International Travel Planning Policy

Effective Date: February 1, 2016

Policy Statement
An essential part of Columbia’s mission is “to support research and teaching on global issues” and “to convey the products of its efforts to the world.” These activities frequently involve travel outside the United States. While traveling internationally can be an enriching experience, it also entails risks. Because of this, careful planning must precede international travel, even for seasoned travelers. Each destination requires a different strategy for responding to small inconveniences and serious emergencies.

This policy establishes a set of guidelines and requirements for planning international travel. This policy covers international Columbia Travel, which includes Columbia-Led Travel and Columbia-Facilitated and/or Recognized Travel, as defined below. It does not cover Non-Columbia Travel.

Reason(s) for the Policy
Columbia University supports and encourages travel by individuals whose educational, research, or occupational activities are international in scope. At the same time, the University seeks to reduce risk to travelers and the University by encouraging thorough preparation and common-sense practices while abroad.

Primary Guidance to Which This Policy Responds
None

Responsible University Office and Officer
Office of the Provost – Vice Provost for Administration and Planning
Office of the Treasurer – Treasurer

Revision History
There is no revision history for this policy as of February 1, 2016.

Who Is Covered by This Policy
Members of the University community participating in international Columbia Travel.

Who Should Know This Policy
Members of the University community who are involved with supporting, planning, funding, or participating in international Columbia Travel.

Exclusions & Special Situations
Non-Columbia Travel is not covered by this policy.
Policy Text
Columbia University requires that all members of the University community comply with specific procedures for international Columbia Travel.

Registration

Columbia persons should register their international Columbia Travel through the university’s global travel portal (globaltravel.columbia.edu/content/register-a-trip) as follows:

- Students, Officers of Administration, and Support Staff are required to register international Columbia Travel.
- Officers of Instruction, Officers of Research, Officers of the Libraries, and Postdoctoral Fellows/ Scholars traveling with students are required to register international Columbia Travel.
- Officers of Instruction, Officers of Research, Officers of the Libraries, and Postdoctoral Fellows/ Scholars who organize international student trips must ensure that all travelers have complied with registration processes before departure.
- Officers of Instruction, Officers of Research, Officers of the Libraries, Postdoctoral Fellows/Scholars and Alumni traveling without students are strongly encouraged to register their international Columbia Travel.

Planning and Preparation

All persons participating in international Columbia Travel should closely review information, alerts and warnings, and other guidance issued by the U.S. Department of State, International SOS (or “ISOS”, the University’s current Travel Emergency Assistance company), health authorities, and other governmental and non-governmental entities. Particular care should be taken for countries or specific regions where the U.S. Department of State has issued a Travel Warning or Travel Alert. A link to these alerts and warnings can be found at: http://globaltravel.columbia.edu/content/alerts.

Columbia University contracts with a Travel Emergency Assistance company (currently ISOS) to provide 24-hour worldwide emergency medical and evacuation services for eligible individuals traveling internationally on Columbia Travel. Restrictions and limitations apply, and each traveler should carefully review the policies and guidance issued by ISOS in advance of travel. Travelers are also encouraged to consult ISOS directly and in advance of travel regarding security advice.

Students on international Columbia Travel must have a health insurance policy that provides for routine as well as emergency care. Note: Students covered by the Columbia University Student Health Insurance Plan have coverage in many, but not all, countries worldwide. For more information, Columbia University students should visit: http://health.columbia.edu/travel-medicine and CUMC students should visit: http://cumc.columbia.edu/student-health/medical-services/travel-services.
In addition, when planning the trip, all travelers should discuss what inoculations and other measures are necessary with their healthcare provider.

Resources for international travel may be found at globaltravel.columbia.edu. Questions and concerns about any travel should be discussed with senior faculty, directors, principal investigators, deans, senior staff, or student group advisers as needed.

From time to time, the University may issue guidance, requirements, and restrictions regarding travel to specific designations. This guidance will be posted at: http://globaltravel.columbia.edu/content/alerts.

Definitions
This policy covers international Columbia Travel, which includes Columbia-Led Travel and Columbia-Facilitated and/or Recognized Travel, as follows:

**Columbia-Led Travel** is mission-related travel that is organized and overseen by Columbia University. Examples include:

- Columbia course activities and programs that are supervised by and fully or partially supported by Columbia, e.g., Summer Arabic Program in Amman
- Columbia-managed study-abroad programs
- Travel that fulfills Columbia grants or contracts
- Travel for Columbia athletics
- Non-student travel sponsored by Columbia for alumni
- Faculty, researchers, and officers traveling internationally on University business

**Columbia-Facilitated and/or Recognized Travel** is travel that is not overseen by Columbia University, but that may be partially funded or arranged by Columbia, may earn academic credit at Columbia, may be coordinated by a Columbia recognized student group or may be an extension of a faculty or researcher’s professional work. Examples include:

- International study through another university or outside organization, e.g., CASB program in Barcelona
- Approved exchange programs between Columbia and another university
- Co-ops, practica, or internships organized by Columbia departments, e.g., the IFAP Global Health Program
- International travel by graduate or professional students to do independent research for their dissertations
- Civic engagement or service trips such as those coordinated with recognized Columbia chapters of larger groups, e.g., CU Red Cross, Doctors without Borders, Engineers without Borders, Global Brigades at Columbia or Habitat for Humanity
- Civic engagement or service trips such as those coordinated with recognized global organizations, e.g., Red Cross, Doctors without Borders, Engineers without Borders, Global Brigades or Habitat for Humanity
- Pre-professional and competition groups representing or competing on behalf of Columbia
• Columbia-funded travel such as travel supported by scholarships, travel grants, or by a Columbia-recognized student organization.

**Non-Columbia Travel**, which is not covered by this policy, is travel other than Columbia-Led Travel or Columbia-Facilitated and/or Recognized Travel. Examples include:

• Independent student travel or group travel through a non-Columbia student organization
• Personal travel, such as spring break or vacations

**Related Considerations**

1. Travelers should be aware that many transactions, e.g., hiring personnel, procuring service contracts, making payments, etc., will carry additional requirements in countries outside the U.S. Travelers should familiarize themselves with the information provided through the Global Support pages of the Finance Gateway (globalsupport.columbia.edu) and seek advice as far in advance as possible by emailing globalsupport@columbia.edu.

2. The U.S. government has a variety of restrictions on the export of equipment, technology, and information, as well as on the provision of services. Travel to certain embargoed countries may be heavily restricted. Regulations also govern the transfer to or expenditure of funds in certain countries and prohibit any dealings with “Specially Designated Individuals and Blocked Persons.” Please review additional information regarding U.S. export and trade controls available within the Global Support pages (see [http://finance.columbia.edu/content/us-export-controls-transferring-technology-commodities-and-software-gs](http://finance.columbia.edu/content/us-export-controls-transferring-technology-commodities-and-software-gs)), before engaging in project activities. Note that certain activities require export licenses, which require a significant lead-time, sometimes several months.

3. Sponsored project agreements may limit foreign travel, may require prior approval from sponsors, or include applicable constraints, e.g., Fly America Act. For further guidance with these terms, please consult your unit manager or Sponsored Projects Administration Senior Project Officer prior to booking your trip.

**Contacts**

For general inquiries, contact [globaltravel@columbia.edu](mailto:globaltravel@columbia.edu)

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**Cross References to Related Policies**

Risk Management Policies and Procedures  