom)
3. Establishing and attending regular one-on-one meetings with Dr. Boateng, with timely updates on your work
4. Maintaining regular communication with Dr. Boateng and the lab coordinator
5. Cleanliness and good stewardship of the lab and Institute spaces (e.g., taking out the trash in the lab, tidying up after oneself after using the kitchen space at the Dahdaleh Institute, turning off all lights at the end of the workday, checking out library books)
6. Careful adherence to safety protocols at the lab and with digital assets
7. A self-starter attitude and proactive approach to work

## What can you expect from working at the lab?

1. On-campus workspace located at the Dahdaleh Institute stocked with books, two desktop computers and seating (with overflow seating available outside the lab)
2. Private office space on the 5th floor of the Dahdaleh Institute (postdocs and research associates)
3. Access to the Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health Research
4. Opportunity to gain research expertise at the local and global level through conference presentations and manuscript development
5. Regular, dedicated support for your academic growth from Dr. Boateng
6. Exposure to academic and career opportunities available at York, within and outside Canada
7. Academic enrichment activities, including workshops and seminars hosted by the Dahdaleh Institute
8. Access to a vast resource bank hosted on OneDrive
9. Learning and networking opportunities by working with Dr. Boateng on multi-partner projects

# New undergraduate interns

## Onboarding

Welcome to the lab! Please follow these steps **before** starting your research project.

1. Have a preliminary meeting with Dr. Boateng to discuss your academic and career goals, ongoing research project and best fit in terms of proposed output.
2. Read and sign the Volunteer Letter of Understanding. Save with the following naming convention: **LastName\_Letter of Understanding\_Year**.
3. Read, fill out and sign the GEHLab Onboarding Package.
4. Complete all outstanding tasks, including the Scientific Skills Assessment.
5. Upload ALL documents to your folder on OneDrive following the recommended naming conventions.
6. Provide a high-resolution JPG photo of yourself and a short bio for the lab website.
7. Familiarize yourself with the Dahdaleh Institute and the lab’s physical location, as we regularly host events there.
8. Watch [this video](https://youtu.be/nZ9kfmpBtHE?si=bkqVITCmcgdvHYBC) on using Boolean operators to kickstart your literature review process.

# Lab logistics

## Working hours and spaces

Typically, interns work on lab-related tasks for 5-10 hours a week given that everyone starts as a volunteer (except lab members hired as postdoctoral fellows, graduate research assistants on contracts with stipulated working hours). Volunteers are not mandated to work these hours in the lab space but are expected to make consistent progress on their work regardless of location. However, in-office work is expected where stipulated (particularly for students on Undergraduate Research Student Research Awards and other funded positions). In such cases, work-from-home arrangements can be discussed with Dr. Boateng pending satisfactory performance.

The lab space at the Dahdaleh Institute is available for those interested in working on lab-related tasks on campus during the Institute’s opening hours. and lab meetings will be held at the Dahdaleh Institute’s boardroom. Please note that the Dahdaleh Institute is reserved for institute- and lab-related activities only. Use the space with discretion, making sure to familiarize yourself with staff, fellows and faculty at the Institute. For security purposes, please do not bring individuals who are not affiliated with the lab or Institute without informing the Institute Coordinator (Theresa Dinh) ahead of time. You are also welcome to use the private spaces available at the Institute, which can be booked [here](https://www.yorku.ca/dighr/access/).

There is another research group connected to the Dahdaleh Institute called the Global Strategy Lab. Please inquire from the Institute Coordinator before using spaces at the Global Strategy Lab and respect the space if you do work there.

The Dahdaleh Institute hosts seminars, events and workshops that all lab members are encouraged to attend. These events are a great opportunity to network, learn about the exciting work that Faculty Fellows are engaged in and develop your research interest.

## Lab meetings

Lab meetings will be held weekly at the Dahdaleh Institute boardroom or via Zoom (location will be communicated weekly). Please attend these meetings to provide updates on your research, learn about the work your fellow lab members are doing and to hear presentations on research from Dr. Boateng.

## A note on showing up

Working at the lab requires a significant time commitment. Please maintain an ongoing working relationship with the lab by working consistently on your tasks and regularly attending meetings. Additionally, please inform Dr. Boateng if there are any extenuating circumstances that may impact your ability to complete your research at a good pace. Life happens and research can wait when there are bigger issues at hand; please communicate where possible (only share details if you are comfortable doing so) and we will happily accommodate you. Additionally, please approach Dr. Boateng and the lab coordinator if you feel that your experience at the lab is not meeting your needs.

Please inform Dr. Boateng and the lab coordinator ahead of time if you cannot make it to a weekly meeting and provide updates on your work via email. If you are absent for **four consecutive meetings in a semester** without informing Dr. Boateng and the lab coordinator, it will be assumed that you are no longer affiliated with the lab. As such, your profile will be removed from the website. Please note that active affiliation with the lab is also required for access to the Dahdaleh Institute.

## Contacting Dr. Boateng

Dr. Boateng is accessible via email (gboaten@yorku.ca) and is also available for in-person meetings if you are on campus. Come say hi! Please send all your inquiries well ahead of time, especially during the fall and winter semesters, making sure to copy the lab coordinator. If you would like to meet Dr. Boateng for feedback on manuscripts, please send your manuscripts at least a week ahead of your proposed meeting date so that he has time to review the content. In the spirit of making good use of time, please have a clear agenda for one-on-one meetings, be punctual and come prepared.

Please send all meeting requests to the lab coordinator and respond to Google Calendar invites ahead of time. All online meetings will be accessible via Zoom meetings (links are included in your meeting invites). Please do not make recordings of lab meetings without informing everyone present, and use said recordings with discretion.

## Attire

Wear what you are comfortable in. We do not run a wet lab, so you do not need to wear lab clothes if you are working on campus. For conference presentations and seminars, please find a business casual outfit formula. Suggestions include a smart blazer/sport coat, button-down shirts, long- or short-sleeved blouses/dress shirts, closed-toe shoes and dress pants (slim or wide leg depending on your preference).

# Research logistics

## Publicity

Good work that remains hidden is no work at all. In academia, strategic publicity is important. We are responsible for demonstrating that research funds are being used efficiently – it’s the only way we get more ☺. Crucially, spreading the word about the work you do is central to building your profile, making an impact and positioning yourself for awards and prestigious positions.

We have a [lab website](https://www.gehlab.com/) and a [Twitter page](https://x.com/GEHLABweb), both managed by the research coordinator. Research updates will also be shared on the Dahdaleh Institute’s [weekly newsletter](https://www.yorku.ca/dighr/newsletter/), [website](https://www.yorku.ca/dighr/news/) and [Twitter page](https://x.com/DIGHR_YorkU). If you are not comfortable with your photo being shared on these platforms, please inform Dr. Boateng and the lab coordinator. Please be digitally savvy when posting online using the lab’s visual identity, and remember that you are representing yourself, GEHLab, the Dahdaleh Institute and York University when you post.

For interns and lab staff hired with funding from the Tri-council agencies (SSHRC, CIHR and NSERC) or some other institutional funding, please consult the respective funding agencies on how to use their brand identities to share the work you are doing. Here are some guidelines from CIHR and SSHRC:

* [Acknowledging CIHR support and promoting your research](https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/30789.html)
* [Acknowledging SSHRC support](https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/using-utiliser/acknowledge-mention/index-eng.aspx)

## Funded opportunities at the lab

Every year, there is some funding available to support interns who have shown significant progress with their research and would like to continue working at the lab. Some of these opportunities include:

* [Undergraduate Student Research Awards](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/UG-PC/USRA-BRPC_eng.asp) (prestigious as they are funded by SSHRC, CIHR and NSERC)
* [Research at York positions](https://www.yorku.ca/dighr/category/ray/) supervised by Dr. Boateng (postings are typically released in April and July)
* Canada Research Chair Program
* Other York-wide funding opportunities
* Provisions for research assistantships from funding procured by Dr. Boateng

Funded opportunities require a greater sense of purpose, dedication and commitment as you are accountable to Dr. Boateng and external funders, particularly for the Undergraduate Student Research Awards where awardees must present at a conference in August at the end of their tenure. If you do well, current future students benefit as you contribute to building a good reputation for the lab across the Dahdaleh Institute, the Faculty of Health and the university at large. Good work begets good funding, and good funding facilitates better training.

If you would like to target any of these positions to build your experience and resume, please express interest with Dr. Boateng ahead of application deadlines and **maintain good progress on your work while volunteering**.

## Presentations

This is the fun part! After you complete your data analysis and have finalized the results with Dr. Boateng, start thinking about where you will present your work. Presentations are a great way to share your work with the world, an important aspect of the research process. Sharing your research allows other scholars to learn about new additions to the evidence on the topic you are working on and gives you an opportunity to defend your ideas. Peer review does not only occur when you submit a paper; it is the very foundation on which the entire research dissemination process is built. By engaging with other students, senior scholars and practitioners, you will get a better sense of what you did well in your study, the relevance of your findings to real-world issues and how you can improve as a researcher. You also represent the lab at presentations, demonstrating that you can work within a group and have institutional support at a reputable academic institution. This is invaluable for grad school applications, research opportunities and any career pathway you choose to pursue.

Here is a list of some opportunities to present your work:

1. [Conference for Undergraduate Health Research](https://www.uhre.ca/cuhr-2024) (undergraduate interns)
2. [Dahdaleh Institute Global Health Intern Symposium](https://www.yorku.ca/dighr/events/6th-summer-global-health-intern-symposium/) (undergraduate interns)
3. Various Canada-wide and international conferences (all lab members)

Conferences feature oral and poster presentations. An oral presentation is the standard lecture-type presentation, whereas a poster means that you will prepare and print a poster and stand beside it for a set duration to present your findings and answer questions from conference attendees. Conference abstracts, particularly those for meetings held by academic associations, are typically requested six months to a year in advance. This means that for a conference held in 2025, abstracts are requested in 2024. For posters, we cannot control printing times. Conference season runs anywhere between late April/early May and August, meaning that the university’s printing service (which is the most cost-effective avenue for printing) may be overwhelmed as researchers across the university put in requests for conference materials.

We are highlighting these timelines to emphasize the importance of working at a good pace if you intend to present at a conference with support from the lab. Please consult Dr. Boateng on conference opportunities, bring up any opportunities you think will be a good fit and **plan well.**

Funding is available for conference presentations outside the university based on the number of proposals at the lab each year, the quality of your output and grant mechanisms available to Dr. Boateng. [York International](https://yorkinternational.yorku.ca/outgoing-global-learning-funds/) (all degree-seeking students) also has some funding available for students interested in attending conferences, as do the York University Graduate Students’ Association [(Conference Support Fund)](https://www.yugsa.ca/funding#Conference%20Support%20Fund) and the [Academic Excellence Fund](https://www.yorku.ca/gradstudies/students/current-students/awards-and-scholarships/other-funding-sources/academic-excellence-fund/) (York University graduate students only).

### Practice and conference material formatting

Be prepared to practise your presentation at lab meetings well ahead of the conference date. Perfect practice makes perfect. This will help you iron out issues with formatting, content and presentation style, which is especially helpful if you will be presenting for the first time. Templates for abstracts, posters and presentations will be provided by the conference organizers. Please follow abstract and poster guidelines closely. For presentation slides, we use the Dahdaleh Institute’s slide deck template for all internal and external presentations to ensure a consistent visual identity. All presentation materials are in the **Intern Work** folder, located in the subfolder named **Materials for conference presentations**. This folder contains the Dahdaleh slide deck template and all relevant lab and funder logos. To get a sense of the posters that have been presented by lab members so far, visit the [Poster Showcase section](https://www.gehlab.com/poster-showcase) of the lab website.

### Procedures for Conference Funding Management

Please keep the following in mind if you receive funding from Dr. Boateng’s research funds and/or the Dahdaleh Institute to attend a conference:

1. Please document all your expenditure by creating a folder in OneDrive with the name of the conference.
2. Discuss expenses that are eligible for reimbursement with Dr. Boateng/the Financial Assistant at the Dahdaleh Institute **before** paying for anything.
3. Ensure that you receive written confirmation from Dr. Boateng and the Dahdaleh Institute about eligible expenses.
4. Discuss accommodation with Dr. Boateng, especially if you will be going in a group.
5. Ensure that you have a functional Visa or Mastercard credit or debit card before travelling, and please inform Dr. Boateng if you need assistance with payment methods.
6. Upload receipts for all eligible expenses to OneDrive as soon as you arrive from the conference.
7. York uses Concur for reimbursement. Consult the [Concur guide](https://www.yorku.ca/finance/wp-content/uploads/sites/76/2019/09/Guide_to_Claim_Personal_Reimbursement_for_GSs_RAs_Res_Assocs_Post_DocsWP.pdf) to learn how to use the platform, and confirm with the relevant approver once you have submitted your claim. Submit your claims as soon as you arrive from the conference (claims cannot be submitted before the conference is over).

If you receive other grants to attend a conference, please bear in mind any requirements for reimbursement and reporting.

## Authorship

Since the goal is to see interns succeed as researchers, one of the benefits of carrying out independent research is being listed as an author on your paper. The order of names on a publication is important. The first author (first name on the list) typically corresponds to whoever contributed the most effort to the conception and completion of the paper, while the last author is typically the senior researcher/principal investigator. Dr. Boateng will be listed as the senior author on all published papers authored by lab interns. Lab interns will be listed as first authors on their respective manuscripts, with co-first authorships where two lab members/other lab staff contribute significantly to conceptualizing and completing the manuscript.

We follow the [International Committee of Medical Journal Editors criteria for authorship](https://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html), which include:

* “Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
* Drafting the work or reviewing it critically for important intellectual content; AND
* Final approval of the version to be published; AND
* Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.”

All those listed as authors should meet all the criteria outlined above. Authorship will be discussed at onboarding. This is a good practice to adopt as you grow as a researcher and build new partnerships. If you do not complete a project before leaving the lab, whoever takes on the manuscript will be (co-)first author depending on the amount of work required for completion.

## Useful online profiles

Please create the following profiles to facilitate manuscript submission and grant reporting. You can open these accounts with your York University email address, but please be mindful of retaining access as York deprecates student accounts six months after graduation.

* [Google Scholar profile](https://scholar.google.ca/intl/en/scholar/citations.html): This is essential for building your research history, as many people engage with research via Google Scholar. You will need to verify your institutional affiliation at York, but please remember to link your account to your personal Gmail address so that you do not lose access if you decide to pursue graduate education elsewhere.
* [ResearchGate profile](https://help.researchgate.net/hc/en-us/articles/14292598334993-Signing-up-for-ResearchGate): This also helps to build your profile as a researcher. Please add the lab to your profile.
* [ORCID profile](https://orcid.org/): ORCID is like a unique code number for everyone who conducts research. It helps people identify your work and is requested by countless journals when you submit a manuscript. Additionally, ORCID allows you to access [Proposal Central](https://proposalcentral.com/default.asp), to apply for grants and awards.
* [eRA Commons profile](https://www.era.nih.gov/register-accounts/manage-personal-profile.htm): Useful for NIH awards and US-based grant reporting

## Books at the lab

The lab has a growing library with books on organizational and presentation skills, history and current affairs in global health and global health theories and methodologies. We also have digital resources available on OneDrive to guide you in developing your research. Please take full advantage of these books as they have been purchased for your use. Please sign out all books using the GEHLab Library Form provided, and make sure to use and return them within a reasonable period so that other lab members can also use them.

Please do not sign out books for individuals who are not affiliated with the lab, and please return all signed out books latest by the midway point of each semester if checkout early in a semester, or by end of semester if checked out during the latter part of a semester.

# Data management

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| --- |
| **GEHLAB software and purpose** |
| OneDrive | Cloud storage for lab resources, completed manuscripts and datasets |
| Zotero | Reference management software |
| DeepL | Translation software |
| Zoom | Virtual meetings  |
| STATA | Quantitative data analysis |
| MAXQDA  | Qualitative data analysis (also supports mixed methods research) |

## OneDrive

The lab uses OneDrive to store and manage digital assets. All York University students have access to OneDrive through their institutional email addresses. Here are some best practices for managing data at the lab:

1. Ensure that you have a personal folder in Intern Work and save all your work there. Develop the habit of saving your work in **three places**, being “cold storage” (such as a USB stick or hard drive), the cloud (Google Drive, iCloud, OneDrive etc) and your computer. Turn on AutoSave in Microsoft Office so that you do not lose your work and ensure that all your files are labelled with the right extensions (i.e., .pdf for PDF files, .docx for Word documents and so on).
2. When saving files, use the following naming convention: **Version [insert version number] \_Name of output and topic\_Your name**. To save the second version of a literature review, for instance, this would look like:
	1. Version 2\_Critical literature review Air pollution and respiratory illness\_Jane Smith
3. When copying datasets, please do not cut and paste files into your folder. Instead, use the “Copy to” function to create a duplicate, so that the main file remains in a central location for all to use. Please make sure you are working with the right dataset when you begin your analysis and save your files to OneDrive regularly. Additionally, please add version numbers to your STATA files for clarity.
4. After conference presentations, poster sessions and other knowledge dissemination events, please upload your final presentation to your folder on OneDrive.
5. All the resources available on OneDrive are strictly confidential, as most of them are Dr. Boateng’s intellectual property. Please do not share the contents of any folder with anyone outside the lab without express permission.

## Zotero

Zotero is a reference management software. It will quickly become your best friend when you are writing your paper. Best practices for Zotero:

1. Please create a Zotero account using your YorkU email address and create a group folder with your topic title. Share this with Dr. Boateng’s Gmail address (available on request).
2. Keep all the literature you read and reference in this folder.
3. Ensure that you have the Zotero plugin for your browser and Microsoft Word. For efficiency, it is better to work in Microsoft Word than Google Docs as Zotero works more seamlessly in the former. The browser plugin looks like the following:



This is the Zotero plugin for Safari (located on the right-hand side of the search bar in Chrome). A blue icon indicates that it is functional, and you can save the page/document you are viewing to your Zotero account. If the icon is greyed out, Zotero is not functional.

1. The following GIF shows how to save a file to Zotero. Here, you can also see that the plugin for Chrome is on the right-hand side of the search bar and will be white/blue if functional. To save, click on the plugin and ensure that the file is being saved to the right folder (you can change the file destination using the arrows by the “Saving to” bar). As the Zotero window shows, the file automatically loads when you perform the Save function.



1. Please make sure you are using Zotero for your in-text citations and bibliography This is important because it helps you to systematically record what you have referenced and makes your life easier when you are formatting your manuscript. It also helps if your paper needs to be submitted to journals with different citation styles. It is neither fun nor efficient to manually edit in-text citations and bibliographies for each journal you submit to!
2. Refer to [York University’s SPARK Zotero](https://researchguides.library.yorku.ca/zotero) guide and [Zotero’s documentation](https://www.zotero.org/support/) for more details on creating an account, sharing a group folder and using Zotero to make your research easier.

## DeepL

You may need to translate documents given the cross-cultural nature of Dr. Boateng’s research, although data are usually translated and verified by our international collaborators before they are made accessible for analysis. DeepL is far more accurate than Google Translate and is the lab’s preferred translation software. Please inform Dr. Boateng and the lab coordinator if you need to use it for lab-related tasks.

## An important note on the lab computers

**PLEASE LOG OUT** after using the desktop computers in the lab. If not, the computers stop working eventually and we will need to call IT to fix them. Logging out takes two clicks and will save us and IT the trouble by ensuring that the computers are operational when we need them.

Internet access can be spotty on the computers due to where they are located. The network adapters were changed in early 2024 so the Internet works well for the time being. If you notice any connectivity issues on the desktop computers even when the Wi-Fi on your devices and on other devices at the Institute works, please notify the lab coordinator and Administrative Assistant at the Institute.

If you need cables, adapters and other computer equipment, please ask the Administrative Assistant at the Institute or the lab coordinator. Please do not take equipment from the Dahdaleh storeroom without asking, and please make sure you return items obtained from the office after use.

# Data analysis software

We use STATA and MAXQDA for quantitative and qualitative data analysis respectively. They are available on both desktop computers at the lab. You may also purchase the software for personal use if you are able to do so. The **Resources** folder has numerous files on how to use the software, some of which are highlighted below:

## STATA resources

1. [STATA Crash Course: Data management](https://friosavila.github.io/chatgpt/stata_08_02_2024/): Covers basic data operations and tools for working in STATA
2. [UCLA STATA Learning Modules](https://stats.oarc.ucla.edu/stata/modules/): A full resource that covers basic to intermediate STATA guidelines
3. [Resources for Learning STATA](https://www.stata.com/links/resources-for-learning-stata/): A resource from STATA comprising resources from across the web
4. [Zip file] [Embrace the Do file: STATA basics](https://tufts.app.box.com/v/IntroStata)
5. [YouTube video] [STATA for Beginners Course](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gdnDkjoPJTM)
6. [PDF] [Getting Started in Data Analysis Using Stata](https://www.princeton.edu/~otorres/StataTutorial.pdf) by Oscar Torres Reyna (Princeton)
7. [PDF] [Linear Regression Using STATA](https://www.princeton.edu/~otorres/Regression101.pdf) by Oscar Torres-Reyna (Princeton)
8. [PDF] [Linear Regression: An Introduction](https://princeton-introml.github.io/files/ch1.pdf)

## MAXQDA resources

1. [MAXQDA 24 Manual](https://www.maxqda.com/help-mx24/welcome)
2. [MAXQDA Academy](https://www.maxqda.com/maxqda-training)
3. [YouTube playlist] [Worked examples of qualitative data analysis in MAXQDA](https://youtu.be/A7ff1DZ0xM0?si=CvcbkeYLfCyc5PKZ)
4. [YouTube playlist] [Mixed Methods with MAXQDA](https://youtu.be/1RaFJezKH5Q?si=4xozu4GKVFw6QT67)
5. [Coding (MAXQDA)](https://study.sagepub.com/using-software-in-qualitative-research/student-resources/step-by-step-software-guides/maxqda-11-6), from *Using Software in Qualitative Research: A Step-by-step Guide*

# Recommendation letters

Dr. Boateng is happy to provide recommendation letters to support applications for graduate school, job opportunities and grants, provided you have worked consistently at the lab for at least four months. This stipulation is for everyone’s sake, as nobody can write a meaningful letter for you if they have not known you for an extended period nor seen how you work. This means you should plan well, maintain progress on your research and show that you are growing as an intern and student.

Please inform Dr. Boateng as soon as possible if you plan on requesting a letter, **preferably no less than a month before the deadline**. For grant and faculty position applications, please provide your materials **no later than two months ahead of the deadline**. This is not always possible as you may see a position you are interested in days or weeks before the deadline. In that case, please forward your materials as soon as possible. Dr. Boateng is also happy to support you on an ongoing basis once you decide to target grants, postdoctoral fellowships and faculty positions. Please inform him when you start your search for assistance with finding positions, drafting documents, and tailoring your materials for each position/award.

Please follow the template provided in OneDrive to draft a copy of your recommendation letter, highlighting key achievements and important milestones in your academic journey. This will be reviewed by Dr. Boateng for submission.

## Details required for recommendation letters

ALL requests should include:

1. An updated CV
2. A copy of your transcript/description of relevant courses taken or skills developed
3. Deadlines
4. **For graduate school applications:** A Word document detailing ALL the programs for which you will need a reference, submission guidelines, details about the programs you are applying to and relevant deadlines
5. **For grants/awards:** draft copies of your application materials, a note detailing ALL the forms/documents that Dr. Boateng will need to complete and relevant deadlines
6. **For faculty positions:** draft copies of your application materials, particularly your research and teaching statements and deadlines

# Offboarding procedures

We are sad to see you go! To make your exit process smooth, please complete the following and check each item off the list once completed:

[ ]  Discuss any outstanding work with Dr. Boateng, including plans to finish manuscripts, abstracts and other output after you have left the lab.

[ ]  Return all lab equipment, making sure to delete personal information and non-lab related data from the computers.

[ ]  Upload all your research files to OneDrive (ensuring that they are properly named) and discuss making copies of files that you might find useful with Dr. Boateng.

[ ]  Clear out workspace and return keys to Dr. Boateng (postdoctoral fellow).

[ ]  Provide your ORCID and new contact information for manuscript submissions (preferably institutional details for those continuing to graduate school outside York).

# Appendix

## Important contacts

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Person** | **Role** | **Contact details** |
| Dr. Godfred Boateng | Lab Director, Global and Environmental Health Lab | gboaten@yorku.ca |
| Theresa Dinh | Coordinator, Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health Research | thedinh@yorku.ca |
| Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health Research | Administrative Assistant (for general inquiries related to the Institute only) | dighr@yorku.ca |
| Global and Environmental Health Lab | Lab email address | gehlab@yorku.ca |
| Nicole Wilson | Administrative Assistant, School of Global Health (for SGH-related inquiries only) | nwils@yorku.ca |

## Important places

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Place** | **Room number** |
| Global and Environmental Health lab space | Suite 2150, Victor Philip Dahdaleh Building (located inside Dahdaleh Institute) |
| Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health Research | Suite 2150, Victor Philip Dahdaleh Building |
| Dr. Boateng’s office  | Suite 5022J, Victor Philip Dahdaleh Building |