As a part of the National Science Foundation’s (NSF) continued efforts to facilitate award stewardship, this checklist was created to enable organizations to assess their travel management practices, verify areas where those practices meet federal requirements, and identify and remedy any deficiencies. Specifically, this checklist enables awardees to verify that:

- **A travel policy and associated procedures** has been approved by management and distributed to staff for official use to help ensure that all travel is reasonable and necessary for the performance of the project.

- **Travel costs** are adequately documented, allowable, allocable to NSF-sponsored projects, and reasonable based on award terms and conditions and 2 CFR 200, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) or Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) as applicable.¹

For additional guidance, please refer to the Uniform Guidance Section 475, Travel Costs”; FAR Part 31 205-46 “Travel Costs”; PAPPG Chapter XI.F.1, “Travel to Foreign Countries” and Chapter X.C.5, “Travel and Temporary Dependent Care Costs”; RTC-NSF Article 14, “Travel”; GC-1 Article 10, “Travel”; CA-FATC Article 10, “Travel”; Federal Travel Regulations (FTR); USC 49.40118 Government Financed Air Transportation (Fly America Act) and the GSA webpage on Fly America Act requirements; and Federal Per Diem Rates.

### Organizational Travel Policies, Procedures, and Practices

1. Does your organization have written policies and procedures to ensure that employee travel is necessary and resulting costs are reasonable, allowable, and allocable?

   **YES**

   **NO**

2. Do your organization’s written travel policies describe which approach(es), per diem vs. actual costs or a combination of the two, is used by your organization?

   **YES**

   **NO**

3. Reasonable, allocable, and necessary travel costs for employees, consultants, and grant-funded conference participants can be charged to the project travel line if organizational travel policies are followed.

   **TRUE**

   **FALSE**

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¹ Most NSF awardees are subject to the Uniform Guidance. Consequently, this checklist is based primarily on those regulations. FAR regulations are quite similar but have some notable differences, particularly related to maximum daily charges for meals, lodging, and incidental expenses. Awardees subject to the FAR should be familiar with and rely on those regulations.

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This checklist was provided for educational purposes only. In the event of any conflict between this checklist and OMB or grant-specific regulations, the regulations take precedence.
4. What types of supporting documentation might an internal or external reviewer analyze to verify that travel costs are allowable? (check all that apply)

- Travel Authorization
- After-the-fact expense report detailing the types of travel expenses claimed and showing advances, if any, and liquidation of those amounts
- Original receipts
- After-the-fact travel report summarizing business activities undertaken while in a travel status

5. Is first-class or business-class travel ever allowable?

- YES
- NO

6. For travel to be allowable as a direct charge to a federally funded award, what criteria are explicitly mentioned by the Uniform Guidance? (check all that apply)

- Travel must be explicitly described in the award proposal or subsequent revisions
- Travel of the individual is necessary to the Federal award
- The costs are reasonable and consistent with the non-Federal entity’s established travel policy
- Individuals must be lawfully in the United States for domestic travel

7. What exceptions are mentioned by the Uniform Guidance and FAR for not using the “least expensive unrestricted accommodations class offered by commercial airlines.” (check all that apply)

- The least expensive unrestricted travel....
- Requires circuitous routing
- Requires travel during unreasonable hours

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Excessively prolongs travel

Results in additional costs that would offset the transportation savings

Offers accommodations not reasonably adequate for the traveler’s medical needs

8. Are dependent care costs for individuals in a travel status allowable?

YES

NO

9. Are caregiver travel costs for individuals in a travel status allowable?

YES

NO

10. Does your organization’s travel policy define “travel” or “travel status”?

YES

NO

11. Must all federally funded commercial air travel be made on a US air carrier?

YES

NO

12. Which of the following is a common concern related to travel costs? (We recommend that your organization review all answers)

- Written policies and procedures do not exist or have not been fully established
- Travel Costs charged to an NSF-funded award for unnecessary travel
- The awardee charged per diem in excess of allowable amounts
Special Note:

- **Dependent travel** is only allowable in very limited instances which require travel of six months or more and with prior written approval of the federal agency. Please consult with the funding federal agency prior to making dependent travel arrangements.

- **Travel by non-commercial carrier** (e.g., chartering a plane) is only allowable in very limited instances. Please consult with the funding federal agency prior to making travel arrangements.

- **Foreign Travel** has stringent regulations, particularly around the use of US commercial carriers for air travel, that exceed the scope of this assessment. We strongly recommend and encourage awardees engaging in foreign travel to become familiar with Fly America Act regulations (see reference section).