



HOW TO OBTAIN FUNDING TO ATTEND AN ACDA CONFERENCE

by the ACDA National Staff

This brief discussion outlines a general process for obtaining funding to attend a conference of the American Choral Directors Association.

Above All: Plan and Propose Well in Advance

First, study the direction of your sponsoring institution through stated mission and objectives. Even if the primary goal of your institution is cutting costs, by knowing this is the prime objective, you are closer to securing funding for the event by demonstrating how the conference will save your institution money.

The second step is to study the offerings of the conference well in advance. Write your request or proposal in terms of your institution's mission and objectives, and clearly demonstrate how your attendance at the conference will advance those objectives. If the primary goal of your institution is placed on financial cutbacks, choose interest sessions and multi-tasking opportunities that are built around saving money, and write your proposal in terms of attending those sessions.

Place a dollar value on the following conference offerings, and demonstrate the value of your chosen ACDA conference:

- Number of performances multiplied by your best conservative estimate of the cost of each performance if attending at your local concert hall: \$ _____
- Number of educational sessions (workshops, labs, masterclasses, demonstrations, interest sessions) you will attend, multiplied by your best conservative estimate of the cost of each seminar if attended separately: \$ _____
- Number of choral reading sessions you will attend and value of music packets received in each session if attended elsewhere: \$ _____
- If your institution is hiring and the conference can be used as a marketing resource for hiring, place a marketing value on the announcements, flyers, posters, etc., that you are able to circulate or distribute at the event: \$ _____
- If hiring, use the conference as a professional location to screen or interview potential candidates. Place a value on this opportunity: \$ _____
- Place a value on a consultation fee for buttonhole seminars or networking: \$ _____
- If the negotiated rate at the conference anchor hotel represents a savings in terms of basic rate, early registration, savings on ground transportation, and other discounts, be certain to point out the savings of money and time, and apply money to budget. Further, apply time saved in transportation by staying at conference

hotel to extended networking and conference opportunities afforded by NOT spending time getting from place to place: \$ _____

- If receptions are offered, place a monetary value on what those networking events are saving you in food and beverage costs: \$ _____
- If you are already an ACDA member, demonstrate the membership dues in terms of discount for attending the conference (applicable for all ACDA events as a benefit of membership): \$ _____
- If your institution sponsors an ACDA student chapter, contact the ACDA Division Leadership (Division Conference) or ACDA National Office (National Conference) for ways students can get involved in a conference as well as ways this involvement could save you and/or students money: \$ _____
- If you are open to sharing a room, create a list on an ACDA website forum, or on Facebook, requesting a possible roommate to share expenses: \$ _____
- If the conference is within reasonable driving distance, advertise early for a carpool or vanpool or even a chartered bus by a state chapter to the event, splitting travel expenses: \$ _____

Once the funding is secured, the following are ways to take full advantage of the conference toward making this the SINGLE travel or conference event that you have chosen:

- If hiring, or anticipate hiring, use the event to advertise, network, screen, or possibly interview candidates. If the conference does not formally make this possible, set this up in advance using the natural resources of any conference city.
- Most conference locations offer much more than the conference. Locate archives, museums, libraries, piano dealers, church or school programs, instrument dealers, mentors, or other resources that can be legitimately utilized during the trip. Choose one such destination offered uniquely by the conference city and multi-task your visit, doubling the value of your travel expenditure.
- Use the conference for continuing education units, certification, graduate credits, or other credentialing.
- Be certain to make a presentation back at your home institution that demonstrates the “take home” that you took away from the conference.
- Pass ideas and opportunities along to colleagues that were not able to attend the event. Rather than discarding music you could not use, find someone that CAN use that type of piece, program, or idea. Become a network for others who didn’t attend the conference.