Travel Expenses Leaflet

As of July 2022

General:

Business trips should only take place if more cost-efficient completion of the business in question, in particular by using digital communication, is not possible or reasonable.

Any business trip must be preceded by the collection of a **business trip approval**. The application for a business trip approval must include evidence (invitation, programme, appointment, etc.), except if a general business trip approval has been issued.

Business trip applications and travel expense settlements shall be processed for the employees via the digital **travel expense workflow**.

Travel expenses of guests will continue to be settled on paper. The form "Supplementary information" to be enclosed by the faculty/department must be fully completed and signed.

Further education:

Settlement of travel expenses for further education events will continue to be settled on paper until further notice. Application, approval, and settlement of further education may be included in the workflow at a later point of time.

Downpayment:

University employees may apply for a downpayment if travel expenses in excess of EUR 200 are expected (payment of 80% of the requested total).

Cut-off period:

The travel expense settlement shall be submitted in a timely manner after completing the business trip, **at the latest within 6 months (cut-off period)**.

Travel expenses:

In addition to **economic efficiency and cost-saving**, **climate protection** also is to be considered when choosing the means of transport.

Generally, business trips are to take place using scheduled (public) transport. The necessary costs for the lowest class will be reimbursed:

- Train (2nd class) incl. seat reservation; 1st class can be reimbursed at a travel distance in excess of 2 hours
- Tram, bus, etc.
- Aeroplane (economy class); a higher transport class can be reimbursed if the strict flight time exceeds 5 hours

Aeroplane:

Flight expenses shall be reimbursed if the flight is necessary for business-related, e.g. due to scheduling, or economic reasons, e.g. if the costs are much lower than those for a train ride, or if a working time gain of at least one full working day in total is achieved.
Domestic flights shall be subject to a stricter standard.

Train tickets:

The university receives a **major-customer discount** of currently 5% from Deutsche Bahn. This discount is to be used **for business trips**, indicating the key account number of the university (BIMS customer number) when buying the ticket.
University employees may receive **train tickets** via a company card at the university's expense. For more information on this, see the website or your faculty/department.
The costs for a **Bahncard** will be reimbursed if it is economically efficient for business trips. Generally, only acquisition of a **Bahncard Business** is an option here since only it (rather than the regular/personal Bahncard) permits use of the major-customer discount of currently 5% now.

Important: The purchasing approval must be collected via the travel expense office before buying a BC Business.

Reimbursement of a private Bahncard is only possible **upon complete amortisation** and if this is the only economically efficient option (e.g. due to the higher price of the Bahncard Business).
A private Bahncard is to be used for business trips even if it is not eligible for reimbursement.

Taxi:

Use of a **taxi** must be justified (e.g. no local public transport, comprehensive business luggage, several travellers, scarce time).

Rental car:

A **rental car** also must be justified. Vouchers for renting a rental car may be collected at the travel expense office of the staff department against submission of a business trip approval.

Use of private vehicles:

When using a **private car**, the business traveller will receive a kilometre allowance in the amount of 30 cents/km.
Taking along other business travellers or heavy business luggage (in excess of 40 kg) in the private car shall be subject to a carrying allowance in the amount of 5 cents/km.
The kilometre allowance when using a private bicycle shall be 20 cents/km.

Overnight expenses:

Necessary hotel accommodation in German towns shall be reimbursed up to EUR 80.00. Costs exceeding this amount must be justified (e.g. no capacities in more cost-efficient hotels, trade fair/large symposium in town).
If overnight accommodation is necessary without evidence of the costs, the flat rate shall be EUR 20.00.
Overnight accommodation on **international trips** is subject to the country-specific rates (see website: List of international daily/accommodation allowance).
The **breakfast included in the hotel invoice will only be reimbursed** if the invoice is issued in the name of the Bielefeld University.
Breakfast costs in excess of EUR 12.00 shall require justification.

Daily allowance:

A daily allowance is granted to cover the increased expenses for meals on business trips (from 8 hours onwards), except if this is explicitly waived. **Receipts for meal expenses** (e.g. invoices from restaurants, conference dinner) shall, therefore, **not be reimbursed**. If meals are provided free of charge, the daily allowance will be reduced.

Secondary expenses:

Reimbursement is available for, e.g.:

- Conference fees (without conference dinner, social evening, meals)
- Entrance fees
- Visa, passport fees, postage
- Phone, internet (when declaring the business requirement)
- Parking fees (requiring justification if in excess of EUR 10)
- Necessary vaccinations

Reimbursement is not available for, e.g.:

- Travel accident/illness/cancellation insurance
- Exchange rate loss.