

Frequently Asked Questions – Sponsored Project Travel

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Q. What is The Fly America Act and when does the regulation apply?

- A. The **Fly America Act** refers to the provisions enacted by [Title 49 of the United States Code](#), Subtitle VII, Part A, subpart I, Chapter 401, 40118 – Government-Financed Air Transportation. It is applicable to all travel funded by United States federal government funds and requires the use of "U.S. flag" airlines. Individuals that are affected include U.S. federal government employees, their dependents, consultants, contractors, **grantees**, and others.

The Fly America Act Regulation also applies to Federal flow-through sponsored funding, as well as any sponsor (i.e. Susan G. Komen Foundation) that references compliance with federal regulations, OMB Circulars or Uniform Guidance 2 CFR Part 200, in the terms and conditions of the award.

Q. Can I charge an airline ticket to my federal grant using a foreign air carrier if the cost is less expensive than a US based carrier?

- A. **No.** According to the regulation, a foreign air carrier service cannot be charged to a Federal award for reasons of ticket cost, preference of the traveler, or convenience. In order to appropriately charge a foreign air carrier flight to a federal award, it must meet one of the allowable exceptions provided under the Fly America Act Regulation.

Q. What are the allowable exceptions under the Fly America Act?

- A.
1. When a U.S. air carrier is **not** available
 2. When the use of a U.S. carrier service would extend the travel time by 24 hours or more.
 3. When a U.S. carrier **does not** offer nonstop or direct service between origin and destination; and,
 - a. Increases the number of aircraft changes outside the United States by **two or more**
 - b. Extends travel time by at least **six hours or more**
 - c. Requires a connecting time of **four hours or more** at an overseas interchange point.
 4. **Short Distance Travel** - When the flight time from origin to destination is less than 3 hours and the use of a US flag carrier doubles the time en-route.
 5. When there is an applicable **open skies agreement** in effect which the Department of Transportation has determined meets the requirements of the Fly America Act.

Q. What are Open Skies agreements and how does it help me with federal funded air travel?

- A. **Open skies** provides an exception to the Fly America Act requirement, in limited circumstances, where a bilateral or multilateral air transport agreement is present between the United States Government and the government of a foreign country in which the Department of Transportation has determined meets the requirements of the Fly America Act. According to the [General Services Administration \(GSA\) website](#),

There are currently **only four** bilateral/multilateral “Open Skies Agreements” in effect that are eligible for Government/Grantee air transportation:

1. **United States (US) Government and European Union (EU)** – Permits the use of a European Union Air carrier for International travel outside the US.
2. **United States (US) and Australia** - Permits the use of an Australian Air carrier for International travel between the US to Australia as long as a [“City Pair” fare](#) is not available between the cities of origin and destination.
3. **United States (US) and Switzerland** - Permits the use of a Swiss Air carrier for International travel between the US to Switzerland as long as a [“City Pair” fare](#) is not available between the cities of origin and destination.
4. **United States (US) and Japan** - Permits the use of a Japanese Air carrier for International travel between the US to Japan as long as a [“City Pair” fare](#) is not available between the cities of origin and destination.

Q. Are there any limitations or restrictions in using Open Skies for Federal Award Grantee Travel?

- A. Yes. The Open Skies exception cannot be used for domestic travel (within the US), and the exception does not apply to travel supported by Department of Defense (DOD) Funds.

Q. Under Open Skies, when must I verify that a [city pair](#) fare is in effect?

- A. The use of Open Skies is determined by the traveler’s origin, destination and selection of air carrier. Any international travel using a **European Union air carrier to or through a EU Country does not require** a city pair fare verification. However, International travel to Australia, Switzerland, and Japan using an **Australian, Swiss, or Japanese air carrier must first be verified** that a [city pair fare](#) does not exist between the cities of origin and destination.

Q. Does Air Canada or Westjet qualify as an exception under Fly America or Open Skies, and when would the short distance exception apply under the Fly America Act?

- A. In general, the answer is **No**. Both Air Canada and Westjet Airlines are operated by Canadian (Foreign) based airlines, neither carrier qualifies as an exception under Open Skies.

However, if the flight time from origin to destination is less than 3 hours and the use of a US flag carrier doubles the time en-route, the **short distance exception** under Fly America could apply in which a foreign, including a Canadian based, carrier may be appropriately charged.

Q. What does it mean when my airline ticket indicates a “Codeshare” arrangement, and when is it, or is it not, an allowable charge on my Federal Award?

- A. **Codeshare**, is an aviation business arrangement where two or more airlines share the same flight. Sharing, in this sense, means that each airline publishes and markets the flight under its own airline designator and flight number as part of its published timetable or schedule. A seat can be purchased on each airline's designator and flight number, but is operated by only one of these cooperating airlines. Typically, code-sharing agreements are also a part of the commercial agreements between airlines in the same airline alliances. **To be compliant under Fly America Regulations**, the purchase must occur using the US airline’s designator and flight number rather than the foreign carrier.

For example:

- **Compliant with Fly America:** American Airlines (AA) 1234 operated by Quantas Airways (QF) 4321
- **Not Compliant with Fly America:** QF 4321 operated by AA 1234

Q. What information should be included with my travel reimbursement to document a Fly America Exception/Waiver?

- A. 1. A completed and signed Fly America Exception/Waiver form; and,
2. A detailed travel itinerary from a travel agent or on-line travel service (i.e., Sanditz, Travelocity, Orbitz, or Expedia).
3. The search results **performed at the time of booking** from an on-line travel service that documents all available flights and the existence of the Fly America exception identified on the Fly America Exception/Waiver form, if applicable.

Q. Is it permissible to charge the University or my Sponsored Award for personal expenses/activities while traveling on University/Grant business?

A. No. Expenses charged to or requested for reimbursement from a sponsored award must directly benefit the sponsored award. Personal expenses, entertainment, and social activities while traveling on University/Grant status is not an allowable expense on a sponsored award and must typically be paid by traveler.

Q. The University recommends the use of Sanditz for making travel arrangements related to University business. What are the advantages of using this tool rather than other sites and booking tools that I am more familiar and comfortable?

- A.
1. Sanditz provides services that ensure compliance with Fly America Act regulations; which therefore, assists the traveler in booking flights without the hassle of having to know and understand the Fly America Regulations.
 2. Sanditz provides direct billing to the University which means no “out-of-pocket” expense for the airline ticket is incurred by the traveler.
 3. If for some reason the traveler is unable to take the trip, Sanditz provides a credit (less fees, penalties, and rebooking charges) for the unused airline ticket. This permits the trip to be either rescheduled with the credit offsetting the cost of the new ticket, or it allows a credit back to the sponsored award in cases where no future trip will benefit that particular award.
 4. Sanditz website and booking tool is located at:
<http://travel.uconn.edu/2014/03/05/sanditz-online-booking-tool>

Q. Who can I contact if I have questions or need assistance with travel on sponsored awards?

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Item	Contact
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