# Why Should I Attend? Here are 4 good reasons

**Relevance**. Choose from over 70 education sessions that address today’s most critical issues for parks and recreation, from staff training to revenue generation. Sessions are designed to ensure delegates can return to their organization ready to implement new ideas.

**92%** of delegates from 2018 indicated they will apply what they learned at the Forum in their everyday work.

**96%** of conference attendees rated the conference content as strong or very strong.

**98%** of conference attendees indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the event.

**Networking.** Where else can you meet face to face with over 400 leaders and influencers who are equally passionate about parks and recreation and eager to share their expertise with you? Networking at the PRO Forum is one of the mostly highly-rated experiences by delegates.

**Innovation.** Find new vendors and suppliers and see the latest innovations in park and recreation facilities, equipment and consulting services. It’s your chance to strike a sweet deal with a new vendor.

**Recharge.**  The PRO Forum will leave you energized, with a new suite of ideas, tools and resources in your back pocket, ready to be implemented when you return to your organization.

# Want to Attend? Here’s How to Convince Your Boss

We’re all under pressure to maximize budgets and use our time wisely. Attending the PRO Educational Forum and Trade Show is an investment, both in yourself and in the future of your programs. Here are some tips for making a case to attend:

1. **Review the education sessions.**Review the program in advance and share a list of the educational sessions you plan to attend, explaining how they support your goals. Encourage your supervisor to review the program and make suggestions of sessions that might be of particular interest to your organization as a whole.
2. **Share your experience.** Propose to deliver a short presentation upon your return to your colleagues to share what you learned and offer possible applications and recommendations relevant to your needs.
3. **List which vendors you will visit** at the Trade Show and how this will help your organization. Identify potential business opportunities that could develop from building connections.
4. **Prepare a plan** that will show your supervisors who will cover for you and how your workload will be handled while you are attending the conference.

**Expense Worksheet**

*“The 2018 PRO Forum was a fantastic week of learning, networking, and reinvigorating*

*my passion for Recreation. It is a fantastic opportunity to engage with like-minded individuals*

*to share innovations, tips, or even laugh about how we often all face similar challenges*

*within our roles. I can't wait for the 2019 PRO Forum!” – 2018 PRO Forum Delegate*

This worksheet will help you justify your expenses. Refer to the registration and hotel information and forms online or in the Conference brochure for details.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Expense**  | **Tips for Building the Case** | **Cost Estimate** |
| Conference Registration Fee  | Be aware of member discounts and early bird rates. If you aren’t a PRO member, consider joining to save up to $500 annually.  | $ |
| Extra fees (e.g. pre-conference sessions) | Most fees are covered in your registration, but if there is a pre-conference session, extra fees may apply. | $ |
| Hotel | Be sure you book using the PRO code for the best rate. Calculate the number of nights x Room Rate*Note: consider shared accommodations to save $$* | $ |
| Meals | Note which meals are included in your package, and which ones you will have to buy on your own.  | $ |
| Transportation | Use a mapping service to calculate travel distance and use your organization’s mileage reimbursement. Or, include costs for flights, parking, rental car, taxi, etc. | $ |
| Misc. reimbursable expenses  | Check your organization’s policy for other types of expenses you can claim (e.g. tips, internet fees, etc.) | $ |
| **Total** |  | **$** |

*"As an elected official, I always gain valuable insight into emerging trends, municipal best practices, and the challenges our staff face at this informative conference. Parks & Recreation programming have a direct impact on quality of place, and my constituents place a high value on these amenities.*

*I encourage other councilors with an interest in Parks & Recreation to attend!"*

*– 2018 PRO Forum Delegate*

# Sample Letter to Supervisor/Manager

Dear < supervisor’s name >,

I came across the [**2019 PRO Educational Forum and Trade Show**](https://www.prontario.org/training/proforum)**,** held March 26 – 29, 2019 in Collingwood, ON. This is Canada’s largest annual forum for parks, recreation, and leisure professionals, with more than 70 sessions, three inspiring keynote speakers and a trade show of over 60 leading-edge vendors. I am seeking approval for the registration fee, travel expenses and necessary meal expenses.

This is a great opportunity for me to learn from top industry leaders while growing professionally and to bring back innovative ideas and best practices to enhance our programs and services. In addition to the sessions, there will be many opportunities for me to meet and build relationships with recreation industry experts.

I have identified a number of sessions that will allow me to gain knowledge and new skills that will help me develop and contribute to our operations:

< Insert a few session titles and descriptions and describe how they will contribute to your development and the enhancement of the programs and services in your organization. >

Following the conference, I will share my learnings, takeaways and any recommendations inspired by the Conference with staff either in a presentation or report so that we can all benefit from this new knowledge.

The <early bird> <PRO Member> full conference registration fee is <$xxxx>. This price will increase after **February 1** and again on **February 26**. Registration provides full access to all educational sessions, keynotes, networking events and the trade show. Here is an overview of the cost for my attendance:

Conference Fees: <$xxxx>

Hotel: <$xxxx>

Meals: <$xxxx>

Transportation: <$xxxx>

Misc Fees: <$xxxx>

Total: <$xxxx>

I strongly believe that there is a high return on this investment for < our organization/name of organization >. The skills and knowledge I will acquire and the professional connections I will make will be valuable assets for our community.

Thank you for considering supporting my attendance at the 2019 PRO Educational Forum and Trade Show. If there is any further information you require, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

< your name here >