Conference
Transparency, Accountability and Tracking (CTAT)
User Guide

July 2020
Version 3.1

Office of the Chief Financial Officer
Transparency and Accountability Reporting Division
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I. CTAT Registration

A. Access Request

1. The CTAT homepage is at https://www.eservices.usda.gov/ctat/. Registered users log in using their eAuth credentials. First time users will be prompted to register. Click on (1) Request Access.

2. Enter information, select agency, and click on the (1) submit request access button. Note: The Network username is pre-populated by the system. A successful access request notification will appear on the screen, which indicates the request is now pending approval.
3. Initial registrations should consist of the agencies’ points of contact (POC). The Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) will review the access requests and assign the agency POC role. Henceforth, POCs will manage registrations for their agencies (OCFO will assist as needed).

B. Roles/Functions

1. The three agency roles are submitter, approver, and POC. The submitter enters and submits conference requests while the approver reviews and approves or rejects them. In most cases the latter is part of agency management; certain thresholds require approval authorities (see III.A.1). The POC, on the other hand, manages CTAT for the agency, including, among others, overseeing user accounts, setting up routing lists, and submitting and approving conference requests on behalf of submitters and approvers, respectively. Note: The term “user” will be used to denote any one of these three roles. A user’s access and function are limited to the agency he or she is assigned to, but any user, regardless of role, can be assigned to multiple agencies.

2. The system allows for a user account to have multiple roles – e.g., a submitter can be an approver, and vice versa; however, except for special cases (e.g., limited staff), it is recommended that users have distinct roles. POCs can fill in on most of the submitters’ and approvers’ functions to allow for a seamless conference approval process.

3. The table of contents shows each section in the user guide and which role(s) it is most applicable to.

II. CTAT Account Profiles

A. Submitters and Approvers

1. Self-Registration

   a. Designated agency staff should register in CTAT (see I.A). Upon completion, the system sends a notification email to the agency POC and OCFO of the pending registration.

   b. The agency POC logs in to review the access request. On the homepage, select (1) Accounts, click on (2) Users and select the (3) User Access Requests tab. Note: The page lists all pending registrations. Click on Approve or Reject, as appropriate. The user requesting access will receive a notification of the decision.
2. Agency POC-Initiated Registration

a. The agency POC can register a user to the site by going to (1) **Accounts** → (2) **New User**, which opens the **User Profile Form** page. Enter the employee’s information, including the network username, select the agency, and click on (3) **Submit User Profile**. A successful submit message appears, which indicates the employee can now access the system.

b. Alternatively, the **User Profile Form** page can be reached by going to (1) **Accounts** → (2) **Users**, selecting the (3) **Manage Users** tab, and clicking on (4) **Add new user**.
c. As opposed to self-registrations where the network username is pre-populated, POC-initiated registrations require manual entry. In most instances the network username is the employee’s (1) Alias in Outlook. However, in some cases the alias is different from the network username. When a POC registers agency staff and the latter are unable to log in or there are issues with accessing the website, it indicates a mismatch. (Network username typographical errors in I.A.2.a can also cause access issues; POCs should check for these errors when troubleshooting.) Have the employee go to the registration page as shown in I.A.1 and note the network username, which is pre-populated, as shown in I.A.2. The employee can complete the registration him/herself and the POC deletes the POC-created account (see I.A.3.c). Alternatively, the POC can modify the account (see II.A.3.d) using the correct network username.

d. POCs who intend on manually registering most of the agency’s users can request to have the Active Directory – a USDA user account software that lists employees’ information, including network usernames – installed on their workstations. Contact OCFO for further information.

3. View and Update Profile

a. Go to (1) Accounts → (2) Users → (3) Manage Users. The page lists all registered users, sorted alphabetically by last name, for all agencies the POC has access to. Scroll through the page(s) to find the user. Note: Users’ account information can be exported to a spreadsheet by clicking on (4) Export User List and following the prompt to open or save the file to a local folder.
b. Alternatively, click on (1) **Search Users**, filter by agency (as applicable), enter the last or first name, and click on (2) **Search**. The user account will be retrieved; otherwise, “No Records Found” will be displayed.

c. To delete the account, click on the (1) delete icon.

Then click (2) **Delete** on the dialog box that appears to confirm deletion.
d. Click on the (1) account number to view or edit the profile.

![User Profile Form](image)

- Total no of active users: 1
- Agency: All Agencies
- Last Name: McStay
- First Name: James
- User Name: jmcsay
- Agency: OCFD
- Email Address: James.McStay@usda.gov
- Contact Number: 9999999999
- Delete

![User Profile Form](image)

e. The User Profile Form page opens. Edit the applicable field(s) and save the changes by clicking on the (1) Submit User Profile button. If the account has an agency approver and/or Under Secretary approver role, it will show in the respective section. Existing agency approver roles can be deleted by clicking on the (2) delete icon and the Delete button on the confirmation box that appears. To add a new agency approver role, click on (3) Add New Agency Approver Role. Note: To manage Under Secretary approvers, see III.A.6.b.

![Agency Approver Roles](image)

f. The Agency Approver Roles section expands. Select the (1) Agency; (2) Sub-agency; (3) Approval Order, i.e., the approver's order on the routing - “1” if the approver is first, “2” if second,
etc.; and (4) **Type of User**, i.e., primary, backup or other. *Note: the backup and other approver can approve/deny a conference request in the absence of the primary approver.* The approval order is limited to the number entered when creating the routing list (see III.A.4). Lastly, the (5) **Approval Order Name** is the designated name for that approver level, e.g., Approver 1, Office Reviewer 2, Agency Administrator Representative, etc. Click on the (6) **Submit Agency Approver** to save the changes.

### 4. Access Levels

a. Submitters and approvers can view their access levels by going to (1) **Accounts** → (2) **My Account**. *Note: The submitters' and approvers' page/tab layout are slightly different from the agency POC's. In addition, submitters and approvers can only access read-only versions of certain pages, such as routing lists and other users' accounts.* The **User Profile Form** page opens. Except for the **Network User Name** and **Agency**, the submitter or approver can update the profile information and save the changes by clicking on (3) **Submit User Profile**. Approvers will have their approver assignments listed in the **Agency Approver Roles** and/or **Under Secretary Approver Roles** section. Submitters will have “No Records Found” displayed in both sections. Submitters and approvers may request new and additional agency approver roles, respectively, by clicking on (4) **Request New Agency Approver Role**. Complete the information and submit as described in II.A.3.f. This action creates a pending approver role request for agency POC approval.
b. The POC goes to (1) Accounts → (2) Users → (3) Approver Access Requests. Note: The page lists all pending approver role requests. Click on Approve or Reject, as appropriate.
B. Agency POCs

1. An agency can have more than one POC. The current POC(s) may view other POC accounts for agencies they have access to under (1) Accounts → (2) POCs. Any POC can delete another user's POC access by clicking on the (3) delete icon. Any registered user – either submitter or approver – may be added as a new POC by clicking on (4) Add New Agency POC.

2. The Add New Agency POC section appears at the bottom of the page. Select the agency and user. The dropdown fields are limited to agencies the POC has access to and users that are registered for that agency. Click on Submit New Agency POC to complete.

III. Routing Lists

A. Create a New Routing List

1. The routing list is the order of approvers through which conference requests will route: A submitter enters and submits the request and approvers – from first to last – review and decide in succession. The June 2013 OCFO memo, “New Requirements for Conference Planning and Reporting,” outlines the conference approval thresholds and requirements:

a. USDA General Officers (i.e., Under Secretaries, Inspector General, Chief Economist, etc.) are authorized to approve events less than $75,000. They may delegate the authority to approve events less than $40,000 to Agency Heads or Staff Office Directors under their supervision. Note: Agency Heads and Staff Office Directors may delegate the approval authority to the Senior Accountable Travel Official (SATO) per the December 2015 Agriculture Travel Regulation.
b. The Deputy Secretary must pre-approve events with net expenses at or over $75,000. These requests will be routed through OCFO.

c. Events with net expenses at or over $450,000 require a Secretarial waiver. These requests will be routed through OCFO for approval.

All routing lists must include the Agency Administrator or Chief, Staff Office Director, or SATO and a General Officer – or their representatives – as the last two levels of approval. Depending on agencies’ requirements any number of approvers at varying responsibilities may be included below these two levels. CTAT will route conference requests to the General Officers only when the cost is at or over $40,000. Additionally, requests will only route through OCFO when the cost is at or over $75,000. All other requests (i.e., less than $40,000) will complete at the Agency Administrator or SATO level.

2. To create a new routing list, the agency POC must first create a sub agency. A “sub agency” is an office, division or unit within an agency through which conferences will route for approval. An agency can have as many sub agencies as needed – each with its own set of approvers – based on the agency’s conference routing and approval requirements. Some agencies may have a sub agency for each state office, for example, while others may have a more consolidated approach that corresponds to fewer sub agencies. Go to (1) Routing Lists → (2) Manage Sub Agencies. Select (3) Agency and click on (4) View Sub Agencies.

3. All existing sub agencies will show under the Sub Agencies section. To create a new sub agency, click on (1) Add New Sub Agency. The Add New Sub Agency section appears at the bottom of the page. Enter the (2) Sub Agency Name and click on (3) Create Sub Agency.
4. The page navigates to the **Agency Routing Form**, which prompts for the (1) **Number of Approval Order(s)**. Enter the number of approver levels (a minimum of one and a maximum of 11) that will be assigned for this sub agency's routing list. Note: This number includes up to the Administrator/SATO. For example, entering "3" indicates the third level approver is the Administrator or SATO. Under Secretary approvers are managed separately (see III.A.6.b). Click on (2) **Submit Agency Routing**.

5. If a sub agency was previously created (as in steps 2-3), but the number of approval order(s) not assigned (as in step 4), the sub agency remains inactive. To activate, go to (1) **Routing Lists** → (2) **New Routing List**, which opens the **Agency Routing Form**. Note: The (3) **Sub Agency** dropdown will be
limited to inactive sub agencies. Complete as in the preceding step and proceed to add the approvers as outlined in the succeeding steps.

6. The page expands to show the **Agency Approvers** and **Under Secretary Approvers** sections.

a. **Agency Approvers**

   i. Click on (1) **Add New Approver** to add a new agency approver.
ii. The **Add New Approver** subsection appears. Complete the fields and click on the (1) **Submit User** button.

![Add New Approver form](image)

(1) The (1) **Approval Order** dropdown consists of as many levels as the **Number of Approval Order(s)** entered in III.A.4. Select the level being assigned to the approver, i.e., “1” if the approver is first on the routing list, “2” if second, etc. The highest number should correspond to the Administrator or SATO.

![Approval Order dropdown](image)

(2) The **Approval Order Name** is the designated name to the approver at that level, e.g., Approver 1, Office Reviewer 2, Agency Administrator Representative, etc.

(3) Select if this approver will be the primary, backup, or other approver at this level in the **Pick type of user** field. The backup and other approver can approve/deny conference requests in the absence of the primary.

(4) Select the user that will be assigned at this level in the **Agency User** field. The dropdown consists of all registered users.

iii. The page updates and shows the (1) recently added approver. Click on (2) **Add New Approver** and repeat step III.A.6.a.ii to add more agency approvers until each level has at least one approver. **Note:** Any level with an unassigned approver will cause routing issues. Also repeat this step when more than one agency approver needs to be added for a level (e.g., two primaries or a primary and a backup). To create more routing lists, repeat from III.A.2.
b. Under Secretary Approvers

i. Under Secretary approvers can be added either through any sub agency’s Agency Routing Form (see III.B.1 on how to access) by clicking on (1) Manage Under Secretaries.
ii. Or (1) Routing Lists → (2) Under Secretary. Click on (3) Add New Under Secretary Approver.

iii. The Add New Under Secretary Approve Role section appears at the bottom of the page. Complete the dropdown fields and click on (1) Submit Under Secretary Approver.

iv. The page refreshes showing the (1) newly added approver. Click on (2) Add New Under Secretary Approver and repeat the preceding step to add more Under Secretary approvers as needed. To delete an existing approver, click on the (3) delete icon and the Delete button on the confirmation box that appears. Note: Under Secretary approvers need only be added (or updated) once – any addition (or update) is effective for all sub agency routing lists.
B. Update an Existing Routing List

1. Go to (1) Routing Lists → (2) Agency. To delete, click on the (3) delete icon and the Delete button on the confirmation box that appears. To view or update, click on the (4) routing list number. Note: All routing lists can be exported to a spreadsheet by clicking on (5) Export Routing List and following the prompt to open or save the file to a local folder.
2. The Agency Routing Form page opens. Update the (1) **Number of Approval Order(s)** as needed and click on (2) **Submit Agency Routing** to save. To add new agency approver(s) click on (3) **Add New Approver** and proceed as discussed in III.A.6.a. **Note: As mentioned in III.A.6.a.ii(1), the number of approver levels added through (3) **Add New Approver** should match the number entered in (1) **Number of Approval Order(s)**. To delete an existing agency approver, click on the (4) delete icon and the **Delete** button on the confirmation box that appears. To update an agency approver, click on (5) **Edit**.

3. The three fields convert to dropdowns. Make the appropriate selection(s) and click on (1) **Update**. The page refreshes with the updated information.

4. To update Under Secretary approvers, see III.A.6.b.

5. The OCFO routing list (for conferences over $75,000) is managed by OCFO but can be viewed by all users by going to (1) **Routing Lists** ➔ (2) **OCFO**.
C. Manage Sub Agencies

1. Go to (1) Routing Lists \(\rightarrow\) (2) Manage Sub Agencies. Select the (3) Agency and click on (4) View Sub Agencies.

2. The list of sub agencies appears. Sub agencies can either be renamed or deleted. *Note: Creating a new sub agency is discussed in III.A.2 to 4.*

   a. Rename

      i. Click on (1) Edit.
ii. The field converts to a (1) textbox. Make the appropriate changes and click on (2) **Update** to save.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUB AGENCY NAME</th>
<th>EDIT</th>
<th>DEACTIVATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMS Demo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMS_Test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMS_Tst2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMS_Tst1.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. Delete

i. Deactivate allows for a sub agency to be deleted with the option to either archive its active conferences (i.e., in draft, pending, or additional information status – see IV.B.1.a and 2.a for definitions) or reassign them to another sub agency. Once a sub agency is deleted it will no longer be available as a routing option for future conference requests. **Note:** This action deletes the sub agency, not its conferences; for a discussion on managing conferences, including how to delete them, see **IV.B.2.** Click on (1) **Deactivate** for the corresponding sub agency.
ii. To archive active conferences, select the (1) first option on the Deactivate Sub Agency dialog box that appears, then click on (2) Save Changes.

The sub agency is deleted and all its conferences in draft, pending, and additional information status are converted to “Archived” in the (3) Status column. Approved and disapproved conferences are unaffected. Note: To view/access conferences see IV.B.2.
iii. To reassign active conferences, select the (1) second option and the (2) sub agency to reassign to, then click on (3) Save Changes.

The sub agency is deleted and all its draft, pending, and additional information conferences remain in the same status but are reassigned to the new (4) sub agency. Approved and disapproved conferences are unaffected.
IV. Conference Requests

Once all appropriate agency staff have registered and the routing lists created, conference requests can be entered and submitted for approval.

A. Create a New Conference

Conference requests can be created entirely new or copied from an existing conference.

1. Entirely New

   a. The submitter goes to (1) Conferences → (2) New Conference.

   b. Enter the conference details – from General Conference Information to Miscellaneous Attachments (see Appendix A for details on each section). Templates can be downloaded from the OCFO Travel Express website at https://www.ocfo.usda.gov/travel-express/ConferenceTrainingTemplates and uploaded on applicable sections. Certain fields will open new sections or fields depending on the response. At a minimum, the (1) Conference Name, (2) Requesting Organization and (3) Requesting Suborganization need to be entered before an initial draft can be saved. Submitters can return to the conference, fill out as much of the template as they wish, and save as often as necessary before final submission.
A Conference Saved dialog box appears after a successful save (by clicking on the Save as Draft button at the bottom of the page). Click on (4) My Draft Requests to navigate to the submitter’s list of conferences (see IV.B.1 for further discussion) or (5) Ok to continue working on the conference template.

c. The conference request cannot be submitted for review unless all fields are completed. When the submitter attempts to submit (by clicking on the Continue to Review button at the bottom of the page) with missing information, a (1) message appears at the top of the page indicating which fields are incomplete.
d. After completing the template and clicking on **Continue to Review**, the page navigates to **Submission Review**, which consists of the **Warnings and Alerts** and **Cost Calculations** sections. The **Warnings and Alerts** indicates potential issues that may prevent the conference request from being approved. The submitter should review the request and address the alerts with the goal of eliminating the red alerts (i.e., high risk) and/or limiting the orange ones (low/medium risk). A green alert indicates no issues.
e. The **Cost Calculations** section shows a summary of costs based on information from the **Overall Attendee Information** (see Appendix A, section E) and the **Overall Cost Information** (see Appendix A, section G). The conference is considered a high cost event when the **Cost per Attendee** is over $3,000 or the **Cost per Attendee per Day**, over $600. A justification for high cost event should have been entered in the **Justification** field (see Appendix A, section A.5) under **General Conference Information**.

f. The submitter can either make further edits by clicking on the **Edit Conference Information** button to navigate back to the template, initiate conference request routing and approver review by clicking on **Submit for Review**, or save the current progress and complete at a later time by clicking on **Save as Draft**. Note: Red and orange alerts do not prevent a submitter from submitting the conference request. They serve to notify approvers of potential issues; an approver at any level may decide to reject or return the request for corrections based on these alerts.

g. A message appears on the screen after a successful submit. The submitter will also receive an email notification with a (1) link to the conference.

2. **Copy Conference**

To copy information from an existing conference to create a new conference request go to (1) **Conferences** → (2) **Copy Conference**. The **Copy Conference** page opens. There are four copy options, which are different ways to narrow down and retrieve specific results, but the objective is to enable agencies to copy information from a conference they created in the past or from their annual plans, or one that was created by another agency. However, not all information will be copied, and users will have to complete the rest of the template.
a. A conference the agency hosted or sponsored in the past
   
i. Select the (1) first option and click on (2) Search.
   
   ![Copy Conference](image)
   
   ii. The page refreshes with the search fields. Fill out or select as many of the filters to narrow down results and click on (1) Search. Click on (2) Reset to clear the fields or (3) Cancel & Start Over to return to the options page. Note: The conference name does not have to be exact; results can be retrieved on a keyword search. In addition, if using the date filters, conferences will be retrieved with start dates after the Date Range Start or end dates before the Date Range End.
   
   ![Copy Conference](image)
   
   iii. As an example, conferences that were created by agency (1) DEMO in the past that have the word (2) “test” in its name with start dates after (3) 5/13/2018 or end dates before (4) 10/30/2018 will yield the results below. Click on the applicable (5) conference number to proceed.
iv. Click on (1) **Create Draft** to continue.

v. A new draft conference is created and automatically saved, and the page navigates to the conference template. Some of the fields are prepopulated with information from the copied conference. Complete the template and save or submit as discussed in IV.A.1.b to g.

b. A conference the agency attended in the past

i. Select the (1) second option, which prompts to select if another agency is hosting or sponsoring the conference.
ii. If (1) Yes, select between an (2) Upcoming Conference or a (3) Past Conference by clicking on its Search button. Regardless of selection, the same fields appear as in IV.A.2.a.ii. Complete the applicable fields and create the draft as shown in IV.A.2.a.iv.

iii. Select (1) No if another agency is not hosting or sponsoring, or if unknown. Click on (2) Search. The same fields appear as in IV.A.2.a.ii. Complete the applicable fields and create the draft as shown in IV.A.2.a.iv.

c. An upcoming conference that another agency created

   i. Select the (1) third option, which prompts to select if the agency attended the conference in the past.
ii. If (1) Yes, select between an (2) Upcoming Conference or a (3) Past Conference by clicking on its Search button. Regardless of selection, the same fields appear as in IV.A.2.a.ii. Complete the applicable fields and create the draft as shown in IV.A.2.a.iv. Note: The Upcoming Conference option copies information from two conferences and combines them into one template – i.e., certain sections are copied from the conference created by the agency in the past, and other sections are copied from the upcoming conference created by another agency.

iii. If (1) No, click on (2) Search. Complete the applicable fields and create the draft as shown in IV.A.2.a.iv.

d. A conference from the agency's annual plan

   Note: This option copies the least amount of information since the annual plan contains a limited number of data elements.

i. Select the (1) fourth option and click on (2) Search.
ii. Select the (1) **Agency** and (2) **Fiscal Year** and click on (3) **Search**. The page refreshes with the results. Click on the applicable (4) conference number and create the draft as shown in IV.A.2.a.iv.

### B. Access Existing Conferences

1. **Draft Conferences**
   
a. Go to (1) **Conferences** → (2) **My Draft Requests**. This option allows submitters to view and edit conferences they created that are in (3) draft and (4) “additional information” status. The former are conferences that were created but never submitted and the latter have been submitted but were returned by an approver for edits.

   b. Click on the (5) conference number to open the conference. Proceed to edit, save or submit as discussed in IV.A.1.b to g.

   c. This page also has the links to create a (6) new conference or (7) copy an existing conference, as discussed in IV.A.1 and 2, respectively.
2. **All Entries**

   a. To navigate to the **All Conferences** page and view all conferences for agencies the user has access to, go to (1) **Conferences → All Entries**. Saved requests will show “Draft” in the (3) **Status** column; currently routing requests will show “Pending”; returned requests, “Additional Info”; completed requests, “Approved”; and rejected requests, “Disapproved.” Lastly, conferences with deleted sub agencies (see III.C.2.b) will show “Archived.” Users may also search for a conference by clicking on (4) **Search Conference**.
b. Select the conference from the (1) dropdown that appears and click on (2) Search.

c. Click on the (1) conference number to open. A submitter who clicks on a conference he/she created in Draft or Additional Info status will open the editable version of the conference and may proceed to edit, save or submit as discussed in IV.A.1.b to g. All other conferences will open in read-only mode.

d. The Conference Request page opens. All conferences have the (1) conference number and status prominently displayed. The (2) Export PDF, (3) Print, and (4) Go Back options are available. Export PDF creates a pdf file of the conference, which can be saved to the user’s local folder; the print option prints a hard copy to a local printer; and Go Back takes the user back to the All Conferences page (IV.B.2.a). Pending, approved, and disapproved conferences have the (5) View Approval Details and (6) Override (see V.D) options.

e. The View Approval Details link opens the Routing Workflow/Approval Details page, which shows the (1) submission details, including when the conference request was created and last modified; the (2) Review History, which shows the approvers’ decision history, including a
timestamp on when the decision was made; and the (3) **Agency Routing List**, which shows the list of approvers the conference will route to. *Note:* Under Secretary and OCFO approvers will only appear if the cost is over $40,000 and $75,000, respectively. Click on (4) **View Conference Information** to return to the Conference Request page (IV.B.2.d).
f. Only POCs and OCFO can delete conferences. To do so, click on the applicable (1) delete icon (which only appear for POCs and OCFO) and the Delete button on the confirmation box that appears.

V. Conference Routing

A. Decision Page

1. Routing is triggered once the submitter clicks on Submit for Review (see IV.A.1.d). The first approver in the routing list for the sub agency entered in the conference request (see Appendix A, section D.2) receives an email notification, which contains the (1) linked conference number (a unique ID that identifies each request in the system); (2) the approval number, which is the approver's order in the routing list, i.e., 1 for the first approver, 2 for the second, etc.; and the (3) agency and (4) sub agency under which the request is being initiated. Note: The system will send automated emails (with a link to the conference) to an approver every 48 hours until he/she enters a decision and the conference moves out of his/her queue.

CTAT: Conference Request Ready for Review

EAS-AppServices@ocio.usda.gov
To: McStay, James - OCFO, Washington, DC

**** Please do not respond to this mailbox. Thank you. *****

A conference request has been submitted for your review.

Please review conference request number: 22746

Approval number: 1
Agency Name: Demo
Sub-Agency Name: DemoSubAgency2

View all requests pending your review at: https://www.preprod.eservices.usda.gov/CTAT//ManageConferenceInfo.aspx
2. Clicking on the conference number link takes the approver to the **Review Decision** page, which consists of seven sections: **Reviewer Submission, Warnings and Alerts, Conference Summary, Miscellaneous Attachments, Cost Calculations, Review History, and Agency Routing List.** On the **Reviewer Submission** section, the approver selects a (1) decision to approve, disapprove, or request additional information; enters (2) comments, if any; and clicks on the (3) **Submit** button. Selecting “Approve” elevates the request further up the routing list where subsequent approvers will review the conference. Selecting ”Disapprove” will end the request, while “Additional Information” will send the request back to the submitter for revisions.

3. Further down the page are the other six sections, which can be reviewed by the approver prior to making a decision. The **Warnings and Alerts**, which is the same that appears to the submitter (as shown in **IV.A.1.d**), indicates potential issues that could flag the request for approval. Red and orange alerts can be causes for disapproval or delays, i.e., in instances where the approver returns the request for revision or additional information.
4. The **Conference Summary** provides the highlights of the conference such as the dates, location, purpose and justification. Clicking on (1) **View Conference Information** takes the approver to the **Conference Request** page.

![Conference Summary: CTAT Guide 3.0](image)

5. The **Conference Request** page consists of the read-only template that was completed by the submitter.
   a. Attachments can be viewed and/or saved by clicking on (1) **Download** on each applicable section.

   ![Attendee List](image)

   b. To return to the **Review Decision** page, click on (1) **Approve and Move Forward**.

6. The **Miscellaneous Attachments** section allows approvers to attach supporting documents. This is applicable in a situation, for example, where a designee is registered, logging into CTAT and moving the request on behalf of the approver, such as a secretary uploading a scanned conference approval request signed by the Administrator.
   a. To upload, click on the (1) **Select** button, which prompts to select the file from a local folder.
b. The (1) file appears below the Select box. Click on (2) Upload Selected Files.

c. The (1) file then appears under Additional Attachments, which indicates a successful upload.

7. The Cost Calculations provides a high-level summary of the costs, including the number of conference days and attendees paid for by the agency. The conference is a high cost event if the (1) Cost per Attendee is over $3,000 or the (2) Cost per Attendee per Day is over $600. Note: The justification for a high cost event should have been entered in the Justification field (see Appendix A, section A.5) under the General Conference Information section.
8. The **Review History** shows the conference request’s decision history. It includes preceding approvers’ names, decisions, comments and review dates.

   ![](image1)

   ![](image2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVIEWER NAME</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
<th>REVIEW DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James McStay Admin</td>
<td>AdditionalInfo</td>
<td>Missing attachment</td>
<td>6/8/2020 4:52:11 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James McStay Admin</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td></td>
<td>6/8/2020 4:54:02 PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Lastly, the **Agency Routing List** shows the list of approvers the conference request will route to within the agency, which includes the Under Secretary for conferences over $40,000. The OCFO approvers list appears for conferences over $75,000.

   ![](image3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENCY</th>
<th>SUB AGENCY</th>
<th>REVIEWER NAME</th>
<th>APPROVAL ORDER NAME</th>
<th>USER TYPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demo</td>
<td>DemoSubAgency2</td>
<td>James McStay Admin</td>
<td>Agency Reviewer 1</td>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demo</td>
<td>DemoSubAgency2</td>
<td>James McStay Admin</td>
<td>Agency Reviewer 2</td>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demo</td>
<td>DemoSubAgency2</td>
<td>James McStay Admin</td>
<td>Undersecretary</td>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**B. Decision Workflow**

1. When the first approver approves the conference request, it routes to the second approver for review, and so on. The process is repeated starting at [V.A.1](#) for the second and subsequent approvers until the request reaches completion when approved by the final approver. The request’s status changes from “Pending” to “Approved” in the **Status** column in the **All Conferences** page (see [IV.B.2.a](#)) and certain reports in the **Reports** tab (see [VI](#) for further discussion).

2. When an approver at any level disapproves the request, the routing ends and the conference request’s status changes from “Pending” to “Disapproved.” The conference is disabled and can only be reactivated by contacting OCFO.

3. When an approver decides the conference needs corrections, he/she selects “Additional Information.” The request is routed back to the submitter, who receives an email notification containing the (1) linked conference number.
An approver has returned your request pending additional information.

Please provide additional information for conference request number: 22748

View all your conference requests at: https://www.preprod.eservices.usda.gov/CTAT//ManageConferenceListing.aspx

4. Clicking on the link takes the submitter directly to the Conference Request page where edits can be made. Alternatively, the submitter can search for and access the (1) conference by going to:

a. My Conferences Needing Additional Information (Conferences → My Draft Requests)

b. List of Conference Requests (Conferences → All Entries)
5. In addition to the original sections – i.e., General Conference Information to Miscellaneous Attachments – two new sections are added to returned conference requests:

a. The (1) Reviewer Comments, which appears before the General Conference Information, shows the approver who returned the request; comments, if any; and return date.

b. The (1) Comments to Reviewer, which appears at the bottom of the page after Miscellaneous Attachments, allows the submitter to enter comments in response to the approver’s.

6. The submitter makes the necessary edits and proceeds to save or submit as discussed in IV.A.1.b to g. The routing and approval process restart from the beginning (i.e., first approver).
C. Manual Retrieval

1. The auto-generated email notifies an approver of a conference request pending his/her immediate review. Approvers can also view and access all their pending and completed requests by going to (1) Conferences → (2) Pre/Post Reviews.

2. The Pre/Post Reviews consists of three sections.

   a. Conferences Pending Review – These conferences are in the approver’s immediate queue.

      i. Click on the (1) conference number to navigate to the Conference Request page.

      ii. Scroll through the page to review the conference details and click on (1) Approve and Move Forward to navigate to the Review Decision page. Proceed as discussed in V.A.2.
b. Upcoming Reviews – These conferences are pending a preceding approver's review and will not have the Approve and Move Forward option when opened to prevent the higher level approver from entering a decision before a lower level approver (i.e., the one who has it in his/her immediate queue).


D. Conference Override

POCs can override pending, approved, and disapproved conferences. This action entails changing the status of a conference from one state to another. Open the conference and click on (1) Override (see IV.B.2 for a discussion on how to access conferences).
1. Pending Conferences

Three options are available – (a) Transfer Ownership, (b) Approve, and (c) Change Status.
a. Transfer Ownership – Only the submitter can edit and submit a conference he/she created. Transferring ownership, which can be done multiple times to the same conference, reassigns the conference from one submitter to another to allow the new user to edit and submit the conference. Note: This action can be utilized in situations where the original submitter left the agency either permanently or temporarily, which necessitates having another user take over. In the case of the latter, the conference can be reassigned back to the original submitter when he/she returns.

i. Click on (1) **Transfer Ownership**, which expands the section. Select the (2) user the conference will be reassigned to, enter the (3) justification and click on the (4) **Transfer Ownership** button.

ii. The page updates with the new (1) conference owner.

The **Review History** section in the **Routing Workflow/Approval Details** page (see IV.B.2.e for discussion) and the **Review Decision** page (see V.A.8) reflects the (1) transaction. Furthermore, all sections or pages with a “Created By” field will reflect the new conference owner.
b. Approve – The POC can administratively approve the conference at the current approver level or for the whole agency. Note: OCFO can administratively approve for the Under Secretary.

i. Click on (1) Approve, which expands the section, and enter the (2) justification. Click on (3) Approve for Level x, where x is the approver level the conference is currently pending review, if approving only for that level. Click on (4) Approve through Agency if approving for all remaining approvers within the agency. For example, if the sub agency below had five approver levels, this action will approve for levels 3, 4 and 5, since levels 1 and 2 had already approved and the conference is pending at level 3.

ii. The Review History will show the administrative approval. In the case of an approval through the agency, each approver level will reflect the same transaction. In the example above, the administrative approval occurred for levels 3 through 5, which corresponds to the same transaction shown for each of approver level (1) 3, (2) 4 and (3) 5 below. In addition, the conference’s status will change from “Pending” to “Approved” in all applicable sections and pages.

Review History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVIEWER NAME</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinton Smith</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Doe</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James McStay</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>Conference administratively approved by James McStay on 7/19/2020 with the following justification: Time sensitive - needs to be approved ASAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James McStay</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>Conference administratively approved by James McStay on 7/19/2020 with the following justification: Time sensitive - needs to be approved ASAP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

iii. Change Status – This action is the same as an approver returning the conference for additional information (see V.A.2 and V.B.3).
i. Click on (1) **Change Status**, which expands the section. Enter the (2) justification and (3) comments and click on (4) **Return for Additional Information**.

![Change Status](image)

---

ii. The **Review History** reflects the (1) transaction, and the conference’s status changes from “Pending” to “Additional Info” in all applicable sections and pages. The submitter will have to make the necessary edits and resubmit (see V.B.4 to 6 for discussion).

![Review History](image)

2. **Approved Conferences**

   One option is available with further options to either reopen the conference or disapprove. Click on (1) **Change Status**.
a. Reopen Conference – This action reverts the conference from “Approved” to “Pending” (at the last approver level). This would be utilized to allow the POC to further process the conference since it will have the same options as a pending conference (see V.D.1) – i.e., transfer ownership or return to submitter.

i. Enter the (1) justification and click on (2) Reopen Conference.
ii. The conference’s status changes to (1) “Pending” with the same (2) override options as in V.D.1.

iii. The **Review History** reflects the transaction, and the conference’s status changes from “Approved” to “Pending” in all applicable sections and pages.

b. Change to Disapproved – Convert the conference from “Approved” to “Disapproved.”

i. Enter the (1) justification and click on (2) **Change to Disapproved**.
ii. The conference's status changes to (1) "Disapproved" on the page and in all applicable sections and pages. The **Review History** will reflect the transaction.

3. Disapproved Conferences

One option is available with further options to either reopen the conference or approve. *Note: One reason a disapproved conference is reopened or approved is due to inadvertent disapproval.* Click on (1) **Change Status**.
a. Reopen Conference – The same action and result as in V.D.2.a, except it reverts the conference from “Disapproved” to “Pending.” Proceed as discussed.

b. Change to Approved – The opposite action of V.D.2.b.
VI. Reports

The POC can run the agency’s conference reports, which can be filtered by status, date range, agency/sub-agency, and cost. Click on one of the options that appear in the (1) Reports tab. Note: Submitters and approvers can also run reports but with limited results.

A. Pending Requests

1. The Pending Requests option retrieves conference requests that are pending an approver’s review and shows where the requests are on the routing. The (1) Reviewers Listing column shows the agency approvers. The (2) Under Secretary and (3) OCFO Reviewers columns show the corresponding approvers at these levels – the former will only show an approver icon for conferences between $40,000 and $75,000, while the latter for those over $75,000.

2. The red approver icon indicates which approver the request is currently awaiting a decision on. For example, (4) conference no. 1949, a less than $40,000 conference, is awaiting approver 2’s decision; (5) conference no. 1915 for less than $75,000 is with approver 1; and (6) conference no. 1909, which is over $75,000 and has gone through the agency and Under Secretary levels, is nearing completion with the Associate CFO at OCFO.

3. The agency POC can send an email to remind the current approver to complete the review by clicking on the (7) checklist icon in the Send Email Reminder column. The system will create and send an email to the approver, which is similar to that in V.A.1 and will allow the approver to access the conference request directly.
B. Filterable Reports

1. Reports can be filtered by any of the following options: status, date range, agency/sub-agency, and cost. The **View By Status** filters for conferences whether in draft, additional info, pending, approved, disapproved, or archived status. The **View By Date Range** includes options for the conferences’ start and end dates. Conferences on or after the start date filter will be retrieved. Entering an end date limits the results to those that end on or before the said date. The **View By Agency** filters by agency and sub-agency (i.e., the office under which the conference request was initiated). Lastly, the **View By Cost** retrieves requests greater/less than or equal to the entered values based on the conferences’ total costs (without salaries and benefits).

2. Select or enter the appropriate filters and click on the (1) **Get Reports** button to retrieve the conferences. **Note:** The **View by Status** option provides the most detailed results. In addition to columns/fields that are available in the other options, it also includes the location, date created, event amount (i.e., conference cost), number of attendees, routing status, and final approver.
3. The results can be exported to an (1) Excel spreadsheet or opened as a (2) pdf file by clicking on the appropriate button.
VII. Conference Transparency Reporting

A. Post Conference Details

1. Select fields from approved conference requests are mapped onto the Post Conference Details, which can be accessed through the All Conferences page (Conferences → All Entries). This information can be used to satisfy the quarterly conference transparency reporting (CTR) requirements to OCFO\(^1\). The submitter or POC must update the post conference data after event completion and as soon as the information becomes available. Click on the (1) Post Conference Details link under the Post Conf Details column.

2. The Post Conference Request Details page appears with pre-populated information.

   a. Three text fields in the summary section require the user to input information: (1) **Attended, Hosted or Sponsored** - enter either attended, hosted or sponsored. (2) **Contracting** – enter sole source; competitively awarded; sponsored the event via grant or cooperative agreement; or expenses are for travel, fees or below micro purchase limit. (3) **Basis for City Selected** – enter location is near more than 50% of attendees; location selected by host; or cost comparison performed to select locations.

   b. In the Participants and Cost Details section, there is an (4) **Actual** and a (5) **Conference Request** column. The fields in the latter are read-only and reflect the estimates that were entered when the conference request was submitted. The fields in the Actual column – from (6) **Agency Participants** to (7) **Salary Costs** – are editable and should reflect the actual numbers and costs; the rest of the fields are auto-calculated.

   c. If the cost per person is over $3,000 or the cost per person per day over $600, a (8) justification for high cost event field appears. Similarly, a justification field for mission impact appears for a sponsored conference over $100,000. An explanation must be entered for the high cost event and/or the conference’s impact on the agency’s mission.

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\(^1\) The June 2013 OCFO memo, "New Requirements for Conference Planning and Reporting," requires agencies to submit certified reports each quarter on conferences that were attended, hosted, or sponsored where net expenses exceeded $7,000.
d. Click on the (9) Submit Conference Details button to save any changes.
B. Generate CTR Reports

1. Approved conferences that have been updated through the Post Conference Details will appear in the post conferences report under (1) Reports → (2) Post Conferences.

2. The report can be filtered by (1) agency and sub agency. Use the (2) date filters and click on the (3) Get Reports button to generate a report for a particular period. For example, enter 4/1/2020 and 6/30/2020 for the start and end dates, respectively, to retrieve all conferences for the 3rd quarter of Fiscal Year 2020. The list of conferences that appear can be exported to a spreadsheet by clicking on the (4) Open in Excel button. Note: The (5) CreatedOn column reflects the date the conference was updated in the Post Conference Details and consequently added to the post conference report.

3. Open or save the Excel file to a local folder once download completes. Click on Yes on the Excel dialog box that appears when opening the file.
4. The spreadsheet contains all the data elements required for post conference reporting to OCFO, such as conference name, dates, location, number of attendees, and costs, among others. Further edits to the data can be made as needed prior to submission.

5. The annual OCFO CTR memoranda establish the guidelines for CTR. The POC should coordinate with agency staff responsible for CTR to ensure quarterly reports are generated from CTAT, updated as needed, and submitted to OCFO in a timely manner.

VIII. Annual Plan

Annual conference plans are due to OCFO by August 31.

A. Add New Plan

1. To add a new plan, go to (1) Annual Plans → (2) New Annual Plan.

2. Select the (1) Agency and (2) Fiscal Year and click on the (3) Create New Annual Plan button.

3. The Agency Annual Plan page refreshes. Two options for adding the annual plan are available: (1) Import Conferences and (2) Create a New Conference. The Import Conferences option allows users to complete an Excel spreadsheet offline for uploading onto the website. The Create a New Conference
option allows users to enter each conference online. Agencies may use whichever option is more suitable; alternatively, both may be combined, i.e., a file is uploaded through the import option and individual conferences added through the manual entry option.

a. **Import Conferences**

i. Click on (1) **FY21 Conference Template planning spreadsheet**, which prompts the annual plan Excel template to be opened or saved in a local folder. *Note: The template can also be downloaded from the OCFO website – see link in IV.A.1.b.*

ii. Complete the template and upload by clicking on the (1) **Select** button. The (2) file appears above the Select box after a successful upload. Click on (3) **Import File**.
iii. A (1) successful import message appears (click on the “x” to close). Note: If there are issues with the file, e.g., missing or incorrect entries, it will not be imported, and a message appears indicating what caused the errors. The (2) file appears in the Imported Conferences section with an option to (3) Download or (4) Delete. All the (5) entries in the Excel file are shown. Note: Agencies may upload more than one template, and each will show as a separate file; however, to prevent potential duplicate records, agencies should consolidate all records and upload one template.

b. Create a New Conference
   i. Click on (1) Add Conference.
ii. The Annual Plan Conference page opens. All the fields are required, except the (1) Cost per Attendee and Cost per Attendee per Day, which are auto-calculated, (2) Additional Expense Justification, and (3) Miscellaneous Attachments. The Additional Expense Justification is only required when the Cost per Attendee is over $3,000 or the Cost per Attendee per Day over $600. One or more documents pertaining to the conference may be uploaded in the Miscellaneous Attachments. Click on (4) Add to Annual Plan when complete.

iii. The (1) conference is added to the Manually Entered Conferences section. Repeat the two preceding steps for each conference.
B. View Plan

1. To view the annual plan, go to (1) Annual Plans → (2) All Annual Plans.

2. Select the (1) Agency and (2) Fiscal Year and click on (3) Search. The corresponding annual plan is retrieved. Click on the (4) plan number to open. Alternatively, all the conferences in the annual plan, regardless if added via the file upload or manual entry option, can be exported and viewed in a single Excel file by clicking on the (5) Export Plan Details button.
3. Clicking on the plan number opens the **Agency Annual Plan** page.
4. The Export Plan Details option prompts the user to open or save the Excel file in a local folder. The spreadsheet will contain all the data elements from the annual plan template. In addition, it includes a summary of the total number of events and estimated expenses, the user who created and/or modified each conference, and the dates these occurred.

C. Edit/Update Plan

1. Imported Conferences – There are several options for updating the records that were added via the file upload.
   
a. Delete the current file and replace with a new file.
      
i. Click on **(1) Delete File** and the **Delete** button on the confirmation box that appears.

   ii. The file and its corresponding records in the **Imported Conferences** section are removed.
iii. Upload the new file (as described in VIII.A.3.a.ii and iii). The new file and all its records will show in the Imported Conferences section.

b. Download the current file, update, and reupload.

   Note: This option would be utilized if the user prefers to work on the file that is already in the system as opposed to a completely new file.

   i. Click on (1) Download, which will prompt to open or save the file to a local folder.

   ii. Update the downloaded file and delete the existing file. Reupload the updated file.
Important: Files are not overwritten; therefore, it is necessary to first delete the existing file before reuploading the updated file, otherwise, a new instance of the file, and consequently, potential duplicate records, will be created.

c. Update a record.

Note: This option would be utilized if there are only a few edits to be made or if the user prefers to update records online, as opposed to making a bulk update on the file offline and having to upload it.

i. Click on the (1) conference number.

![Annual Plan Conference](image)

ii. The **Annual Plan Conference** page opens (see VIII.A.3.b.ii). Make the appropriate edits and click on the **Add to Annual Plan** button to save the changes.

Important: Changes made to a record via this option do not carry over to the source file, i.e., the data in the file remains unchanged. However, the data for updated records will reflect in the annual plan spreadsheet when exported as described in VIII.B.2 and 4.
A. General Conference Information

GENERAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Conference Name
Enter conference name

When adding a new conference, be sure to completely spell out the name. Do not use acronyms or abbreviations unless they are contained in the actual conference name.

Conference Dates
Enter the full date range of the conference, even if your agency is not attending all dates.

Estimated Start Date
Start Date

Estimated End Date
End Date

Conference Location
Country
United States

State
Select...

City
City

Purpose
Enter the reason your agency will be attending the conference.

Justification
Explain why your agency must attend this conference. How will your attendance benefit your agency? This will also be the draft text used in reporting sponsored events with costs over $100 thousand dollars.

1. Enter the conference name.
2. Enter the start and end dates (mm/dd/yyyy) or use the date picker.
3. Select the country, the state if U.S., and type in the city.
4. Enter the purpose for attending, hosting, or sponsoring the conference.
5. Enter the justification for participating in the conference. Also include an explanation when the conference is high cost, i.e., cost per person over $3,000 or cost per person per day over $600.
6. Select one (or more) event type.

7. If the event is recurring move the slide button to the right and enter the frequency.

8. Select yes or no.

9. Select yes, no, or unknown.

10. Select one (or more) role(s). Selecting Sponsor(s) will open the Sponsoring Agency Information section.
What is/are the role(s) of your agency in the conference?
- Attendee(s)
- Exhibitor(s)
- Host(s)
- Presenter(s)
- Speaker(s)
- Sponsor(s)

Conference Agendas
Please attach the conference agenda, or if training, the official list of courses

SPONSORING AGENCY INFORMATION
What steps will be taken to minimize lodging costs (such as negotiating a rate below per diem)?

- Upgraded rooms are part of the arrangements
- Additional meeting rooms are being provided that are not listed on the agenda
- Outside conference planning services will be used
- Scouting trips will be used when arranging this conference
- After hours events, networking sessions, or parties will be officially organized or included on the agenda
- Alcohol will be officially provided or procured with government funds for this event

a. Enter explanation.

b. If the item applies, move the slide button to the right and enter justification.

- Upgraded rooms are part of the arrangements

Please explain why they are needed, their intended use and how they will be distributed.

- After hours events, networking sessions, or parties will be officially organized or included on the agenda

USDA strongly discourages these type of events and a yes answer will likely result in your conference request being denied. Please provide a justification on why this is a proper use of government resources.

- Alcohol will be officially provided or procured with government funds for this event

USDA strongly discourages providing or procuring alcohol and a yes answer will likely result in your conference request being denied. If alcohol will be provided, please explain why this is necessary in the Purpose and Justification fields above.

c. If applicable, this item will cause an orange flag in the Warning and Alerts (see IV.A.1.d and V.A.3). Enter justification.

d. If applicable, this item will cause a red flag in the Warnings and Alerts (see IV.A.1.d and V.A.3).
11. To upload:

   a. Click on the (1) Select button.

   ![Image of Select button]

   b. The folder dialog box appears. Select the (1) file and click on (2) Open. *Note: One or more files may be uploaded.*

   ![Image of file selection]

   c. The (1) file appears above the Select box, indicating a successful upload. To delete the file, click on (2) Remove.

   ![Image of file upload confirmation]

   ![Image of Remove button]
B. Conference Justifications

Selecting No in any one of these questions will trigger a red flag in the Warnings and Alerts.

**CONFERENCE JUSTIFICATIONS**

Will this conference help further the agency’s mission or the Department’s strategic plan? *

Select...

Can the information NOT be effectively shared through another means such as a teleconference or the Internet? *

Select...

Is the number of employees attending justified? *

Select...

Is the conference or training event a “must-do” considering the limited budgets of the agency? *

Select...

1. Select yes or no.

C. Conference Sponsorship Information

**CONFERENCE SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION**

Sponsoring USDA Agency/Organization

Select...

Co-Sponsor USDA Agency/Organization

Select...

Non-USDA Co-Sponsoring Organization

Select...

Executive Sponsor
Name

Title

Point of Contact
Name

Title

1. Select the sponsoring organization – either a USDA agency, Other (non-USDA), or N/A if not applicable or unknown.

2. Select the co-sponsoring agency or N/A if unknown or not applicable.

3. Type in the non-USDA co-sponsoring organization if known; otherwise, enter N/A or unknown.

4. Enter the executive sponsor’s name and title.

5. Enter the sponsoring organization's POC's name and title.
D. Requestor Information

REQUESTOR INFORMATION

1. Select the agency, which is limited to those the user has access to.

2. Select the sub agency. This field determines the approval workflow, i.e., the conference will route through the approvers listed for the sub agency.

3. Enter the requestor's information.

E. Overall Attendee Information

OVERALL ATTENDEE INFORMATION

1. Enter the number of USDA employees (both in and outside the agency) attending the event that are paid for by the agency.

2. Enter the number of non-USDA attendees whose expenses (partial or full) are paid for by the agency.

3. Enter the number of non-USDA federal participants not covered by #1 or #2, if known.

4. Enter the number of non-federal participants not covered by #1 or #2, if known.
F. Facility Information and Justifications

**FACILITY INFORMATION AND JUSTIFICATIONS**

In what type of facility will the event be held?

Select...

Justification of Why a Tele/Video Conference is not a Viable Alternative to Meeting in Person

What was the basis for selecting this location?

Select...

1. Select the facility type. “Commercial Facility” prompts for a justification.

2. Enter justification for in person attendance.

3. Select location basis. If the agency is hosting the conference (i.e., selected “Host(s)” in Appendix A, section A.10), the first and third options will be available; otherwise, the choice will be limited to the second option.
G. Overall Cost Information

If "Host(s)" is selected in section A.10 and "Cost comparison performed to select location" in section F.3, this section will expand to show three columns, one for each location; otherwise, the default consists of only the first column (Preferred Location).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITY &amp; STATE OF EVENT</th>
<th>PREFERRED LOCATION</th>
<th>2ND ALTERNATIVE</th>
<th>3RD ALTERNATIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PER DiEM RATES - LODGING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PER DiEM RATES - M &amp; IE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATION OF EVENT</td>
<td>Hotel, conference center, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TYPE OF FACILITY</td>
<td>USDA, Federal, University or Commercial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - AIR FARE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - LOCAL/TDY TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - MISCELLANEOUS TRAVEL EXPENSES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - TOTAL LODGING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - TOTAL M&amp;IE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Prepopulated from section A.3.


3. Enter the specific type of facility, e.g., hotel, conference center, etc., as opposed to a “general” type of facility in section F.1.

4. Prepopulated from section F.1.
5. Enter the applicable dollar amounts.

6. Enter the applicable dollar amounts. A non-zero entry prompts for the justification, description and/or explanation. Light refreshments will trigger an orange flag in Warnings and Alerts.
Providing light refreshments at conferences is discouraged at USDA and should only be provided when absolutely necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7 - LIGHT REFRESHMENTS</th>
<th>$500.00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8 - PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL</th>
<th>$500.00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9 - SPEAKER / TRAINER FEES</th>
<th>$500.00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### 7A - JUSTIFICATION
- Enter justification.

### 7B - DESCRIPTION
- Enter description.

### 8A - JUSTIFICATION
- Enter justification.

### 8B - DESCRIPTION
- Enter description.

### 9A - JUSTIFICATION
- Enter justification.

### 10 - OTHER COSTS - ITEMIZED
- Enter explanation.
- If any, list each item and cost.

### 10A - EXPLANATION
- Enter explanation.
7. The Deputy Secretary Memo only appears when the total cost (without salaries) is over $75,000.
   a. Clicking on the Deputy Secretary Memo link opens a new webpage of the OCFO Travel Express site (see link in IV.A.1.b) where templates, including the memo, can be downloaded.
   b. Complete the memo and upload (see upload instructions in section A.11).

8. This only appears for a hosted conference utilizing a cost comparison to select location.
   a. Select the location methodology.
b. Enter the justification.

c. Enter explanation.

9. The Attendee List template can be downloaded from the OCFO website (see link in IV.A.1.b). See upload instructions in section A.11.

10. The Speaker Credentials only appears when the Speaker/Trainer Fees in section G.6 is non-zero. See upload instructions in section A.11.

H. Accounting Information

**ACCOUNTING INFORMATION**

1. Select the funding type.

2. Enter the accounting code(s).

3. Select the contracting methodology.

4. This only appears when the Non-Federal Contribution in section G.5 is non-zero.
   
a. Enter the non-federal funding organization(s).

b. If applicable, move the slide button to the right, which prompts for an Office of General Counsel form upload. See upload instructions in section A.11.
I. Miscellaneous Attachments

Upload other pertinent documents as needed. See upload instructions in section A.11.

J. Save or Submit

The Save as Draft and Continue to Review buttons are at the bottom of the page. Save progress or proceed to submit – see IV.A.1.b to d for discussion.