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# Sample Letter: Request for Approval

Date

Dear <Manager>

I request your approval to attend the Ninth Annual Reconciliation in America National Symposium of the John Hope Franklin Center for Reconciliation for [Dates].

The conference theme is, “[Theme],” and it is the premier event for discussions of social equity, reconciliation, and related dialogue strategies to address social tensions in American communities. This year’s focus on the [Theme] will lend itself to conversations about (1) defining what reconciliation looks like in daily experiences, (2) what our individual roles are as agents of reconciliation, and (3) how to be peacemakers while not allowing ourselves to settle with “keeping the peace” in ways that perpetuate unjust, systemic wrongs. These topics align with my professional development to assist me in doing my job more effectively and be of assistance as our organization addresses such issues.

The conference features significant speakers, such as [list the ones who you want to highlight that align with your professional development goals]. [Explain how the speaker(s) will help you meet your goals. Provide specific items that you anticipate learning or doing.] Interacting with [Speaker(s)] and discussions about [their/his/her] work during this symposium will allow me to reformat and refocus various activities I currently use in my job to better understand and relate to underserved communities and needed allies.

Networking with colleagues across the nation will help me to learn from others and improve my own skills and knowledge about my field. I will also have the great opportunity to engage more deeply with my work, ask questions of others who are also doing the work, and develop informed practices to improve my success as a professional and my awareness of strategies to facilitate reconciliation within the work environment and community concerns. Upon my return, I plan to share my learning with my team and other staff as needed. I can do so by sharing session presentations, handouts, and written summaries.

Please check out the conference agenda: https://www.jhfnationalsymposium.org/agenda. The registration cost for the Symposium is (Early Bird Fee: $159.00; Regular Fee: $189.00), along with travel expenses and hotel. I also wish to participate in the Saturday Morning evening “Greenwood Bus Tour,” ($30.00/ticket) as it will be a great networking and learning opportunity. Right now, the cost to fly is only [\_\_\_\_\_]. Including hotel, I estimate the total cost to be [\_\_\_\_\_\_]. I can save on costs by booking my travel early and registering with the early-bird rates, so I look forward to your response.

I am confident you will see this as a worthwhile investment. It is an opportunity for me to network with social justice, race relations, and reconciliation dialogue experts, meet the motivational keynote speaker, attend valuable educational sessions and gain specific industry knowledge. My attendance at this conference is a wise investment and will pay off for years to come.

Sincerely,

[name]

Title

# Talking points

1. Explain specifically what you plan to learn by attending the conference and how that will benefit your peers and students.
2. In addition to your personal learning goals, here are other popular reasons to attend:
* Network with other education professionals experiencing similar challenges;
* Stay on top of best practices from leaders in the field;
* Small one-on-one learning experiences, even though at an international conference;
* Take new knowledge and understanding of the latest research back to your organization to make change; and
* Experience dynamic, interactive learning experiences that rejuvenate and refresh reconciliation agents at all levels.
1. Show how you will share the learning with your team and when you return.
* Share session presentations and handouts;
* Write summaries and analyses;
* Create a slideshow presentation or video;
* Develop poster presentations;
* Utilize technology that you learn about at the conference;
* Model learning strategies you discover;
* Volunteer to host mini workshops; or
* Plan sharing opportunities across grade levels, subject areas, and schools.
1. Be proactive
* Offer to share a room to reduce hotel expenses;
* Book your travel early; and
* Avoid the higher registration fee by taking advantage of the early-bird registration.

# Topics Covered

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| --- | --- |
| **Areas of focus**Social Equity/JusticeReconciliationHistory of Civil RightsTulsa Race Massacre 1921Facilitating Difficult ConversationsLeadershipResourcesStudent LearningEquityGlobal / Emerging Issues | **Other topics**Addressing change and resistanceAdult development and learningPersonal Learning Networks Continuous improvementCulturally responsive pedagogyEducator EffectivenessEquityFamily and community engagementFuture-ready learning Global perspectivesIntegrating student or teacher voiceLeadership development and skillsPartnerships and coalition buildingPolicy development and advocacy effortsUrban issues and settingsSTEM: Science, technology, engineering, and mathPresentation and facilitation skills |

# Benefits to districts and organizations

Effective professional learning remains the single most powerful investment a district/organization can make for improving educator/employee effectiveness to increase student/employee achievement.

The conference offers leaders

* Connections;
* Tools;
* Learning opportunities; and
* Resources needed to design, implement, and measure high-quality professional learning for educator, staff, and student success.

# Registration Fees

