



INTERNATIONAL
OMBUDSMAN
INSTITUTE

IOI TRAVEL POLICY

2026

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to establish principles and requirements for selecting representatives of the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI) at international events and spending of IOI funds on travel expenses to represent the IOI, in support of the IOI's purposes and objectives¹.

2. DEFINITIONS

In this Policy:

- 'Director' means a Director of the IOI Board of Directors.
- 'IOI Officer' means the President, the two Vice-Presidents and the Treasurer of the IOI.
- 'Executive Committee' means the IOI Officers, the IOI Secretary General, and the respective Regional Presidents forming part of the Executive Committee at the relevant time.
- 'Event' means any conference, forum, seminar, meeting or other event at which a representative of the IOI can promote the IOI or further its and its members' interest.
- 'Travel expenses' includes airfares, accommodation and other appropriate expenses, including meals and transport to and from the event, airport or accommodation.

3. APPLICATION

This Policy applies to travel by Directors in their capacity as representatives of the IOI.

The Policy does not apply to travel by Directors to fulfil their duties as Directors, such as travel to Board meetings, Committee or Working Group meetings, and General Assembly meetings.

Article 11(7) of the IOI By-laws provides that the Board (or the Executive Committee by virtue of the operation of Article 13(4) of the IOI By-laws) can, in certain circumstances, reimburse vouched expenses arising as a result of Directors' attendance of Board meetings.

¹ see, for example, the Preamble and Article 3 of the IOI By-laws

Article 11(8) of the IOI By-laws provides that the Board (or the Executive Committee by virtue of the operation of Article 13(4) of the IOI By-laws) can, in certain circumstances, authorise a reasonable allowance for travel and related expenses for certain Directors to fulfil their duties as Officers of the IOI.

This Policy may also be used to guide the Board's (or Executive Committee's) discretion when authorising travel allowances under Article 11(7) and Article 11(8).

IOI funding of travel expenses is an exception and not the rule. This Policy therefore does not apply where:

- The costs of the travel can be met by a third party (for example, a host organisation); or
- The costs of the travel can be met by the Director's office.

4. POLICY

The IOI requires value for money and accountability for all IOI-sponsored travel.

Inform General Secretariat about attendance at international events

- The IOI attaches importance to its international visibility. However, this does not mean that all invitations to participate in conferences are required to be accepted. Careful consideration should be given to time and means involved in attending such meetings.
- Directors are asked to inform the General Secretariat if they are planning to attend an international event to identify the opportunity for a Director to represent the IOI at such an event.
- Regular and up-to-date information about Directors' invitation and attendance at international events helps reduce the burden of travelling and representing the IOI for the IOI President.

Selection of IOI representative

- The IOI President – as the highest-ranking IOI Officer – shall ideally represent the IOI at international events. In case he/she is not able to do so, the RP geographically closest to the event would be the appropriate person to represent the IOI at the respective event.

- Selection of the appropriate Director to represent the IOI at the event is made by the President and the Secretary General, and can include taking into account:
 - The geographical proximity of the Director to the event, considering that shorter distances are likely to incur lower travel expenses;
 - The expertise and experience of the Director that may be relevant to the event;
 - The languages spoken by the Director and the primary language to be spoken at the event; and
 - The level of representation required by the event, for example, that the event is one in which it is most appropriate for the President to attend.

Application and approval of IOI-sponsored travel

- IOI funding of travel expenses is an exception and not the rule.
- In case a Director who has been selected to represent the IOI at an event and needs IOI funding he/she is requested to submit an application with the following information:
 - A letter explaining why the institution cannot cover the travel costs itself;
 - A cost estimate for the flight and/or accommodation;
 - Documentation on the event to be attended.
- Applications for IOI-sponsored travel are approved by the relevant body according to the IOI By-laws, i.e. either the Executive Committee or the Board (depending on the requested amount).

Reimbursement

Any one Director can seek reimbursement at most for only one trip within a year. This “once-a-year” reimbursement ceiling does not apply to the IOI President when on approved travel representing the IOI – although the presumption is still that IOI funding is the exception and that they will fund their own travel, or seek payment through a third party (e.g. the host of the event) if and where possible.

The IOI General Secretariat will reimburse a Director's travel expenses upon provision of receipts and invoices. In exceptional cases, other arrangements, such as booking and payment directly through the General Secretariat or payment in advance can be approved by the SG in close consultation with the Treasurer.

Airfares

- Airfares should be selected based on the lowest fare available from all appropriate carriers at the time the travel is booked that suits the practical business needs of the traveler.
- Business Class may be used for long-distance flights only (i.e. a flight segment that is longer than six hours).

Frequent Flyer points

- Frequent flyer points accumulated in the course of IOI-sponsored travel should not be used for private purposes while the Director remains a Director of the IOI.
- Where possible and practical, the Director is encouraged to use any frequent flyer points accumulated as a result of IOI-sponsored travel for any subsequent IOI-sponsored travel they undertake as a Director.

Accommodation

- The type of accommodation that may be sponsored is the lowest cost room in a standard business hotel (or equivalent) within a reasonable distance from the event being attended.

Other expenses

- The IOI will reimburse reasonable travel expenses, such as:
 - Reasonably priced meals; and
 - An appropriate mode of transport, where the expenses are connected with the Director's travel as an IOI representative.