

OIST Guidelines for Student Travel



OIST Graduate School

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General Guidelines of Student Travel

The following guidelines are based on OIST’s travel expense regulations (PRP 29) and relevant Graduate School policies. For any matters not addressed in these guidelines, please refer to the above.

- These guidelines define financial assistance and/or travel support provided by the OIST Graduate School to OIST PhD Students and Junior Research Fellows (hereafter referred to as “Students”), to assist with “Student Travel” under Student Support Policies 2.
- The Graduate School provides support only to students, not their traveling companions.
- The Graduate School provides financial assistance and travel support for only the first five years of enrolment in the PhD program (excluding non-study leave). After five years and before registration as a Junior Research Fellow, no financial assistance or travel support is available.
- For Students enrolled in or before September 2018, Graduate School financial assistance and travel support is available during each academic year (September-August).

For Students enrolled in or after January 2018, Graduate School financial assistance and travel support is available during each *corresponding* academic year (relevant to the students’ start date)

Enrolment Month	May (Early Enrolment)	September (Regular Enrolment)	January (Late Enrolment)
Academic Year	May-April	September-August	January-December

- There is a limit on the number of travel support grants given per year, per travel category. If unused, these grants do not carry over to the following year.
- Applications for travel support must be made through the “Business Travel Form”.
- Applications are assessed using a variety of criteria, including the contents of the application, the timing of the event, and the student’s academic status and progress.
- Students are not generally permitted to travel during terms when they are enrolled in courses. If travel is requested during terms when the student is enrolled in courses, the student is responsible for obtaining permission from their lab supervisor and/or class instructor(s) for this absence and for making appropriate arrangements to cover all missed classes, courses and absence from the lab.
- When travel coincides with examination arrangement, travel support may be approved *conditionally*. Further information should be sought from the Academic Affairs Section.
- Any modification of travel period or flight itinerary for personal reasons is not permitted after the travel request has been approved.
- OIST does not pay for any costs related to personal expenses and activities during personal stays.
- Students are reimbursed travel costs only after the travel has concluded.



- Students are responsible for reporting any financial support provided by any organization other than OIST to the Graduate School without concealment or deception. When a student receives a travel grant from an organizer of the event the student plans to attend, this travel grant must be used to support their travel costs.
- Expenses incurred in foreign currencies are reimbursed in Japanese Yen (JPY). The currency conversion rate is set monthly by the OIST Financial Management Division.
- To minimize risks and be most cost-effective, OIST has appointed preferred travel agencies (PTA).
- Other than to obtain quotations, students should not contact PTAs directly unless the Graduate School directs them to do so. After travel has been approved and arranged, under no circumstances shall students modify travel arrangements, tickets or itinerary without the Graduate School's prior approval.

1. Conference & Workshop Travel

- The Graduate School provides financial assistance to OIST PhD Students who wish to attend scientific conferences or workshops.
- Conference & Workshop Travel funding is generally awarded only to students taking an active part in the event. A presentation is required to attend a conference. Presentations about research completed at OIST will receive precedence over others.

[Application]

- Students may receive Graduate School funding to attend conferences or workshops **once per academic year** (see General Guidelines). The start date of the intended conference or workshop travel should be ON or AFTER the first day of each academic year. Only in exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the Manager of the Academic Affairs Section, may funding be granted for more than one conference or workshop travel (or other educational activity) during any given academic year.
- **A Business Travel Form** must be submitted **at least THREE months prior** to the start date of the conference or workshop travel, **even if an acceptance notice has not yet been received**.
- Application documents, materials and information:
 - Business Travel Form (under “Application: Conference & Workshop Travel”)
 - Airfare quotation(s)
 - Endorsement from the lab rotation supervisor or course provider affected by the period of absence, or from the thesis supervisor (and co-supervisor, if applicable). Endorsements should **include the conference or workshop name and the period of absence from OIST**.
 - Conference or workshop information (website, etc.)
 - Invitation letter or acceptance letter from the conference or workshop organizer. This is not required at the time of submission, but the student should provide the letter to the Graduate School via email (gs-travel@oist.jp) as soon as it is received. Flight tickets should be purchased only **AFTER receipt of the letter has been confirmed by the Graduate School**.
 - Additional documents and materials may be required as necessary.

[Flight]

- The Graduate School arranges **the most economical, simple, round-trip, economy class flight between Okinawa and the nearest airport to the conference or workshop venue**. Students must obtain quotation(s) from an OIST-preferred travel agency (PTA) to include in the application.

- Stopovers at any city during transit and open-jaw tickets are not permitted. There are NO exceptions. An open-jaw ticket is an airline return ticket where the destination and/or the origin are not the same in both directions.
- If a student makes any changes to the itinerary for personal reasons after the purchase of flight tickets, the student is responsible for any cancellation fees, change fees or any other additional costs.
- Air tickets for conference or workshop travel should be purchased **AFTER any necessary visas are issued.**

[Ground Transportation]

- Students are responsible for ground transportation arrangement, **both in Okinawa and at the conference or workshop location.** The transportation fee will be reimbursed only for the most economical and direct route, in accordance with OIST's travel expense regulations (PRP 29). If a student makes any changes for personal reasons after the arrangement is confirmed, the student will be responsible for any cancellation fees, change fees or additional costs.
- **For domestic travel,** transportation for only one round trip between the airport and the conference or workshop venue is reimbursed. No other travel is reimbursed, including to or from accommodation.
- **For international travel,** transportation for one direct round trip between the airport and the conference or workshop venue *or* accommodation is reimbursed, as is daily travel between accommodation and the conference or workshop venue.

[Per Diem and Lodging Allowance]

- A daily (*per diem*) allowance is provided to cover meals and miscellaneous expenses during travel (such as communication fees, tips, lockers, etc.).
- The amount of *per diem* allowance is stipulated in the appendix "*Per diem* and Maximum Lodging Allowance (rate in JPY)." For more information, see the appendix at the end of this document.
- Students are responsible for arranging accommodation. After travel is complete, up to the maximum amount as stipulated in the appendix "*Per diem* and Maximum Lodging Allowance (rate in JPY)" will be reimbursed after submission of the original receipts.

[Personal Stay and Annual Leave]

- Students may include a period of annual leave up to three days per travel period as a personal stay, subject to the approval of the Graduate School. However, the number of days of personal stay (including annual leave as well as weekends and holidays) should not exceed the number of business days over which the



conference or workshop was held. When the allowable days for a personal stay during one business trip are exceeded, only half of the business-related airfare will be paid by the Graduate School.

- Neither *per diem* nor lodging allowances are provided during periods of personal stay. Weekends and Japanese public holidays are also regarded as personal stays if they occur either before or after the conference or workshop. If there is a weekend or holiday in the middle of an event program that does not include business, and if it is necessary to stay during this break in the event program, then these days are counted as non-business days but are not considered a personal stay, and lodging allowance is provided.
- OIST does not pay for any expenses or costs related to personal stays, or any incremental expenses incurred through non-OIST related activities.

[Travelling dates]

- **For domestic travel**, students are allowed to arrive at the business location the day before commencement of business if the travel otherwise requires departure from home before 7am. Students are also allowed to depart the day after business is concluded if the travel otherwise requires arrival at home after 8pm.
- **For international travel**, students are allowed to arrive at the business location the day before commencement of business and to depart the day after business concludes. However, if an extra day is necessary to adjust to local time, or to prepare for business the day before, students are allowed to arrive 2 days before business commences. In these cases, the day before business commences is considered a “preparation day”, and is not deducted from annual leave. For preparation days, only lodging allowance is provided (no *per diem*). A personal day cannot come before or after the preparation day.

[Registration and Course Fees]

- Students are responsible for confirming the amount and the payment deadline of registration or course fee or course fees. **Only the approved registration fee for conferences, workshops or courses are covered.**
- The Graduate School supports the payment of registration fees up to 100,000 yen. When “registration fees” cover lodging, meals, or both, the Graduate School pays only an additional amount equivalent to the total applicable *per diem* and lodging allowance stipulated in the appendix. No separate *per diem* or lodging allowance is provided. If total fees are more than this amount, students are responsible for making initial payment and reimbursement will be made up to the total of 100,000JPY plus relevant *per diem* and lodging allowance.
- If the cost of meals is included in the registration fee, the student must report any provided meals during the conference or workshop without concealment or deception.

- If the cost of meals is clearly stated on the quote or receipt, the Graduate School covers the amount after subtracting any meal costs (full *per diem* is paid instead).
- Participation fees for social functions, such as after-conference parties or networking events (*konshin-kai*), are not reimbursable.
- Membership fees are not part of travel support provided by the Graduate School and are the responsibility of the student. Only when the membership fee is required to present will this be covered by the Graduate School. However, the Graduate School will not cover any membership fees for any subsequent years.

[Visa]

- Students are responsible for obtaining any necessary visas, Electronic System for Travel Authorization ESTA, or other electronic travel authorization applications, if necessary.
- If travel outside Okinawa is required to obtain a visa, then a **Business Travel Form for “VISA application travel for Conference & WS travel”** must be submitted **TWO weeks** prior to the period of travel and must be approved before travel arrangements can be made.
- Travel for the purpose of visa issuance should be planned with a minimal period of absence. Students may include a personal stay only on weekends or holidays up to the number of official business days (usually only one day).
- *Per diem* and lodging allowances (if applicable), as stipulated in the appendix “*Per diem* and Maximum Lodging Allowance (rate in JPY)”, will be provided.
- Visa and ESTA-application-related fees (application fees, travel costs, accommodation outside of Okinawa, etc.) are reimbursed after submission of original receipts once travel is complete.

[Document Submission]

- A “Travel and Expense Report [Form]” must be completed by the student to report completion of the travel and to inform the Graduate School of any travel expenses.
- Original receipts are required for all items claimed for reimbursement. For local transport with fixed costs, such as metro, bus, and train fares, an original receipt, or a printout of the website showing the route and fare, must be submitted.
- All receipts and website copies need to be in English or Japanese. Translations are acceptable.
- Receipts and original boarding passes are required for reimbursement if the flight tickets were purchased through services other than an OIST- preferred travel agency (PTA).
- **The Graduate School cannot reimburse any expenses without receipts.**

2. Educational Institution Visit Travel

- The Graduate School provides travel support to OIST PhD Students who wish to visit an educational institution. This support provides airfare costs only. Students are responsible for all other related expenses.
- Educational institution visit travel cannot be combined with any other business travel.

[Application]

- Students may receive travel support to visit an educational institution **once per academic year** (see General Guidelines of Student Travel).
- A **Business Travel Form** must be submitted **at least THREE months prior** to the start date of the Educational Institution Visit Travel **AFTER an appointment with the intended institution has been arranged**.
- Application documents, materials and information:
 - Business Travel Form (under “Educational Institution Visit Travel”)
 - Endorsement from the lab rotation supervisor or course provider affected by the period of absence, or the thesis supervisor (and co-supervisor if applicable). Endorsements should **include the name of the educational institution, the name of the professor hosting the student, and the period of absence from OIST**.
 - Confirmation letter from the host at the educational institution (the letter should **be addressed to the student and include the name of the educational institution, the name of the host (holding a title of professor or above), and the dates of visit**).
 - Additional documents and materials, as required.

[Flight]

- The Graduate School arranges **the most economical, simple, round-trip, economy class flight between Okinawa and the airport closest to the institution**.
- The Graduate School does not ask students to confirm their flight itinerary before purchasing flight tickets except in special circumstances (for example, when the flight itinerary requires transit visa(s), or when students ask for this confirmation when applying). When prior confirmation is not requested, the Graduate School arranges the flight as the most simple, round-trip route, departing from the airport of origin after 10:00 and arriving at the destination airport before 19:00 to ensure students’ ability to use public transportation. The dates of arrival and departure from the destination country are set accordingly based on flight availability.



- Stopovers at any city during transit and open-jaw tickets are not permitted. There are NO exceptions. An open-jaw ticket is an airline return ticket where the destination and/or the origin are not the same in both directions.
- If students make any changes to the itinerary for personal reasons after the air tickets are purchased, the student will be responsible for any cancellation fees, change fees, or any other additional costs.
- When the itinerary requires an overnight stay at a transit airport, the Graduate School covers the cost of this accommodation.
- Air tickets for educational institution visit travel will be purchased **AFTER any necessary visas are issued.**

[Ground Transportation]

- Students are responsible for all costs and arrangements.

[Per Diem and Lodging Allowance]

- Neither *per diem* nor lodging allowances are provided.
- Students are responsible for all costs and arrangements.

[Personal Stay and Annual Leave]

- **Only ONE day** is considered an official business day for the visit to the institution. Students must take annual leave for the rest of the period of their Educational Institution Visit Travel, **including travel days but excluding weekends and Japanese public holidays.**

[Registration and Course Fees]

- Neither registration fees nor course fees are provided.

[Visa]

- Student are responsible for arranging and obtaining any necessary visas, ESTAs or other electronic travel authorization applications **at their own expense.**

[Document Submission]

- A “Travel Report [Form]” must be completed by the student, and the submission of this form is required to report completion of the travel.
- All receipts must be in English or Japanese. Translations are acceptable.
- Receipts and original boarding passes are required if flight tickets were purchased through services other than an OIST-preferred travel agency (PTA).
- **The Graduate School cannot reimburse any expenses without receipts.**

[Other]

- Students must take OIST promotional materials for distribution at the educational institution.

3. Career Development Travel

- The Graduate School provides financial assistance to OIST PhD Students and Junior Research Fellows who wish to attend **domestic** career development events or other **domestic** career-related events announced by the Graduate School Professional and Career Development Team. Career related events include job matching events, career fairs, company or institution visits, and networking sessions followed by career related events. Students on Career Development Travel must attend career development events or institutional visits. Attendance at only networking sessions or social activities are not allowed. If a student wishes to attend a career development event that is not announced by the Professional and Career Development Team, please consult in advance.
- Job interviews or graduate school fairs are not eligible for this travel support.
- Career Development Travel funding is awarded only to students working on their PhD thesis research (during the third, fourth and fifth year of study) and Junior Research Fellows seeking job opportunities in Japan. An exception to this rule may be granted on approval from the Dean of the Graduate School, subject to availability of funds.

[Application]

- Students may receive Graduate School funding to travel for domestic career development events or activities **twice per academic year** (see General Guidelines of Student Travel). Only in exceptional circumstances, with the approval of the Manager of the Curriculum and Programs Section, will funding be granted more than twice during any academic year.
- **A Business Travel Form** must be submitted **at least ONE month prior** to the Career Development Travel start date.
- Application documents, materials and information:
 - Business Travel Form (under “Application: Career Development Travel”)
 - Endorsement from the thesis supervisor (and co-supervisor, if applicable) and mentor. Endorsements should **include the event or activity name and the period of absence from OIST**.
 - Travel and schedule proposal
 - Event or activity information (website, etc.)
 - Confirmed appointment, invitation, registration or acceptance letter from the event or activity.
 - Additional documents and materials, as required.

[Flight]

- The Graduate School arranges **the most economical, simple, round-trip, economy class flight between Okinawa and the airport closest to the venue**. In most cases a travel package (including flights and accommodation) is arranged by the Graduate School.
- The Graduate School will not ask the student to confirm their flight itinerary before purchasing their flight ticket except in special circumstances (for example, when students ask for confirmation when applying). When prior confirmation is not requested, the Graduate School arranges flights as the most simple, round-trip route departing from Okinawa after 10:00, and returning to Okinawa before 19:00, to ensure students' ability to use public transportation.
- If students make any changes to the itinerary for personal reasons after flight tickets are purchased, the student is responsible for any cancellation fees, change fees, or any other additional costs.

[Ground Transportation]

- Students are responsible for all costs and arrangements.

[Per Diem and Lodging Allowance]

- *Per diem* allowance is not provided.
- Accommodation is arranged by the Graduate School, generally through a travel package. When the travel package is arranged, accommodation will be selected by the Graduate School. If the travel includes a personal stay, accommodation should be arranged by the student, and only accommodation during business days will be later reimbursed up to the maximum amount as stipulated in the appendix.

[Personal Stay and Annual Leave]

- Students may include a period of annual leave up to three days per travel period as a personal stay, subject to the approval of the Graduate School. However, the number of days of personal stay (including annual leave as well as weekends and holidays) should not exceed the number of business days over which the event was held. When the allowable days for a personal stay during business travel are exceeded, only half of the business-related airfare will be paid by the Graduate School.
- Lodging allowance is not provided during periods of personal stay. Weekends and Japanese public holidays immediately before or after the event are also regarded as days of personal stay. If there is a weekend or holiday in the middle of an event program that does not include business, and if it is necessary to stay during this break in the event program, then these days are counted as non-business days but are not considered as personal stay and lodging allowance is provided.
- OIST does not pay for any expenses or costs related to personal stay activities or any incremental expenses incurred through non-OIST related activities.

[Travelling dates]



- **For domestic travel**, students are allowed to arrive at the business location the day before commencement of business if the travel otherwise requires departure from home before 7am. Students are also allowed to depart the day after business is concluded if the travel otherwise requires arrival at home after 8pm.

[Registration Fee]

- Registration fees, membership fees for professional associations, and any other similar fees are **NOT** part of the travel support provided by the Graduate School, and remain the responsibility of the student.

[Document Submission]

- A “Travel and Expense Report [Form]” must be submitted to the Graduate School to report completion of the travel.
- All receipts must be in English or Japanese. Translations are acceptable.
- Receipts and original boarding passes are required if the flight tickets were purchased through services other than an OIST- preferred travel agency (PTA).
- **The Graduate School cannot reimburse any expenses without receipts.**

[Appendix] Source: PRP 26.9, PRP 29 and OIST’s “Travel Expense Handbook” (as of 16 December, 2019)

1. Per Diem and Maximum Lodging Allowance (rate in JPY)

Traveler	Domestic		International Large Cities		International Small Cities	
	<i>Per diem</i> (per day)	Lodging (per night)	<i>Per diem</i> (per day)	Lodging (per night)	<i>Per diem</i> (per day)	Lodging (per night)
Student	2,400	11,100	5,200	18,800	5,200	15,800

*The allowance rate applied depends on the main location for each day. When it is possible to transfer to the business venue within the same day, the rate at the final destination will be applied. *Actual lodging costs within the maximum lodging allowance are reimbursed.

2. List of International Large and Small Cities

	Country	City
Group A (Large)	ARGENTINA	Buenos Aires
	AUSTRALIA	Melbourne, Perth, Sydney
	AUSTRIA	Vienna
	BELGIUM	Antwerp, Brussels
	BRAZIL	Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo
	CANADA	Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver
	DENMARK	Copenhagen
	FINLAND	Helsinki
	FRANCE	Paris, Lyon
	GERMANY	Berlin, Bonn
	HONG KONG	Hong Kong
	ISRAEL	Tel Aviv, Jerusalem
	ITALY	Rome
	NETHERLANDS	Amsterdam
	NORWAY	Oslo
	PORTUGAL	Lisbon
	RUSSIA	Moscow, Saint Petersburg
	SINGAPORE	Singapore
	SPAIN	Madrid
	SWEDEN	Stockholm
SWITZERLAND	Geneva, Zurich	
UNITED KINGDOM	London	
UNITED STATES	Atlanta, Los Angeles, New York, Boston, Chicago, Denver, San Francisco, Miami, Washington DC	
Group B (Small)	Locations not listed in Group A	

*Classifications are subject to change. Please check OIST's "Travel Expense Handbook" for updated information.

Payment of *Per Diem* and Maximum Lodging Allowance

Case		Per-diem	Lodging	Remarks
Travel day before or after conference or workshop		Paid(*)	Paid(*)	Only for international travel. (*)For domestic travel, only in cases where travel is necessary the day before or after. (Leaving home before 7 am or arriving home after 8pm)
Business days		Paid	Paid	<i>Per diem</i> and lodging allowance are provided if there is a program (not excursion) scheduled.
Preparation day (conference/workshop travel) & Non-Business days		Not Paid	Paid	A weekend during a conference will be considered a "non-business day" and only lodging allowance will be provided. This will also apply to a preparation day.
Meals provided during conference or workshop	Either lunch or dinner provided	Half amount is Paid	/	Where meal costs can be separated from the registration fee, reimbursement for meals is not provided. Instead, full <i>per diem</i> allowance is paid.
	Lunch and dinner provided	Not Paid		
Overnight stay on board		Paid	Not Paid	
Personal stay before or after conference or workshop		Not Paid	Not Paid	If the itinerary allows the traveler to fly or return on the first or final day of the conference or workshop but the traveler chooses to stay one day longer, neither <i>per diem</i> nor lodging will be provided as this is regarded as a personal stay.
Long term travel exceeding 30 days (PRP29.3.8) (Exceptions may apply for travel with multiple destinations.)		Paid	60%	

* Lodging allowance will not be provided when a traveler stays at home or at a friend's place.

Supplementary Provisions

This Guidelines for Student Travel shall come into force from September 1, 2020.

Supplementary Provisions

This revised Guidelines for Student Travel shall come into force from May 1, 2021.