

Review of Conference Policies

Context: The Mission Support Council met on December 12, 2018 and evaluated the recommendations of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) to relax NASA-imposed conference restrictions. Specifically, the OCFO suggested the elimination of the NASA Conference Tracking System (NCTS) registration and approval process for non NASA-sponsored domestically held conferences. The suggested change continues to support: Mission critical operations regarding conferences as appropriate, and Agency compliance with limitations and cost controls.

NASA conference regulations flow down, in part, from Budget Control Act of 2011, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (PL115-141), and relevant OMB memos such as OMB M-17-08 and OMB M-13-05 and are outlined in NPR 9770.1. The Agency has two approval process thresholds: \$20k and above for sponsored conferences and \$90k and above for non-sponsored conferences. If either of these thresholds are met, a NF 1784 is required. Depending on the level of spend, required approvals begin at the OIC level and proceed through the OCFO.

Currently, NASA-sponsored and non NASA-Sponsored conferences require NCTS registration and approval. Post-conference information is collected in NCTS and used to identify and summarize the costs of an individual conference. (The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, requires NASA to provide additional information to NASA's OIG for NASA-sponsored conferences costing more than \$20,000 within 15 days after the conclusion of the event. This information is provided using estimated data from NCTS.) OMB M-17-08 only requires oversight and reporting for conferences that are Federally-sponsored and Federally-hosted. Therefore, the requirement of registering and approving attendance for non NASA-sponsored conferences may be adjusted. As an agency, we will continue to exercise appropriate stewardship of taxpayer dollars via travel authorization and SATERN process internal controls and supervisory approvals and accountability. Any cases of abuse will be reviewed by the DAA for appropriate consequences.

This policy change has been briefed to senior leadership including:

Associate Administrator, Steve Jurczyk
Deputy Associate Administrator, Melanie Saunders
Chief of Staff; Tom Cremins
Chief Financial Officer: Jeff DeWit
Deputy Chief Financial Officer (Finance); Joseph McIntyre
Deputy Chief Financial Officer (Budget); Andrew Hunter
Center Chief and Deputy Chief Financial Officers
Conference POC Community

Decision:

The OCFO will eliminate the NASA Conference Tracking System registration and approval process for non NASA-sponsored domestically held conferences effective January 7, 2019.

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Signatures represent concurrence that this decision was reached in compliance with Mission Support Council procedures, and ownership of amplifying comments relative to the decision.

Decision execution accountability

Jeff DeWitt, AA OCFO

Accountable for:

Oversight for the Office of Chief Financial Officer implementation of the decisions in this memo with regards to OCFO.

Execution milestone

Milestone Date

Responsible Party

Create communication plan to disseminate change to Agency.

March 2019

Joe McIntyre, Deputy CFO

Modify NPR 9770.1, *NASA Conference Approval and Reporting*, to reflect change in requirement.

February 2019

Joe McIntyre, Deputy CFO

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Decider: (b) (6)	
M. Saunders, MSC Chair	

Signatures represent concurrence that this decision was reached in compliance with Mission Support Council procedures, ownership of amplifying comments and joint council key stakeholders relative to the topic.

Signature	Amplifying Comments	Signature	Amplifying Comments
(b) (6) S. Jurczyk, AA			
(b) (6) J. DeWit, OCFO			
(b) (6) D. Tenney, AA MSD			
(b) (6) T. Wilcutt, OSMA			
(b) (6) R. Wynn, OSIO			