



Title: Federal Supplement to WPI Travel Policy  
Administered by: Sponsored Programs Accounting (SPA)  
Revised: December 4, 2025

The following guide references the WPI Entertainment, Meal and Travel Expense Policy Effective 6/24/24.

## **Sponsored Programs & Federal Funds (referred to as grant worktags)**

### **Definitions**

- Allowable means travel cost expenditure that is permitted by all oversight policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, the WPI Entertainment, Meals and Travel Policy, Uniform Guidance or an awards individual terms and conditions.
- Allocable means travel expenditures that directly benefit the scope of work supported by the grant worktag paying for the travel expenses. The trip is directly related to the project.

### **Airlines**

Additional leg room for flights in excess of six (6) consecutive hours, excluding layovers ONLY applies to airline tickets charged to institutional funds. This is an institutional policy and is not applicable to travel on a grant worktag, with some exceptions.

Seat assignments and baggage fees are allowable on grant worktags, if they are not for upgrades. An example is buying the lowest price economy ticket that does not provide a seat assignment. You can purchase the lowest price seat assignment, as long as it does not pay for extra legroom. Or purchase the economy with a seat assignment, with documentation that this is less expensive than purchasing an economy and a seat assignment separately.

One piece of baggage is allowed. Additional baggage fees are allowable if it is for equipment or other project related expenses with proper back up documentation.

At the time of purchasing tickets, it is recommended to document comparison to other fares that you are purchasing the lowest economy fare available.

For exceptions, please confirm with your [Department SPA contact](#) PRIOR to travel.

### **Foreign travel**

May require a sponsor's prior approval, even when the funds for international travel are listed in the approved budget. Please contact your [Department SPA contact](#) if you have any questions about what may need prior approval per the Funding Announcement and/or the Terms and Conditions.

- **Visas for short term grant-related travel** – per WPI policy obtaining or renewing a visa is reimbursable for faculty, staff and research assistants. Related travel to obtain the visa requires pre-approval by the Division Head prior to the travel arrangements. The written prior approval should be included in expense reports when submitted for reimbursement.

***All Foreign air transportation must comply with the [Fly America Act](#) or an Open Skies Agreement.***

- If you are travelling internationally on a **Department of Defense (DOD) Award**, you **MUST** travel under the Fly America Act, meaning you must use a **US Flag carrier** (an airline owned by a US company).
- For a flight to follow the Fly America Act, the code of a U.S. flag air carrier must be noted as part of the flight number on the airline ticket, flight coupon (boarding pass\*), or passenger receipt. Each airline has a two-letter alpha code. For example, United Airlines has a code of "UA". On an airline ticket, boarding pass or passenger receipt, this two-digit code is designated just to the left of the flight number.

- For all other non-DoD awards, the Open Skies Agreement may be applicable. Open Skies Agreements lists carriers owned by other countries that can be used. Please note that only 4 Open Skies Agreements meet the Fly America Act: the European Union, Australia, Switzerland and Japan.
- In rare cases, with specific approved documentation, an exception may be made. Allowable exceptions are listed in the Fly America and Open Skies documents. Unfortunately, a lower price is not considered a valid reason.
- If you book with a U.S. or other Open Skies Carrier, and they transfer you to another airline (but you still are ticketed using the original carrier) that is okay. For example, American Airlines flight 6117 (ticketed as AA6117), but operated by Cathay Pacific Airways, is considered a U.S. carrier.

### **Lodging/Accommodations**

- A friendly reminder that the itemized folio **provided by the hotel** is required as an attachment to the expense report in Workday. The documentation provided by a third-party vendor, like Booking.com or Expedia, may not replace the itemized folio provided by the direct service provider if it is not itemized.

### **Meals, Gratuities & Tipping**

- Meals
  - WPI does not reimburse per diem; the WPI policy states reimbursement for actual expenditures benchmarked to the Boston Per Diem rate of \$79 per day. If your daily meal expenses exceed \$79, an explanation is required.
  - ONLY use the categorization of “Business Meal” when 2 or more WPI employees are traveling together.
  - Please use the categorization of “Travel Meal” for all meals expensed during a business trip.
  - Group Meals are used for more than 12 attendees with a description of the type of attendees (students, faculty, etc.) and a technical justification provided.
  - Non-travel meals are unallowable. For example, in general with a few exceptions, catering on campus or dining at local restaurants is not allowed on federal grants. If you have any questions regarding a specific award, please contact your [Department SPA contact](#).
- Alcohol
  - It is unallowable. When removing the alcohol from the reimbursement, please remember to remove the associated tax and tip.
- Specific to National Science Foundation Funding
  - NSF States under Meals and Coffee Breaks: “Meal expenses of recipient employees who are not on travel status are unallowable.”
  - Meals are allowable for non-Travel Participant Support Costs when:
    - The program or funding provides subsistence in the awarding document, like WPI Summer REU (Research Experience for Undergraduates) programs.
    - Meals can only be provided to enrolled participants to attend a meeting with a published agenda and evidence of attendance.
    - When providing meals to participants receiving a subsistence payment, the subsistence support must be reduced by the per head cost being charged; otherwise, this is considered duplicate reimbursement for the same expense.

### **Entertainment**

- Amusement or recreation activities are unallowable on grant worktags.