



UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

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Center for **Global Health**

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## **Global Health Student Travel Guide**

## **Introduction**

In order to help students in the Health Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh prepare for their Global Health Opportunities Abroad, the Center for Global Health has created this Global Health Student Travel Guide. The following section lists Student Responsibilities for Global Health Opportunities Abroad, which details the timeline and student responsibilities for planning a practicum or research experience with an advisor and faculty member. The next section, Center for Global Health Pre-Departure Resources, directs students to resources within and outside the University of Pittsburgh to prepare for their international experience. Some topics included in this section are: health and safety abroad, University policies, passport & visa information, international research ethics, technology and communication abroad, and more.

This travel guide is meant to be a digital book, so that students can interact with the links in this guide to access online resources.

If you have any questions or concerns about the information below, please reach out to:

Center for Global Health | 412-648-6985 | [cgh@pitt.edu](mailto:cgh@pitt.edu)

Study Abroad Office | 412-648-7412 | [abroad@pitt.edu](mailto:abroad@pitt.edu)

# **Student Responsibilities for Global Health Opportunities Abroad**

## **Step 1: Preparing for Your Practicum/Research Experience**

Minimum of 10 months prior to anticipated departure

Students are responsible for identifying their own practicum and research opportunities. This section here will assist you to research and develop a list of possible opportunities.

Before meeting with your Pitt Faculty Mentor:

- Create a list of your global health interest areas.
- Conduct an internet search to explore possible international research and practicum opportunities.
- Research Pitt Faculty Members for a potential mentor. This person can be your appointed departmental advisor.
  - Please reach out to the Center for Global Health if you are having difficulty connecting with global health researchers.

Then, meet with your dept. advisor to further discuss and select the most appropriate options from your above selections.

## **Stage 2: Project Development**

Minimum of 9 months before departure. This stage may take up to 5 months.

Work with your faculty mentor to develop a global health project

If this experience will be used as a practicum, complete any needed practicum paperwork, such as learning agreements.

Contact potential sites.

Work with Pitt Faculty Member to ensure your project meets IRB Requirements.

Apply for funding and scholarships.

- Many Pitt-related scholarships, such as the [Nationality Room Scholarship](#) and the [Center for Global Health Student Travel Scholarship](#), have application dates starting around November/December with submissions closing in January of the following year.

Refer to the section below for helpful advice on how to prepare for your trip, including a suggested packing list, sources to explore travel safety tips, and much more.

## **Stage 3: During Practicum/Research**

Establish a communication plan pre-departure.

Keep your faculty and practicum/research mentor updated on your progress.

## **Stage 4: After Practicum/Research**

Complete any deliverables committed to site or faculty mentor. If practicum, complete any necessary practicum evaluations and report.

## **Center for Global Health Pre-Departure Resources**

### **Travel Resources: Policy**

As the University of Pittsburgh increases its global engagement, a natural consequence is increased international travel by members of the University community. The Council of Deans established Travel Registry Guidelines in order to reach Pitt students and personnel abroad in an emergency or events such as a natural disaster, or military or civil uprising. In addition, the registry can be a useful tool in defining the University international engagement.

Per the guidelines, students and staff must register their international travel, and faculty are strongly encouraged to do so. These guidelines carry the same weight as a policy and apply to all international travel that is sponsored by, funded in any part by (including grant funds processed through Pitt), or involves the granting of academic credit by the University of Pittsburgh.

Registering with the Travel Registry can be done on my.pitt.edu. 'Travel Registration' is located under the 'My Resources' tab.

Note that the guidelines do not pertain to student, staff, or faculty travel for personal reasons (e.g., vacation).

### **Travel Registration**

Know the location of and contact information for the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate for your destination and all countries where you have a layover. If you plan to drive, review the [State Department's tips for driving abroad](#). Less developed countries may lack paved and/or lighted roads, traffic and vehicle safety regulations, and seat belt and helmet laws. Traffic accidents are among the top causes of death and disability in many developing countries. Motor cycles are particularly hazardous and should be avoided if possible.

Make several copies of all important documents (e.g., passport; itinerary; your local contact information; credit and ATM cards; passwords; prescriptions; health or medical records; emergency contacts in the U.S. and all foreign countries visited; health and other emergency plans; driver's license; address and phone for nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.) Give a copy to a relative or friend in the U.S. and take at least two copies with you. Do not put copies in baggage that will be checked.

### **STEP**

Registration with the [U.S. Department of State Safe Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) is highly recommended. This free service is available to U.S. citizens and nationals who are traveling or living in a foreign country. Once you create an account, you can register specific trip information each time you travel. By registering with STEP, it is easier for U.S. embassies and consulates to reach and/or assist you in the event of an emergency. Registering also makes it easier for contacts in the U.S. to reach you abroad in the event of an emergency back home.

Note that registry with STEP supplements, but does not replace, registration in the University of Pittsburgh's Travel Registry, in the section above.

## **While Abroad**

When you arrive at your destination, place copies of important documents in separate, secure locations (e.g., locked luggage, room or hotel safe). Have your passport, insurance information, and key contact information with you at all times. Register with the local U.S. Embassy or consulate. (Foreign nationals should register with their home country embassy.) Stay in safe areas and avoid going out alone, particularly when dark. Use reputable ground transportation, and avoid motor bikes when possible, particularly if helmets aren't available. Carry only small amounts of cash, and exercise caution when using ATM machines. Keep food and beverage safety in mind when choosing options. Use insect repellent, sunscreen, and bed nets where indicated. Take prophylactic medication as prescribed.

## **After Return**

Complete all prophylactic medication regimes. Contact your physician immediately if you have fever, rash, persistent diarrhea or other unusual symptoms, particularly if you've traveled to Sub-Saharan Africa or tropical regions.

## **Travel Resources: Passport & Visa**

### **Passports**

It takes 4-6 weeks to obtain a first-time passport; however, this time can increase during periods of heavy travel. You must apply in person for a first passport and under certain other circumstances (e.g., replacing a lost passport, name change, last passport was issued more than 15 years ago). Some countries require that a passport be valid for at least six months after the expected completion of international travel, and you can contact the embassy of the destination country to confirm. However, the U.S. Department of State recommends renewing a passport at least nine months before the expiration date. As of August 2013, obtaining or renewing a U.S. passport will cost between \$110 and \$140 plus the cost of photos and applicable fees. Refer to the [U.S. State Department Passport and International Travel Web site](#) for additional information.

### **Visas**

You may need a visa in order to enter your destination country. Most countries have different types of visas depending on the nature of your visit and/or length of stay. Do not assume you can conduct research or a medical or other intervention with a tourist visa. There can be serious consequences in foreign countries for those who conduct work or research outside the scope of their visa type. Some countries require a transit visa to pass through the country—but not stay there—on the way to the destination country. A transit visa might also be required if you want to leave the airport during an extended layover (for example, to spend the night at a hotel or to tour the city). As soon as you know to which country/countries you will be traveling, determine which visas will be required and initiate the visa application process as soon as possible.

A valid passport is required before applying for a visa. Visa costs can range from no charge to several hundred dollars and can take from 1 week to several months to process. Expedited visa services are available for an additional fee. While some countries will issue visas upon arrival in the country (commonly called an “airport” visa), it’s generally better to obtain visas prior to departure from the

U.S. Check with the [U.S. Department of State](#) or the country embassy Web site to determine visa requirements.

If you are an international student, scholar, or employee please consult with the [Office of International Services](#) to determine what is required for you to return home or visit another country and then return to the U.S. in proper status.

### **Expedited Passport and Visa Services**

There are companies and some travel agencies that provide expedited passport and visa services. Fees can vary greatly, so it's important to compare prices.

## **Travel Resources: Transportation**

### **Air Travel**

The University of Pittsburgh has three approved travel agencies:

Anthony Travel (412) 246-9024

Peoples Travel (412-621-0799)

Using a University-approved agency will ensure that you receive all available discounts. Another advantage is that these agencies are authorized to accept the University Business Travel Request (Form 0062) as payment for airfare and group travel services. Refer to the University of Pittsburgh's [PantherExpress Travel & Expense Management](#) for additional information.

**Important Notes:** The [Fly America Act](#) mandates the use of a U.S. certificated air carrier for federally funded international travel. There may also be restrictions on the class (coach vs. business) of travel. Check with the principal investigator or the administrator who handles grants and contracts in your area to obtain information on requirements.

Check with carrier-specific baggage restrictions for all legs of your journey. You may need to show proof of round trip transportation between the U.S. and foreign destination, so you should make copies of the originals and keep them in a separate location.

### **Ground Transport**

Research ground transportation options when planning your trip. Hotels often provide transportation to/from the airport, but there may be a fee. Hotels that don't provide transport can generally recommend a taxi or driver service that is safe and reliable. If you are considering driving, check to see if there are restrictions on visiting foreign nationals renting or driving vehicles while in the country. You should check on locally accepted liability insurance and see if an International Driver's Permit (IDP) is recommended or required. The [American Automobile Association \(AAA\)](#) is an excellent source of information on IDPs and related issues.

## **Lodging**

Before booking accommodations, consider the location in terms of safety, availability of transportation, and proximity to organizations you will be visiting, food, and other goods and services. You may also want to consider the safety of western hotels vs. local or internationally branded hotels. Good sources for recommendations are colleagues from the location you'll be visiting, recent travelers, and reputable travel agencies. Refer to the [University of Pittsburgh Office of Travel Management](#) website for information foreign per diem rates for lodging, meals, and incidentals.

## **Travel Resource: Health Safety Tips**

### **Before Departure**

Obtain **recommended and required immunizations, prophylactic medications, and sufficient supply of prescription medication**. See the [Center for Disease Control's Traveler's Health](#) page for specific needs.

Obtain **allergy, medication, and health condition translation cards**. Some insurance carriers provide these free of charge. They can also be ordered online for a reasonable fee (example vendor: [Select Wisely](#)). Low cost apps are also available for most mobile devices.

Check on overseas **medical coverage** before you depart. Many insurance plans offer coverage for emergency care abroad, but some do not. Note that Medicare does not cover services provided outside the United States, but supplemental insurance for foreign care may be purchased. Check with the [American Association of Retired Persons](#), travel agent, or other medical insurance plans for options.

### **Learn about the country(ies) you will be visiting.**

The State Department has [Country Specific Information sheets](#) on every country. These sheets contain a description of the country; current travel warnings and alerts, the location of the U.S. Embassy and consulates; local laws; and travel and transportation safety information. It's advisable to take a copy of the fact sheet with you.

Register with the [U.S. Department of State Safe Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#). Note that international students, scholars, or visitors at the University of Pittsburgh should register with the government of their country of citizenship. Register your travel with the [University of Pittsburgh Travel Registry](#).

## **Travel Resources: Insurance**

University of Pittsburgh students who are participating in a formal study abroad program should contact the University of Pittsburgh Study Abroad Office.

University of Pittsburgh students must provide documentation of health insurance, as well as coverage for emergency evacuation and repatriation during their time abroad. Students who already have insurance should provide documentation to the appropriate contact in their school.

The University of Pittsburgh has a contract with International SOS, an organization that provides health, security, and medical assistance for students, faculty, and staff who are traveling abroad for University – related programs and projects. International SOS services include repatriation, evacuation, assistance with navigating international medical facilities and documents, and how to prepare for your trip abroad by offering resources on vaccinations, health, safety, and security. For more information including how to register for these benefits prior to your travel, please visit the International SOS section of the [Pitt Global Support](#) website or contact the Study Abroad Office at: 412-648-7413 or [abroad@pitt.edu](mailto:abroad@pitt.edu).

Faculty and staff who have health insurance through the University have direct access to [Assist America](#), a provider of global emergency services.

Follow these steps for more information about the services provided and a wallet card with phone and identification numbers. 1) Call the UPMC Health Plan number on the back of your insurance card to obtain an Assist America Reference Number and 2) go to the [Assist America website](#) and log into the Member Information section.

Once you confirm or obtain insurance, find out where and how to obtain emergency medical care before you depart. Review reputable sources for health and safety information, such as the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), the [U.S. Department of State](#), and the [World Health Organization](#).

Review reputable food and water safety information, particularly for street vendors. Good sources are the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and the [World Health Organization](#).

### **Traveling to Countries with State Department Warnings**

Check for [U.S. Department of State Travel Warnings and Alerts](#). Note that the University of Pittsburgh has [categorical classifications of these warnings](#) and alerts as well as [Guidelines for Travel to Countries under State Department Warning](#).

Graduate and professional students must submit a required waiver if traveling to a country under State Department Warning. To obtain the waiver, please e-mail [cgh@pitt.edu](mailto:cgh@pitt.edu).

### **Travel Resources: Immunizations & Medications**

#### **Vaccinations**

Look into required and recommended vaccinations at least two months in advance (it may take weeks to develop immunity). The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Website](#) is a good source of destination-specific information on vaccinations and other health and safety issues. Local sources for information and vaccine administration are below.

[Allegheny County Health Department Immunization Clinic](#) provides information on vaccination requirements and administers some vaccines. Note that this is not a travel medicine clinic, and medications for malaria prophylaxis aren't prescribed or dispensed.

[University of Pittsburgh Student Health Service](#) provides pre-travel assessments for University of Pittsburgh students. There is a fee for the assessment. Students can obtain a list of recommended

vaccinations, but the clinic does not administer the vaccines. They do write prescriptions for malaria prophylaxis.

[Passport Health](#) provides comprehensive travel medicine services and has four locations in the Pittsburgh region (1-800-839-4007).

[UPMC Corporate Health Travel Clinic](#) provides comprehensive travel medicine services and is open to the general public (412- 560-8765).

### **Malaria Prophylaxis**

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website](#) lists endemic areas and provides information on prevention. A prescription for malaria prophylaxis can be obtained from your physician or as indicated above. It's very important to understand the side effects of the different anti-malarial medications when making your decision about which to use. In addition to medication, it's advisable to sleep under a net in mosquito-laden areas.

### **HIV Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (HIV-PEP)**

If your planned activities abroad might put you at risk for an occupational exposure to HIV, the first step is to determine which primary prevention methods are available/used and if HIV-PEP is available at the site. Talk with your primary care physician, travel medicine provider about securing protective supplies (such as gloves) and PEP medication. Pitt health science students should discuss HIV-PEP with the faculty member who is serving as the advisor or preceptor for the rotation or experience.

### **Prescription Medications**

It's important to take enough prescription medication for the entire trip and a few extra days in the event of travel delays. Some medications aren't available in all countries, or they may be of a lower quality. Some countries do not allow certain medications into the country, so check with the consulate of each country you will be entering. Take a copy of all prescriptions (with the generic names) and a list of the prescribing physicians (with contact numbers) if not on the prescription. Leave copies with a relative or friend. You should also take a signed note from the prescription physician for controlled substances and injectable medications (such as insulin or an epinephrine auto injector). Prescription medications should be packed in your carry-on luggage.

### **Over-the-Counter Medications**

Some over-the-counter medications might be expensive or not available abroad. Consider taking the following: pain medication (such as ibuprofen), antihistamines, anti-motion sickness medicine, cough syrup or drops, antibacterial ointment, anti-diarrheal medicine, mild laxative, and antacid.

### **Other Items**

Depending on your destination or circumstances, the following items might be helpful: sunscreen, insect repellent, condoms, feminine products, bandages, antiseptic wipes, moleskin, tweezers, scissors, water purification tablets, and oral rehydration solution packs.

For additional information on immunizations, preparing medications, water safety, women's security, and other health, safety, and security issues abroad, please visit: <http://abroad.pitt.edu/predeparture>.

## **Travel Resources: Credit Cards & Banking**

### **Banking and Credit Cards**

Check with your bank and credit card provider about foreign transaction fees, availability of ATMs or alternative ways of accessing cash, and emergency replacement procedures as far in advance as possible, particularly if this is the first time you'll be using the accounts for foreign travel. Remember to obtain global contact information for reporting lost or stolen cards since many toll-free numbers don't work abroad. Before departure, notify your bank and credit card provider of your travel dates and destinations and give them information on how to reach you during travel.

If you don't have a credit card or want to obtain one specifically for use overseas, there are three important factors to consider when selecting a company 1) foreign transaction fees, 2) widespread acceptance overseas, and 3) ease of reporting a lost or stolen card and getting a replacement card. Note that full-time faculty, staff, and research associates who travel on University business at least twice a year can apply for a Diner's Club Mastercard or a PNC Visa Card. Refer to the [University's Travel Management website](#) for more information.

### **Travel Advances**

The University of Pittsburgh will issue travel advances in the form of a check payable to the traveler within 10 days prior to travel. See the University of Pittsburgh Travel Management website for additional information.

### **Currency Exchange**

The [OANDA website](#) offers current and historical exchange rates for 164 world currencies. You can also create a wallet-sized printable exchange table to take along on your travels.

### **Important Notes**

Always have several forms of money, such as credit cards, ATM cards, travelers, checks, and small amounts of cash.

Make a list of account numbers, personal identification numbers (PINs) and emergency contacts and replacement procedures. Give a copy to a family member, or a trusted friend or colleague and take copies with you. See [MasterCard ATM Global Locator](#) and [Visa ATM Global Locator](#) for the locations of ATMs.

## **Travel Resources: Connect and Communicate**

### **Technology and International Travel**

The [University of Pittsburgh Computing Services and Systems Development \(CSSD\)](#) offers guidelines and tips on use of technology abroad.

## **Electrical Outlets Devices**

There are various electric outlets throughout the world. In addition, electronics built for use in North America are designed to use 110-120 VAC (volts alternating current) while other parts of the world use 220-240 VAC. To prevent damage to your electronic devices, it's important to use a converter to match the requirements of your device to the local voltage. [ElectricalOutlet.org](http://ElectricalOutlet.org) and [Voltage Valet](http://VoltageValet.com) provide information on electric systems for most countries and offer products such as converters and outlet adaptors.

## **Phone**

For phone service, you can purchase a phone and pre-paid service in the destination country or use your international service enabled cell phone and service provider. Many U.S. carriers have international plans for calling from, to, and within foreign countries. However, service can be expensive so it's important to compare plans. In addition, be sure that you know local dialing requirements to make calls to the U.S. and within the country. For information on international calling and country dialing codes see [HowtoCallAbroad.com](http://HowtoCallAbroad.com). Also see the tips for cell phone use on the [University of Pittsburgh Computing Services and Systems Development \(CSSD\)](http://UniversityofPittsburghComputingServicesandSystemsDevelopment(CSSD)website) website.

## **Travel Resources: International Research**

The information in this section is for faculty, staff, and students who are going abroad under the auspices of the University of Pittsburgh (e.g., to conduct research; participate in field work, internships, or rotations; when using University funds, including extramural funds that flow through Pitt; or when engaging in study or activities for which academic credit will be given). Click on the links below for information on each topic.

### **International Research Ethics**

Click the link below to learn about international research ethics related to that topic.

[Protection of human subjects—informed consent](#)

[Institutional review boards](#)

[Investigational new drugs](#)

[FDA approval to market a new drug](#)

[Biological products](#)

[Licensing](#)

[Investigational devices](#)

### **Organizations**

[Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences \(CIOMS\)](#) is an international, non-governmental organization established by the World Health Organization and UNESCO. CIOMS works to facilitate and promote international biomedical science activities. One publication of particular

relevance to international research is [International Ethical Guidelines for Biomedical Research Involving Human Subjects](#).

### **Health International**

FHI, a non-profit global health and development organization, offers a number of publications that can be downloaded from their Web site. Of particular note are the [Research Ethics Training Curriculum for Scientists](#), the [Research Ethics Training Curriculum for Community Representatives](#), and the [Communications Handbook for Clinical Trials](#).

### **National Institutes of Health (NIH)**

The [NIH's Bioethics Resources](#) provides a compilation of links to information on bioethical issues, including international human subjects research.

### **Nuffield Council on Bioethics**

The [Nuffield Council on Bioethics](#) is an independent body that examines and reports on ethical issues in biology and medicine. The council's project [Research in Developing Countries](#) resulted in a report and follow up discussion paper on the ethics of health research in developing countries.

### **United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**

UNESCO's Ethics of Science and Technology program works to assist Member States in developing sound policies and decisions on ethical issues in science and technology and released the [International Declaration of Bioethics and Human Rights](#) in 2005. Of particular note are two capacity-building initiatives: [Assisting Bioethics Committee](#) and [Ethics Education Program](#). UNESCO's [Global Ethics Observatory \(GEObs\)](#) is a set of databases contains information on all currently available ethics resources worldwide.

### **U.S. Presidential Commission for the Study of Bioethical Issues**

The [commission](#) advises the President on bioethical issues that may emerge from advances in biomedicine and related areas of science and technology and works with the goal of identifying and promoting policies and practices that ensure scientific research, health care delivery, and technological innovation are conducted in an ethically responsible manner

### **World Health Organization (WHO)**

The [WHO's Ethics and Health Initiative](#) examines a range of bioethical issues—such as access to health services, organ transplantation, and research with humans—raised by WHO's own activities. A number of publications on ethics and health—including research—can be downloaded from the [publications page](#). To learn more about the bioethics activities in a specific region, please click on one of the links below:

[African Region \(AFRO\)](#)

[Eastern Mediterranean Region \(EMRO\)](#)

[European Region \(EURO\)](#)

[Region of the Americas \(PAHO-AMRO\)](#)

[Region of South-East Asia \(SEARO\)](#)

[Western Pacific Region \(WPRO\)](#)

[World Medical Association \(WMA\)](#)

The [WMA](#) is an international organization of over 95 medical associations. While it is best known for the Declaration of Helsinki, WMA has published a number of guidelines and reports that address standards in medical education, ethics, and science.

### **Policies and Procedures**

Pitt has a number of [policies](#) and [procedures](#) that pertain to international research, scholarship, and travel. They are designed to facilitate international endeavors, ensure compliance with legal and ethical standards, and protect the safety and welfare of our faculty, staff, and students.

### **Office of General Counsel**

The [Office of General Counsel \(OGC\)](#) provides legal services to the University of Pittsburgh, including preparation and review of University contracts and agreements, representing the University in legal proceedings, and providing legal advice to the University. The OGC website offers several resources related to international activities:

International Human Subject Research (PowerPoint) Guidelines and Form for Establishing an Overseas Academic Program  
University of Pittsburgh Study Abroad Programs: Guidelines and Checklist (PowerPoint).

### **University Center for International Studies**

The [University Center for International Studies \(UCIS\)](#) facilitates international relationships by all units of the University of Pittsburgh. UCIS also plays a central role in the University's Policy and Procedure on International Inter-Institutional Agreements and provides assistance in drafting such agreements and facilitates the approval process within the University.

### **Global Operations Support**

The Global Operations Support website offers resources related to International Inter-Institutional Agreements. For more information on active agreements, sample agreements, applications, and routing forms, please visit the [Global Operations Support website](#).

The [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee \(IACUC\)](#) must review all animal subject research conducted by faculty, staff, or students. Investigators should consult with the IACUC office for specific information on international research.

### **Institutional Review Board**

The [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) must review all human subject research conducted by faculty, staff, or students

For the IRB's Policies and Procedures, please visit: <http://www.irb.pitt.edu/content/policies-and-procedures>. Investigators should also consult with the IRB office for additional information.

## **Additional Resources**

[American Public Health Association](#)

[American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)

[Consortium of Universities for Global Health](#)

[International Committee of the Red Cross](#)

[John E. Fogarty International Center](#)

[National Institutes of Health](#)

[One Health Initiative](#)

[Peace Corps](#)

[U.S. Agency for International Development \(USAID\)](#)

[U.S. Department of State](#)

[United Nations](#)

[World Bank](#)

[World Health Organization](#)