



SESYNC Travel & Reimbursement Policies

SESYNC provides travel support to eligible researchers invited to participate in our programs, as outlined under the terms of our agreement with the National Science Foundation (NSF). Travel support is subject to The University of Maryland and NSF travel policies.

COVID-19 Requirements Before & During Visit

It is the responsibility of the team lead/s to get an email or letter from each in-person participant attesting that they have been vaccinated and indicating the date of their 2nd shot. This information must be submitted to SESYNC at the time a meeting planner is submitted, and it should be in the form of a single PDF file that includes copies of their emails attesting to vaccination. For the most up-to-date COVID requirements, please contact travel@sesync.org.

Eligible Expenses

Participant support is provided for the duration of the meeting to non-local, invited visitors to SESYNC, and includes:

- Coach class airfare to and from your home/work area purchased on a U.S. carrier, a minimum of 21 days in advance, unless an exception is approved in advance by SESYNC
- Accommodation in a SESYNC-designated hotel
- Meals (per diem)
- Mileage and/or ground transportation to/from airports
- Extra baggage charges (max of \$60.00 Domestic/\$120 International).

Participant support is provided during the duration of the meeting for local invited visitors (those visitors located within a 50 mile radius of the Washington, D.C./Baltimore/Annapolis metro area) to SESYNC, and includes:

- Meals (per diem)
- Mileage between your home and our office, or mileage between campus and our office for University of Maryland employees
- Parking charges (max \$10/day)
- Accommodations in a SESYNC-designated hotel are provided upon PI's written request for visitors residing beyond a 30-mile radius of SESYNC.

Detailed receipts are required for all non per diem expenses. If you expect to have expenses not listed, please contact us to discuss.

Non-Eligible Expenses

- Rental cars, unless approved in writing by SESYNC before the trip
- Gasoline or car insurance purchased from the rental car agency
- Limousine or car service
- Upgraded airline /rail seating
- Alcohol
- Overnight accommodations for local participants within 30 miles of SESYNC
- Expenses incurred beyond the scope of the meeting duration or purpose

How to Proceed

Upon receipt of an invitation to participate in a SESYNC-funded project, all recipients must complete and submit the Participant Travel Worksheet (link provided within your Travel Information Email) a minimum of 4 weeks before the event. A Social Security Number (SSN) is required for U.S. citizens, and a passport and/or visa number is required for non-resident aliens living outside the United States. Please note:

- Travel must be coordinated through SESYNC. Failure to do so may result in some or all of your travel expenses being ineligible for reimbursement.
- Federal and state agency employees must check with their legal counsel to verify if they are eligible to participate in SESYNC programs, or receive travel and/or reimbursement funds.
- Non-U.S. citizens/permanent residents traveling from abroad will need to obtain a B-1 visa or register with the Visa Waiver Program (<https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/esta/>) prior to making their travel arrangements. Please contact us if you will require an official invitation letter of support for your visa application. Note: We will only reimburse the visa application fees if you are only traveling to the U.S. on SESYNC business. Visa fees are not reimbursable if you are combining your travel to the U.S. with other personal business. We will only reimburse \$14 for ESTA visa waiver fees.

Travel & Transportation Expenses

Air/Rail:

Prior to booking your travel, you must submit your online Participant Travel Worksheet by the 4-week advance deadline.

For your convenience, we will prepay your air/rail fare to/from the meeting at SESYNC. We have provided our travel agency, Globetrotter Travel, with the parameters for booking your tickets. Please contact Globetrotter with your requested itinerary at 866-235-5467 or travel@globetrottermgmt.com. You will need to provide them the Profile Name: UMD/SESYNC and the Trip Number (provided in the Travel Information email).

- **Tickets** – Tickets may be purchased through Globetrotter (and directly billed to SESYNC) up to 21 days before the event start date. After that deadline, you will need to purchase your tickets per our instructions on page 4. You may claim reimbursement for air/rail fare up to the 21-day advance purchase rate.
- **Domestic Travel** – Domestic travelers must fly in/out of Baltimore Washington Marshall International Airport (BWI) or Reagan National Airport (DCA). Exceptions need to be approved by SESYNC prior to booking. International travelers may also fly in/out of Dull-les International Airport (IAD).
- **International Travel** – Air travel must be on a U.S. Flagged Carrier, unless one is not available or the flights fall under an Open Skies Agreement: <https://www.state.gov/open-skies-partnerships-expanding-the-benefits-of-freer-commercial-aviation/>. For information about the U.S. Flagged Carrier requirement and exceptions: www.gsa.gov/portal/content/103191. We cannot reimburse any international airfare booked on a non-U.S. Flagged Carrier without prior approval.
- **Multi-Destination Travel** – If you plan to combine your trip to Annapolis with travel to another destination, please contact us with your requested itinerary before booking your tickets. We will work with you to determine the amount to be paid by SESYNC. Travel should be arranged through Globetrotter if possible to ensure that all of our requirements are met. If you will be purchasing your own tickets, please refer to instructions on page 4. If another institution is reimbursing part of the ticket, you cannot request more than the balance.
- **Purchasing Your Own Tickets** – The ticket receipt must include the traveler’s name, complete itinerary, name of airline(s), price (must be economy class fare), and the date of purchase. The receipt must show evidence that the ticket was purchased and include copies of the boarding passes (digital passes must be printed or emailed to us). Reimbursement of the ticket expense cannot be made until after completion of travel.

A comparison quote (obtained through our travel agency, Globetrotter Travel) for roundtrip flights from your home airport to our local airports on the meeting travel dates must also be provided for reimbursement of the purchased ticket. It should show the names of airlines, lower range economy class fare, and must be dated the same date as the purchased ticket. Please contact us with your requested itinerary before booking your tickets, and we will provide the comparison quote from Globetrotter Travel.

Please note, the comparison is not meant to serve as an allowance of expenses up to the quoted dollar amount, but rather the maximum amount that SESYNC will reimburse for flights that show a direct connection to SESYNC. The use of our travel agency removes this burden from you and ensures that all of our requirements are met, as well as timely and full reimbursement of your expenses.

- **Air travel from an airport that is not closest from your home** requires supporting documentation to show that it is the more economical route. Contact us for assistance with this issue.

Driving:

The cost of driving your private vehicle will be reimbursed at the University of Maryland's standard mileage rate (currently \$0.56/mile), provided it does not exceed the cost of air or rail travel (which is based on 21-day advance purchase prices). Please contact us to obtain a quote if you are driving from a distance greater than 300 miles from the Baltimore/Washington, D.C. area. Mileage reimbursement to/from the airport is allowed, as well as mileage reimbursement to/from SESYNC for our local participants. When requesting mileage reimbursement, please be sure to include a printout from Google Maps verifying the amount of mileage being claimed, this should show your start and end locations. If your significant other/housemate drops you off (or picks you up) at the airport using your private vehicle, we can reimburse the roundtrip mileage.

Note: We cannot reimburse you for mileage if your friend drove you to/from the airport using their private vehicle.

Rental Cars:

Rental cars are not covered unless you have received prior written authorization from SESYNC. Gasoline or insurance costs from the rental car agency are never covered.

Baggage:

We will reimburse baggage charges up to a maximum of \$60 Domestic, \$120 International. If there will be baggage charges in excess of this amount, please contact SESYNC prior to your travel for prior authorization.

Ground Transportation:

We will reimburse the cost of ground transportation to/from your home airport, as well as between the Washington, D.C./ BWI local airports and SESYNC. Receipts must indicate a direct connection to SESYNC (or the Annapolis area). Transport to/from local airports will be reimbursed on the following schedule:

Between Airport and SESYNC	Total Amount (includes 15% tip)
To/From BWI	\$70.00
To/From DCA	\$105.00
To/From IAD	\$165.00

The reimbursement schedule is based on average cab fare, with the exception of IAD. For transport to/from IAD, we recommend booking non-stop shuttle service with SuperShuttle (www.supershuttle.com). If cabs can be shared between participants based on flight schedules, we will reimburse whomever paid the fare the full amount. Local companies we recommend are:

- **Annapolis City Taxi:** <http://www.annapoliscitytaxi.com/> or 443-852-0686
- **Annapolis Taxi Service:** <http://www.taxiserviceannapolis.com/> or 443-995-1400

To be sure that your local transportation costs are less than our capped amounts, we recommend booking a shared shuttle (www.supershuttle.com). Note: The shuttle may make multiple stops before arriving at your destination.

Alternatively, many of our travelers have had success using services like Uber or Lyft. These non-stop services are comparable to the cost of a shared shuttle. Note: While the university does not endorse Uber, Lyft, or similar services, they are still eligible for reimbursement. If you choose to use these services, the to/from locations must be present on the receipts, they must show a direct connection to SESYNC, and the last four digits of the payment method must be shown. (The easiest and best way to make sure that all the required information is included is to simply forward the receipts from the Uber/Lyft to travel services.)

*****Original receipts are required for all ground transportation costs.*****

All receipts must include the last four digits of the payment method for our accounting purposes. If your receipt does not include this information you must submit an account statement that shows: your name, the last four digits of the account number, and the charges for which you are seeking reimbursement (highlighted for easy reference).

Parking:

We will reimburse airport parking at a reasonable rate. If driving to Annapolis, we will reimburse parking costs up to \$10/day. Special cases will be taken into consideration upon written explanation. Please pay special attention to hotel parking rates/instructions in the **Travel Information email you receive**.

Accommodations

SESYNC will reserve a block of rooms in a nearby Annapolis hotel for non-local participants for the duration of the meeting.

- The cost of the room is directly billed to SESYNC under a contracted rate, as long as you submit your Participant Travel Worksheet before the booking deadline.
- If submitted after the cut-off date, you may need to book your own accommodations and will be reimbursed at a maximum rate of \$139/night.
- You will be responsible for any incidentals, as well as charges incurred above the negotiated room rate.
- Special circumstances that require lodging outside of Annapolis will be taken into consideration upon notification prior to travel. It must be approved by us beforehand to be eligible for reimbursement.

Internet

Wireless high-speed internet access is available at your SESYNC-booked hotel and our office at no additional cost to you.

Dependent Care & Travel

SESYNC falls under University of Maryland travel guidelines; therefore, SESYNC is not able to cover expenses associated with bringing children or caregivers at this time. Please email travel@sesync.org and we can provide a list of local providers in the Annapolis area.

Meals

Meals will either be provided by SESYNC or will be reimbursed according to the University of Maryland rate schedule (www.dbs.umd.edu/travel/services/rates/domestic.php). Please note that this differs from federal policy in the method of calculating partial per diems for travel days and for days on which meals are provided. SESYNC will provide lunch, and will reimburse \$13.00 for breakfast and \$28.00 for dinner on eligible meeting days if these meals are not provided as part of your meeting.

Participants will be reimbursed for meals that occur when the participant is in travel status for SESYNC-related business; these reimbursements are based on travel status times:

- Travel to SESYNC should have begun prior to 6:30 am to be eligible for breakfast.
- Travel home from SESYNC will have had to have concluded after 6:30 pm to be eligible for dinner.
- Lunch will be covered as long as participants are still in travel status between 12:00 and 1:00 pm.

Local participants driving to/from the meeting each day will generally not be eligible for per diem reimbursement. For special circumstances, please include a written explanation with the reimbursement request.

Receipts are not needed for meals, as they are reimbursed on a per diem basis.

Alcohol is never a covered expense.

Cancellations

All participants must immediately notify SESYNC and Globetrotter if travel must be canceled. Non-refundable airfare and accommodations purchased by SESYNC (less any fee penalties) may be used by the participant for SESYNC business at a later date. Other expenses incurred by participants are not eligible for reimbursement under state and federal guidelines. Any non-refundable charges incurred by SESYNC will be deducted from the overall budget of the project.

Reimbursement Process

Upon completion of your trip, you may submit a reimbursement request for any eligible expenses incurred by you during the visit. Our [Reimbursement Form](#) and original receipts must be received by SESYNC within 90 days upon event completion in order to be eligible for reimbursement. Once we receive your request, we will complete a University-authorized Travel Expense Statement (TES), which will be sent to you to sign and return to us for final processing. It takes approximately 6–8 weeks for your reimbursement to be issued after we receive the original signed TES from you. A Social Security Number (SSN) is required for all U.S. citizens and permanent residents to process your reimbursement. All other participants must provide a copy of your passport and visa/waiver stamp in order to process reimbursements.

For more information, please contact:

SESYNC Travel Services
1 Park Place, Suite 300
Annapolis, MD 21401
travel@sesync.org
410-919-4810 (phone)
410-216-9026 (fax)