

Travel with Companions

Travel is a fundamental part of research, and at the same time these expenses have been under increasing scrutiny from external agencies. There are occasions when the researcher is accompanied by a companion or family on research trips; we have noticed an increase in these instances in recent times. There are special considerations that must be taken in these circumstances; the below provides guidance on key considerations for the research community.

The key principle is that the costs charged should be equivalent to those that would have been incurred if the researcher was travelling alone. This requires making cost comparisons **prior** to departure, to provide sufficient and appropriate supporting evidence. In general travel costs are required to be at the most economical option or rate available.

The following areas have been highlighted from practice:

Travel period: The period charged must be for the eligible travel period related to the research purpose of travel. Expenses related to conference travel are only eligible for period beginning the day before the conference with departure the day after the conference. If travel plans are extended for personal reasons during a research trip, the cost comparison must show the difference in price had you made a direct flight for the conference period only vs. extending the trip.

Travel between destinations: There are cases where researchers leverage travel so as to attend several conferences and/or meetings. Travel costs between destinations must be the most economical option. For example, if a decision is being made to rent a car vs. fly between destinations, cost comparisons must be provided to show that this option claimed was the most economical.

Accommodation: Accommodation expenses can only be claimed for a standard room. For example, if a family was travelling and rents a 3-bedroom villa, a cost comparison showing the cost of a 1-bedroom accommodation should be claimed.

Meals: It is recommended that researchers claim meals on a per diem basis. While it is possible to claim on a receipted basis, this becomes difficult from a tracking perspective.

Vehicle Insurance and licenses: In general, costs associated with a partner's international driving insurance and licenses is non-eligible.

The above areas are general in nature and do not cover all possible circumstances. Please contact Research Accounting, prior to undertaking the travel, for additional guidance. A list of Research Accounting contacts can be found [here](#).