



Expenses Policy for Directors

Supporters Direct is a not-for-profit organisation which receives funding in order to achieve key goals.

Whilst we are not a public body and thus subject to the Freedom of Information Act, expense claims are subject to enquiry by tax authorities, our members and funders, and effort should be taken to minimise expenses.

Supporters Direct's Directors are unpaid and devote time and energy to the organization, and as a result of their work for the organisation, none should be out of pocket, or subject to privations.

In addition, we recognise that it is legitimate for Directors to be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses and that an organisation with the turnover of SD incurs governance costs which are not discretionary and are a legitimate and standard item of expenditure.

We also wish to ensure that in addition to the criteria for being a Director, an informal culture does not develop which sees expenses as something Directors should absorb as evidence of their commitment and fidelity to our values, which does not respect the variations in means of current and future Directors.

Supporters Direct does not have day rates or standard allowances for specific items, and has successfully operated a trust-based policy since its inception, which is based on guidelines rather than specific stipulations and fixed allowances.

- **Travel**

Wherever possible and practicable, all journeys shall be by standard class rail and alternatives should only be used where necessary. Where car journeys are made, mileage claims should be demonstrated by use of a mapping service (eg Google maps). Where flights are taken, the cheapest possible airfare should be secured.

- **Accommodation**

Wherever possible and practicable, all accommodation should be in comfortable economy-level accommodation, unless where for reasons of necessity, alternative accommodation must be sought. Necessity here is to include a requirement to be at a particular hotel for facilities essential to the Director's undertaking of their duties (which includes Director's paid employment responsibilities to be undertaken around the execution of their unpaid work for SD) that are not provided at economy options, or where for reasons of arrival or departure, or proximity to a meeting venue, the location of an alternative hotel is much better suited.

- **Refreshment**

There is no daily rate set for claims, but no more than three meals can be claimed in any one day, where a Director is on SD business. Meal costs should be reasonable and meals taken should be equivalent to what one would ordinarily have taken had one not been engaged on SD business. SD will not ordinarily pay for alcoholic drinks.

- **Hospitality**

SD recognises that from time to time, Directors are on official business and are in situations where hospitality is received and there is an expectation that it should be reciprocated. Whilst ordinarily expenses are not to be claimed for non-Directors, in these instances, we recognise that there is potential for officials to be out of pocket

whilst representing the organisation. These instances should be kept to a minimum, and should for the avoidance of doubt, a Director anticipating this should notify the Chief Executive in advance wherever possible.

Procedure for Claiming

- Directors are urged to use the assistance of SD staff in securing best prices for upcoming expenditure, which also obviates the need for submitting and processing claims.
- Claims should be submitted within 30 days of being incurred to the Office Manager using the standard expense claim form. If there are issues which might prevent a claim submitted in good time, it is the responsibility of the Director to raise the matter with the Office Manager.
- All items claimed for must be accompanied by itemised receipts of expenses actually incurred; we cannot reimburse where there is no paper record of the expense actually being claimed.
- If Directors choose to utilise a service above a standard level in travel, accommodation or refreshment, they will be responsible for the difference between the cost of the service and the standard cost and it is incumbent on Directors to identify the difference in cost of the upgrade. SD will pay the costs of the standard service.
- Reimbursement will be by BACS transfer within 4 weeks to the account details you have supplied us with. If you need to be paid by cheque or require more speedy reimbursement, then please let us know.
- All claims must be paid out of the financial year in which they were incurred, and after the books have been closed on a particular year (normally around one month after the year-end), no payments can be made. If there are issues which might prevent a claim submitted in good time, it is the responsibility of the Director to raise the matter with the Office Manager.

Queries

- Queries over the any claims will be raised first with the Director concerned for clarification. Should there be any concerns arising from these discussions, then the Secretary will be informed, who will determine the next steps. This can include:
 - to allow the payment as claimed for.
 - the exclusion of items deemed to be outside the expense policy.
 - the capping of reimbursement at a lower level where it is deemed that the amount claimed is excessive and does not reflect an overriding necessity to incur greater expense than the economy rate.
- Breach of these guidelines is cause for possible suspension of removal from the board, and SD will not hesitate to involve the authorities should fraud be suspected.