

Conference versus training: Large information-sharing or learning sessions

The following supports sub-section D.3.2.1 of the [Guide to Travel, Hospitality, Conference and Event Expenditures](#)

What are large information-sharing or learning sessions?

Large information-sharing or learning sessions are conferences that may support an individual's learning and professional development or provide information on the status of a subject. These sessions have a large number of participants and may include participants from the public sector and private sector. These sessions do not include traditional forms of training, such as courses offered by the Canada School of Public Service, a university or other post-secondary institutions.

What is the role of the government-wide functional community leads?

The government-wide functional community leads at the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat will objectively determine, on a case by case basis, whether large information sharing or learning sessions are to be considered conferences or training.

For example, the Comptroller General of Canada will make decisions on the treatment of large information-sharing or learning sessions for the financial management function. The financial management function could include several occupational groups, for example, Financial Management (FI) and Administrative Services (AS) involved in the financial management function.

What approvals are required?

- If the government-wide functional community lead designates a large information-sharing or learning session as a **conference**, then **conference approval and event approval are required**.
- If the government-wide functional community lead designates a large information-sharing or learning session as **training**, then conference and event approval is not required.
 - **Training approval** is to be obtained through the established departmental processes as described in subsection D.3.2 of the [Guide to Travel, Hospitality, Conference and Event Expenditures](#).
 - Ideally before the large information-sharing or learning session, the CFO should provide the deputy head with a report for information purposes (not for approval) on the total departmental costs and number of participants when the total cost of the session (including associated costs, such as travel) exceeds \$50,000.

How do government-wide functional community leads communicate decisions about the designation of a large information-sharing or learning session?

When the government-wide functional community lead has made a decision about the designation of a large information-sharing or learning session, he or she notifies his or her community through this GCpedia page.

CFOs and departmental heads of human resources are responsible for regularly reviewing this GCpedia page to ensure that the appropriate approvals for the large information-sharing or learning sessions are obtained for their departmental staff.

Real property, material management, procurement and project management functional community

Large information-sharing or learning session	Description	Decision taken by the Comptroller General of Canada	Date decision taken
Real property Institute of Canada (RPIC)	RPIC is a not-for-profit organization that has a mandate to specifically cater to professional development needs of the federal real property community. The Institute's offerings are based on an assessment of the federal real property community and the federal government's priorities.	This event is classified as training.	September 15, 2017