Policy on Support Staff Travel and Workshop/Conference Attendance

If travel undertaken is at the request of the Libraries

There may occasionally be a need for library support staff members to undertake travel to an event in order to address specific business needs of the Libraries. Business needs are defined as a) representing MIT Libraries or b) obtaining or improving skills, education or training necessary to perform one's job; or c) participate in Diversity & Inclusion activities as part of a committee or in support of Libraries’ strategic priorities. In these instances, travel and financial support will be considered if the following conditions are met:

- the employee's attendance at an event is required in that the representation of the Libraries or the training received will address or support a defined business need of the MIT Libraries
- the business need addressed by the event cannot be met locally
- the daily operational needs of the unit can be managed satisfactorily during the absence

The procedure for obtaining authorization for undertaking such travel is as follows:

1) The traveler, in consultation with their Department Head, will submit a "Request for Travel Support Form" and supporting documentation to the Associate Director for their area. The form must include:
   a) substantive justification for the employee's attendance, including the specific business need that will be met and confirmation that the need cannot be met locally;
   b) an agenda of the event and specific plans of how the employee will spend time at the event in order to address the business need;
   c) a tentative travel itinerary, which will be used to determine the application of the Institute policy and the calculation of any overtime pay which may be required

2) The Associate Director will review the request. Requests supported by the Associate Director will be forwarded to the Libraries' Human Resources Administrator.

3) The Human Resources Administrator will consult with the Libraries' Human Resource Officer to assess the compensatory obligations, legal risks, etc. associated with the request per the Institute policy on travel for hourly employees.

4) Final approval of the request rests with Associate Director, who, in consultation with the Human Resources Administrator, will conduct a final review of the request and the assessment provided by Human Resources.

If travel is undertaken at employee's own discretion

Often employees have the opportunity to attend conferences or training events that, while they may be useful to one's work or support one's professional aspirations, are not critical to the business needs of the Libraries. In this case, a "Request for Travel Support Form" should be completed and submitted into the regular approval process. If approved and these events are scheduled during an employee’s normal work hours, support staff will be compensated in accordance with Institute guidelines (http://hrweb.mit.edu/node/984). If the events are held on holidays or weekends, staff attend on their own time and are not eligible for overtime pay or "comp" time.
In such events, expenses incurred can be requested, but may not be fully reimbursed by the Libraries.

**Attendance at local events (e.g. ALA in Boston)**

The following guidelines pertain to local event attendance. "Local" events are those which do not require an overnight stay.

- Paid time may be granted for the employee's event attendance during normal work hours, if they are judged to be useful to the individual's work or career development. Approvals are required from the supervisor and the Department Head.
- Approval will only be granted if the employee's absence will not adversely affect the daily operational needs of the unit nor cause undue hardship on the unit's staff.
- Weekend and holiday attendance is on the employee's own time and is not eligible for overtime pay or "comp" time.
- Expenses, such as registration fee and transportation, may be covered from the Libraries’ training budget as funds permit. (The process for arranging for and paying for approved local activities/travel is at: [http://libguides.mit.edu/admin/travel](http://libguides.mit.edu/admin/travel).)
- As is expected of all who attend training or association events, employees are encouraged to share their experience and the information learned through their event attendance with colleagues and staff.