

Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy
Travel and Professional Development Reimbursement Policy
Faculty, Staff, Post-docs
(Effective July 1, 2023— June 30, 2024)
(Revised 09/20/2023)

Professional conferences provide opportunities for faculty and post-docs to engage in scholarly presentations, disseminate scientific findings, network with experts and scholars in their field, and pursue further training/education to promote success in their roles and academic careers. Staff may also travel for purposes related to their job functions.

It is the responsibility of each employee traveling to familiarize yourself with the university's travel policies found at <https://policy.usc.edu/travel-expenditures/> related to use of personal vehicles, various travel expense restrictions, etc. Please take time to review these policies prior to making your travel arrangements.

To ensure we support these important activities, which are vital to each person's scholarship roles and/or professional development, we have established the following guidelines to request and use travel funds from the Division. There are three categories of travel, so please read carefully below.

Category 1: Faculty travel to OS/OT Specific Conferences (scholarly presentations)

This category applies only to **full-time faculty**. Please note that retired faculty, part-time faculty and adjunct faculty are not eligible for travel reimbursement in this category.

This category is intended to incentivize scholarship specifically within the field of OS/OT. Attending conferences within Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy promotes engagement with other OS/OT scholars and provides important opportunities for publicizing the latest findings in research and innovations in clinical or teaching practices specific to OS/OT, in line with the Division's name and mission to build capacity in the field of OS/OT.

Faculty are encouraged to select 1-2 OS/OT specific conferences per year that are most beneficial to their scholarship and congruent with the overall mission/strategic priorities of the Division. If you are accepted to present at more than two OS/OT conferences, any additional travel requests would move to Category 2 for consideration.

Below are the approved Category 1 conferences along with the approved maximum travel support awarded per conference for the 2023 – 2024 academic year:

○ OTAC (Fall 2023; virtual 2023)	\$1,000
○ OTAC (Spring 2024)	TBD
○ AOTA	\$2,000
○ SSO:USA	\$2,000
○ OT Summit	\$1,500 (Education or Research)

Qualifications

- An accepted, first-author presentation (e.g., poster, paper, panel) at the conference is required. Proof of the acceptance with title and author order must be submitted.
- If not first-author, the active role as a co-presenter at the conference must be justified (i.e., you are co-teaching a 2-day workshop).
- See Category 2 for additional considerations when presenting with students.

Category 2: Faculty travel — all other conferences/events

This category applies to full-time, as well as part-time faculty. Please note that adjunct faculty and retired faculty are not eligible for conference travel reimbursement.

Attendance at interdisciplinary or specialty conferences facilitates scientific and clinical networks specific to populations/topics and critical opportunities for sharing cutting-edge science and clinical interdisciplinary programs. All requests will be evaluated and approved on a case-by-case basis and must be congruent with faculty goals as well as the mission/strategic goals of the Division. If approved, the amount will vary dependent upon funding available and other considerations including number of conferences attended.

Examples of items included in Category 2:

- Scholarly presentations at Interdisciplinary or specialty conferences
- Invited keynotes or lectures (e.g., AOTA specialty conferences, pre-conference institutes), if not reimbursed by sponsor
- Co-presentation of posters with student mentees/advises or residents
- Continuing education/training purposes (e.g., specialty certifications required for clinical practice)
- Registration for local professional development courses
- Service-related travel
- Travel related to your administrative role (e.g., program director, events coordinator)

Category 3: Post-docs and staff travel to conference/events

This category applies to full-time post-docs and staff. Post-docs and staff may be required to participate in conferences, professional development, and events that are most relevant to their role and responsibilities in the Division. All requests will be considered case by case.

Grant-Related Travel

When utilizing grant funds for travel, you need to use the USC vendor (Christopherson Business Travel) because they are aware of the fly America Act (see below). Be sure to tell the agent that you will be using grant funds to cover the travel expense. If you use Concur booking, you should be able to see which flights are compliant with the policy. <https://procurement.usc.edu/travel/plan-book/preferred-suppliers/>

When federal funds are used for foreign travel, tickets must be purchased in compliance with the Fly America Act/Open Skies Agreement. This Act stipulates that tickets must be purchased for airline travel on:

- A U.S. flag air carrier; or
- A foreign carrier that operates under a U.S. flag air carrier code-sharing agreement and tickets or documentation for electronic tickets identify the U.S. flag air carrier's designator code and flight number.

Such carriers must be used unless the traveler can document such carriers were "unavailable," as availability is defined by federal regulations. Certification of unavailability must be on file in the Department of Contracts and Grants prior to purchase.

Not all sponsors accept the Open Skies agreement; before booking any non-U.S. carriers, verify terms and conditions with the Department of Contracts and Grants.

Approval Processes

Reimbursable Expenses

- May include registration, lodging, transportation (i.e., airfare, mileage, and/or taxi/train, parking), and poster costs. Meals will not be reimbursable.
- The Ostrow School of Dentistry does not allow any per diem reimbursements.

Process for Making Requests

- Requests for conference travel must be made within 2 weeks of notification of abstract acceptance, or in the case of meetings/continuing education, at least 30 days prior to. All requests must be made using the Travel Support Request form which will be found here: <https://chan.usc.edu/resources/forms-and-documents>
- All requests must be reviewed and signed off by the faculty's designated Associate Chair (supervisor of the person making the request), or the Associate Dean and Chair for persons reporting directly.

Routing Instructions:

- **Faculty and staff primarily engaged in patient care** should submit their requests to **Dr. Katie Jordan**.
 - **Faculty and staff primarily engaged in teaching, admissions, and fieldwork coordination** should submit their requests to **Dr. Julie McLaughlin Gray**.
 - **Faculty and staff involved primarily in IT, Continuing Education, Global Initiatives, Marketing/Communications, and Special Events** should submit their requests to **Dr. Sarah Bream**.
 - **Faculty, post-docs, and staff primarily engaged in research** should submit their requests to **Dr. Mary Lawlor**.
 - Associate Chairs should submit their requests to **Dr. Grace Baranek**.
- Once approved, the signed form should be routed to the Associate Dean and Chair's office.
 - Requests will not be approved retroactively.
 - You must submit the request form even in the case that your travel expenses are covered by another organization so that your Associate Chair is aware of the days you are requesting to be out of the office.

Process for Submitting Travel Expenses

- Pay for your travel costs upfront and submit your reimbursement request to Stephanie Lee within 30 days of your return from the conference.
- See "Travel Reimbursement Submission Instructions" for further details.

Additional Considerations

- In determining which conferences to prioritize, faculty may consult with their designated Associate Chair at their annual reviews or as needed. Presentations should be linked to annual goals.
- The same poster/paper may not be circulated to multiple conferences without strong justification. Rather than presenting the same content at multiple conferences, we encourage sustainable contribution to the profession by writing and submitting a publication.
- Approvals only apply to the conference requested and may not be applied towards a different conference.
- Time off (number of work days versus vacation days) is subject to any existing university, Division, or hospital policies as applicable to each faculty.
- In order to supplement Division travel awards, we urge you to look for other sources of funding, including grants.

*** The Associate Dean and Chair has the final discretion regarding availability and use of faculty travel funds. This policy and the allowable reimbursements will be re-evaluated annually and are dependent on the availability of funds.**

**** All travel-related forms can be found here: <https://chan.usc.edu/resources/forms-and-documents>**