1. **POLICY.** The Optical Society of America (OSA) appreciates the work that volunteers and staff perform while traveling on OSA business. In OSA's role as a non-profit organization, the Society strives to be fiscally prudent. OSA reimburses volunteers and staff for reasonable expenses incurred while conducting business or performing services on behalf of the Society, as authorized by the Board of Directors and approved in advance of travel.

This Policy sets forth the reimbursements that OSA is authorized to make and the procedures to follow for submitting expenses for reimbursement. Any material changes to this OSA travel reimbursement policy must be reviewed with the Treasurer and approved by the OSA Finance Committee. Volunteers with any questions should contact OSA’s Director of Governance and Volunteer Relations prior to making travel arrangements. Staff should contact OSA’s Chief Operating Officer (COO) or other CEO designee with any questions.

2. **GENERAL TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT POLICIES.** You are asked and encouraged to make reasonable, cost-effective choices when traveling on OSA business. In general, travelers should book their own travel according to this Policy and then seek reimbursement from OSA. The following provisions apply to all OSA travel. There are additional provisions that apply to specific OSA meetings (see section 3 below).

   **A. Prior approval.**

   i. **For Volunteers.** OSA reimburses volunteers for certain travel expenses as described in Section 3 below. For all other volunteer travel, please check with your employer to see if it is willing to cover your travel expenses. Otherwise, please obtain written approval from OSA to be reimbursed. Approval requests should include travel purpose/goals, travel dates, and budget/expense limitations.

   ii. **For OSA Staff.** Except for travel to attend certain meetings listed below, staff should complete the “Travel and Training Approval Form” and have it approved before paying registration fees or booking any travel arrangements. The approval form is attached to this policy and can also be found on the Intranet under the HR Tab. Staff need not complete the approval form for travel to attend Leadership, OFC, CLEO, FiO or topical meetings.
B. **Transportation – Air & Rail.**

i. **In General.** Travelers are generally expected to obtain the lowest available nonrefundable, economy (coach) class fares that reasonably meet OSA’s business travel needs, taking into consideration length of travel and all standard fees. OSA will reimburse fees for advance economy seat selection (if applicable) and to check up to 2 bags. Absent prior approval, OSA will not reimburse costs incurred to upgrade from an economy seat for flights shorter than 10 hours or for more than 2 bags.

In order to obtain the best possible fares and avoid unnecessary transaction fees, travelers are encouraged to finalize your dates of travel before making travel arrangements. Where possible, plan ticketed travel to take advantage of the lowest available fares through convention rates and special promotional fares. Travelers should start pricing tickets six to eight weeks in advance of their travel dates and should purchase their tickets no later than 14-days prior to travel.

If your airfare is over $700.00 USD for travel within the continental United States, or $1,800 USD for international travel (including travel to Alaska or Hawaii), you are asked to contact OSA’s COO (or other CEO designee) to compare prices before finalizing your travel arrangements.

ii. **Special Circumstances.** OSA recognizes that special circumstances may justify or require exceptions to the above general policy. Below are some of the more common special circumstances. Travelers should seek prior approval as indicated below or for other special circumstances.

   a. **Upgrades and Upgradeable Tickets.** OSA will reimburse the cost of an “upgradeable economy” ticket or “premium economy”/“economy plus” seating for flight segments of 10 or more consecutive hours. If you purchase an upgradeable economy ticket, it is generally your responsibility to use air miles, an existing personal “upgrade certificate,” and/or pay the upgrade fee to obtain the actual upgrade. Air miles are not reimbursable.

   b. **Travel Insurance.** Travel insurance is not generally considered a reimbursable expense.

   c. **Business or First-Class.** If prior approval is obtained, OSA will reimburse the cost of a business or first class ticket in cases of medical need.

   d. **Airline Club Access.** Travelers whose total one-way travel time exceeds 12 hours (calculated as the time leaving from departing airport to time arriving at final destination airport) and have an airport layover of at least 2 hours, are eligible to be reimbursed up to $50 for “one-time” or “one-day” airline club access.

iii. **Changes in Travel.** Travelers who purchase a ticket for OSA-related travel and are unable to make the trip for whatever reason should apply the ticket to another OSA-related meeting. If OSA is responsible for a change in your travel arrangements after purchase of
your ticket, OSA will reimburse the change/cancellation fee and any difference in your fare. You are responsible for handling this transaction.

iv. **Combining OSA Travel with Other Travel.** OSA understands you may need to combine OSA travel with other travel. In such cases, please submit with your expense report (1) an itinerary pricing the trip without the added travel, AND (2) your actual itinerary and receipt. For example, if a London traveler combines an OSA trip to Washington, DC, with a personal trip to New York and then flies home, that traveler should submit the London-DC-New York itinerary and receipts as well as a comparable-class London-DC roundtrip itinerary for the same dates. The two itineraries should be generated around the same time. OSA will reimburse the lesser of the two itineraries.

C. **Transportation: Ground.** Use of taxis, airport and hotel shuttle services, bus and subway transportation should be determined on the basis of lowest cost while also taking into account the time of day, quantity of luggage and personal safety.

D. **Transportation: Automobile Rental.**

i. **Prior authorization required.** Rental cars may be obtained if economic public transportation is unavailable, impractical, or more expensive. Car rental must be preauthorized by OSA and selected according to lowest cost available, taking into consideration the costs of parking and tolls, number of passengers and amount of equipment. Staff should obtain prior authorization for car rental through the Travel and Training Approval Form (see Section 1). Please use discretion in determining low-cost parking arrangements at airports, hotels, etc.

ii. **Insurance.** Because OSA has a comprehensive insurance policy in the U.S., you should decline any additional insurance offered when renting an automobile in the U.S. However, in order for your car rental to be covered under OSA’s policy, please add “Optical Society of America” under your signature for any automobile rental agreements you sign.

If you are renting an automobile outside of the U.S., the country you are traveling in may have compulsory insurance requirements. In that case, you should purchase the compulsory insurance offered by the rental car company, for which you will be reimbursed.

E. **Transportation: Use of Personal Automobile.** “Personal automobile use” is defined as driving your own automobile on OSA business and does not include travel to and from your home to the staff office.

i. **In the U.S.** Mileage reimbursement for personal automobile use in the U.S. will be at the current, published U.S. government rate. You may not claim reimbursement for gas expenses while claiming mileage reimbursement. However, parking and toll expenses are separate reimbursable items. Please use discretion in determining low-cost parking arrangements at airports, hotels, etc.

ii. **Outside of the U.S.** For personal automobile use in countries other than the U.S., OSA will reimburse reasonable gas, toll, and parking expenses. Those seeking such
reimbursement should submit receipts for each expense along with some method for determining your mileage, such as a printout of a MapQuest or Google Maps route.

F. **Business Entertainment.** Staff members who are required to entertain clients as part of their job will be reimbursed for the cost of a meal or refreshment for those clients beyond the per diem. Reimbursement will be provided for legitimate business entertainment expenses as long as they are properly documented. The event must have a clear and stated business purpose, and the cost should reflect reasonable judgment on the part of the staff. Proper documentation for business entertainment expenses includes receipts, a list of attendees (which needs to include at least one OSA senior staff member), their affiliation and an explanation of the business purpose of the meeting. Expenses for staff members entertaining other staff exclusively are not considered legitimate business entertainment expenses. Those expenses will be reimbursed at the per diem levels for each attending staff member.

G. **Hotel Accommodations.** You should use the Internet to book hotel accommodations, and then submit receipts and expenses as described below. Unless otherwise authorized, you are asked and encouraged to reserve hotel rooms at the lowest available single rate at moderately priced hotels, taking into account personal safety and proximity to meetings or planned events. The use of convention/group rates or similar promotional rates is encouraged. Travelers should take into consideration hotel fees and additional charges when choosing a hotel, as internet, breakfast, health club and resort fees may or may not be included in the rate. Some hotels charge a premium for these services on an a la carte basis.

*For OSA Staff:* please talk with your supervisor before making lodging reservations outside of the United States.

H. **Miscellaneous and Personal Expenses.** Costs for in-room movies, service bars, room service (other than as part of the meals and incidentals (M&I) per diem), valet/laundry (for hotel stays of fewer than five days), health clubs (beyond $15 per day), hairdressers, toiletries, magazines, babysitting services, etc. are not considered reimbursable expenses. Please deduct personal expenses from hotel charges submitted for reimbursement.

I. **Telephone and Internet Charges.** OSA expects you to use personal cell phones or calling cards rather than hotel phones to make phone calls. For international phone calls, you are requested and encouraged to use an Internet-based phone service (such as Skype) whenever possible. You may also use an unlocked GSM phone and purchase a local SIM card at your destination for the best rates on local calls at your destination. Staff who incur airport or hotel Internet charges for business purposes will be reimbursed. Please note that many times Internet service can be negotiated into the room rate.

J. **Meals and Incidentals.**

i. *For OSA Staff.*

a) **Per Diem.** Staff are reimbursed an M&I travel per diem of $55 for all meals, snacks, beverages, and associated tips. If the meeting or conference you are attending provides meals (e.g. committee breakfast, dinner, etc.), you are expected to participate in those meals and should deduct them from your M&I per diem as
follows: $10 for breakfast, $15 for lunch, and $30 for dinner. Receptions are not considered a meal.

When you utilize the M&I per diem, no receipts are required to be submitted to Finance for meals, snacks, beverages, and associated tips. Staff should simply indicate the per diem amount on their travel expense reports.

b) **Actual costs.** Staff may also choose to submit for reimbursement of actual costs instead of requesting an M&I per diem. In such cases, the following amounts per person will be treated as reasonable: $10 for breakfast, $15 for lunch, $30 for dinner. You should submit receipts for expenses over $25. Requests for reimbursement of actual costs beyond these amounts require written approval from your supervisor.

c) **Local Training.** For local staff training and conferences, staff will be reimbursed up to $15 to cover lunch associated with training in the local area.

d) **Other.** If department chief approval is obtained, exempt staff working late (minimum of 10 total working hours on a weekday), or on weekends or holidays (minimum of 3 hours on a weekend day or holiday) are eligible for reimbursement on meals. OSA will reimburse up to $15 for lunch and $30 for dinner.

ii. **For Volunteers.** For all volunteer travel, the following applies: meal costs should be kept reasonable, typically no more than $55 USD per day, ($10 for breakfast, $15 for lunch, and $30 for dinner). Volunteers are expected to take advantage of the meals provided at group functions. Reimbursement may be subject to adjustment if determined to be extravagant.

K. **Guidance on Tipping.** Tipping customs vary widely from country to country. Tipping is much less common in Asia, and many restaurants and hotels in Europe automatically add gratuity. Travelers outside the US are expected to follow local protocol for tipping.

Subject to certain variations based on local practices, tipping should conform to the following guidelines for travel within the US:

- 15%-20% for meals, including room service, if not automatically added to the check (tips are included in M&I per diem);
- 15% to 20% for taxis, plus $0.50 per bag or box;
- $2.00 per bag or box for bellhop or doorman service;
- $1.00 per bag or box for airport check-in service;
- $1.00-$2.00 for airport shuttle driver;
- $2.00 per day for hotel maid service.

Reimbursement for tips may be subject to adjustment if determined to be extravagant.

3. **GOVERNANCE/OFFICERS MEETINGS (For Volunteers Only).**

A. **Winter Leadership Conference (early February).** OSA will reimburse travel costs for those invited to attend this conference. OSA covers your room and tax on its master account. The
number of room nights covered is dependent on when your committee meetings are held. Other travel expenses such as airfare and travel to and from the airport will be reimbursed as described in section 2. Group meals are provided throughout the conference; thus meals are not generally reimbursed.

B. **Spring (May/June) and Fall Board Meetings.**

i. **Board Members.** Only those members attending the Award Committee, Finance Committee, Executive Committee, and Board meetings will be reimbursed for the expenses necessary to attend these meetings (includes several nights’ stay and travel to and from the meeting). Volunteers who are also attending the technical conference are asked to cover their own travel costs. Group meals are provided during these meetings. You will be responsible for the initial payment of your expenses.

ii. **Non-Board Committee Members.** OSA makes every effort to schedule committee meetings in conjunction with technical conferences of interest to committee members. Expense reimbursement is not generally provided for volunteers to attend governance meetings when held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the Society.

C. **Officers International Travel.** Funds are available to the OSA officers (Past President, President, President-Elect and Vice-President and Treasurer) for travel outside of the US made on behalf of the Society, i.e. for the purpose of building relationships with other non-US science/engineering organizations. The total cost (hotel, airfare, etc.) is projected to range between $1,500 and $3,000 per trip. A trip report is required when submitting for reimbursement.

D. **Ad Hoc Meetings.**

i. **OSA Meetings.** Volunteers who participate in OSA strategic planning meetings, Officers’ meetings and other ad hoc committee meetings held at OSA headquarters will generally be reimbursed for hotel, airfare, and cab/subway expenses for the days required to attend the meeting. Group meals are generally provided at these meetings.

ii. **Other Meetings.** Other pre-approved travel requests for reimbursements on behalf of OSA should be sent to the COO (or other CEO designee), along with a trip report to the Board, detailing what was accomplished on behalf of OSA.

E. **Miscellaneous Expenses.** It is expected that member volunteers are responsible for the cost of telephone calls, facsimile transmissions, postage, photocopying, and similar office expenses related to their work on behalf of the Society.

4. **SPECIAL REQUESTS.** Travelers should seek prior approval for reimbursement of travel costs outside of this Policy. OSA may adjust or deny reimbursement of travel costs outside of this Policy without prior approval.

A. **For Volunteers.** Special requests from volunteers for support/reimbursement of travel outside the existing policy should be handled by the Treasurer, with a recommendation from staff as follows:
i. The traveler submits to OSA’s COO (or other CEO designee) a request for funds, specifying the dollar amounts for each component of travel.

ii. In addition, he/she provides a written explanation in support of his/her request.

iii. OSA’s COO (or other CEO designee) reviews, comments and then forwards the completed request to the OSA Treasurer for approval.

iv. Any decision will be communicated to the traveler by OSA’s COO (or other CEO designee).

B. **For Staff.** If exceptional circumstances are anticipated for staff, prior approval of exceptions is required by the staff members’ department chief and COO (or other CEO designee), if deemed appropriate. The expense report containing such exceptions will require the department chief’s approval.

5. **SUBMITTING YOUR EXPENSE REPORT.**

   A. **For Volunteers and Staff.**

   i. You have the option of using either the OSA Travel & Expense Report spreadsheet (Excel) or document (PDF). Use of the spreadsheet version is encouraged whenever possible to eliminate staff processing time. For OSA staff, both versions can be found at O:\Finance Information\Expense Report & Policy. For volunteers, contact acctspayable@osa.org for your preferred version.

   ii. Please submit supporting documentation with your expense report, including proof of prior approvals for special circumstances. Supporting documentation may be original, photocopied or scanned. If submitting originals, please tape receipts to a standard sheet of paper in date order. Attach all receipts for expenses over $25. If the reason for the expense is not obvious from the receipts/paperwork, please include a written explanation. Please also include a written explanation if the requested reimbursement varies from the receipts submitted (for example, if you are seeking reimbursement of only part of an amount shown on a receipt).

   iii. For airline and rail tickets, always attach the receipt and the itinerary. This allows OSA to verify travel dates/destinations.

   iv. You should include a separate line entry for each day of hotel costs on the expense report.

   v. When seeking a mileage reimbursement over $25, please attach support for calculation of your mileage such as a printout of a MapQuest or Google Maps route.

   vi. When seeking reimbursement of non-US currency, you have two options: (a) wait until your credit card statement arrives to get the exact rate of exchange paid; or (b) obtain the exchange rate from the OSA Finance department for a prompt reimbursement.
B. **For Volunteers Only.**

i. The expense report needs to include the OSA business purpose, dates of travel and name of staff contact.

ii. All expense reports and supporting documentation should be submitted to OSA’s Finance department (2010 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC, 20036, United States) within 30 days of travel. If the expense report reflects reimbursement of costs not within OSA’s travel reimbursement policy, Finance staff will notify the appropriate staff liaison of any adjustments before contacting the volunteer or mailing the adjusted payment.

iii. Note that Volunteer expense reimbursement requests are public documents and available to the membership at large.

iv. If you have requested reimbursement for items that are not covered by OSA’s travel policy, please make a formal request to your OSA staff liaison for consideration. Staff will notify you once a possible disputed item is recognized. Disputed amounts will be held until a satisfactory explanation and/or resolution has been met.

C. **For Staff Only.**

i. Prior to submitting your expense report to the Finance Department, please obtain your supervisor’s approval.

ii. Deduct all prepaid items such as air and rail fares, hotel room charges, and corporate card direct-billed items when applicable.

iii. If you are seeking reimbursement for costs that are not covered within the OSA travel expense policy, provide written approval from your department chief or a written explanation with your expense report to your department chief. Once approved, any further questions by Finance will be addressed directly with your department chief.

iv. **Cash Advances.** Staff may request a cash advance up to $50 per day from OSA to cover travel incidentals. Staff will not be entitled to an additional cash advance until any previous advances are settled. OSA travel credit cards are available for staff who spend a high percentage of their time traveling for OSA. Staff who travel for OSA may be eligible for reimbursement of their credit card annual fee (maximum of $100.00). Corporate credit card holders are not entitled to reimbursement of personal card fee reimbursement. For more information, please consult the OSA Corporate Credit Card Policy or check with the COO or other CEO designee.