



Traveling for MIT on a Federally Funded Award

Plan ahead and know what costs are allowable before you travel

When traveling on a federally funded award, please keep in mind:

- All items on a travel expense report must provide a direct benefit to the project.
- The person traveling must be currently working on the project.
- Travelers should refer to Kualii Coeus for any travel restrictions in place by the sponsor. Travelers unsure about allowable costs should contact their Research Administration Services (RAS) representative or RA-Help@mit.edu before booking travel or incurring any travel expenses.
- If a sponsor has specified terms that require a U.S. carrier, a United States Flag Carrier must be used.
- If a sponsor has terms that require an airline that is included in the Open Skies Agreement, only Flag Carriers of the countries listed in the Fly America Act may be used.
- Airline costs that are reimbursable under MIT policy but cannot be charged to a sponsor (such as a business class airline ticket) must be itemized and allocated. The economy rate obtained at time of booking needs to be itemized as airfare, and the difference needs to be itemized as airfare difference and allocated to a non-sponsored account.

For help navigating U.S. carrier requirements or the Open Skies Agreement, contact travelsupport@mit.edu or MIT's preferred travel agency, The Travel Collaborative, at 617-497-7400.

Multipurpose Trips

Documentation is required for trips that have multiple purposes or include personal stays.

When booking travel for one trip with multiple purposes, a comparison quote must be obtained at the time of booking to show the exact airfare for the sponsored-related portion of the trip. The quote must be attached to the expense report in Concur.

Example: A traveler flies to California for a two-day meeting with a sponsor, and then travels directly to a conference in Seattle that is unrelated to the sponsored project. The traveler should, at the time of the booking, obtain a quote to show what the flight cost would have been if the traveler returned to Boston at the completion of the sponsor meeting. When reporting expenses, this amount can be allocated to the sponsored project.

If a traveler arrives early to a sponsored-related event or delays their return for personal reasons, a comparison quote must be obtained at the time of booking to show the exact airfare for the sponsored-related portion. The quote must be attached to the expense report in Concur.

Example: A traveler presents research results of the sponsored project at the IEEE Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society Conference in Hawaii. The traveler stays an extra week in Hawaii for personal travel. The traveler should, at the time of the booking, obtain a quote to show what the flight cost would have been if he or she returned to Boston at the completion of the sponsor meeting. When reporting expenses, this amount can be allocated to the sponsored project.



Travel-Related Expenses (not airfare)

Only expenses directly related to the particular project should be charged to a sponsored project.

Allowable expenses that can be charged to a sponsor:

- Poster printing for a conference that directly benefits the project
- Materials purchased that directly benefit the project
- Checked baggage fee
- Overweight or oversized baggage fee
- Change fees due to rescheduled conferences or sponsor-mandated meetings with documentation of the date changes (see box at right)
- Paper ticket fees



Unallowable expenses that cannot be charged to a sponsor:

- Materials purchased in an emergency during travel
- Non-recoverable expenses
- Phone or computer cables that break during travel
- Airfare, hotel, rental cars, or any other travel purchased with frequent flyer miles or rewards points and/or cost for frequent miles or rewards points
- Costs incurred by unreasonable failure to cancel transportation or hotel reservations
- Fines for automobile violations including parking tickets
- Personal auto repairs, insurance deductibles, and surcharges
- Lost or stolen tickets, cash, or property
- Travel accident insurance premiums
- Travel insurance (trip protection or trip cancellation insurance)
- Car rental insurance for domestic travel
- Expenses not directly related to the performance of the travel assignment
- Headphone or movie rentals, magazines, newspapers, books
- Toiletry items, medications, health club fees
- Personal credit card late fees or finance charges



Change Fees

Airline “Change Fees” or additional travel agency fees are rarely allowable in federal awards. In instances when a conference is rescheduled or relocated, or the date of a sponsor-mandated meeting is changed after travel is booked, a sponsor may make exceptions. Contact your Research Administration Services (RAS) representative to determine if a particular change or agency fee is allowable on your sponsored project.