

FY 2026-2027 BUDGET QUESTION
Response to Request for Information

DEPARTMENT(S): Austin Small & Minority Business Resources;

CBQ NO.: 86

REQUESTED BY: (District 3) José Velásquez

DATE REQUESTED: Tuesday, July 28, 2026 9:20 AM

DATE POSTED: Saturday, August 1, 2026

REQUEST:

On page 7 of the Service Enhancements document, \$70,000 is approved ongoing for the Small and Minority Business Resources (SMBR) Connections Conference. How was this event funded in previous years?

RESPONSE:

The Small Business Connections Conference is an annual event hosted by Austin Small and Minority Business Resources (ASMBR), Austin Economic Development (AED), and Austin Financial Services (AFS). The departments have partnered to plan, fund and execute this event since 2023.

In prior years, expenses for the conference have been split between the three departments as follows:

- ASMBR - \$30,000
- AED - \$10,000
- AFS - \$30,000.

ASMBR has served as the lead department for the Connections conference and has assigned staff to assist with planning and coordinating event details along with staff from AED and AFS. The event continues to grow and attract new participants. In 2023, in its inaugural year, approximately 350 participants attended the event, in 2024 this number increased to over 700, and in 2025 over 750 participants attended. For the 2026 conference over 800 attendees are expected.