

Version 1.0

This is your guide to everything travel-related at Scientific Group.

You work in med comms, so going on-site, whether for a client meeting, site visit, advisory board, symposium or large stand-alone meeting, is part of the job. It can be hard work, and you may end up working long hours or weekends or both. But it can also be great fun – meeting clients and HCPs, seeing how all the hours spent on pre-work translate into the live experience, travelling to new places, and getting to know your colleagues better.

Whether it's your first travel experience or your fifty-first, and whether you're going yourself or you're organizing for someone else, this guide will tell you everything you need to know about planning it, booking it, the actual travelling, being on-site, staying safe, and more.

This guide replaces the Travel Policy, Climate Friendlier Travel Policy, Safe Travel Policy and On-site Etiquette Guide.



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Before you book

So, before you go ahead and pull the trigger on a booking – or indeed as soon as the need for travel arises – there are a couple of things to think about.

Consider your climate impact

We have set *Science Based Targets* to reduce our carbon emissions by 50% (or more!) by 2029 – but a big chunk of our 2019 baseline emissions came from flights.

Given this, we need to minimize the number of flights we take each year, while still functioning as a global medical communications business. This requires you to consider two things as you plan a trip:

- Is the trip necessary (i.e. could a meeting be as effective on Teams?), and if it is, what's the minimum number of people needed to do the job properly?
- Can you avoid flying? For nearby destinations – that's all UK cities, Paris, Brussels and Amsterdam – please take the train. It might cost a bit more, it might take a bit longer (although, probably not), but it has a smaller climate footprint. For places further away like Basel, Berlin and Barcelona, please consider taking the train. Base your choice on the practicalities of getting there and away, not price. And remember, trains often have free wi-fi, seat power, tables and a buffet car.

Check the entry requirements

Your first port of call for understanding the entry requirements of your destination is the Foreign Office website at <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice> (or the equivalent for the country you're living in).

Here, you'll find information on visas, vaccinations and health considerations, and any travel warnings in place for the country you're travelling to.

Passports

You'll need a valid passport to travel, obviously! And for many destinations, you'll need a passport that's not expiring in the next few months (typically, this is the length of time you *could* stay, so your passport doesn't expire while you're in the country).

Visas and travel authorisations

For some countries, you'll need to apply for a pre-authorization – e.g. an ESTA, ETA or ETIAS – before you travel. Don't turn up at the airport without one, as it can take hours or even days to process your application! These typically cost a small-ish amount,

which you can expense, and are valid for several years. When you apply the first time, add the expiry date to your calendar to remind you to reapply.

If you're a UK citizen, you'll need an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorization) for the US and from Q4 2026 you'll need an ETIAS (European Travel Information and Authorization System) to travel to Europe.

If you're a European citizen, you'll need the US ESTA and an ETA (Electronic Travel Authorisation) to come to the UK.

If you're a US citizen, you'll need an ETA for the UK and an ETIAS from the end of 2026

If you're a citizen of elsewhere, check the entry requirements if you're going to the US, EU or UK as soon as you can. You may need one of these pre-authorizations, or you may need a full visa.

Work visas

Visa waiver programmes like ESTA generally cover us travelling for business meetings, not 'to work'. What defines 'work' is sometimes a little difficult to decipher. Certainly, if we're going to a client meeting, even if we're being paid to go and thus 'working', we should be fine. So that's pitches, planning meetings, workshops, ad boards, *et al.* We're also fine going to conferences in some instances.

But, the US defines 'working' in the US as doing paid work for a US company, even if you're being paid back in the UK. So, for example running a satellite symposium for Lilly at a conference in the US would be working. And for that you'll need a **B-1 business visa**. Speak to People and Culture if you want help applying or want to discuss whether you need one.

Similarly, for our contractors in the EU, you can visit the UK for meetings, training, and conferences. But you can't come to work from the office for a week, because that's defined as "doing paid for a UK company or as a self-employed person." Discuss your plans with People and Culture before booking anything.

If you're travelling to more far-flung places, also check the entry requirements. Some places are visa-free for US/EU/UK citizens, some countries like China require you to have a full visa, which you'll need to apply for some months in advance. We use CBIT Visas to help us (<https://cibtvisas.co.uk>).

Vaccinations

COVID vaccination requirements have ended in most countries, but you still might need proof of vaccination for other diseases. Even if it's not an entry requirement, vaccinations are recommended for travel to many countries in the world.

Book early-ish

There's a tendency to hold off booking travel until the last minute, as we can be unsure about who's going, what time a meeting is happening, or because we're busy with other project stuff. But, booking at the last minute can limit your flight options for popular destinations or hotel options for big conferences, and almost always costs more (particularly important if we're paying!). You should aim to confirm the requirements and book as soon as you can, and choose flexible options in case plans change. But note that airlines use dynamic pricing, so booking too early can also be more expensive. See here for the best time to book:

<https://www.skyscanner.net/news/best-time-to-book-savings-generator>

Read up on your destination

It's always useful to do a bit of research before you travel – whether it's finding the hotel and congress centre on a map, investigating transit options, or having a chat with someone who's visited before.

Expect the unexpected

Finally, it's a good idea to keep one eye on the news. Occasionally things happen that might disrupt your travel plans – like the start of a global pandemic or a volcano erupting in Iceland. And you should also check there are no Travel Advisory warnings about your destination.

Organizing travel

Whether you're organizing a trip for yourself, your team or event faculty, once you're ready to start booking, here's how.

Use Goodwings

Goodwings is our new travel booking site – it's the place to go to research and book flights, trains, hotels, and car rental. You should use the site to book all company travel (and to log things that can't be booked through the site, like AirBnB) because we can then track and report on our climate impact all in one place. This includes internal travel like our long-term contractors visiting the office. They also have an emergency helpline if something goes wrong.

To organize a trip for yourself or someone else, go to <https://trips.goodwings.com/>. You should have already been set-up, so you will be able to log in with your Microsoft credentials (the ones you use for your laptop and Office). If you have problems logging in, speak to Bo.

If you want to find out more about how Goodwings works, or you have questions, your first port of call is their training site [here](#). There is also an introductory video available on the Travel Guide page on Knowledge Central.

Finally, before we get to booking stuff, Goodwings also has an app, which is helpfully called Spotnana. Like the site proper, you can log in with your Microsoft identity, make bookings and view upcoming trips. Spotnana is available from all good app stores.

Booking flights

OK, first stop is flights. What we're trying to do here is find the right balance between **cost, convenience and climate impact**. There's no magic formula – you're aiming to get the lowest cost, lowest emission flight that works for your timings. If the client is paying, cost is often the primary consideration. For flights that we're paying for, we prioritize footprint and convenience over price, within reason.

In terms of climate impact, we try to fly N.E.R.D.ier:

- **New** – choose flights with modern, (slightly!) more fuel-efficient planes
- **Economy** – we only fly economy for short haul (less than 5 hours) or premium economy for longer flights. Business class flights have a significantly higher carbon footprint (4x), so we no longer do this even for long haul journeys and even if the client is offering – sorry!
- **Regular**-sized jets – avoid flights in small regional jets and very large planes (747, A380), as they tend to be less fuel efficient

- **Direct** – opt for direct flights, even if that is a bit less convenient in terms of timing, airport, etc.

Luckily, Goodwings takes these considerations into account and can show you flight options **sorted by CO₂ emissions** (it's at the bottom of the sort options).

You can also use the '**Hide out of policy**' button to just show the flights available to book (e.g. omitting business and first class).

In terms of price, you'll likely have some kind of project or other budget, so try to find the lowest cost option that works (even if it's not your – or the world's – favourite airline).

And then for convenience, aim to arrive and depart in good time, choose direct flights if possible but leave enough transit time if not, and remember some larger cities have more than one airport [so for example you can search on LON (all airports) rather than LHR (London Heathrow)].

When flying long haul or taking the train, you can choose to travel out a little earlier – project schedule permitting – to give yourself time to recover. We're happy to pay an additional hotel night if needed.

Choose the right ticket type

When you've selected your flight, you might be confronted with non-, partially or fully refundable options. Again, there's no magic formula. If there's budget, get the **fully refundable** ticket because plans often change. When you make the booking, you'll be asked for a job number, which you can select from a list (this is manually updated weekly, so if your job is new, you might have to ask Bo to add it). The Finance credit card is on file and will be used for payment. You'll need to log the cost on CMAP (see *Logging costs on CMAP* below).

You'll also get asked to create a Trip, to which you can also add a hotel booking, etc. You can see your existing bookings in the Trips section of the site.

Collecting frequent flyer points

You can add your frequent flyer number to flights you take (do it when you check-in online) and collect the points for your own use. Our only requirement is that you don't select a flight option based on the points it will give you – your choice should be based on carbon footprint, price and convenience.

If you've not signed up for a scheme it's worth doing – there are perks for collecting a certain number of points each year, and lots of points can be traded in for free flights. See, for example the British Airways scheme here:

<https://www.britishairways.com/content/executive-club/about-the-club/tiers-and-benefits>

Choose the right hotel

To find a hotel in your destination city, you should again use Goodwings. Try to choose somewhere that's a balance of practicality (e.g. close to the event – look at the map view!), price and eco credentials.

For client projects, we use 4-star business hotels. In pharma, putting up HCPs in 5-star hotels is non-compliant, and this rule is applied to staff and vendors for any type of stay, so 4-star it is. For internal trips, 3-star places are fine to use.

Setting your filters

When you've entered the city and date range for your booking on Goodwings, you'll get a list of hotel options. **Uncheck 'Show out of policy'** to limit your search to 3- and 4-star properties. At the moment, unlike flights, Goodwings doesn't show carbon footprint for hotels, but there is another filter, **'Eco-certified only,'** which you should look at first.

Plans can change, so you should also aim to make a refundable reservation unless the price is wildly different from a pre-paid, non-refundable booking. Check the filter **'Free cancellation only'** to show only these options.

Paying for your room

Picking an option with free cancellation means you'll actually pay for the hotel at the end of your stay when you check out. The Finance credit card is on file at Goodwings and will be used (but not charged) to secure the booking. However, you'll need to show a physical card when you check in, to pay for the room and to cover any expenses like eating in the restaurant. Make sure you – or someone you're travelling with – has a card. When you check out, pay the bill and get a copy of the receipt, which you'll need to sort out an expense claim when you return.

If cost is important (like our internal travel), you can save a few quid by selecting the non-refundable option where you pay for the room up front. Make sure your plans are definitely definitely not going to change before choosing this option. Here, the payment will be made on the Finance card (you will have to call Iago if it asks for the 3-digit CVV number for the card) and you'll need to get the invoice and log the cost yourself on CMAP (see *Logging costs on CMAP*).

AirBnB also works

For longer stays or when travelling with colleagues, it can sometimes be more convenient and cheaper to book an AirBnB apartment instead of a hotel, which are not on Goodwings. But, once you've booked you can – and should – add the details into Goodwings so that we have a record of it. Go to the *My Climate* section and click *Add External Trip*.

Let the train take the strain

As noted in the planning section, for nearby destinations – UK cities, Paris, Amsterdam, Brussels – we use the train. And we're happy for you to try train travel to further afield if the timing works for you. We have previously gone to Basel, Barcelona and Berlin, with mixed results!

But it takes much longer! Well, actually, no it doesn't. Once you've factored in getting to the airport, going through security, waiting for boarding, exiting the plane at the other end, queuing in the (non-EU citizens!) line at immigration, and getting a taxi to your often city centre destination, door-to-door travel times are pretty much the same or even quicker on the train for Paris and Brussels, and only an hour or so slower for Amsterdam. Plus, there's wi-fi and a phone signal, tables, power and food.

For those further away destinations, we can cover an extra night in a hotel if the travel time makes it hard to squeeze everything in. Speak to your line manager about options.

But also, first try to build train travel into the project budget to see what the client thinks. Depending on destination, it could be more expensive than a flight, so if they push back (let's hope not!), quote for a flight and we'll cover the difference when it's invoiced.

Goodwings should be used to book your train tickets, just like you would do with a flight.

Car travel is an option

Driving to a destination

For locations in the UK, feel free to drive (particularly if you have an electric car). We pay mileage expenses for travelling on business in your own car of £0.45 per mile plus £0.05 per mile per passenger, which is set by HMRC. When submitting expenses, please print out a route plan with the miles shown.

If you are using your own car, it goes without saying (but here it is anyway) that it should be in good working order, fully insured (for 'business use'), taxed, with a valid MOT, and you're covered by breakdown assistance.

Getting taxis

You can get a cab to and from the airport – although do check out transit systems because for many airports it can be quicker and cheaper to get a train or tube (e.g. London!). And if you get a cab, see if you can find an electric one, for example through Uber Green.

Renting cars

Depending on how much to-ing and fro-ing you need to do at your destination, it might be cheaper and more convenient to rent a car, which you can do on Goodwings. If you're able, choose an electric option. Note that you might need an international driving permit in some countries (<https://www.gov.uk/driving-abroad/international-driving-permit>).

Help is on hand

If you have problems while travelling, Goodwings has a **24/7 helpline**:

From the UK: +44 20 3608 7407

From the US: +1 833 409 7211

Some other countries also have direct numbers, which you can find here:

<https://trips.goodwings.com/support>

If you need to book directly

Ideally, we want all flights, trains and hotels to be booked through Goodwings because we need to be able to easily track the climate impact of our travel. However, if there is a particularly good reason you need to go DIY, please first get approval from your senior team lead. And, you should still enter the details on Goodwings for externally booked flights, trains and hotels – plus AirBnB stays and journeys using your own car. Select *Add External Trip* in the My Climate section. Whatever you've done, make sure you also submit it as an expense to CMAP so the cost gets logged on the project.

Log costs on CMAP

Once the booking is made, you – and your line manager and Finance – will receive a confirmation email with a PDF itinerary. If you've booked a flight, you'll also get an email with the invoice. You – or the project manager if you don't have access permissions – will need to **add the invoice to the project on CMAP** (internal travel costs should be added to the relevant internal project).

To do this, find the project, go to the Budget Versus Actual section, scroll down to Additional Costs, pick the right line and click 'Add Purchase.' You'll need to fill in all the details:

- For the *Supplier*, choose Goodwings (even though the invoice comes from their booking agent, JTB).
- Add the invoice PDF to *Attach Document*
- In the *Purchase Description*, add the traveller's name

- The *VAT Rate* will depend on where the invoice is issued from and what it's for. Flights will generally be *UK Purchase Services Zero Rate* but best to check with Iago when you're filling in the form

Hotel bookings that you've paid on-site using your own or a team member's credit card are entered onto the project via a CMAP expenses claim.

Your own travel

If you're a UK employee, you should not use Goodwings to book train tickets for commuting, office visits, or parties. Per our *Flexible Working Policy*, these costs are not reimbursable.

Preparing to travel

Right, so everything's booked and your travel day is fast approaching. What do you need to think about before you travel?

Relax, we're insured

We have corporate travel insurance that covers all employees and contractors while working for us on-site (if you plan to stay on for any length of time though you'll need your own). Details of the policy number and the emergency contacts are at the end of this guide, and the policy document itself is stored on SharePoint [here](#).

Print your important documents

You'll need to take your passport plus your flight details, hotel bookings, etc. You can store all these on your phone, but if the battery dies, or your phone or passport is lost or stolen, you're stuck. So, you should print copies (on recycled, recyclable paper of course!), just in case:

- Flight details
- Hotel confirmation, including the address
- Conference registration
- Photocopy of your passport
- Any visa or vaccination certificate you need
- Our travel insurance document (get it [here](#))

If you're renting a car, remember your driving license (and international driving permit, if needed), DVLA code (get it here: <https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence>) and a credit (not debit) card.

Be prepared for immigration

Sometimes, the immigration agent will want to see your return flight details, insurance certificate, or evidence that you're travelling to a conference, so having these to hand makes things easier.

There have been reports recently of people being denied entry to the US because they'd posted things critical of Donald Trump or Elon Musk on their social media. Border officials in the US (and other countries) can demand to look at your phone or laptop when you pass through immigration at the airport (refusal will get you sent home and potentially, never allowed back). So, if you're travelling to the US, it would be wise to delete anything that might cause problems before you travel. Burner phone anyone?

Grab an events pack

If you or someone you're travelling with is passing by the office, we have events kits containing useful stuff like pens, Post-Its, stapler, scissors (don't put in your carry-on luggage), Velcro tape, slide advancer, etc. And actually, we also have a set of walkie-talkies if you're going to a big event.

Add emergency numbers to your phone

Make a note of all our sources of help:

Goodwings help UK number: +44 20 3608 7407

Goodwings help US number: +1 833 409 7211

Travel insurance emergency medical: +44 1243 621066

Travel insurance emergency cash: +44 1243 621 556

Travel insurance policy: 100001562GPA

Granular: +44 7816 664934 (Vish) or +44 7507 600987 (Gerard)

It's also worth noting down your bank's helpline, in case you lose your card.

Swap contact details

Also make sure you have the mobile numbers for the colleagues you're travelling with and clients you're meeting.

Get some money

Since COVID, most places around the world take cards, so it's not critical to stock up on currency before you travel. But it is useful to have a few notes to pay an occasional taxi or leave a tip, so you should consider getting some from a bureau de change.

If you don't have a company credit card, you can also ask Finance for a float – they pay some money onto your card in advance, you spend it on-site and bring back the receipts. They reimburse you so that your float is topped back up for next time. Check out the SOP on Knowledge Central for more info.

Buy some data roaming, or turn it off

Data roaming can be madly expensive, so investigate whether you can get a package from your network provider before you travel – you can expense it. If you have a company mobile, we have a package for Europe already active; speak to Granular if you're going elsewhere.

Note that in some countries, a data package might be £5 for 200MB for example, which is totally pointless. If you've been sent a few emails and a couple of

attachments while you're flying, you can easily eat 200MB as soon as you turn off flight mode. Aim for a package that's at least 500MB for a reasonable price. And consider turning off data roaming for individual apps like Outlook. If you don't have a package, turn data roaming off completely for the duration of your trip.

Make yourself a packing list

If you're going to be travelling a lot, one useful thing to do is make a packing list that you can refer to each time. It seems like a silly thing to do, but it's surprising how often the seasoned traveller gets to a destination and realises they've forgotten socks.

Pack wisely

The weight limit for checked bags is 20 or 23 kg depending on the airline, so don't overdo things. If you need to transport a lot of event materials, one option is to fill a suitcase with it and use your luggage allowance or pay the excess if it's over-weight. Remember to pack event kits in hold luggage not your carry-ons – many a pair of scissors has met an ignoble end in the bin at airport security. Make sure you put your name and phone number on a label or tag on the outside of your cases.

If you're taking cabin bags only, look up the size and weight guidance for your airline – some airlines, particularly the budget ones, can be quite vigilant enforcing these rules. Generally, a standard cabin bag is around 55 x 40 x 20 cm and a maximum weight of 10 kg. Many airlines also allow a small personal item, like a handbag or laptop bag, to be carried on board in addition to the main cabin bag.

Check-in online

Don't forget to add the 'Advance Passenger Information' and your frequent flyer number to your flight booking, and then check-in online (your booking reference is in your Goodwings travel itinerary). Grab your boarding card – you can add it to Wallet on your phone, but don't forget to keep your phone charged (or print instead).

Take power adapters, chargers

On the subject of keeping things charged, it's easy to forget you'll need chargers for your phone, laptop, headphones, iPad, etc., and adapters for the country you're going to. The US uses plugs with two flat pins, most of Europe uses two round pins. But note that Switzerland has a mix of European and 3-round-pin sockets that aren't cross compatible, so it's wise to get a Swiss adapter. If you're travelling elsewhere, look up what you'll need.

And, finally...

**Don't forget
your passport!**

Crushing it on-site

When you're on-site, you're representing our company, and you're (usually) working on behalf of our clients, so you're representing them too. Here's how to do a great job.

Use your travel time

Not many clients pay for our travel time. But at the airport and on long-haul flights, you may have several hours to kill between meal services. If it's a working day flight, you can use this time to do some work (yay!). There's space in premium economy to get your laptop out (don't forget your privacy filter) and tap away, either for the event you're travelling to or for other projects. And we're happy for you to expense the plane WiFi so you can check your email and Teams too.

Don't panic if you're delayed

Delays happen. If they happen to you:

- Check in with the project team, let them know what's happening and your new ETA
- Let the client know if appropriate
- Contact your hotel: if you arrive late, there's a possibility that they might deem you a no-show and give your room away

In the EU, you're entitled to food vouchers if your plane is delayed over 2 hours, and an alternative flight or a refund if it's over 5 hours. In the US, there's no help for delays but if the flight is cancelled the airline must refund or rebook you on the next flight. Sometimes you can also get bumped off a flight ("involuntary denied boarding"), and for this you should receive some monetary compensation.

If you need any help with rebooking or rerouting and the airline can't help, contact Goodwings.

Dress to impress

For anything that involves clients apart from social engagements, wear your personal equivalent of a suit with an ironed shirt and polished shoes. Ties these days are optional, and it's unusual to see European clients wearing them. Bear in mind that you might be on your feet all day, so those polished shoes should also be comfortable.

You may wear smart yet casual clothes to go out to dinner with a client. You can wear whatever you like to travel in, but remember that it's not always practical to get changed before meeting the client. You can also wear anything if you're working on

something that doesn't involve clients, such as room set-up or unboxing, or if our team goes out to dinner

Turn up on time - or early

Punctuality is necessary, and particularly important for events, where everything needs to happen on time - don't be late! Discuss and agree times to meet in advance with your teammates - such as what time for breakfast, what time to leave hotel, etc. And also:

- Set two alarms, especially if you're traveling solo - and if they're on your phone, make sure it's set to the right time zone and your phone is charged or charging
- Wear a watch if you have one - if you're looking at your phone all the time in a meeting, the client might think you're checking Instagram
- Travel times for tubes and taxis can be significantly longer at rush hour, plan ahead
- Congress centres can be huge, especially in the US - try to do a recce beforehand; and leave enough time if you're walking between locations
- If you're meeting HCPs, plan to get to the room and arrange to meet the client early, so you can check set-up and align before the HCP arrives

Go easy

You're on-site primarily to work, but there's also time to fit in some fun as long as you follow our rules. First and foremost, drink in moderation, especially if you're with clients. (And note that many clients are not allowed to let you buy drinks for them because of anti-bribery rules.)

- Consider sticking to water at client dinners
- Don't empty the minibar
- Don't stay out late if you're working the next day (staying up late working on PowerPoint slides is fairly standard)
- If you're a smoker, be discreet

Make friends

Meeting our clients (and HCP experts) face-to-face is a really good opportunity to build relationships, and to meet other members of their team and other potential clients - so be visible, responsive, accommodating and keen to chat. Go out for dinner or drinks if invited:

- Remember you're still working, even if the client thinks they're not

- Don't gossip, even if the client does
- Keep your curiosity ready to find new opportunities or useful intelligence
- But, ensure you are safe at all times. If you are uncomfortable, remove yourself from the situation immediately and inform a senior member of staff (see *Stay Safe*)
- Do not share your hotel room number with clients

Do a little business intelligence

When you have a spare minute or two, don't forget to check out what other companies and agencies are doing. If you've at a conference, go explore the exhibition hall and see what cool stuff there is on booths, pop into other companies' symposia and see what they're up to (and how well attended it is). If you see cool stuff, take a photo, and tell us about it in the Inspiration Teams channel when you return.

Take some photos

On the subject of photos, we run some amazing events but we don't often get the evidence! Take photos of your event, and the team on-site, so we can use them in case studies, capabilities presentations and social media posts.

Remember we are a team

"First and foremost, we are a team - we respect and support each other..." is Scientific Group Culture. The job of the on-site team is to get the event done, well. There might be late nights or early mornings - or both. Make sure you're contactable at all times (from agreed morning meet up until the on-site lead calls it quits for the day). Don't disappear without checking it's OK and letting people know where you're going.

If you find yourself with time on your hands, tell someone - there are always things needing doing and you can learn more about how events work if you muck in. And if not, there are probably things to do for the team back in the office or on your other projects if you're really at a loose end! Clients don't always pay for all our actual hours on-site, so it's good to use spare time wisely.

Keep things confidential

You never know who's sitting on the seat behind you or standing next to you at the baggage carousel, so try to keep things confidential. Use your privacy filter on your laptop (ask Granular if you don't have one), don't chat about work in public places like airports and hotel bars, and never gossip about clients.

And it's also useful to refresh your knowledge of the *Information Security Policy*, which includes for example:

- Only use password protected USB drives
- Don't leave printouts on the hotel printer
- Always bring or ship back anything that's confidential. Clients may also want used or surplus meeting materials like delegate books and invitations that are not technically confidential to be disposed of confidentially. You can ask the hotel or the printer to shred and recycle these, or again, bring them back and put it in the office confidential waste.

Don't spend too much

Try to stay 'within reason' when buying things on-site (see below). Get receipts for everything, and log all rechargeable expenses to the job on CMAP – including your phone bill. Then submit your expenses as soon as you get back – expenses submitted after a project is finished and closed will not be reimbursed.

Use a credit card in preference to a debit card for any large purchases, as they have a better level of protection. If you're using your own card to pay for things, you can ask for a float from Finance (see [here](#)) before you travel.

You're OK to get taxis everywhere (particularly if they're electric!), but sometimes the train/tube/airport shuttle is a better option so check it out before you travel.

Stick within our spending limits

Taxi from home to airport or back: £120

Subsistence: £35 per day. We don't have a per diem allowance (i.e. an amount you can claim regardless of what you spend), but we also realise if you're stuck in a hotel all day and night, hitting this number might not be possible. It's a guide.

Hotel room: aim for £200/night, and 4-star maximum. Again, there's a big difference in price between the Marriott Chicago at the height of ASCO and a Premier Inn in Basingstoke. In pharma, 5-star hotels are not compliant, so everything happens in 4-star venues.

Entertainment (e.g. dinner with the team or clients): £100 per head max. Don't be ordering Laurent-Perrier Rosé.

If you have any questions or are unable to find options to fit, speak with your line manager or the project lead on-site.

Tipping

In many places – particularly the US – tipping for things like taxis and meals is expected. If you do leave a tip and you want to claim it back, make sure you get it included on the receipt.

Don't get in the way

We might create materials for an exhibition booth, we might organize lunch for an all-day event, but remember we're doing these things on behalf of our clients, for them to meet, network, or help their customers: HCPs.

So, make sure you visit the booth – it's a good place to meet existing and potential clients. But, unless invited, don't sit down or hang out there, it's a space for our client's reps to talk to potential customers.

Similarly, unless invited, wait until the end to get lunch. And don't hang around the client's site office or take up seats at a satellite symposium (unless you have an active role, like processing questions or monitoring the AV).

Stay safe

We want to make sure you're safe at all times when on-site and, while we trust your judgement, we recommend you follow our guidance. Here's some pointers.

Keeping in touch

First up, it's best to travel in pairs, both to events and when you're out on-site. There may be occasions when you have to go to an event alone, or you arrive on-site at a different time to everyone else. If this is the case, make sure you have your mobile with you and roaming enabled, and you have all the useful numbers listed in this document plus contacts for the team.

And stay in touch. Give people your travel itinerary (flight details, hotel address, etc.), let them know what time you're expecting to do things like get on a flight/land/getting a cab/arrive at the hotel/etc., and then message them to tell them you have done. If you're going out, let someone know where you're going and when you'll be back (and pick up the hotel's card so you have their address and phone number – particularly useful if you don't speak the language).

It also goes without saying that you should never leave your luggage unattended and never agree to carry packages for people you don't know. But we've said it, just to be sure.

Travelling by car

The previous version of this guide contained a long list of handy tips for travelling by car, such as 'always wear your seatbelt'. We think you're sensible enough to know the basics, but if you're going to drive somewhere in your own car or a rental:

- Check out the driving rules for the country you're in, e.g. on the RAC website (<https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/travel/driving-in-Europe/>)
- Keep your phone handy, but use hands-free while driving
- Don't drive if you're tired
- Do not get out of the vehicle if you are unsure of your surroundings; don't wind your window down fully when speaking to strangers
- Park in well-lit places

And note that if it's your own car, you need to be insured for 'business use' – check with your insurance company.

Travelling by taxi

Most of the time, taxis are a safe and convenient way of getting around a city door-to-door. Hotel reception can normally call you a cab (or, you know, Uber) – don't wander the streets hoping to hail one. And it's good to bear in mind:

- Make sure it's a real, marked taxi with a meter before you get in, and check that the driver takes cards if you don't have cash on you
- If you don't speak the language, show the driver your destination address on your phone or travel booking documents – as mentioned already, picking up the hotel's business card showing the address when you go out is another useful tip
- Watch out for minimum fares from airports – for example, the author once went to the wrong terminal and got a cab to the right one to save time. But the minimum fare for airport pick-up was €35, even though the trip was 500m
- Make sure the meter is running; avoid taxi drivers that want to agree an off-meter fare, as these can be renegotiated later
- Always wear your seatbelt in the back seat
- 'Change your plans' and ask to be dropped somewhere close by if you think they're driving dangerously, etc.
- Get a receipt!

Food and drink

As it says above, 'go easy' and watch your alcohol consumption. It gets harder to stay safe when you've had a few. And if you're travelling to a country with lower food hygiene standards than you're used to, take the usual precautions like sticking to bottled water, only eating hot food, etc.

Medical bits

Again, most of this is common sense, but if the place you're travelling to is hot (and you're expecting to actually leave the conference centre), take sunscreen and/or insect repellent. If you're taking prescription drugs with you, make sure you have enough for your trip and carry a copy of your prescriptions or a note signed by your doctor saying what they're for – they may not be available or recognised locally. If you wear glasses or contact lenses, consider taking a spare pair.

Culture

Investigate local laws, customs and culture before you travel, and then respect these when you arrive – for example dress codes, rules on alcohol, how to interact with important KOLs, etc. The Foreign Office at <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice> is a good starting point and has some useful information for women and LGBTQ travellers.

Hotel safety

We mostly stay in city centre business hotels, but it's good to check the area before you book. When you check in, avoid getting a ground floor room if you can. Always lock the door and use the safety chain. Use the spyhole, if there is one, before opening the door to someone, and phone reception if you're unsure who's there.

Find the nearest fire alarm and extinguisher, and make sure you know your emergency exit route (it's normally shown on a sign in your room near the door). It's a good idea also to follow the emergency route to the final exit to make sure you can actually get out easily.

Keep important and valuable items in the room safe if there is one, or you can also ask the hotel to put things in their office safe. And it also goes without saying that you shouldn't arrange to meet visitors like clients or suppliers in your room – use the lobby or elsewhere.

Important documents

We've said several times to keep your phone handy, but what happens if it gets nicked? Make sure you carry a paper copy of emergency contact numbers (see the

end of this guide) and photocopies of your passport, our insurance policy, and your ticket. And keep these papers separately from your phone/laptop bag/handbag.

Don't get mugged

Sage advice. But if you are, the best thing to do is to hand over what they want – your stuff is insured, you're irreplaceable. Report it to the police immediately and get a crime reference number.

Sexual harassment

We have some up-to-date guidance on sexual harassment in the workplace on Knowledge Central, based on recent changes to UK law where our sexual harassment policy and our responsibilities now include incidents with third parties like clients and speakers. Please make sure you've read the policy and you know what to do in the unlikely event that a problem arises. Speak to People and Culture if you have questions.

Tidy up

As part of our commitment to sustainability, we want to make sure we recycle as much as we can. After the event, make sure you put all unused or used-and-discarded materials like invitations, delegate books and signage in the recycling (we aim to produce as much as possible on recycled and recyclable stock; speak to Mary if you're not sure whether something can be recycled).

Some clients – like Lilly – may want their materials recycled confidentially (i.e. shredded or 'destroyed'). Check with the venue to see if they offer this service, or whether the print vendor can do it, or whether you should bring them home and recycle it via the confidential waste in the office. Check also with Mary to see if you should bring back any roller banners for reuse, or get them picked up by the printer.

When you get back

Fill in your timesheets

On-site time

Once you're back - or ideally while you're there - you should log your time. Most of our clients only pay for a 7.5- or 8-hour day on-site, regardless of the fact you were working from 6.00 am breakfast with the client to slide editing at 2.00 am. Check with the project manager to see if you should log all your working (or waking) hours to the project or just 7.5/8.0.

Travel time

Time spent travelling should be logged as a 7.5-hour day. If you've managed to squeeze in some billable work on the plane, log it as normal to the appropriate project. The rest should be added to the project you're travelling for, either on the on-site support line, or the internal travel line if we can't charge it to the client. Discuss with the project lead if you are not sure.

Arrange for TOIL

Being on-site can involve a few days of long hours due to the nature of the work, so on-site working is considered differently than 'office' work for TOIL. You may get some TOIL for particularly long days. Check our TOIL Policy for more information, or ask your line manager or check with the project manager. If you are the line manager, check out Applying the TOIL Policy on Knowledge Central.

Working a weekend or bank holiday day always gets you a day back in TOIL.

Log (and claim for) expenses

You'll have noticed that we've repeatedly said 'keep your receipts' in this document. We will obviously refund expenses incurred 'in the line of duty' (see our guidance in *Don't spend too much* on what we think is reasonable). Make sure you log all expenses on CMAP **as soon as you get back** so they can be charged to the client (or for internal jobs, so we have a record). As we said above, expenses submitted after a project is finished and closed will not be reimbursed.

For cash or money you've spent on your own card, start a new expenses claim - check out Expense Claim Processing SOP on Knowledge Central if you don't know how. For company credit cards, you'll need to keep your receipts until you get your monthly statement, and then process them.

Recycle your rubbish

All event materials that you've brought back with you should be put in the confidential waste bin in the office, which is shredded and recycled. If you have things like feedback forms, you'll obviously have to process them before you bin them.

File your photos

If, as instructed above, you took some great photos of the event, make sure you file them in the project folder – and let the External Communications Team know.

Organize a debrief

As with all projects, once the dust has settled, there should be a debrief. And, it's also super useful to create a case study slide or project showcase with any metrics, feedback, highlights and learnings.

And finally, **put your passport back** where you keep it so you can find it next time.

Tips and tricks

In no particular order, here's some important things we've learned while travelling...

- At an event, everything takes twice as long as you expect it should
- When using a hotel steam iron, give it a go first on a towel to make sure it's not going to steam stains into your only shirt
- Small creases fall out of clothes if you hang them up in the bathroom while showering - but careful not to drop them in the water
- Always carry a notebook and pen (and laptop), you never know when a client might want a meeting
- Never get a cab with someone that approaches you in the airport, always use the official queue (or Uber)
- Airports can have more than one terminal, and they're not always close - check which one you're flying from
- If you fly to Basel (but, try the train first), pay attention when exiting because there's a choice of Switzerland or France and no way to switch afterwards
- On the subject of Switzerland, they have their own sockets - a European two-pin adapter will not work
- Check which plug adapters you need for the country you're going to beforehand and take a few with you
- Take a long phone charging cable, hotel rooms often don't have a lot of sockets and you want to keep your phone by the bed
- Don't forget to pack up and check out from your hotel, even if you're going to be working all day; checkout is normally 10am but you can ask for an extension, or leave your suitcase with the concierge
- Check-in is often 3pm or later - don't expect to get access to your room if you arrive early
- Check the times of your meetings - a meeting that's in your Outlook calendar in the UK at 2pm will be at 9am when you're on-site in New York
- People eat at weird times. If you go for dinner at 8pm in Indianapolis, they'll be cleaning up around you, but in Barcelona you'll have to wait at the bar for 2 hours.
- If you go for a walk in a strange city, look behind you occasionally so you know what it should look like when you're walking back

- If you can, travel with hand luggage only – it's faster to check in, and if there are any issues with flights (e.g. bad weather) you're much more able to change plans at short notice if you need to – and the airline can't lose your luggage!
- Charge your laptop and phone as often as you can – you never know when you'll be unable to plug them in
- Set two alarms, just in case
- Be sensible about when to eat – long days are harder when you're not keeping your energy up
- Be prepared! We have a cupboard full of 'Event Kits' containing post-it notes, slide advancers, Velcro tape and lots of other useful goodies, plus walkie-talkies, tent card holders, plug adapters, etc.
- And lastly, we repeat: don't forget your passport!

When things go wrong

Things don't often go wrong, but it's best to be prepared. **Firstly, don't panic.** What to do depends on what kind of emergency you're having. Some typical (don't worry, not frequent!) situations are given below, but if you're unsure what to do you can also contact your manager or a colleague on Teams or by phone (which is why it's a good idea to make a note of numbers in advance).

Travel emergencies

If something's gone wrong with your travel (forgot your passport, missed your flight, etc.), contact Goodwings:

From the UK: +44 20 3608 7407

From the US: +1 833 409 7211

(You can use either of these numbers from anywhere, but an international call will just cost more)

You can also try our insurance helpline:

Aviva non-emergency assistance number: +44 1243 621416

Policy number: 100738282GPA

IT problems

Your first port of call is Granular on Teams, or for out-of-hours support you can call: Vish on +44 7816 664934.

Medical emergencies

If it's serious, call for an ambulance – the emergency number depends on the country but 911 works in the Americas and 112 in Europe (see here for other countries: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_emergency_telephone_numbers). You can also get help from our insurance:

Aviva emergency medical: +44 1243 621066

Policy number: 100738282GPA

Crime

If you've been the victim of a crime, your first stop is the police. The emergency number depends on the country (see the previous paragraph). If you need to make an insurance claim (e.g. for a theft), make sure the police give you a crime reference number. You can also get help from the British Embassy/Consulate (or your appropriate nation).

If you've had all your money stolen, you can get help from our insurance:

Aviva insurance emergency cash: +44 1243 621 556

Policy number: 100738282GPA

Help with local language

If you have an emergency and you don't speak the local language, you could use Apps like Google Translate or ChatGPT to help, or again try the Consulate.

That's all folks, **happy travels, stay safe!**



Document Signed By Simon Newman

Simon Newman

Thursday 29th May 2025 at 15:55