



Q: What do I need to Consider Before Travelling?

A: Travel Essentials

1. Visit An Accountant

Seek the advice of an accountant early in the planning process. They can help with preparing applications for assistance. Or, if you are intending to claim part or all of the travels costs as a tax deduction, they can provide guidance about the documentation needed to support claims. It may be necessary to begin documenting some expenses, like visa fees and international telephone calls, before leaving Australia.

In addition, it may be useful to lodge the post-travel tax return with the help of an accountant to ensure that all the tax relief available for the travel expenses is obtained, and that ineligible claims are not made.

If you plan to sell work overseas, you will need to understand the tax implications in Australia and in the country in which work is sold. Also seek professional advice about any tax or GST that may be due on grants and assistance received for the overseas project or travel.

2. Passport

Passports should be arranged or renewed well in advance of departure and/or ensure that there is enough time left on the passport for the duration of the travel, for example, in some countries it is necessary to have undertaken travel and left the country with at least 6 months still valid on the passport. Have additional photographs taken for later use for visas and identity cards.

3. Visas

Information for obtaining entry visas for individual countries can be obtained from relevant diplomatic services in Australia or through a travel agent. If intending to work whilst overseas you **MUST** get the right type of visa, and in some countries there are other requirements to fulfill such as the need to be sponsored or have letters of endorsement.

If you have a foreign-born parent or grandparent you should contact the relevant embassy to establish whether you are entitled to residency or citizenship which may make it easier to work or study in some countries.

Plan enough time to gain the required visas, some can take many weeks to process.

4. Vaccinations

Travel agents or a travel medical centre can advise about the vaccinations recommended and the required timing to make them effective. Medical insurance is strongly recommended.

5. Accommodation

Try to research and book accommodation before leaving Australia – this is especially important if travelling during peak holiday periods or while a large cultural event is on in the destination city.

6. Insurance

Take out a travel insurance policy to cover situations such as an accident, missed or cancelled flights or theft of personal possessions or luggage. If you will be away for some time you should consider a private health insurance policy. If you plan to exhibit or work overseas it may be necessary to take out other sorts of insurance as well including protecting your work.

7. Business Cards

Have some business cards prepared, and if going to a non-English speaking country, have it translated on the back into the language of that country. Also consider having some of your promotional material translated.

8. Promotional Material

Carrying a professional package of promotional material will be extremely useful even if the trip is of a more informal nature. High-resolution images can be shown to arts workers and gallery directors – and if appropriate offering these to magazines and newspapers will increase the chances of coverage of your activity or your work.

If carrying the material will be too difficult consider the following:

- arrange appointments before leaving Australia and send the material in advance, electronically.
- if the trip is sponsored by a host organisation or festival, negotiate for the sponsor to produce the promotional material, using source material supplied by you
- travel with an electronic backup copy of the promotional material that can be printed out as required.
- Develop a website of your work that you can refer to as you travel.

9. Money

There are a number of standard ways of carrying money and receiving overseas payments. They include:

- travellers cheques
- local currency - organise some local currency before leaving Australia for taxis and other incidentals
- credit card - is a useful way of handling expenditures while overseas and can be cost effective, as long as the balance is paid at the required time. If travelling for an extended time arrange for payments to be made as necessary. Check with a travel agent which one(s) are most often accepted in the countries to be visited
- EFTPOS - some cards allow overseas ATM access to an Australian bank account,

but will incur an additional fee, plus the conversion rate at the time of withdrawal.

If payments in a foreign currency are expected whilst you are overseas consider:

- opening a foreign bank account - but this will depend on the length of stay in the country
- your Australian bank may have bank agencies overseas which will accept deposits or,
- the payment could be made by electronic transfer. Be sure you have your bank's international transfer codes (referred to as SWIFT codes).
- Set up a Paypal or Travelex Account.

For each of the above, check the level of fees (sometimes at both ends) and who pays. Always check exchange rates and be aware of the impact of fluctuations in currency values. You can have both good and bad surprises.

Information in this factsheet is presented as general information only and should not be relied on as legal or financial advice. Legal advice should be sought on specific legal issues.

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