

Research Foundation Travel Rules and Regulations

Travel expenses are generally allowable costs to grants and contracts received by the Research Foundation on behalf of SUNY Polytechnic Institute provided that the purpose of the travel directly relates to goals and objective of the sponsored award. This document serves to provide information regarding Research Foundation travel rules and regulations. Travel regulations are complex and may differ depending upon the situation or the funding source. SUNY Poly travel staff is available to assist with arrangements and questions concerning business travel. Please contact them by email at cnsetravel@sunypoly.edu.

General

- All business travel funded by grants and contracts received by the Research Foundation on behalf of SUNY Polytechnic Institute must be coordinated through the travel department to ensure that travel has received the appropriate SUNY Poly management and Human Resources review and approval. Travelers are reminded that travel should not interfere with carrying out other SUNY Poly duties, tasks, and obligations.
- All international travel requires additional campus approval by SUNY Poly management and Human Resources and is considered on a case by case basis.
- All travel is subject to final review by SUNY Poly management. Expenditures for travel not appropriately approved or coordinated may not be reimbursed.
- For business travel, completed [Travel approval forms](#) are to be submitted two weeks in advance of the requested departure to CNSE travel (cnsetravel@sunypoly.edu) with the appropriate documentation and approvals.
- Travelers are expected to travel by the most economical means available. Arrangements are not to be at the convenience of the traveler.
- All travel funded by grants and contracts, including non-project personnel should conform to the same regulations and policies.
- All travel reimbursements require original and itemized receipts as well as documentation substantiating the business purpose of the travel, such as a conference announcement or meeting agenda.
- As a tax-exempt entity, the Research Foundation cannot pay for nor reimburse New York State Sales Tax; a tax exempt form can be provided.
- A completed [travel expense reimbursement request form](#) should be submitted to the travel department (cnsetravel@sunypoly.edu) within two weeks of return from travel. Reimbursement requests submitted after 30 days of returning from travel will not be considered.

Travel Advances

Travel advances are available for employees. Travel advance requests must be submitted to CNSE travel four weeks in advance of the departure date. Travel advances must be reconciled within two weeks of return. Failure to do so will impact the ability to obtain future advances.

Transportation

Common Carriers: Travelers are expected to use the lowest-priced available coach-class airfare. Travel charged to federally funded awards must be in compliant with the Fly America Act. Nonrefundable tickets cannot be charged to a sponsored award in the event that the travel is cancelled. Passenger Coupons or Flight itinerary is required for reimbursement.

Seat upgrades are not an allowable expense unless deemed reasonable and necessary. Appropriate justification must be provided. Allowable seat upgrades must be approved by the travel department in advance of the travel.

Expenditures for early check-in or other similar services are not reimbursable. The Research Foundation will reimburse for reasonable baggage fees based upon the specifics of the travel.

Rental Cars: Rental cars may be used when it is the most cost effective means of transportation. To ensure appropriate insurance coverage, rental arrangements should be in the name of The Research Foundation and through the existing contract with Enterprise. Appropriate insurance coverage is included under the contract, therefore travelers should not elect for any optional insurance packages offered (ie. PAI). Toll Pass Devices are required for travel in all-electronic toll facility states only. It is the responsibility of the traveler to obtain approval for a Toll Pass Device prior to travel in all-electronic toll facility states. Toll Pass Devices are not covered for cash toll states and will be the responsibility of the traveler. Additional options such as GPS, Roadside Assistance, or any other elected options are not covered and will be the responsibility of the traveler.

Personal Vehicle: Personally Owned Vehicles may only be used with the approval of SUNY Poly and when other transportation is not available or appropriate. Mileage in excess of an individual's typical commute to or from their official work station is reimbursable at the allowable business mileage rate established by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Requests for mileage reimbursement must be substantiated with appropriate documentation.

Miscellaneous: Transportation costs such as taxi, subway, tolls, or parking expenses are typically reimbursable when necessary for achieving the objective of the trip. Expenses considered un-necessary or personal in nature are not reimbursable. Travelers are expected to use the most economical means available. Original receipts are requested.

Lodging, Meals, and Incidentals

Eligibility: To be eligible for lodging and meal reimbursement, a traveler must be in travel status. Travel status is defined as 35 miles from both their place of residence and official work station.

Lodging: Research Foundation travelers are entitled to government per diem rates for lodging. If the government rate is not available, effort must be made to obtain reasonable lodging rates. Exceeding government per diem rates requires appropriate justification and approval by CNSE in advance of the travel. Receipts are required for reimbursement of lodging costs.

Lodging which occurs at no cost to the traveler, such as electing to stay with family or friends, must be appropriately documented.

Meal Eligibility: Allowances and per diem rates are determined by the travel destination. Meal allowances are based upon travel departure and return times and adjusted for meals provided at no expense to the traveler such as at the conference, hotel, or by another third party. Reimbursement is not provided for lunch or for meals during non-overnight travel. Receipts are not required for meal reimbursements.

Incidentals: Expenses such as tips to bellhops or maids are included in the per diem rate. These expenses will not be separately reimbursed.

Expenditures for Laundry and Dry Cleaning may be reimbursable in some instances of extended domestic travel. However allowance for such expense is included in the per diem rate for certain domestic locations such as Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands and all foreign per diem rates and will therefore not be separately reimbursed.

Other Expenses

Conference Registration Fees: The Research Foundation can pay conference registration fees directly to the conference or event organizer. Requests should be submitted 4 weeks in advance of the registration deadline. Reimbursement for conference registration fees paid by the traveler must be accompanied by proof of payment.

Communication Expenses: Expenditures for telephone and internet usage for business purposes may be reimbursable when justified and receipted. The Research Foundation can deny reimbursement for expenditures deemed to be unreasonable, unnecessary, or personal in nature.

Business Meetings: Expenditures incurred for business meetings during travel status must comply with meeting expense policies. Additional restrictions exist and appropriate approval and documentation is required. Please consult with the appropriate financial manager for additional information.

International Travel

Additional policies and approvals apply to international travel. All international travel requires approval from SUNY Poly management and Human Resources and is considered on a case by case basis. Reimbursement for travel not conforming to all applicable policies and regulations may not be feasible. Please contact the travel department for additional information and assistance.

Travel Warnings: Travel to any country listed on the [US Department of State Travel Warning lists](#) requires additional campus approvals. The traveler should familiarize themselves with the U.S. Department of State's Travel warning for the applicable country and review the Department of State's "[Tips for Traveling Abroad](#)". The traveler should take appropriate precautions for their personal safety and is advised to consider registering with the local consulate.

Fly America Act: Air transportation to, from, between, or within a country other than the US should be provided by a US Flag carrier when such is available. Exceptions must be justified and appropriately documented in advance of the travel.

Foreign Transaction Fees: Foreign transaction fees for expenses incurred for business are reimbursable. Proof of the fees must be provided to obtain reimbursement.

Export Controls: Regulations exist surrounding the shipment, transmission or transfer of items, information, and technical data/software to foreign countries, persons, and entities. Export Control concerns to be cognizant of during travel include the destination, parties involved, as well as items being transported (shipped or carried). Export licenses may be required for travel to sanctioned or embargoed countries, contact with restricted individuals, or entities, or transportation of restricted items such as laptops, encryptions software, or data. Exclusions to license requirements must be documented in advance of the travel.

Travel Insurance: Blanket international travel assistance as well as emergency health insurance benefits are available through The Research Foundation for individuals traveling overseas on official Research Foundation business.