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## Sample Letter: Request for Approval

Date

Dear <Manager>

I request your approval to attend the Ninth Annual Reconciliation in America National Symposium of the John Hope Franklin Center for Reconciliation for May 30 – June 1, 2018.

The 2018 conference theme is, “The DNA of Reconciliation: the Substance of Peacemaking,” and it is the premier event for discussions of social equity, reconciliation, and related dialogue strategies to address social tensions in American communities. This year’s focus on the DNA of Reconciliation will lend itself to conversations about (1) defining what reconciliation looks like in daily experiences, (2) what our individual roles are as agents of reconciliation, and (3) how to be peacemakers while not allowing ourselves to settle with “keeping the peace” in ways that perpetuate unjust, systemic wrongs. These topics align with my professional development to assist me in doing my job more effectively and be of assistance as our organization addresses such issues.

The conference features a significant keynote speaker, Michelle Norris, one of the most trusted voices in American journalism. Her voice informs, engages and enlightens listeners with thoughtful interviews and in depth reporting as one of the hosts of NPR’s flagship afternoon broadcast. She’s interviewed world leaders, Nobel laureates, Oscar winners, American Presidents, military leaders, influential newsmakers and even astronauts traveling in outer space. Michele started [The Race Card Project](#) in 2010 to help foster a candid dialogue about race. Interacting with Norris and discussions about her work during this symposium will allow me to reformat and refocus various activities I currently use in my job to better understand and relate to underserved communities.

Networking with colleagues across the nation will help me to learn from others and improve my own skills and knowledge about my field. I will also have the great opportunity to engage more deeply with my work, ask questions of others who are also doing the work, and develop informed practices to improve my success as a professional and my awareness of strategies to facilitate reconciliation within the work environment and community concerns. Upon my return, I plan to share my learning with my team and other staff as needed. I can do so by sharing session presentations, handouts, and written summaries.

Please check out the conference agenda: <https://www.jhfccenter.org/symposium-agenda>. The registration cost for the Symposium is (Early Bird Fee: \$195.00; Regular Fee: \$249.00), along with travel expenses and hotel. I also wish to participate in the Friday evening “Arts Crawl: Greenwood 1921, on this Day,” as it will be a great networking and learning opportunity. Right now, the cost to fly is only \_\_\_\_\_. Including hotel, I estimate the total cost to be \_\_\_\_\_. I can save on costs by booking my travel early and registering with the early-bird rates, so I look forward to your response.

## Justification Kit for John Hope Franklin Annual Symposium on Race & Reconciliation

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I am confident you will see this as a worthwhile investment. It is an opportunity for me to network with social justice, race relations, and reconciliation dialogue experts, meet the motivational keynote speaker, attend valuable educational sessions and gain specific industry knowledge. My attendance at this conference is a wise investment and will pay off for years to come.

Sincerely,

[name]

Title

## Talking points

1. Explain specifically what you plan to learn by attending the conference and how that will benefit your peers and students.
2. In addition to your personal learning goals, here are other popular reasons to attend:
  - Network with other education professionals experiencing similar challenges;
  - Stay on top of best practices from leaders in the field;
  - Small one-on-one learning experiences, even though at an international conference;
  - Take new knowledge and understanding of the latest research back to your organization to make change; and
  - Experience dynamic, interactive learning experiences that rejuvenate and refresh reconciliation agents at all levels.
3. Show how you will share the learning with your team and when you return.
  - Share session presentations and handouts;
  - Write summaries and analyses;
  - Create a slideshow presentation or video;
  - Develop poster presentations;
  - Utilize technology that you learn about at the conference;
  - Model learning strategies you discover;
  - Volunteer to host mini workshops; or
  - Plan sharing opportunities across grade levels, subject areas, and schools.
4. Be proactive
  - Offer to share a room to reduce hotel expenses;
  - Book your travel early; and
  - Avoid the higher registration fee by taking advantage of the early-bird registration.

## Topics Covered

### Areas of focus

Social Equity/Justice  
Reconciliation  
History of Civil Rights  
Tulsa Race Massacre 1921  
Facilitating Difficult Conversations  
Leadership  
Resources  
Student Learning  
Equity  
Global / Emerging Issues

### Other topics

Addressing change and resistance  
Adult development and learning  
Personal Learning Networks  
Continuous improvement  
Culturally responsive pedagogy  
Educator Effectiveness  
Equity  
Family and community engagement  
Future-ready learning  
Global perspectives  
Integrating student or teacher voice  
Leadership development and skills  
Partnerships and coalition building  
Policy development and advocacy efforts  
Urban issues and settings  
STEM: Science, technology, engineering, and math  
Presentation and facilitation skills

## **Benefits to districts and organizations**

Effective professional learning remains the single most powerful investment a district/organization can make for improving educator/employee effectiveness to increase student/employee achievement.

The conference offers leaders

- Connections;
- Tools;
- Learning opportunities; and
- Resources needed to design, implement, and measure high-quality professional learning for educator, staff, and student success.

## Registration Fees

Price List (Early Bird Rate ends May 1)

- Regular \$249; Early Bird \$195.00
- Presenter Fee \$175; Early Bird \$135
- Student \$100; Early Bird \$75
- One-Day Pass \$150