Travel and Hospitality POLICY

1. Purpose

As a not-for-profit corporation, GlycoNet must ensure that as much of its funds as possible are directed towards its program goals – every dollar not spent on travel is a dollar available for research. At the same time, members of the Network all have wide mandates and responsibilities, and it would not be useful or prudent to require members to take the least expensive route between two points regardless of circumstance or consequence. This policy establishes a balance between cost-effectiveness, sustainability, and convenience while ensuring compliance with the Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) departmental standards for travel and hospitality. It prioritizes cost control, environmental responsibility, and justification of travel expenses to maximize the impact of GlycoNet's funding.

The GlycoNet Travel and Hospitality Policy is consistent with the principles (section) of the Modern Travel Practices of the National Joint Council Travel Directive and the standards set out in the current Treasury Board Directive on Travel, Hospitality, Conference and Event Expenditures (THCEE), and the GlycoNet Project Eligible and Ineligible Cost Policy.

Additionally, as GlycoNet is hosted by the University of Alberta, it follows the University of Alberta Travel Process and Expense Procedure, which is more restrictive than the THCEE.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all travel made by GlycoNet staff, or members of the committees and boards of the Network. Any exceptions must be pre-approved by the Chief Executive Officer or the Scientific Director.

This Travel and Hospitality Policy, including cost eligibility, due diligence, and monitoring procedures should also apply to Ultimate Recipients of GlycoNet. Ultimate recipients include researchers, academic institutions, research hospitals.

3. Travel Plan Approval and Annual Reporting

The GlycoNet Board of Directors must approve the GlycoNet Annual Travel Plan that aligns with this policy. The travel plan may be amended as needed and shall be made available to the Minister upon request.

4. Eligible Expenses

Travel Arrangements

- **Justification:**
  - All travel for GlycoNet must be pre-approved by the GlycoNet administrative office.
  - Travel must be necessary and justified based on operational requirements, with preference given to virtual meetings whenever possible.
- **Advanced Booking:**
  - If at least one month's notice is provided for a meeting, must book at least 14 days in advance of the travel date to obtain the best rate possible, and reimbursement will be limited to the best available rate on that date.
  - If less than one month's notice is given, travelers are still encouraged to book as early as possible to obtain the best rate.
  - When travel involves a Saturday night stay, GlycoNet will reimburse accommodation costs and per diems incurred as a result.
- **Lowest Logical Fare Requirement:**
  - Reimbursement for plane travel will be at economy class rates.
  - Airline and route choices should be based on cost-effectiveness rather than personal frequent flyer programs.

Meals and Hospitality

- **Meals Reimbursement:**
  - The actual cost of meals per receipt (excluding alcohol), or per diem rates, as set by the University of Alberta Travel Process and Expense Procedure.
  - No reimbursement for additional meals where otherwise provided (e.g., meals included in conference registration or cost of accommodation).
  - Receipts must be itemized.
  - Alcohol will not be reimbursed under any circumstances.
- **Per Diem:**
  - Per diem will be provided at the University of Alberta rate in force at the time of travel. The individual may claim breakfast if departure is 7:30 am (from home) or earlier or return is 7:30 am or later (to home); lunch if departure time is 1 pm (from home) or earlier or return time is 1 pm or later; dinner if departure time is 6:30 pm (from home) or earlier or return time is 6:30 pm or later.

Hotel Accommodation

- Reimbursement is limited to the single occupancy rate for standard accommodations, or whatever class of accommodation is the least expensive.
- Accommodation for one night before and after an event is acceptable if airfare savings can be demonstrated. Where applicable, accommodation dates should coincide with those on the air ticket.
- Please note whether phone or internet charges were for personal or business use.
- Charges for movies, laundry, and mini-bars will not be reimbursed.
- Reimbursement will be made for private accommodations at the prevailing University of Alberta rate at the time of travel.

Ground Transportation

- **Vehicle Rental**
  - Vehicle rental is to be limited to a compact, mid-size, or full-size vehicle, depending on justifiable need and the prudent expenditure of GlycoNet funds. For example, several cab rides could be more economical than a car rental and parking. Reimbursable expenses include the rental fee, the kilometer/mileage charge by the rental agency, fuel charges, and insurance coverage, when applicable.
  - It is the responsibility of the traveler to ensure that they have the appropriate license to drive a vehicle while on GlycoNet business and to ensure that adequate insurance is in place for all drivers of the vehicle.
  - Car rental should only be chosen when it is more cost-effective than multiple taxi rides.
- **Mileage Reimbursement**
  - Gas and mileage expenses are eligible for travel within a 200 km radius of the meeting, or for travel of more than 200 km when flights do not provide adequate transportation.
  - Mileage will be reimbursed at the prevailing University of Alberta rate at the time of travel.
- **Ride-sharing & Public Transit**
  - Travelers are encouraged to use cost-effective and environmentally friendly alternatives (e.g., Uber, Lyft, public transit) whenever feasible.

5. Procedures

- **Submitting Expenses**
  - Expenses should be submitted to the GlycoNet administrative office for review and approval.
  - All expenses must be documented, justified, and demonstrate good value for public funds.
- **Receipts and Documentation**
  - Original, itemized receipts must be submitted for all expenses.
  - Credit card statements alone are not acceptable.
  - If expenses are being shared with another institution or original receipts cannot be provided for some other reason, please provide a letter of explanation.
- **Proof of Payment**

- Air travel: Receipts must include the itinerary, fare breakdown, and confirmation of payment. Boarding passes are not necessary.
- Mileage claims: A Google Map screenshot showing the distance traveled must be submitted.
- Taxi receipts must include the destination and point of origin.

- **Receipts must include**
  - Name of guest
  - Date
  - Taxes
  - Location
  - Details of the meeting

6. Compliance and Monitoring

GlycoNet shall maintain and administer a Travel and Hospitality Policy that ensures the prudent and reasonable use of funds.

- **Ethical Use & Conflict of Interest:**
  - Travel expenses must be incurred ethically and without any conflict of interest.
- **Pre-Approval & Delegation:**
  - The Chief Executive Officer or Scientific Director has final approval authority for exceptional travel cases.
- **Annual Review & Compliance:**
  - The Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee will review this policy annually and will report to the Board of Directors, including any recommendations for changes or revisions.
  - Compliance with the policy will be monitored, and any misuse of funds will be addressed through appropriate financial oversight mechanisms.
  - The GlycoNet Board of Directors will approve the GlycoNet Annual Travel Plan that aligns with this policy. The travel plan may be amended as needed.

7. Ultimate Recipient Compliance & Monitoring

Ultimate Recipients receiving GlycoNet funding must ensure that their travel and hospitality expenditures comply with the GlycoNet Travel and Hospitality Policy. A maximum of $3,000/year/funded researcher/project is provided to attend the GlycoNet AGM and symposium.

Annual Review & Compliance:

- A clause to the Award Agreement obliges the Ultimate Recipients to comply with GlycoNet Travel and Hospitality Policy.
- Ultimate Recipients must submit yearly travel and hospitality expenses in the GlycoNet Form 300.
- GlycoNet will review the compliance of the expense reports with the travel policy and budget restrictions.

History

- Revised by the Board of Directors on June 3, 2015.
- Revised and approved by the Board of Directors on October 31, 2017.
- Revised and approves by the Board of Directors on March 3, 2020.
- Revised and approved by the Board of Directors on May 1, 2025.