

Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Report on Conferences Sponsored by the Department of Commerce

Background

The Department of Commerce is committed, within current budget constraints, to enabling Commerce employees to participate in official conferences as required to meet the mission to support American businesses, create jobs, and strengthen the economy. In accordance with Office of Management and Budget Memorandum M-17-08, Amending OMB Memorandum M-12-12, Promoting Efficient Spending to Support Agency Operations, the Department continued to focus its efforts on oversight of expenses related to Federally-sponsored and Federally-hosted conferences to ensure that all conference expenses were appropriate, necessary, and managed in a prudent manner while acting as good stewards of taxpayer dollars and ensuring that our policy meets all Office of Management and Budget mandates and Federal Travel Regulations.

Conference Activity

Office of Management and Budget Memorandum M-17-08, Amending OMB Memorandum M-12-12, Promoting Efficient Spending to Support Agency Operations requires that by January 31 of each year, the agency shall report on conference expenses on a dedicated place on their official website that describes all agency-sponsored conferences from the previous fiscal year where the net expenses for the agency associated with the conference were in excess of \$100,000 and in addition, for any instances where the net expenses for an agency-sponsored conference exceeded \$500,000, the website shall include the agency designated official's rationale and approval.

In FY 2023, the Department of Commerce sponsored 25 conferences; 22 in excess of \$100,000 and three in excess of \$500,000. The total net cost for the 25 conferences was \$7,050,184. The agency designated official's rationales and approvals are included on the website with the report. All conferences held during FY 2023 related to accomplishing the Department of Commerce's mission to promote job creation, economic growth, and sustainable development to improve the standards of living for all Americans by working in partnership with businesses, universities, and the nation's workforce.

Department of Commerce Conferences		10/1/2022-9/30/2023				
> \$500,000						
EDA						
Title	Purpose	Location	Start Date	Attendees	Net Cost	Quarter
2023 Reconnect Conference	Brought EDA personnel together for the first time since 2015. Allowed leaders to connect at all levels with employees with the goal to develop methodical approaches and consistent tools for employees to assist the communities and industries they serve. Provided an overview of EDA reauthorization progress as well as overviews and strategy sessions on Tech Hubs and Recompete and how they impact the organization. Explored impacts and progress made on EDA's equity investment priority, including strategic dialogues on how EDA can continue to ensure under-served populations and/or geographies. Provided a face-to-face opportunity to provide awards for past work done boosting morale.	Washington, DC	01/23/2023	289	\$562,927	2
Total EDA Conferences		1		289	\$562,927	
ITA						
Title	Purpose	Location	Start Date	Attendees	Net Cost	Quarter
United States Africa Business Forum	The USABF demonstrated the impact of this Administration's Africa economic initiatives where Commerce created an opportunity for the public and private sectors to strategize on how to unleash economic growth on the Continent. USABF advanced the commercial, trade, and investment priorities of the Administration's "U.S. Strategy Toward sub-Saharan Africa," as well as ITA's own Africa Commercial Engagement Strategy (ACES).	Washington, DC	12/14/2022	41	\$829,903	1
Total ITA Conferences		1		41	\$829,903	
NOAA						
Title	Purpose	Location	Start Date	Attendees	Net Cost	Quarter
* 2023 National Weather Service (NWS) Science Operations Officer (SOO)-Development and Operations Hydrologist (DOH) National Meeting	NOAA's mission is summarized by three main tenets: Science, Service, and Stewardship and these tenets are tactically addressed through the goals of the NWS Strategic Plan: People, Infrastructure, and the Future. The NWS SOOs and DOHs are directly responsible for leading the science mission and training for each of the NWS's 122 Weather Forecast Offices (WFO) and River Forecast Centers (RFC). By attending this meeting, the SOOs and DOHs addressed NOAA's three mission tenets and the NWS Strategic Plan's goals by learning, doing, and implementing concepts around People, Infrastructure, and the Future. Attendees discussed topics that focus on social, behavioral, and economic science, service equity, and culture change. They were introduced to and learned about new tools and technology to support the NWS mission. Subject matter experts showed why probabilistic thinking is important, as NWS operations evolve.	Denver, CO	08/14/2023	206	\$588,394	4
Total NOAA Conferences		1		206	\$588,394	
< \$500,000						
CENSUS						
Title	Purpose	Location	Start Date	Attendees	Net Cost	Quarter
State Data Center (SDC) and Census Information Center (CIC) Annual Meeting	The State Data Centers (SDCs) and the Census Information Centers (CICs) had their Joint Annual Training Conference on July 25-27, 2023. The conference was hosted by the Data Users Branch (DUB), located in the Customer Liaison and Marketing Services Office (CLMSO). The SDCs and CICs are local and community data experts. The SDC and CIC partnership includes the dissemination of Census data, products, services, and materials to their statewide, local, non-profit, and community constituencies. The meeting continued to strengthen the Census Bureau's commitment to providing the public with transparent, knowledgeable, and informed Census data sources.	Alexandria, VA	07/25/2023	73	\$157,651	4
Total CENSUS Conferences		1		73	\$157,651	
ITA						
Title	Purpose	Location	Start Date	Attendees	Net Cost	Quarter
2023 SelectUSA Investment Summit	To serve as the premier investment event showcasing inbound investment opportunities throughout the United States. It strengthened GM's involvement and support of the foreign direct investment mission and encourages engagement with leading companies in their markets, which are often clients for both investment, export promotion, and commercial diplomacy initiatives.	National Harbor, MD	05/01/2023	473	\$270,009	3
Locally Employed Staff (LE Staff) Budget and Administrative Training	Provided a broad spectrum of training, especially budget and administrative issues needed for new employees.	Manila, Philippines	07/10/2023	54	\$128,644	4
Overseas Locally Employed Staff (LE Staff) New Commercial Specialist Training	Provided a broad spectrum of training, especially tradecraft and related issues needed for new employees.	Amman, Jordan	09/10/2023	33	\$116,713	4
Total ITA Conferences		3		560	\$515,367	

Department of Commerce Conferences		10/1/2022-9/30/2023				
NIST						
Title	Purpose	Location	Start Date	Attendees	Net Cost	Quarter
OSAC Team A 2023 In Person Meetings	NIST benefits by fulfilling its obligations mandated by Congress "... to strengthen and enhance the practice of forensic science" through the development of high quality, technically sound, consensus-based standards. NIST also benefits by providing leadership in the forensic science documentary standards arena in compliance with its strategic objective to strengthen national security and public safety. Since the National Research Council Report entitled "Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States - A Path Forward" was published in 2009 specifically calling upon NIST to provide stronger leadership in improving forensic science, NIST continues to provide that leadership and fulfills its responsibilities to assist the forensic science industry to mature its approach to standards development.	Houston, TX	04/17/2023	198	\$402,235	3
OSAC Team B 2023 In Person Meetings	NIST benefits by fulfilling its obligations mandated by Congress "... to strengthen and enhance the practice of forensic science" through the development of high quality, technically sound, consensus-based standards. NIST also benefits by providing leadership in the forensic science documentary standards arena in compliance with its strategic objective to strengthen national security and public safety. Since the National Research Council Report entitled "Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States - A Path Forward" was published in 2009 specifically calling upon NIST to provide stronger leadership in improving forensic science, NIST continues to provide that leadership and fulfills its responsibilities to assist the forensic science industry to mature its approach to standards development.	Indianapolis, IN	05/15/2023	190	\$374,364	3
2023 5x5: The Public Safety Innovation Summit	The event provided NIST (PSCR) researchers with a stage to provide transparent research updates, network to gain partners and stakeholders, and collect feedback critical to their mission. The Public Safety Communications Research (PSCR) meeting is an annual public safety broadband stakeholder meeting that brings together representative from public safety, federal agencies, industry, and academia. Participates heard from PSCR researchers and FirstNet staff about testing updates. PSCR invited industry and public safety partners to present on cutting edge technology findings, features, and functionalities. The meeting enabled PSCR and FirstNet to receive direct input, guidance, and feedback from their diverse stakeholder community.	San Diego, CA	06/28/2023	62	\$289,001	3
Total NIST Conferences		3		450	\$1,065,600	
NOAA						
Title	Purpose	Location	Start Date	Attendees	Net Cost	Quarter
Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) National Diversity in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Conference	The conference provided a premiere opportunity for NOAA to engage directly with students, professionals, and stakeholders in the Latino and Native American community. SACNAS also possessed diversity by gender and sexual orientation. The SACNAS platform provided NOAA access to a national network of interdisciplinary STEM students and professionals with access to region-specific opportunities for recruitment and science service delivery.	San Juan, PR	10/27/2022	34	\$138,609	1
Coastal and Estuarine National Summit	NOAA is a national leader in coastal management and habitat restoration. As the lead federal agency involved on this topic, it was important for NOAA to participate in the meeting to share results of its work, and to learn from others managing and restoring coastal resources around the country.	New Orleans, LA	12/04/2022	68	\$180,606	1
Alaska Marine Science Symposium	The conference was a means to exchange current scientific information about Alaska marine resources. It not only facilitated the advancement of the research by bringing together scientists from different agencies and academia, it also provided managers, policy makers, and the public a chance to learn about the latest findings from researchers themselves, and to use that information to better adapt and prepare for changes.	Anchorage, AK	01/23/2023	104	\$166,424	2
5th International Marine Protected Area Congress (IMPAC5)	One of the National Ocean Service's priority areas is place-based conservation. Through national marine sanctuaries, monuments, and other marine protected areas, NOS manages ocean and Great Lakes waters, spanning coasts, special marine areas, and coral reefs. Marine protected areas are some of the best management instruments to encourage partnerships in science, education, technology, management, and coastal community engagement to protect marine resources and the communities and economies that depend on them. NOAA employees attended this congress to work, share, and to learn from representatives from the international community of practitioners on marine protected areas, and build a partnership network on marine resource conservation efforts. IMPAC5's agenda themes and streams focused on topics of key importance to advance NOAA's current marine conservation goals, including engagement of indigenous communities in marine conservation, conserving biodiversity, and addressing the climate crisis.	Vancouver, Canada	02/02/2023	23	\$123,894	2
10th International Fisheries Observer and Monitoring Conference	This meeting improved fishery-dependent data collection of commercial catch and bycatch data to achieve three of NOAA's mission statements: 1. To understand and predict changes in climate, weather, oceans, and coasts, 2. To share that knowledge and information with others, and 3. To conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems and resources.	Hobart, Tasmania	03/06/2023	27	\$162,166	2
Total NOAA Conferences		5		256	\$771,699	

Department of Commerce Conferences		10/1/2022-9/30/2023				
USPTO						
Title	Purpose	Location	Start Date	Attendees	Net Cost	Quarter
Intellectual Property Rights Judicial Exchange	To increase intellectual property rights enforcement for the benefit of U.S. rightsholder active in the Algerian market.	Alexandria, VA	01/23/2023	58	\$208,993	2
Intellectual Property Rights Workshop for Moroccan Judges and Prosecutors	To increase the knowledge base of judges in Morocco and Tunisia to increase enforcement actions for the benefit of U.S. rightsholders in those markets.	Marrakech, Morocco	02/06/2023	58	\$455,578	2
Best Practices and United States Patent Trademark Office (USPTO) Experience in Trademarks	The IP Office Administration program serves to improve efficiency and cooperation in global IP systems by providing technical advice and expertise to prioritized countries of interest for purposes of improving IP protection and enforcement, capacity building, legislative reform, including creation of country-specific strategic plans for national offices and implementation of best practices regarding budget development, IT infrastructure planning, hiring, IP education and outreach, and core operational functions.	Alexandria, VA	02/06/2023	67	\$199,222	2
Indo-Pacific Workshop on Enforcement Against Food Fraud and Trade in Counterfeit Agricultural Products	The workshop provided continued engagement with the USDOJ, FDA, and the ASEAN Secretariat in providing relevant training on topical enforcement issues.	Bangkok, Thailand	05/09/2023	65	\$133,625	3
Intellectual Property Five Heads of Office Meeting	The Intellectual Property Five Heads of Office Meeting is a collaboration between the five major patent offices in the world. The conference promoted cooperation and collaboration of the United States Patent and Trademark Office with partnering offices around the world.	Honolulu, HI	06/12/2023	80	\$419,145	3
Patent Examination Fundamentals	Provided technical assistance training and instruction to officials from Middle East Partnership Initiative countries, advising and instructing on patent basics and fundamentals for integration into their local practices and procedures.	Alexandria, VA	07/10/2023	30	\$161,967	4
Judicial Colloquium on Intellectual Property, Innovation, and Technology	The Indo-Pacific Judicial Colloquium brought together members of the judiciaries of all Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity Partner Members to discuss the role and impact on the courts by developments in intellectual property, innovation, and technology.	Alexandria, VA	07/25/2023	77	\$356,332	4
Intellectual Property Office Administration Program: Best Practices and United States Patent Trademark Office (USPTO) Experience in Trademarks	The Intellectual Property Office Administration program serves to improve efficiency and cooperation in global intellectual property systems by providing technical advice and expertise to prioritized countries of interest for purposes of improving intellectual property protection and enforcement, capacity building, legislative reform, including creation of country-specific strategic plans for national offices and implementation of best practices regarding budget development, information technology infrastructure planning, hiring, intellectual property education and outreach, and core operational functions.	Alexandria, VA	07/31/2023	3	\$291,219	4
Regional Copyright Program in Central America	The Regional Copyright Workshop in Central America program contributes to USPTO's anti-piracy efforts by building critical intellectual property capacity and creating strategic government-to-government partnerships with key U.S. trading partners in areas related to protecting and enforcing rights related to creative works.	Panama City, Panama	08/01/2023	43	\$135,714	4
Madrid Protocol Implementation Administration Program	Capacity building with current and future members of the Madrid System for International Trademark Registration.	Alexandria, VA	09/25/2023	35	\$196,848	4
Total USPTO Conferences		10		516	\$2,558,642	
Total DOC Conferences		25		2,391	\$7,050,184	

* The conference is under review for post approval