

## *From Cranial to Spine*

# An Overview of Neurosurgical Topics for the Advanced Practice Provider (APP)

We understand. Organizations are limiting travel and continuing education budgets. The AANS wants to help you develop a solid justification for attending educational programming. Use the tools in this kit to explain how attending the [AANS APP Course](#) is a smart investment for your organization.

### **FOCUS ON THE BOTTOM LINE**

When resources are tight, focus on the bottom line: costs vs. benefits. This worksheet will help you determine the full cost of attendance and identify the benefits. Customize the justification letter on the last page to draft a formal (and persuasive) request for funding.

Creative solutions can help you get your request approved. Consider these options:

- Before meeting with your supervisor, prepare a plan that shows who will cover your duties while you attend the conference.
- Offer to prepare and deliver a short presentation and Q&A session for your colleagues to share what you learned. This way, your coworkers will also benefit from your attendance.
- Share resources with colleagues. As an attendee, you will have access to a course outline that can be shared and used as a department reference.

[Contact](#) the AANS education staff for additional information or support when drafting your request. We look forward to meeting you!

# STEP 1: DETERMINE THE COSTS

Before you can justify expenses, calculate what they will be.

Use this worksheet to estimate the total cost of attendance.

EXPENSES	COST
<b>Conference Registration</b> (includes Neuroimaging Workshops and Essential Neurosurgical Skills Practical Clinic) <input type="checkbox"/> AANS Member – \$1,000 <input type="checkbox"/> AANS Non-member – \$1,300	\$
<b>Flight</b> Visit a travel website to estimate your flight cost.	\$
<b>Lodging</b> Visit <a href="#">AANS APP Course</a> website for a discounted hotel rate.	\$
<b>Transportation from the Airport &amp; Parking Information</b> Visit the airport's transit website for shuttle information.	\$
<b>Mileage Reimbursement</b> Driving to the conference or to the airport for your flight? Use Google Maps to calculate the distance then multiply by 54.5 cents per mile (IRS standard 2019 rate).	\$
<b>Meals</b> The course registration (if all sessions are attended) includes four breakfasts, three lunches and snacks during break. Estimate how much additional meals will cost.	\$
<b>Subtotal Per Person</b>	\$
<b>Total number of employees attending</b>	
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$

## STEP 2: OUTLINE THE BENEFITS

When showcasing the benefits of the *AANS From Cranial to Spine: An Overview of Neurosurgical Topics for the Advanced Practice Provider*, focus specifically on what you will bring back to your organization as a return on their investment. Use the course [agenda](#) to answer these questions

**1) Which sessions have particular relevance to the work you do?**

**Example:** Neuroimaging Workshops, Subspecialty Breakouts, Essential Neurosurgical Skills Practical Clinic

**2) Which sessions will help you assist your team to overcome existing or future challenges?**

**For example:** The framework of this conference is designed to fill knowledge and skill gaps and address new advances and interventions in care delivery specific to neurosurgical practice. Moreover, the conference will define guideline recommendations and dosing strategies to promote safe and responsible use of new anticoagulation agents and their reversal in neurosurgical patients.

**3) Are there any speakers your organization would benefit from hearing or working with?**

**For example:** The *AANS From Cranial to Spine: An Overview of Neurosurgical Topics for the Advanced Practice Provider* is developed by a partnership of physicians, nurse practitioners and physician assistants. This four-day course covers all aspects of neurosurgery, including pharmacology and neuroimaging. The content covered is the equivalent to lectures and bedside teaching that happen over years at a busy institution. Topics are designed for both newly hired practitioners and those who are highly experienced.

**4) Networking can help open doors for your organization. Will the presenters and attendees you meet at the course help your department achieve its goals?**

**5) What value could you get from discussions with other neurosurgical nurse practitioners and physician assistants.**

When considering these questions, keep these tips in mind:

- List specific sessions and explain how they will impact you, your department and your facility.
- Clearly make the connection between your organization's needs and the benefits.
- If the budget approver is outside of your department, do not assume they understand your department's goals or any technical terms. Spell out the impact for them.
- Passion is the best persuasion technique – let yours shine through in your letter.

# STEP 3: DRAFT YOUR JUSTIFICATION LETTER

Below, you will find a “justification letter” template, which can help you craft a note to your supervisor explaining all of the benefits of attending the *AANS From Cranial to Spine: An Overview of Neurosurgical Topics for the Advanced Practice Provider* course, including how it will help advance your organization and make you a better employee.

This general template will get you started. Customize it to you and your organization’s particular needs:

Dear < approver’s name >:

I would like to attend the *AANS From Cranial to Spine: An Overview of Neurosurgical Topics for the Advanced Practice Provider* course, taking place on \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ location \_\_\_\_\_. This one-of-a-kind course is designed exclusively for neurosurgical advanced practice providers. The course offers a wide range of topics specific to neurosurgery, including pharmacology, updates in spine, trauma, tumor and cerebrovascular techniques. This year, in addition to an incredible didactic series, the course offers expanded Neuroimaging Workshops and Hands-On Practical Clinic, including suturing skills. This is an exciting opportunity to meet, collaborate and connect with colleagues working in the world of neurosurgery.

The AANS Advanced Practice Provider course covers relevant topics that are directly applicable to my work. Presentation topics range from < list relevant topic > to < list another relevant topic >, and I am confident that the education and skills that gained will be directly applicable to my work. After carefully reviewing the agenda, I have identified a number of key topics that would be applicable to my role:

- Topic 1 and how it will benefit you, your department and your facility
- Topic 2 and how it will benefit you, your department and your facility
- Topic 3 and how it will benefit you, your department and your facility

Getting the information at an in-person event will greatly reduce the research time and costs that <your organization’s name> would normally incur. I have only listed some of the topics; including them all would make this request much too long.

In order to attend the conference and gain these benefits, I am seeking sponsorship of < total amount you need > for the following expenses:

Registration: <\$xxx>  
Round-trip Airfare: <\$xxx>  
Ground Transportation: <\$xxx>  
Hotel: <\$xxx>  
Meals: <\$xxx>

The opportunity for me to develop a network of colleagues and to gain knowledge in areas specific to my job responsibilities makes my participation at the *AANS From Cranial to Spine: An Overview of Neurosurgical Topics for the Advanced Practice Provider* course a wise investment that will yield rich dividends for our organization. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,  
< your name here >