

Attendance Justification Toolkit

*Tips and tools to justify the value of attending the
2018 ACR/ARHP Annual Meeting*

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We want to support your attendance at the 2018 ACR/ARHP Annual Meeting by proving its value to your profession.

The world's largest rheumatology meeting is coming to Chicago, Illinois. This year's meeting will feature high-caliber selected abstracts, and you will get first-hand access to the latest innovations, science, and best practices that will transform rheumatic care delivery. The meeting will provide numerous opportunities to network with rheumatology professionals from over 100 countries.

But how do you share the value of the 2018 ACR/ARHP Annual Meeting with your supervisor to help justify your attendance?

This toolkit includes:

- General Tips
- Reasons Why Your Employer Should Send You to the 2018 ACR/ARHP Annual Meeting
- How to Justify Conference Attendance
- Tips to Help Maximize Your Time – Before, At, After the Meeting
- Sample Expense Worksheet
- Sample Cost Benefit Worksheet
- Sample Justification Letter

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General Tips

Things to consider that will help justify your travel and meeting expense:

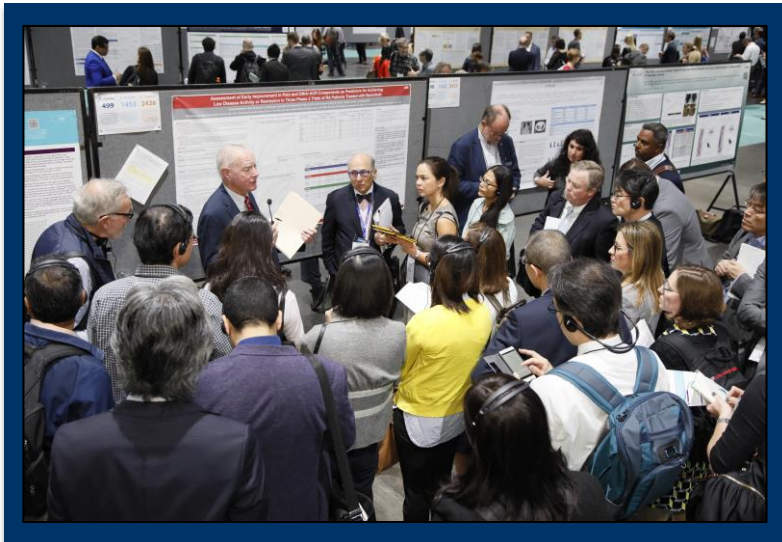
- Check out the registration page and determine the various rates listed and see if you qualify for any discounted rates. Be ready to present the exact amount.
- Focus on specific benefits/value that you will bring back to your office as a return on investment.
- Share your experience. Propose to deliver a short presentation to your colleagues to share what you learned and offer possible applications and recommendations relevant to your office/practice.
- Share relevant meeting materials to colleagues that will benefit from the handouts and other learning materials from the meeting.
- Prepare a plan that will show your supervisor who will cover for you and how your workload will be handled while you are attending the meeting.
- If you are interested in obtaining continuing education credits, remind your supervisor that the ACR/ARHP Annual Meeting is a great meeting to earn up to at least 50 hours.

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Reasons Why Your Employer Should Send You to the 2018 ACR/ARHP Annual Meeting

- The ACR/ARHP Annual Meeting brings together over 15,000 domestic and international participants from over 100 countries. You don't want to miss this gathering of rheumatology professionals and the opportunity to learn best practices from your colleagues.
- The meeting has something for everyone and offers a wide range of sessions to educate professionals in every segment of the field—clinicians, researchers and academicians, practice managers, fellows, and other health professionals. Educational tracks are available to help identify content targeted to your area of specialty and interest.
- Extensive learning opportunities with over 450 educational sessions to choose from and opportunity to earn at least 50 hours of continuing education credits. Get firsthand access to groundbreaking findings that will be revealed at the meeting, including 3,000+ abstract presentations, 70+ Meet the Professor sessions, and 30+ Workshops. The meeting offers diverse learning formats that foster knowledge exchange and sharing of best practices.
- Meet rheumatology experts and visionaries in person. Witness the brightest leaders in rheumatology sharing their latest research, techniques, and clinical applications. Over 700 speakers will participate from over 20 countries.
- Face-to-face networking opportunities. Rheumatology professionals from around the globe gather to share their knowledge and experience, allowing you to meet people that you can rely on for support and information. Professional relationships motivate and enhance your impact to your own organization, and the 2018 ACR/ARHP Annual Meeting will inspire collaboration and provide you with invaluable opportunities to make personal connections and build meaningful interactions.
- See the latest technology in rheumatology. The meeting brings together over 100 exhibiting companies, and the exhibit hall will showcase the very latest products and services for you to see, touch, and learn.

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How to Justify Conference Attendance

- ❖ It isn't an expense, it's an investment
- ❖ Return on Investment
 - How much benefit/profit will your organization make relative to the expense it will incur, if your organization sends you to the meeting?

Understand Your Conference Expenses

Complete an **Expense Worksheet** to develop a cost estimate for attending the 2018 ACR/ARHP Annual Meeting. See *sample worksheet (page 8)*.



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Tips to Help Maximize Your Time

Before the Meeting

- Make a checklist of all the sessions that you want to attend. Focus on specific benefits/value of attending these sessions and what you will bring back to your office as a return on investment.
- Prepare a plan that will show your supervisor how you intend to share with your colleagues knowledge and skills you learned from the meeting. Schedule a “lunch and learn” before you leave.
- Download the Annual Meeting App closer to the meeting and plan your schedule in advance. Search or browse sessions, and create a customized itinerary.

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Tips to Help Maximize Your Time *continued*

At the Meeting

- Visit the registration area to pick up a copy of the program to easily find your way around the convention center.
- Use the Annual Meeting App to search sessions and accepted abstracts.
- Attend the networking sessions and create personal connections for professional support.
- Visit the exhibit hall to network with colleagues and exhibitors.

After the Meeting

- Schedule time to review notes and materials collected and evaluate sessions while ideas are still fresh in your mind.
- Offer a recap of what you learned to your supervisor and co-workers.
- Actively follow up with colleagues and other professionals that you met.
- Access recordings of sessions you missed. As a registered attendee, enjoy online access to recorded sessions through ACR Beyond.

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Sample Expense Worksheet

Expense	Notes	Cost
Registration Fee (include any additional fees associated with courses or events you wish to attend)	Registration Fee includes: 1. Pre-meeting courses? 2. Early bird member registration fee? 3. Etc.	\$
Meeting Materials Fee (if any)	Books? Software?	\$
Airfare	Air mileage points available to offset airfare?	\$
Lodging	Number of nights; room rate; taxes	\$
Transportation Fees	Taxi/car rental/airport shuttle	\$
Mileage/Parking Reimbursement	Driving to conference or to the airport for your flight? Other modes of transportation?	\$
Food Per Diem	Refer to your company's policy on food per diem	\$
Miscellaneous reimbursable expenses	Tips, internet fees, etc.	\$
	SUBTOTAL	\$
Total number of employees attending		
	TOTAL	\$

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Understand and Identify the Benefits

List the most important benefits of attending the 2018 ACR/ARHP Annual Meeting, such as:

- Building strong rheumatology communities with people from across the globe.
- Earning continuing education credits.
- Enhancing competencies that will allow you to make changes to improve clinical or office practice and/or patient care delivery.
- Networking opportunities to enhance knowledge base and to form connections for professional support.
- Engaging with thought leaders in rheumatology and learning latest research findings.
- Sharing your gained knowledge with others in the workplace.



Clearly outline specific aspects of the meeting and why it would be beneficial for you and your team/organization.



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Sample Cost Benefit Worksheet

Your needs and/or organization's needs:	How the 2018 ACR/ARHP Annual Meeting will meet these needs:
Compliance with continuing education requirements.	Over 450 educational sessions to choose from that are categorized according to educational tracks. Credits earned from the meeting can be converted into European CME credits.
Stay current with public health issues and rare medical conditions affecting rheumatologists worldwide.	This year's opening lecture speaker will feature a patient. Be inspired as Jonathan Koch, a Hollywood executive producer, shares his medical and personal journey to recovery from a near fatal mystery illness that took his hands and feet in 2015. Doctors told him he had a 10% chance of survival with hours to live, but two years later, this successful Hollywood entertainment executive is able to operate a vehicle and play tennis.
Learn about new products and technologies.	Over 100 companies will be exhibiting to showcase the latest rheumatology products and services.
Education on latest research data on the many rheumatic diseases and potential complications that rheumatologists encounter.	<p>The following are examples of specific sessions for 2018:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated Classification Criteria for Large Vessel Vasculitis - present updated classification criteria for giant cell arteritis and Takayasu's arteritis. • The Missing Microbe: Lost from our Clinics – will cover emerging perspectives revealing the role of the microbiome in metabolic conditions and the dysbioses that underlie diverse conditions such as esophageal reflux and other inflammatory and autoimmune conditions. • Bones of Contention: Controversies in rheumatic diseases and bone – will discuss the activation of the immune system and its impact on bone rheumatic disease, as well as the role of biologic agents used to treat patients with rheumatic diseases. • Emerging Treatments for Osteoarthritis: Targeting Pain Vs Structure – address emerging therapies in OA. Speakers will focus on key aspects of OA structural changes and pain mechanism that may serve as targets for treatment, emerging treatments that target pain but not structure, and recent treatments that target structure and if they also improve pain. • Treating SLE in 2018 - Newly-proposed SLE treatment algorithms and guidelines will be discussed in this one hour state-of-the-art symposium on treating and managing SLE in 2018. • RA: Beyond Treat to Target – will review the current aspects of disease pathogenesis related to ACPA autoantibodies, assessment of clinical remission in RA, strategies, risks and benefits of reducing therapy in RA patients in remission. • ACR/EULAR Classification Criteria for IgG4-Related Disease (IgG4-RD) - A group of 80 international collaborators from North & South America, Europe, and Asia recently finished development of the ACR/EULAR Classification Criteria for IgG4-RD. Implications of the Classification Criteria for use in clinical trials will be discussed.
Hands-on training on the following: interpreting findings in biopsy reports; learning ultrasound scanning techniques; optimizing EHR	Over 30 workshops scheduled that will provide hands-on training utilizing microscopes, ultrasound machines, and computers.
Networking with peers.	Over 30 networking opportunities available, including study groups, opening reception, first-time attendee orientation, networking forum, etc.

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Sample Justification Letter

Explains the benefits you will get from attending the 2018 ACR/ARHP Annual Meeting and how the meeting will make you a better employee and help advance your team/organization.

Date _____

Dear (Supervisor's Name) _____,

I would like to request approval to attend the 2018 American College of Rheumatology/Association of Rheumatology Health Professionals Annual Meeting, to be held on October 19-24, 2018, in Chicago, IL.

The meeting 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 rheumatology experts and colleagues from around the world. My participation will allow me the opportunity to expand my knowledge and give me tools and resources to enhance my performance at _____.

After reviewing the program in detail, I have identified a listing of sessions that I feel are most relevant and would provide the most value to my professional growth at _____.

I am seeking support of my attendance to this meeting, which would include the registration fees, travel expenses and living expenses while at the meeting. A detailed cost breakdown is attached. I anticipate the total expense to be approximately \$_____.

The opportunity for me to enhance competencies and to establish connections with rheumatology experts makes my attendance at the 2018 ACR/ARHP Annual Meeting a very wise investment, and a benefit on both personal and professional levels.

Thank you for considering support of my attendance at the 2018 ACR/ARHP Annual Meeting.

Sincerely,



Save THE Date!

OCTOBER 19-24, 2018 • CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

**ACR/ARHP
Annual Meeting**

Chicago • 2018

Thank you for taking this opportunity to consider attending the 2018 ACR/ARHP Annual Meeting.

Plan your trip now and be part of this outstanding educational and professional networking event!