



DrPH Doctoral Project Manual

Class of 2025

Guidelines and Procedures for DrPH Degree Candidates and Committee Members

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The DrPH Program has tailored this handbook with specific guidelines for the DrPH graduating class of 2025. It is subject to change.

Part I: An Overview

The Harvard DrPH degree program integrates foundational knowledge of public health theories and methods with the competencies of leadership, management, communication, and innovation necessary for bringing about significant change. As a practice-oriented degree, the program's goal is to prepare future public health leaders for high-level roles in the fields of public health and healthcare, enabling them to translate knowledge into action as they address complex problems.

The Doctoral Project

The DrPH Doctoral Project serves as the integrated learning experience (ILE) for the program, as well as the culminating experience of the Harvard DrPH Program and the primary locus of the knowledge translation elements of the degree. The Doctoral Project provides an opportunity for the DrPH degree candidate to practice and develop leadership skills while engaging in a project that contributes substantively to public health or healthcare.

A typical project is built around a student and host organization relationship, although more independent work may be appropriate in some cases. Through an 8- to 10-month field-based experience,¹ DrPH degree candidates engage in a partnership with an organization on a public health or healthcare-related project or work on an independent project of their own design to apply their advanced training from the first two years of the program.

The Doctoral Project Deliverables

The final products of the Doctoral Project include a Doctoral Thesis, a Reflection Report on Leadership and Enabling Change, and other deliverables. The Doctoral Thesis is a substantive piece of written work that documents the background, justification, and results of the project work. The Reflection Report is an opportunity for doctoral candidates to reflect on their personal leadership growth and development during the program. The other deliverables category includes additional written work resulting from the project that may not be in the usual academic format, including, for example, reports or presentations for the host organization.

The Doctoral Project Committee

The candidate's Doctoral Project Committee guides the Doctoral Project. The committee assists the student in preparing the project proposal, supports the candidate during the project, and examines the candidate on the project deliverables. The committee consists of three members: a Committee Chair who is a faculty member at the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health; a second member who also a faculty member at the School; and a third member who may be either a faculty member (including adjunct faculty) or a professional in public health. No member of the committee can be an employee of the host organization.

Milestones and Timetable Acknowledgment

Students will follow a specific series of steps and milestones beginning in the second year of the program that help to ensure that they are making satisfactory progress toward their deliverables and graduation, are getting adequate support, and will be able to complete all degree requirements for a May Commencement in the program's third year. Key milestones include nominating a committee, submitting a final program of

¹ The project may extend beyond this time by mutual agreement between the student, the host organization, and the program.

coursework, developing a project proposal, passing an oral qualifying examination, submitting progress reports, completing the Doctoral Thesis, the Reflection Report, and the DrPH Oral Final Examination.

Part II: The Doctoral Project

Throughout the Doctoral Project, students will develop, apply, and integrate competencies in foundational academics, enabling change, personal leadership, and knowledge translation. The project should make a significant contribution to the field of public health or healthcare. The project's impact may be achieved by directly improving outcomes in population health or in organizations, or through the creation of significant innovations that can effect such change. Examples include the establishment, implementation, or evaluation of a public health initiative; managing and enhancing existing efforts; engagement in developing the strategy of an organization or policy initiative; or development of an innovative product or service. The project will also help develop the degree candidate's leadership capabilities and their ability to facilitate change.

The Doctoral Project Committee plays a crucial role in the development of the project, supervision of the student's progress, and final assessment of the project's sufficiency for awarding of the degree. This manual broadly defines the scope and criteria for the Doctoral Project. But the evaluation of the project work will ultimately rest with the committee through a process of committee review and assessment, and an oral final examination.

Throughout the Doctoral Project, the student will be in close contact with his/her/their Doctoral Project Committee for feedback, discussion, and evaluation. The student will also provide all deliverables to the committee. Students may consult with the DrPH Faculty Director in coordination with the Doctoral Project Committee chair.

To develop a successful Doctoral Project, students should follow a set of linked steps aligned with the administrative timetable outlined later in this Manual. The order of these steps is not fixed and may differ for different students and projects as students and committee members iterate toward a final project. For example, students need to:

Table 1: Recommended steps to develop a successful Doctoral Project

| | |
|----------|--|
| A | Identify a public health issue, problem, or concern as well as personal leadership goals on which to focus, as well as fulfilling the competencies of the program. The specific focus of the project should fit within a larger complex public health issue. |
| B | Engage with a Harvard Chan faculty member who agrees to chair the Project Committee and other potential committee members according to the program guidelines. |
| C | Seek out and engage with a host organization with which the student will work, except in conditions where the Project Committee may approve independent work. |
| D | Identify means for funding the third-year project experience, including travel, housing, and living stipend (if applicable). |
| E | Develop deliverables, role, and scope of work with the host organization or stakeholders. |
| F | Develop an entry plan with the host organization supervisor and doctoral committee members. |

Part III: Deliverables from the Doctoral Project: the Doctoral Thesis, Reflection Report on Leadership and Enabling Change, and Other Deliverables

The Doctoral Thesis

The Doctoral Thesis is the primary academic product of the project. It reflects the competencies that the student has developed through doctoral coursework, field immersions, and the enabling change curriculum that are core pieces of the degree program.

The thesis itself is a descriptive, analytic, and reflective account of the student's leadership contributions to a strategic project within a host organization, or in an independent project. It is a demonstration of the student's ability to engage others, develop a strategy to successfully diagnose and address challenges, work toward a vision and goals, and learn from the results. The thesis should position the student's specific project within a broader complex public health context and include a review of relevant public health and related literature.

The DrPH Program's pedagogical origins and goals differ from those of a traditional PhD, SD, or DPH program. Traditional doctoral programs prepare students for a career in original research and academics, and the final written products of the degree are typically three articles prepared for peer-reviewed journals. Because the DrPH Program is practice-oriented, the final thesis presents the results of the student's final project in which they tackled a complex public health issue and focused on translating knowledge into action and enabling and facilitating change.

The Doctoral Thesis should be a **60- to 90-page double-spaced** document prepared using standard doctoral thesis formatting. The Doctoral Thesis will be submitted to and retained in the Harvard University Archives.

The Main Components of the Thesis

The main components of the Doctoral Thesis are described below with suggested page lengths. Every project and thesis is unique, so there is some flexibility to the structure and content of the thesis; the degree candidate should discuss the specific details of their thesis with their committee. Also, the page length guidelines are recommendations only. The actual length of written deliverables for the Doctoral Project should be appropriate to the content.

I. **Thesis Title Page**

See Appendix C for formatting guidelines.

II. **Abstract** (suggested page range: 1 – 2 pages)

The abstract provides a summary of the public health issue and the specific project undertaken by the student and why it is important, the results/findings, and critical lessons learned.

III. **Table of Contents**

IV. **List of Figures or Tables**

V. **Acknowledgments (optional)**

A section where the student acknowledges and thanks those who have helped support them in their project and degree program.

VI. **Introduction** (suggested page range: 4 - 5 pages)
The introduction provides an overview of the broad public health issue that will be the focus of the project and describes the specific project and its goals. It also gives a brief overview of the thesis contents.

VII. **Background, Literature Review and Framework for Change** (suggested page range: 15 - 25 pages)
This section provides a more in-depth discussion of the broad public health problem that motivated the project work, a review of relevant literature, a description of a framework for change that the student utilized during the project, and a detailed description of the project itself.

The purpose of the literature review – which should include public health and related literature – is to explore and substantiate existing knowledge of the problem, and to provide a context for the project. The framework for change provides a theory or approach that the student uses to help analyze, understand, and address the problem, and to design an approach to improvement and change.

The literature review and framework for change should provide the underpinning for a discussion of the project in explicit detail, including a description of the design, project goals, and expected strategy.

VIII. **Methods and Analyses** (suggested page range: 15 – 20 pages)
This section should present a description of the qualitative and/or quantitative methods and approach used to explore the problem, generate data and insights, and identify options for intervention. This section should also present significant findings from these analyses.

IX. **Results** (suggested page range: 20 - 30 pages)
The results section focuses on the outcomes of the project. It presents a narrative discussion of what transpired during the project, including the degree to which the student achieved the stated goals and objectives. Not every project must be successful or achieve its goals; a project that did not meet its goals might yield important results for both the degree candidate and host organization. For example, in a situation where a student does not have sufficient time to fully achieve the project goals, the results section will focus more on the process and related learnings than on outcomes.

In presenting results, students should reconsider the framework for change they selected for use in the project, and how useful – or not useful – it was in helping to structure an approach and enable change. The results statement may include a discussion of issues in leadership, management, and organizational behavior that were relevant to the project's outcome, including a description of the organizational context of the project, barriers encountered, and how the barriers were or could be overcome.

The results statement may also discuss what the host organization has learned due to the project, and its implications for the organization's future work. It is important to note, however, that the thesis will be a public document. Other deliverables could also be a vehicle for recommendations to the organization that should not be made formally public.

The Doctoral Project Committee will assist DrPH students in crafting an effective results statement in the thesis. The student should review drafts with the committee before the final oral examination.

- X. **Conclusion** (suggested page range: 5 – 7 pages)
The concluding section broadly reviews the project, key findings, and main analytical takeaways. Rather than repeating previously discussed findings, the student can use the Conclusion to reflect on how the project can contribute to broader learning in public health, and to propose questions and topics for future investigation.
- XI. **Bibliography**
A complete list of formatted, cited material and sources using the [Citation and Styles guide](#).
- XII. **Appendices**
The student can include additional relevant material for the thesis as appendices. When compiling these documents, the student should consult with the Doctoral Project Committee and cite them in the thesis with appropriate references.

Style and Formatting of Doctoral Thesis

It is the degree candidate's responsibility to ensure the Doctoral Thesis meets the Harvard Chan School's doctoral thesis formatting criteria and uses proper citation style. To ensure appropriate style and formatting, please visit the [Registrar's Website](#) for details and follow the directions carefully.

The DrPH Program follows the dissertation/thesis formatting and style listed on the Registrar's Website, except for the **title and signature page**. Please see Appendices C & D for the [Thesis Title](#) and [Signature Page](#) templates. The student should complete all formatting and style work before submitting the Doctoral Thesis for the Oral Final Examination and to Harvard's Electronic Thesis and Dissertation System (ETDs@Harvard).

Submission of the Doctoral Thesis

For a May 2025 commencement, Harvard requires degree candidates to upload the final approved electronic version of their Doctoral Thesis via Harvard's Electronic Thesis and Dissertation system ([ETDs @ ProQuest](#)) no later than **April 2025 at 5:00 PM EDT (TBD)**. Once each member of a degree candidate's Doctoral Project Committee signs the Signature Page for the final *approved* version of the thesis, the student should upload this page along with the thesis to [ETDs @ ProQuest](#) (further details will be provided by the Registrar's Office closer to time of submission). The Signature Page should be signed once each committee member approves the final version of the doctoral thesis. This signing may be at the Oral Final Examination or a later date after the student has completed revisions.

Please remember, there are no exceptions to the submission date and time. If missed, the candidate will not be able to graduate in May 2025.

As of 2015, the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health does not require students to submit hard copies of their thesis or dissertation. For more information on ordering a bound dissertation/thesis, please visit the [Registrar's Office webpage](#).

The Reflection Report on Leadership and Enabling Change

The second written deliverable of the Doctoral Project is the Reflection Report on Leadership and Enabling Change, a 15- to 20-page double-spaced statement about the degree candidate's leadership development journey during the project and throughout the program, as well as insights into effectively enabling change. Students are encouraged to keep a journal throughout their project to help recall progress and challenges and to extract valuable insights on these topics at the conclusion of the project.

The Reflection Report is not required to be retained as part of your thesis submission to the Harvard University Archive. It can be submitted as an Appendix to the thesis if the student desires and the committee agrees but is usually submitted as a separate document.

The degree candidate will discuss their leadership development journey during their Oral Final Examination. **A final copy of the Reflection Report must be submitted to the committee and the DrPH Program for our records 2 weeks after you have passed your OFE.** The DrPH Program will not share your Reflection Paper with anyone outside of the DrPH Program.

The Reflection Report offers the student an opportunity to focus on the personal goals they set for themselves during the program and final project, what they have learned, and how they envision applying their academic work and applied experiences in their future careers as public health leaders. Some questions to consider could be:

1. Review your leadership development goals from the beginning of the program. Were you able to accomplish these? Why or why not? Have you revised your goals for the next phase of your career, and if so, how are these revised goals informed by your doctoral project experience?
2. What challenges did you face during your doctoral project, both at the “balcony” and “dance floor” levels? What did you try that helped you address these challenges? Were there things you tried that were not helpful? How might these experiences shape your leadership practice in the future?
3. What value did the project provide to your understanding of your future roles and growth as a public health leader? Were there things that surprised you about your leadership development growth during the doctoral project?
4. How did the DrPH experience contribute to your understanding and ability to enable change in an organization of your choosing and the broader public health field? Think about your personal qualities as well as aspects of an organization that may impact your ability to be an effective leader.

Other Deliverables

In addition to the Doctoral Thesis and Reflection Report on Leadership and Enabling Change, the degree candidate may be required to produce other deliverables of public health interest. These deliverables will vary by student and can take a variety of forms and media. Before starting the Doctoral Project, these deliverables will not need to be defined as they will be developed during the project with a host organization and in consultation with the committee. Other deliverables may include a program or project evaluation, a results report, or an evaluation plan or policy statement for the host organization. It may also include products in other media such as a blog, new media report, movie, webinar, or website. Other possibilities may include resources for dissemination (toolkit, educational/communication materials, or presentation to a community group) or advocacy products, policy briefs, or presentations to legislative representatives.

Part IV: Doctoral Project Committee

The Doctoral Project Committee is the primary vehicle in the DrPH Program to guide and evaluate DrPH students in their Doctoral Project. The committee should advise and guide the student on the development of the Doctoral Project final proposal and provide guidance and feedback during the experiential learning phase itself with the overall objective of assisting the student to achieve their professional and personal goals as outlined in the project proposal.

Members: Roles and Responsibilities

The Doctoral Project Committee plays a valuable role in the development, satisfactory progress, and evaluation of the Doctoral Project. The committee will consist of three members:

- **Committee Chair:** must be a faculty member (Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Senior Lecturer, Lecturer) holding an appointment at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.
- **Committee Member #2:** must be a faculty member (Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Senior Lecturer, Lecturer) at the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health or elsewhere within Harvard.
- **Committee Member #3:** may be either a faculty member (adjunct faculty included) or a professional in the public health field (with appropriate education and experience to assess work at a doctoral level at Harvard). The committee member **cannot** be employed at the student’s host organization to avoid any conflict of interest. He/she/they must agree to take on the responsibilities of a committee member in writing.

The Committee Chair has special responsibilities on the Doctoral Project Committee and should be the first committee member a degree candidate identifies. The Chair can assist in identifying other committee members. The Committee Chair manages and leads the outlined processes for ensuring the degree candidate's satisfactory progress, including communicating clear expectations about the project deliverables. The Chair should also be the primary point of contact for both the host organization and the student if challenges should arise.

Committee Members Attending Exams Virtually

All committee members must be physically or virtually present for all exams. Students who wish to hold their OQE and/or OFE virtually may do so without submitting a general petition.

Table 2: Roles and Responsibilities of Doctoral Project Committee Members

| Committee Roles and Responsibilities | Committee Chair | Committee Member #2 | Committee Member #3 |
|---|---|--|--|
| <i>Summary of key responsibilities</i> | Serves as the primary point of contact for the student and the DrPH Program; Chairs the Doctoral Project Committee and signs off on all required paperwork. | Contributes to project in area of expertise, and provides feedback and evaluation based on milestones. | Contributes from an organizational perspective and provides feedback and evaluation based on milestones. |
| <i>Availability</i> | Agrees to be Chair of the committee through degree candidate graduation. Must be physically or virtually | Available for consultation on the Project Proposal. Must be physically or virtually present for examinations and Student | Available for consultation on the Project Proposal. Must be physically or virtually present for examinations and Student |

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|-------------------------------|--|--|--|
| | present for examinations and Student Progress Reports, will provide email/phone consultation with degree candidate. Will provide periodic in-person/virtual/email/phone communication. Must commit to being Chair for a minimum of 12 months or until the student graduates. | Progress Reports, will provide email/phone consultation with degree candidate. Must commit to being a committee member for a minimum of 12 months or until the student graduates. | Progress Reports, will provide email/phone consultation with degree candidate. Must commit to being a committee member for a minimum of 12 months or until the student graduates |
| <i>Feedback</i> | Primary individual managing project proposal feedback. Responsible for the timely signature of all project milestone components, prompt review of Doctoral Thesis drafts. | Reviews and offers feedback on areas of expertise for proposal, drafts of thesis, and deliverables. Should provide resources, guidance in areas of expertise, and ask questions for deepening project. | Reviews and offers feedback on leadership development, public health expertise, drafts of thesis, and deliverables. Should provide resources, guidance in areas of expertise, and ask questions for deepening project. |
| <i>Oral Final Examination</i> | Attends and chairs the Oral Final Examination | Attends and participates in the Oral Final Examination. | Attends and participates in the Oral Final Examination. |
| <i>Evaluation</i> | Leads evaluations and signs off on Oral Qualifying Examination and Oral Final Examination for graduation. | Will inform and sign-off on Oral Qualifying Examination and Oral Final Examination evaluations. | Will inform and sign-off on Oral Qualifying Examination and Oral Final Examination evaluations. |

Declaration of the Doctoral Project Committee

Degree candidates may consult their academic advisor, other advisors and mentors, the DrPH Program staff, and possible committee chairs before naming their committee. The identification of the Chair and committee members is the sole responsibility of the student.

To officially declare the members of the Doctoral Project Committee, all DrPH degree candidates must submit a completed *Nomination for Doctoral Project Committee Form* with all required signatures by **May 3, 2024**. The DrPH Program recommends that degree candidates obtain all committee member signatures of commitment before this time. Failing to submit this form by the appropriate date will delay the student's ability to schedule their Oral Qualifying Examination, which may put them at risk for falling behind on their Doctoral Timetable.

Changing Doctoral Project Committee Members

Occasionally, after officially declaring a Doctoral Project Committee, a degree candidate may need to change a committee member. In such cases, the student must petition the Committee Chair and DrPH Faculty Director to make the change by completing a *General Petition* form. The student should carefully consider changing a committee member as it could impact the timing of degree completion.

In Case of Conflict

In the case that conflict or challenges arise, below are guidelines for handling these types of matters.

Student and Host Organizational Conflict

If a student or host organization is experiencing conflict, the student should approach the Committee Chair for advice on resolving the dispute in a timely manner. Should the conflict not be addressed promptly, potentially affecting the Doctoral Project's satisfactory progress, the student should notify the DrPH Assistant Director, who will bring it to the necessary school personnel.

Student and Committee Conflict

If a student or Doctoral Project Committee is experiencing conflict, the student or Chair of the Doctoral Project Committee should approach the Faculty Director of the DrPH Program for guidance in a timely fashion. The parties should discuss appropriate solutions and implement them promptly. Committees whose degree candidates fail to keep satisfactory progress with the doctoral timetable should consult the DrPH Assistant Director and Registrar's Office for immediate guidance.

Part V: Doctoral Milestones, Timetable, and Descriptions

The timetable and milestones help ensure that each degree candidate stays on track to graduate on time. Each milestone ensures accountability and progress toward completion.

The milestones are sequentially related, and a student **may not** proceed to the next milestone without completing the previous one. Should questions or concerns arise, degree candidates should consult their Doctoral Project Committee or the DrPH Assistant Director *before* the deadline to stay on schedule. Students who do not meet the approved doctoral timetable must review their situation with the DrPH Assistant Director. In some cases, the program may need to consult with the Doctoral Student Liaison to the Committee on Admission and Degrees (CAD) in the Registrar's Office to develop a revised timetable.

All milestones requiring submission need a signature by one or multiple parties. The degree candidate *must pay close attention to deadlines* and collect the necessary signatures on time. The DrPH Program will monitor the completion of all deliverables in coordination with the Registrar's Office, which will audit and ensure adequate progress. *Milestones in the **bolded** text have dates that cannot be altered.*

Doctoral Project Milestones & Deliverables Timetable

| Milestone | Timeline | Brief Description | Final Submission |
|---------------------------|--|---|------------------|
| Doctoral Project Planning | September 2023 – April 2024 (Year 2) | In consultation with DrPH Faculty Director, the degree candidate should identify a potential host organization, project, and committee members, and define deliverables and leadership development goals. | |

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| Submit Prospective Program | December 8, 2023 | The Prospective Program should include all course work the student has taken and intends to take for Year 1 and 2. All requisite signatures must be collected. | To Registrar's Office and DrPH Assistant Director (email) |
| Submit Final Program | May 3, 2024 | Submit the Final Program with all requisite information & signatures. | To Registrar's Office and DrPH Assistant Director (email) |
| Submit Nomination for Doctoral Project Committee Form | May 3, 2024 | Submit Nomination for Doctoral Project Committee Form with all required signatures to officially nominate the committee. | To Registrar's Office and DrPH Assistant Director (email) |
| Doctoral Project Proposal | <i>Recommended before end of May 2024</i> | The student shares the Doctoral Project Proposal with the Doctoral Committee and DrPH Program. | Committee Chair; DrPH Assistant Director (email) |
| Submit the Scheduling Form for Oral Qualifying Examination Form | Three weeks before date of Oral Qualifying Examination | The student completes the Oral Qualifying Examination Scheduling Form with all signatures and provides this to the Registrar's Office. <i>The DrPH Program highly recommends that the student schedule the exam as early as possible and submit this scheduling form on time.</i> | To Registrar's Office and DrPH Assistant Director (email) |
| Oral Qualifying Examination | June 2024 | The Oral Qualifying Examination assesses the quality of the student's proposal and readiness to engage in fieldwork. The student may only begin the field phase of their project after passing the oral qualifying examination. The student must ask a committee member to pick up the OQE grading sheet from the Registrar's Office on or before the scheduled OQE. A committee member must return the grading sheet to the Registrar's Office (with all committee signatures) once the OQE is completed. | To Registrar's Office |
| Complete Travel Waiver and Register Travel | Before you leave for your doctoral project | Complete the domestic or international travel waiver. Student registers travel through Harvard's website. | Travel Waiver – DrPH Assistant Director (email) |

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|--|---|--|---|
| Engaged in the project fieldwork phase | July 1, 2024 – February 28, 2025 (Year 3) | Pending a passing mark on the Oral Qualifying Examination, the DrPH degree candidate will be able to begin their 8-month final project at the host organization. | |
| Progress Report | September 20, 2024 | <p>Before the due date, the student sets up a meeting with the Committee members and turn in a Progress Report. Students can meet with their committee virtually. At least two of three committee members should be present for a progress report meeting as required by the Registrar's Office.</p> <p>Within a week after the meeting, the student should have all committee members sign-off on the progress report before submitting it to the Registrar's Office.</p> <p>This date is the date the progress report is to be submitted to the Registrar's Office, not the day you should hold your progress report meeting. Please plan accordingly.</p> | To Registrar's Office and DrPH Assistant Director (email) |
| Progress Report | December 13, 2024 | Requirements are the same as for the first progress report. | To Registrar's Office; DrPH Assistant Director (Email) |
| Progress Report | February 21, 2025 | Requirements are the same as for the first progress report. | To Registrar's Office; DrPH Assistant Director (Email) |
| Students Work on Written Deliverables | March 1 – April 11, 2025 | After the 8-month Doctoral Project, degree candidates may return to campus to work on their deliverables and prepare for their Oral Final Examination. | |
| Submit Oral Final Examination Scheduling Form | A minimum of 3 weeks before the Oral Final Examination (Year 3) | This form is due at least three weeks before the scheduled Oral Final Examination date. The degree candidate must submit a completed form with all completed information and signatures. | To Registrar's Office and DrPH Assistant Director (email) |
| Oral Final Examination | March 1- April 11, 2025 | <p>DrPH degree candidates complete their 90-minute Oral Final Examination. The Committee Chair will submit the result.</p> <p>The student must ask a committee member to pick up the OFE grading sheet from the Registrar's Office on or before the scheduled OFE. A</p> | To Registrar's Office and DrPH Assistant Director (email) |

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|---|------------------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| | | committee member must return the grading sheet to the Registrar's Office (with all committee signatures) once the student completes the OFE successfully. | |
| Last Day to Submit Doctoral Thesis to be able to participate in May Commencement | April 2025 (exact date TBD) | This date is a strict, immovable University deadline. Having passed the Oral Final Examination, the candidate must submit the Doctoral Thesis through ETDs@Harvard. Note: Please send a copy of your Reflection Report on Leadership and Enabling Change to your committee and the DrPH Assistant Director via email before Commencement Day. | To Registrar's Office |
| Harvard Commencement | May 2025 | May Commencement | |

Note: *The deadline for the final submission of the Doctoral Thesis is not negotiable for a May graduation*

Milestones, Submissions and Description of Required Forms

Prospective Program Form

The Prospective Program Form is a two-page form on which the candidate lists the coursework completed thus far and the coursework the student intends to take. This form is a good opportunity to ensure that the coursework is comprehensive and preparatory for the Doctoral Project. The student's academic advisor must sign this form, and its completion may provide an opportunity to discuss the student's academic trajectory and experience thus far. The DrPH Assistant Director approves the form and the student submits it to the Registrar's Office via my.Harvard by the deadline.

Final Program Form

The student completes the Final Program Form after the last registration period in the final semester. The form is the same as the Prospective Program, and the student must obtain all required signatures. The DrPH Assistant Director approves the form and the student submits it to the Registrar's Office via my.Harvard by the deadline for the degree candidate to sit for the Oral Qualifying Examination.

Doctoral Project Proposal

The Doctoral Project Proposal describes the proposed project, including an introduction, background, and the candidate's role in the host organization. It should include a description of resources needed and provided, as well as social and political considerations within the host organization, an initial literature review, proposed approach and methods, clear timeline, and deliverables for both the host organization as well as the committee, potential problems, and strategies for mitigation, and, lastly, a conclusion on implications for oneself, organization, and sector.

The proposal will be 5-8 pages single-spaced in length. The proposal will be developed as part of the Doctoral Seminar (DRPH 290A/B) and shared with the student's committee. The proposal that will be the subject of the Oral Qualifying Examination will be shared with the Doctoral Project Committee and the Faculty Director of the DrPH Program. A copy of the final proposal should be sent to the Registrar's Office and the DrPH Assistant Director. An overview and outline for the Doctoral Project Proposal can be found in Appendix B of the Manual.

Student Progress Reports & Progress Meetings

Student Progress Reports and virtual meetings help the Committee monitor satisfactory progress of the student's Doctoral Project and the student's experience at the host organization. Progress Reports are to be completed three times: at the 3-month mark, the 6-month mark, and the 8-month mark. Student Progress Reports are due one week after the committee and degree candidate have met. During the meeting, all committee members must be present, in person, or available via a virtual chat platform (Zoom). If a committee member cannot attend, the meeting must be rescheduled.

It is the student's responsibility to organize the meeting and secure all required signatures and ensure that the necessary forms are submitted to the Registrar's Office via my.Harvard on time.

Please note that students who extend their graduation date will be required to submit additional progress reports until they complete the Doctoral Project. For example, students who extend their graduation date to November 2025 will submit an additional progress report. If a student extends their graduation date a second time (to March 2026), they will submit another progress report for a total of two additional progress reports.

Communication with Host Organization

The DrPH Program may solicit feedback from the host organization regarding the degree candidate's progress via email. Your host organization does not have to submit a progress report.

Part VI: The Oral Examinations (OQE & OFE)

Oral Qualifying Examination

Once the Committee Chair agrees that the proposal is ready for examination, the student can schedule the Oral Qualifying Examination. The OQE consists of an examination with the Doctoral Project Committee that is no longer than 90 minutes. The first 30 minutes will be a presentation by the degree candidate on their proposal. The committee members will then ask the student questions to assess the student's readiness to embark on the project. The Doctoral Project Committee can spend the remaining time to help the student strengthen the project plans.

Students must pass their OQE **before** they are allowed to register for DRPH 350 (Doctoral Project – Residence) or DRPH 400 (Doctoral Project – Non-Resident). Students who schedule their OQE after the Summer session begins **must** register for an independent study (DRPH 301 - 15 credits) for the entire summer semester to maintain their status as a full-time student. The student may enroll in DRPH 350 or DRPH 400 in the Fall semester, provided they pass the OQE. There are no exceptions to this rule. The DrPH Program recommends that all students **take their OQE by the end of June** to stay on track with their Project timeline.

Oral Final Examination

Once the field phase and written deliverables (Doctoral Thesis, Reflection Report) are complete, the student will be examined by their Doctoral Project Committee at a session open to the Harvard University community. The Oral Final Examination will be a maximum of 90 minutes in length, with approximately 45 minutes devoted to the candidate's formal presentation, followed by another 45 minutes for Q&A with committee members and other questions and discussion. The committee will then meet privately to evaluate the examination and determine the grade, following which they will meet privately with the candidate to present their results and agree on the next steps.

Because revisions sometimes need to be made, degree candidates are *highly encouraged* to schedule their Oral Final Examination before March 29, 2025. This timing helps ensure that there is enough time to make revisions and receive approval from their committee. For the Class of 2025, all degree candidates must have completed their Oral Final Examinations with all revisions and approvals and submission of deliverables by **April 2024, at 5:00 PM EDT (TBD)** to graduate in May 2025. **This deadline cannot be changed.**

While every Oral Final Examination will be unique, it is the responsibility of both the degree student and the Doctoral Project Committee to agree on the Oral Final Examination expectations. In general, while the student's presentation should summarize the project, it is also an opportunity for the degree candidate to highlight the Results Statement of their Doctoral Thesis and other findings or results they wish to share.

Criteria for Evaluation of the Doctoral Project

It is ultimately the responsibility of the Doctoral Committee to determine whether the Doctoral Project has been completed satisfactorily. The DrPH Program has developed criteria for this evaluation, summarized below. The Doctoral Project Proposal should provide the committee with some guidance on how the proposed project will meet the evaluation criteria.

It is in the best interests of the Doctoral Project Committee and the degree candidate to ensure that a mutual understanding of evaluation criteria is established in preparing for the Oral Qualifying Examination and the field project phase. As aligned with the DrPH Program and the Doctoral Program's goals, below are some suggested guidelines for evaluating a Doctoral Thesis:

1. Can translate knowledge into impactful practices or policy.
 - a. This can be evaluated using the Doctoral Thesis: Introduction, Background, and Methods Sections, and implication sections of the Results section.
2. Can make effective use of the skills needed for enabling change—including leadership, management, communication, and innovation—to conduct a project that supports a host organization, its mission, and the population it serves, or to develop an innovative solution to a public health problem; to exercise leadership; and to make significant personal progress in professional development.
 - a. These can be evaluated through the Results section of the thesis, the Reflection Report on Leadership and Enabling Change, and other deliverables.
3. Articulate how the project improves strategies for advancing public health or health care sector.

- a. This can be evaluated by the Doctoral Thesis's Results section and other deliverables.

Scheduling the Oral Examinations

The date for the Oral Examinations is determined by the candidate and the committee. The exam(s) should take place once the Doctoral Project deliverables are complete, and the DrPH degree candidate is ready to present.

The Oral Qualifying and Oral Final Examination Scheduling Forms must be submitted for the DrPH Assistant Director's signature. To request a room reservation, please contact the DrPH Assistant Director before submitting the form to the Registrar's Office via my.Harvard. The Registrar's Office requires a minimum of 3 weeks before the date of the Oral Examination. All committee members must be physically or virtually present for all exams. Students who wish to hold their OQE and/or OFE virtually may do so without submitting a general petition.

The Oral Qualifying Examination will/must only have the student and committee in attendance.

While the Oral Final Examination is a public forum, only the Doctoral Project Committee will be present for the discussion and feedback of the examination. The public can ask questions only once the presentation and Q&A by the Doctoral Project Committee are finished.

Oral Examination Grading

The following are the possible outcomes for Oral Qualifying and Oral Final Examination grading:

- **Pass:** The Committee approves the student's Doctoral Project.
- **Pass with Qualifications:** The Committee requires the student to meet specific qualifications before completing their Doctoral Project. The committee must detail the specific requirements the student is required to complete to secure a pass. Note: **this will impact a student's time-to-degree.** A student who fails to meet the qualifications or deadline(s) outlined by the committee is subject to withdrawal from degree candidacy. Students are allotted three (3) months to complete revisions for their Doctoral Project, but the committee can decide to have the student submit their work earlier. The committee must specify the date by which the student must meet the conditions. The Chair of the Doctoral Committee must submit written confirmation to the Registrar's Office once the student has met all the specified conditions.
- **Fail:** The Committee does not approve the student's Doctoral Project. A student who receives a grade of Fail may schedule a second examination within three months of having received the Fail. Note: **this will impact a student's time-to-degree.** The Doctoral Timetable may be adjusted at the discretion of the Committee on Admission and Degrees. A student who fails the examination twice will be withdrawn from degree candidacy.

Part VII: Registration, Visa, Health Insurance and Travel Waivers

Complying with the Doctoral Timetable

The DrPH Program enables students to complete the degree in three academic years from the date of entry into the program, including completing the required coursework, the Doctoral Project, and the Oral Final Examination. The program has allowed for additional time of up to one year if needed. The DrPH Faculty Director and Registrar's Office need to grant an extension beyond the three years if a student requests more time through the proper petitioning mechanism. Failure to comply with the three-year approved doctoral timetable, without a new pre-approved schedule, puts a degree candidate at risk for being administratively withdrawn by the Registrar's Office on behalf of the Committee on Admissions and Degrees (CAD).

Registration during the Doctoral Project

It is the student's responsibility to register on-time each semester during their Doctoral Project to remain an enrolled full-time student in the DrPH Program and be eligible for financial aid. Dates of registration are posted on the Harvard Chan School Academic Calendar. DrPH students must register for 15 to 20 credits of Doctoral Project credits. To determine which set of credits to register for, see below to determine whether your status will be resident or non-resident. Failing to register on time puts a student at risk for being administratively withdrawn.

- Summer – 15 credits of Doctoral Project
- Fall – 20 credits of Doctoral Project
- Spring – 20 credits of Doctoral Project

Resident versus Non-Resident Status

Resident and non-resident status have implications for visas and health insurance. If completing your Doctoral Project outside of the Metro-Boston area, as per School Policy, students can apply for non-resident status by submitting a Non-Resident Petition. To be approved for a change to non-resident status, a student must petition the Registrar's Office.

Students who enroll in DRPH 350 (Doctoral Project – Residence) are allowed, but not encouraged, to enroll in other courses while they are completing their project. Students who enroll in DRPH 400 (Doctoral project – Non-Resident) are not eligible to enroll in classes as they are a non-resident student. If a non-resident student enrolls in a course and they do not petition to the Registrar's Office to change their status to residence, the student will be dropped from the course they enrolled in by the Registrar's Office. If the petition to change status is approved, the student becomes a student in-residence, which will affect tuition. The tuition amount may increase as residence students are charged more than non-resident students. It is in the student's best interest not to enroll in any courses while working on their final project.

Visa

In cases where full-time international and domestic students from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health travel overseas, students should take care to satisfy visa requirements both for the U.S. and for other countries. Students should address all questions regarding the visa process to Elizabeth Capuano, the HIO advisor for HSPH. Information about dates and times is available on the [HIO website](#).

The student should communicate with the Harvard International Office to ensure alignment with maintaining full-time student status at Harvard and visa requirements for extended travel and work authorization depending on the geographic location of the host organization.

Health Insurance

According to Massachusetts state law, all full-time students, domestic and international, must have health insurance, even if they are not on campus. Students with adequate health insurance can continue to waive the Harvard University Health Insurance requirement.

Non-resident students may choose not to pay the health fee and can opt-out with proper notification to the Registrar's Office. However, should a non-resident student decide to waive the health fee, they will no longer be able to utilize Harvard University health services. If a student currently uses these services for their primary care or mental health, the student should consider the implications of waiving the health fee as they will not have access to these services when they return to campus, even temporarily.

It is important to ensure a student's health insurance plan is eligible when traveling overseas. If on the Harvard University Student Health Plan, for more information about the specifics of this coverage when traveling abroad, please see: [Medical Coverage While Abroad](#).

If you waived the Harvard Student Health Insurance Plan, you would need to check with your insurance company to determine the extent of your coverage. When you call your health insurance company, you should ask the following questions: (1) do you have coverage outside the U.S.; (2) are there limitations to coverage; (3) does overseas care have a higher deductible or coinsurance; and (4) does your insurance company have a network in the country in which you are visiting.

If your health insurance does not provide coverage when you are traveling abroad, you will be required to purchase a short-term international health insurance plan.

Travel Waiver

Per Harvard University, all degree candidates completing their Doctoral Project, whether domestically or internationally, will be required to complete a Travel Waiver, and register their travel. Harvard advises all degree candidates to complete appropriate recommendations as outlined in the Travel Guidelines in Appendix E.

Part VIII: Ethical Considerations

Overview

The DrPH Program and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health recognize that the Doctoral Project requires that a degree candidate balance between working and being a full-time learner wherever he/she/they choose to do their Doctoral Project. Certain professional behaviors are expected of Harvard T.H. Chan degree candidates wherever they go, as they represent not only the values of the DrPH Program but also the larger University. In preparing for the Doctoral Project, degree candidates are responsible for educating themselves on how to protect host organization personnel and the communities they serve from the risk of personal or professional harm. Below are some suggestions for areas a degree candidate should consider. This list is not comprehensive, so the degree candidate should seek support from their Doctoral Project Committee about Harvard and sector-specific resources to adequately prepare themselves.

Expectations of Degree Candidate in a Professional Context

The degree candidate should maintain professional communication and relationships with the host organization, its staff, and all its constituents. Though the student is not in the academic school context during their final project, the DrPH Program expects the same student code of conduct, ethics, and integrity in the workplace.

The DrPH Program expects degree candidates to manage their time wisely and to manage their professional commitments to ensure that they do not fall behind on their deliverables and milestones for the DrPH Program.

Use of Human Subjects

If you are conducting research with human subjects as part of your Doctoral Project, please refer to the [IRB website](#). Research with human participants includes not only medical or biological research but also surveys, interviews, and records review. Prior approval from IRB may be required, and the review process can take at least 1-2 months. You should check with the organization where you are working to inquire whether they also have an IRB process. In some cases, Harvard will accept another organization's IRB review, but in all cases of human subjects' related research, Harvard requires a Harvard IRB agreement.

For the Class of 2025 (Cohort 9), each degree candidate will be required to meet with a QA/QI Specialist for a brief consultation to determine whether their project requires IRB approval. Pending QA/QI Specialist advice, each degree candidate may have specific follow-up steps required to ensure data is appropriately collected. If the student is not using human subjects, they are not required to contact IRB.

IMPORTANT: If you collect human subjects' data without the appropriate IRB approval, you will not be able to use these data in your Doctoral Thesis or other DrPH degree submissions. Please consult with the DrPH team, your committee, or the Senior Associate Director of Regulatory Affairs & Research Compliance, Alyssa Speier (aspeier@hsph.harvard.edu) for further assistance.

Consent

Before quoting or identifying any individual by name in the Doctoral Thesis, Reflection Report, or other deliverables, the degree candidate should obtain written consent from that individual, properly explaining the purpose of the Doctoral Project. Should the individual not provide consent, it is the degree candidate's responsibility to disguise the individual's identity or omit the information if that is not possible.

Documenting the Contribution of Others and Plagiarism

While conducting Doctoral Project work, degree candidates should abide by all policies outlined in the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health's Student Handbook as it pertains to Academic Integrity. For further details on how to ensure proper documentation of others, make sure to keep notes of where ideas and literature came from when writing. Additionally, the Doctoral Project Committee can help navigate how to document the contributions of others.

Guidelines on Public Availability and Confidentiality

The Doctoral Thesis will be available in the Harvard Library. Depending on the agreement with the host organization, Harvard will allow the embargo of the Doctoral Thesis and its data for up to two years. The student selects the opportunity to embargo the work at the time of submission to ETDs@Harvard.

Appendix A: Examples of Doctoral Projects

The following are some examples of projects that have been completed by DrPH students. DrPH theses can be accessed through [DASH: Digital Access to Scholarship at Harvard](#).

| Organization Name | Goals |
|--|--|
| The World Bank Global Financing Facility | <p>Capacity building in health financing Assess country capacity in health financing using a new methodology. Unpacking the reasons for limited capacity in health financing and understanding the role of power dynamics, which can impede implementation capacity.</p> |
| World Health Organization (WHO) | <p>Why don't providers identify and manage maternal sepsis? A mixed methods approach to developing an awareness campaign to accompany a WHO-led multi-country study Exploring the factors affecting healthcare provider awareness on maternal sepsis to better inform a campaign that accompanied a 53-country, one-week inception cohort study validating a new definition for this condition</p> |
| Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts | <p>Advanced Illness Support in Massachusetts: From Perceptions to Practice Evaluating a home-based palliative care pilot specifically designed and implemented by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts to support the commercially insured population in Massachusetts with advanced illnesses</p> |
| Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ministry of Economy and Planning | <p>Investigate possible geographical health disparities and initiate processes of investigation in hopes of reducing disparity. Engage stakeholders in the process of addressing health disparities, including the understanding of facilitators and barriers affecting the process.</p> |
| Administración de Seguros de Salud (ASES) | <p>Analyze <i>Mi Salud</i> (Medicaid) spending and make recommendations to improve efficiency and cost-saving based on best practices. Reduction in GHIP's net spending on outpatient drugs by implementing proposed changes: increasing the discounts applicable and implementing standardized and stricter exception and exclusion policies</p> |
| IZUMI Foundation | <p>Exploring Opportunities and Challenges for Providing Direct Funding to Local Health NGOs in East Africa Informs the IZUMI Foundation's new grantmaking strategy to provide direct philanthropic funding to local health NGOs in East Africa by adding exploratory, qualitative data to the growing philanthropy field and sparking critical reflection, or serve as an insightful resource for other funding organizations interested in supporting locally led social change.</p> |
| Johnson & Johnson | <p>A Health Economic Framework for Expanding Access to Mental Health Treatment in An Emerging Market Second-generation antipsychotics are unaffordable and inconsistently available to people with schizophrenia in Rwanda. This study conducted and assessed the health economic and market access components of an initiative to improve access to these medications in Rwanda.</p> |
| Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC) | <p>No Estimate, Big Problem: Measuring the Health Impact of Community Development Projects Devised a novel quantitative approach to estimate the correlational health impact of LISC's work across projects that improve education, income and/or employment to measure and communicate their health impact through social determinants of health research</p> |

Appendix B: Doctoral Project Proposal: Overview and Outline

Overview: At the end of the second year of the DrPH Program, typically during May and June, each student develops a Doctoral Project Proposal, and a slide deck summarizing the proposal that is used during the Oral Qualifying Examination (OQE).

The Doctoral Project Proposal is developed with input from the student's Doctoral Committee members. Once the Committee Chair agrees that the proposal is ready for examination, the student can schedule the Oral Qualifying Examination. The OQE consists of an examination with the Doctoral Project Committee that is no longer than 90 minutes, with the first 30 minutes being a presentation by the degree candidate on their proposal, followed by questions from Committee members. After successfully passing the OQE, the student can begin their final project.

The framework below provides a guideline for the contents of the proposal. Each student's proposal may vary from this outline, depending upon the project and input from the Committee members. The exact timeframes can also be adjusted based on the student's progress on developing a final project.

Students will have an opportunity to present a draft of their proposal and OQE presentation during Spring 2 of the Doctoral Seminar.

Proposal Outline

1. INTRODUCTION

- Provide a brief overview of your project, host organization, and goals of the project

2. ISSUE/PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

- What is the issue or problem you are planning to address?
- Why is this issue or problem an important public health issue?
- What is being done to address the issue or problem already?
- What are you proposing to do differently?

3. HOST ORGANIZATION

- Describe your host organization and its background. If you are working on an independently designed project, describe that.²
- Why did you choose the organization or project, and why is it a good fit?
- What will your role be and what kind of support will you have at the organization, including financial and mentoring supports?

4. LITERATURE REVIEW AND PROJECT APPROACH

- How much is known/not known about the issue or problem?
- What framework(s) for change are you thinking about using, and why are they appropriate to the issue or problem?
- What quantitative and qualitative methods will you use to gather information?

² Independent projects must be reviewed with and approved by Rick Siegrist, DrPH Program Director.

5. DOCTORAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- What are your leadership development goals?
- How do you see your work in this organization or project supporting these goals?
- What measures might you use to demonstrate growth in these areas?

6. TIMELINE & DELIVERABLES

- What will be your activities and when will they be done?
- What are your deliverables for the organization and what are your deliverables for your committee?

7. POTENTIAL CHALLENGES & STRATEGIES

- What are some of the potential challenges that you are expecting?
- How do you intend to address these challenges?

8. CONCLUSION

- What is the expected impact on:
 - Personal and professional growth
 - The host organization
 - Public health

Appendix C: Doctoral Thesis Title Page

The title page must contain the following information, well-spaced and centered on the page:

TITLE OF DOCTORAL THESIS

STUDENT'S NAME

A Doctoral Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of

The Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of *Doctor of Public Health*

Harvard University

Boston, Massachusetts.

Date

(the month in which degree will be awarded, year of graduation (e.g., May 2025))

This should be the name the degree candidate plans to use in future publications, including op-eds in newspapers. Students should be mindful of nicknames or married names.

Appendix D: Doctoral Thesis Signature Page

The Signature Page must be formatted as follows:

This Doctoral Project, [*Title of Doctoral Project*], presented by [*Student's Name*], and Submitted to the Faculty of The Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of *Public Health*, has been read and approved by:

(typed name below line – signature above)

(typed name below the line – signature above)

(typed name below the line – signature above)

Date: [Doctoral Project Official Approval Date (month day, year)]

Example:

Joe Smith

Joe Smith

Appendix E: Travel Guidelines

DrPH Doctoral Project Travel Check List

Students pursuing Doctoral Projects domestically or internationally are required to complete the following steps to help ensure a safe and well-planned experience.

Pre-Departure

International SOS

Students are **required** to register their travel before undertaking field immersion international or domestic travel. Be sure to enter your lodging, transportation, and emergency contact information in [MyTrips](#). You will also want to register with the embassy of your country of citizenship. In an emergency, International SOS, which is available worldwide, will provide you with medical referrals & security advice and emergency evacuation and repatriation. Before you go, visit [Travel Tools & Resources](#).

IRB

If you are conducting research with human subjects while abroad, please refer to the IRB website. Human participant research includes not only medical or biological but also surveys, interviews, and records review. Prior approval from IRB is required, and the review process can take at least 1-2 months. You should check with the organization of interest to inquire whether they have IRB approval for your work. Please consult with your Doctoral Project Committee and Senior Associate Director of Regulatory Affairs & Research Compliance, Alyssa Speier (aspeier@hsph.harvard.edu) for further assistance.

Health

If you are traveling on Harvard sponsorship, you are required to have health insurance. While International SOS provides access to medical and travel assistance services, it does not provide health insurance coverage. Please speak with your health insurance company about coverage abroad.

If you are covered by the Harvard Student Health Insurance Plan, administered by Blue Cross Blue Shield, you have coverage when traveling outside the United States. However, you will be responsible for any applicable deductible, copayments, and coinsurance. For more information about the specifics of this coverage when traveling abroad, please see: [Medical Coverage While Abroad](#).

If you waived the Harvard Student Health Insurance Plan, you would need to check with your insurance company to determine the extent of your coverage. When you call your health insurance company, you should ask the following questions (1) do you have coverage outside the U.S., (2) are there limitations to coverage, (3) does overseas care have a higher deductible or coinsurance and (4) does your insurance company have a network in the country in which you are visiting.

If your health insurance does not provide coverage when you are traveling abroad, you will be required to purchase a short-term international health insurance plan.

□ **Safety and Security**

Before departure, familiarize yourself with current health and medical facilities, as well as personal safety and security at your destination. Carefully consider your safety when arranging local lodging and transportation. The following are helpful resources in addition to [Harvard Global Support Services](#).

[U.S. State Department Travel Warnings](#)

[U.S. State Department Country Specific Information](#)

[Overseas Security Advisory Council \(OSAC\)](#)

[Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#)

□ **Travel Safety Questionnaire**

If you're traveling to **high-risk regions** with Harvard sponsorship, you're required to complete the following steps. These steps are also recommended for all travelers to high-risk regions, whether or not Harvard sponsors the travel: (1) typically one month prior to travel, submit a [Travel Safety Questionnaire](#) to our International Safety and Security team. Global Support Services will share your questionnaire with the designated School official; (2) depending on the travel, we may request a follow-up consultation, usually, a brief phone call; and (3) based on our recommendations and in consultation with you and any involved faculty, the designated School official may require additional safety measures and/or trip adjustments as a condition of receiving Harvard funding, credit, or other sponsorship. In exceptional cases where appropriate risk mitigation is found too costly or impractical, this may have the effect of deferring or canceling the trip.

□ **Travel Waiver and Release**

If you are undertaking a field immersion or doctoral project either domestically or internationally, you are required to submit an assumption of risk and general release form and travel waiver to the DrPH Assistant Director. Please use the [domestic](#) or [international](#) travel waiver.

□ **Vaccines**

Visit a travel clinic or your doctor for pre-travel health consultation, including any specialists, at least one month before travel. Depending on your destination's health risks, you'll need to factor in time to take single or multi-dose vaccinations.

□ **Visa**

Obtain a passport, required visa or letter of affiliation well in advance, as the process for each of these can take weeks and sometimes months. *International Students* should consult with the Harvard International Office. Elizabeth Capuano, the HIO advisor for HSPH, holds office hours for HSPH students and scholars: <http://hio.harvard.edu/office-hours#sthash.T3krjOet.dpuf>.

Appendix F: Considerations for a Host Organization Agreement

The DrPH Program recommends that the degree candidate agrees on certain understandings with their host organization or stakeholders.

Below are a few suggestions for possible topics to discuss for a letter of agreement:

1. The Doctoral Project will serve as a culminating experience for the degree candidate to receive their Doctor of Public Health degree at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health;
2. The degree candidate's role in designing and executing the project within the host organization or the body of stakeholders;
3. The degree candidate's responsibilities within the host organization as it pertains to the project's execution;
4. Who will the degree candidate report to and work with directly?

This information should include process and content (project description, role within the organization, privacy, and confidentiality of the materials and data you will be handling and the understanding that you will use it in an academic paper).

The agreement can be **signed and dated** by the degree candidate and a host organization representative and reviewed by the degree candidate's committee chair. While some information may repeat from the Doctoral Proposal, this requirement fulfills and confirms commitment and placement.

Appendix G: Where to Find a Form or Document

[Domestic Travel Waiver](#)

[General Petition](#)

[International Travel Waiver](#)

[Oral Final Examination Form](#)

[Oral Qualifying Examination Form](#)

[Student Progress Report](#)

[Nominations for Doctoral Committee Form](#)

[Non-Resident Status Petition Form](#)

[Prospective & Final Program](#) (Class of 2025)

