IIRPS/SGPS COVID Response and Policy

This page is updated regularly with any changes to pertinent global COVID requirements.

The health and safety of our participants continue to be a priority as we monitor the global COVID pandemic. IIRPS and SGPS programs monitor and adhere to all requirements maintained by our collaborating organizations (see also WVU Education Abroad COVID-19 Travel Policy) as well as the Italian and US Government agencies.

All SGPS participants must abide by the local health and safety guidelines, including vaccination requirements. IIRPS will update and confirm with all participants COVID regulations one-month prior to the beginning of each program.

All SGPS applicants will be asked to provide COVID vaccination status prior to participating in the program, in accordance with SGPS adherence to requirements maintained by our collaborating organizations as well as the Italian Government. Applicants requiring exemptions due to documented medical reasons will need to contact Polly Withers before participating.

All SGPS participants will be required to show proof of a negative COVID-19 test taken within 72 hours of the orientation day before classes start at the beginning of each session. Participants may also be required to fill out a health screener and have their temperatures taken every Monday at the beginning of classes.

COVID Travel Guidelines and Compliances*

All students traveling internationally must comply with Italian expectations for travel, including testing mandates, prior to departure. There is currently a travel alert for Italy and the US requiring travelers to be fully vaccinated and to be able to show proof of vaccination before flying. Travelers may also be required to show proof of a negative COVID-19 test prior to departing.

Before departing, it is the traveler’s responsibility to know:

- What test and documentation is needed prior to traveling to Italy
- Time limitations for the test result (most are 72 hours prior to flying)
- What type of test and documentation is needed prior to scheduling a test
- Understand that vaccinations are valid for 12 months from the second/full dose. (We recommend that travelers have the 2nd shot at least 2 weeks prior to departure and/or ensure that the 2nd shot will not be more than 12 months old before flying home - in which case, get a booster shot before flying.)
- Understand and comply with all masking requirements on airlines and local masking ordinances while traveling

Upon arrival in Italy, currently travelers are required to:

- take rapid-response COVID test (currently 20 euros)
- complete a Self-Declaration Form
- complete a Passenger Locator Form

COVID-specific Safety Procedures*

- If a participant is not feeling well and is experiencing flu-like symptoms, please immediately tell a member of the SGPS staff. Put on a mask and keep mindful of others by self-distancing.
- If you don’t know the vaccination status of the group, mask while indoors
• Mask while outdoors in large crowds
• Social distance when you can
• Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or hand sanitizer
• Comply with quarantining regulations during the program and pay for any related accommodations costs

* For general safety and travel guidelines, please see our Student Services webpage and our Travel Logistics document.

**What happens if a participant or member of staff contracts COVID during the Program?**

• If a participant is not feeling well and is experiencing flu-like symptoms, please immediately tell a member of the SGPS staff. Put on a mask and keep mindful of others by self-distancing.
• Participants may be required to quarantine, depending on current local regulations. SGPS will assist in finding accommodations, but this may incur extra housing fees for the participant. Applicants will be required to agree to pay these fees. SGPS will make every effort to provide virtual options to continue to participate in the program.
• If a member of faculty becomes sick, we have a virtual option with qualified teaching assistants continuing in-person workshops.

**What happens if a participant tests positive for COVID before flying to Italy?**

• If a participant tests positive before flying to Italy, please immediately tell Polly Withers. The participant will not be able to fly and will therefore not be able to participate in the program.
• The required CISI insurance does not cover program reimbursement and SGPS will not refund program fees due to a pre-trip positive test. SGPS can hold programs fees for participation another year (these fees are not transferable to other students).
• We can suggest an additional insurance resource to cover pre-trip positive tests. This service is not administered by CISI. It is expensive and covers a lot of benefits. For more information visit their website: https://www.culturalinsurance.com/academic-trip-protector-insurance-program.asp

**Italy COVID Requirements Update Fall 2021**
Travelers may be asked to show your proof of COVID vaccination certificate when accessing certain local indoor services, such as restaurants, museums, gyms, cinemas, private events, public transportation, etc. Italy has extended the validity of COVID vaccination certificates and the equivalency for foreign-state-issued COVID vaccination/recovery certifications.

By Italian Law (Decreto-Legge 21 Settembre 2021, n. 127, art. 5), effective September 19, 2021, COVID Vaccination Certificates are now valid up to 12 months from the second dose/full-vaccination. Furthermore, third dose (booster shots) are considered valid up to 12 months past the date of injection.

The Italian Ministry of Health issued an ordinance on July 29, 2021 stating that an Anti-COVID-19 vaccination certificate for an European Medicines Agency (EMA) recognized vaccine from competent U.S. health authorities (CDC "white cards") will be considered the equivalent of the Italian Green Pass where this requirement exists.
In order for a foreign-issued COVID vaccination certification, such as the U.S. CDC vaccine card, to be considered equivalent to the E.U. Green Pass issued by the Italian Government, the vaccination certification must include the following information for the vaccinated individual:

- Last name and first name;
- Date of birth;
- Name of vaccine;
- Date(s) of vaccination does (when the vaccine was administered);
- Identification of the issuing health authority certifying the vaccination.

The administered vaccine indicated on the COVID vaccination certification must be one of the official E.U. recognized vaccines (please also reference the dgc.gov.it website for additional details, FAQ - Certificazione verde COVID-19 (dgc.gov.it):

- Comirnaty (Pfizer-BioNtech);
- Spikevax (Modern);  
- Vaxzevria (AstraZeneca);
- Janssen (Johnson & Johnson).
- Covishield (Serum Institute of India), AstraZeneca
- R-CoVI (R-Pharm), AstraZeneca
- Covid-19 vaccine-recombinant (Fiocruz), AstraZeneca

Should you experience any issues with any establishment please refer them to the original Italian-language decrees at the following links:

Equipollenza certificazioni vaccinali e di guarigione rilasciate dagli Stati Terzi per gli usi previsti dall’ art. 3 del decreto-legge 23 luglio 2021: and

Equivaleenza di vaccini anti SARS-CoV-2/COVID somministrati all’estero