My GEAR Network award letter says I’m being funded by the University of Illinois Hub, what do I do now?

Below are common questions regarding reimbursement for travel funded by the GEAR Network from the University of Illinois Hub.

**General**

**Q:** How do I submit a reimbursement request?

**A:** Reimbursement forms are found at [GEAR Reimbursement Form University of Illinois Hub](#). You may mail your reimbursement form and supporting documentation to

GEAR Network
257 Altgeld Hall
1409 W. Green St.
Urbana, IL 61801

or email at gear@math.illinois.edu. Email is preferred.

**Q:** How long do I have to submit the reimbursement request?

**A:** Please submit the request within 10 business days from the last day of your travel to ensure timely processing.

**Q:** What can I claim for reimbursement?

**A:** The award is intended for travel, lodging and local expenses related to the trip you indicated in your GEAR Network application such as airfare, lodging, and taxi/shuttle.

**Q:** What won’t my GEAR award cover?

**A:** 1) Expenses not related to GEAR
   2) Hotel amenities such as room service, safe rental, etc.
   3) Expenses for an additional traveler
   4) Business class or first class airfare
   5) Airfare amenities such as additional legroom (unless required by a physician)

**Q:** What kind of receipts are acceptable?

**A:** All receipts must include proof of payment. For airfare include a receipt showing the 1) itinerary and 2) the airline, 3) the cost of the airfare and 4) proof of payment (i.e. “charged to MasterCard/Visa XXXXXX1234”). For hotels, submit an itemized receipt showing check in/check out dates, daily rate, and a "0" balance and proof of payment.
Q: What if I don’t have original receipts?
A: The University of Illinois will accept expenses up to $10 without an original receipt. Any amount above that cannot be reimbursed without a proper receipt.

Q: What if my airfare or lodging receipt doesn’t show proof of payment?
A: You must include a credit card statement (with non-relevant information blacked out) showing that you made the purchase.

Q: I shared travel expenses with another person(s). Can you split the reimbursement?
A: No. The person whose name is on the receipt is the only person who can be reimbursed.

Q: Can my reimbursement be wired to me instead of mailing a check?
A: Unfortunately, no. The Mathematics Department at the University of Illinois disperses reimbursements in the form of a check only.

Q: I am no longer at my check mailing address. What do I do?
A: Contact the GEAR Network Administrator immediately at gear@math.uiuc.edu to arrange for the check to be sent to another address.

Q: How long will it take for me to receive my reimbursement check?
A: It can take up to 10 weeks to receive your reimbursement check as the request has to go through several layers of review including a final review by the University Grants and Contracts Office. However, most reimbursements are dispersed within 6-8 weeks.

Q: How do I check on the status of my reimbursement?
A: You may contact the GEAR Network Administrator at gear@math.uiuc.edu to check on the status of your reimbursement request.

Visa Documentation
Q: I am traveling on a B2 or WT visa. How does this affect my reimbursement?
A: If you are traveling on a B2 or WT (waiver for tourists) visa, you cannot be reimbursed for more than 9 days of your travel per University guidelines. This policy does not apply to the other visa statuses.

Q: What kind of documentation do I need?
A: The reimbursement form lists all of the required documentation.

Q: I am traveling on an ESTA waiver. Will I still need to provide my visa and passport information?
A: Yes. The University of Illinois requires copies of your passport, visa and all US entry stamps as well as a copy of your ESTA.
**Travel/Lodging**

**Q:** I am traveling from a country outside of the US to the United States. Am I allowed to use any air carrier?

**A:** No. Because the GEAR Network is funded by a US federal NSF grant all participants must abide by the Fly America Act when booking airfare. Please refer to [Fly America Act](#) for more detailed information. You will not be able to seek reimbursement for your airfare if your flight does not fall within these guidelines.

**Q:** I would like to purchase airfare which includes my GEAR related trip along with another trip(s). Is this allowable?

**A:** No. Do not include your GEAR trip with other non-GEAR related trips. Because your award is funded by a US federal NSF grant any travel that is not related to the mission of the GEAR Network cannot be reimbursed from the grant. Please purchase an individual direct ticket for your GEAR related trip.

If you cannot purchase an individual direct ticket, you **must** go to an online travel agency such as a Travelocity or Expedia and print an itinerary showing a direct flight from your home to the destination sponsored by GEAR back to your home on the same day you purchased your ticket. The itinerary must also show the cost of the flight. **If you have multiple destinations on one airline ticket without any evidence of the cost of a direct flight, you cannot be reimbursed for your airfare.**

**Q:** Can GEAR pay for my lodging in advance?

**A:** Yes and No. Per NSF policy GEAR can only pay for lodging at the end of the stay, not before. This is most easily arranged by contacting the GEAR Network Administrator at gear@math.uiuc.edu. Please note most lodging companies other than a hotel (i.e. airbnb) require payment upfront in which case you will need to pay for the rental and request reimbursement at the end of your visit.

**Q:** I can usually find a good deal on a hotel and flight package. Is it okay if I purchase a travel bundle?

**A:** No, in order to process your reimbursement you will need to present individual itemized receipts for your hotel and flight.

**Other**

**Q:** What is per diem and how do I get it?

**A:** Per diem is Latin for per day. It is a daily meal allowance. When you request per diem in your application it is then included in your award. Students receive $20 per diem regardless of where the student travels. Postdocs and faculty members receive $28 per diem for travel to Illinois and $32 for domestic US travel outside of Illinois. Also, postdocs and faculty members receive $40 per diem when traveling to a country outside of the US.

**Q:** How do I get reimbursed for mileage?

**A:** Mileage is reimbursed for driving a personal car. You do not have to submit the actual mileage; just trip origin and destination. Please retain all of your travel receipts if you are using forms of transportation other than your personal car.

If you have any questions, please contact the GEAR Network Administrator at gear@math.uiuc.edu. Thank you for being an active GEAR Network participant!