



Expense Reimbursement and Travel Policies

TRAVEL POLICY OVERVIEW

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and understating of their roles and responsibilities in the purchasing process who make travel purchases on behalf of AAG.

Generally, participants should always seek the lowest-cost alternative, consistent with good business practices, when making purchases. Within the parameters of these policies, each project director will have the discretion to set spending policies for her/his own project based on budgetary and cultural considerations.

Every participant who makes purchases on behalf of a project is responsible for understanding prior to making any purchases what constitutes appropriate and economical spending within the project's particular context. By following these policies, AAG Participants will be helping to ensure that AAG's use of resources is in keeping with program purposes and achieving the mission.

It is the responsibility of each participant to understand and timely comply with this policy prior to submitting expenses for reimbursement. Any questions or requests for guidance should be directed to the participant's project director. Expense reports will be reviewed for compliance with these policies. By submitting an expense report, participants are representing that the expenditures incurred are in accordance with these policies.

Participants have a responsibility to submit an appropriately documented record of all expenses via AAG's expense reporting system. Appropriate documentation and detail must be provided for all expenses. In the event a receipt is not available, Participants need to provide an explanation and a missing receipt affidavit.

NON-REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

Several categories of expenses are not reimbursable under any circumstances:

- Participants will not be reimbursed for travel costs related to their commute to the office from their residences or from personal travel.
- Participants who work remotely from their home offices will not be reimbursed for rental or other usage charges for their home office space.
- Participants will generally not be given travel per diems.
- Participants will not be reimbursed for other expenses related to business travel unless expressly outlined in these policies.
- Participants will not be reimbursed for travel and entertainment expenses incurred by a spouse/companion, or any other individual who is not an AAG participant, who accompanies an AAG participant on business. A spouse/companion or other individual may accompany a participant on a business trip at the participant's own expense.
- Travel accident insurance premiums or purchase of additional travel insurance.
- Any entertainment or alcohol beverage expense.

The above list includes examples and is not exhaustive. For specific questions regarding whether expenses are reimbursable, please contact your project director for further guidance.

TRAVEL RESERVATION PROCEDURES

In all cases, Participants are expected to make reservations for travel as early as possible, to take advantage of advance purchase discount prices.

AIR TRAVEL RESERVATIONS

Air travel reservations should be made directly through the airlines or through an airline travel service. Use of travel websites is encouraged, except for those travel websites that require non-refundable prepaid flights for travel. Participants are expected to obtain the lowest available airfare that reasonably meets business travel needs.

Travelers are encouraged to book flights in advance to avoid premium airfare pricing. Coach class or economy tickets must be purchased for domestic flights.

In most cases, upgrades may not be submitted for reimbursement. With prior approval, an upgrade may be allowable as a reimbursable expense if compelling business reasons for the upgrade exist.

Participants are responsible for handling all cancellation activities directly with the airline or travel agent. Participants will be responsible for fees related to cancelling or modifying their travel reservations, except in circumstances in which modification or cancellation is unavoidable or outside of the participants' control.

Cancellations due to other unforeseen circumstances, participants are obligated to inform AAG staff in a timely manner and return any refunds to the AAG.

RAIL TRAVEL RESERVATIONS

The most economical/lowest available business class fare is allowed for non-commuter rail travel.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL & FEES

Participants are responsible for obtaining a passport and visas for international travel sufficiently in advance of the trip.

AAG will not reimburse expenses for passports, visas, and country entry/exit fees required for travel. AAG will not reimburse expediting fees except in the instance where last-minute business was required and the project director approved.

AAG will reimburse in US Dollar and will not include currency exchange gain or loss.

RENTAL CAR GUIDELINES

Participants are expected to consider the costs of all travel options when arriving at their destination to determine if it would be more efficient and cost effective to walk, take public transportation, pay for a taxi, or rent a car.

If a rental car is decided to be the best option, Participants may make reservations through a rental car service or travel website. Participants should avoid using travel websites that require a non-refundable prepayment for rental car reservations.

Participants can request a compact or midsize vehicle for AAG business travel. Rentals of other types of cars are not permitted, except with the project director's prior approval. Luxury, premium, and specialty. Participants assume responsibility for all parking and traffic fines and violations.

Personal Vehicle Usage

The use of a privately owned vehicle is allowed once pre-authorized when it is cost effective. If the length and duration of travel is such that traveling by vehicle (mileage + meals + lodging) is more expensive than using economy-airfare, this option should not be used. Participants will be reimbursed at the current GSA rate per mile, plus properly documented parking fees and tolls.

<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-a-trip/transportation-airfare-rates-pov-rates-etc/privately-owned-vehicle-pov-mileage-reimbursement>

TAXIS AND LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

Participants may submit requests for reimbursement for taxis, shared ride services, and local public transportation used for travel associated with business. Reimbursement requests will be honored for travel to and from the airport, client meetings, business dinners, and approved AAG functions. All other requests must be authorized by a project director for approval. Participants are encouraged to walk to destinations or use public transportation whenever feasible.

AIRPORT TRANSPORTATION

Participants are expected to select transportation to and from the airport in keeping with the AAG policy of seeking travel options that are comfortable and economical. Depending on the circumstances, this would mean choosing public transportation, airport vans/shuttles, or taxis. Limousines or car services should not be chosen unless there is no acceptable alternative and only with the approval of the project director.

MEALS

Reimbursement will be provided for reasonable and necessary meal expenses incurred related to participating in AAG funded events. The AAG does not offer per diem. Meal expenses will be reimbursed up to the GSA Meals & Incidentals rate of the City, State.

<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

This policy is not applicable if hotel arrangements are made by AAG for the group.

Hotel reservations may be made through a travel website or through the hotel directly. Participants should avoid travel websites that require prepayments, as many of these services offer non-refundable reservations. Participants should make every effort to understand budget constraints and donor expectations and requirements when spending travel dollars. Further, the IRS requires itemized receipts for lodging expenses, regardless of dollar amount. Participants must submit itemized receipts and not just credit card statements for all lodging expenses to receive reimbursement.

Lodging selections must be no higher than a four-star or four-diamond rating in the United States or the international equivalent.