Travel and Hospitality Policy

This policy covers travel approvals and bookings for Science & Technology Australia (STA) executives, board members, program/event participants and staff. It applies to all travel on behalf of STA and all domestic and international travel arrangements.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide travellers with a clear understanding of the requirements of this policy in relation to travel protocols and administration;
- Ensure adequate financial controls are exercised over travel and hospitality;
- Ensure accountability requirements are met for taxation purposes (FBT and GST); governance (anti-fraud provisions of the Commonwealth Corporations Act 2001) and for audit purposes; and
- Establish and maintain appropriate travel standards.

Authorised travel bookers

Air travel and accommodation are to be booked by the Executive Officer, Events Manager, or Program Manager only.

Air Travel

STA's preference is for the best economy fare available and the most direct route.

Any traveller may indicate preferred flights if they are impacted by extenuating circumstances and wish to travel outside of best fare; however, the final booking will be made at STA's discretion.

Preferred flight requests from STA Board Directors will be accommodated whenever possible, provided they fall within reasonable cost limits.

For first morning flights out of Canberra in winter, bookings may preference Qantas regardless of best fare (in case of fog, Qantas flights will depart as scheduled whereas other flights will be cancelled or delayed).

Where late changes are anticipated, the CEO may authorise a flexible return flight. Changes to travel arrangements that have already been booked can only be approved by the CEO or an authorised STA staff member. Any costs incurred by travellers due to late arrival at the airport or unauthorised changes to tickets will be at the traveller's own expense.

Should the traveller wish to book their own air travel, STA will reimburse up to the cost of the best fare of the day. Travellers are welcome to claim frequent flyer points for STA-booked travel.

Accommodation

Accommodation will be a minimum three-star rating. STA's preference is for proximity to the event or meeting venue, and value for money. The traveller may indicate preferred accommodation; however, the final booking will be made at STA's discretion.

All accessibility requests (e.g. single rooms and accessible facilities) will be considered, and STA will work with individuals to source appropriate accommodation or travel.

Should a traveller wish to book their own accommodation, STA will reimburse up to the value of the group or preferred accommodation rate near the event or meeting venue.

Ground Transportation

If group ground transportation has been arranged and pre-paid by STA, travellers will be informed and are expected to use this option. Where these arrangements have been made, alternative ground transportation will not be reimbursed.

If no ground transportation has been arranged, STA will reimburse public transport, taxi or Uber fares to/from the airport and to/from the meeting or event venue.

STA travellers are encouraged to take public transport or share rides with other STA travellers where possible.

For board directors and staff, ground transportation will be reimbursed when travelling for STA activities. Program participants and scholarship recipients should refer to relevant guidelines for advice on whether ground transportation will be reimbursed or not.

In accordance with the current ATO guidelines, STA will reimburse the current year's ATO-approved cents-per-kilometre rate for the use of personal vehicles to travel to/from the airport or up to 500km if driving to the meeting/event city. The cost of parking whilst on STA related travel is reimbursable (wherever possible the traveller should seek an economical parking arrangement).

Driving and parking infringement penalties will not be reimbursed by STA.

Meals

Where agreed prior to travel, STA will reimburse up to a maximum of $90 per day for meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner) when a traveller is outside their home city on STA business.

Reimbursement

Digital scans of all tax invoices must be provided at the time of request for reimbursement. No reimbursements will be made without the production of a receipt.