

DPCPSI Helpful Hints: Processing OD Conference/Meeting Approval Requests

OD Conference/Meeting Approval Requests

- The OD Executive Office requires that the [Checklist for Completing the NIH Conference/Meeting Approval Form](#) be used for all submissions. The checklist must include all details on the form and TBD is not acceptable. Please enter N/A for any items that do not apply to your requests instead of leaving them blank.
 - Match checklist costs and descriptions to those listed on the HHS Conference or Conference Grant Request and Approval (formerly Attachment A) form and other package documents.
 - The number 7 Funds block on the checklist must indicate the *funding justification* as stated on the [Routing and Transmittal Slip \(DPCPSI Conferences and Meetings\)](#).
The following completed statement must be included on the routing slip:
(All conference expenses will be paid using FY _____ funds billed directly to the CAN _____ if approved and pending the availability of funds). Contract Details are attached _____ (check or indicate N/A and obligation is pending conference approval).
 - The number 6 block on the checklist must state the statutory authority and be matched to the form. The statutory authority must be listed on page 2 of the HHS Conference or Conference Grant Request and Approval (formerly Attachment A) form under the Explanation of Other Cost block or the empty block right under it (see the [Sample Conference Approval Request Package](#))
- Include a list of speakers for all non-NIH travelers, as an attachment to your submission. For example, if you have 3 non-NIH travelers listed on the HHS Conference or Conference Grant Request and Approval (formerly Attachment A) form, then a list of 3 names must be attached to the form (see the [Sample Conference Approval Request Package](#)).
- Match contract proposals and funding breakdown amounts to those descriptions and values on the HHS Conference or Conference Grant Request and Approval (formerly Attachment A) form.
- Three quotes are required for hotel amounts over \$3,000. Indicate hotel names and quoted amounts on the NIH 827-1 form. In addition, the amounts listed on each hotel quote (written or verbal quote) must be written on the quote and signed by the person who obtained the quotes.
- Values indicated on the Cost Information block of the HHS Conference or Conference Grant Request and Approval (formerly Attachment A) form must add up to the total sum and match the estimated cost breakdown.
- Under the Audience block, the Total Estimated Cost is divided by the Total Number of Attendees to determine the Cost Per Attendee.
$$\text{Total Estimated Cost} \div \text{Total Attendees} = \text{Cost Per Attendee}.$$

For example: \$35,189 divided by 100 attendees = \$351.89 (include dollars only and round to the nearest dollar). In this case, the amount should be \$352 per attendee on the form.
- The Agenda must include the following statement next to lunch or any reference to meals/refreshments:
Lunch will be provided at the expense of the attendee.
- The Executive Officer's name should be typed on the last page of the HHS Conference or Conference Grant Request and Approval (formerly Attachment A) form under OPDIV/STAFFDIV Senior Executive Officer or Senior

Travel Official Approval, along with his/her title (Executive Officer, OD). In addition, his/her name and title should be typed on the NIH 827-1 form under Part B.

- Do not add any or correct any information manually via pen/ink on the HHS Conference or Conference Grant Request and Approval (formerly Attachment A) forms.

OD Statutory Authority Selections

- **Use of Appropriated Funds** - As a general principle, appropriated funds cannot be used to pay the travel expenses of persons who are not Federal employees unless an appropriate exception exists. Conference approval forms must be annotated (in the justification block on page #2) with the proper citation authorizing non-Federal attendee travel when traveling non-Federal attendees to an HHS sponsored conference.
- **Statutory Authority** - Agencies may have a unique statutory authority to use their appropriated funds for travel and other expenses of non-Federal employees. This statutory authority must be specific (e.g., general training and technical assistance authority is not enough). Statutorily required (rather than merely authorized) conferences may provide sufficient specificity.
- **Invitational Travel Statute 5 USC § 5703** - "An employee serving intermittently in the Government service as an expert or consultant... or serving without pay or at \$1, may be allowed travel or transportation expenses, under this subchapter, while away from his home or regular place of business and at the place of employment or service." This statute permits agencies to invite individuals to a meeting or conference at government expense if the individuals are legitimately performing a direct service to the government, such as making a presentation or advising in an area of their expertise. Paying for the travel and subsistence of invitational travelers must still serve a legitimate authorized purpose of the agency for which funds have been appropriated, such as to provide technical assistance as authorized by program statute. Travel Regulations would apply and travel orders would need to be issued by the NIH to such individuals. If this authority applies, we recommend a statement such as: "Non-Federal Attendee Travel: NIH will issue Invitational Travel Orders to non-federal presenters or experts attending this event under the authority of 5 USC § 5703.

You only need to include the following statement on the form:

"Invitational Travel Statute - NIH will issue Invitational Travel Orders to non-federal presenters or experts attending this event under the authority of 5 USC § 5703."

- **Limited Procurement Exception** - An agency may contract for various conference-related services, including services related to presentations. Contractors may, but are not required to, utilize subcontractors for the purpose of providing such services, and the contractor may incorporate allowable costs (including travel expenses) into its price for these services. However: (a) Contractors, through their employees or subcontractors, must provide a deliverable (e.g., a speech, presentation, or other specific role) and (b) Contractors should generally be responsible for selecting the individuals (their employees or subcontractors) who will provide services such as presentations, though the contracting officer, with input from the program office, may have final approval over a list of topics and presenters if required by the contract.

You only need to include the following statement on the form:

Limited Procurement Exception