

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

Conference Approval Package Procedures

Conference Approval Package Process (Paragraph 3.D)

1. **Identification of the Responsible Reclamation Leadership Team (RLT) Member for Preparation of the Conference Approval Package.**
 - a. **Externally Hosted Conference.**
 - The Bureau Conference Coordinator (BCC) must notify the Directorate Conference Coordinator (DCC) if their organization has the highest planned attendee costs for an externally hosted conference or their RLT member has expressed interest in leading the conference approval package. The RLT member of that Region/Directorate becomes the responsible RLT member for the conference approval package.
 - The BCC must notify the DCC if the conference attendee cost is below the level of \$20,000, requiring the responsible RLT Member approval.
 - ⇒ The DCC ensures the Conference Approval Package requirements, including established local internal processes, are met and appropriate approvals received.
 - b. **Reclamation Hosted Conferences.**
 - The BCC identifies and notifies the hosting office to prepare the conference approval package.
 - The BCC must notify the DCC if the Reclamation hosted conference cost are estimated below the level of \$20,000, requiring the responsible RLT Member approval.
 - ⇒ The DCC ensures the Conference Approval Package requirements, including established local internal processes, are met and appropriate approvals received.
 - c. **Sponsorships.**
 - The BCC identifies and notifies the sponsoring organization to prepare the conference approval package.
 - The sponsoring organization follows the requirements outlined in ADM 04-01, A.(1)(c) and established local internal process to prepare the conference approval package.
2. **Criteria for Approval.** Paragraph 3.D of the D&S and the *Conference Approval and Reporting Matrix* (Appendix D) provides a summary of conference package criteria for approval and will assist in determining the appropriate level of approval required for all conferences. The process for determining if a conference package is required for approval, is as follows:
 - a. **Externally Hosted Conferences.**
 - After the Annual Plan/Quarterly Updates are approved, the BCC communicates to the DCC which externally hosted conferences have an estimated cost of \$20,000 or more.
 - The DCC and/or Point Of Contact (POC) prepares the conference approval package in accordance with Paragraph 3.D.(3) of the D&S and establish local internal processes.

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

- The DCC coordinates with the responsible RLT member and the BCC for submission of the conference approval package in accordance with Appendix D.
- b. **Reclamation Hosted Conferences.**
 - The BCC will communicate to the hosting office which Reclamation hosted conferences have an estimated cost of \$20,000 or more.
 - The hosting office will then prepare the conference approval package according to Paragraph 3.D.(3) of the D&S.
 - The DCC coordinates with the hosting office and the BCC for submission of the conference approval package in accordance with the Appendix D.
- c. **Sponsorships.** Committing funds for conference sponsorship, including membership or advertising, requires senior Bureau/Office management or Reclamation Chief Financial Officer (CFO) review and approval for sponsorship of less than \$20,000, and review and approval by the Deputy Secretary for sponsorship of \$20,000 or more.
 - The BCC will notify the sponsoring organization that the cost of sponsorship is \$20,000 or more, requiring Department approval according with the Appendix D.
 - The sponsoring organization prepares the conference approval package in accordance Paragraph 3.D.(3) of this D&S.
 - The DCC coordinates with the sponsoring organization and the BCC for submission of the conference approval package.
- 3. **Conference Package Preparation and Approval Process.** A conference approval package is required for external, and Reclamation hosted conference with the level of \$20,001 or more.
 - a. Appendix E, *Conference Approval Package Checklist*, lists the documents that are required for the conference approval package according to the approval level identified in Paragraph 3.D and Appendix D.
 - Conference Approval Request Form*, Appendix J;
 - Cost Estimated Worksheet*, Appendix K;
 - Note to Reviewer (NTR) – Conference Review*, Appendix L
 - Memorandum for Conference Approval*, Appendix M
 - DOI Multi-City Worksheet*, Appendix N;
 - Department Checklist for Evaluation of Proposed Conference*, Appendix O;
 - Secretarial Waiver Memorandum*, Appendix F;
 - Sponsorship Memorandum*, Appendix P.
 - Conference Agenda / Schedule. This includes schedules and agenda for the conference and other meetings occurring outside the conference event.
 - b. The RLT member designates/assigns a POC who manages the preparation, coordination, and submission of the Conference Package for approval. The RLT member's POC:
 - Prepares the documents according to Appendix D and Appendix E.
 - Coordinates with all Reclamation organizations and other Department agencies (if applicable) to prepare the conference approval package. This includes but not limited to coordination with the following offices:

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

- ⇒ The Ethics Office for appropriate review and approval.
The Acquisitions Office for appropriate review and approval of any contracts and/or agreements.
 - ⇒ The BCC:
 - ⇒ Conducts a final review of the conference approval package to ensure all required documentation and information is included and may request additional information or changes before continuing the surnaming process.
 - ⇒ Identifies and ensures the next appropriate surname routing through DTS has been established according to the approval level.
 - ⇒ Monitors the surname approval process.
 - ⇒ Coordinates with the DCC, and/or POC to incorporate comments, requested changes, and/or additional information into the conference approval package.
- c. During the DTS surname routing process, the BCC:
- Monitors the DTS surname/approval process.
 - Coordinates with the DCCs and/or POC to incorporate comments, requested changes, and/or additional information into the conference approval package.
 - Once approval is obtained by the appropriate approver level according to Appendix D:
 - ⇒ The BCC:
 - Informs the DCC and POC the conference package is approved/denied.
 - Uploads the approved conference package into ECS as the official record.
 - ⇒ The DCC and the POC:
 - Provides a copy of the approval/denial to all Department agencies, bureaus, and other Reclamation offices who have attendees on the proposed list, as well as the RLT member and DCC of the requesting organization.
 - Ensure all attendees are notified to take for appropriate action upon receipt of conference approval/denial (i.e., pay registration fee, book travel accommodations, etc.)
- d. **Sponsored Conference Approval Package.**
- ⇒ In addition to the process for approval in Paragraph 3.D. above, requests seeking approval for sponsorships must prepare a memorandum to include the following information in the conference approval package. (see *Sample Sponsorship Memorandum* (Appendix P)):
 - The name, date, and location of the conference;
 - The name of sponsored entity/entities hosting the conference;

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

- The amount of the sponsorship;
- Any benefits and/or services provided in return for the sponsorship (e.g., free attendance by some number of attendees, logo posted on the website, free meals, etc.);
- The funding source; and
- A detailed narrative explaining:
 - ◆ how the sponsorship meets the criteria provided above;
 - ◆ why sponsorship is in the best interest of the Department and taxpayers;
 - ◆ how the sponsorship is consistent with the purpose of the appropriation to be used; and
 - ◆ whether the bureau or office has previously sponsored conferences with hosting entity/entities.

⇒ The DCC will provide a copy of the approval to the sponsoring organization.

4. **Actions Taken After Conference Approval.** Upon receipt of approval, the post-approval process is as follows:

a. **Externally Hosted Conferences.**

⇒ **BCC.** In accordance with Appendix D, the BCC will notify the DCC and the POC to complete and submit the *Bureau of Reclamation Report of Actual Conference Costs and Checklist* (Appendix I).

⇒ **DCC and POC.** The DCC and POC sends written notification (memorandum, e-mail, etc.) to all attendees of the following:

- Conference is approved;
- Conference fees can be paid;
- Travel and lodging reservations can be made indicating that lodging costs cannot exceed the GSA maximum lodging per diem rate or any special arrangement, unless the justification was approved in the conference package;
- Identify the purpose of the conference in the automated travel system as "Conference Attendance;" and;
- Understand the requirements outlined in this D&S when attending conferences;
- At least 10 calendar days prior to the start date of the conference, the DCC and POC provides the following documents for completion to each attendee and their respective DCC:
 - ◆ Actual Conference Cost Report (Appendix I)
 - If the estimated cost of the conference is within ten percent (10%) of the next approval level, the DCC and POC notifies attendees their actual costs are due back to the hosting office no later than 5 working days following the conclusion of the conference
 - For all conference over the cost of \$100,000, the DCC and POC will submit a consolidated Appendix I for the total actual conference cost to the BCC no later than 10 working days.

⇒ **Changes to Approved Conferences.** If there are changes to approved conference package (e.g., location, cost, etc.):

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

- The DCC and POC immediately notifies the BCC
- The BCC determines if additional approval is required.
- The BCC notifies the DCC and POC via e-mail of the final determination.

b. Reclamation Hosted Conferences.

- ⇒ **BCC.** The BCC will notify the DCC and the POC of the hosting office to complete and submit Appendix I.
- ⇒ **Hosting Office.** The hosting office will provide the local acquisition office a copy of the conference approval to move forward with acquisition related responsibilities and send written notification (memorandum, e-mail, etc.) to all attendees that:
 - conference is approved;
 - conference fees can be paid;
 - travel and lodging reservations can be made, indicating that lodging costs cannot exceed the GSA maximum lodging per diem rate or any special arrangements; and
 - they must identify the purpose of the conference in the automated travel system as "Conference Attendance.";
 - at least 10 calendar days prior to the start date of the conference, the DCC and POC of the hosting office will send the following documents for completion to each attendee and their respective DCC:
 - ◆ Appendix I
 - DCC notifies attendees their actual costs are due back to the hosting office DCC and POC no later than 5 working days following the conclusion of the conference.
 - DCC and POC will submit the completed Appendix I to the BCC.
- ⇒ **RACC.** The RACC will coordinate with the POC with the following:
 - Ensuring compliance with the RAC 20-02 located on the acquisition OneStopShop;
 - Ensuring Reclamation hosted conference purchased materials comply with visual identity requirements in Reclamation Manual D&S, *Application of Visual Identity in Corporate Materials* (ADM 02-05) and are procured appropriately in accordance with FAR and the *Reclamation Purchase Line Handbook* (PURLbook); and
 - Ensuring compliance with the location and material requirements for attendees as provided in CRM 03-01 and HRM 06-01.
- ⇒ **Changes to Approved Conferences.** If there are changes to the approved conference package conference package (e.g., location, cost):
 - The hosting office will notify the DCC and the BCC immediately via e-mail.
 - The BCC determines if additional approval is required.
 - The BCC will notify the hosting office and the DCC via e-mail of the final determination.

c. Sponsorship.

- ⇒ **BCC.** The BCC will notify the DCC and the POC of the sponsoring office to complete and submit Appendix I.

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

- ⇒ **Sponsoring Office.** The sponsoring office will provide the local acquisition office a copy of the conference approval to move forward with acquisition related responsibilities. The sponsoring office will submit the completed Appendix I to the BCC.

- ⇒ **RACC.** The RACC will coordinate with the sponsoring office to ensure the commitment of funds for the sponsorship conforms to all fiscal, acquisition, and financial assistance requirements, including:
 - the clearance of all legal and ethical matters relating to sponsorships, cooperative agreements, and/or other issues with the Solicitor's Office and the Departmental Ethics Office;
 - the review of contracting actions by the bureau/office acquisition official to ensure they are compliant with the FAR.
 - ensuring compliance with the RAC 20-02 located on the acquisition OneStopShop;
 - ensuring all co-sponsor conference purchased materials comply with visual identity requirements in Reclamation Manual D&S, *Application of Visual Identity in Corporate Materials* (ADM 02-05) and are procured appropriately in accordance with FAR and the *Reclamation Purchase Line Handbook* (PURLbook)

- ⇒ **Changes to Approved Conferences.** If there are changes to approved conference package (e.g., cost):
 - The sponsoring office will notify the DCC and the BCC immediately via e-mail.
 - The BCC determines if additional approval is required.
 - The BCC will notify the sponsoring office and the DCC via e-mail of the final determination.