



Jardín Botánico de Cartagena

Guillermo Piñeres

Travel and Subsistence Policy

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 It is Organization policy to reimburse claimants for properly authorised and reasonable travel and subsistence expenses incurred in the performance of their Organization duties, while temporarily away from their normal place of work, in accordance with the provisions listed hereunder.

1.2 This policy takes account of the financial constraints facing the Organization.

1.3 The Organization will continue to reimburse appropriate travel and subsistence expenses based on a fully vouched process. The emphasis at all times will be on value for money. The only exceptions to the use of a fully vouched process are for staff abroad on sabbatical leave and in the case of a very limited number of research activities including visiting researchers or where research terms and conditions prescribe that per diems must be used. In such cases the prior approval of the Research Finance Manager is required. Claims in such circumstances must include proof of travel. In the case of sabbatical leave please refer to the Organization's Sabbatical Policy for further details

1.4 The civil service rates are computed to cover all costs associated with using one's private transport on a business journey (including Fuel, Tax and Insurance, Toll charges, Wear and Tear, and Maintenance etc.), and meals and accommodation costs whilst away from normal place of residence.

2 OBJECTIVES/PRINCIPLES

2.1 This document sets out the Organization's policy in relation to travel. It details the principles to be applied in organising, authorising and undertaking travel and the procedures and processes to be followed. The policy aims to provide a fair and consistent enabling framework in which persons, undertaking travel on behalf of the Organization do so with due regard to personal safety and comfort consistent with the nature and purpose of individual journeys, and to ensure that all travel undertaken on behalf of the Organization provides value for money. The policy outlines the Organization's approach in general terms and is not expected to cover every possible situation. Items of an unusual nature should be raised with the Finance Department before the cost is incurred and any such clearance should be attached to the subsequent expense claim.

2.2 The Organization Strategic plan identifies the development of a greater international profile for the Organization as a key goal. It is expected that the staff will develop international networks and contacts and significantly increase participation in international collaborations. The achievement of this goal will involve foreign travel by staff on behalf of the Organization. The development of international relations is mainly based on the development of relationships with key persons in relevant institutions across the world.

2.3 The policy applies to all claims for travelling on approved Organization business and to all travel expenses so incurred regardless of funding source. The policy also applies to the claiming of costs incurred in the performance of Organization duties, where the claimant may not have travelled as part of incurring the cost.

The following principles underpin the policy:

Jardín Botánico de Cartagena "Guillermo Piñeres"

Sector Matute, km 9 Autopista I-90 (Cartagena-Turbaco), Turbaco, Bolívar, Colombia | Cel. +57 (310) 806-8582
www.jbgp.org.co | e-mail: direccion@jbgp.org.co

- Travel must be undertaken only when necessary and be consistent with the needs of the Organization.
- All travel should be planned as far in advance as is possible to take advantage of discounted air fares and other economies that may be available by advance purchasing and to afford adequate time for insurance, visa, etc., processing.
- Staff must consider alternatives to travel, e.g. video conferencing and other available media, where appropriate.
- Under certain circumstances staff may be provided with an advance for travel purposes.
- Claims for reimbursement of travel expenses must be made as soon as possible and in any event **no later than 3 months after the date incurred**. Only in very exceptional circumstances will claims submitted late be paid, a clear explanation should be attached to the expense claim. Approvers should reject claims where a detailed explanation has not been provided by the claimant. For research grants claim must be submitted and paid on or before the end date of the project.
- If there are two or more UL employees present when the expense is incurred (e.g. restaurant meal), the expense claim should be made by the most senior member of staff. This is to ensure that the expense claim is reviewed and approved as being appropriate by a UL employee who was not present.
- The expenses of a spouse, partner, family member or other person accompanying the claimant are not an allowable expense except when their presence is appropriate for a bona fide purpose and their travel is authorised in advance by the President.
- Claims for reimbursement from externally funded research projects should, in addition to compliance with this policy, ensure compliance with eligibility for reimbursement for travel and subsistence as set out in the grant agreement and/or funding rules.

3 OFFICIAL ENTERTAINMENT POLICY

3.1 The Organization has an Official Entertainment Policy all claims for reimbursement relating to entertainment should be claimed under that Policy.

Where claiming for vouched subsistence while travelling away from the Organization it is not possible to reclaim the cost of alcohol other than for Official Entertainment and as set out in that policy.

4 AUTHORITY & RESPONSIBILITY

4.1 It is the responsibility of every claimant to act in a prudent and reasonable manner when incurring expenditure on behalf of the Organization. Claimants must comply with this policy in all claims they submit for payment.

4.2 Responsibility for financial management is delegated through a decentralised structure with appropriate authority levels being vested in relevant Organization staff. Executive Director/Head of Finance/Coordinators, (the Approvers), are charged with reviewing expense claims to ensure that the expenses have been incurred wholly, exclusively and necessary on Organization business and that documentary evidence is attached where required.

4.3 Approvers are responsible for adherence to this policy and to ensure that the regulations and procedures contained in it are strictly adhered to, and in particular, that expenditure is

held within budget, and value for money is obtained. Each and every expense claim once submitted by the applicant must be approved by the relevant Approver.

4.4 All claims submitted to the Finance Department must be approved by the relevant Approver. The Finance Department will then process the claim provided that the claim is fully supported by the necessary receipts. In addition the Finance Department will randomly carry out checks to ensure claims are in accordance with this Policy. In determining whether a claim is in accordance with this policy the decision of the Finance Department will be considered as final. In certain circumstances a claim may arise for an expense which while appropriately incurred carrying out Organization duties may not fully comply with all of the requirements of this policy. In any such circumstances the Finance Department will exercise judgement whether on balance the claim should be approved for payment. Where there is evidence that such judgement has been exercised the said claim will be considered to be in accordance with this policy.

Receipts must show details of purchase and proof of payment. Credit/Debit card receipts should be included as well to support payment claims for audit purposes. Please note that credit and debit cards on their own are not acceptable the actual itemised receipt must be attached. Order acknowledgements or invoices showing a balance due will not be accepted without proof of payment.

5 DOMESTIC TRAVEL

5.1 Public Transport: When travelling on behalf of the Organization all claimants should choose the most economical means of travel. All claimants must travel standard/economy class on trains. Public transport must be used where feasible.

5.2 Private Car: Where public transport systems are not feasible the following eligibility criteria for private car usage will apply:

- All business kilometres must be claimed based on the number of kilometres from UL to destination. It is recommended that claimants validate the kilometres claimed online on a website such as Google Maps or AA Route Planner.
- Kilometres will be reimbursed at the civil service rate per kilometre. The public service kilometre rates are available on the Finance Department web site.
- Kilometres will not be paid for travelling from home to UL.
- Travelling expenses will not be paid in respect of any portion of a journey which covers all or part of an employee's usual route between home and normal place of work.
- Where a claimant proceeds on an official journey direct from home or returns home direct, the travelling allowance payable will be calculated by reference to the distance from home or normal place of work, whichever is the lesser.
- When two or more persons are attending the same meeting/event/ conference arrangements, where feasible, should be made to avoid the unnecessary duplication of the use of his/her own car.
- Insurance – it is the responsibility of claimants to ensure that they have adequate business insurance in place, which indemnifies the Organization against all claims arising, while using private transport, on Organization business. The Organization cannot accept liability for any loss or damage resulting from the use of privately owned transport on Organization business.

5.3 Car Rental: It is recommended that this is purchased through the requisition process. Car rental should only be undertaken when it represents the best value for money. The cost of car

rental from a standard economy/compact range plus petrol and excess insurance waiver costs will be reimbursed upon presentation of all receipts. Claimants should take out full insurance when hiring a car as the Organization will not reimburse claimants for any excess.

6 FOREIGN TRAVEL

6.1 Expenditure on foreign travel and subsistence (whether recouped by a third party or not) should be strictly appraised and monitored. It is the duty of approvers to ensure that only essential travel is undertaken and that the number of persons travelling on official business is kept to a minimum, consistent with the requirements of official business.

Approvers should ensure as a general principle that the best value for money is obtained, in respect of each official trip undertaken, consistent with the requirements of official business.

It is recognised that an employee maybe required to stay in a particular hotel/area for business reasons, otherwise the standard and cost of hotels should have regard to the Department of Finance subsistence rates.

Expense claimants whose receipts are in foreign currency but are submitting their claim in Colombian pesos should attach evidence of the exchange rate used (e.g. credit card statement, rate on bank receipt for the purchase of foreign currency etc.).

Approvers must be prepared to use the services of all carriers operating out of Colombia.

The Organization will reimburse the cost of entry visas required for travel on Organization business. The cost of passports/passport renewal will not be reimbursed.

6.2 Class of Air Travel

1 The terminology used to designate different classes of air travel varies between airlines and changes over time.

2 The following principles should apply in relation to the class used:

- a) It is expected that persons travelling will use economy class travel including internet (low-cost carriers) fares for short-haul flights.
- b) Cheaper restricted fares should be used where the travel abroad is predictable and changes to travel are unlikely to occur.
- c) There are a range of fully flexible economy fares, but these should be used only where it can be shown that the flexibility provided and the extra cost of the ticket are warranted compared to the potential cancellation cost of a restricted internet/economy ticket.
- d) Premium economy class travel may be used (where available) for long-haul flights where the additional flexibility afforded is considered necessary for the effective discharge of official business.
- e) Business class travel should be confined to limited situations. The additional cost where justified in relation to the length of the flight and the official business to be conducted must be approved in advance in writing by the Office of the President. As a general guide flights under 8 hours in duration will not require business class travel.
- f) As a general rule, first class travel should not be used. If it is considered that there are very exceptional circumstances where the use of first class travel is justified for business reasons, the permission of the Office of the President should be obtained beforehand and the reasons justifying it should be recorded.

3 The Organization will not pay the travel costs of persons who have no direct connection with the Organization and have no role in the official business being conducted during a trip

other than in exceptional circumstances where a specific invitation is extended for a special occasion and that attendance is in the interest of the Organization.

4 In no circumstances is it permissible to 'trade down' premium tickets to enable another person who is not a member of the staff of the Organization to travel free of charge or at a reduced rate. If for any reason it is decided to downgrade the class of travel, the saving must accrue to the Organization.

6.3 Frequent Flyer Points

It is the responsibility of each Approver to ensure that frequent flyer points are not allowed to influence decisions taken in relation to the carriers used for official business.