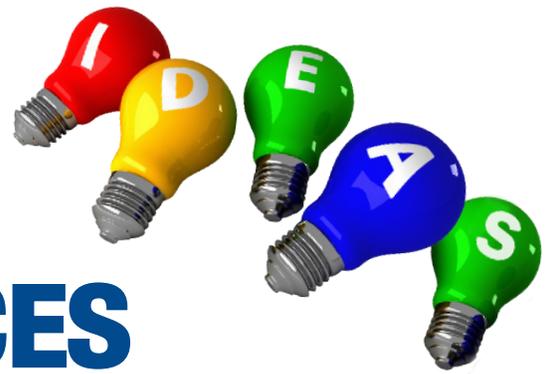


# 10 WAYS TO MAXIMIZE ROI FROM CONFERENCES



- 1. Submit a proposal.** Speaking at conferences increases visibility, strengthens your resume/CV, and, sometimes, helps motivate you to complete stalled writing/research projects. Proposal deadlines are typically months before the conference, so check early.
- 2. Seek funding.** Consider all potential sources of funding, including professional development or training allowances from your employer, travel expense reimbursement, conference bursaries, research grants, and even draws for free registrations.
- 3. Register early.** Most conferences offer discounts for “early bird” registrations and travel expenses may be significantly lower if booked in advance.
- 4. Reduce costs.** With limited budgets, small cost savings can make a big difference. Reach out to conference organizers to enquire about volunteer opportunities, use social media, or find other attendees to share a cab, hotel room, or Air BNB with or to carpool. If you don’t need to fly, use discount sites to compare hotel rates and air fares, and use free Wi-Fi in hotel lobbies or coffee shops rather than paying for access in your room. Combined you could save hundreds of dollars.
- 5. Check the program.** As soon as the preliminary program is available, start making lists of what key events and sessions you’d like to attend and who you’d like to connect with.
- 6. Schedule meetings.** Be strategic. Conferences offer a unique opportunity for in-person connections, strengthening relationships with colleagues from other regions. Reach out to set specific times to connect rather than counting on chance encounters.
- 7. Integrate local activities.** If you have travelled to get to a conference, consider other personal or professional tasks to accomplish in the region whether for business development, reconnecting with family, or just being a tourist and visiting local sights.
- 8. Attend relevant sessions.** Set learning goals and read session descriptions to find the best fit rather than attending the most popular sessions. Consider attending a few innovative sessions that may stretch your thinking or shift your perspective.
- 9. Share what you learn.** Extend your learning by discussing it with others in breaks between sessions and with colleagues once you’re back home. Consider offering a webinar, hosting a lunch ‘n’ learn session, or writing a blog about your key takeaways.
- 10. Follow-up.** Take action on the business cards you collected, commitments you’ve made, and brilliant ideas that you brainstormed. Often the best ROI from a conference can only be measured long after the final keynote!

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