

International Development Research Centre

Corporate Policy

Official Centre Hospitality

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1. **Objective**

To define the circumstances under which employees may extend hospitality for IDRC representation to facilitate the conduct of IDRC business or as a matter of courtesy or protocol towards visitors to any IDRC office.

2. **Application**

Hospitality may be extended under one or more of the following general circumstances to non-employees who are not in receipt of travel allowances from IDRC:

- when discussions on official matters or business development take place;
- on the occasion of visits by persons who are members of national or international organizations involved in activities relating to those of IDRC;
- on the occasion of visits by persons who wish to obtain an understanding and appreciation of IDRC's objectives and operations;
- when service is rendered without remuneration by a person who is not an IDRC employee;
- when a person is being interviewed for possible recruitment for a position within IDRC;
- in conjunction with meetings or conferences related to IDRC-sponsored projects to allow for a small and informal reception for participants (when the number of IDRC employees in attendance is less than or equal to (\leq) the number of external participants, **and** when only a subset of the total number of meeting or conference participants is invited); and
- when discussions are undertaken in the best interest of IDRC with non-Canadian government funding partners, suppliers, contractors and other goods or service providers to negotiate better prices or service improvements, to take advantage of an opportunity or to enhance IDRC's negotiation position.

Hospitality extended to groups composed mostly of employees should be only in the form of meals and non-alcoholic beverages. Such hospitality shall be exceptional, and the number of attendees must be limited to the minimum necessary to deliver IDRC business.

Spouses or common-law partners are not normally included in hospitality activities.

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3. Definitions

Budget holder

The person responsible for the budget against which the hospitality expense will be charged.

FAD

Finance and Administration Division.

Hospitality

The provision of refreshments, meals, and, under certain circumstances, entertainment to IDRC guests or stakeholders and accompanying IDRC employees.

Generally, hospitality may be extended in one of the following forms:

- breakfast
- luncheon
- dinner
- reception
- snacks

In rare circumstances, "artistic functions" are considered to be a valid form of IDRC hospitality; the following aspects must be present:

- the function exposes individuals visiting from overseas to examples of Canadian or regional art and culture; and
- the function is less expensive than meal-type hospitality.

Hospitality activities usually have no formal agenda and program. The emphasis is on networking and social interaction.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The organizer of the hospitality activity is responsible for:

- Ensuring the activity readily passes the test of public scrutiny, i.e. demonstrating the highest possible standards in ethics and restrict activities that may be questioned due to their purpose, frequency, cost, location, or other special features;
- Verifying availability of budget with the budget holder (if this is a different person than the organizer) and securing authorization as per Section 5.
- Using the forms published by FAD;
- Adhering to the [IDRC Code of Conduct](#).

FAD shall setup and maintain a distinct account solely used for all Official Centre Hospitality expenses. This account is included in the IDRC Chart of Accounts.

The Manager, Corporate Accounting is responsible for ensuring that hospitality claims have been appropriately authorized and coded before they are reimbursed.

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To assist management in controlling its hospitality expenses, the Manager, Budget and Financial Management will make available on a monthly basis reports outlining the expenses incurred since the beginning of the financial year.

To provide transparency in IDRC's use of funds, hospitality expenses will be made available publicly, as directed by the Board of Governors. The Director, Finance and Administration will designate a manager responsible to regularly collect the information for posting on the IDRC corporate web site.

5. Authorization

The prime level of managerial responsibility for authorizing hospitality expenses rests with the President, Vice-Presidents and Regional Directors subject to the availability of adequately budgeted funds and in accordance with the following thresholds:

- Vice-Presidents and Regional Directors up to and including 3,000 CAD per occurrence;
- President for any occurrence in excess of 3,000 CAD.

The President shall authorize hospitality expenses incurred by the Vice-Presidents. Vice-Presidents shall authorize hospitality expenses incurred by directors and employees in their respective branches with the exception of the Vice-President, Resources who will in addition authorize the hospitality expenses of the Director, Communications; the Director, Human Resources and, for practical reasons, the hospitality expenses of the President.

6. Consultants and Contractors

Consultants and contractors cannot invoice IDRC directly or indirectly for costs related to hospitality they extend to IDRC employees. Also, they are not normally recipients of IDRC hospitality.

7. Reimbursement

Hospitality expenses are reimbursed by the Finance and Administration Division (FAD) on submission of a claim documented on the forms published by FAD. The hospitality expense claim must be approved and authorized in accordance with Section 5.

The value of hospitality should not exceed what is considered to be normal and reasonable for the area and locale where such hospitality is extended. Such costs are reimbursed on an "actual and reasonable" basis. In the case of meal-type hospitality extended to non-employees, where IDRC employees have little knowledge of what is normal and reasonable, the per-person limit of 2.625 times the applicable lunch or dinner meal allowance and of 2.25 times the applicable breakfast allowance shall be used as a general reference. A similar metric for receptions is 1.6 times the dinner meal allowance.

In the case of meal-type hospitality extended to IDRC employees only, the per-person limits of 2.0 times the applicable lunch meal allowance, 1.75 times the applicable dinner meal allowance and 1.5 times the applicable breakfast allowance shall be used as an absolute reference.

Only the President, Vice-presidents and Regional Directors can host receptions at their private residence. They will be reimbursed actual and reasonable costs provided that all direct costs are

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supported by receipts and there is an appropriate balance between the number of IDRC employees and companions compared with the official guests for the reception.

Hospitality costs are never charged against projects.