



Biological Ecological Sciences Coalition

Congressional Visits Day Frequently Asked Questions

1) What is the cost to participate?

Participation in the event is free, but participants are responsible for paying for their travel, lodging, meals, and incidental expenses.

2) What can I expect to get out of the event?

Participants will receive training on how to effectively communicate with policymakers and will be briefed on trends in federal research spending.

Participants can expect to take part in five to eight meetings with members of Congress or their staff. Typically, this includes two or three meetings with the participant's congressional delegation and several more meetings with other congressional offices.

The event is also an opportunity to meet other scientists with an interest in science policy.

3) What are my responsibilities as a participant?

Participants are responsible for arranging and paying for their travel, lodging, and meals.

Participants are expected to attend the mandatory orientation and training program on the first day of the event.

Participants should plan on spending an hour or more in advance of the event to research and prepare talking points on the benefits of federal investments in science, especially to their local region.

4) When should I arrive in/depart from Washington, DC?

The event will take place on April 25-26, 2017. An optional panel discussion on science policy will take place the morning of April 25. All participants are expected to attend the training session during the afternoon of April 25. Participants can expect to finish with their congressional meetings by 5 pm on April 26, but are welcome to stay for an optional happy hour afterwards.

5) What is the closest airport?

Two airports service Washington, DC. Reagan National Airport is the closest to downtown DC and is about a 30 minute Metro ride from Capitol Hill. Dulles International Airport is located farther outside the city; although it is not connected to a Metro station, shuttles are available between the airport and Wiehle/Reston Metro station.

6) Where should I stay?

The event activities will take place in downtown Washington, DC. Capitol Hill is serviced by two Metro stations: Union Station and Capitol South.

There are numerous hotels in downtown DC from which to choose. Budget conscious travelers may prefer to stay at a hotel adjacent to a Metro station in suburban Maryland (e.g. Bethesda) or Virginia (e.g. Arlington). Airbnb and similar services offer many housing options in downtown DC. Suggested neighborhoods are Dupont Circle, Adams Morgan, and Foggy Bottom.

7) What is the best way to get around the city?

Metro services the greater Washington, DC area. More information is available at <http://wmata.com/>. Taxis and ride shares are also available.

8) What should I wear?

Participants should plan on wearing business attire for their congressional meetings. For gentlemen, this includes a suit, dress shirt, and tie. For ladies, a suit or blazer with skirt/slacks is appropriate. Business or business casual attire is acceptable for the day of training.

9) How can I prepare for the congressional meetings?

Participants should spend time in advance of the event to prepare talking points for the congressional meetings. Resources from the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS) can be accessed at www.aibs.org/public-policy/congressional_district_visits_resources.html. More guidance will be sent closer to the event.

10) Can I bring along handouts?

Participants are welcome to bring along a document to distribute to congressional staff. Appropriate examples of handouts include information about your organization/institution or a policy-relevant paper that is understandable by non-scientists. AIBS policy staff can help you to select appropriate documents.