



The Alt Protein Project

APP case studies:

Planning and executing a regional conference

*This resource is meant to act as a supplement to the **APP's guide on [hosting large events](#)** which includes information on how to host successful events. While those guides are the best places to start, we hope that you will also find it helpful to see what real APP chapters did to achieve this goal, down to the emails they sent and the notes they took.*

All the credit for this case study goes to the SDSU APP!

☐ Envision your event

SDSU APP created an [event vision](#) (see below) to map out their conference goals, what they hoped to accomplish, and who they hoped to reach. They drew inspiration from [this resource](#) about outlining an Asana workflow with specific due dates to guide their thinking.

- [SDSU's event vision:](#)

First Mission and Impact

The [San Diego State University Alt Protein Project](#)'s first annual Alt Protein Summit will take place where it was originally conceived on university grounds during the week of [Greenfest](#), an Associated Students program which promotes a series of educational and entertaining events for the SDSU campus community that encourage, advocate, and celebrate sustainability, diversity, and SDSU pride. The first conference will originally celebrate its local roots by connecting regional San Diego strategic planners, founders, entrepreneurs, researchers, educators, community organizers, and other visionaries in professions pertaining to alternative protein ecosystem building. We aim to aid in aligning the interest of those present through implementing the necessary incentives required for coordinating impactful and fulfilling academic and vocational opportunities. We believe tangible internship, fellowship, educational, research, and entrepreneurship programs can only be justified through initiating this form of intentional stakeholder thought leadership.

The **free** event seeks to recognize San Diego State University's potential to become a prominent repository of innovation, commercialization, and talent for the rapidly growing alternative protein industry in the region and the global market. From our perspective of being a registered leadership organization on campus, we believe the most obvious next step to support our SDSU peers, alumni, and teachers is to leverage existing

- [Event outline resource:](#)



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Executive summary

In two sentences, what is this project about?

Background (Goals)

What led up to this project? Why is this work important?

Problem statement (Challenges)

What problem are you attempting to solve?

Proposed solution (Plan)

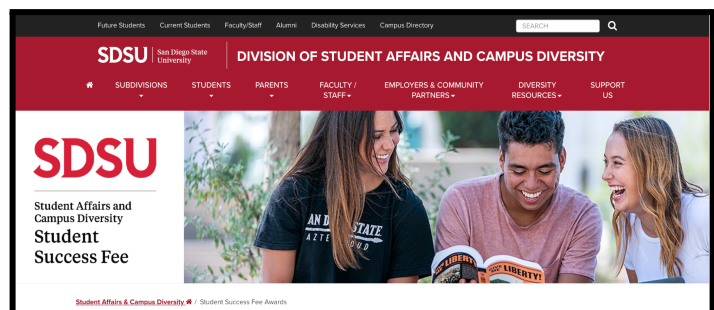
How will you solve this problem?

In addition to helping the SDSU APP team plan accordingly, the event vision also served as a valuable resource to share with others involved in the planning process (e.g. panelists, keynote speakers, facility manager, their regional mentor at GFI, etc). The better you are able to communicate your vision for your conference, the better others can support and help you bring that vision to life!

Remember, you do *not* need to have every single detail depicted in your event vision from the start! It's natural for your event vision to take time to build as you brainstorm and gather more information. Allow your event vision to be a living document that reflects the shifts that come with planning a large event.

☐ Secure funding for the event

SDSU APP applied for funding through the [Student Success Fee](#) and [Campus Program Funding](#) at their university. Conferences can be quite pricey so it's important to explore funding that is available to you as a student organization at your university. Make sure to keep an eye out for funding deadlines, especially if you are planning an event far out in the future. Given the clear event vision they created, SDSU APP was able to submit a strong proposal and receive \$17,500 USD!





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Total **17,5** How does your SSF proposal support your career focus and goals?

This SSF fee will allow me, as the president and founder of the Alt Protein Project SDSU, to signal that I have done something of value for my community. This event is a culmination of how effective I am as a student, and the results of it matter more to me than the grades I get in my classes this year. If the event goes well, it means that I have grown in my skills and theories as someone who wishes to provide a fulfilling and impactful career path for myself and my fellow thinkers/teachers (students, faculty, professionals). This will set up an increased chance of success for my senior year in which I will still likely be leading the strategic planning process of my organization. Afterwards, I hope to aid the industry by addressing the most pressing bottlenecks that stand in the way of success. I hope to do this by becoming a thought leader, which to me is the definition of a fulfilling career, as it signals my attempt to synthesize knowledge from different sectors in a local context

Characters remaining: 0

Please describe how your SSF proposal will help you and others explore career options?

This will contextualize vocational opportunities for interdisciplinary food system careers and beyond. While alternative sources of protein will be the main focus, we will hear where talent is needed in many aspects of the local food system (for those already likely living in San Diego). More importantly, this event will plant the seeds for new forms of local collaboration, which might even create new career options that combine localized forms of knowledge and networks that have been already built through previous collaboration between educational and learning systems. Much of this subject is on the cutting edge of science (e.g. biotech in San Diego), and novel pathways for innovation have yet to be explored (as the industry is still exploring its own potential and strategy). This event will hopefully instigate a fresh perspective on how change happens and how we can use our role in our career to provide solutions in an empathetic but visionary way, and bring the conversation to SDSU!

Budget Narrative

(1000 characters or less)

Provide a brief description of how you will use these funds.

Provide explanation for any items that may be questioned when under review.

We are using free Montezuma Hall, free for students, so conference fee is N/A unless we budget for a longer event. Travel is N/A unless we want UCSD students to come for free and bus them in. We have three honorariums budgeted thus far. While we will likely have over 20 speakers/panelists that are willing to speak without a fee or expectations of payment, these honorariums will allow us to highlight prominent thought leaders within each industry sector. We plan on renting any temporary supplies (like chairs, tables, etc.) and purchasing reusable supplies for similar events like this in the future, which means physical supplies like signage, tablecloths, and banners will be generalized to a necessary extent. Estimate based on associated printing and acquiring costs. Event staff and coordinator is necessary for a smooth running event and informational processes (estimated 30\$ per person per hour). Video/Sound Engineer necessary for relaying the contents of the events towards present and future evaluation, feedback, and amplifications across other channels. Our event highlights the start of regional collaboration, so this seems necessary for future stakeholders who want to get involved. Associated marketing costs have to do with promotion and information exchange across various channels. We hope to use digital ads across various social media and informational platforms, and physical ones throughout campus. We plan on hosting the speaker portion of the event virtually, in which the event is recorded seamlessly and interested stakeholders across our larger network can hop on in. We also plan on conducting a study of the effectiveness for the event, so we need various information analytic tools to evaluate attendance, registration, and other success metrics.

Screenshots from SDSU APP's student success fee application!

SDSU APP also applied for additional funding from GFI via the [Funding Guidelines](#).

☐ Delegate tasks amongst team members



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SDSU APP used their [organization structure's roles](#) (see below) to discern who was best-suited for each part of the planning process. Lean into the power of delegation in order to break down the larger tasks at hand. Rather than leaving all outreach to one person, assign outreach efforts to specific team members (e.g. designate relationship owners). This will allow an even distribution so that one person does not have all the responsibility of keeping track and managing all communications to panelists, speakers, and event attendees.

Define your team roles and responsibilities

Name	Title	Responsibilities
Justin Wilken	President	Make sure we stay established and coordinated as a club by assigning duties to leadership and other officers, planning organization elections, filling in when needed in other positions, and strategizing and tracking an effective engagement vision for the organization. Official spokesperson, attends all meetings.
Sophia Salgado	Director of External Affairs (Treasurer and Operations)	Manages the organization budget (CPF, SSF, and GFI), Organizes fundraising and professional events (summit, off campus facility tours/networking), handles reimbursements, soliciting of sponsors, attends annual treasurer training. Advises the President and team on financial implications of activities and goals.
Talia Solovei	Director of Internal Affairs (Event Coordinator)	Oversees the organization's event logistic/communications department, maintains and updates university EAS system, a yearly internal (exec meetings) and external (e.g. linktree calendar, RSO student life apps, GFI, Aztec News) calendars of activities, give notice to all platform members through a weekly newsletter.
Paige, Tierney	Co-Directors of Recruitment	Arranges off campus inbound socials (get-to-know-you events, cooking demos, product taste tests) and inbound promotion in the form of tabling events. Onboards new recruits, responsible for elections.
Jericho, Shotaro	Co-Directors of Research & Education	Identify, develop, and execute ecosystem map of alternative protein curriculum, research, and teaching materials/opportunities. Assist comms team and regional consortia faculty, admins, centers, and orgs.
Angeline	Director of Marketing	Manages Instagram and LinkedIn accounts' marketing, advertisement, education, and content campaigns. Responsible for printing and posting event flyers at least one week before and identifying potential partners.
James	Director of Public Relations	Manages WIX website (consolidating education, resources, industry landscape/careers) and hubspot crafts content narratives for PR and ecosystem partnership campaigns. Issue press releases when appropriate.



Conference-specific roles/delegations could include:

- Finance team (tracking conference budget and sponsorship amounts, submitting grant/funding applications)
 - Sponsorship team (leading outreach to potential sponsors)
- Event space team (securing space reservation, outlining layout, leading setup)
- Programming team (deciding on the themes/topics of the conference, leading outreach to speakers/panelists)
- Marketing team (creating and publishing event graphics, publicizing at different club events or lectures)

SDSU APP also assigned day-of-the-event tasks to group members. For example, certain members were tasked with:

- Leading the sign-in table
- Providing panelists with their name tags

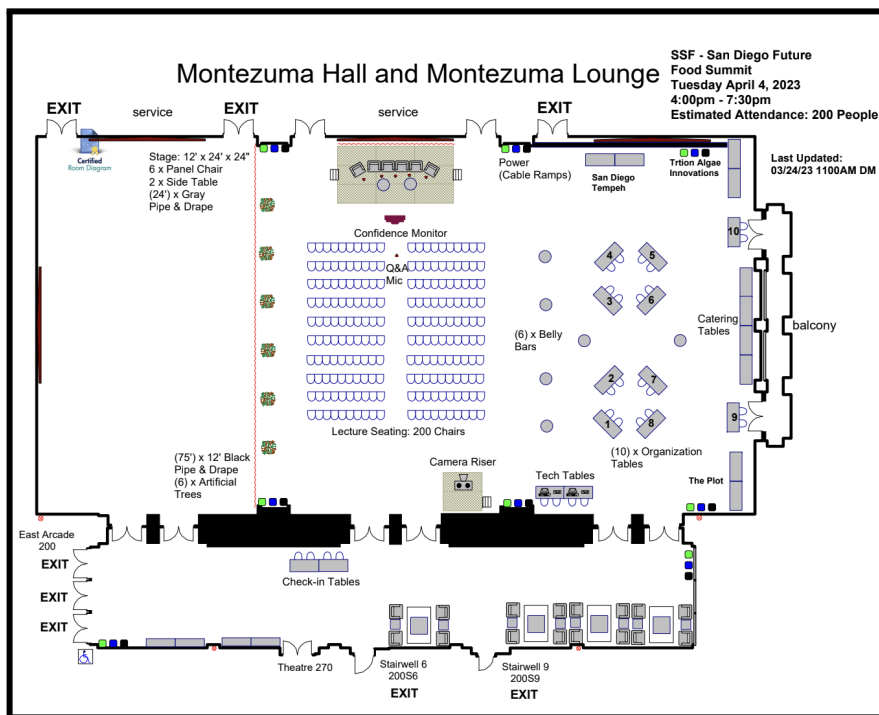


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- Distributing program flyers
- Table setup

☐ Secure a venue

SDSU APP determined their event budget based on expectations of attendees, vendors, and activities with the help of their facility manager. They determined a rough estimate of 300 in-person attendees. Based on that number, they [considered many venues](#), and ultimately landed on Montezuma Hall (see below for the final [blueprint](#)).



SDSU APP reserved Montezuma Hall for their event from 2:30 - 8:30pm to allow for ample set-up and clean-up time. See their full reservation summary [here](#).

Once securing the venue itself, SDSU APP focused on other logistical details such as vendor [parking and loading](#) and environmental health and safety contracting ([permits](#)).

☐ Secure catering and food for attendees

Fortunately, SDSU APP is located in a region with many plant-based restaurants that offered catering services!

☐ Design marketing materials





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Create various [external graphics](#) to print and disseminate to your segmented audience, alongside a general [summit promotional flier](#) and any advertising mediums you may have chosen (e.g [KPBS Graphics](#)).

☐ Compile a list of potential speakers

Determine the regional scope of your event and compile thought leaders from your ecosystem landscape map of regional stakeholders from their websites, LinkedIn profiles, or databases/articles ([San Diego Contacts](#))

☐ Determine panel topics

Group your potential speakers into themes and create an initial description for each, working off of existing synergies ([see slides 3-6](#)).

COLLABORATE WITH CULINARY COMMUNITIES

 Jessica Waite, Co-Founder and CEO of The Plot	 Dissaya T. Founder and CEO of Shroomeats
 Grant Plummer, Owner and Operator of Veg'n Out	 Matt Clifford, Founding Board Member of Naturally San Diego
 Adam Hiner, Co-Founder of Boochcraft, CEO of PACHA	

CRAFT VISIONS AND BUILD BRIDGES

 Neal Bloom, Managing Partner of Interlock Capital	 Hannah Schuler, Local Food Economy Lab Manager of SDFSA
 Brian Berry, Strategic Advisor of The Good Food Institute	 Matt Clasen, Director of TMA BlueTech™
 Harrison Shapira, Capital Development Partnering Manager of Biocom California	

MANUFACTURE A NOVEL FOOD ECONOMY

 Steve Matzke, Senior Manager of the Pioneering Innovation Team at CP Kelco	 Steven Rees, PhD, Founder and CEO of Defined Bioscience
 Morgan Keim, Chief Commercial Officer of Plantible Foods	 Lou Cooperhouse (President and CEO of BlueNalu)
 Miller Tran, VP of Research and Development at Triton Algae Innovations	

SUPPORTING ACADEMIC RESOURCES

 Asia Sheehab, Academic Community Coordinator at The Good Food Institute	 Changqi Liu, Food Science Researcher and Faculty Advisor
 Savannah Schuermann, Sustainability Professor	 Y. Olive Li, Functional Food Engineering Professor
 Erlinde Cornelis, Sustainability Commission and Marketing Professor	 Dr. Paula Peters, Marketing Professor

☐ Reach out to panelists

- Use [GFI's email templates](#) and include necessary panel information (expected co-panelists, questions, audience) as well as a specific timeline for preparation, rehearsals, deliverables, and reimbursement. Our university used this [contract](#) and [payment request form](#) to outline requirements and compensation for our panelists.
- Once panelists have been confirmed, be timely with your communication to ensure speakers feel informed and prepared for the event! Ask panelists for their feedback on



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panel questions to help craft meaningful discussions where all panelists can contribute their insights.

- Gather biographical information from panelists so you can properly introduce them and highlight key aspects of their background that qualify them to speak on the panel.
 - Ask panelists how they would like to be addressed during the panel (i.e. Doctor, Professor, etc.).

Hello,

Thank you for your continued patience regarding receiving specific information surrounding the logistics, agenda, and your role as a panelist in the San Diego Alt Protein Summit taking place on April 4th. I am working hard with my team to coordinate with the necessary actors in order to make this as valuable as possible for you with our limited bandwidth, and am happy to say that we will all be gathering in Montezuma Hall (see attached for the layout) for our celebration!

Please, give me feedback for what topics, questions, and concepts would be the most valuable for you to craft responses to and discuss with your fellow panelists? I aim to incorporate your visions into the final narrative and personalized questions I will be crafting and sending to you by Friday March 31st.

If you haven't already, please, take a look at the General Agenda (attached) to validate your panelist groupings and co-panelists, and if you haven't already done so please send us the GL contract and Payment Request Form that I individualized for you and emailed in the past few months so you can be reimbursed following the summit for your time, if that is something you decide to accept. If you can't attend anymore for any reason or have any questions or concerns at all, please let me know so I can accommodate your request.

Best,
Justin

Hello Alt Protein Summit Panelists and Ecosystem Builders,

Thank you for your continued enthusiasm regarding celebrating our local roots by connecting regional San Diego strategic planners, founders, entrepreneurs, researchers, educators, community organizers, and other visionaries in professions pertaining to alternative protein ecosystem building. It has been my absolute pleasure to connect with many of you regarding your vocational niches you've currently found yourselves in, and I will hold myself to the highest standard I can to best help curate your unique visions and expertise into the narrative of the summit. By March 21st I will be finalizing your personalized questions and logistical elements of the summit, so if there are any interesting personal insights, experiences, or general topics/questions that you would like incorporated into your panel, please let me know personally in the coming weeks so I can best support you.

My team is hard at work thinking about which social channels we wish to market our event to, and have attached our general summit flyer if you'd like to spread the word to your network! We have a promotional budget we can allocate towards in order to reach our audience, so if you all have feasible advice regarding a specific demographic of prospects in the region of San Diego please send that my way!

Finally, if you have any questions or concerns regarding filling out the necessary contracts, the panel in which you have been placed, or anything else that I might have missed, please let me know!

Best,
Justin (President, Founder of Alt Protein Project at SDSU)

SDSU team communicating with panelists via email in the weeks leading up to the conference!

☐ **Create a registration link and page for your event**



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SDSU APP bought a year-long domain on [Wix](#) (although [school library web hosting](#) for registered organizations or other free alternatives are available) to be their platform to house their chapter's information and [summit registration page](#).

Register to attend and receive any necessary information!

First Name *

Last Name *

Email *

☒ I want to subscribe to The Alt Protein Project's newsletter and receive updates on their events and accomplishments.

☐ I agree to receive updates and evaluation surveys regarding this event.

in

Submit

KINDRED

BERRY GOOD FOOD

USA

Slow Food

TACOTARIAN

DONNA JEAN

the plot

BlueNalu

Vegan Out

STARTUP SAN DIEGO

TMA BlueTech

food+soil

OCEAN SPIN

HILLCREST

mayas

veggiegrill

defined bioscience

Angel Conference

INTERLOCK CAPITAL

PASA

farmer's market

PRODUCE GOOD

plumeria

HUMAN SMART

SPLIT

the yasai

Solana Center

PLANT POWER

MATTHEW KENNEY

Naturally

Biocom California

TRAILHEAD CAPITAL

plantible

FARM BUREAU

ARROW

☐ Market your conference on social media

In the weeks leading up to the conference, SDSU APP posted about the event on their social media platforms to spread the word. They specifically tagged their conference

panelists on [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#) (enabling them to repost) which allowed them to amplify SDSU APP's original posts in turn. Oftentimes, featured guest speakers and panelists may be active on social media platforms such as [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#), so asking them to share their participation at your event is a great way to draw in folks from their vast networks as well.

☐ Write an agenda to stay on track during the event



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- a. SDSU APP created an [overarching agenda](#) (see a snapshot below) for their conference that allowed them to have a good sense of timing for their event.

Welcome (4:00 PM - 4:10 PM)

[Justin Wilken](#) (President and Founder of [The San Diego State Alt. Protein Project](#)) will provide an introduction for and moderate the following speakers and panelist sessions. (Attached here)

Keynote (4:10 PM - 4:30 PM)

Bruce Friedrich is founder & president of the Good Food Institute, also known as GFI, a global network of nonprofit organizations, with affiliates in the U.S., India, Israel, Brazil, Singapore, and Europe, that works on alternative protein policy, science, and corporate engagement. GFI is accelerating the production of plant-based and cultivated meat in order to bolster the global protein supply while protecting our environment, promoting global health, and preventing food insecurity. Bruce is a TED Fellow, Y Combinator alum, 2021 "American Food Hero" (EatingWell Magazine), and popular speaker on food innovation. He has penned op-eds for the Wall Street Journal, Guardian, USA Today, Los Angeles Times, Wired, CNN, Foreign Policy Magazine, Nature Food, and many other publications. He has represented GFI on the TED Radio Hour, New Yorker Radio Hour, Recode Decode, the Ezra Klein Show, Making Sense (with Sam Harris), and a variety of other podcasts and TV programs. Bruce's 2019 TED talk has been viewed more than 2.3 million times and translated into 30 languages. He co-authored two books, contributed chapters or forewords to ten more, and has written seven law review articles. He is here today virtually to share his knowledge of the alternative protein ecosystem to you all, so please give him a warm welcome.

Panel 1 (4:30 PM - 5:00 PM)

Please welcome [Brian Berry](#) (Strategic Advisor of [The Good Food Institute](#)) [Neal Bloom](#) (the Managing Partner of [Interlock Capital](#)) [Hanna Schuler](#) (the manager of the [San Diego Food System Alliance](#) Local Food Economy Lab) [Matt Classen](#) (the Director of [TMA BlueTech](#)), and [Harrison Shapira](#) (Capital Development Partnering Manager of [Biocom California](#)) to the stage. In this panel, we will explore ecosystem building and vision setting for an agrarian revolution. This means understanding the methods in which the academic, private, and civil sector interact with each other in their joint responsibility to transition food systems in engaging, effective, and efficient ways.

- Map out your various sessions and overestimate time blocks to ensure ample time for transitions. Take into account the time needed for event setup, testing audio and visual systems, and welcoming guests.
- b. SDSU APP created individual agendas for *each* panel as well (e.g. [Panel 4 agenda](#)).

Panel 4 (7:00 PM - 7:30 PM)

[Asia Sheehab](#) (Academic Community Coordinator at The Good Food Institute) will be joined by SDSU faculty to imagine ambitious programs and opportunities to build the next generation of talent:

[Savanna Schuermann](#) (Sustainability Professor) [Erlinde Cornelis](#) (Sustainability Commission, Marketing Professor), [Changqi Liu](#) (Food Science Researcher), [Olive Li](#) (Food Engineering Professor) and [Paula Peter](#) (Consumer Behavior Professor).

Panel Narrative and Questions:

[Changqi Liu](#), you are a food scientist with an interest in novel and underutilized food sources. You are also a member of the Center for Better Food Futures here at SDSU. Can you share your ongoing research on alternative proteins at SDSU, and some benefits you have gathered from eating more plant based?



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- It can be helpful to write out exactly what you will be saying, especially when you have multiple panelists to introduce and feature. It's important to make sure all panelists are properly introduced (e.g. make sure to include key accomplishments and credentials, practice name pronunciation in advance, etc!)
- By writing out a panel agenda, SDSU APP's panel moderator was able to keep an eye on timing and ensure each panelist was able to provide their insights equally.

☐ **Communicate with registered attendees via email**

- a. Use an email marketing platform (SDSU APP used [Mailchimp](#)) to communicate with event registrants weeks before the event. For in-person events, be sure to communicate logistical details ahead of time such as venue location, parking accommodations, accessibility, and an event timeline.

Hello and thank you for registering to attend The San Diego Alt Protein Summit!

It is my absolute pleasure to announce that the commencement of the first-ever San Diego Alt Protein Summit is happening in person tomorrow in Montezuma Hall, a venue which is inside of the Aztec Student Union on SDSU's campus (Aztec Student Union, San Diego, CA 92182). We will also be hosting a [virtual zoom meeting option located here](#), which will capture the event live. Attached is the general agenda for the summit.

We believe that we have an unparalleled opportunity to cross-pollinate ideas across sectors, across academic fields, and across industries, and wish to celebrate our local roots and forge connections by connecting founders, entrepreneurs, researchers, educators, community organizers, and other visionary stakeholders who are building the alternative protein ecosystem, movement, and strategic plan in regional San Diego. Thank you for joining us in this endeavor.

Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns whatsoever.

See you all soon,
Justin (President and Founder of the Alt Protein Project at SDSU)

SDSU team communicating with conference registrants via email leading up to the event!

☐ **Create a pre- and post- event survey to gather feedback & understand the impact of your event**

- a. Identify questions to assess the impact of your event on attendees (e.g. [Pre- and post- event survey](#))

12:29

What motivate you to consume alternative proteins (select all that apply)?

- ☐ Health reasons
- ☐ Environmental concerns
- ☐ Animal welfare concerns
- ☐ Curiosity
- ☐ Taste preferences
- ☐ Other (please specify)



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Additional SDSU Alt Protein Summit conference planning resources:

- [Event vision document](#) and [slidedeck](#)
- [Panelist contract](#) (from their university)
- [Panelist payment request form](#) (from their university)
- [Panelist input email](#)
- [Summit promotional flier](#), [printed external graphics](#), [KPBS Ads](#)
- [Community call presentation about the event to share with APP community](#) ([with speaker notes](#))
- [Summit Panel Recordings](#) and [Agenda Narrative/Panelist Questions](#)