



ATTENDANCE JUSTIFICATION

ABOUT WEFTEC CONNECT

WEFTEC Connect will be a unique virtual event that uses the latest online learning platform to create an immersive experience for attendees. It is being carefully shaped to be responsive to feedback gathered from water professionals on preferred education and participation options. This online learning platform will enable water professionals worldwide to learn and share with peers no matter their location. WEFTEC Connect will provide hundreds of hours of live and recorded content that can be used for professional development credits.

GENERAL TIPS

WEFTEC Connect attendees will have access to a mixture of real-time, interactive, scheduled learning events, more than 400 On-Demand technical presentations, and many different opportunities to network with each other, presenters, and exhibitors.

Where else can you find so many water sector professionals facing the same issues as your organization? Are there solutions you are not aware of? Here are several tips to guide you in your request for approval to attend WEFTEC Connect:

JUSTIFY THE EXPENSE

- ◆ **SAVINGS.** WEFTEC Connect is VIRTUAL! This means there are no transportation or lodging costs associated with the conference. *Instead of spending thousands of dollars on room and board, on-site meals, transportation, and travel time, you are only paying for the cost of access, which as a WEF YP member, is \$210!*
- ◆ **NETWORKING!** We may not be able to interact face to face this year, but fear not! WEFTEC Connect is jam-packed with opportunities to connect, engage, and network with clients, colleagues, attendees, exhibitors, and friends. On top of that, each day we have something special planned to provide some fun and social time to gather with friends and colleagues.
 - A-I Enabled Matchmaking
 - Connect 1-on-1 with Exhibitors
 - Virtual Meeting Rooms that YOU Create
 - Focus Area Chats
 - Networking Roundtables
- ◆ Just like in-person conferences, virtual conferences give you the opportunity to practice critical skills for career development. **Work on your virtual presentation skills in**

networking meetings with colleagues. Hone your writing skills as you virtually chat with session speakers and exhibitors.

- ◆ **Focus on the knowledge, information, and new contacts** you will bring back to your organization and team as a return on the initial investment.
- ◆ Offer to deliver a short presentation and Q&A session to the other young professionals or your supervisors regarding your experience and all that you have learned.
- ◆ Remind your supervisor that WEFTEC Connect is virtual, **so it is the most effective in terms of time and cost for the opportunity to brainstorm ideas and challenges facing the industry** and learn how you can contribute by being a more sound technical, well rounded leader in your field.
- ◆ **Be ready with a plan that shows who will help cover your workload while attending the WEFTEC Connect.** The good news is that there is no travel time associated with WEFTEC Connect! You will have access to on-demand content for a full year following WEFTEC Connect to view sessions they missed during the live event. If your position requires PDHs (Professional Development Hours), attending WEFTEC Connect is a good way to help you reach your annual education goal.

THE DETAILS

- ◆ Session Content:
 - Identify specific sessions that are relevant to your organizations work, or a project you are going to be working on in the future, or maybe even a topic that you are looking to explore as a part of your career path.
- ◆ Building Your Network:
 - There are young professionals in varied jobs that all contribute to the water sector and attend WEFTEC to grow their network. These can vary from vendors, municipal employees, and engineering consultants, to finance consultants, research agency, and permitting agency representatives.
 - **This is an international event;** there will be opportunities to network with other water professionals and young professionals from all over the world, each with their own unique challenges.
 - Ensure that you will utilize your time to **build this network with people who are potential clients, sub-contractors, and consultants to your future projects.**
- ◆ Best Practices:
 - Highlight all the pertinent sessions that your team/organization could benefit from through your attendance.
 - Emphasize relevant sessions and workshops designed to teach specific technical or soft skills that will assist you in being a better team player and future leader.
 - Research the benefits of attending WEFTEC Connect and emphasize the significant savings your organization will receive. Be sure to add them to the Benefits Worksheet and the letter to your supervisor.

Expenses Worksheet

Use the worksheet below to develop a cost estimate for attending WEFTEC Connect. For more information, refer to the [WEFTEC Connect main page](#).

Expense	Guideline	Cost																																													
WEFTEC Connect Registration	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="font-size: small;">Prices are listed in U.S. Dollars</td> <td colspan="2" style="background-color: #d9e1f2; text-align: center;">Full Access</td> <td colspan="2" style="background-color: #d9ead3; text-align: center;">Exhibitor Showcase Only</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="font-size: x-small; text-align: center;">Super Saver By August 28</td> <td style="font-size: x-small; text-align: center;">Standard On & after August 28</td> <td style="font-size: x-small; text-align: center;">Super Saver By August 28</td> <td style="font-size: x-small; text-align: center;">Standard On & After August 28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Member</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$299</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$399</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$30</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Young Professional Member</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$159</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$210</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$30</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student Member</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Free</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Free</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Free</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Free</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5" style="font-size: x-small;">WEF membership required.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Non-member</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$399</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$499</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$60</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student Non-member*</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$75</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$150</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$60</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$60</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5" style="font-size: x-small;">*Proof of student status required.</td> </tr> </table>	Prices are listed in U.S. Dollars	Full Access		Exhibitor Showcase Only			Super Saver By August 28	Standard On & after August 28	Super Saver By August 28	Standard On & After August 28	Member	\$299	\$399	\$30	\$30	Young Professional Member	\$159	\$210	\$30	\$30	Student Member	Free	Free	Free	Free	WEF membership required.					Non-member	\$399	\$499	\$60	\$60	Student Non-member*	\$75	\$150	\$60	\$60	*Proof of student status required.					\$
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Networking Events	<i>Tuesday Trivia Night, \$25</i>	\$																																													
Lodging	<i>N/A</i>	\$																																													
Mileage Reimbursement	<i>N/A</i>	\$																																													
Flight	<i>N/A</i>	\$																																													
Transportation <i>(Airport to Hotel)</i>	<i>N/A</i>	\$																																													
Parking Reimbursement	<i>N/A</i>	\$																																													
Food Per Diem	<i>N/A</i>	\$																																													
Total Expenses:		\$																																													

Benefits Worksheet

<p>Powerful networking opportunities: People that can save us money</p>	<p><u>UTILITY CONTACTS</u>: I will find other utilities facing the same problems we face and will develop contacts who can share their knowledge of cost-effective solutions, so that I can learn from their mistakes and benefit from their successes.</p>
	<p><u>VENDOR CONTACTS</u>: I will virtually meet vendors who know our processes and how they can be cost-effectively improved, including new technologies that can save us money in the long term.</p>
	<p><u>SUPPORT CONTACTS</u>: Government officials and engineers that know which technologies qualify for grant funding and how to obtain it.</p>
	<p><u>REGULATORY CONTACTS</u>: Agency reps that can help us clarify and understand our regulatory requirements so that we remain current on compliance issues.</p>
<p>Find solutions to our current problems (regulatory issues, equipment issues, management issues, customer service issues, process issues, etc.)</p>	Issue 1:
	Issue 2:
	Issue 3:
	Issue 4:
<p>Find ways to do more with what we already have</p>	<p>I will virtually meet with clients, vendors and operators that know our processes well and can give us insights into how we can deliver better performance, using equipment we currently use,</p>
<p>Find new technologies we should be studying now</p>	<p>I will see where the industry is heading, and which innovations are making it much more cost-effective to operate our processes.</p>
<p>Cross-training - Provide opportunities for others to learn my job and take on more responsibility</p>	<p>I plan to have _____ cover my duties while I am attending WEFTEC Connect. I will have this person ready to assume these duties before the week of WEFTEC Connect, will meet with them for a debrief upon my return and will provide counselling/feedback/coaching for this person with written reports for supervisor's use and for their personnel file.</p>
<p>Staff presentations to "Share the Information" gained from WEFTEC Connect</p>	<p><u>SUPERVISOR'S REPORT</u>: I will prepare and submit a written report to my manager of my findings and of the short term and long-term action items that result from what I learned and connections I made at WEFTEC Connect.</p>
	<p><u>STAFF BRIEFINGS</u>: I will prepare and deliver a staff briefing of my findings so that others may benefit from what I learned at WEFTEC Connect.</p>
	<p><u>TRAINING ASSISTANCE</u>: I will help others learn how to effectively attend a major virtual event like WEFTEC Connect and deliver the maximum benefit to the organization upon their return.</p>

Elevator Pitch

- ◆ There are no transportation or lodging costs associated with the conference which means it is the most effective in terms of time and cost for the opportunity to brainstorm ideas and challenges facing the industry.
- ◆ Opportunities to connect, engage and network with clients, colleagues, attendees, exhibitors, and friends include: A-I Enabled Matchmaking, 1-on-1 Connection with Exhibitors, Virtual Meeting Rooms, Focus Area Chats and Networking Roundtables.
- ◆ Improve virtual communication and presentation skills in networking meetings with colleagues. Hone your writing skills as you virtually chat with session speakers and exhibitors.
- ◆ Bring back knowledge, information and new contacts to your organization and team as a return on the initial investment. Build your network with people who are potential clients, sub-contractors, and consultants to your future projects.
- ◆ You will have access to on-demand content for a full year following WEFTEC Connect.
- ◆ This is an international event; there will be opportunities to network with other water professionals and young professionals from all over the world, each with their own unique challenges.

Sample Letter

After you have identified the specific advantages of attending WEFTEC Connect, provide both the expenses and benefits for your manager to realize and approve the value of your proposition. Below is a sample letter that you can use as a template for your proposition.

< Date >

Dear < supervisor's name > ,

I would like to attend WEFTEC Connect being held virtually October 5 – 9, 2020. The conference will enable me to attend technical sessions that are directly applicable to my work, improve my virtual communication skills, and allow me to network with a variety of water industry experts and colleagues from around the world. This virtual format will provide me a unique opportunity to access educational content for a full year following WEFTEC Connect as well as to search profiles and make 1:1 connections based on shared interests and experience.

Many of the presentations are tailored to the < your specific profession > water professional and give information on how to < list benefits to your responsibilities >. I am seeking approval for the cost of access, networking trivia fee, and time off to attend this event. There are no other transportation or lodging costs associated with the conference, which is a huge savings compared to other years. A detailed cost breakdown is included below.

WEFTEC Connect is offering five days of interaction and live events, plus access to more than 400 on-demand presentations for a full year. After reviewing the WEFTEC Connect Schedule, I have identified various exhibitor booths I would like to visit, clients I would like to connect with, sessions I would like to attend, networking events to increase engagement within WEF and the sector, and methods that will

allow me to gain knowledge and understanding on how we can improve my skill set. The presentations are all facilitated by industry experts who have faced similar challenges. The sessions I chose to attend are directly related to <an issue> we are dealing with currently. Getting the information in a presentation format will greatly reduce the research time and costs that < your organization's name > would normally incur in gaining insight into these topics.

< You will need to insert the session titles and descriptions which most apply to your responsibilities. >

The WEFTEC Connect registration fee is <\$xxxx>.

< You will need to insert your travel cost numbers in here >

Here is the breakdown of conference costs:

Networking Events: <\$xxxx>

Roundtrip Airfare: N/A

Transportation: N/A

Hotel: N/A

Meals: N/A

The total costs associated with attending this conference are <\$xxxx>.

The opportunity for me to develop better contacts and gain knowledge in specific areas of the water sector makes my attendance at WEFTEC Connect a wise investment, which will yield rich dividends for < name of your organization>.

Sincerely,

< your name here >