

Travel Guidelines & Procedures

TRAVEL BUDGETING

Travel funds may be available if your speaker comes from a distance, but they are not allocated automatically. To apply for travel funding, send a request with a completed [Travel Fund Request Worksheet](#) via email to the Director (Robert Pollack; pollack@columbia.edu) and Deputy Director (Alice Newton; an2113@columbia.edu).

Let us know as much as you can about your speakers' travel needs well before the beginning of the academic year or the beginning of the semester, and keep us posted if things change later. Do not invite speakers or promise travel funding without securing the funding first. We can very often help with unforeseeable invitations at the last minute, but only if we know what our foreseeable expenses will be.

Our policy is to pay for a coach ticket via our travel agent, and one night in a hotel—two if the guest is coming from a distance or needs to rest. The only meal we buy a speaker is the one shared with the Seminar group. Please make your guest aware of this. For speakers traveling internationally, we are always happy when a department, institute, or another institution also invites the speaker and shares the travel costs.

If approved, our travel funds can be used to cover the following expenses:

1. Coach-class air or rail tickets booked through Valerie Wilson Travel (see [Air & Travel Tickets](#)).
2. One-night stay at any hotel on the Columbia list. Two nights if a person is traveling a significant distance or if circumstances warrant a longer stay.
3. Car service to and from airports. Local transportation.
4. Parking, tolls, and mileage. Reimbursements to non-Columbia payees must be approved in advance by [Pamela Guardia](#) in order to ensure reimbursability.

Our charter forbids honoraria; though we are always glad when departments, institutes, and other institutions pay the speaker for a separate, non-University Seminars' talk while (s)he is in town.

APPLYING FOR TRAVEL FUNDING

To apply for travel funding, Seminar Chairs must send an email to the Director (Robert Pollack; pollack@columbia.edu) and Deputy Director (Alice Newton; an2113@columbia.edu).

Emails should include the [Travel Fund Request Worksheet](#), available on our website, and a word or two about the importance of bringing the scholar to the Seminar.

AIR AND RAIL TICKETS

All air and train travel must be arranged through our travel agent, Lori Ean, at Valerie Wilson Travel.

- If funding is approved, have the traveler contact Lori Ean directly: lorie@vwti.com. Traveler should identify herself as a University Seminars' guest speaker and name the seminar she will be speaking at.
- Please copy univ.seminars@columbia.edu on all email correspondences with Lori.
- **IMPORTANT** - Please be advised that under the TSA Secure Flight Rules, the travel agent is required to collect and send to the TSA the following passenger information: **Name exactly as it appears on your government-issued I.D. used when traveling (First, Middle & Last Name), Date of Birth, and Gender.** For International travel, the travel agent will need the passenger(s) **passport number with expiration date, and the country of issue.**

Every time you make a change to an existing reservation, Valerie Wilson Travel charges The University Seminars a Travel Agent Fee. Please make every attempt to give clear information the first time you or the speaker contacts Lori. Thank you.

BUS, SUBWAY AND LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

Please contact [Pamela Guardia](#) ahead of time if you suspect that your speaker may need reimbursement for local travel expenses that are not arranged through our travel agent. **Some foreign nationals are not reimbursable at all.** We are happy to work on a case-by-case basis to avoid out-of-pocket travel expenses for any non-reimbursable guest.

Car service can be arranged with Luxury Limousine and Transportation. Rapporteurs should submit a completed car service request form to Pamela Guardia for each one-way trip. A separate form should be filled out for the arrival to, and departure from, a seminar.