Office on Violence Against Women

Conference Request and Conference Report Training

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- Conference Requests
- Preparation
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- Calculating the Costs
- Conference Request Form
- OVW Request Approval Email
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- Conference Reports
- Frequently Asked Questions
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Introduction
- Is this webinar for you?
- Are you planning on holding a conference using OVW cooperative agreement or contract funds?

For the purposes of the rest of this webinar, we are going to assume that the receipt of a conference request form will not be the first time your OVW program specialist is learning about the conference; and that you have been collaborating with your program specialist.
What is a conference?

A conference is a meeting, retreat, seminar, symposium, or training activity. It is typically a pre-arranged event with designated participants and/or registration, a published substantive agenda, and scheduled speakers or discussion panels on a particular topic.

Why is approval needed to hold a conference if the conference was already approved in the grant award?

Review the OVW website for additional information

OVW Training Guiding Principles for Grantees and Sub-grantees

- Trainings must comply with applicable law.
- The content of trainings and training materials must be accurate, appropriately tailored, and focused.
- Trainers must be well-qualified in the subject area and skilled in presenting it.
- Trainers must demonstrate the highest standards of professionalism.

Preparation
### What to Think about as You Plan Your Meeting

- Every effort must be made to minimize conference costs.
- What is the primary purpose of your meeting? Is an in-person meeting necessary?
- Are you developing and planning your meeting in collaboration with your OVW program specialist?
- Participants, dates, or location: what is the primary consideration in planning your meeting?
- Can you use a federal facility or a free facility?
- How many faculty and staff do you really need?
- How are you estimating your number of attendees?
- Does your organization have its own travel policy or will you be following the federal travel regulations?
- Who will be doing the logistical planning for your meeting? Is this cost effective?
- Are you collaborating with one or more DOJ cooperative agreement and/or contract recipients to develop and/or deliver this event?

### Food and Beverages

- Generally, food and beverage purchases using OVW funds are not allowed.
- Refreshments may be provided in very limited circumstances.

### Conference Request Requirements

#### Prior Approval

- Prior approval is required to hold a conference supported by an OVW cooperative agreement or contract.
- OVW approval must be received before entering into a contract and before any travel arrangement are booked for your event.
- Requests to provide food require additional prior approval.
- Before entering into hotel contracts, ensure that any AV equipment is compatible 90 days before you need to know if your conference has been approved or denied.

#### Submission of Requests

- Please submit the conference request at least 90 calendar days prior to the date on which you need to know if your conference has been approved or denied.
- If the conference will cost more than $100,000, please submit the conference request at least 120 days prior to the date on which you need to know if your request has been approved.
- Conference requests are not considered submitted for review and approval unless all fields and required sheets have been completed. Note: Sheets A and B are required.
- Prior approval process does not begin until OVW is in receipt of a completed Conference Request Form. Incomplete requests cannot be fully reviewed and create delays in the overall process for all grantees.

### Attachments

- The most recent OVW conference request form
- Indirect rate agreement
- Agenda
- The submission of an agenda is required. It can be a rough draft; however, at the very least we need an outline of the event.
Calculating the Cost

Planning

- Conference Planners
  - The threshold for a logistical planner is $50 per attendee, not to exceed $8,750.
  - The threshold for a programmatic planner is $200 per attendee, not to exceed $35,000.
- Conference Trainer/Instructor/Presenter/Facilitator
  - These terms refer to a subject matter expert who provides training, instruction, presentation or facilitation during the conference. This person may be a member of your staff or an outside consultant. In either case, the cost for their time must be included. This individual may conduct classes, lead sessions to ensure the purposes of the conference are met, give presentations on the conference topic, or staff a booth or table providing information.
- Consultants and Consultant Costs
  - Consultant rates in excess of $650 per day (or $81.25 per hour) for an 8 hour day require prior OVW approval through a Grant Adjustment Notice (GAN). A consultant who performs work that exceeds 8 hours in a single day, should be compensated for all hours worked. The prior approval process for consultants is separate from the Conference Request approval process.
  - There are limitations on payments for preparation and travel days for consultants.

Meeting Space/AV (Don’t forget to include taxes and services fees.)

Indirect Costs

- Indirect costs must be included on the Conference Request form. Failure to include those costs may result in a denial of reimbursement of those costs.
- Indirect costs cannot be applied to participant support costs.

Participant Support Costs

- Participant support costs are paid to (or on behalf of) participants or trainees (not employees) to support their participation in conferences. Examples include transportation and lodging.

Registration Fees

- As a general rule, awardees cannot charge registration fees for OVW sponsored training and technical assistance events. However, when participant registration fees are charged, typically when OVW is not the only event sponsor, some or all of the income generated as a result of the registration fees must be treated as "program income."

Program Income

- Program income (e.g., registration fees collected from participants) should NOT be included on your Conference Request form.
- If the program income was not included in the approved budget of your cooperative agreement, you must submit a GAN to request a budget modification.
- OVW is developing a separate form to capture program income.

Calculating the Cost (Continued)

The Conference Request Form


The Conference Request form includes the following:

- Submission Form
- Sheet A
- Sheet B
- Sheet C (Conference Report Only)

Conference Request forms must be submitted to the OVW Conference Request email box at OVWConferenceRequest@usdoj.gov effective October 1, 2015.
Conference Request Form
Section A

A. GENERAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION:

Name of the OVW Program Specialist.

A. GENERAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION:

A blanket request is for multiple events where the title and agenda are identical.

The events must also take place in the same federal fiscal year (e.g., October 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017).

While you may include that holding the conference is a deliverable of your OVW award in the description, that alone is not sufficient justification. Justification should include a brief statement of why this meeting is necessary to address stalking, sexual assault, dating violence, or domestic violence. Additional space for your justification can be found on "Sheet A."

OVW cooperative agreement or contract award number (Example: 2012-MU-AX-0000).

Select the federal fiscal year quarter during which the event will occur:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Federal FY Quarter</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quarter 1</td>
<td>10/1/16 – 12/31/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarter 2</td>
<td>1/1/17 – 3/31/17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarter 3</td>
<td>4/1/17 – 6/30/17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarter 4</td>
<td>7/1/17 – 9/30/17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Enter the number of attendees who are Department of Justice employees.
- Please obtain this number from your OVW Program Specialist.

Enter the number of attendees who are federal employees but who are not Department of Justice employees.
- Please obtain this number from your Program Specialist.

Enter the number of attendees who are not federal employees (i.e., faculty, staff, participants...).

Add the number of attendees who will be reimbursed for all or some of their travel costs by the cooperative agreement or contract to the number of people from question 20.
- The cost for any DOJ attendees must be included. OVW will add the costs for any DOJ/OVW staff.
- The total should be placed in Box A. 24.

If a cooperative agreement is the federal funding instrument supporting the event, select ‘N/A – Cooperative Agreement’ from the drop down menu.

Food and beverage purchases, other than M&IE reimbursements, using OVW funds require additional prior approval.
- Enter the number of meals (typically referred to as “working meals”) that will be provided to participants during the conference, not the number of people attending the meal.
- Please note that meals are only listed in this section if they are part of the conference and all participants are required to attend. Do not include in this section meals that are reimbursed as M&IE.
A logistical conference planner can be an employee or contractor of the cooperative agreement recipient. The cost cannot exceed $50 per attendee, or a cumulative cost of $8,750. Please include the position titles of all staff and contractors who will be compensated for logistical planning as well as their hourly rate and the anticipated number of hours each will spend on logistical planning for this event on Sheet A of the Conference Request form.

A programmatic conference planner will aid with agenda design and curriculum development. The cost cannot exceed $200 per attendee, or a cumulative total of $35,000.

The combined cost for conference meeting space and audio-visual equipment rental and services cannot exceed $25 per day per attendee. If the combined cost exceeds the allowable threshold, an explanation is necessary. OVW must seek additional approval for costs exceeding the threshold in each of these categories.

#12. Trainers/Facilitators includes both internal and external trainers. The detailed information will be completed on "Sheet B."
## Conference Request Form
### Sections C, D, and E

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost Category</th>
<th>Number of Attendees</th>
<th>Per Person Threshold ($)</th>
<th>Total Threshold ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Logistics of Conference Site</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Programmers Conference Planner</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$400</td>
<td>$400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Conference Request Form
### Sections F, G, and H

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment Provided on Site That Will Be Treated Under Categorization (Copy and PRM)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>itemized on site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>itemized on site</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Conference Request Form
### Sections I and J

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Required to Attendee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>Site Access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Conference Request Form

#### Sheet A

**Purpose of the Daily Rate**
- Training, Travel, or Preparation Day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presenter Name</th>
<th>Role (e.g. keynote, workshop leader)</th>
<th>Daily Rate</th>
<th># of Days</th>
<th>Total Compensation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Explanation of the need for this particular consultant (i.e. the particular expertise they are bringing to the conference that cannot be addressed by one of the other faculty members and their expertise)***

Has consultant rate been approved by OVW? (Select Yes or No)
- Yes
- No

**Total Compensation for all faculty/presenters**
- In the space to the right, please explain the need for the number of faculty as compared to the number of participants.

### Sheet B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presenter Name</th>
<th>Role (e.g. coordinator, project director, facilitator, workshop leader, logistical coordinator, monitor)</th>
<th>Daily Rate</th>
<th># of Days</th>
<th>Total Compensation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Please provide better information regarding cooperative agreement staff and DOJ staff attendees**

**Cooperative Agreement or DOJ Staff Name:**

**Role (e.g. coordinator, project director, facilitator, workshop leader, logistical coordinator, monitor):**

**In the space below, please explain the need for the number of cooperative agreement staff as compared to the number of participants and faculty. Pay particular attention to staff who could serve multiple functions, thereby reducing the number of staff necessary for a successful event.**

### OVW Request Approval Email

**Approved**
**Conference Report Requirements**

*Submission of Reports*

- If the total cost of the conference is more than $20,000, then a Conference Report must be submitted to the Program Specialist and the conference reporting (ovw.conferencereport@usdoj.gov) no more than 30 days after the last day of the event.

- It is strongly recommended that first time TA Providers or TA staff new to completing conference reports, submit a report for their first and second conferences regardless of the cost. This will allow the TA Provider to become comfortable with the form and in providing all the required information and addressing follow-up questions. If a TA provider is submitting a report for a conference with total costs less than $20,000, the report can be submitted within 60 days of the last day of the event versus the normal 30 days submission requirement. Please remember, however, that if the approved conference request amount exceeded $20,000, the TA provider must still notify OVW within 30 days of the event’s last day that final costs were less than $20,000.

**Conference Reports**

- Cooperative agreement and contract recipients must submit a conference report for any conference for which the total costs exceed $20,000.
- Reports are due within 30 days of the last day of the event.
- Award recipients who have not received all of their invoices by the reporting due date should still submit their reports. They should note on the form which invoices are missing and should use the estimates included in their approved requests for any missing costs. Once all invoices are received, the award recipient must submit a revised form to OVW.
- Award recipients who have not received all of their invoices by the reporting due date should still submit their reports. They should note on the form which invoices are missing and should use the estimates included in their approved requests for any missing costs. Once all invoices are received, the award recipient must submit a revised form to OVW.

**Variances**

- If the conference request was approved for under $20,000 and the actual cost was over $20,000, a Conference Report is required.
- If the conference request was approved for over $20,000 and the actual cost was $20,000 or less, a Conference Report is not required, however OVW must be notified in writing (email is acceptable) that final expenses were below $20,000. The grantee should maintain documentation that total expenses were less than $20,000.

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**Table: Conference Report Form**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conference Setup</td>
<td>Setup costs related to conference setup</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>Venue costs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>Travel costs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals</td>
<td>Meals costs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Transportation</td>
<td>Local transportation costs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Materials</td>
<td>Costs associated with conference materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>Registration costs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals</td>
<td>Meals costs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Transportation</td>
<td>Local transportation costs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Materials</td>
<td>Costs associated with conference materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Frequently Asked Questions

**QUESTION:** Where can I find the conference form?

**ANSWER:** The OVW Conference Form can be found on OVW’s website at [http://www.justice.gov/ovw/training-and-technical-assistance](http://www.justice.gov/ovw/training-and-technical-assistance). You can also ask your OVW program specialist for a copy of the form, or you can contact Sunita Joshi at (202) 305-1658 for a copy.

**QUESTION:** Where do I submit my Conference Request?

**ANSWER:** Conference Request forms must be submitted through the Conference Request email box at OVW.conferencerequest@usdoj.gov.

**QUESTION:** How do I submit a Conference Report?

**ANSWER:** Conference Reports must be submitted with the same information from the final approved request. Reports must be submitted through the Conference Report email box at OVW.conferencereport@usdoj.gov, no more than 30 days after the last day of the event.

**QUESTION:** What are the most common errors on Conference Request forms?

**ANSWER:** The most common issues delaying OVW approval of conferences are:

- The form submitted is incomplete. Incomplete forms are returned to grantees through their OVW program assistants, and in some instances must re-start the entire review process.
  - What's a common missing item?
    - Funding Symbol
    - Box 24 does not also include the attendees from Box 20
    - Section J Attendee Duty Station is not completed
  - The number in Box 20 must always be included in the total in Box 24.
  - The indirect cost rate is applied incorrectly (i.e. applied to participant support cost); or not applied at all without an affirmative statement that you are foregoing indirect costs.
  - The form does not identify and justify the consultant/trainers, as requested on OVW Sheet B.
  - The form does not explain the role of your staff that will be in attendance on OVW Sheet B.
  - The form does not include a reasonable number of alternate facilities in section I: Facilities Considered; and/or there is insufficient explanation for not selecting a less expensive venue.
  - There has been a pattern of submitting requests within all thresholds; however, final reported conference expenses have routinely exceeded the caps.

**QUESTION:** What if the estimated costs that were approved change?

**ANSWER:** A change in the purpose, event title, major agenda changes, length, or the substantive focus of the event that causes the cost to increase by 10% or more, or causes the event to exceed one or more thresholds or $100,000 overall, must be re-submitted for approval prior to the event, and the full review process will start from the beginning.

A change in the location, or number of faculty, or number of estimated attendees requires approval of the OVW program specialist, conference administrator, and conference supervisor. This should take no longer than one week.

**QUESTION:** Lodging taxes are not included in the federal per diem rate, so do I need to include them on my conference request form?

**ANSWER:** Yes, estimated lodging taxes must be included on the conference request and reporting form even though they are not included in the federal per diem rate.
Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)

- **Question**: Why does OVW require that conference requests be submitted 90 days before I need to know if the event has been approved or denied? Does it really take that long?
  - **Answer**: OVW conference request review process is designed to ensure that all OVW-sponsored conferences are consistent with relevant statutes, regulations, and policies. To provide a thorough review, OVW’s process consists of several key personnel.

- **The first step is a “basic minimum requirements” (BMR) check that is performed by an OVW program assistant. These BMRs are a list of critical elements that must be completed and reviewed. These include, but are not limited to the dates and location of the conference, the topic and target audience, the need for any special accommodations or working meals, and the estimated number of attendees, including DOJ attendees.**

- **The requestor is assessed whether or not the conference is within the statutory scope of at least one of the OVW grant programs that support the underlying cooperative agreement. If more than one grant program supports the cooperative agreement, but the conference is not within the statutory scope of all supporting grant programs, the supervisor may confer with the OVW p.o.c. and the requesting agency to ensure that all supporting grant programs will benefit at some time from the cooperative agreement even if they will not benefit from this particular conference.**

- **Principal Deputy Director for final approval or denial. Events which exceed $100,000 or any of the established thresholds must also be forwarded to other DOJ officials for approval.**

- **Once a request has been uploaded into the Conference Request Database, the OVW staff person responsible for the event, typically an OVW program specialist, is notified that the event is pending.**

- **OVW uses this information to track reporting requirements. Additionally, the OVW TA2TA calendar is updated. This will allow us to strategize with you about possible mitigating steps. Failing to contact us could result in a denial of a request for funding.**

- **The dates of my approved conference needs to change. Does this change require OVW approval?**
  - Yes; as soon as you become aware of the date change you must notify your Program Specialist and the Conference Administrator (OVW.ConferenceRequest@usdoj.gov). OVW uses this information to track reporting requirements. Additionally, the OVW TA calendar must be updated.

- **Note:** OVW can deny a date change; dates that fall on federal holidays or conflict with a requirement for a specific event may be denied. Date changes are rarely denied.

- **The number of my approved estimated attendees needs to change.**
  - Please consult with your OVW Program Specialist as soon as you become aware of any change that may cause you to exceed a DOJ threshold. This will allow us to strategize with you about possible mitigating steps. Failing to contact us could result in a denial of a request for funding.

- **The location of my approved conference needs to change. Does this require OVW approval?**
  - Yes. Please contact your Program Specialist with the new location. OVW requires new information to determine if the change is allowable and must ensure that costs remain below established thresholds.

- **Once a request is in the OVW Grants Financial Management Division, the OVW conference administrator and Conference Supervisor begin the review process.**

- **The OVW conference request review process is designed to ensure that all OVW sponsored conferences are consistent with relevant statutes, regulations, and policies. To provide a thorough review, OVW’s process consists of several key personnel.**

- **The number of my approved estimated attendees needs to change.**
  - Once a request has been uploaded into the Conference Request Database, the OVW staff person responsible for the event, typically an OVW program specialist, is notified that the event is pending. Since conferences under the auspices of the conference policy require approval, there have been planned without OVW involvement outside the spirit of cooperative agreements.

- **Please consult with your OVW Program Specialist as soon as you become aware of any change that may exceed a DOJ threshold. This will allow us to strategize with you about possible mitigating steps. Failing to contact us could result in a denial of a request for funding.**

- **The location of my approved conference needs to change.**
  - Please contact your Program Specialist with the new location. OVW requires new information to determine if the change is allowable and must ensure that costs remain below established thresholds.