Overview

As a steward of University resources, anyone making purchases on behalf of the University should do so prudently. The University reimburses individuals for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by individuals in the conduct of official University activities. Both the person who incurs the expenses and the person who approves reimbursement or University payment of expenses are responsible for ensuring that all requests submitted relate to University business.

*Items for University business should not be purchased using personal funds, but instead with a Stanford Purchasing Card (PCard) or via a purchase requisition whenever possible.*

*Travel expenses should be purchased using a Stanford Travel Card (TCard).*

Expenditures and reimbursements are to be consistent with federal regulations and must be reported in a timely manner. Absent exceptional circumstances, expenses submitted more than 60 days after they are incurred will be reported as additional income to the individual, in accordance with Internal Revenue Service guidance.

Reimbursable travel expenses on behalf of Stanford include:
- Travel expenses, payments to human subjects, costs of business meals, conference registration and training course fees, dues & subscriptions for memberships to professional organizations and publications, moving & house hunting expenses, and gifts (tangible personal property) related to University business.

**NOTE:** Any plans to travel on behalf of Stanford University to countries identified as “State Sponsors of Terrorism” must be reviewed and approved by the University Export Control Officer in advance of travel. Stanford will not reimburse travelers to these countries without the Export Control Officer’s written pre-approval: Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, Syria, and Crimea Region of Ukraine.

There are certain expenses which are non-reimbursable by the University to individuals, such as personal expenses and other unallowed items. See Policies and Regulations for additional information.

**Best Practices**

- Before and during your trip, review the [Fingate: Stanford Travel Packet](#) and obtain/retain applicable information
- Expenses should be submitted and approved within 60 days after they are incurred.
• Any plans to travel on behalf of Stanford University to countries identified as “State Sponsors of Terrorism” must be reviewed and approved by the University Export Control Officer – Steve Eisner, in advance of travel.
• Purchase items using a Stanford Purchasing Card or via a purchase requisition whenever possible.

Roles & Responsibilities

Originators/Initiators: Faculty and Staff (Payee/Preparer)
✓ Preparers should complete course FIN-0500: Introduction to the Expense Requests System and required prerequisite/applicable training via STARS.
✓ Initiate expense report within 10 days of incurring the expense(s) or completing travel for Stanford business. Expenses should be submitted and approved within 60 days after they are incurred.
✓ Ensure the transaction request is allowable, allocable, and reasonable by including all pertinent information (attachments such as conference/meeting agenda, itemized receipts, list of participants/attendees, etc.) necessary to understand the circumstances, details and business purpose of the expenditure. Depending upon the type and value of the expense, certain requirements for documentation apply.
✓ Ensure the business purpose includes the reason for the expenditure, explains how it directly benefits the project/Stanford, and addresses “Who, What, Where, When, and Why.”
✓ Ensure expenses are coded to the appropriate Project/Task/Award (PTA) and expenditure type.

Approvers/Reviewers: Director of Finance and Administration and/or designee
✓ Approvers/Reviewers should complete FIN-0103: Approving Financial Transactions and required prerequisite/applicable training via STARS and ensure Originators/Initiators roles and responsibilities are performed appropriately in accordance with policies & regulations.
✓ Review and ensure expenses incurred are allowable, allocable, and reasonable to be directly charged to unrestricted, restricted or sponsored awards.
✓ Approver should not be someone who reports to the payee or initiator (either directly or indirectly).
✓ Review and ensure transactions are approved in a timely manner within 60 days of transactions.

Other Reviewers: Travel & Reimbursement (T&R) Auditors
✓ Ensure Originators/Initiators and Approvers/Reviewers roles and responsibilities are performed appropriately in accordance with policies & regulations.
✓ For expense report transactions, T&R Auditors will approve the transaction for payment if compliant. If non-compliant, T&R Auditors will reject and notify the person initiating the transaction of required corrective action.
If a transaction has unusually high cost, T&R Auditors will escalate to the department escalation designee for final review and approval.

Penalties for non-compliance

Per federal regulation, expenses reported after 60 days of incurring the expense (trip, meals, supplies, etc.), will be reported to the IRS as taxable income. In addition, non-compliant transactions will be rejected and notification will be sent for required corrective action to responsible individual.

Policies & Regulations

Administrative Guide Memos:
AGM 5.4.3 Reimbursable Expenses
AGM 5.4.2 Travel Expenses

Stanford’s Gateway to Financial Activities - Fingate:
Fingate: Stanford’s Reimbursement/Expense Reporting Process
Fingate: Policy Notes – Business Expense Policy
Fingate: Reimbursement/Expense Reporting Resources
Fingate: Proper Coding of Allowable and Unallowable University Expenditures
Fingate – Policy Notes: Required Documentation for Travel Expense Reimbursement
Fingate: Faculty Travel
Fingate: Stanford Travel Packet
Fingate: Guidelines for Writing a Clear Business Purpose
Fingate: Stanford’s Buy & Pay Guide
Fingate: Expense Guidance for Business Meals
Fingate – Policy Notes: Export Control/Trade Sanctions Compliance Requirements

Questions?
Financial Management Services Center – Financial Support Center (FSC)
Email finhelp@stanford.edu or call 650-723-2772