

**From: “Your career does not develop here”, to: “We love our jobs though it’s too much paperworks”.
Developing local research management and administration in an international research unit.**

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Oxford University Clinical Research Unit (OUCRU) conducts clinical and non-clinical infectious disease focused research in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi in Vietnam. OUCRU also manages the research and grant-related activities of its sister units – EOUCRU in Jakarta, Indonesia and OUCRU-Nepal in Kathmandu. OUCRU is a Wellcome Center, as one of the five Wellcome-Trust funded Africa and Asia Programmes, three of which (including OUCRU) are administered by the University of Oxford in the UK.

OUCRU was established in 1991, but didn’t get a local grants manager until Katrina Lawson started in 2011. In this talk, Katrina will share her experience setting up a locally embedded research management service at OUCRU. This has included systematizing some general research management functions for the unit, as well as developing creative solutions for specific local problems. In research management, one size does not fit all, and this is particularly the case in a developing country context.

100 percent of the research projects conducted at OUCRU involve collaboration, and most involve international collaboration. The research management challenges (and opportunities!) reflect that collaborative environment. There are always conflicting priorities: for the funders, for the host institutions, for the collaborators, for the investigators and for the research itself. Working in a developing country context, there is less institutional knowledge than you might find in other countries. Working in the international environment, there is greater exposure to a vast range of funders and funding schemes, and a vast range of expectations and standards to comply with. Therefore OUCRU makes special efforts to focus on capacity building around research administration - for admin staff, for the researchers and also for our local collaborators. As the capacity has grown, these efforts are now beginning to stretch beyond basic administration to wider areas such as research communications, policy influencing and regional networking.