



Travel Policy

1. Introduction

The IP Federation (“Federation”) allocates a part of its budget each year to support travel by members’ representatives on its behalf. Typically, such travel is to meet with government or patent office representatives or other professional bodies to put forward Federation views or to gain information or insights on behalf of the Federation. This Travel Policy describes the mechanism by which the IP Federation monitors and allocates this budget and approves such travel.

The support for travel on behalf of the Federation typically includes the cost of travel by air, rail or road and any necessary associated accommodation and meals.

In general, the Federation will not support travel in instances where the traveller is likely to undertake the travel in any case, supported by other sources such as their employer. In general, the Federation will not support more than one traveller for any one meeting except for minor domestic travel within the UK.

2. Approval

Any travel that is proposed to be supported by the Federation must be approved in advance. The traveller should give as much notice as possible for such approval. Ideally, the traveller should initially propose the travel, at least in outline, at a Council meeting for preliminary approval. In any event the traveller should submit a proposal for approval no less than two weeks prior to the date of travel. The traveller should make no bookings before approval is obtained.

Any submission for approval of travel shall include the following:

- Location and date of meeting(s).
- Who will the proposed meeting be with; organisation, individuals’ names or positions.
- Reason for the meeting, including the IP Federation objectives or viewpoints that will be progressed.
- Likely total cost of travel, including major fares and accommodation plus an estimate of incidentals such as food and taxi fares.
- An indication that the proposer will not receive support for the travel from elsewhere, such as from their employer.

Guidelines on acceptable travel costs are as follows:

- Proposed air fares within Europe should be by the cheapest practicable economy route.

- Long haul flights (over 5 hours flight duration) should generally be premium economy; business class may be considered for overnight flights and under special circumstances.
- Overnight stays should be only if strictly necessary. Guideline hotel costs are £150 per night.

The submission shall be made by the traveller to the Secretary who shall circulate it promptly to the Governance Committee. The Governance Committee may nominate a single member of the Committee to consider travel approvals and approve them where appropriate on their behalf. The Governance Committee or the nominee member shall consider the proposal and respond either approving the travel or declining it within two weeks. If the traveller is a member of the Governance Committee then the traveller will not take part in the approval process.

In considering the proposal, the Governance Committee or the nominee member shall weigh the cost of the travel, the travel budget available at the time of the proposal and the potential benefit to the Federation. The Governance Committee is under no obligation to give any reasons for its decision either way, nor to enter into any correspondence or conversation regarding the outcome.

Once approval has been given, the traveller should make the bookings. Any increase in the actual cost on booking of more than 10% should be reported to the Governance Committee for re-approval.

3. Reimbursement

All travel should be booked at the cost of the traveller.

Within 3 months of the completion of the trip, the traveller should submit an expense claim to the Secretary of the Federation. The claim must be accompanied by receipts for all expenses with a list of what each receipt is for. If meals or taxis were shared, that should be noted. Any significant deviation from the cost originally approved should be reported and explained. Electronic copies of receipts are preferred.

The Secretary of the Federation shall check that the claim corresponds to travel previously approved by the Governance Committee. If the amount claimed is no more than the previously approved amount, then the Secretary shall approve the claim. If the amount is greater than the previously approved amount then the Secretary shall circulate a note of the claim to the Governance Committee. The Governance Committee may at their sole discretion agree to pay the previously approved amount or the claimed amount, or an amount between these two as they deem reasonable. They will endeavour to agree and approve such payment within one week.

Once the claim is approved, the Secretary shall arrange to pay the claimant promptly.

4. Record-Keeping

The Secretary shall keep a complete record of submissions approved and declined and of payments made. The record shall include a note of any significant (10% +) discrepancies between the submission for approval and the final payment.

This Travel Policy shall come into effect for all travel undertaken from 1st January 2016.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

Version 1 - date of adoption by Council 11th December 2015.

Version 2 - date of adoption by Council 12th January 2018.

Date of Last Review by Governance Committee; January 2018.