

Guide to Travel for Graduate Students

Before Traveling – Applying for Travel Funds

The Chemistry Department and the Office of Graduate Studies will support each graduate student with \$400 to travel to a conference, meeting, etc. **once per academic year** if the student is going to present a talk or a poster at the meeting. Students should apply for the \$400 travel funds **prior** to traveling.

Email Cynthia Hodge with the following information to apply for the travel funds:

1. Your student ID#
2. Dates of travel
3. Name of conference/meeting
4. City/State/Country of the meeting
5. Whether you are presenting a poster or giving a talk
6. If you require additional financial assistance please see *** below

Before Traveling – International Travel

The MyTrips International Travel Registry is a secure platform where faculty, staff, and student record travel itineraries and emergency contact information. MyTrips require travelers to create a one-time profile and then register the details of each trip. The registry allows WU to better assist you in emergencies of times of crisis while abroad. Register your trip with MyTrips before you travel (<https://global.wustl.edu/resources/travel-registry/>). If you fail to register your trip, WUSTL will not process your travel reimbursement for your international trip.

Considerations for Making Travel Arrangements

1. Air Travel

- Federal regulations require travels to incur the lowest possible expense, and that air travel be on American-based airlines. FAQs about the FlyAmerica act: https://financialservices.wustl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/SPA_WP_NP_TRAVEL_Fly-America-FAQ_rev3_9-2015.pdf
- You should purchase the lowest economy fare available at the time of booking. Only economy class airfare will be reimbursed.
Exceptions to purchasing the lowest available economy fare:
 - i. The lowest fare requires circuitous routing
 - ii. The lowest fare requires travel during unreasonable hours
 - iii. The lowest fare will excessively prolong travel
 - iv. The lowest fare would request in additional costs that would offset the transportation savings or
 - v. The lowest fare would offer accommodations not reasonably adequate for the traveler's medical needs
- You should prove that you're purchasing the lowest available economy fare by doing a print screen at the time of purchase
- Upgrades are not allowed. Upgrades include (but are not limited to): upgrades in class, early-bird check-in, priority access seating, upgrades for preferred seats, etc. **NOTE:** Any fare other than "Wanna Get Away" on Southwest Airlines is considered an upgrade. If there are no "Wanna Get Away" fares available on Southwest Airlines when you're booking, be

sure you document that by a print screen. Otherwise, you cannot be reimbursed for your air travel.

- You must travel on an American-owned airline (e.g. American, Delta, United, Southwest, Frontier), even is a less costly non-American (e.g. British Airlines, Lufthansa, KLM) flight is available. Even if you're traveling internationally, you must use an American-owned airline.
- If you have any questions about purchasing your airfare, please ask Cindy Hodge or V Watts **prior** to making the purchase.

2. Car Rentals

- To rent a car and have auto insurance coverage by WU car insurance, the car rental agreement must be purchased by PO.
- Contact Gerry Kohring for help with generating the PO for your car rental.
- Get a WU auto insurance card from either Cindy Hodge or V Watts before you leave for travel, and keep it with you while you're using the rental car. Return it to Cindy/V after your trip.
- Do not purchase additional auto insurance when renting a car. WU will not reimburse for it.

3. Personal Car Usage

- When a personal car is used, reimbursement is based on the current Internal Revenue Service (IRS) mileage rate
- You must maintain liability insurance on your car that meets the minimum statutory requirement for the state of your residency.
- If you choose to use a personal car for a work-related trip, then a more comprehensive review of all costs of flying versus driving needs to be considered. The reimbursement for the business use of a personal car is limited to the total costs associated with flying. You'll have to provide documentation to show that it is less expensive to use a personal car for a trip than to fly.
- You must print exact mileage from starting point to ending point from Google Maps and include this with your reimbursement request.

4. Personal Trip Add-Ons

- Please do not add personal trips before or after a business trip.

During Your Trip

1. Save ALL receipts, including receipts for cabs/Uber, dining expenses, parking expenses, etc.
Note: Uber has several classes of service. The only Uber services that can be reimbursed for are: UberX and UberPool. Unapproved Uber services are: Black Car, Taxi, SUV, and LUX
2. If meals are included in the costs of your conference/meeting, you cannot be reimbursed for any dining expenses. If you decide to visit a restaurant instead of eating the food provided by the conference, you cannot be reimbursed for that. **You must include information from the conference (e.g. print screens from the conference website) that shows whether some/all/no meals are provided by the conference/meeting.**
3. If you traveled internationally, you must document the exchange rate for the dates of travel using this website: www.oanda.com.
4. The exchange rate must be documented for each receipt. Print the exchange rate and attach to your receipt.

After Your Trip – Filing for Reimbursement

1. **Within 15 days** of returning from your trip, you must file a travel expense statement with V Watts. The form may be found here: <https://sites.wustl.edu/financeandaccountingservices/files/2023/02/Travel-Report-Template-2023.xlsx>
2. All trip expenses must be recorded on the travel expense statement, including pre-paid expenses.
3. **Submit all original receipts** (including airfare, lodging, meals, etc) with the travel expense statement.
4. Submit any print-screens that you took when you were booking your airline travel, to prove that you took the lowest rate economy fare available at time of purchase.
5. If you requested the \$400 in travel funds from the Chemistry Department, be sure to let V Watts know.
6. If you shared expenses with someone else from WU (e.g. you shared a rental car, a hotel room, a meal, etc.), you must let V know. All travel reimbursement requests that are related due to shared expenses must be submitted before V can process any of them for payment, because we are required to cross-reference them.
7. If your research advisor is paying a portion or all of your travel expenses, they will need to send an email to V Watts stating which fund(s) (GR#, PJ#, or GF#) to use for the reimbursement, and in what amount. Trip information – including conference name, dates, and location – should be included in this email.

*****If you require additional financial assistance beyond the provided travel funds, please feel free to confidentially reach out to V Watts at vwatts@wustl.edu or Cindy Hodge at kernkec@wustl.edu for support. We are here to help and ensure you can make the most of this opportunity without worry.**