

Tri-I PhD Program Research Allowance - Travel Policy Updates

Revised May 20, 2026

Subject: Travel Reimbursement Update: What You Need to Know

Dear TPCB and CBM Students –

Effective **June 1, 2026**, Weill is implementing a revised Travel and Expense Policy. This updated framework is mandatory for all personnel and students.

What You Need To Know:

- **You still need pre-approval before you book anything.** All conference and travel requests must be submitted for pre-approval no later than **8 weeks** before your travel date. No pre-approval means no reimbursement, no exceptions.
- **Every request must be justified.** When seeking pre-approval, all students must submit a draft budget along with a copy of the conference flyer and reason for attending.
- **What about receipts?** Same as before. You need to submit a copy of your ticket, boarding pass or booking confirmation along with proof of payment. Itemized receipts are required for anything over \$75. Under \$75, no receipt is required but you need to note the date and amount. If you can't produce an itemized receipt for something over \$75, reimbursement is capped at \$75.
- **What about economy vs. premium class?** Economy is required for any flight or rail segment - including Acela of 6 hours or less. Premium is only available for segments exceeding 6 hours. If you book up on a segment that doesn't qualify, the difference is your responsibility.
- **Lodging.** Airbnb, VRBO, private residences, and luxury hotels are not reimbursable. You need a single-occupancy hotel room at a reasonable rate. When a conference hotel is available, that's where you should stay. If you book elsewhere, your rate needs to be at or below the conference standard rate.
- **Meals.** Same rule - per diem or receipts, not both on the same trip.
- **International Travel.** You must register through the Cornell Travel Registry. All expenses must be submitted in U.S. dollars using the exchange rate at the time of the expense. [Travel Registry](#)
- **What's not reimbursable?** TSA PreCheck and similar programs, airline upgrades, preferred boarding fees, frequent flyer mile redemptions, carbon offsets, hotel in-room entertainment, luggage, and travel expenses for a spouse, partner, or family member.

- **Submit your reimbursement within 60 days of returning.** This is an IRS requirement. Miss that window and the reimbursement becomes taxable income to you personally. After 365 days, it can't be reimbursed at all.

Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in delayed reimbursements or rejected claims. Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with the revised guidelines and send any questions you may have to Francine Collazo-Espinell at fcollazo@med.cornell.edu.

Thank you,
Tri-Institutional Research Program Admin team