**Getting Funding to Attend The Mathematical Association Annual Conference**

Those who attend our annual conferences are almost unanimous: these conferences are enormously enjoyable. You meet old friends and make new ones. You learn new mathematics and new approaches that you can take back to your classroom – and you’re recharged professionally.

But ... your Head of Department or Headteacher is, quite reasonably, not going to fund you to go have ‘fun’, so anyone attending our conference must be able to make a good argument as to why funded conference attendance will be good value for money for the school.

To make this case, you will need a good understanding of the benefits your attendance will bring you, your colleagues, and your school.

There are intangible, but very real, benefits of meeting other teachers and exchanging experiences and ideas, of being affirmed and of sharing challenges. When you attend our conference, you will meet other teachers of mathematics from all phases and from all over the country. Of course, you will encounter like-minded people in the sessions you choose – but you’ll also benefit from informal discussion during the breaks and in the evening. This recharges, affirms and renews you in a way not possible with other forms of CPD.

In the very substantial category of formal CPD goals, you can mention the following, but there are seven slots each of nine sessions, with a spread of primary, secondary, tertiary and general mathematical focus and interest in each. For example …

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| **CPD Goal** |  **2017 Conference Session** |
| To learn about new and forthcoming changes in mathematics curricula, from 5-19 | We have our *Primary Plenary* by Debbie Morgan: *What is mastery, why does it matter, and what are teachers doing where it’s working well?* and Andrew Taylor on *Problems, models and data … the challenges of the new A-level*

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| To find out what new textbooks and other teaching materials publishers are bringing out | On the Saturday and Sunday of the conference we have a Publishers’ Exhibition where you can talk to representatives and see what they have on offer – but we also have a variety of sessions where you can experience new ways to use or develop homemade or commercial resources. |
| To learn new approaches to teaching a particular topic | For example, we have Julia Smith *Recharge and motivate: ideas for GCSE resits (or others challenged by GCSE)* and the ever-popular Rachael Horsman *Ideas for developing geometric thinking*  |
| To meet and network with other teachers in similar and contrasting situations from around the country  | Conference attendees meet each other at the coffee breaks between sessions, and at breakfast, lunch and dinner. There is also a first-timers’ welcome session and a lively Quiz Night |
| To develop understanding of how new technologies can be used to teach mathematics | This year we have a T&L with technology thread running through the conference with sessions by Douglas Butler, Mick Blaylock, Mark Dawes, Stephen Britton and Richard Lissaman |
| To expand your mathematical horizons  | There are sessions to intrigue you mathematically, such as the celebrated statistician and nurse Florence Nightingale, (yes, that one!), Zeeman medallist Rob Eastaway (*Solving outside the box: creativity in problem solving*), Liz Meenan (*Geometry for all through paper folding*) and a Saturday night special with Ben Sparks and David Acheson: *A mixture of maths and live music, in which David and Ben will attempt to explore their common denominators*  |
| To meet teachers who have had recognised success in improving their school’s standing in mathematics | Mel Muldowney who previously led the Mathematics Department of “most improved school in England out of National Challenge” will lead a session |
| To find ways to make mathematics more relevant and engaging in your classroom | We cannot find a session that fails to meet this goal! |

These are only some of the conference sessions you will be able to choose from. Speakers include Robert Barbour, Joyce Brown, Rose Griffiths, Gerry Leversha, Ems Lord, Adam McBride, Jennie Pennant, Tom Roper, Chris Sangwin and of course our President Jennie Golding, to name but a few. Full details of the conference can be found at <http://www.m-a.org.uk/annual-conference>.

Attending this conference and taking part in your chosen sessions will represent an intensive, but enjoyable, three-day course of Continuing Professional Development. Your Head of Department could not make a better investment in staff development. In case you need to approach someone in your institution for funding, here is a [pro forma justification letter](http://www.m-a.org.uk/resources/Conference_Justification_Letter_2017.docx) that you can use.