



## ACEC-BC 2018 YP Conference

### Attendance Justification Toolkit<sup>1</sup>

#### General Tips

The upcoming 2018 Young Professionals Conference will provide you with a full day of seminars focusing on non-technical skills, such as business development, team building, communications and networking. Additionally, the conference will feature a networking activity the evening before the conference which will provide an excellent opportunity to interact with your peers throughout the consulting industry.

Many companies have tight travel and training budgets. Regardless of the merits of a conference or networking event, it's always a good idea to take some time to justify the expense. Here are some things you may want to consider:

- Focus on the specific knowledge you will bring back to the organization as return for the investment.
- Offer to prepare and deliver a short presentation and Q&A to your colleagues to share what you have learned so that others will also benefit from your attendance.
- Share the program with your colleagues.
- If you are working to obtain training or professional development hours for your provincial organization, remind your supervisor that this is a great way to earn many hours and could be less expensive than registering for a number of separate conferences and seminars. It also requires less time away from the office. Mention that this conference qualifies for eight (8) Professional Development Hours.
- Be ready with a plan that shows who will cover for you while you are attending the conference.
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- Be sure to check out the registration page where the various rates are listed to see if you qualify for the ACEC-BC member rate discount.

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<sup>1</sup> Information for this toolkit was derived from ACE 2016 Justification Toolkit published by the American Water Works Association © 2016 and the ACEC National Leadership Conference 2016 published by the Association of Consulting Engineering Companies – Canada © 2016.





## Expenses Worksheet

Expenses related to your participation at the national leadership conference are affected by a number of factors. Before you can even begin to justify your expenses, you need to calculate what those expenses are. Use the worksheet below to develop a cost estimate for attending the conference. Refer to the registration information available at <http://www.acec-bc.ca/events/yp-conference>.

Expense	Cost
<b>Conference Registration</b> (Circle one)	\$330 for ACEC-BC Members \$380 for non-members
<b>Thursday Evening Networking Event</b>	<i>COST INCLUDED IN REGISTRATION</i>
<b>Flight</b>	\$
<b>Lodging</b>	\$
<b>Transportation</b> (Between airport and hotel)	\$
<b>Airport Parking</b>	\$
<b>Food Per Diem</b> (Refer to your organizations' policies)	\$
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$</b>

## Understanding the Benefits





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Although networking is undoubtedly the most important benefit of attending a conference, it is also the toughest to quantify. When you propose the ACEC-BC YP Conference for approval, don't focus on how much you want to go; focus specifically on the knowledge and experience you will bring back for your organization. Some specific details you'll need to identify:

- **Session content:** What sessions have particular relevance to you and your organization?
- **Industry contacts:** Will the ACEC-BC YP Conference provide you with an opportunity to meet new contacts for future collaboration?
- **Best practices:** Will there be training sessions in areas that will immediately benefit you and your group?

Although you may understand the benefits of attending the ACEC-BC YP Conference, your manager may not have thought much about it. To be most effective, you need to clearly articulate the connection between your organization's knowledge requirements and the conference program. **DO NOT** assume your manager will be able to automatically make those distinctions.

To support this process, use the worksheet below to help you focus on the benefits. Use whatever makes sense for your particular situation/organization and omit the rest.

Benefits to Your Organization	Specific Needs and the Sessions That Meet the Need
Networking Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference sessions</li> <li>• Thursday evening reception (war game / business strategy)</li> <li>• Friday evening gala dinner</li> <li>• Breakfast, lunch, and coffee breaks</li> </ul>
Business and Non-Technical Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soft skills focused sessions such as "How Technology Impacts Project Delivery" and "Global Business Delivery"</li> <li>• Panel Discussions</li> </ul>
Leadership and Career Path Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keynote Speakers</li> <li>• Panel Discussions: "Planning and designing for growth, climate change and resilience" and "Succession planning – internal growth vs. acquisitions – how is business changing"</li> <li>• Leadership focused sessions (ex. "Dealing with Growth")</li> </ul>





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## How to Sell Your Attendance

After you have identified the specific knowledge benefits, provide both the expenses and benefits your manager needs to decide the value of your proposition. Don't leave it up to them to infer the benefits of your attendance. Sell your proposition!

### Letter to Manager

< Date >

Dear < supervisor's name >,

I would like to attend the ACEC-BC YP Conference, May 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> 2017 in Vancouver, British Columbia. This is an interactive conference for young professionals with a focus on non-technical skills, such as business development, team building, communications and networking.

At the conference, I will attend invaluable training sessions that are directly applicable to my work and will allow me to network with a variety of leaders, peers, and colleagues from across British Columbia. The conference sessions will include speakers and panel discussions on leadership, effective communication, and business development.

Organizers recognize the changing face of the consulting engineering industry and the high value in providing a forum for emerging leaders to interact with and learn from senior industry leaders. I am seeking sponsorship for the registration fee, travel and living expenses during the national leadership conference. A detailed cost breakdown is included below.

The full-price conference fee for Young Professionals is \$320 for ACEC-BC members. Here is the breakdown of conference costs: < You will need to insert your travel cost numbers in here >

Roundtrip Airfare: <\$xxxx>  
Transportation: <\$xxxx>  
Hotel: <\$xxxx>  
Meals: <\$xxxx>  
Conference Fee: <\$xxxx>

The total costs associated with attending this conference are <\$xxxx>.

This event provides an opportunity for me to network with peers, establish new contacts and gain valuable insight and knowledge in many areas of the consulting industry. By supporting my attendance at the ACEC-BC YP Conference, < name of your organization > is making a wise investment that will yield rich dividends for the company in the future.

Sincerely,

< your name here >

Presented by:



ASSOCIATION OF CONSULTING  
ENGINEERING COMPANIES  
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