



#AclaraConnect Justification Kit



GENERAL TIPS: JUSTIFY THE EXPENSE

1. Focus on the knowledge and information you will bring back to your team and the organization as return on the initial investment.
2. Offer to deliver a short presentation and Q&A session to your colleagues regarding your AclaraConnect experience and all that you have learned.
3. Remind your supervisor that AclaraConnect offers the most convenient and cost-effective opportunity to brainstorm ideas and challenges facing the industry, a variety of professional sessions to help solve those challenges, and even earn certifications.
4. Be ready with a plan that shows who will help cover your workload while you are attending AclaraConnect.
5. Register early and reserve your hotel accommodations **by March 20, 2019**, to receive best registration rates.

SOME SPECIFIC DETAILS YOU'LL NEED TO IDENTIFY

- **Session Content:** Identify specific sessions that are relevant to your organization's work.
- **Vendor Contacts:** Identify specific exhibitors and tools being showcased at AclaraConnect 2019 that your organization either currently uses or would like to evaluate using.
- **Products and Services:** Highlight the fact that the most relevant and innovative technologies and ideas in the water industry will all be offered at AclaraConnect 2019.
- **Best Practices:** Spotlight all the pertinent training sessions from which your group will immediately benefit.
- **Training:** Emphasize the Knowledge Center designed to give hands-on assistance to you and your team solving problems on the spot. And don't miss out on the certification and training courses offered.

Conference expenses are affected by several factors. Before you can even begin to justify your expenses, you need to calculate what those expenses are. Use the worksheet below to develop a cost estimate for attending AclaraConnect 2019. Refer to the registration and hotel information or the conference announcement for details.

EXPENSE	GUIDELINE	COST
Conference Registration	Full-Conference (meals, sessions, off-site event and more included) Early Bird rate/ Regular rate - after March 20, 2019	\$795/\$995
Certification Program	Optional: Meter School Training	\$
Flight	Try an online travel service to get a quick estimate.	\$
Lodging	AclaraConnect's special rate is \$269/night at the Fairmont, Austin	\$
Transportation: Airport to Hotel	Taxi, shuttle, rental car, etc.	\$
Transportation: Hotel to Airport	Taxi, shuttle, rental car, etc.	\$
Mileage Reimbursement	Driving to conference or to the airport for your flight? Use an online mapping tool to calculate distances, then multiply miles by 54.5 cents per mile. (IRS standard for 2018)	\$
Parking Reimbursement	Airport parking for flight departure, or at location where conference is located (convention center or hotel).	\$
Food Per Diem	*Remember your meals are covered starting Monday night through Thursday's lunch.	\$
Total	\$	

Although you might understand the benefits of attending AclaraConnect, your manager may not. To be most effective in justifying the conference, you need to clearly articulate the connection between your organization’s knowledge requirements and the conference program. DO NOT assume your manager will be able to automatically make those distinctions.

To support this process, use the worksheet below to help you focus on the benefits. Use whatever makes sense for your situation and organization and omit the rest.

YOUR ORGANIZATION’S BENEFITS	SPECIFIC NEEDS AND THE CONFERENCE SESSIONS
Networking Benefits	Example: AclaraConnect 2019 will allow ___to network with other professionals and exhibitors in the industry. We will be able to take the pulse of what is happening for tools, technologies, and processes and hear ideas we may not have considered.
Team Building (if sending a big part of your group)	Example: This conference will help motivate our team, providing a forum for team members to discuss tools and technologies, and how we might apply them in our company to improve our information, products, workflow, and processes.
Current Tools	Example: We are currently using Aclara’s MTU’s and I can learn how to optimize this tool more effectively by the sessions at AclaraConnect 2019.
Future Tools Exploration	Example: Aclara will be unveiling new products and solutions at AclaraConnect and I can learn more about how they will benefit us.
Current Technologies	Example: We are currently using AclaraONE and I can learn how to optimize this tool more effectively by the sessions at AclaraConnect 2019.
Future Technologies Exploration	Example: Important updates and new technologies will be featured in the sessions at AclaraConnect 2019. Getting to see this firsthand will help us stay on the forefront of our industry.
Current Processes	Example: Important updates and new technologies will be featured in the sessions at AclaraConnect 2019. Getting to see this firsthand will help us stay on the forefront of our industry.
Future Processes Exploration	Example: At AclaraConnect I’ll be able to connect with experts who can help us solve the problem___ face to face.
Vendors With Tools & Technologies You Are Exploring	Example: As we are exploring new tools and/or technologies to help us grow, AclaraConnect will provide access to a number of vendors who offer integrated options.

After you have identified the specific educational advantages of attending the conference, provide both the expenses and benefits for your manager to realize and approve the value of your proposition.

Sell your conference proposition!

Sample Letter 1: Basic

LETTER TO MANAGER

<Date>

Dear <supervisor's name>,

I would like to attend Aclara's Annual Conference & Exposition, AclaraConnect 2019, being held in Austin, Texas, May 20-23, 2019. The conference will enable me to attend several professional sessions directly applicable to my work and will allow me to network with a variety of industry experts and colleagues from around the world. Many of their presentations are tailored to the <your specific profession> professional and give information on how to <list benefits to your responsibilities>.

After reviewing the AclaraConnect 2019 program, I have identified a number of professional sessions that will allow me to gain knowledge and understanding about how we can improve our operations. The presentations are all facilitated by industry experts who have faced similar challenges. This is a valuable training opportunity to advance my skills, improve efficiency in my position, and transfer knowledge back to my team. By attending, I can transform our organization's challenges into solutions that can help <organization's name> reduce costs and continue to provide the best service to our customers.

<INSERT A SAMPLE SELECTION OF SESSIONS YOU WANT TO ATTEND>

Here is the breakdown of conference costs:

Conference Fee:	\$795 (Early bird rate) \$995 (regular rate)
Round-trip Airfare:	<\$XXXX>
Transportation:	<\$XXXX>
Hotel:	<\$XXXX>
Meals:	<\$XXXX>

The total estimated cost associated with attending this conference is <\$XXXX> (if registered before March 20, 2019).

Again, the opportunity for me to develop better contacts and gain knowledge in specific areas of our industry makes my attendance at AclaraConnect 2019 a wise investment for <organization's name>. Feel

free to view the conference agenda at www.aclaraconnect.com/agenda. I look forward to your approval.

Sincerely,
<your name>



Sample Letter 2: Best Value

LETTER TO MANAGER

<Date>

Dear <supervisor's name>,

I would like to attend Aclara's Annual Conference & Exposition, AclaraConnect 2019, being held in Austin, Texas, May 20-23, 2019. The conference will enable me to attend several professional sessions directly applicable to my work and will allow me to network with a variety of industry experts and colleagues from around the world. Many of their presentations are tailored to the <your specific profession> professional and give information on how to <list benefits to your responsibilities>.

After reviewing the AclaraConnect 2019 program, I have identified a number of professional sessions that will allow me to gain knowledge and understanding about how we can improve our operations. The presentations are all facilitated by industry experts who have faced similar challenges. This is a valuable training opportunity to advance my skills, improve efficiency in my position, and transfer knowledge back to my team. By attending, I can transform our organization's challenges into solutions that can help <organization's name> reduce costs and continue to provide the best service to our customers.

<INSERT A SAMPLE SELECTION OF SESSIONS YOU WANT TO ATTEND>

Here is the breakdown of conference costs:

Full-conference:	\$795 (Early bird rate) \$995 (regular rate)
Roundtrip Airfare:	<\$XXXX>
Transportation:	<\$XXXX>
Hotel:	<\$XXXX>
Meals:	<\$XXXX>

The total estimated cost associated with attending this conference is <\$XXXX> (if registered before March 20, 2019).

I can attend the entire professional program and devote time to networking, plus my registration fee includes access to AclaraConnect session materials even after the conference.

Again, the opportunity for me to develop better contacts and gain knowledge in specific areas of the water

industry makes my attendance at AclaraConnect 2019 a wise investment for **<organization's name>**. Feel free to view the conference agenda at aclaraconnect.com/agenda. I look forward to your approval.

Sincerely,

<your name>



Sample Letter 3: Field Operator Full-Conference

LETTER TO MANAGER

<Date>

Dear **<supervisor's name>**,

I would like to attend Aclara's Annual Conference & Exposition, AclaraConnect 2019, being held in Austin, Texas, May 20-23, 2019. The conference will enable me to attend several professional sessions directly applicable to my work and will allow me to network with a variety of industry experts and colleagues from around the world.

After reviewing the AclaraConnect 19 program, I have identified a number of professional sessions that will allow me to gain knowledge and understanding about how we can improve our operations. The presentations are all facilitated by industry experts who have faced similar challenges. This is a valuable training opportunity to advance my skills, improve efficiency in my position, and transfer knowledge back to my team. By attending, I can transform our organization's challenges into solutions that can help **<organization's name>** reduce costs and continue to provide the best service to our customers.

AclaraConnect 2019 will feature sessions like these, plus more!

<INSERT A SAMPLE SELECTION OF SESSIONS YOU WANT TO ATTEND>

- AclaraONE Direct Load Control-Making the Transition
- What is Synchrophasor Measurement and How it Will Revolutionize Electric Distribution
- The Impact of Fault Detection & Localization on Co-op Operations and Members
- What's New with Aclara Electricity Meters?

Here is the breakdown of conference costs:

Field Operator Full-Conference: \$795 (Early bird
rate) \$995 (regular rate)
Roundtrip Airfare and Transportation: <\$XXXX>
Hotel: <\$XXXX>
Meals: <\$XXXX>

The total estimated cost associated with attending this conference is <\$XXXX> (if registered before April 20, 2019). I can attend the entire professional program and devote time to networking, plus my registration fee includes access to the AclaraConnect sessions online following the conference.

Again, the opportunity for me to develop better contacts and gain knowledge in specific areas of the water industry makes my attendance at AclaraConnect 2019 a wise investment for <organization's name>. Feel free to view the conference agenda at aclaraconnect.com/agenda. I look forward to your approval.

Sincerely,

<your name>

For more information about AclaraConnect visit our [website](#). Still have questions? Please contact events@aclara.com.