



## **Congressional Visits Day: Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is Congressional Visits Day (CVD)?**

Congressional Visits Day (CVD) is a great opportunity to educate your members of Congress on the importance of optics and photonics and to establish a relationship with your Congressional offices.

SETCVD is a coordinated effort for scientific societies to advocate to Congress all on the same day. The National Photonics Initiative (NPI) participates in SETCVD.

### **Why should I participate?**

Members of Congress are interested in the needs of their constituents and the best way to inform them of the needs of the optics community is to meet with their offices as a constituent.

### **What is the typical CVD schedule like?**

As an example, below is the 2016 schedule:

#### **Day 1:**

8:30am-9:30am Congressional Fellowship Program (optional event for most participants, required for student travel grant recipients). Learn about the Congressional Fellowship program from a Congressional Fellow.

9:30am-10:00am Check-in for NPI Training Session.

10:00am-11:30am NPI Training Session (All participants are required to attend)

11:30am-12:15pm Lunch, meet and strategize with your team (All participants are required to attend)

12:15pm-1:00pm Travel Time

1:00pm-4:00pm SETCVD Orientation Session (SETCVD event)

4:00pm-7:00pm Reception and Exhibits (SETCVD event)

#### **Day 2:**

8:30am-5:30pm Congressional Visits Appointments (setup by NPI staff)

*\*The 2017 schedule has not been set and may be different than last year's schedule.*

### **How do I register for CVD?**

You must register by April 14 in order to participate in CVD. The earlier you register, the better chance you have of getting meetings with all of your Congressional offices. You can register at [www.lightourfuture.org/cvd](http://www.lightourfuture.org/cvd)

### **I registered, but now I am no longer able to attend, what should I do?**

Contact Brandy Dillingham ([bdillingham@osa.org](mailto:bdillingham@osa.org) or 202.416.1409) as soon as possible so that she may cancel the Congressional appointments made for you.

### **What information is covered at the training session?**

The training session will provide you with details and background on the NPI, the “asks” and how to have an effective meeting. You will receive documents explaining the important issues and how to discuss them in your meetings as well as advice on how to talk about your work.

**Will I be doing visits on my own or with a group?**

Each participant will be placed on a combined society team based on your geographic region. Each team will have a team leader (either a staff member from OSA and SPIE or an experienced NPI CVD participant).

**What meetings do I set up for CVD?**

None. The NPI will take care of scheduling all of your appointments as you will be put into a group with other participants.

**What time will my meetings be scheduled?**

Expect your Congressional meetings to be scheduled any time between 8:00am-5:00pm on Wednesday, April 26. Should an office propose a meeting time outside of that time period, the NPI will reach out to you to verify that time works for your schedule.

**What should I wear to my meetings?**

Business attire. As you will be doing a lot of walking on Capitol Hill, it is a good idea to wear comfortable shoes.

**Will the NPI give us materials to leave behind for Congressional staff?**

Yes. The NPI will have all the materials to give to the Congressional staff. Each team’s leaders will be in charge of the folders.

**What issues are we supposed to talk about?**

The NPI will provide you with the legislative issues to discuss with the office closer to time of the visits. It may be helpful to view the issues discussed in previous years, which can be [viewed here](#). As most Congressional offices want to hear about the work happening in their district in optics and photonics, you should be prepared to discuss the industry and research in the district/state and the work that you do.

**I have connections with a state/district different than the address I provided during signup, can I get a meeting with the member of Congress representing that state/district?**

Please send the information to Brandy Dillingham ([bdillingham@osa.org](mailto:bdillingham@osa.org)) and she will make an attempt to get you an appointment.

**I am a student, can I get financial assistance to travel to CVD?**

There are a limited number of student travel grants available that students can apply for. These grants are available for students doing CVD for the first time. Contact Brandy Dillingham ([bdillingham@osa.org](mailto:bdillingham@osa.org)) for more information on the student travel grant, the application process and eligibility requirements.

**Additional questions about CVD, contact:**

Krisinda Plenkovich ([krisindap@spie.org](mailto:krisindap@spie.org)) at SPIE or Brandy Dillingham ([bdillingham@osa.org](mailto:bdillingham@osa.org)) at OSA.

**Additional questions about the NPI, contact:**

Krisinda Plenkovich ([krisindap@spie.org](mailto:krisindap@spie.org)) at SPIE or Laura Kolton ([lkolto@osa.org](mailto:lkolto@osa.org)) at OSA.