

From: [Jenkins, Joe \(NIH/NCI\) \[E\]](#)
To: [NCI DCTD-ARC](#)
Subject: FW: Tips for submitting Attachment A Conference Approval Form to NIH for Approval and forwarding to HHS
Date: Tuesday, July 17, 2012 8:08:13 AM
Importance: High

Another wrinkle...please see below. Could this become more difficult? Yes.

As you know it is obvious that there is an extremely high hurdle for conferences in non-government facilities. To clarify the preparation sequence for the NIH 827: Confirm that there are no government facilities available; check for alternate dates; if all of that fails then prepare the complete Attachment A packet with the unsigned 827 included. I will forward the packet to Sue Kiser who in turn will get John C's signature on the 827 where previously I used to sign. They will then send the 827 to Mary Ann Bachman for approval.

Note: If a Program wants to piggyback on to a major meeting and hold mini-conferences then you had better start the process way in advance. The issues of procuring rooms from the conference organizer are significant and because of this policy no commitments can be made until approval is received. Don't get caught in this trap.

Regards,

Joe

Joe Jenkins
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From: Kiser, Susan (NIH/NCI) [E]
Sent: Tuesday, July 17, 2012 7:23 AM
To: Jenkins, Joe (NIH/NCI) [E]; Tobiassen, Bridgette (NIH/NCI) [E]; Osborne, Joy (NIH/NCI) [E]
Cc: Carney, Deborah (NIH/NCI) [E]; Smith, Mary (NIH/NCI) [E]
Subject: RE: Tips for submitting Attachment A Conference Approval Form to NIH for Approval and forwarding to HHS

Just learned one additional tip that actually will stop the processing of the Attachment A – must be signed by John C. If he is on vacation or out for an extended time – NIH until his return. I know last week we had a couple of Attachments signed by Donna – if under 25k I do not think it is an issue but if over 25k I will have John sign the package before sending to NIH.

The same is true with the NIH 827-1; any NIH 827-1 form sign after June 15th must have John signature or it will be returned by NIH.

Believe me I think this is crazy but since I do not want any packages held up will have re-signed.

From: Kiser, Susan (NIH/NCI) [E]

Sent: Monday, July 16, 2012 9:52 AM

To: Jenkins, Joe (NIH/NCI) [E]; Tobiassen, Bridgette (NIH/NCI) [E]; Osborne, Joy (NIH/NCI) [E]

Cc: Carney, Deborah (NIH/NCI) [E]; Smith, Mary (NIH/NCI) [E]

Subject: Tips for submitting Attachment A Conference Approval Form to NIH for Approval and forwarding to HHS

To date we have forwarded five (5) requests to NIH for approval. None of the NCI Attachment A, conference requests have been returned. We have however, received questions about our packages from NIH staff. To assist our future packages going to NIH and beyond for approval I thought I would share some of the questions being asked by the NIH reviewers.

1. If you have indicated on Attachment A that the conference will be held in non-federal space – ensure that you have included a signed copy of the NIH 827-1 in which NIH Events Management has approved the request. Remember the 827-1 must now be signed by the EO as the IC funds approving official.
2. If conference is \$25,000 or more ensure you have a strong justification for the Purpose of the conference. Write the justification as if the individual reviewing has no idea why the conference needs to be held and after reading your write-up will want to hold the conference.
3. Under Explanation of how the conference directly supports the mission – do not take for granted that reviewers will understand your program’s goals – explain it so there is no doubt that we cannot meet our mission if we do not hold this conference.
4. Our reviewers do not know the frequency of any conference so we need to be able to explain why any conference must be recurring or why conference must even be held. For example if an annual meeting – you need to explain why it is necessary to meet on an annual basis – if the conference is set by a grant or contract need to state in the justification for conference frequency.
5. Be prepared to explain why any conference must be more than one day. To support this section include a copy of the agenda; if you do not have a current agenda, even a draft one – if the conference is an annual event – include the previous year’s agenda as an example of how full the conference is. I would definitely reflect on the agenda that all time is being spent on getting the official business completed – recommend you limit breaks to 15 minutes and lunch to an hour – if longer explain why it is necessary for the additional time. If you have any food or use the term “working lunch” make sure you indicate “no cost to the government”.
6. Cost for attendees equals – Total Estimated cost divided by number of attendees. If you cannot fill in the cost per attendee – write in on the form with ink.
7. Total estimated Cost includes all costs for the conference. So the numbers you fill in in the Details on Cost section of Attachment A should add up to the total estimated costs. Please check your math.
8. If you have a large number of non-federal attendees that the government is paying to travel to the conference – you should explain why we are paying for the non-federal travel in the Justification of costs section.
9. Also, if you have high contractor costs – explain what makes up this cost.
10. It has been requested by NIH reviewers to provide a listing of conference attendees, so if possible provide attendee list – again if a list has not been developed and this is an annual

event you can provide a listing of a previous conference.

Basically, complete Attachment A so a person with no NCI experience could pick up the form and understand why it is important that we hold this conference and spend this level of monies to do so.

As I hear more from NIH I will share with you. In the meantime forward your packages as soon as possible so we can obtain the clearance to proceed with the conference. Remember we cannot obligate any monies until we have approval from the requirement level (NIH or DHHS). If you have any questions please contact me.