**Letter to Your Manager**

Dear <supervisor's name>,

I would like to attend the Western Museums Association (WMA) 2025 Annual Meeting, October 1-4, in Reno, NV. The conference will enable me to attend a number of educational sessions that are directly applicable to my work, and will allow me to network with a variety of museum experts and colleagues from around the West. Many of the presentations are tailored to specific <*Insert your primary function here i.e. curatorial, registrar, education, exhibit design, marketing, development, etc.*> functions, and at the same time would give me information on how to improve my <*insert benefits/lessons here, for example: reduce costs, expand educational programming, grant writing skills, develop collections, harness technology, etc.*> abilities. I am seeking support for the registration fee, travel and meal expenses during the meeting. I am also including at attached breakdown of costs and Return on Investment for my attendance at WMA 2025.

After reviewing the meeting program, I have identified a number of informative sessions that will allow me to gain knowledge and understanding about how we can improve our <*insert primary function*> processes. Both museum colleagues whom have faced similar challenges as well as industry experts will facilitate these presentations. I chose each of these presentations because they are directly related to issues the <*your department name*> department is currently dealing with. By sitting in on these sessions, I will be able to gather the information in a seminar format, which will subsequently reduce the research time and related costs that <*your organization’s name*> would normally incur during development phases.

Furthermore, I will be able to relay and teach my <*insert your primary function*> colleagues at <*your organization’s name*> new skills and information that I learned from these presentations. If you would like, I could also create a mini-presentation to share everything I will have learned at WMA 2025. *(Insert another option here if it would better suit your function within your institution)*

The opportunity for me to gain knowledge in <*your area of expertise*> and develop relationships and network with museum professionals makes my attendance at the WMA 2025 Annual Meeting is a wise investment that will yield rich ideas and benefits for <*name of your organization*>.

Sincerely,

<*Your name here*>

**Calculate the Return on Investment for Your Attendance at WMA 2025**

*Numbers in the table below will need to be adjusted to reflect the current pricing. The travel costs vary as well, and should be changed to reflect your costs.*

The full price conference fee is $450 (for WMA members), but can be reduced by $50 if I register before the early bird deadline on August 1, 2025.

Here is the breakdown of additional conference expenses:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Expense** | **Cost** |
| Conference Registration | $ |
| Pre-Conference Workshops, event attendance | Consult Program for costs, as specific costs for opportunities will vary |
| Transportation & Parking (flight, mileage reimbursement if you are driving, parking costs at hotel)  | $ |
| Transportation (airport to hotel, to events, while at conference, etc.) |  |
| Lodging\* | ~$135+Tax/night |
| Food Per Diem (See [IRS guidelines](http://gsa.gov/portal/category/21287%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) for conference locale rates. Remember, some events include meals and other refreshments) |  |
| **Total** |  |

\*Offer to search for colleagues you can share a hotel with, or find a less expensive hotel you can stay at during the conference proceedings.

Quantifying the benefits of your attendance at a conference can be a little trickier. It is often said that one of the main benefits of conference attendance is networking, even though this is the most difficult value to quantify. Therefore, you should focus on what you will specifically bring back from WMA 2025. List activities and take-aways that you will specifically bring back from WMA 2025:

* **Presentations** relevant to <*name of your organization*> that I plan on attending at WMA 2025:
	+ *Insert the session titles which most apply to your responsibilities.*
* **Exhibitors** relevant to <*name of your organization*> that I will visit include:
	+ *Will you be able to connect with vendors with items you use, or are evaluating for potential future use? Can you compare competing items? Are there any vendors that you can collect information for your colleagues?*
* **Training** gained from conference sessions and workshops.
	+ *Will any of the presentations or workshops be able to specifically help with or allow you to gain stills to deal with an existing challenge?*

You can also use this chart to help clearly articulate the connection between your museum’s needs and value of the conference proceedings.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Benefits to <*name of your organization*>** | **Specific Needs and the Specific Sessions and Resulting Training that Meet the Need** |
| Networking Benefits | *Learn about ideas and programs you weren’t aware of; network with colleagues and vendors in the museum world; understand the pulse of museums; learn about new technologies and tools* |
| Teambuilding (if you are going as a group) | *Discuss the future of your department in real time; discuss real changes; how to improve your department* |
| Current Tools |  |
| Future Tools Exploration |  |
| Current Technologies |  |
| Future Technologies |  |
| Current Processes |  |
| Future Processes Exploration |  |
| Relevant Exhibitors |  |