

INSTREAM FLOW COUNCIL TRAVEL GRANT POLICY

Biennial and Regional Meetings

Instream Flow Council (IFC) meetings provide key opportunities to learn about recent and state-of-the-art technical and scientific accomplishments and issues in the instream flow field and network with peers. However, tight travel budgets and agency policies make attendance difficult or impossible for some states and provinces. The inability for members to fully participate in the IFC impairs the ability of IFC to provide services to its membership.

Executive Committee Meetings

Instream Flow Council Executive Committee (EXCOM) meetings are required to properly manage of the business of the IFC. IFC bylaws state that the EXCOM will meet at least annually to conduct business. Attendance at IFC meetings by all EXCOM members is essential to the functioning of the IFC as most of the key organizational business items are handled at these meetings. The inability for EXCOM members to fully participate in the IFC impairs the ability of IFC to conduct business, recruit officers and to provide services to its membership.

In the year of the biennial meeting, it has been the practice of the EXCOM to meet at the same venue, immediately preceding the biennial meeting. In the alternate years, the bylaws require that EXCOM meetings be held in conjunction with a regional meeting, in a manner that rotates amongst the regions. The EXCOM generally transacts business between meetings via teleconferences, in addition to other forms of communication such as email.

These business meeting practices help to reduce EXCOM travel costs. However, Governing Council member agencies will not always pay the travel expenses for their employees to serve on the EXCOM and attend EXCOM meetings because of funding or policy restrictions.

Other Travel

Occasionally, IFC members are requested to attend meetings or workshops as representatives of IFC. The IFC will generally pay associated travel expenses if IFC representation is judged to be important. As discussed above, IFC representatives should seek to minimize travel costs, regardless of the type of meeting. When IFC participation is requested by the meeting organizer, the organizer should first be asked to fund the travel expenses in whole or in part.

Policy

- 1) To enable our members the opportunity for full participation in the IFC and to allow the IFC to fully serve its membership, the IFC will provide limited monetary travel grants for members to attend Biennial, Regional, EXCOM and other meetings on a case by case basis to help those who would otherwise be unable to attend. The intent of providing travel assistance is to cover reasonable expenses for attendees, not to cover all expenses. The caps on some expenses may result in a member paying for some items.
- 2) Members must be in good standing to receive travel grants.

- 3) Grants will not be used as a replacement for available agency funds and should be used by members who either cannot get out-of-state authorization or funding to attend IFC events. Members must make every effort to obtain travel funding from their agencies before requesting IFC travel assistance. If full agency funding is not possible, members are to attempt to obtain partial funding.
- 4) All travel grants will be subject to the following criteria:
 - a. Eligible expenses include travel, meals, lodging and other actual costs incurred while attending the meeting.
 - b. Applicants must make every effort to minimize all travel related expenses including lodging and meals.
 - c. Transportation must be based on the lowest practicable cost. If an individual opts to drive their personal vehicle, IFC will reimburse them for either the mileage cost at current IRS rates or up to the amount of the lowest air fare on the day application is made, whichever is less. Cost also should be minimized when traveling to and from the airport of departure and arrival. Sharing rides with others should be pursued.
 - d. Meal reimbursement will be limited to actual expenses for eligible meals. Meals covered as part of registration or otherwise covered by IFC are not eligible for reimbursement. Maximum reimburseable rates are \$8.00 for breakfast, \$12.00 for lunch, and \$20.00 for dinner. IFC will not reimburse for alcohol consumed with, or independent of meals.
 - e. Applicants will be expected to share a room, when appropriate, to reduce costs.
 - f. Upon completion of travel, applicants must fill out a reimbursement spreadsheet and provide copies of all receipts.
- 5) Any added costs above and beyond the costs related to travel to and from the meeting for the designated travel period for add on days for personal or other purposes that result in higher costs will be borne by the grant recipient.
- 6) If the IFC finances are limited at the time of the request, the EXCOM or President shall give priority to partial requests for travel funds or to any special importance of the requesting member's attendance at the meeting. For example, if a member is providing a report or key update on an IFC business item, that individual will have priority for funds over a member with regular participation.
- 7) Travel grant application forms may be obtained from Executive Committee members or downloaded from the IFC members-only web site. The application shall require:
 - a) a written statement on the need for funding and attendance at the meeting;
 - b) the amount requested;

- c) if the applicant requests waiver of meeting registration; and
 - d) any special circumstances that need to be considered by the Executive Committee in granting the award.
- 8) The deadline to apply for funding is 60 days prior to a Biennial meeting or 30 days prior to a Regional, EXCOM or other meeting. The EXCOM may at its discretion accept and grant late applications.
- 9) Awards will be selected by majority vote of the Executive Committee. An EXCOM member requesting funding shall not vote in the decision regarding her/his own funding request.
- 10) Limits on the amount of funds provided by IFC to a given meeting:
- a) For Biennial meetings the total amount awarded shall not exceed \$4,000; the amount awarded to any individual shall not exceed \$800; and the amount awarded to any one region shall not exceed \$1,600, unless special circumstances warrant additional amounts.
 - b) For Regional meetings the total amount awarded shall not exceed \$1,000 and the amount awarded to any individual shall not exceed \$500, unless special circumstances warrant additional amounts.
 - c) For EXCOM and other meetings the limit shall be \$500 per person, unless special circumstances warrant additional amounts.
 - d) When Regional or EXCOM meetings are held in conjunction with the Biennial meeting, grants will only be awarded as in item 10) a).
 - e) The number and amount of grants stipulated in this policy can be increased only if there are extenuating circumstances and unanimous approval by the EXCOM.
- 11) The amount of funds provided by IFC for travel assistance in a calendar year shall take into consideration the fund balance of IFC accounts. The total amount provided shall not exceed 10% of the fund balance unless there are extenuating circumstances and unanimous approval by the EXCOM.
- 12) The Executive Committee shall endeavor to fairly allocate funds among the regions over time and shall follow the criteria listed below in approving travel grants:
- a) Current IFC Governing Council members in good standing will have first priority on travel grants. Other employees of Governing Council IFC members in good standing, current IFC General Council members (category 3, resource agency staff), and emeritus members can be considered for travel grants after the travel needs for IFC Governing Council members have been satisfied and the attendance of these individuals is in the best interest of IFC.

- b) The EXCOM will give extra consideration to applicants who request only a portion of the travel costs; who have never attended an IFC meeting before; or who intend to present a paper.
- 13) The member seeking travel expense reimbursement must submit documentation of actual expenses to the Secretary/Treasurer including all pre-paid expenses.

Conceptually Adopted by the Executive Committee on December 5, 2003

Final Policy Adopted by the Executive Committee on May 14, 2004

Amended by the Executive Committee on July 6, 2006

Amended by the Executive Committee on January 20, 2010

See next page for travel grant application form.

INSTREAM FLOW COUNCIL TRAVEL GRANT APPLICATION

Name	
Agency	
Reason you are requesting travel assistance	
Have you attended an IFC meeting before?	
Do you intend to present a paper?	
Special circumstances for the Executive Committee to consider	

IFC Status (check one by double clicking on the box)

- Executive Committee
- Incoming Executive Committee (includes Regional Directors-elect)
- Governing Council Representative
- Other Agency Employee of Governing Council
- General Council

Meeting (check one by double clicking on the box)

- Biennial
- Regional
- Executive Committee
- Other (describe) _____

Expected Costs (Enter estimates in each box. Right click the “total” boxes and select “update field” to calculate total.)

Expense	Requested from IFC	Provided by your agency
Airfare	.00	.00
Ground	.00	.00
Lodging	.00	.00
Meals	.00	.00
Registration	.00	.00
Other	.00	.00
Total	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00

- Check here if you request waiver of registration fee for biennial meeting.

[Return this form to the IFC President via email.](#)

[Deadline – 60 days prior to a Biennial meeting or 30 days prior to all other meetings.](#)