



IFT : first July 16-19, 2023
ANNUAL EVENT AND EXPO McCormick Place, Chicago, IL

Attendee Justification Toolkit

Making the Case with
Management to Attend IFT FIRST





Connect. Learn. Innovate....at IFT FIRST!

With so many choices of events to attend, we are glad that you are looking to add IFT FIRST into your schedule. Our goal is to support you in making the best case possible with your management team so that you can join us in Chicago for this transformative event. The team at IFT has developed this Attendee Justification Toolkit to provide you with the resources and information you need to showcase why you should be at IFT FIRST in 2023!

This toolkit includes:

- What is IFT FIRST and who attends
- Attendee justification information
- Top 7 Reasons to Attend IFT in 2023
- Sample justification letters to present to management segmented by job fields

More than
2/3 of 2022
attendees

said they would
return to IFT FIRST
in 2023

We hope to see you in Chicago July 16-19!

For more information, visit iftevent.org/attend/registration



About IFT FIRST

IFT FIRST means **F**ood **I**mproved by **R**esearch, **S**cience, and **T**echnology. It is IFT's response to the transformative nature of the global food system. It's the place where science of food professionals gather to discover science and new innovations, explore ingredients and technologies for the future, and collaborate on key issues impacting the global food system.

This year's event theme - **"Innovation in a Time of Crisis: Can We Future-Proof the Food System?"** is an experience you don't want to miss as thousands of innovators, product developers, scientists, and company leaders will be in attendance this year at IFT FIRST.

Who Attends IFT FIRST

The ability to network and connect with peers and collaborators within the science of food community is of paramount importance when it comes to deciding on where to spend your time and resources. Consider this circle of attendee job functions and industries who will be represented at IFT FIRST.

Here's a snapshot of industries and attendees who will be represented at IFT FIRST:



Food & Beverage
Manufacturing
and Processing



Ingredient
Suppliers



Packaging and
Materials Manufacturers/
Suppliers



Equipment
Manufacturers/
Suppliers



Academia



Consulting



Government



Food Safety



Private Research
Institutions



Trade Associations
and Foundations

Top Job Functions of Attendees

R&D • Product Development • Innovation • Purchasing • Procurement • Academia • Research Education • Research Chef • Recipe Developer • Culinologist • Supply Chain • Food Scientist Formulator • Chemist • Package and Process Engineer • Food Safety • QC • Management Marketing & Sales • Consulting • Startups and VCs

Nearly
70 countries
were represented
at IFT FIRST in
2022



How to Justify Conference Attendance

If you or your company are involved in the science of food profession, IFT FIRST is a must-attend event in 2023. You can show the value of attending IFT FIRST to your employer by understanding your conference expenses and explaining how you and your organization will benefit from your participation.

- **Outline an approximate of conference expenses. To get started, review the following pages:**
 - Review and select your registration pass at [Registration & Access](#).
 - Research hotel accommodations at [Hotels](#).
 - Explore travel and transportation information [Travel](#) and research pricing to travel in and around Chicago.
 - Are you a global traveler, be sure to review [information created specifically for traveling internationally](#) to IFT FIRST.
- **Evaluate the potential return on investment by thoroughly exploring the IFT FIRST website for the sessions and experiences that will support your professional development goals or overall company goals.**
 - Build a tentative [schedule](#) with the rationale for attending each event or experience.
- **Create a wish list of customers, collaborators, peers, suppliers, and/or exhibitors you've yet to reach:**
 - Review iftevent.org for the names of presenters and speakers you would like to connect with during the event. Be sure to provide the value proposition for these networking opportunities.
 - Explore the [interactive floor plan](#) to see which exhibitors will be in attendance in order to connect with companies focused on the best trending ingredients, machinery, food and food science intelligence.

Prepare to deliver a presentation after IFT FIRST, sharing with your colleagues and peers what you gained from attending the event, along with recommendations on how to best take advantage of the resources you compiled at the event.

More than
6,000 attendees
visited the
Scientific Posters
area



Top **7** Reasons to Attend IFT FIRST

1

A Food Expo featuring more than **850 exhibitors** offering the latest in food science intelligence, non-stop food tastings, and exposure to innovation in food tech.

2

More than **100 Science FIRST sessions** and multi-disciplinary conversations focused on ground-breaking science solutions in **novel technology and innovation, health and nutrition, sustainability and climate, food safety and consumer insights.**

3

Nearly **500 posters** of the most cutting-edge science and research impacting the future of food.

4

Business FIRST live panel discussions on topics including **regenerative agriculture, supply chain challenges, and food product development.**

5

High-value networking with science of food professionals who can help you achieve your goals.

6

The Innovation Lab, **an immersive, experiential journey** that allows you the chance to innovatively test and solve problems or try new methods and ingredients.

7

100 food and food tech Startups plus a multi-day Pitch competition in the Startup Pavilion.

Startup Pavilion was a hit – with nearly **7,000 people** spending an average of 29 minutes.



Sample Justification Letters

In today's environment, registrants need to be able to make a compelling appeal to gain buy-in from their employers. Below is a sample justification letter that you can use to make your case. Links to this letter and others segmented by sample titles are available for download as word documents.

- **Sample Justification Letter (General)**

[Date]

Re: Attending IFT FIRST: Annual Event and Expo

Dear [Supervisor's Name]:

I am seeking your support to attend IFT FIRST: Annual Event and Food Expo in Chicago July 16-19. This event attracts innovators, product developers, scientists, academia, company leaders and others from the global science of food community to collaborate on shaping the future of food. By attending, I'll bring back knowledge and contacts that will greatly benefit [organization name].

This year's theme is Innovation in a Time of Crisis: Can We Future-Proof the Food System?

IFT FIRST will provide me with opportunities to attend sessions that directly impact my work, as well as network with more than 17,000 science of food professionals from over 75 countries. I've reviewed the entire program, and I look forward to attending [[insert specific programming, and other activities in which you plan on participating (Note: Be sure to include programming links from iftevent.org)].

I'm especially excited about the Monday Night Professional Networking Event, which brings together over 19 different special interest groups, and is an opportunity to meet with people who can answer some of my questions on [insert specific info on your questions or challenges]. As the [insert your job title], my specific goals in attending are to [insert goals as related to your job responsibilities]. I believe the learnings that will come out of my experience will help me to meet both my organizational and professional goals.

Below is an approximate breakdown of expenses:

- Event registration: [\$xxx]
- Networking events: [\$xxx]
- Roundtrip airfare: [\$xxx]
- Transportation: [\$xxx]
- Hotel: [\$xxx]
- Meals: [\$xxx]
- Total cost: [\$xxxx]

This year, our organization set out to [insert company's goals] and attending IFT FIRST I will work toward these goals faster by [insert what you will gain from by attending and how these efforts connect to the organization's goals].

Upon returning from the event, I look forward to compiling a brief presentation to share my learnings from the event with the rest of the team and highlight the relationships that were built.

Thank you for your consideration in supporting my attendance at IFT FIRST.

Sincerely,
[Your name]

Downloadable Sample Justification Letters

[Justification Letter 1](#)

(General)

[Justification Letter 2](#)

(i.e., Managers, Product Buyers)

[Justification Letter 3](#)

(i.e., R&D, Food Scientists, Innovators)

[Justification Letter 4](#)

(i.e., Industry and Academic Researchers, Professors)

