**Attendee Justification Toolkit
Virtual Alliance Annual Conference**

Now more than ever, organizations are limiting travel and continuing education budgets. We are here to help you develop a solid justification for attending year-round Alliance educational programming. Use the tools in this kit to convince the decision-makers that underwriting your participation in the Virtual Alliance Annual Conference is a smart investment in you and in your organization’s future.

**Focus on the Bottom Line**

When resources are tight, focus on the bottom line: costs vs. benefits. This worksheet will help you determine the full cost of attendance and identify the benefits. Determine the cost and customize the justification letter on the last page to draft a formal (and persuasive) request for funding.

Creative solutions can help you get your request approved. Consider these options:

* When you meet with your supervisor, inform them that you can conveniently access sessions on-demand following the live presentation. You will not need a colleague to cover your duties in your absence.
* Offer to prepare and deliver a short presentation and Q&A session for your colleagues to share what you learned during the virtual conference. This way, your coworkers will also benefit from your attendance.
* Share speaker handouts with your colleagues. As an attendee, you will have unlimited access to presenter materials that are easily downloadable.

Contact the Alliance staff if you need additional information or support when drafting your request.

**Step 1: Determine the Costs**

Before you can justify your expenses, you need to calculate what they will be. Use this worksheet to estimate the total cost of your attendance.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Expenses**  | **Cost** |
| **Full Alliance Experience RegistrationThe bundled package includes registration for the Virtual Alliance Annual Conference, Learning Labs and Alliance Connect.*** Members: $1,000
* Non-Members: $1,590
 | $ |
| **Virtual Alliance Annual Conference Includes registration for the Virtual 2021 Annual Conference and Learning Labs. The virtual conference will be held January 12-15, 2021.*** Members: $350
* Nonmembers: $600
 | $ |
| **Subtotal Per Person** | $ |
| **Total number of employees attending**  | $ |
| **Total Cost** | $ |

### Step 2: Outline the Benefits

When showcasing the benefits of the Virtual Alliance 2021 Annual Conference, focus specifically on what you will bring back to your organization as a return on their investment. Use the [schedule](http://www.acehp.org/p/cm/ld/fid%3D431) to answer these questions:

* Which sessions have particular relevance to the work you do?
* Which sessions can teach you a skill and/or help your team overcome current or future challenges?
* Are there any speakers your organization would benefit from hearing or working with?
* Which exhibiting companies will be demonstrating the tools you currently use or will likely use in the future?
* How can networking open doors for your organization? Could the people you meet help your department achieve its goals?
* What value could you get from discussions with other continuing healthcare education professionals?

When considering these questions, keep these tips in mind:

* List specific sessions you plan to attend and explain how they will impact you, your department, and your facility.
* Clearly make the connection between your organization’s needs and the benefits you are identifying.
* If the budget approver is outside of your department, don’t assume they understand your department’s goals or any technical terms. Spell out the impact for them.
* Passion is the best persuasion technique – let yours shine through in your letter or presentation.

**Step 3: Draft Your Justification Letter**

Below, you'll find a "justification letter" template — a letter to your decision-maker explaining all of the benefits of attending the Virtual Alliance 2021 Annual Conference, how it will advance your knowledge and skills as well as advance your organization.

This general template will get you started while allowing you to customize it to you and your organization's particular needs.

Dear **< approver’s name >**,

I would like your approval to attend a professional development event, the Virtual Alliance 2021 Annual Conference, hosted by the Alliance for Continuing Education in the Health Professions. This fully virtual event will take place January 12-15, 2021, and offers me the convenience to attend sessions throughout the day, but also view sessions on-demand following the live presentation. This virtual conference is the premier annual educational event for CPD in healthcare, connecting industry professionals for an innovative educational experience. It is tailored to continuing healthcare professional development professionals interested in gaining knowledge, advancing skillsets, and learning from others’ experiences.

The biggest difference between the Virtual Alliance 2021 Annual Conference and other conferences is that this enables me to learn how leaders are managing challenges and how new enterprise education solutions perform at their respective organizations. How great would it be for me to both further my professional development and advance our department and organization as a whole?

After carefully reviewing the virtual conference program, I have identified a number of key sessions that I would like to attend:

* Session 1 and how it will benefit you, your department, and your organization/facility
* Session 2 and how it will benefit you, your department, and your organization/facility
* Session 3 and how it will benefit you, your department, and your organization/facility

Getting great content through a virtual event will greatly reduce the research time and travel costs that <**your organization's name**> would normally be incurring around these topics and events.

In order to attend the conference and gain these benefits, I am seeking sponsorship of **< total amount you need >** for registration expenses:

Registration: **<$xxxx>**

The opportunity for me to develop a network of colleagues and to gain knowledge in specific areas makes my participation at the Virtual Alliance 2021 Annual Conference a wise investment that will yield rich dividends for our organization. I can also share any speaker handouts and information I learned with the rest of the department. Please let me know if you have any questions, or would like more information on the Virtual Alliance 2021 Annual Conference. I appreciate your approval for this virtual event.

Sincerely,