# Invitational Travel for READI Engagement Series

The U.S. Department of the Interior is seeking tribal input on how to streamline and advance renewable energy development. To collect this feedback, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is launching the Renewable Energy Accelerated Deployment Initiative (READI). The information gathered during the READI engagement sessions will inform decision makers of Tribal visions and needs regarding Tribal renewable energy development plans. Invitational travel funding is available for a limited number of Tribal representatives to attend one of the in-person engagement sessions.

READI tribal engagement session dates and times are as follows:

1. Monday, August 21, Hard Rock Hotel and Casino Tulsa, Catoosa, Oklahoma
2. Thursday, August 24, Pechanga Resort Casino, Temecula, California
3. Monday, August 28, Wild Horse Resort and Casino, Pendleton, Oregon
4. Wednesday, September 6, via Zoom
5. Thursday, September 7, via Zoom
6. Monday, September 11, National Indian Programs Training Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico
7. September 2023, Hybrid Midwest/Eastern Area

## Travel Funding Support

Please register as early as possible to secure travel funding. Funding is limited and will be available on a first come first served basis.

Limitations and considerations:

* Travel funding will be made available for one (1) representative from each tribal nation to attend one of the in-person engagement sessions.
* We cannot guarantee funding availability for more than one traveler. Travel funding requests beyond the first representative can be wait-listed, pending availability of funds.
* While travel funding availability is limited, each tribe is welcome to send additional representatives to any in-person event at their own expense.

### Deadlines for Reserving Travel Funding

To reserve travel funding allocations, travel request *and* authorization documents must be received by the dates shown in the table below. This includes completion of Invitational Travel Process Steps 1-3. Once deadlines have past, travel funding will open to waitlisted requests, in the order that requests were received and based on funding availability.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **READI In-Person/Hybrid Session** | **Travel Funding Reservation Deadline** |
| Monday, August 21, Tulsa, Oklahoma | August 4, 2023 |
| Thursday, August 24, Temecula, California | August 9, 2023 |
| Monday, August 28, Pendleton, Oregon | August 11, 2023 |
| **READI In-Person/Hybrid Session** | **Travel Funding Reservation Deadline** |
| Monday, September 11, Albuquerque, New Mexico | August 21, 2023 |
| September 2023, TBD | August 24, 2023 |

## Eligible Travel Expenses

BIA will directly book and pay for airline flights. Travelers must manage and pay for all other expenses upfront. Eligible expenses will be reimbursed after travel is complete and will not be processed until the BIA receives and approves the completed travel reimbursement forms and required receipts. Reimbursable expenses include:

* Hotel lodging, at GSA approved per diem rates.
* Meal and incidentals at GSA, approved per diem rates (only 75% on travel days).
* Transportation between residence and originating airport, including taxis and airport parking.
* Transportation at destination, including rental cars, fuel, taxis, etc.
* Baggage fees

In some case, it may be advantageous for travelers to drive to event locations rather than fly. In these situations, a traveler can be reimbursed at GSA approved mileage rates. Additional justification may be required to demonstrate that ground transportation is the better option over flying.

### Additional Information

* GSA per diem rates: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>
* DOI Policies on Invitational Travel (Temporary Duty Travel Policy): https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/uploads/pfm-amended-doi-tdy-policy-180831.pdf

## Invitational Travel Process and Requirements

1. [Register](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/bia-readi-tribal-engagement-sessions-tickets-664857686237.) for the desired READI in-person engagement session.
2. Send an invitational travel request to READI@bia.gov
	* Use subject line: READI Invitational Travel
	* Provide the name, title, and contact information for the traveler.
	* Demonstrate that the requesting traveler is authorized to use the one (1) travel allocation for the respective Tribe. This could include an email or letter from a Tribal representative in a leadership or supervisory position.
	* Indicate if there are any additional travelers requesting to be waitlisted for travel funding, pending availability of funds. Provide the name, title, and contact information for the waitlisted travelers.
	* Indicate which engagement session the traveler(s) would like to attend.
	* Provide information on desired flights, if known.
	* Preferred communication method for travel coordination.
3. Complete travel authorization documents
	* BIA staff will coordinate with traveler(s) for completion of travel authorization form and other required documents for direct deposit reimbursement. (Note: Direct deposit is the only allowable method for reimbursement.)
	* An official email will be sent out to notify traveler that their travel has been approved.
4. Make travel arrangements.
	* Upon completion and approval of travel authorization documents, travel arrangements can be made.
	* BIA will directly reserve and pay for airline flights. An email will be sent out to notify traveler of airfare ticking information.
	* Travelers must arrange and pay for all other travel requirements (hotel, rental cars, ground transportation, etc.) in compliance with DOI Policies on Invitational Travel (Temporary Duty Travel Policy).
	* Hotel expenses must comply with GSA per diem lodging rates.
5. Travel and attend READI engagement session.
	* Keep all required receipts for travel expense documentation.
	* Receipts are required for the following expenses:
		1. Hotel
		2. Rental car
		3. Rental car fuel
		4. Transportation: Taxis/Uber/Other type of public transportation, tolls
		5. Baggage fees
		6. Parking fees
	* Meal receipts are NOT required. GSA per diem meal and incidental expense (M&IE) rates are used for reimbursement.
6. Submit travel voucher form (i.e., expense report) for reimbursement of travel expenses,
	* Upon completion of travel, BIA staff will coordinate with the traveler to submit required receipts and travel voucher form (i.e., expense report).
	* The traveler will need ensure that all required documents for direct deposit reimbursement have been completed. (This should be completed during travel authorization steps prior to travel).
	* Upon delivery of all required receipts, the travel voucher form will be reviewed for reimbursement approval.
	* Upon approval of the travel voucher, the traveler will be reimbursed for reimbursable expenses through direct deposit.
	* Direct deposit is the only allowable method for reimbursement.

## Thank you for your interest in READI.

We sincerely appreciate everyone’s interest and commitment to participate in the READI engagement series. Your input will help to ensure an effective outcome for improving access to resources for developing and sustaining Tribal renewable energy development visions.

If at any time you find the invitational travel process is not working or needs improvement, please let us know. We will do our best to promptly resolve any challenges that arise.

## FAQ: Quick Reference Guide for Invitational Travelers

**How many representatives are allowed to attend the READI Initiative?**  One (1) travel allocation is available for each respective tribe. Any additional travelers will be waitlisted for travel funding, pending availability of funds. Each tribe is welcome to send additional representatives to any in-person event at their own expense.

**What is the deadline to submit for travel?**

Travel requests should be submitted 2-3 weeks prior to travel. We cannot guarantee approval of requests received less than 2 weeks prior to travel.

To *reserve* travel funding allocations, travel request *and* authorization documents must be received by the dates shown in the table below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **READI In-Person/Hybrid Session** | **Travel Funding Reservation Deadline** |
| Monday, August 21, Tulsa, Oklahoma | August 4, 2023 |
| Thursday, August 24, Temecula, California | August 9, 2023 |
| Monday, August 28, Pendleton, Oregon | August 11, 2023 |
| Monday, September 11, Albuquerque, New Mexico | August 21, 2023 |
| September 2023, TBD | August 24, 2023 |

**How do I request travel for the READI Initiative?**

Send an invitational travel request to READI@bia.gov

* Use subject line: READI Invitational Travel
* Provide the name, title, and contact information for the traveler.
* Demonstrate that the requesting traveler is authorized to use the one (1) travel allocation for the respective tribe.
* Preferred communication method for travel coordination (email, cell phone, work phone, etc.)

**What documents are required to get travel approved?**

Complete travel authorization documents

* + BIA staff will coordinate with traveler(s) for completion of the travel authorization form and other required documents for direct deposit reimbursement.
	+ Direct deposit is the only allowable method for reimbursement.

**When can I book my travel?** Upon completion and approval of travel authorization documents, travel arrangements can be made.

**Who will book flights?** BIA will book all flights. Provide information on desired flights, if known.

**What expenses will I be reimbursed for?**

* Hotel
* Rental car
* Rental car fuel
* Transportation: Taxis/Uber/Other type of public transportation, tolls
* Baggage fees
* Parking fees

**Will I be paid for mileage if I decide to drive?** Yes, you will be paid $0.655/mile for privately owned vehicles. However, additional justification may be required to demonstrate that ground transportation is the better option over flying.

**Who will book my hotel and rental car?** The traveler is responsible for making their travel arrangements outside of airfare in compliance with DOI Policies on Invitational Travel (Temporary Duty Travel Policy). Traveler responsibilities include hotel, rental cars, ground transportation, etc.

**Do I need to keep track of my meal receipts?** No, the traveler will be reimbursed at the GSA per diem meal and incidental expense (M&IE) rates (only 75% on travel days).

**Do I need to book the hotel at per diem rate?** Yes, hotel should be booked at GSA per diem lodging rates.The traveler is liable for any over per diem rates.

**Where can I verify GSA per diem rates?** GSA per diem rates: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>

**What do I need to do to get reimbursed for my travel?**

* Submit required receipts.
* Complete travel voucher form.
* Any other remaining documents to verify travel expenses.
* Verify direct deposit reimbursement form is complete.

**How will I be reimbursed?** Direct deposit is the only allowable method for reimbursement.

**What if I do not want to share my bank information to be reimbursed through direct deposit?** The traveler will not be approved for travel funding.Direct deposit is the only allowable method of reimbursing the traveler.