

CONFERENCE

101

ING



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Introduction

what is a conference?

- A conference is an event meant to bring people together to discuss a certain topic (in our case, Space!).

Why go?

- Networking Opportunities and Connections
- Internship/Interview Opportunities
- Presenting Research
- Career Fair
- Professional Development
- Learning about new companies
- Learning about research and projects students are doing
- Going to panels and meeting industry leaders
- Traveling and exploring with your chapter!



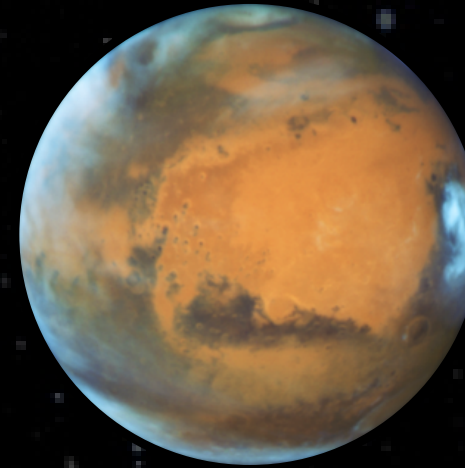
what is a conference?

Google Search

IMPORTANT FACTORS

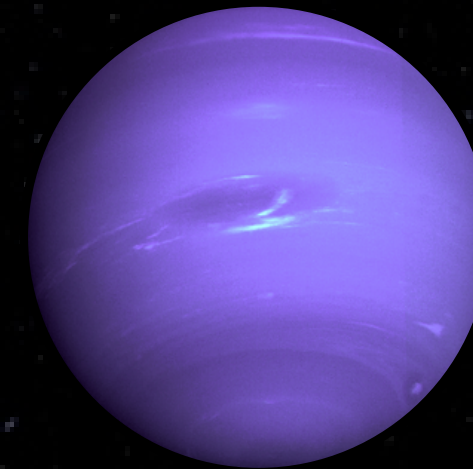
What do you need for a successful Conference?

This includes the expenses and planning needed to take into account prior to a conference. You can always get sponsorships to help fund costs from your University, the conference itself, or third parties.



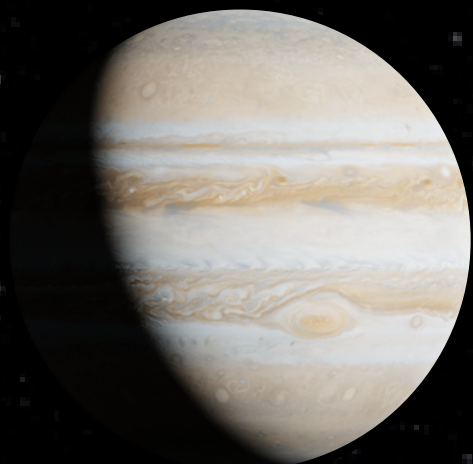
Place to Stay

Hotel, AirBnb, Friend, etc...



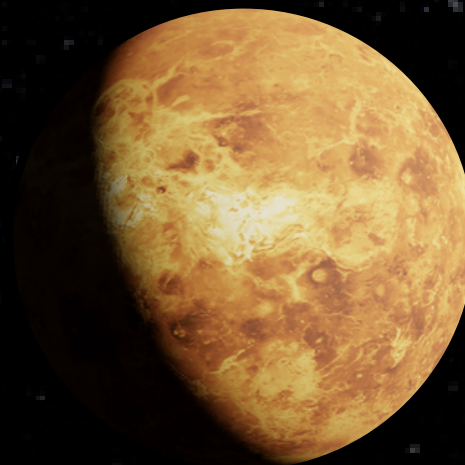
Transportation

Flight, Train, Rental Car, Uber, Public Transportation



Preparation

Start Early! The earlier you plan, the cheaper everything is!



Conference Ticket

You can usually get this sponsored by your University!

Steps for Planning!

Start planning as far out as you can!

See if your chapter is going and start planning together, as the more people that go the cheaper it will be to split where you stay!

There is much more to a conference than just the event itself-

Start Early!

The earlier you start, the more likely people will be able to go and the prices for everything only increase the closer you get to the start date. Advertise to your friends/colleagues, and planning with your SEDS Chapter can decrease costs and get more people to come, which makes it more fun to attend for everyone involved!



Steps for Planning!

Step 1: Book Hotel, AirBnB, etc. – *Do this first!*

- Given stay may be the most expensive part of your trip, know that you can share hotel rooms to split costs.
- Look at the conference website – sometimes they will have a hotel listed with a discounted price that is close by the venue.
- If you stay farther away, you may have to spend more on transportation, but the lodging might be cheaper. Also consider distance to metro stops in your comparison.
- Make sure that everyone has a place to sleep that is not overcrowded. While the more people that attend the cheaper it is to split. Be upfront with each other on sleeping expectations (*to share or not to share a bed– that is the question!*).
- Wherever you decide to stay, include a day before and after the conference in your booking.



Steps for Planning!

Step 1: Book Hotels (*cont.*)

- Keep in mind that some hotels have a requirement that you have to be 21+ to sign in to a hotel
 - If this is a problem for your group, consider looking/calling other hotels to see if they have an 18+ requirement, or look into an Airbnb.
 - Also keep in mind if you are considering renting a car that the age restrictions are also usually higher (in some cases 23+) so make sure to double check the laws/company policies.
- Payment
 - Some hotels have specific cancelation policies to consider.
 - Depending on the hotel, you may be able to pre-pay. Keep in mind if you are using the club card to pay for hotels, your name on your ID has to be registered to the card or you need to bring a Credit Card Authorization Form.



Steps for Planning!

Step 1: Book Hotels (*cont.*)

- Payment using a Chapter Card
 - On the left is an example of the Credit Card Authorization form. This form is needed if the person whose name is on the card will not be there in person. You can usually find one online or the hotel will have their own, and you fill out the dates, hotel reservation number, card information, and the authorization from the person whose name is on the card that has signed and approved that purchase.
 - Once filled out, you can either email it to the hotel so it is on file when you arrive, or you can bring the copy in person (I recommend both to be safe).
 - Keep in mind– usually you need to have a card in hand with your ID for incidentals for the room to check in, as well as the card you will pay for the room with (these can be the same or separate cards depending on the situation).

Company Name: _____

Street Address: _____
City, State, Zip Code: _____
Phone Number: _____

Credit Card Payment Authorization Form

Sign and complete this form to authorize the above-mentioned company to make a one-time debit to your credit card listed below.

By signing this form you give us permission to debit your account for the amount indicated on or after the indicated date. This is permission for a single transaction only, and does not provide authorization for any additional unrelated debits or credits to your account.

Please complete the information below:

I _____ (full name) authorize _____ (company name) to charge my credit card account indicated below for _____ (amount) on or after _____ (date). This payment is for

_____ (description of goods/services)

Billing Address _____ Phone# _____
City, State, Zip _____ Email _____

Account Type: ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ AMEX ☐ Discover

Cardholder Name _____

Account Number _____

Expiration Date _____

CVV2 (3 digit number on back of Visa/MC, 4 digits on front of AMEX) _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

I authorize the above named business to charge the credit card indicated in this authorization form according to the terms outlined above. This payment authorization is for the goods/services described above, for the amount indicated above only, and is valid for one time use only. I certify that I am an authorized user of this credit card and that I will not dispute the payment with my credit card company, so long as the transaction corresponds to the terms indicated in this form.

Steps for Planning!

Step 2: Flights

- *Do this after hotels so you have a place to stay!*
- Look at multiple websites (like Expedia or Cheapo Air vs Frontier or American) and compare prices and times.
- ***PAY ATTENTION TO ARRIVAL, DEPARTURE TIMES AND AIRPORT!***
- You want to be at the airport at least 2 hours before your flight, so plan how you will get there accordingly (Uber, friend, public transport, etc...) & make sure you get the right airport, as you do not want to find out you picked the wrong airport the day of departure.
- It is recommended to arrive the day before the conference starts and leave the day after– this give you more time to explore the city!
 - Ex. SpaceVision 2025 is Nov. 6th – 8th. I would recommend getting plane tickets for Nov. 5th – 9th, which gives you plenty of time to arrive in the event of delays, explore the city, and prepare for the conference!



Steps for Planning!

Step 3: Conference Ticket

- You can get this on the conference's website, and usually you can get this covered by your student government if you go the conference → If you go through the networking route they will cover at least a part of it.
- If you are presenting research, most universities will cover the entire cost of the trip!
- Keep in mind this highly depends on the university, so start early and do your research.

Step 4: Get the Absences Excused!

- A lot of times, you can get a form filled out and signed by your chapter mentor or the dean of the college that excuses the absence as a university-sanctioned event (especially if you are getting a part funded through the university) so make sure to fill it out and send it to your professors early!





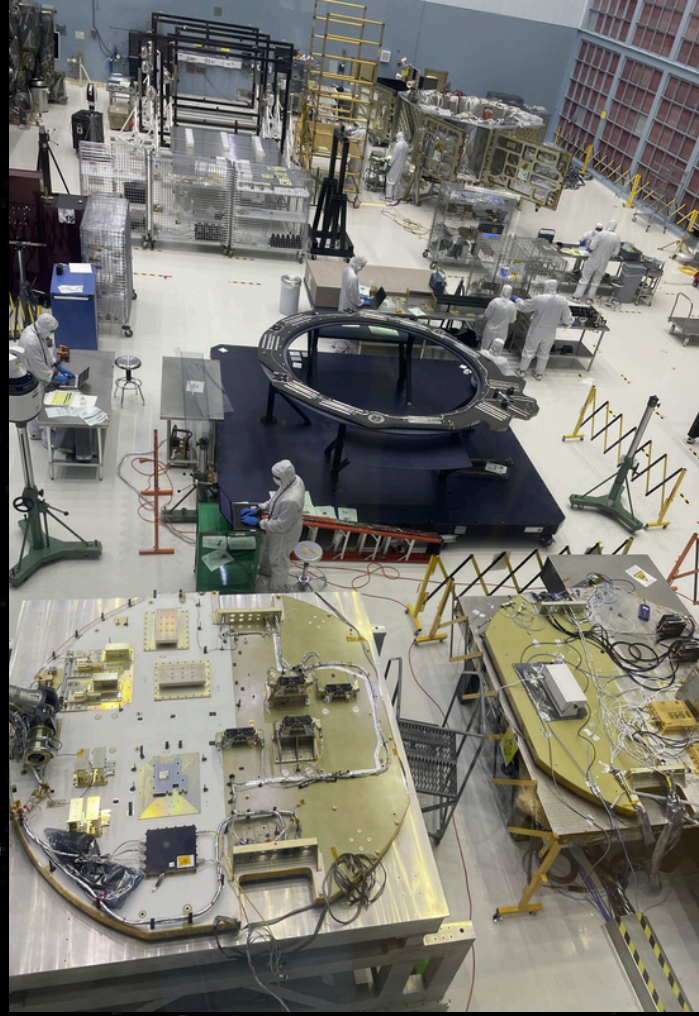
GO ON TOURS!

Tours can be a great way to get an inside look into a company you are interested in and may want to work at in the future. They are a great opportunity to meet and connect with people who are already working there, and taking the time to talk to them and ask them questions can make you stand out from everyone else! It is a great way to get a good start to a conference, as most are usually offered before it even starts.

Keep an eye out on the conference website as this will be the primary way to sign up for tours.



Tours!!



Featured: Nasa Goddard
Facility Tour from
SpaceVision 2023

Tips and Tricks (Prior)

1) Do some Research!

- *Schedule* – Review the overall schedule & map, and plan out your day by picking and choosing the panels/presentations that interest you. Start with the events you would want to attend the most, then be prepared to be flexible about the others. If you don't find a panel that inspires you, it's okay to take an hour off and grab coffee or peruse the exhibition hall for a break.
- *Companies* – Look to see which companies will be at the career fair/are sponsoring the event, and fine tune your resume and questions for the companies to get an interview/job offer!
- *Location* – Look at the city the conference will be held in! This can help give you a good idea on where the conference is located, the local public transportation, places to visit, where the airport is located, etc.
- *University* – See what your university can cover through Student Government and Scholarships the conference may offer.
- *Panels* – Look into the conference panels to find ones you are interested in, and prepare questions to ask the speakers to stand out and make a great impression

Tips and Tricks (Prior)

2) Work with your University's Chapter to plan!

- This way you have more people to attend and help plan, and you can work together with your peers to find the most affordable flights and hotels.
- Keep in mind – *the more people that go the cheaper hotels are*, so the more the merrier!
- Some universities can get group funding through chapters/clubs applying for a group trip, so that is always helpful to cut down on cost.
- First time traveling alone? – No Problem!
 - If you are nervous about traveling by yourself for the first time, going with a group can help ease anxiety. You can plan to fly with and sit beside your friends and other group members going, and it can be a great bonding experience as well as help you gain the confidence to go.
- Represent your chapter at SpaceVision!
 - This is always a plus, and only when planning with your chapter can you find out if more of your fellow SEDS members are participating and you can work together for competitions and go to events.

Tips and Tricks (Prior)

3) Pack Smart!

- Make sure you bring everything you need – don't forget about your resume, business cards, professional clothes, tote bag, comfortable shoes, toiletries, and your computer if you need it! Having extra space is never a downside, and make sure to leave room if you are planning on buying souvenirs.
- Take into consideration if you will travel with luggage or a backpack, and what type of luggage your plane ticket includes.
- Bring a Notebook to take notes at the cool panels you will attend! This way you can remember the important topics discussed and have somewhere to refer back to them or look into new topics later on.
- An extra shoulder bag, such as a tote, can be a great addition to store all of the free merch you will collect from the career fair, as well as a great place to store your resumes, laptop, and everything else you may need or collect throughout your day.

Tips and Tricks (During)

3) Pack Smart! (cont.)

- A good “survival pack” can include:
 - A shoulder bag/tote – to store everything
 - A notebook & a few pens
 - at least 25 business cards
 - at least 10 printed resumes
 - small snack
 - bottle of water
 - wallet & ID
 - conference registration & information/schedule
 - phone charger & power bank
 - (optional) mints, hand sanitizer, and/or deodorant

Tips and Tricks (During)

4) Utilize Conference Events

- On the website and/or the welcome schedule for each conference, there is usually an event page that includes tours, after-parties, outside events, competitions, and more.
- Make use of it – remember a conference is great for networking and meeting new people, so attend new events and make the most out of your time there.
- Talk to people about events that are not necessarily on the schedule.
 - It can be a great way to meet executives in companies you want to work for, and is a great place to really connect with people on a personal level.
- Explore the city!
 - If you need a break or have some downtime, consider taking yourself on a city tour – a lot of times there are festivals, museums, history/ghost tours, etc. that you can go on to learn more about the city and places of interest.
- Regardless of your goal for the conference, make the most out of the experience and enjoy your time there, because it will pass by before you know it!

Tips and Tricks (During)

5) Set Goals

- Develop a plan to work on the goals you wish to achieve while you are there. Conferences can be an investment, and going into it with clear objectives of what you want to get out of it can keep you on track and guide you if you feel overwhelmed. Make a hit list of companies or speakers you want to make sure you talk to and connect with. This can include things like:
 - Talking to & following up with recruiters at the Career Fair
 - Identifying the Speakers you want to connect with

6) Maximize your experience

- *Be ready to be social!* One of the best things to get out of a conference is networking, so be prepared to introduce yourself, have an elevator pitch ready and fine-tuned for your audience (at the career fair vs talking to a speaker vs another conference attendee). It can be awkward and scary at first, but the more you do it the easier it gets.
- *Remember* – conferences are a great opportunity for professional and social development, so network and make the most out of it!

Cost

This is the question of the hour–
*How much will it cost to go to
this conference?*

Take into consideration this is
unique for everyone, so do the
calculations before you go!

1) Upfront Costs

- This includes things purchased before you leave, and can be made more affordable with sponsorships (University or Scholarships), group pricing, and more.
 - Conference Ticket
 - Hotel
 - Flight
 - Extra – (~Rental car)

2) Summit Costs

- This includes things during the trip and are not usually fully estimated/considered, and can be unique to everyone. This includes things like:
 - Food – (Does the conference include meals?)
 - Transportation – (Public or Uber?)
 - Events – (Ex. Museum or various tours)
 - Miscellaneous – (unexpected costs, souvenirs, merchandise, etc..)

Ways to Save

Conferences can be expensive, but there are always ways to help fund it.

Make sure to look into different opportunities and **start early!**

1) Group Travel

- You can save on hotels if you play it smart, so plan with a group.
- Split transportation costs like uber/lyft to make it cheaper.

2) University Funding

- Apply to grants through your university's Student Government.
- Present Research – Most universities will fully fund conference travel if you do so.

3) Scholarships

- There will usually be scholarships offered by the conference on their website for students or attendees.

4) Volunteer

- If the cost of the conference ticket is too expensive, consider volunteering at the conference as most conferences offer it as a way to spend a small part of the conference volunteering and attending the rest for free.

5) Fundraising!

Post-Conference



When you get back, here are some things to not forget:

- 1.) If you got funding or scholarships to be able to go to the conference, make sure you contact them with a follow-up when you get back.
 - This can include a short paragraph on the trip, photos, etc.
- 2.) Follow-up on the people you met at the conference!
 - Reach out to them on LinkedIn, and make sure to connect with them and start a conversation you can refer back to if you want to reach out to them again in the future.
 - Reach out to speakers/company representatives or the like with your student email, as they are often more likely to continue the conversation and respond if you show you are a student, and thank them for taking the time to present and share their knowledge. It goes a long way to make them feel valued, and leaves a great impression!
- 3.) Review your notes!
 - By going over the notes you took, it can be great reminders of everything you learned as well as calls to action for researching a certain topic or reaching out to someone.

Post-Conference



When you get back, here are some things to not forget:

4.) Share your experience!

- Make a post on your social media and/or LinkedIn, as it shows recruiters you are participating in conferences and networking, as well as being a great thing for people to connect with you.

Final Notes

*Conferences are an investment on
yourself and your career.*

Don't waste them, and remember
that you get as much from the
experience as you put in. Have fun,
and be prepared to learn a lot!



GOOD LUCK!

**SAFE TRAVELS,
WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!**

