

Experts by Experience Project: Participant Expenses Policy

1. Why do we have a participant expenses policy?

We want to make sure that participants in our Experts by Experience project are able to make their voices heard without incurring any additional costs because of their involvement.

This policy aims to:

- Provide a clear set of rules so that participants know what can and cannot be reimbursed.
- Ensure that participants are treated fairly, reimbursed promptly and in full for any legitimate cost they have incurred due to their involvement in the project activities.
- Ensure that as a charity, we are able to give our trustees and funders assurances that we are spending our funding wisely and achieving best value for money.

All expense claims are subject to verification and authorisation by a member of Cymorth Cymru staff.

2. What kinds of activities qualify for expenses?

The following activities will qualify for expenses, but must be agreed with the project in advance of the activity taking place:

- Attendance at Ending Homelessness National Advisory Board meetings
- Attendance at in-person focus groups or meetings
- Attendance at a visit or an in-person training session organised by the project
- Other activities agreed by the project on a case-by-case basis

3. What expenses are covered?

We will reimburse costs relating to the following expense categories, but these must be agreed with the project in advance of the activity taking place.

3.1. Travel

Participants should seek to use public transport where this is practical, in order to reduce costs and the impact on the environment. Where possible, we ask participants to book as early as they can and to choose the best value option. Receipts or tickets with proof of the cost, origin and destination must be retained in order to claim travel expenses.

If public transport is not practical then participants may travel by car. We will repay the cost of petrol to the value of 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles, in line with the UK Government's [approved mileage rates](#). We will also pay an extra 5p per mile if another participant is travelling in the car as a passenger.

It is the responsibility of the participant to ensure that the vehicle is taxed, insured and roadworthy. Where a support worker is driving the participant, they should claim the mileage from their own organisation as part of their staff expenses policy.

We will also reimburse parking charges where this is required to enable the person to participate in project activities.

We will not reimburse any driving fines, penalties or charges incurred.

3.2. Food and drink

We will seek to provide refreshments when participants are involved in project activities during meal times.

If refreshments are not provided during this time, we will reimburse the cost of a meal up to the following amounts:

- Breakfast of up to £10 can be claimed when a participant is required to stay overnight for project activities.
- Lunch of up to £10 can be claimed when a participant is involved in project activities during lunchtime.
- An evening meal can be up to £20 if participation in project activities requires the person to be away from home after 7pm in the evening.

Alcohol is not an allowable expense.

3.3. Accommodation

There may be rare occasions when participants will need to stay overnight somewhere. On these occasions, accommodation should be booked in advance by Cymorth Cymru. We will pay for accommodation up to £80 per night.

3.4. Other costs

We are willing to consider other costs that are incurred due to participation in Experts by Experience project activities, but these requests must be submitted in writing and agreed with the project in advance of the activity taking place.

4. How do I make an expense claim?

Participants must complete and sign a participant expense form for any expenses.

With the exception of mileage claims, all expenses should be accompanied by a receipt, invoice or other form of proof of expenditure. This is to verify that the expense has been incurred. Credit or debit card receipts are not appropriate on their own unless they contain details of the items purchased.

For mileage claims, you must include the postcodes for the start and end of the journey.

The expenses form and receipts can be submitted to EBE@cymorthcymru.org.uk

Expenses should be claimed within two months of the activity. This helps us to plan and keep track of funds.

The expense claim will be checked and signed off by the relevant volunteering contact before being submitted for payment.

5. How will I get paid?

We can pay expenses by bank transfer (BACS), which is our preferred method. BACS payments will be paid within 10 working days of a correctly filled expenses claim form being submitted. In most cases they will be paid sooner. If participants do not have a bank account then we will work with them and their support worker to find a solution to ensure they receive reimbursement for their involvement.

6. What happens to the information I provide?

By making an expenses claim, you will be asked to supply certain details, including address, contact information and bank details. We collect this information only to process your expenses claim. We keep details on record within our central finance database for statutory accounting reasons and to be able to expedite any subsequent claims in line with current data protection regulations. No details from the finance database are ever used for any purpose other than to make payment and are never passed to any third party.

7. Any other questions?

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with the project at EBE@cymorthcymru.org.uk