

Volunteer Expenses Policy & Procedure

At IPEM, we recognise the incredible contributions our volunteers make, giving up their time, knowledge and skill to help IPEM deliver our charitable activities. We therefore have an expenses policy so that volunteers are not out of pocket for any reasonable expenses incurred as part of their volunteering activities.

Every volunteer has a dedicated member of staff at the IPEM National Office they can contact for queries on expenses before they are incurred. You can find contact details here; [Resources for Volunteers - IPEM](#). Volunteers must read, understand, and comply with this policy.

Scope

This Policy is applicable to all volunteers, including members and non-members and activities must be authorised to qualify for reimbursement. IPEM official meetings, external meetings and events for approved IPEM representatives are classed as authorised activity. Other activities outside of this need prior approval from the IPEM CEO and/or the Finance and Business Planning Committee. In the first instance, you should speak to your dedicated member of staff at the IPEM National Office before any expenses are incurred.

General Guidance

- You should always look to minimise costs to IPEM without compromising health and safety.
- Claims must be for costs actually incurred which are reasonable, necessary, and supported by receipts showing the VAT registration number and VAT charged.
- Claims must be submitted by the end of the month in which the expense was incurred or at the latest within 4 weeks of the event. It is at IPEM's discretion to pay expenses for claims submitted after then without a valid reason i.e. sickness.
- The expense claim form must be used and signed by you, stating clearly the IPEM activities that are being claimed for.
- We won't pay expenses until we receive the meeting attendance form or have had approval from the IPEM CEO, Finance and Business Planning Committee or the IPEM National Office member of staff.
- We will only pay expenses directly into your own bank account, via BACS transfer. IPEM's Finance Team will pay this within 14 days of you submitting a correct and completed claim form.
- When travelling for IPEM activities, volunteers are covered by IPEM's travel insurance policy. You can obtain a copy via an IPEM National Office member of staff. Please don't purchase your own travel insurance policy as we won't be able to reimburse you.
- Expenses are submitted and reimbursed by IPEM on the basis that they have not been covered by another source i.e. your employer.

How to claim expenses

- Use the approved expense claim form listed on the website [IPEM Expense Claim Form](#)
- Submit claims promptly, ideally by the end of the month or within 4 weeks of the event to finance@ipem.ac.uk.
- Attach original receipts for all claims.
- Payment will be made directly to your bank account within 14 working days via BACS.

Types of Expenses

Expenses other than those mentioned will only be reimbursed if they have been agreed in advance

Rail travel

- Rail is often the most cost-effective and environmentally friendly way of travelling intercity in the UK, especially when booked in advance. Reimbursement for rail travel should be at the cheapest available fare, taking advantage of any offers, existing railcards you may have and advanced booking.
- We will not normally reimburse the costs of a railcard, unless this is agreed in advance with a member of National Office staff.
- You should book your train tickets as far in advance as possible, as soon as the volunteering activity is confirmed, to take advantage of the lower priced fares. We'll still reimburse you if the event is cancelled or postponed.
- Flexible and open tickets are generally more expensive, you should avoid these by booking a return train. It may be cheaper to book a flexible ticket, if this is the case, please provide a screenshot to demonstrate it was cheaper to buy flexible rather than a booked advanced ticket.
- No reimbursement will be made for any part of a journey made on a season ticket.

Bus/London Underground

- Claims for the use of public transport should be at standard class rates.
- In order to claim public transport expenses using a pre-payment card (such as Oyster, Octopus, MetroCard or EZ-link cards) volunteers will need to provide a journey statement. You can access your journey history through your travel card provider.
- No reimbursement will be made for any part of a journey made on a season ticket.

Bicycle travel

- Although we appreciate IPEM Members travel from all corners of the UK and beyond, sometimes meetings and activities are within the same city/town that you may live in. To encourage low carbon footprint travel, we'll pay 20p per mile if you choose to cycle.

Car/motorcycle travel

- We'll reimburse for car and motorcycle travel including reasonable car parking, necessary road tolls and congestion charges, but not fines for motoring offences, parking tickets and vehicle maintenance. Mileage claimed must be the actual mileage travelled.
- You are responsible for ensuring your vehicle is road worthy, registered, taxed and has a valid MOT and has insurance for business use.
- Mileage rates are; cars 30p per mile, motorcycle 24p per mile, additional passengers 5p per mile. Why not car share to reduce your carbon footprint?
- Taxis can be used when justified on value for money grounds, considering luggage, distance and passengers travelling. We'd encourage arranging arrival and departure times with other attendees to reduce costs. You must obtain a receipt from the taxi company.

Car hire

- Where it can be shown to be cost effective, car hire is permitted.
- All car hire arrangements will be booked by a member of staff in the IPEM National Office, you should not hire your own car.
- The vehicle hired must be appropriate to the circumstances (i.e., number of passengers, luggage carried, and distance travelled).
- All drivers must hold a valid driving license.

Air travel

- All air travel arrangements will be booked by a member of staff in the IPEM National Office, you should not book your own air travel.
- Air travel is permitted when there are no other practical or cheaper alternatives.
- Air travel should be at the cheapest available fare booked in as far in advance as possible.
- You are responsible for carrying valid travel documents and VISA's.

Other Expenses

Accommodation Expenses

- If you are staying with a friend or relative, a gift or meal may be given to the host as a thank you. This is in lieu of paying accommodation costs. You can claim £25 per night, ensure you retain the receipt.
- Justification is needed for overnight accommodation. Acceptable reasons are;
 1. Departure from home is before 7am or arrival at home is after 10pm, if you were to travel the same day.
 2. Consecutive daily travel where the daily travel time would be greater than 1 hour each way or the cost of daily travel is higher than the cost of a hotel (we'll need to see proof of this).
 3. A demonstratable health and safety issue.

- If the need for a hotel is justified, maximum rates for overnight accommodation in London is £230 and £160 elsewhere in the UK, inclusive of breakfast.
- Accommodation should be at the cheapest available rate booked in as far in advance as possible.
- In exceptional circumstances, increased accommodation allowance may be required, this should be confirmed with a member of staff at the IPEM National Office before booking.

Refreshments

- Subsistence can only be claimed if you are away from your normal place of work or home, on authorised IPEM activities and it is not practical to return. Reasonable expenses for meals will be refunded provided that original VAT/sales tax receipts are attached to the claim form.
- Any tips or services charges applied to the bill are in addition to the allowances below.
- The costs of alcohol are not eligible expenses for subsistence during working hours.
- Breakfast will be reimbursed up to a maximum of £10 if you are away from home before 7am and breakfast is not otherwise available i.e. a morning meeting or through the overnight accommodation.
- Lunch will be reimbursed up to a maximum of £10 if you are away from home/work for more than 6 hours and lunch has not been included in the meeting.
- Dinner will be reimbursed up to a maximum of £25, inclusive of drinks if you are away from home/work on authorised IPEM activities past 8pm or overnight and dinner is otherwise not available.
- Claims for alcohol are not acceptable other than modest claims (considered to be up to half a bottle of wine per person) with an evening meal only when travelling on IPEM business and required to stay overnight.
- The costs of bar drinks, mini-bars, pay-to-view films or additional services (e.g. use of gym, hairdressing etc.) are not allowable other than the purchase of non-alcoholic drinks from a mini-bar if drinking water is not provided in the room.
- Claims for food and beverage on behalf of a group of Volunteers will be accepted if the claimant notes the names of the Volunteers in attendance on the reverse of the original receipt.

What happens if you don't follow these guidelines

- Any claims that do not meet the guidelines listed above are at risk of not being fully reimbursed by IPEM.
- Any claims that are considered unreasonable will be forwarded to the IPEM CEO in the first instance and then the Treasurer for adjudication.