

FAQs

NIGP
FORUM
2024

IN-PERSON ATTENDEE FIRST TIMER'S GUIDE TO FORUM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Welcome to Charlotte, the home of NASCAR racing! We are so glad you are able to attend, and we look forward to connecting with you! The first time at an event like this is overwhelming for all of us so don't feel out of place; we've all been there!

Your Member Council and Talent Council have created these Frequently Asked Questions to try to help ease any anxiety about not knowing where to go or what session to attend or becoming involved in the best way possible. So, rev those engines because it will be a wild ride!

1. What should I expect during my first Forum?

- a. You will experience a wide range of sessions with amazing topics to choose from! You'll be able to meet with a wide variety of suppliers at the Expo so take advantage of the easy access!

2. How should I prepare for Forum?

- a. Great question! Check out the Forum page on NIGP's website. You can navigate to the page by clicking here: <https://nigp.org/events/annual-forum-and-products-exposition/forum>.
- b. Be sure and download the app from the app store that your device is supported by. This will give you the most up to date information as schedule changes could happen.
- c. Finish up last-minute tasks so that you are not stressed out during the conference.
- d. Attend the NIGP webinar for first timers that will be scheduled shortly before the conference.
- e. Post, read and engage on the NIGP Forum 2024 NSite group! You'll find lots of helpful information in this group and, possibly, an old friend you haven't talked to in years!

3. What is the Products Exposition?

- a. It is the supplier trade show that will allow you to meet your existing suppliers and perhaps find new ones! They are eager to meet you and look forward to answering any questions you may have. This year, NIGP will have theaters in the exhibit hall for additional learning opportunities from suppliers.

4. What should I bring to Forum?

- a. Comfortable shoes! You will be doing a LOT of walking. Many of us simply choose to wear sneakers because that enables us to get to where we need to be.
- b. Business cards! Not only will the suppliers appreciate this but your fellow professionals will too! This conference is all about education and networking and both are meaningful ways to continue to improve your professional standing.
- c. External chargers! Our phones are extensions of our hands and always get a lot of use. Since the most updated conference schedule is on the Forum app, you'll use your phone more frequently throughout the conference.
- d. Comfortable business casual clothing! This is one of the more frequent questions first timers have. But don't forget casual clothing because there are opportunities to socialize with your fellow professionals. And, this can't be stated too frequently, bring comfortable shoes to walk in as you will definitely meet your daily steps goal!
- e. Notebooks and pens/pencils! You'll want to take notes in each of the outstanding sessions you'll attend.

5. How do I make the most of networking opportunities?

- a. Don't be shy! We all understand the first timers' butterflies so don't be afraid to meet new people.
- b. Attend the social events! NIGP and the host chapter always bring an amazing event for attendees to meet, mix, and mingle so make this a part of your schedule!
- c. Take advantage of the NIGP Councils and Governing Board – Talent Council, Member Council, and Finance Council. Photos and contact information for each can be found here: <https://www.nigp.org/about-nigp/our-leadership>. We are here to serve so don't be afraid to approach us.

6. Is it okay to attend sessions alone or should I try to find someone to go with?

- a. It is absolutely ok to attend by yourself but again, don't be shy! Introduce yourself to the professionals you are seated with.
- b. Attend the session with a friend! If you are with a group, it is perfectly fine to attend sessions together. But do make a point of meeting new friends!

7. How can I navigate the conference venue effectively?

- a. Another great question! Wayfinding signs are located throughout the conference area that will help you find your session. And, QCT volunteers will be posted throughout the center to help with directions. You can also stop by the Information Booth by registration. After the first day, you should be a pro at finding meeting rooms!

8. Which airport is the best to fly to, and how can I get from the airport to the conference site?

- a. Travel and transportation information is available on the NIGP Forum page. You can find the information by clicking this link and navigating to the bottom of the page: <https://www.nigp.org/events/annual-forum-and-products-exposition/forum-hotel>.

9. What resources are available for first timers at Forum?

- a. There will be a first-timers meet and greet before the conference meet and greet on Saturday. Stay tuned to the NIGP Forum 2024 NSite group for more information.

10. What can I expect when I arrive at the hotel I'm registered in?

- a. Be sure to fly in on Saturday! That way you will have time to get checked into your room. Then you can walk over to the convention center and get registered for the conference. Registration is located on the ground level of the convention center in Concourse A (off S College St.).
- b. After getting your name badge, check out the information tables around the registration area. Take a look at all of the standing banners located in and around there. Meet new people and perhaps make dinner plans.
- c. GET EXCITED! You're about to have an awesome experience! And some of you may be asked to write about your experiences afterwards!

11. How can I follow up after the conference?

- a. Review your notes! Reach out and schedule time with other professionals you've met at Forum. Be proactive about pursuing connections from the networking you've done!

12. How can I make the most of my overall conference experience as a first timer?

- a. Be an advocate for yourself! Embrace the opportunities to meet as many fellow professionals as possible. Don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone and try new things!
- b. ENJOY THE EXPERIENCE! We all have memories of our first Forum. Ask others about theirs!

13. What should I do if I encounter technical difficulties or have questions about conference materials?

- a. NIGP staff are the best of the best. They will assist you with any and all issues that may arise during the conference.

14. Are continuing education credits available for sessions I've attended?

- a. Yes! Your NIGP transcript will show the maximum number of contact hours that can be earned by one's full participation during the Forum. All sessions, with the exception of entity networking sessions, will be recorded and available to watch on demand for 60 days after Forum. Additional contact hours can be earned for on-demand viewing. We recommend keeping a list of the sessions that you attended in case you need this information for your employer, or for professional certifications.

15. How can I maximize my exposure to exhibitors and sponsors at Forum?

- a. BRING YOUR BUSINESS CARDS! Try to meet as many suppliers during the Products Exposition as you can. It's not an easy feat for any of us but the suppliers appreciate even 30 seconds to 1 minute of your time. They are spending money on us so we should show our appreciation by stopping by to chat.
- b. Sponsors are listed on signage throughout the convention center. If you run across one, please introduce yourself and thank them for their support of the procurement profession!
- c. Take suppliers cards and add them to your eprocurement database. Schedule short video calls so that you can relax and really get to know them and what they offer.

16. Are there options available for dietary restrictions at mealtimes and/or snack times?

- a. Yes! NIGP will do all that is necessary to ensure that you remain healthy, wealthy, and wise during the conference! Well, maybe not wealthy and wise but they are committed to keeping everyone safe and healthy during Forum. Please inform NIGP staff in advance of any special needs or allergies by emailing to forumspecialneeds@nigp.org. Staff cannot guarantee accommodations if not notified in advance.

FAQs

Continued

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17. Is there a code of conduct to follow for professional behavior at the conference?

- a. Absolutely. NIGP has an expectation that all attendees will adhere to the NIGP Code of Conduct. You can read it here:
<https://s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/nigp-prod-media/assets/forum/2023/2022-event-code-of-conduct.pdf>

18. Can I access conference materials or recordings after the event?

- a. Absolutely! The virtual platform will be available for 60 days after forum for viewing sessions on-demand.

19. How can I provide feedback or suggestions for future Forums?

- a. Each session will have a survey for attendees to complete. Additionally, a conference survey will be made available to all attendees upon conclusion of Forum.
- b. NIGP is eager to hear your impressions! Please be sure to complete the surveys and offer suggestions you have. Just like there is no dumb question, there is no dumb suggestion so submit them all!

The main takeaway is to enjoy! Embrace the learning, reach out and meet new friends, and ask for help if and when you need it! Your Governing Board and Councils want you to have the best experience so come to Forum with confidence and excitement! We will as well!

**Can't wait to see you in
Charlotte August 25 – 28!**

