

# ACRP Ambassador Program Guidelines

The Airport Cooperative Research Program (ACRP) is an industry-driven, applied research program that develops near-term, practical solutions to problems faced by airport operators. ACRP is managed by the Transportation Research Board (TRB) of the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine (the Academies) and sponsored by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

The ACRP Ambassador program is one of several research dissemination initiatives that are strengthening ACRP's connection to the airport industry. Ambassadors tell the ACRP story, help practitioners access and apply research to solve airport problems, serve as conduit of information between airports and ACRP, and strive to develop the next generation of airport leaders.



## The Role and Responsibilities of an Ambassador

ACRP's Ambassadors fill a vital role in getting ACRP's research products into the hands of those who most need them—industry practitioners. As representatives of ACRP, Ambassadors understand the goals, values, and importance of the program and strive to promote them across the airport industry.

Ambassadors volunteer to serve a two-year term (e.g., January 2020 – December 2021) and agree to represent ACRP at a minimum of four to six industry conferences or events within their geographic region during this period. They staff the ACRP exhibit booth, describe and promote solutions (in the form of ACRP research products) to a wide array of issues affecting airports, encourage involvement in the ACRP research process, and, as opportunities arise, present on other topics. During their term, Ambassadors should expect to spend as many as 10 days away on ACRP business.

Ambassadors must identify themselves as volunteers when they represent ACRP at conferences to avoid the perception that they are employed by ACRP, TRB, or the Academies.

Ambassadors also participate in quarterly teleconferences to share their experiences and feedback with other Ambassadors and ACRP staff and learn about ACRP program developments and priorities.

In addition to conference attendance, ACRP challenges Ambassadors to undertake a wide range of creative tactics to disseminate research and introduce new audiences to the program. For example, as opportunities arise, Ambassadors may choose to visit airports, state DOT aviation divisions, or colleges that offer degrees in airport management; conduct outreach on social media; or author trade journal and newsletter articles.

## *Ambassador Duties*

Ambassadors must be generally knowledgeable about TRB, ACRP, and the ACRP research process. **All Ambassador candidates must attend a one-day, in-person ACRP Ambassador Orientation at the start of their first year and are strongly encouraged to participate in orientation again at the start of their second year.** The orientation provides participants with the information and resources necessary to succeed as Ambassadors. *Therefore, attending the initial orientation is mandatory.*

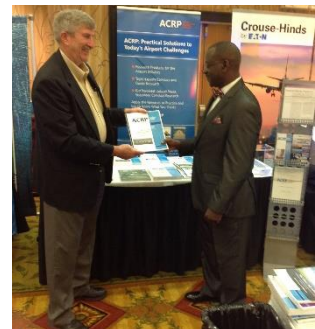
Throughout the two-year term, Ambassadors collaborate with ACRP to proactively identify and select the most beneficial and cost-effective events to attend within their regions. While Ambassadors are strongly encouraged to suggest relevant conferences and events they wish to attend, **ACRP makes final determinations and must approve attendance for each event based on budget constraints and program priorities.** Ambassadors also routinely share their insights and suggestions with ACRP based on their experiences as Ambassadors.

### Before attending an event, Ambassadors shall:

- Collaborate with ACRP to secure a speaking role and/or cost-effective exhibit space at the event.
- Following ACRP's approval for an event, review the event agenda and/or ask conference and session organizers to identify the most relevant ACRP publications for the anticipated audience.
- Complete a material request form listing the specific publications ACRP should send to the event (including quantities and titles).
- Tailor a standardized ACRP Ambassador PowerPoint presentation to highlight ACRP priorities, hot topics, and relevant research products (if speaking).
- Make lodging arrangements when an overnight stay is necessary.
- Assist ACRP with pre-event email marketing to increase traffic at the ACRP exhibit booth.

### While attending an ACRP-approved event, Ambassadors:

- Staff ACRP's exhibit booth during the event's standard exhibition hours (each day).
- Give presentations on ACRP, the ACRP research process and products, and ways to get involved, whenever possible.
- Attend networking functions to educate and update conference patrons on ACRP research projects underway, recent ACRP publications, new ACRP initiatives, and upcoming opportunities to participate in the research process.



- Encourage other industry practitioners to get involved in ACRP (e.g., submit research ideas, serve on project panels, apply for the Ambassador program, become or sponsor an ACRP Champion, attend ACRP webinars, use ACRP’s research products in their work).
- Gather evidence or real-world examples of airport practitioners putting ACRP research products to work (i.e., Impacts on Practice) through their interactions with airport industry practitioners and report these examples to ACRP.

### Following each event, Ambassadors:

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- Return the ACRP exhibit materials and any remaining ACRP publications to ACRP.
- Submit conference attendee and exhibitor lists including contact information (when possible) to ACRP.
- Complete brief event reports summarizing activities, pertinent meetings and conversations, recommendations on attending the event in the future years, and any follow up needs.
- Request reimbursement for allowable expenses (e.g., lodging) by completing an expense reimbursement form and submitting receipts.

## Ambassador Resources

Ambassadors receive training, program support, and ACRP materials to represent ACRP at conferences and other appropriate venues. During the Ambassador Orientation, ACRP will provide detailed information on the ACRP research process, summarize recent and ongoing research projects, and describe in greater detail Ambassador opportunities, responsibilities, and processes.

Following orientation, Ambassadors will have access to hard copy materials, such as brochures, ACRP Reports, guidebooks, summary cards, and other research products; ACRP-branded presentation templates as well as speaker tips and guidance; access to a comprehensive online calendar of airport industry events; and the ACRP exhibit/booth (including an iPad). ACRP will handle all event registration tasks (aside from securing lodging reservations), exhibitor logistics and payments, and shipping materials (including the booth) to each event on behalf of the Ambassador. ACRP will also provide Ambassadors with branded collateral (e.g., shirt, lapel pin, business cards) for Ambassadors’ use while representing ACRP.



Ambassadors will also have regular access to ACRP staff or its designated contractor to answer questions, prepare for selected events and presentations, and assist with pre- and onsite event details, logistics, or unanticipated problems.

## Ambassador Application and Selection Process

ACRP generally selects up to two new Ambassador candidates from each FAA Region every Fall. Applicants are asked to submit the following:

- A completed and signed [Ambassador Program Application](#).
- A brief (one- to two-page) personal statement describing the applicant's relevant qualifications and explaining why he or she would be a good ACRP Ambassador.
- A current resume (two pages or less).
- One letter of reference that addresses the applicant's familiarity with airports in his or her region, knowledge of ACRP projects or products, experience with ACRP research panels, and other pertinent accomplishments. Letters of reference may be from an employer, a colleague, a client, or other party familiar with the applicant's experience and qualifications. *Applicants may indicate their recent participation on an ACRP project panel or research team in lieu of providing a letter of reference.*

Following ACRP's review of the application package, applicants may be asked to participate in a brief video (e.g., Skype) or telephone interview and provide a speaker's bio suitable for use in conference programs.

### *Selection Criteria and Considerations*

ACRP will evaluate and select applicants based on the criteria described below. In addition, ACRP will consider the applicant's geographic location so that Ambassador's personal travel expenses are minimized and ACRP's research products reach all regions of the country. ACRP will also give priority to qualified applicants who currently (or have recently) work(ed) within airport organizations (e.g., airports, aviation divisions at state departments of transportation, port authorities, FAA). General selection criteria include:

- A clearly expressed commitment to promoting ACRP's goals before, during, and after tenure as an Ambassador. Following the two-year commitment, ACRP offers Ambassadors Emeritus various opportunities to participate in research dissemination and implementation activities.
- Applicable work experience and a strong professional network in the U.S. airport industry.
- Familiarity with the ACRP research process and products, preferably with first-hand experience participating in ACRP's research process and/or using ACRP's products.
- Willingness and ability to speak/present at industry events on ACRP, its research process, and the ways practitioners can get involved. Ability to present on technical topics including those addressed by ACRP research projects is desirable, but not required.

**Applicants must have support from his or her employer to attend Ambassador Orientation as well as selected conferences and industry events throughout his or her two-year term.**

### *Eligibility Exclusions*

Ambassadors will serve as representatives of the program and, therefore, must appropriately represent the Academies, TRB, and ACRP. Inappropriate or unethical behavior, including but not limited to actively soliciting business during Ambassador activities or through ACRP affiliation, will be taken seriously, formally reviewed by ACRP, and may lead to removal from the Ambassador program. *Applicants who are actively involved in business development activities, particularly when attending conferences and other industry events, should not apply.*

### **Ambassador Travel and Expense Reimbursement Policies**

Following ACRP's approval of each conference or event, ACRP WILL pay for the following expenses:

- Conference or event attendee registration and/or exhibitor registration fees, all logistics support (e.g., material handling, warehousing), and all shipping (FedEx) costs to transport exhibition materials to and from an event.
- One (1) night of hotel expenses if the Ambassador is presenting on behalf of the program and one (1) night of hotel expenses for each full day an Ambassador is exhibiting at the event. Ambassador's hotel expenses are generally capped at the federal government scale per diem (plus tax), which is set by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA). GSA's Per Diem Rate Lookup Form for all covered locations is available at [www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287](http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287).
- Daily on-site parking fees charged by conference venues (e.g., hotels) when the Ambassador uses a personal vehicle for traveling to and from an approved event.
- Transportation to and from the mandatory Ambassador Orientation.
- Up to two (2) nights of hotel expenses to attend the mandatory Ambassador Orientation.

ACRP will NOT pay for the following expenses:

- Hotel accommodations exceeding the GSA's maximum daily rate. ***However, in advance of an event***, Ambassadors may ask ACRP to pay the difference between a preferred accommodation and GSA's maximum allowable daily rate. ACRP will evaluate each request on a case-by-case basis and may grant approvals at its sole discretion based on event priority and available program resources.
- Transportation expenses, such as airfare, train, or bus, to and from conferences and events. In addition, ACRP will not reimburse Ambassadors for personal automobile

expenses (e.g., gas) or for miles traveled. Ambassadors generally attend events that are geographically close to their home or workplace, so ACRP expects these out-of-pocket expenses to be minimal. For conferences or events that require longer distance travel (e.g., requiring air, train or bus transportation), Ambassadors' travel expenses are not normally reimbursed by ACRP. **However, in advance of an event**, Ambassadors may, on limited occasions, ask ACRP to pay for transportation expenses that would otherwise preclude the Ambassador from attending the event. ACRP will evaluate each waiver request on a case-by-case basis and may grant approvals at its sole discretion based on event priority and available program resources.

- Any food expenses incurred while traveling or at events. Meals are often included in the cost of conference registration, which will be paid by ACRP, but any food expenses beyond those included in registration will not be reimbursed.

**All estimated expenses must be approved by ACRP in advance of the event to be eligible for reimbursement.**

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. *I'm a consultant working in the airport industry. Can I apply to be an ACRP Ambassador?*

Yes, consultants may apply. Consultants provide valuable connections within the industry and can serve as exceptional Ambassadors for ACRP. Consultants, as well as all other applicants, must understand and agree to the eligibility exclusions described in the Program Guidelines (see above).

2. *I recently retired from an airport organization. Can I apply to be an ACRP Ambassador?*

Yes. Individuals who recently retired from working within an airport organization are welcome to apply. Their strong connections to airports within their region can be a great asset for sharing ACRP's research products with industry practitioners.

3. *I'm interested in the program but concerned that applying for this role will impact my ability to respond to ACRP's Requests for Proposals or serve on ACRP project panels.*

ACRP Ambassadors are welcome to bid on Requests for Proposals and serve on project panels so long as the project does not present a clear conflict of interest. The role of a volunteer Ambassador is separate and distinct from that of a contractor or panel member.

4. *I live/work in a region of the country where few airport industry conferences are held within a reasonable driving distance. Will ACRP pay for me to travel to attend events elsewhere?*

ACRP works closely with Ambassadors and provides them with the resources they need to identify geographically suitable opportunities to connect with industry practitioners and promote ACRP and its research products. As a general rule, ACRP does not reimburse Ambassadors for transportation expenses (airfare, train, bus, or personal auto mileage/gas). However, in advance of an event, Ambassadors may request a waiver to cover transportation expenses that would otherwise preclude them from attending but these requests will be reviewed and considered by ACRP on a case-by-case basis.

Please contact [Sargon.deJesus@erg.com](mailto:Sargon.deJesus@erg.com) (ACRP Ambassador program support) with any additional questions not addressed in the ACRP Ambassador Program Guidelines.