

# STRATEGIC INSIGHTS

Ways NIH can save on Travel Costs

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STRATEGIC RESULTS



## Ways NIH can save on Travel Costs

The most cost-effective strategies in meeting planning involve implementing enough small changes at every step of development to amass significant savings in the long term.

The following suggestions, executed together and taken across the NIH's wide reach of meetings and symposiums, could ultimately save the NIH millions each year. To demonstrate the potential for cutbacks, we will provide the estimated savings of a hypothetical meeting with 40 attendees traveling by plane.

1. If planning for a meeting with a duration of one and a half days, plan so that the half day precedes the full day. If the full day is first, most attendees will fly in the night before, adding an entire unnecessary night to their stay at the hotel.  
**Estimated savings for 40 travelers:** \$6760-9040 in DC
2. Try to book hotels that offer complimentary breakfast rolled into their room fees. This will save on the cost of breakfast every morning.  
**Estimated savings for 40 travelers:** \$480/morning in DC
3. Try never to end a meeting earlier than originally scheduled. Travelers will rebook flights to depart earlier, paying the necessary fee to do so.  
**Estimated savings for 40 travelers:** Up to \$6000
4. When choosing venue and hotel locations, consider city and county hotel and per diem rates. For example, the rate for lodging in Baltimore City is \$145, whereas the rate for lodging in Baltimore County is \$97. In this case, it is more prudent to host travelers in the county rather than within city limits. Washington DC and nearby areas in particular have high per diem rates.  
**Estimated savings for 40 travelers:** Switching the hotel from Baltimore County to Baltimore City saves \$1920/night
5. Host the meeting in close proximity to the hotel and airport, even at the possible inconvenience of local attendees. It is cheaper for a few local residents to drive a distance than for many airline travelers to travel the same distance by taxi cab.  
**Estimated savings for 40 travelers:** Up to \$80/mile travelled by cab one way
6. Schedule the meeting so that attendees would travel on Tuesday, Saturday, and especially Wednesday; airfares are generally the cheapest for these days. If possible, consider the time of year



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for your meeting as well. Outside of Thanksgiving and Easter, fares are cheaper during Spring and Autumn.

**Estimated savings for 40 travelers:** Variable

7. Large corporations have started to require that employees rent cars in lieu of taking taxis. Depending on the routes driven and the number of stops, car rentals can actually prove cheaper than taxis. For longer distances and more stops, consider car rentals.



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