

Smithsonian Requirements for International Travel

For travelers, supervisors, and others who support travel at SI.

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Smithsonian Institution

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Smithsonian Institution (SI) is a global organization, working across art, history, culture, science, and education in more than 140 countries around the world. Whether assisting in the rescue of cultural treasures following a natural disaster or conducting cutting-edge scientific research for biodiversity conservation, our scholars and professionals are engaged throughout the world to explore, care for, and support our global cultural and natural heritage – all in the service of the Smithsonian’s mission: the increase and diffusion of knowledge.

The Smithsonian Requirements for International Travel are designed to:

- Ensure the safety and accountability of SI personnel traveling internationally.
- Identify the steps required of SI personnel seeking to initiate international travel.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of SI personnel, supervisors, and support units involved in international travel.
- Provide guidance for travelers and supervisors/sponsors during travel.

See Appendix A: Terms and Definitions for additional information.

II. APPLICABILITY

This process applies to the following personnel traveling outside the United States and its territories:

- Employees (SI Federal and Trust employees)
- Certain non-employees, when traveling with Employees and/or as part of an international activity or initiative on behalf of SI (“non-employee travelers”)¹. Principal investigators or Travel supervisors/sponsors must identify all non-employee travelers associated with any international activity or initiative to determine whether the non-employee must comply with this policy for purposes of travel approval. If so determined, non-employee travelers need comply with only section III.A below. Additionally, non-employee travelers approved under this policy are subject to self-insurance and liability provisions to which they have separately agreed with the Smithsonian by contract or agreement.

These personnel will be collectively referred to as “SI Travelers” in this policy.

All international travel by SI Travelers is subject to the requirements and processes outlined in this document. Additional guidelines, policies, or procedures pertaining to project or program approval (that reach beyond travel) may still be required. However, international travel associated with any international trip (whether discrete or part of a project or program) is subject

¹ This may include, but is not limited to: contractors, interns, fellows, volunteers, students, collaborators, speakers and event participants, spouses and dependents traveling at the invitation of SI and acting in a capacity directly connected with official SI activities.

to these requirements, and this process may impact the ability of a project or program to move forward. In cases where international travel is a part of an activity subject to the [Global Activities Tracking Process](#) (GATP; [SD 804](#)), principal investigators/activity leads must comply with *both* applicable processes (i.e., review of an activity via the GATP does not exempt compliance with these requirements at the time of planning travel).

III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS (PRE-BOOKING)

Prior to booking, all SI Travelers must complete the International Travel Risk Review (ITRR) process (security, medical, and occupational considerations for the anticipated travel). Upon completion of the ITRR, if the security assessment of the travel is determined to be High Risk (as defined below), further approval from Smithsonian leadership is required and the SI Traveler's Supervisor/Sponsor must contact the Office of Contracting and Personal Property Management (OCon & PPM) Travel Management Office (TMO) via the [Service Portal](#) (see below). Please note that this process may take up to several months depending upon the travel destination and associated security requirements. SI Travelers and their Supervisors/Sponsors should plan accordingly.

A. Security Assessment

The SI Traveler and Supervisor/Sponsor are required to review the [U.S. Department of State's Travel Advisories](#) for all international locations in which travel (including airport transfers) will occur. **Please note**, while most countries are assigned a countrywide risk level, some areas or regions within a country may have a higher rating (see Appendix B for examples). It is therefore important to closely review the entirety of the travel advisory's text. Based on this review, the Traveler and Supervisor/Sponsor must identify the appropriate risk designation for all countries, areas, and regions in which travel, or transfer, will occur. OCon/TMO shall monitor all booked travel to ensure this process is followed.

- **Low Risk.** If a country or area has a **Level 1 - Exercise Normal Precautions** or a **Level 2 - Exercise Increased Caution** advisory, travel is categorized as **Low Risk**.
- **Medium Risk.** If a country or area has a **Level 3 - Reconsider Travel** advisory, travel is categorized as **Medium Risk**.
- **High Risk.** If a country or area has a **Level 4 – Do Not Travel** advisory, travel is categorized as **High Risk**.

Low Risk

If the travel advisory review characterizes the travel as Low Risk, the SI Traveler may proceed to process their travel authorization within Concur. Additional information or action may be required as noted in Table 1, below.

Medium Risk

If the travel advisory characterizes any portion of the travel as Medium Risk, the SI Traveler must obtain Unit Director approval before they process their travel authorization

within Concur. Additional information or action may be required as noted in Table 1, below. As needed, directors should consult OCON/TMO and OPS on how Medium Risk travel can be assessed and mitigated.

High Risk

If the State Department advisory characterizes any portion of the travel as High Risk (Level 4), in addition to obtaining Unit Director approval, the proposed travel is required to undergo review by the International Travel Task Force (ITTF) and receive approval from the Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating Officer (DSCOO) before the SI Traveler may make final travel arrangements.

After a request is sent via the Service Portal, the following steps will occur:

- OCon/TMO will consult with the Office of Protection Services (OPS) to review the proposed itinerary.
- OCon/TMO and OPS may request additional information from the SI Traveler and Supervisor/Sponsor to review the justification for the travel, specific travel plans, activities, locations of the travel, and proposed risk mitigations to offset the “Do Not Travel” advisory.
- OCon/TMO and OPS will consult with other security resources as necessary to determine if the proposed risk mitigations are adequate and/or to offer alternate or additional risk mitigations to offset the “Do Not Travel” advisory.
- OCon/TMO and OPS will present their recommendations to the DSCOO and ITTF for discussion and a final decision.

In some cases, particularly those where there is insufficient information upon which to issue a recommendation, OCon/TMO and OPS may recommend a project or trip-specific risk assessment, likely performed by an external consultant, and funded by the sponsoring unit. Such risk assessments may result in a requirement that a project or trip-specific security plan is required for approval; a cost that would also be borne by the sponsoring unit. The completion of the project or trip-specific risk assessment and/or security plan shall require further review by OCon/TMO, OPS, the ITTF, and the DSCOO.

Please reference Section III, Review and Approval Process (Pre-Booking) for additional information on the review and approval process and approval timelines.

B. Medical Assessment

The ITRR requires SI Travelers and Supervisors/Sponsors to consider the medical risks associated with their travel itinerary, including the risks inherent to the destination, the activities required, and the health status of the SI Traveler(s). To support SI Travelers, Smithsonian Occupational Health (OHS) [provides health-related travel risk assessments](#)



and personal health risk recommendations confidentially to the SI Traveler. The assessment includes travel-related medications and vaccinations.

SI Travelers and Supervisors/Sponsors must **query the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [international travel website](#)** for active Travel Health Notices and other health-related advisories for all countries/areas in which travel or transfer will occur.

Travel to countries/areas with **no active notices, CDC Level 1 (Watch) or Level 2 (Alert)** notices **require**:

- Supervisors/Sponsors to notify SI Travelers of the availability of OHS travel medicine services.
- SI Travelers to strongly consider an OHS travel medicine risk assessment at least a month prior to departure; and
- SI Travelers to confirm coverage by their private medical insurance in the travel destination(s).

Travel to countries/areas with a **CDC Level 3 (Warning)** notice **require**:

- SI Travelers to schedule an OHS travel medicine risk assessment at least 30 days prior to departure.
- SI Travelers to confirm coverage by their private medical insurance in the travel destination(s); and
- Unit Director approval.

SI Travelers with medical conditions that could put them at increased risk for illness or injury during travel are required to schedule a confidential travel medicine appointment with OHS.

C. Occupational Safety and Health Assessment

As a reminder, SI Travelers must complete a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) for all activities, including those performed in international locations, as required by the [SI Safety Manual](#). Units may follow their own JHA procedures, and where a unit does not have a standard JHA procedure, the SI Traveler should reach out to their Unit Safety Coordinator or Facility Safety Coordinator ([safety coordinators list](#)). A travel-specific JHA template is available from OHS, and should be completed by the SI Traveler and, if applicable, brought with them to their OHS travel medicine risk assessment in line with the guidance above.

Depending on the risks identified, and in consultation with the Supervisor/Sponsor, along with other relevant offices such as the [Smithsonian Scientific Diving Office](#), the SI Traveler may be required to:

- Complete activity-specific training identified by the Job Hazard Analysis.
- Acquire appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and complete the necessary training to ensure appropriate use and understanding of the PPE.

- Receive a Medical Clearance from OHS prior to travel (e.g., respirator, dive, hazardous exposure, zoonosis, animal care and use).

IV. PRE-TRAVEL ADVISEMENTS & REQUIREMENTS

A. ISOS Resources

Smithsonian has contracted with [International SOS](#) (ISOS) to provide resources for assessing security and medical travel risks, offering relevant advice, and assisting travelers with in-travel issues and emergencies. ISOS is integrated with the Smithsonian’s Concur Travel system such that international travel itineraries are synced to the ISOS platform and OCon/TMO and OPS are alerted of all international travel that is booked. Resources for the SI Traveler are provided on the [Smithsonian Global Assistance webpage](#).

SI Travelers are required to complete certain actions prior to international travel. These requirements are identified in Table 1:

Table 1: Pre-Travel Action Items

1.)	SI Traveler must review and update their personal profile in Concur and ensure that the cell phone to be used during travel is listed as the primary contact number. The phone used during travel (whether personal or Unit-provided) must be loaded with emergency contact information for ISOS and any available local resources.
2.)	SI Traveler is required to review the Pre-Travel Advisory (PTA) provided via an email by ISOS following booking in Concur.
3.)	SI Traveler is required to print the Emergency Contact Card provided by ISOS (available in the PTA email and on the Smithsonian Global Assistance webpage).
4.)	SI Traveler is required to download the ISOS Assistance App on the mobile phone that will be used during travel and to perform daily check-ins through the application.
5.)	SI Traveler must register with the State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP).^[1]
	1. STEP enrollment is available only to US citizens and nationals. SI Travelers who do not qualify to enroll in STEP are encouraged to enroll in any similar programs available through their country of citizenship

B. Other Resource and Considerations

IT Security: Most staff use mobile devices such as laptops, cell phones, and tablets when traveling in order to perform their work. However, these devices are susceptible to an increased threat of loss, theft, and attack when traveling. The risk is even higher when traveling to certain countries which are less friendly to the US, or where there is strong international competition or civil unrest. When traveling to these places, a traveler is more likely to be the victim of computer crime or surveillance. The [Computer Security While Traveling](#) document, located in the IT Security Handbook, provides information on risks a traveler is likely to encounter when traveling and things a traveler can do to protect themselves and the Institution when they travel. SI Travelers should contact [OCIO](#) for further questions on IT security while traveling abroad.

Export Compliance: For SI Travelers who are traveling to a [sanctioned country](#), carrying export-controlled items or sensitive data, or planning to bring field samples or other collected materials back, they must contact the [Export Compliance Officer](#) prior to travel.

V. IN-TRAVEL COMMUNICATION RESPONSIBILITIES AND RESPONSE MANAGEMENT

Once an SI Traveler has begun their trip, their respective itineraries, and unique in-app check-ins (as referenced in Table 1, above) will be processed through the ISOS TravelTracker platform. The Office of Emergency Management's SI-Communications (SCC) provides 24-hour monitoring of ISOS TravelTracker alerts in real-time. Should an incident occur at any physical location where an SI Traveler's itinerary or in-app check-in are located, SCC will be aware and notify OCon/TMO and OPS of the SI Traveler(s) in that location.

A. SI Traveler(s) Responsibilities

As noted in Table 1, above, SI Travelers are required to check-in daily via the ISOS app when traveling. Additionally, SI Traveler(s) are responsible for acknowledging the in-app notification check-in within 60 minutes of a prompted incident and/or responding as soon as possible to requests for contact from ISOS, OCon/TMO, OPS, and/or their Supervisor/Sponsor via phone, email or text.

If an SI Traveler(s) is personally impacted by an incident, they should, as soon as possible, contact **one or more** of the following, in this order of preferability:

- ISOS via app and/or telephonically that they have been impacted by the incident.
- SCC Communications at (202) 633-9300
- Their Supervisor/Sponsor

Note: If the SCC does not receive an in-app check-in within 60 minutes after an incident, they will begin a notification process to OCon/TMO and OPS.

B. Supervisor/Sponsor Responsibilities

Supervisors/Sponsors are responsible for notifying the SCC immediately at (202) 633-9300 if they become aware of an SI Traveler(s) being impacted by a known incident or requiring assistance by ISOS or the Smithsonian for some other reason. They are also responsible for working with OCon/OPS to support the impacted SI Traveler(s) as needed.

C. OCon/TMO and OPS Responsibilities

When informed by the SCC, OCon/TMO and OPS are responsible for notifying the Supervisor/Sponsor (and potentially unit director), the ITTF, and the DSCOO of an impacted Traveler(s). They also coordinate and manage support for the SI Traveler with ISOS and other Smithsonian units as needed.

Appendix A: Terms and Definitions

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): CDC works 24/7 to protect America from health, safety and security threats, both foreign and in the U.S. The CDC proactively works to mitigate the spread of diseases and supports communities and citizens in doing the same.

Concur: A web-based travel system created, operated, and supported by Concur Technologies and used by the Smithsonian. The most widely deployed of two online travel systems approved for use by federal agencies, Concur provides the ability to create a travel authorization; book airline, hotel and rental cars through an on-line booking engine; and create a voucher at the end of the trip.

International SOS (ISOS): [International SOS](#) is a medical and travel security service with whom SI has contracted to provide resources for assessing geographic, social, and political risks, as well as offering relevant advice, and potential assistance to travelers. Additionally, ISOS provides emergency evacuation services in cases of extreme risk.

International Travel Risk Review: A security, occupational activity, and medical review process that will be initiated during the development and planning stages of any SI program or project that will require international travel.

International Travel Task Force (ITTF): A multi-unit Smithsonian committee responsible for advisement to the Deputy Secretary and Chief Operating Officer (DSCOO) surrounding High Risk travel and incident management.

Invitational Traveler: A non-employee traveling at the invitation of SI and acting in a capacity directly connected with official SI activities.

Office of Contracting and Personal Property Management (OCon & PPM) Travel Management Office (TMO): OCon/TMO is the Smithsonian office responsible for monitoring International Travel requests and ensuring that High-Risk travel is reviewed with OPS and elevated as necessary to the ITTF..

Office of Protection Services: An SI unit responsible for International Travel through collaborative analysis of the security risk and potential mitigation, and provides recommendations for travel approval/rejection to the ITTF.

Office of Safety, Health, and Environmental Management/Occupational Health Services (OSHEM/OHS): An SI unit that contributes to international travel through a country-by-country analysis of your itinerary, anticipated activities, and review of previous immunizations in order to develop an individualized travel health plan.

Pre-Travel Advisory (PTA): An e-mail notification to the traveler that offers important security information relevant to travel. It is sent automatically following successful travel booking.

Trip-Specific Risk Assessment: A detailed risk analysis provided by a security consultant that outlines the risks associated with a specific project.

Trip-Specific Security Plan: A detailed plan provided by a security consultant to comprehensively capture the unique logistics and requirements of a specific project.

State Department Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP): A free service under the auspices of the State Department to allow U.S. citizens and nationals traveling and living abroad to enroll their trip with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate to receive communications and support in the case of a local emergency.

Subject Matter Expert (SME): A person with bona fide expert knowledge about necessary technical and safety procedures for a particular subject area.

SI Traveler(s): The person(s) who will be traveling internationally on behalf of the Institution.

Traveler Supervisor: The approving official for authorized travel and SI supervisor who has overall responsibility for ensuring the review process is complete for individual travelers.

Traveler Sponsor: A representative of the SI Unit providing travel for an invitational traveler. The SI project sponsor/lead assumes the responsibilities of the traveler's supervisor and has overall responsibility for ensuring the review process is complete.

TravelTracker: An ISOS management platform by which the administrator can interact with tools and services available through ISOS membership, which allows for visibility of the traveler, means to communicate when an incident occurs, and pre-trip and in-trip management of risk.

Appendix B: Reading State Department Travel Advisories

See the [U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories](https://travel.state.gov/traveladvisories) website for more information.

Travel Advisory

We issue a Travel Advisory for each country of the world. Travel Advisories follow a consistent format and use plain language to help U.S. citizens find and use important security information. Travel Advisories apply up to four standard levels of advice, describe the risks, and provide clear actions U.S. citizens should take to help ensure their safety.

To see a complete list of Travel Advisories for every country in the world, see travel.state.gov/traveladvisories. Click on our color-coded world map at travelmaps.state.gov for a global view.

Levels 1-4

The Travel Advisory appears at the top of each country page, with a color corresponding to each level:



Level 1 - Exercise Normal Precautions: This is the lowest advisory level for safety and security risk. There is some risk in any international travel. Conditions in other countries may differ from those in the United States and may change at any time.

Level 2 - Exercise Increased Caution: Be aware of heightened risks to safety and security. The Department of State provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.

Level 3 - Reconsider Travel: Avoid travel due to serious risks to safety and security. The Department of State provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.

Level 4 – Do Not Travel: This is the highest advisory level due to greater likelihood of life-threatening risks. During an emergency, the U.S. government may have very limited ability to provide assistance. The Department of State advises that U.S. citizens not travel to the country or to leave as soon as it is safe to do so. The Department of State provides additional advice for travelers in these areas in the Travel Advisory. Conditions in any country may change at any time.

Varying Levels

We issue an overall Travel Advisory level for a country, but levels of advice may vary for specific locations or areas within a country. For instance, we may advise U.S. citizens to “Exercise increased caution” (Level 2) in a country, but to “Reconsider travel” (Level 3) to a particular area within the country.

Risk Indicators

Travel Advisories at Levels 2-4 contain clear reasons for the level assigned, using established risk indicators and specific advice to U.S. citizens who choose to travel there. These are:

- **C – Crime:** Widespread violent or organized crime is present in areas of the country. Local law enforcement may have limited ability to respond to serious crimes.
- **T – Terrorism:** Terrorist attacks have occurred and/or specific threats against civilians, groups, or other targets may exist.
- **U – Civil Unrest:** Political, economic, religious, and/or ethnic instability exists and may cause violence, major disruptions, and/or safety risks.
- **H – Health:** Health risks, including current disease outbreaks or a crisis that disrupts a country's medical infrastructure, are present. The issuance of a Centers for Disease Control Travel Notice may also be a factor.
- **N - Natural Disaster:** A natural disaster, or its aftermath, poses danger.
- **E - Time-limited Event:** Short-term event, such as elections, sporting events, or other incidents that may pose safety risks.
- **K – Kidnapping or Hostage Taking:** Criminal or terrorist individuals or groups have threatened to and/or have seized or detained and threatened to kill, injure or continue to detain individuals in order to compel a third party (including a governmental organization) to do or abstain from doing something as a condition of release.
- **D – Wrongful Detention:** The risk of wrongful detention of U.S. nationals by a foreign government exists.
- **O – Other:** There are potential risks not covered by previous risk indicators. Read the country's Travel Advisory for details.

Examples:

Paraguay
Republic of Paraguay

Travel Advisory
October 5, 2022

Paraguay - Level 1: Exercise Normal Precautions

Exercise normal precautions in Paraguay. Some areas have increased crime risk. Read the entire Travel Advisory.

[READ MORE]

Embassy Messages Alerts

Message for U.S. Citizens – U.S. Embas
COVID-19 Information Tue, 25 Oct 2022
Health Alert for Monkeypox Mon, 08 A
Travel Advisory PARAGUAY – Level 1: Ex

Paraguay
Republic of Paraguay

Travel Advisory
October 5, 2022

Paraguay - Level 1: Exercise Normal Precautions

Last Update: Reissued with updates to health information.

Exercise normal precautions in Paraguay. Some areas have increased crime risk. Read the entire Travel Advisory.

Exercise increased caution in:

- Amambay, Alto Paraná, Canindeyu, San Pedro, and Concepcion departments due to **crime**

Read the [country information page](#) for additional information on travel to Paraguay.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has determined Paraguay has a high level of COVID-19. Visit the CDC page for the latest [Travel Health Information](#) related to your travel.

If you decide to travel to Paraguay:

- Read the [Department of State's COVID-19 page](#) before planning any international travel, and read the [Embassy COVID-19 page](#) for country-specific COVID-19 information.
- Enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive Alerts and make it easier to locate you in an emergency.
- Follow the Department of State on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).
- Review the [Country Security Report](#) for Paraguay.
- Prepare a contingency plan for emergency situations. Review the [Traveler's Checklist](#).

Departments of Amambay, Alto Paraná, Canindeyu, San Pedro, and Concepcion – Level 2: Exercise Increased Caution

Transnational criminal elements are active and engage in illicit trafficking of arms, narcotics, and goods in these departments, which are located along Paraguay's northeastern border with Brazil. Police presence is limited.

U.S. government personnel must provide advance notice when traveling to these areas.

Reissued with updates to travel restrictions in Laikipia County.

Exercise increased caution in Kenya due to **crime, terrorism, civil unrest, and kidnapping**. Some areas have increased risk. Read the entire Travel Advisory.

Do Not Travel to:

Kenya-Somalia border counties and some coastal areas, due to terrorism and kidnapping.

Areas of Turkana County, due to crime.

Reconsider Travel to:

Nairobi neighborhoods of Eastleigh and Kibera, due to crime and kidnapping.

Certain areas of Laikipia County, due to criminal incursions and security operations, reconsider travel through Nyahururu, Laikipia West, and Laikipia North Sub-counties.

Country Summary: Violent crime, such as armed robbery, is common. U.S. citizens should respond effectively to serious criminal incidents and be aware of their surroundings at all times. Dark anywhere in Kenya due to crime.

Terrorist attacks have occurred with little or no warning at markets/shopping malls, and places of worship.

Demonstrations may occur, blocking key intersections. Conditions occur regularly, particularly in periods of political unrest. When it occurs around the country, it is mostly notable in Nairobi.

Due to risks to civil aviation operating in the vicinity of Mombasa (NOTAM). For more information, U.S. citizens should consult the U.S. State Department website.

Specified Areas – Level 4: Do Not Travel

U.S. government personnel are prohibited from traveling to the below areas.

Kenya-Somalia Border Counties:

- Mandera due to kidnapping and terrorism.
- Wajir due to kidnapping and terrorism.
- Garissa due to kidnapping and terrorism.

Coastal Areas:

- Tana River county due to kidnapping and terrorism.
- Lamu county due to kidnapping and terrorism.
- Areas of Kilifi County north of Malindi due to kidnapping and terrorism.

Turkana County:

- Road from Kainuk to Lodwar due to crime and armed robbery, which occur frequently.

Specified Areas – Level 3: Reconsider Travel

Nairobi neighborhoods of Eastleigh and Kibera

- Violent crime, such as armed carjacking, mugging, home invasion, and kidnapping, can occur at any time. Street crime can involve multiple armed assailants. Local police often lack the resources and training to respond effectively to serious criminal incidents.

Laikipia County

- Certain areas of Laikipia County, due to criminal incursions and security operations, reconsider travel through Nyahururu, Laikipia West, and Laikipia North Sub-counties.

Consider carefully whether to use the Likoni ferry in Mombasa due to safety concerns.