



ASPE

The Global Network for Human Simulation Education

Association of SP Educators

CONFERENCE JUSTIFICATION TOOL KIT

WHAT YOUR SUPERVISOR NEEDS TO APPROVE ATTENDANCE

You recognize the value of attending the ASPE Annual Conference, but how do you communicate that to those responsible for approving your professional development requests? We know that travel and professional development budgets are tight, and that it is difficult to get approval to attend events and Conferences, which is why we're here to help!

One of the best ways to get approval is to connect your responsibilities, goals, and challenges in your daily work life to your Conference experience. Listed here are some goals common to our attendees, as well as the ways in which ASPE meets those needs, so you can make a strong case for attending this year and for years to come.

This justification tool kit provides everything you need to "make the case" to your supervisor for attending the ASPE Annual Conference.

In this packet, you'll find:

- A letter/email template
- Benefit worksheet
- Expense worksheet
- "Q&A" fact sheet
- Sample post-Conference report

Feel free to tailor these materials for your unique needs and the needs of your organization. If you need any other information or would like additional support, don't hesitate to email your ASPE headquarters staff. We're here to help you!

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JUSTIFICATION LETTER TEMPLATE

Dear [*Supervisor Name*],

I'm writing to request permission to attend the 2026 Association of SP Educators (ASPE) Annual Conference held June 21-24, 2026, in St. Louis, Missouri, USA. The Annual Conference is filled with informative, cutting-edge sessions for all levels of learners in diverse formats that include workshops, presentation discussions, training techniques, posters, oral research reports, snapshot sessions, and much more. This is the only national educational event dedicated specifically to SP Education professionals. It offers over 100 different educational sessions presented by SP educators and thought leaders in the field and beyond. Attending the Conference will enable me to gain valuable insights about key issues central to our program and curriculum, while also establishing connections with peers and networking with experts from around the world.

Several sessions are directly applicable to my work and the needs of our program. If approved, I plan to attend sessions focused on areas of <fill in topic areas> which could be put into practice with <project(s) you are working on>. With this opportunity to expand my knowledge, I will gain tools and resources that could immediately be put to use in improving the <project(s)/issue you are working on>. Following the Conference, I'll multiply the benefits of attendance by offering a short presentation on everything I learned, and I will also bring home all session materials to share. While I am out of the office, I plan to have <who/how cover while out of the office> see to any urgent requests.

The ASPE Annual Conference is a wise investment. Gaining knowledge in this format will greatly reduce the time and costs otherwise necessary, making it an excellent value that will serve our institution well. I am seeking approval for the registration fee, travel expenses to the Conference, and minimal food expenses during the Conference. I've included a [fact sheet, Conference benefits, and estimated expenses] for your review. This opportunity is an investment which will yield dividends throughout the year for our whole team and for <name of your organization/employer>.

Please let me know if there is any additional information, I can provide to aid your decision-making process. Thank you for considering this proposal.

Sincerely,

BENEFIT WORKSHEET

CALCULATE CONFERENCE VALUE

A proposal for allocation of resources in your organization should include the two elementary components of decision-making: benefits or return on investment (ROI) and expenses (the “investment”). This tool kit provides simple steps for calculating the investment and identifying the return(s).

YOU NEED:	ASPE PROVIDES:
Affordable professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Save on your Conference costs when you register before the early bird rate registration deadline.• Save on your hotel room when you book your room through the ASPE block for a discounted rate!
Access to the latest industry trends and knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend a variety of sessions to understand the future of the SP profession, including our pre-Conference workshops, poster rounds, and a variety of quality sessions!• Learn all the latest techniques, technology, and evidence-based information for real tangible takeaways!
Information from a variety of industry leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our plenary speakers will provide you with the big picture knowledge you are looking for!• Attending a variety of session styles from workshops, snapshots, discussions, research presentations, poster presentations, and so much more!
Quick and efficient networking time with key companies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our robust and extensive exhibit hall will provide multiple hours of networking time with leading companies.• Enjoy numerous chances to network with colleagues during meals, breaks, and scheduled casual outings in the city.

EXPENSES WORKSHEET

UNDERSTANDING CONFERENCE EXPENSES

Before you can even begin to justify Conference expenses, you need to calculate what those expenses are. Use the following Expenses Worksheet to develop a cost estimate for attending.

EXPENSES WORKSHEET		
Expense	Guideline	Cost
Conference Registration	Discounts Early and Member registration	\$
Pre-Conference Workshop	Optional	\$
*Flight <i>Find a quick estimate online</i>	<i>Accessible by a major international airport</i>	\$
Lodging x # of nights =	Hilton discounted rate: \$205.00/night USD	\$
*Transportation: <i>To and from airport – hotel</i>	<i>Taxi, Rental, Rideshare, Shuttle van</i>	\$
Mileage Reimbursement <i>Driving to the Conference or airport</i>	<i>Use online map to estimate distance, multiply this # by the reimbursement rate per mile allowed by your organization.</i>	\$
Parking x # of nights =	Hotel: Self-parking (20% discount on posted rate)	\$
Food Per Diem <i>Breakfast, refreshment breaks, & lunch provided for full Conference registrants</i>	<i>See your organization guidelines for allowed rates, and meal expenses.</i>	\$
<i>(Multiply by number attending)</i> subtotal		\$
Total =		\$
*Airport by Hilton	Transportation Type	Typical Minimum
St. Louis Lambert International Airport (STL) <i>15-20 minutes from hotel</i>	Taxi Uber/Lyft	

CONFERENCE “Q & A” FACT SHEET



WHAT IS ASPE?

ASPE is an international professional association for human simulation and standardized patient (SP) methodology. ASPE was created out of the need for educators to share ideas, network, and become even better at what they do.

ASPE is dedicated to:

- Promoting best practices in the application of SP methodology for education, assessment and research;
- Fostering the dissemination of research and scholarship in the field of SP methodology;
- Advancing the professional knowledge and skills of its members; and
- Transforming professional performance through the power of human interaction.



WHAT IS THE VALUE OF ATTENDING?

The Conference offers plenaries and invited presenter workshops that reflect cutting-edge practices; it provides not only education in core SP and Simulation topics but also highlights the richness and perspectives of simulation education around the world.



WHAT WILL I EXPERIENCE?

This Conference provides targeted support in three critical areas:

- **EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION** — balanced selection of hands-on workshops and professional growth/development opportunities. Topics cover diverse themes, including Administration, Advancing Your SPs, Curricular Programming and Case Development, GTA/MUTA, and SP Educator Development.
- **INCREDIBLE NETWORKING** — with contacts and collaboration for years to come. Connect "face-to-face" with more than 400 fellow SP/simulation education professionals. The Conference is delivered by knowledgeable and experienced peers. It is an exciting forum for creativity and innovation, fostering multi-disciplinary connections, professional development and mentoring, and furthering/inspiring scholarship and research collaborations.
- **INDUSTRY SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE** — targeted specifically to the world of SP Education. The Conference is host to vendors with products and services you use or may be evaluating for future use. Vendors are knowledgeable and friendly — see products, compare tools, learn about new innovations and services.



DOES THE CONFERENCE MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR BUDGET?

The Conference is an excellent value. With a reasonable registration fee, special room rate just for attendees and multiple meals included in the registration fee, it provides a cost-effective source for education

SAMPLE POST CONFERENCE REPORT

Overview of Event:

The Conference focus was program development, assessment/evaluation, training, feedback, and communication—as well as presentations on extending SPs into new disciplines, hybrid and mixed modalities, incorporating technology, and leadership. It was well organized, and the speakers provided candid opinions on the subject matter at hand. The Exhibit Hall was on-site, allowing for multiple opportunities to investigate new products and services and meet with vendors. The first day featured pre-Conference workshops. The remaining three days featured breakout sessions and multiple keynote sessions. All sessions were led by experts and offered ample time for questions. All Conference materials and access to the Exhibit Hall were included with the registration fee. The provided meals and refreshment breaks allowed me to save on my travel budget.

Why Did I Choose to Attend?

This is the premier Conference for SP Programs dedicated to providing solutions and best practices for SP education. It attracts hundreds of SP Education professionals. The opportunity to learn from such a diverse group of peers was invaluable. I was particularly interested in sessions on < insert customized list here > since they directly relate to < insert aspects of your job or projects here >. In addition to the sessions, the chance to network with other colleagues was an extremely valuable experience. I was also able to interact with vendors in the Exhibit Hall, research new solutions and discuss current technologies with service experts. < List specific people, vendors you interacted with and the benefits of those discussions >.

What Sessions Did I Find Most Valuable?

During the Conference, I was able to attend numerous sessions. I was able to focus on topics that directly relate to my position at this facility/organization and find solutions for ongoing projects. <Insert Name, Speaker and Subject - List sessions and include detailed descriptions of what you learned and how it will apply to your organization >.

Overall Summary of Conference Experience

I was very pleased with the ASPE Conference and felt it was well worth the expense. I learned new solutions and best practice strategies that can be implemented in our program. I gained valuable experience that could not be obtained elsewhere. I was able to speak with several experts who provided tips and useful information for our program's particular needs. I hope to attend again next summer.