

Subject: Travel Planning and Approval for Conference Attendance	Effective Date: May 17, 2016	Initiated by: Head, Accounting Division
	Supersedes Revision 1, dated 4/3/13	Approved: Director

Management System (Primary): 07.00 Business Operations
Management System Owner: Head, Business Operations
Management Process: 07.02 Finance and Accounting
Process Owner: Head, Accounting
Sub-Process: 07.02.28 Travel
Sub-Process Owner: Head, Accounting
Subject Matter Expert (SME): Head of Accounting

Applicability

This procedure applies to all Laboratory staff, PPPL visitors and subcontractors when they will be traveling on behalf of PPPL to attend a “**conference.**”

All travel for PPPL, including local travel, is categorized as a conference unless it can be assigned an **Exclusion** as described in Attachment 1.

Exclusions do not have to follow this procedure. The Accounting Division’s Travel and Conference Services reviews travel forms and make the final determination as to whether the travel is considered a conference or exclusion.

Introduction

PPPL must maintain reasonable business standards and prudent cost controls over travel. The DOE and the Laboratory expect all conference attendees to cooperate aggressively to reduce costs, including:

- Selecting carpooling or public transportation,
- Early registration and travel arrangements,
- Bringing audiovisual equipment rather than renting it,
- And limiting attendance.

Travel should be kept to the minimum level needed to accomplish the Laboratory's objectives with emphasis on contributions made by each individual attending; potential benefit to PPPL and the DOE; and the cost of travel.

There are three general conference categories: DOE Sponsored, DOE Contractor-Sponsored (e.g., PPPL) and non-contractor sponsored conferences. Some of these require entry into the DOE Conference Management Tool (CMT) as shown in the following table.

Type of Conference	Description	Contractor Responsibilities	Reporting
DOE-sponsored- Attended by PPPL personnel	A conference hosted/sponsored by a DOE program office	Report all costs in CMT and if DOE aggregate costs >\$100k approval needed	
Contractor sponsored (Recognized)- PPPL or other DOE Contractor	A conference hosted/sponsored by a DOE contractor (lab, plant, etc)	a) If the host can ensure DOE aggregate costs <\$100k do not need to report in the CMT b) If the host cannot ensure DOE aggregate costs <\$100k, report all estimates in the CMT	
Contractor sponsored (Unrecognized)- Event can become contractor sponsored with any of these actions	A conference where monetary support at any level is provided to the conference or a DOE, program, lab, or M&O logo is authorized for use by the conference	Report all costs in CMT and if DOE aggregate costs >\$100k approval needed. This type of action is not likely to be approved resulting in unallowable costs	
Non-DOE sponsored	Conferences hosted by parties outside of DOE for which no monetary support is provided	Report and approve conference estimates through PPPL internal systems	

A conference is considered to be Contractor Sponsored if the event meets the definition of a conference and any of the following criteria are met:

1. The Contractor provides funding to plan, promote, or implement an event. Funding support for the planning, implementation, and publicity of a conference including:
 - a. Purchasing “sponsorship” packages for the conference
 - b. Providing funds for a workshop or other components of a conference
 - c. Provide support to event planners for student/speaker/early-career participants **above \$10K**
 - d. Providing funding to rent a conference venue or hire a conference planner.

2. The contractor authorizes the use of a DOE or Lab logo to promote the Conference (website, brochures, programs)

3. Host the event in a DOE facility.

Attending a conference, giving a speech or serving as an honorary chairperson does not connote sponsorship, nor does payment of attendee registration fees, or renting booth space.

Providing funding to plan, promote or implement an event (conference) or to authorize the use of a seal or logo must be approved by the Conference Host and Travel Office prior to being processed/authorized. The Conference Host and Travel Office must ensure that funds are not expended on the specific conference by PPPL, DOE or other DOE Contractors prior to providing an approval.

Attending a DOE Sponsored Conference

Attendance at all DOE-sponsored conferences requires PPPL to report cost and attendee information to DOE in the Conference Management Tool (CMT) prior to the lockout-date. It must also be approved by the DOE prior to expending funds to attend the conference (i.e., airfare, registration, etc.).

Attending a DOE Contractor Sponsored Conference

Attendance at DOE contractor-sponsored conferences with expenditures estimated to exceed \$100,000 in total must be reported to, and approved by, the DOE prior to expending funds to attend the conference. PPPL must enter costs and attendance information in the CMT for DOE contractor conferences being attended. Attendance at DOE contractor-sponsored conferences with expenditures estimated at <\$100k must be entered in the CMS but do not require cost estimates or DOE approval.

Attending a Non-DOE or Non-Contractor Sponsored Conference

Attendance at Non-DOE or Non-DOE Contractor sponsored conferences does not require prior DOE approval or reporting to the DOE. However, PPPL will be required to follow the following guidance:

- 1) Track all expenses for each conference.
- 2) Require the Laboratory Director or Chief Operating Officer to approve single conferences with net costs of \$80,000 or greater.

Once DOE funds have been expended on a non DOE/Contractor (PPPL) sponsored conference, **contractors may not**

Authorize the use of their trademarks/logos for the conference,

Provide the conference planners with more than \$10,000 for specified individuals to participate in the conference,

Or provide any other sponsorship funding for the conference.

If the Contractor does so, its expenditures to attend the conference may be deemed unallowable.

Travelers must:

- Inform the PPPL Travel Office as soon as possible of the intent to travel. The Travel Office will determine if the trip is considered a conference. Travelers are required to provide adequate information on the Travel Approval Form (TAF) and Conference Information Form (<http://travel.ppl.gov/forms>) (i.e., Conference Title, Conference Date(s), Location and Purpose and Objectives) to allow the Travel Office to make this determination.

In the case of DOE or DOE Contractor conferences (over \$100K), no expenses are to be incurred until the PPPL Travel and Conference Services has been informed conferences are approved by the DOE.

For a PPPL traveler, the basic travel planning and approval process for attending a conference or an event excluded from this procedure are essentially the same: complete a Travel Approval Form, obtaining approvals and processing travel arrangements through the Travel Office.

Definitions and Acronyms

- Conference** A “Conference” is a meeting, seminar, symposium, workshop, or similar event that involves official travel, including local travel and does not meet the conference exclusion criteria described in Attachment 1. The PPPL Travel Office will make this final determination on conference status.
- Conference Management Services** The PPPL Travel Office Manager and other individuals appointed by the Head of PPPL Accounting to assist departments and projects in the planning and approval process for conferences.
- FTMS** Foreign Travel Management System (FTMS) is a DOE-wide centralized system for recording, tracking, and securing approvals of all foreign travel conducted by DOE Federal employees and contractors. In order for DOE Federal employees and contractors to conduct international travel, the trip request must be entered and approved in FTMS. Prior to final approval within FTMS, country clearance must be obtained from the respective country(ies) to be visited. The Travel and Conference Services will provide guidance to the traveler and assist in compliance to DOE Order 551.1D.
- Lock-out Date** DOE established date based on benchmarks such as date for abstract submittals, the date by which foreign travel visas are needed, and the date by which less expensive travel arrangements can be made (e.g., advance purchases fares, early registration, etc.)
- P&C** P&C refers to the PPPL Planning and Control, or “P&C,” organization, its representatives, or Officers.

References

1. Updated Guidance on Conference-Related Activities and Spending, DOE Under Secretary for Science and Energy, August 17, 2015
2. DOE Order 551.1D Official Foreign Travel
3. PPPL Travel Manual (<http://travel.pppl.gov/policies/travel-manual>)

Procedure

I. Notifications of Conferences and Intention to Attend

Responsibility

Action

Travel and
Conference
Services

1. Periodically prepares a Conference List of the conferences that PPPL participants typically attend and that are expected to occur within the next 12 months.
2. Sends out a data call for conference travel to all PPPL potential travelers and includes the Conference List for reference purposes.

PPPL Travelers

3. Completes Conference Information Forms (Attachment 2) for all conferences that they would like to attend. A single form may be submitted for multiple attendees.
4. Returns the completed Conference Forms to Travel and Conference Services **up to 6 months prior to the conference date.**

Travel and
Conference
Services

5. Compiles the conference information received from the PPPL travelers and determines if any conferences are excluded from this conference attendance procedure or if any conference will exceed \$80K in costs that will require the Director's Office approval.
6. Enters the required information into the PPPL Conference Tracking Database.

II. Approval of Conferences

A. Estimating and Approval of All Conferences

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|---|---|
| Travel and
Conference
Services | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepares an estimate of PPPL’s costs for each conference. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Updates the Conference List with the: cost estimates, names of known participants and number of participants. 2. For conferences with estimated costs of \$80K or more for PPPL Travelers, proceed to step II.B.1. 3. Submits the updated Conference List and estimates to the Head, Planning and Control Division for review. The list includes the estimated cost to PPPL for each conference, the estimated number of participants as well as the names of known participants. |
| Head, Planning
and Control
Division | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Ensures that there is adequate funding to cover conference attendance costs as estimated by Travel and Conference Services, and that all known attendees are listed. 5. Informs Travel and Conference Services of concurrence, comments, and/or corrections, and any additional conferences. |
| Travel and
Conference
Services | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Incorporates input from the Head of Planning and Control, and submits the updated Conference List and estimates to the Deputy Directors for review. |
| Deputy Directors | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Review the Conference List, for conferences under their purview, and ensure that the attendance at the conferences provides value to PPPL and to the DOE commensurate with the cost of attendance and that the number of PPPL participants that are attending is necessary to achieve the purpose of PPPL's participation. 8. Inform Travel and Conference Services of comments, adjustments, and/or objections. |

B. Additional Planning and Approval Requirements for Conferences with Estimated Costs of \$80K or more for PPPL Travelers

<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Action</u>
Travel and Conference Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initiates a Conference Attendance Approval Form (http://travel.pppl.gov/forms). 2. Sends the Conference Attendance Approval Form for each conference to the Head, Planning and Control for review and completion.
Head, Planning and Control	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Reviews the Conference Attendance Approval Form and ensures there is adequate funding to cover the cost estimate for conference attendance and that all known attendees are listed. 4. Submits the Conference Attendance Approval Form to the cognizant Department Head for review and approval.
Cognizant Department Head	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Reviews and approves the Conference Attendance Approval Form ensuring that attendance at the conference provides commensurate value to PPPL and the DOE, that the number of PPPL participants is appropriate and concurs with the costs; or indicates adjustments, comments, and/or objections. 6. Returns the Conference Attendance Approval Form to Travel and Conference Services.
Travel and Conference Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Verifies that the Conference Attendance Approval Form is complete and forwards to the Director’s office for final PPPL approval.
Director’s Office	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Signs the Conference Attendance Approval Form authorizing the number of PPPL participants to travel to the conference. <p>NOTE: The Director's Office may approve a maximum number of attendees to participate in the conference. If the maximum number of attendees is exceeded, the Conference Attendance Approval Form must be resubmitted to the Director’s Office for re-approval.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Returns the Conference Attendance Approval Form to Travel and Conference Services.

III. Arranging Travel to Conferences

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Travel and
Conference
Services | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensures that final DOE approval is obtained for all DOE sponsored conferences or DOE Contractor sponsored conferences that exceed \$100K, before any expenses are incurred. This excludes non-DOE sponsored conferences. 2. , Updates the approval status for each conference on the DOE iPortal Conference Database as “Approved,” after the lock-out date has passed 3. Notifies the approved travelers that they are authorized to attend the conference; provides the travelers with approved cost guidelines for the conference; and requests that they complete a Travel Approval Form and obtain required approval for DOE sponsored conferences or Doe Contractor sponsored conferences that exceed \$100k. (http://travel.pppl.gov/forms). |
| PPPL Traveler | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Reviews and completes the Travel Approval Form and any conference registration forms. 5. Obtains approval of the Travel Approval Form by an individual with Cost Center Signature Authority. 6. Completes and obtains approval of DOE Form 551.1 Request for Approval of Foreign Travel to the Travel Office at least 40 days before travel for sensitive countries and 30 days before travel for non-sensitive countries, when required. |
| Authorized
Signatory | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Signs Travel Approval Form authorizing the named individual to travel and authorizing cost center funds to be allocated for the travel. |
| PPPL Traveler | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Returns the approved Travel Approval Form to the Travel Office along with completed conference registration forms and DOE Form 551.1, if applicable. |
| Travel Office | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Processes Travel Approval Form and makes travel arrangements as indicated on the form in conjunction with the traveler. 10. Notifies Travel and Conference Services with name and information of any new participants added after approval of the Conference Attendance Approval Form. |
| Travel and
Conference
Services | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Tracks the conferences to assure that all requirements for forms and time constraints are met. This includes the Travel Approval Forms and conference registration forms and DOE Form 551.1 Request for Approval of Foreign Travel, as applicable. |
| Travel and
Conference | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Tracks total number of attendees and resubmits Conference Attendance Approval Form for Director’s Office approval if the maximum number of |

Services attendees is exceeded.

IV. TRAINING

Head of 1. Ensures the following training is provided.

Accounting or
Designee

Target Audience: Department Heads, Supervisors, P&C Officers, Administrative Support Staff, PPPL Staff

Training Method:

- Read only via routine email distribution of each revision of this procedure to PPPL staff by Best Practices.
- Read only training of Planning and Control (P&C) Officers and Administrative Support Staff via email distribution of major revisions of this procedure by the Head of Accounting.
- Announcement or briefing of Council members on the initial issue or major revisions of this procedure by Head of Business Operations or Head of Accounting.

Frequency:

- Upon each revision of this procedure.

Head of
Business
Operations or
Designee

2. Notifies the Human Resources Training Office of the required training so they will be aware of the training requirements and will be able to provide any appropriate assistance and guidance in the course development, implementation, tracking, and maintenance.

Records Requirements Specific To This Procedure

Records Custodians must assure records are maintained as follows:

Record Title	Record Custodian	Location	Retention Time
Conference List	Travel and Conference Services	Travel Office	Destroy 6 years after final payment or cancellation, but longer retention is authorized if required for business use. <i>Reference: GRS 1.1 (10)</i> <i>Disposition Authority: DAA-GRS-2013-0003-0001</i>
Conference Information Form	Travel and Conference Services	Travel Office	Destroy 6 years after final payment or cancellation, but longer retention is authorized if required for business use. <i>Reference: GRS 1.1 (10)</i> <i>Disposition Authority: DAA-GRS-2013-0003-0001</i>
Conference Attendance Approval Form	Travel and Conference Services	Travel Office	Destroy 6 years after final payment or cancellation, but longer retention is authorized if required for business use. <i>Reference: GRS 1.1 (10)</i> <i>Disposition Authority: DAA-GRS-2013-0003-0001</i>
PPPL Conference Tracking Database.	Travel and Conference Services	Travel Office	Destroy 6 years after final payment or cancellation, but longer retention is authorized if required for business use. <i>Reference: GRS 1.1 (10)</i> <i>Disposition Authority: DAA-GRS-2013-0003-0001</i>

Attachments

1. Determination of a Conference and Exclusions
2. Conference Information Form

PPPL	PRINCETON PLASMA PHYSICS LABORATORY	PROCEDURE	No. ACT-011 Rev 2 Page 1 of 2
Determination of a Conference and Exclusions			Attachment 1

Travelers are advised to ask a Travel and Conference Services member to determine if an event is a “Conference” or “Exclusion.”

PPPL Travel and Conference Services uses these criteria to make final determination of whether an event is considered a conference or exclusion using a fact-based analysis. Travelers may make preliminary determinations using this guidance, if they choose. Travel and Conference Services must sign all Travel Approval Forms and review all FTMS approvals before travel arrangements or registrations can be made and paid.

A “Conference” is defined in the Federal Travel Regulations as a meeting, seminar, symposium, workshop, or similar event that involves attendee travel. The term 'conference' also applies to training activities that are considered to be conferences under 5 C.F.R 410.404. What constitutes a conference for the purpose of this guidance is a fact-based determination based on an evaluation of the criteria. Even if an event meets the criteria of an “Exclusion,” it needs to be further evaluated based on the “Indicia of a Conference” criteria listed below. Events may qualify as conferences by only meeting some, but not all, of the conference indicia. Training events may qualify as conferences, particularly if they take place in a hotel or conference center.

INDICIA OF A CONFERENCE: Conferences subject to this guidance are also often referred to by names other than "conference." Other common terms used include conventions, expositions, symposiums, seminars, workshops, or exhibitions.

- Typically involve topical matters of interest to, and the participation of, multiple agencies and/or non-governmental participants.
- Formal Conferences often include, but are not limited to:
 - Registration
 - Registration fees
 - A published substantive agenda
 - Scheduled speakers or discussion panels
 - Meeting conducted in a commercial facility such as a hotel or conference center
 - A published website

Individual events may qualify as conferences without meeting all of the indicia listed above, but will generally meet some of them. Please note that some training events may qualify as conferences for the purposes of this guidance, particularly if they take place in a hotel or conference center.

Local Conferences: Events within the local duty location may also qualify as a conference for the purposes of this guidance if the event exhibits other key indicia of a conference, especially the payment of registration, exhibitor, sponsor, or conference fee.

Determination of a Conference and Exclusions**Attachment 1**

EXCLUSIONS: Travel that is generally excluded from this conference attendance travel procedure

- Meetings necessary to carry out statutory oversight functions related to PPPL operations and/or programs. This exemption would include activities such as investigations, inspections, audits, or non-conference planning site visits.
- Meeting to consider internal agency business matters held in federal or contractor facilities, that are related to the Laboratory's or the agency's regular business. Such as meetings that take place as part of an organization's regular course of business, do not exhibit indicia of a formal conference as outlined above and take place in a Federal facility.
 - Meetings under Bi-Lateral and Multi-lateral international cooperation engagements that do not exhibit indicia of a formal conference.
 - Formal classroom training held in government facilities that do not exhibit indicia of a formal conference.
 - Classroom training available through Federal and commercial sources required as part of a certification program and for the performance of an employee's position, which does not exhibit indicia of a formal conference.
 - Advisory Committee and Federal Advisory Committee meetings, Solicitation/Funding Opportunity Announcement Review Board meetings, peer review/objective review panel meetings, evaluation panel/board meetings, or program kick-off and review meetings.

Conference Information Form

General Information:

Date of Request:

Requested By:

Name:

Organization: Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory

Phone Number:

E-mail:

Sponsoring Organization:

CO- Sponsoring Organization(s):

Conference Organizer:

Name and Title:

Phone Number:

Conference Title:

Conference Date(s):

Conference Location:

Meeting Venue:

Purpose and Objectives:

Benefit to DOE to attend this event:

Impact on DOE if PPPL does not attend this event:

Please advise if any of the following apply: *If yes, please include the details (i.e., deadline, amount, agenda, indicate speakers or discussion panels, location of meeting etc.)*

Registration

Registration fees

A published substantive agenda

Scheduled speakers or discussion panels

Meeting conducted in a commercial facility or other non-government facilities

If yes to any of the above, please provide all of the details:

PPPL Participants Requesting Approval:

Name

Title

Presenter/Participant/Attendees

Please provide justification to support your specific activity level at the event (i.e., presenter, participant or attendee) and how your attendance will advance DOE's mission.

Note: Please include event link if available: _____