How to convince your supervisor to support your
AOCS Annual Meeting experience

You know the annual meeting will help you reach your professional goals, but you are not sure how to demonstrate to your supervisor that investing in your annual meeting experience is an investment for your organization as well. AOCS has three steps to help you secure the funding you need to join your colleagues in Montréal in 2020.

Step 1: Build a meeting agenda for yourself.

Identify the technical sessions, Hot Topic Symposia, and networking activities that you plan to attend. If you are member of an AOCS Common Interest Group, Division or Section, the group’s activities are quality ways for you to network with those of like-minded interests and learn how you can develop leadership capabilities that you can bring back to your organization.

Short courses are an excellent way to build specific expertise in a focused environment. You can maximize your travel expenditure by attending a short course before the meeting.

Step 2: Connect the investment.

The “Why?” is the most important part of your pitch: connect how your knowledge building and networking will not only provide personal growth but also a solid return on investment for your supervisor, team and larger organization. You can do this by connecting titles and content of sessions, symposia, and short courses to your current and future tasks and project goals.

Consider answers to the following questions:

- How will the annual meeting expand your technical knowledge, business knowledge or both?
- What knowledge will you bring back to your organization and share with colleagues?
- What networking opportunities will allow you to build global contacts in your respective industry(ies)?

Bring your answers, along with your personalized agenda, to an in-person conversation with your supervisor or use them to complete the email template on page 3.
Specifics for government and academic attendees to include in their pitches

- **Meeting with working groups, committees or both:** The annual meeting provides a forum for working groups and committees to convene amid the latest research updates and eliminate travel expenses for a separate meeting.

- **Learn about future funding opportunities:** The annual meeting provides networking events that foster academia and industry collaboration.

- **Provide students and young professionals with early career development:** Students can gain input on their research by presenting, network with fellow students and potential future employers, and learn about the latest research and technology in their field(s) of interest. The “Career Catalyst: Speed Networking to Create New Professional Bonds” session is a good investment for those just starting their careers.

**Step 3: Discuss the meeting with your supervisor sooner rather than later.**

As soon as you have completed Steps 1 and 2, meet with your supervisor or send him or her your tailored version of the email template on page 3.

Registering by February 28 can save you up to US $100 off registration, in addition to allowing you to reserve the lowest hotel and airfare costs by making plans early, all of which reduce the cost to your organization. If you are not an AOCS member, consider adding membership to your registration to save up to US $200 off registration and to stay connected to AOCS colleagues and resources.

Internal approval processes can take a long time, too; starting early means you do not have to pressure your supervisor or others into pushing necessary forms or emails through your organization’s approval process, if it has one.

**Additional funding information for AOCS members**

Members of the AOCS European Section, Industrial Oil Products Division, Lipid Oxidation and Quality Division, and Protein and Co-Products Division should visit their Section and/or Division’s webpages for information on funding opportunities. For graduate students, the Smouse Fellowship consists of a pair of inscribed bookends, a US $10,000 stipend, up to US $5,000 in research and travel funds, and an award lecture at the Annual Meeting; applications are due to AOCS Headquarters by February 1, 2020.
Email Template

Dear [name],

The 2020 AOCS Annual Meeting & Expo is a premier international science and business forum on fats, oils, surfactants, and proteins. Attending this conference will help me build knowledge and expand my network in [your area of expertise].

I have identified three specific areas where my attendance will provide the greatest return on investment, which I have estimated in the table below.

- Session/symposia/short course title
  - [Personalized description connecting title and/or content to your current or future tasks, projects or both.]
- Session/symposia/short course title
  - [Personalized description connecting title and/or content to your current or future tasks, projects or both.]
- Session/symposia/short course title
  - [Personalized description connecting title and/or content to your current or future tasks, projects or both.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>Cost (US $)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short course [only include if you plan on attending one]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airfare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals</td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
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I welcome the opportunity to meet with you and further discuss how attending this meeting will benefit my professional development as well as our team.

Sincerely,

[Your name]