ISSM Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policy

1. Purpose and scope

This policy governs the reimbursement of air travel and related transportation and travel expenses for individuals traveling on behalf of the International Society for Sexual Medicine (ISSM), specifically members of the Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and other approved representatives.
Its purpose is to ensure cost-efficient, transparent, and consistent travel practices, while aligning with ISSM's financial responsibilities and strategic operations.

2. General principles (applies to all travellers)

- **Cost Minimization:** Travel costs **should and will be minimized as much as reasonably possible**, while maintaining a manageable and safe travel itinerary.
- **Cost Responsibility**: ISSM will reimburse travel and related expenses only if incurred for approved ISSM business. All other expenses remain the traveller's own responsibility.
- **Sponsorship and Third-Party Coverage**: If travel is partially or fully covered by a third party (e.g. sponsor, local organizer, institution or partner organization), ISSM will only cover the remaining cost not reimbursed by the third party.
- **Combined Travel Purposes**: When combining ISSM duties with other activities (e.g. personal travel, external meetings), ISSM will only reimburse the portion directly related to the ISSM engagement.
- **Documentation Requirements**: Reimbursement claims must include complete documentation - e-ticket, itinerary, invoice, receipt, and proof of payments, where applicable.
- **Booking Process**:
  - All travel should be arranged through or in consultation with the ISSM Executive Office.
  - If self-booking is approved, it must be confirmed in advance, and booking details and proof of payment must be submitted for reimbursement.

3. Eligibility and Scope of Reimbursed Travel

- **Executive Committee (EC) Members:** EC members are eligible for travel reimbursement for:
  - Two in-person Executive Committee meetings per year
  - Other ISSM business travel that has been pre-approved (e.g. representation at partner events)
- **ISSM President:** In addition to EC meeting travel, the ISSM President receives travel support for attending:
  - The **annual meetings of ISSM's Affiliated Societies**
  - Other international or regional meetings **specifically approved** by the ISSM Executive Committee as part of the President's representative role.
- **Board of Directors:** Travel expenses for ISSM Board of Directors members are **not reimbursed** unless explicitly approved by the ISSM Executive Committee in advance. Board members are expected to cover their own travel costs to attend regular Board meetings.
- **Other Representatives or Delegates:** Travel reimbursement may be extended to other individuals representing ISSM upon **case-by-case approval** by the EC.

4. Air Travel Class and Booking Guidelines

Flight Duration*	Class Allowed	Notes
≤ 6 hours	Economy Class	Standard
> 6 hours	Business or Premium Economy	Based on cost-effectiveness and travel context (e.g. overnight flight)

** Flight Duration refers to the duration of a single, continuous flight segment, not the total trip including stopovers or layovers.*

- Upgrade at Traveller’s Own Expense: Travellers may choose to upgrade their ticket beyond the class permitted by this policy by paying the fare difference themselves. The ISSM will reimburse only up to the maximum fare allowed under this policy, as outlined in the Travel Grid.
- Restricted Tickets: Should be booked when possible; more flexible tickets may be approved when justified (e.g. schedule uncertainty).
- Stopovers: Should be minimized. Stopover time should preferably not exceed 4 hours unless no reasonable alternative is available.
- Preferred Airlines: Can be chosen if rates are competitive with the cheapest available fare.
- Airline Safety: Blacklisted or untrustworthy airlines must not be booked.
- Booking Process:
  - All tickets should be arranged or approved by the ISSM Executive Office.
  - If booking is delegated to the traveller, prior written approval is required, and all documentation must be provided with the claim.
  - Travelers are encouraged to book flights at least 30 days in advance whenever possible, in order to support cost-effective travel arrangements. Exceptions may apply when ISSM travel is confirmed on shorter notice or when operational circumstances require later booking.

5. Ground Transportation, Mileage, and Parking

- Reasonable expenses for taxis, ride-share services, trains, buses, and other public transportation to and from airports, hotels, meeting venues, and approved ISSM business activities are reimbursable when supported by receipts.
- When a traveler uses a privately owned vehicle for approved ISSM business travel, including transportation to and from the airport, mileage may be reimbursed at the mileage rate approved by ISSM. The applicable mileage rate will be communicated by the ISSM Executive Office and reviewed periodically. The traveler must provide the travel date, route, business purpose, and number of kilometers or miles claimed.
- Airport parking may be reimbursed when it is reasonable and cost-effective compared with other transportation options. Reimbursement is limited to long-term, economy, or equivalent parking rates. Premium, valet, short-term, or daily terminal parking is not reimbursable unless there is a valid reason and prior approval has been obtained where possible.
- Fines, penalties, parking violations, speeding tickets, or other traffic-related penalties are not reimbursable.

6. Travel-Related Meals and Incidental Expenses

- For approved ISSM business travel covered under this policy, reasonable meal and incidental expenses may be reimbursed when such expenses are directly related to the approved travel and are not otherwise provided or reimbursed by a third party.
- Meals and basic refreshments during approved ISSM travel may be reimbursed up to a maximum of USD 100 per full travel day and USD 50 per partial travel day, unless a different amount is approved in advance. Claims must be supported by receipts. These amounts are intended as practical reimbursement caps rather than formal per diem rates and will be reviewed periodically to ensure they remain reasonable for international travel.
- When meals are included as part of the conference registration, official meeting program, hotel accommodation, airline service, hosted event, or affiliated society program, travelers are expected to make reasonable use of those meals. Alternative meals during the same period are not reimbursable unless there is a valid reason.
- Reasonable expenses for breakfast, lunch, dinner, coffee, water, and light refreshments during travel may be reimbursed within the daily cap when no meal or refreshment is otherwise provided.
- Alcoholic beverages, minibar charges, luxury dining, entertainment, and personal expenses are not reimbursable.

- Business or representation meals with affiliated society representatives, partner organizations, sponsors, or other external stakeholders may be reimbursed when the expense has a clear ISSM business purpose. Claims for such meals must include the receipt, the names and affiliations of attendees, and the business purpose of the meeting. These meals are reviewed separately and are not automatically covered by the daily meal cap.

7. Reimbursement & Limitations

- **Standard Reimbursement**: Travel costs will be reimbursed only when aligned with this policy and supported by complete documentation, including:
  - E-ticket or passenger itinerary
  - Proof of payment (credit card statement or invoice)
  - Boarding passes (where applicable)
  - Original invoices or receipts (not photocopies)
- **Shared Rides**: When sharing transport (e.g. taxi or ride-share) with other ISSM travellers, **one person may submit the full expense**, provided the names of the fellow ISSM travellers are clearly noted in the claim.
- **Non-Compliance and Capped Reimbursement**: If the conditions outlined in this policy are not fully met (e.g. ticket class exceeds policy, no prior approval, incomplete documents), reimbursement will:
  - Be based on **actual costs incurred**, only if original documentation is provided, and
  - Be **capped** at the amount specified in the **ISSM Travel Grid**.
- **Ineligible Expenses:** The following expenses are **not reimbursable** under any circumstances:
  - First-class ticket upgrades or luxury fares
  - Travel or accommodation expenses for spouses, family, or guests
  - Alcohol, minibar charges, in-room movies
  - Fines, penalties, or parking violations
  - Personal travel insurance or frequent flyer program fees
  - Lost or stolen items, including baggage or electronics
  - Passport or visa renewal costs (unless required for ISSM travel)
  - Dry cleaning or laundry (unless on extended trips >7 days)
  - Entertainment or personal expenses
  - Any cost reimbursed or reimbursable by a third party
- **Discretion for Exceptions**: The **ISSM Executive Committee reserves the right** to approve **exceptions** to this policy in special cases, based on reasonable justification and organizational needs.

8. Annual Officer Administrative Expense Allowance

- ISSM officers may claim up to an annual maximum for small recurring administrative expenses incurred in the performance of their ISSM role.
- This allowance is intended to cover minor ISSM-related administrative costs for which receipts may be difficult or impractical to provide, such as telephone or mobile use, internet or data use, postage, regular mailing, printing, scanning, copying, small office supplies, minor software or online tools, and similar administrative expenses.
- This allowance is not a payment for services, compensation, honorarium, or remuneration.
- The annual officer administrative expense allowance is separate from approved travel, meeting, and representation expenses. It does not cover airfare, accommodation, meals, drinks, hospitality, transportation, conference registration, courier or bulk mailing costs, equipment purchases, or other expenses for which receipts can reasonably be provided. Such expenses must be submitted separately under the applicable ISSM travel and expense reimbursement process.

- The maximum annual allowance amounts are:
  - President: maximum USD 2,000 per year;
  - Past President, President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer: maximum USD 1,000 per year.
- The amounts listed above are upper limits. Officers may claim the full amount, a lower amount, or may decide not to claim the allowance.
- At the end of each year, officers wishing to claim the annual allowance must submit the ISSM Annual Officer Administrative Expense Allowance Claim Form. The form must identify the general categories of expenses incurred during the year and include the officer's confirmation that the expenses were incurred in connection with their ISSM role, have not been claimed elsewhere, and do not include expenses that must be claimed separately under the travel and expense reimbursement process.
- Receipts are not required for minor expenses claimed under this annual allowance where receipts are difficult or impractical to provide. However, ISSM may request additional information or supporting documentation if needed.
- Officers may not claim more than the amount actually incurred or reasonably attributable to ISSM business. Any amount paid more than ISSM-related expenses must be returned or will be treated in accordance with applicable tax and reporting requirements.
- The same expense may not be claimed both under the annual officer administrative expense allowance and as a separate reimbursed expense.
- ISSM will determine the tax and reporting treatment of any officer allowance or reimbursement in accordance with applicable laws and reporting requirements and, where needed, in consultation with its accountant or tax advisor.
- These amounts will be reviewed, if necessary, at the beginning of each year.

9. Claims and Deadlines

- Travel expense claims must be submitted within 14 days following completion of travel.
- Claims must be approved by the ISSM Executive Director or Treasurer.
- One individual may not claim for another's travel; each traveller must submit their own expense claim.
- Claims without the required documentation or submitted late may be denied or reimbursed only partially.
- All claims remain subject to audit and possible adjustment.

Attachment A. Travel Grid

This table outlines the maximum reimbursable airfare amounts (in USD) between major world regions. It serves as a reference cap when travel is booked outside of ISSM policy, without prior approval, or where the required booking process has not been followed..
The Travel Grid does not replace the requirement for advance approval, actual-cost reimbursement, and complete supporting documentation. When travel is booked in accordance with this policy and approved in advance, reimbursement will be based on the actual eligible cost incurred.

All rates in: USD
Reviewed: June 2026

	USA East	USA West	Europe	North Africa / Middle East	South Africa	Asia	Austr. East	Austr. West	Latin America
USA East	USD 500	USD 500	USD 1.500	USD 1.500	USD 2.000	USD 2.500	USD 2.500	USD 3.000	USD 2.000
USA West	USD 500	USD 500	USD 2.000	USD 2.500	USD 2.500	USD 2.000	USD 2.000	USD 2.500	USD 2.000
Europe	USD 1.500	USD 2.000	USD 500	USD 1.000	USD 2.000	USD 2.000	USD 2.500	USD 2.000	USD 2.500
North Africa / Middle East	USD 1.500	USD 2.500	USD 1.000	USD 500	USD 500	USD 2.000	USD 2.500	USD 2.000	USD 2.000
South Africa	USD 2.000	USD 2.500	USD 2.000	USD 500	USD 500	USD 2.000	USD 2.500	USD 2.000	USD 2.000
Asia	USD 2.500	USD 2.000	USD 2.000	USD 2.000	USD 2.000	USD 500	USD 2.000	USD 2.000	USD 2.500
Austr. East	USD 2.500	USD 2.000	USD 2.500	USD 2.500	USD 2.500	USD 2.000	USD 500	USD 500	USD 2.000
Austr. West	USD 3.000	USD 2.500	USD 2.000	USD 2.000	USD 2.000	USD 2.000	USD 500	USD 500	USD 2.500
Latin America	USD 2.000	USD 2.000	USD 2.500	USD 2.000	USD 2.000	USD 2.500	USD 2.000	USD 2.500	USD 500

Note on Rate Validity
The rates outlined in this Travel Grid have been reviewed against current global airfare trends and remain appropriate as maximum reimbursement caps for the specified routes.
The grid is intended to provide a fair and cost-conscious framework for situations where travel was not booked in accordance with the standard ISSM approval process or where reimbursement must be capped. Short-haul caps, such as intra-Europe and intra-USA travel, provide reasonable flexibility for regular and some last-minute bookings. Long-haul intercontinental caps, ranging from USD 1,500 to USD 3,000, remain broadly in line with upper-range economy, premium economy, and selected lower-cost business-class fares, depending on routing, timing, and availability.

Actual fares may vary significantly based on travel dates, booking timing, destination, airline availability, seasonality, and fare class. The Travel Grid should therefore be used as a maximum cap and not as an automatic reimbursement amount.
The grid should be reviewed annually to ensure ongoing accuracy and alignment with market conditions.