



MCP Guidelines for Travel and Business Meals

Purpose: This document is to help guide your decisions for traveling and business meals. Stanford requires reimbursements and travel to be relevant to your research and *will only reimburse the relevant portions*. We want everyone to be able to receive a full reimbursement. Talk to your admin if you have any questions. ***If you do not comply with Department, University, and Federal guidelines, Stanford will not reimburse you.***

It is your responsibility to provide clear documentation and complete explanations to your admin – your admin cannot start your reimbursement until they have all relevant information.

Traveling for MCP

Before You Go

Provide the following information to your admin via email (you are no longer required to provide a Student Certification form):

Who: Name of person traveling

What: Name of conference/event

attending **Where:** Location of the conference/event **When:** Dates of your trip

Why: An explanation of how this trip benefits your research work at Stanford

How: Tell us how this trip will be funded (Fellowship? Travel Grant? Your Faculty has agreed to fund?)

What You Need to Think About Before Booking Travel

- Communicate with your PI:** You must have your PI's approval for travel, and there must be a funding source identified before you make any reservations.
- Communicate with your administrator:** Let your administrator know as soon as you start planning your travel. Your administrator knows the ins and outs of the travel process and can help you plan your travel to ensure you get reimbursed.
- Combining work & leisure:** Keep in mind that *you will only be reimbursed for the work portion of your travel*. Personal travel expenses will not be reimbursed.
- When booking flights, follow these guidelines:
 1. You **must** book your travel using one of the following resources:
 - Stanford Travel
 - FCM Travel for complex foreign itineraries; or
 - United Corporate Direct

You can access these travel booking resources here:

http://web.stanford.edu/group/fms/fingate/staff/travel/stanford_travel.html

If you do not book your travel using one of these options, you will not be reimbursed.

2. Book economy flights. Economy Plus is reimbursable, but needs to be cleared by your PI.
 3. Try to pick the closest airport.
 4. Travel insurance is not reimbursable.
 5. Fly America Act: When a federal grant (e.g. NIH) is funding your travel, you must fly with an American carrier, exceptions: countries in the EU, Norway, Iceland, Switzerland, Australia and Japan.
- Rental Cars:** Travelers are no longer required to book rental cars through Stanford Travel. Stanford provides auto-insurance for car rentals in the US (except Hawaii). Choose the most economically practical vehicle for your trip (e.g., no four-wheel drive SUVs for city driving).
 - Hotels:** Individuals traveling on university business are expected to use lodging accommodations that are necessary and reasonable. The cost of hotel and lodging should be kept to a minimum and consistent with a reasonable level of comfort, convenience, and security for the traveler. When booking lodging, choose a standard room. Upgraded rooms, such as those with upgraded views, additional concierge service or suites, are not reimbursable unless there is no other suitable option. The business purpose should clearly explain why any non-standard room was selected. Air BnB may be used for lodging if the following requirements are met:
 1. The cost must be less expensive than a comparable hotel stay.
 2. The location is an entire home (not just a room in a home).
 3. The location has a rating of at least 4 stars and 10 or more reviews.
 - Meals:** If your travel will be paid for by a research grant, you will be reimbursed for your meals at the per diem rate. The university reimburses according to [Federal GSA rates](#) for domestic travel and the [US State Department's rates](#) for foreign travel.
 - Ground Transportation:** Uber, Lyft, or BART/train are the preferred methods of transportation to and from SFO, San Jose, or other local airports.

Itinerary Forwarding: When hotels or exempted air fare are booked outside of the Stanford Travel booking channels, travelers or travel arrangers **must** use the [itinerary-forwarding service](#) to register and then, as needed, update their trip details.

While Traveling

You do not need to save individual meal receipts for travel meals being reimbursed using per diem.

Business meals can happen while traveling: A business meal is a meal shared by 2 or more people where the meal has a Stanford business purpose (for example, a discussion of research collaboration). To be reimbursed for these meals you will need to provide a list of the attendees and their affiliations and a description of the business purpose of the meal. For this type of meal, a receipt is required. See Business Meal section below for further information.

Please keep receipts for any other travel-related expense such as taxis, baggage fees, or similar if you want to be reimbursed for these costs.

Upon Return

Provide all info and documentation in a packet or email to your admin **within 2 weeks of your return**. Your admin has 60 days to have your travel reimbursement approved. Any expenses not submitted within 60 days will be considered personal income for the purchaser, and therefore, subject to income taxation. These rules apply to personal credit cards, as well as Stanford Travel Card holders.

Documents required for reimbursement:

- Conference Agenda (abridged version is OK) and/or website link. *If your conference or hotel provides food, your per diem meal reimbursement will be deducted for that meal.* If you presented at the conference, please mark where on the program your talk appears.
- Abstract (if you submitted one and spoke at the conference)
- Itemized list of items to be reimbursed
- Itemized/detailed** receipts:
 - Conference Registration
 - Abstract submission, if applicable
 - Lodging
 - Airfare & other transportation

Business meals

A business meal is a meal between 2 or more people which has a Stanford business purpose. Examples include taking a postdoc candidate out for lunch or meeting with a colleague from another institution during a meal to discuss research collaboration.

Requirements for reimbursement and/or Pcard use:

- Must be approved by your PI
- Provide a business purpose explanation: Was this a meal to discuss research collaboration? Lunch for a candidate? Tell us.
- Provide a list of all meal attendees by name, including their affiliation.
- Provide an itemized receipt.
- Do not exceed totals of: \$30/\$55/\$95 per person for **breakfast/lunch/dinner**.* These totals include food, tax, and tip. Alcohol will *not* be reimbursed by your PI in most cases, check with your PI for approval.

Additional Information and Resources

- **Stanford Travel website access:** https://web.stanford.edu/group/fms/fingate/staff/travel/stanford_travel.html
- If you are carrying Stanford owned equipment (includes laptops and computers) out of the United States, fill out the Annual or One Time **Temporary Export/Reexport form** <https://web.stanford.edu/group/export/forms/TMP-annual.html>
- **Postdoc Travel:** <http://postdocs.stanford.edu/handbook/travel.html>
And <https://adminguide.stanford.edu/chapter-5/subchapter-4/policy-5-4-2>
- **A Stanford Travel tutorial can be found on Axxess:** Traveling for Stanford FIN-0400